**Katz, Ilan (PS4-A)**

**Children in Out of Home Care: Links Between Caseworker Relationship and Socio-emotional Outcomes**

Other than the quality of care children receive, the services children in out of home care (OOHC) receive are perhaps the most important modifiable factors influencing their outcomes in care. Perhaps the most important of these is the casework relationship. Caseworkers often provide direct support to children and carers, and also link them to specialist services such as psychologists and pediatricians, as well as providing practical support and arranging respite care etc. Caseworkers are also involved when children move placements and in planning for children to leave care. Despite the key role of caseworkers, there is very little research which examines the relationship between children and their caseworkers, and virtually none which examines how this relationship is associated with children’s outcomes. This paper will present an analysis of this association based on findings from 3 waves of the Pathways of Care Longitudinal Study. This is a study of over 1200 children who entered care in New South Wales Austria in 2010/2011. The findings indicate that many children have very little contact with caseworkers, but those who do have contact with caseworkers are generally positive about the contact. Interestingly socio-emotional wellbeing over the three waves was not highly associated with the quality of caseworker contact.

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