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Assisting carers to respond to the mental health needs of children

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Across the developed world, efforts are being made to identify and develop effective interventions that will reduce the prevalence and severity of mental health problems among children and young people in out-of-home care. Foster and kinship carers have been identified as critically important in this process. In order to develop an understanding of what interventions and or supports assist carers in responding effectively to the mental health needs of the children and young people in their care, a scoping review was undertaken. Using the scoping study method, 1,064 publications were identified and 82 publications were selected for further analysis. The review shows that promising interventions that aim to improve the mental health of children and young people living in out-of-home care have been developed and trial led both in Australia and internationally. However, the review also highlights the lack of research specifically focused on the role of the carer.

Biography

Josh Fergeus is a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne. He was President of the Foster Care Association of Victoria from 2011-2014, and Senior Policy and Project Leader for Home-Based Care at the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare from 2009-2013. He has been an accredited foster carer since 2005.

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