

An analysis of the stages in the Family Centered Support Program for Orphaned Children after the 921 Earthquake

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Background

CWLF analyzed the Family-Centered Support Service for Orphaned Children in kinship care after the 921 Earthquake from 1999 to 2019.

Objective

1. Analyze the different services that social workers provided for children of different ages.
2. The analysis also compared some key factors such as the children's age and family dynamics.

Methods

This research includes

1. a quantitative research study which analyzed 113 children's case records;
2. in-depth interviews with 2 experienced social workers.

**1. Children's
independent living
skills and resilience**

**2. Stabilized
children's
relationships with
families**

**Bereavement
Counseling**

**3. Family Services
for Relative
Caregivers**

**4. Connected
Families with
Resources**

1. Children's
independent living
skills and resilience

2. Stabilized
children's
relationships with
families

Bereavement

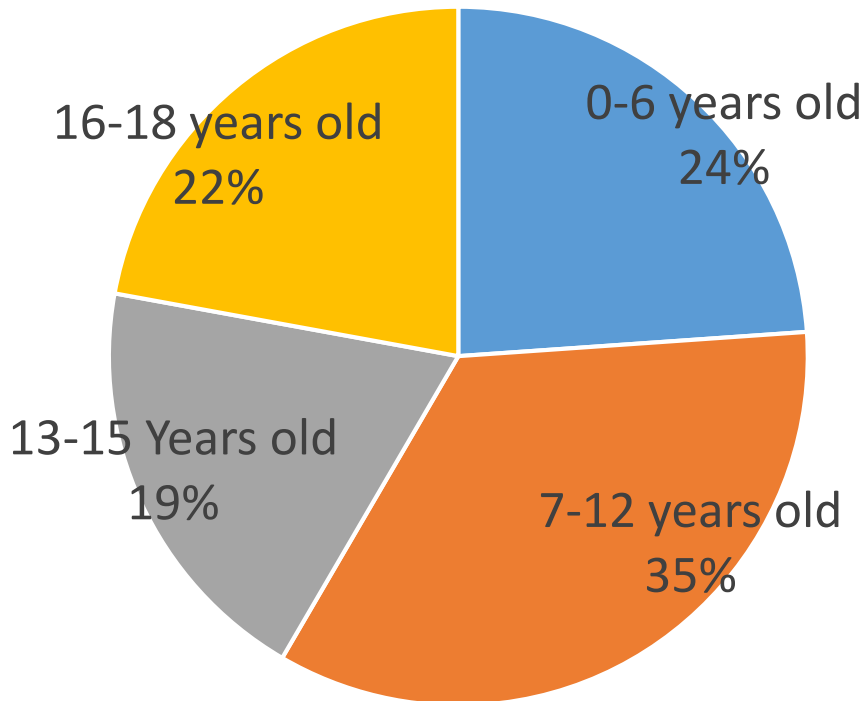
Examples: independent
living skills, emotional
management,
interpersonal
relationships

Examples: relationships
with siblings,
Relationships with foster
families

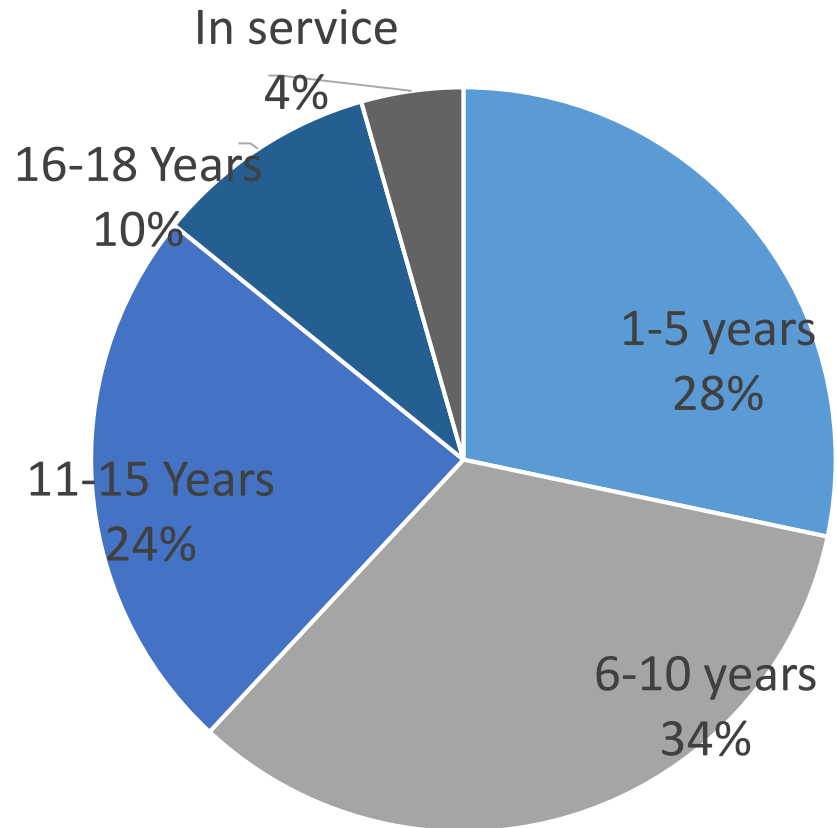
$$\text{Intensity of services} = \frac{\text{Numbers of key services provided in a certain timeframe}}{\text{Numbers of months}}$$

Basic information

Children's age during the disaster



Duration (until 2019)



**1. Children's
independent living
skills and resilience**

**2. Stabilized
children's
relationships with
families**

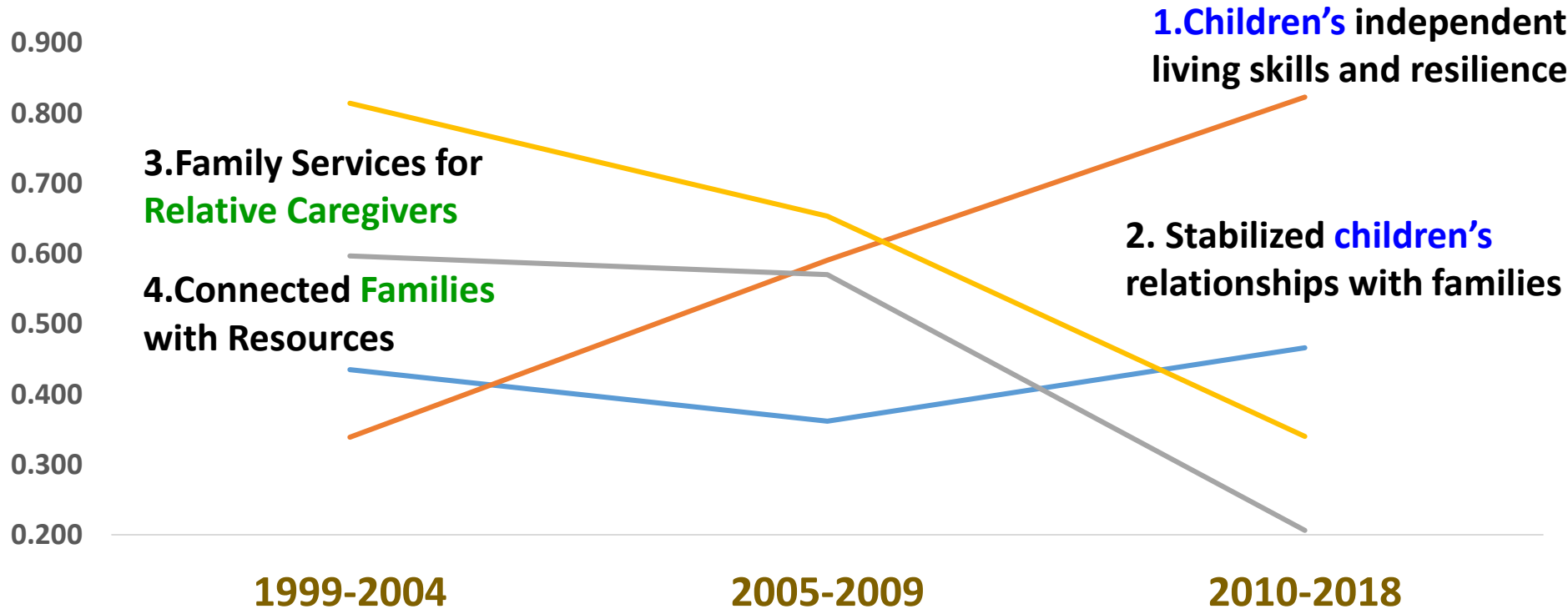
**Bereavement
Counseling**

**3. Family Services
for Relative
Caregivers**

**4. Connected
Families with
Resources**

Results—Children under 10 years

Services of Intensity—Children under 10 years



1. Initially, focus on supporting the caregivers by helping them enhance parenting skills and adjust to caring the children.
2. At a later stage, focus on helping the children process grief and gain new perspectives.

Results—Children under 10 years

Family Services for Relative Caregivers

Caregivers' bereavement



“I went to his sports day and I cried so badly. I saw many other children’s parents were there, but not his. I couldn’t bear myself and cried again under a tree. “

Results—Children under 10 years

Family Services for Relative Caregivers

Dilemmas of parenting

“It’s even more difficult than teaching your own child. If you don’t set strict rules, some people would say ‘you relax because he/she is not your child’. While you are strict, some would say ‘you are tolerant of your child, but why not for this one?’”

Caregivers’ meetings



Results—Children under 10 years

Independent living skills and resilience



When becoming adolescents

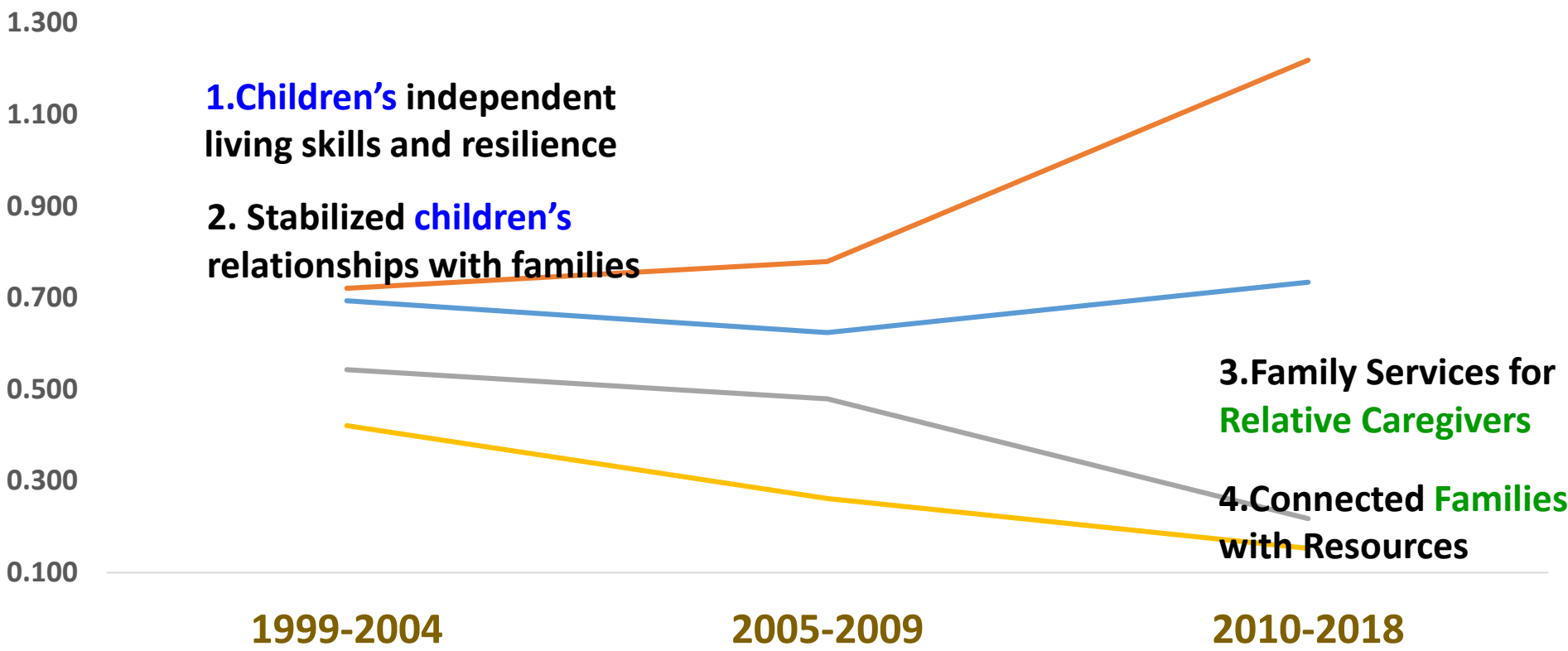
Examples: interpersonal relationship, emotional expression, academic planning

Bereavement counseling

“You are not my parents. If they were alive, they would be very tolerant of me and support whatever I want.”

Results—Teenagers

Services of Intensity—Teenagers



For teenagers (ages 11 to 20), the social workers would provide mental and emotional support or guidance to help them deal with everyday problems such as relationship troubles and family conflict.

Results—Teenagers

Independent living skills and resilience

Independent living skills



“When I was little, my parents helped me sew buttons. Now they were gone and I had to learn how to sew buttons by myself. That was the first time I sew buttons.

When my parents were alive, I didn’t have to worry about anything. Now I have to learn everything, because I have nobody to rely on .“

Results—Teenagers

Independent living skills and resilience

Bereavement counseling

“You thought you didn’t care about losing parents that much. But after talking with others, you realized that he touched a point, and then you realized that you really care.”



Triggers: ending a relationship, other disasters

Results—Teenagers

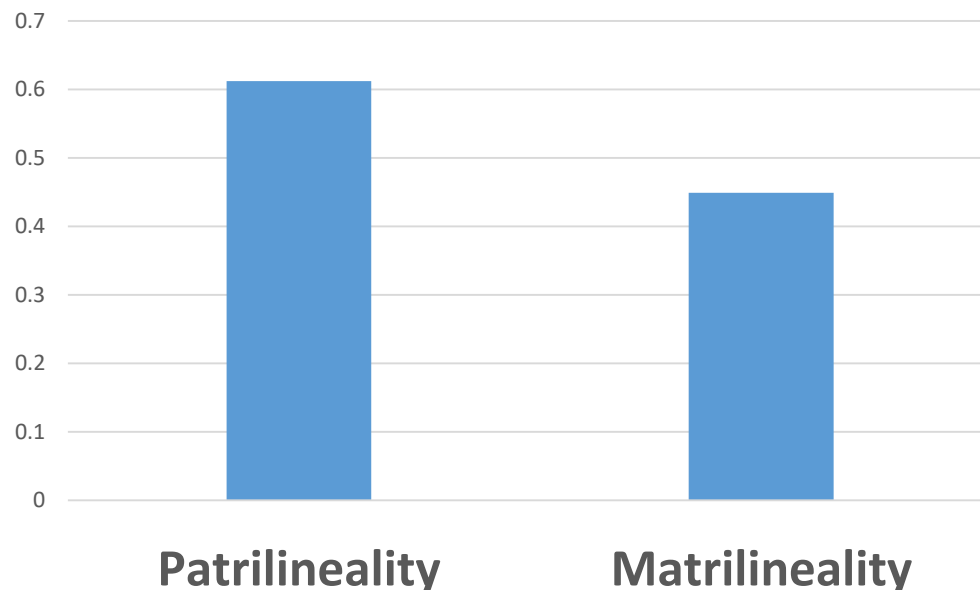
Teenagers' independent living skills

- 1. Personal level:** physical and mental responses after disaster, life adaptation, academic and career planning
- 2. Family level:** division of housework, stress from and skills in taking care of younger siblings
- 3. Finance:** allocated compensation, opened investment trust, applied for student loans or home loans
- 4. Interpersonal relationships:** relationships with schoolmates and coworkers, intimate relationships

Results

Patrilineality v.s. Matrilineality

Intensity of services:
**Stabilizing children's
relationships with
families**



- In tradition, the responsibility of taking care of descendants falls on patrilineal families. Thus, matrilineal families take care of children because of bonds, while patrilineal families may bear some extent of responsibility and reluctance.

Conclusions

1. Kinship foster care needs to provide differentiated services for children and caregivers

(1) Hold activities according to children's needs after their lives back to track

(2) Provide services according to caregivers' needs

Examples: resources about parental skills, supporting activities focusing on emotions and education

(3) Be aware of differences between patrilineal and matrilineal foster families

Conclusions

2. Deconstruct the general concept that “only birth parents take good care of their child(ren)”.

Through advocacy and promotion, the government can highlight that kinships can surpass blood ties. This can release relative caregivers and children from being examined by the public.

Conclusions

3. To de-stigmatize, if bereaved families do not need specialized services, they could seek supportive services in community instead of staying in the program compulsorily.