



Challenges of Foster Care in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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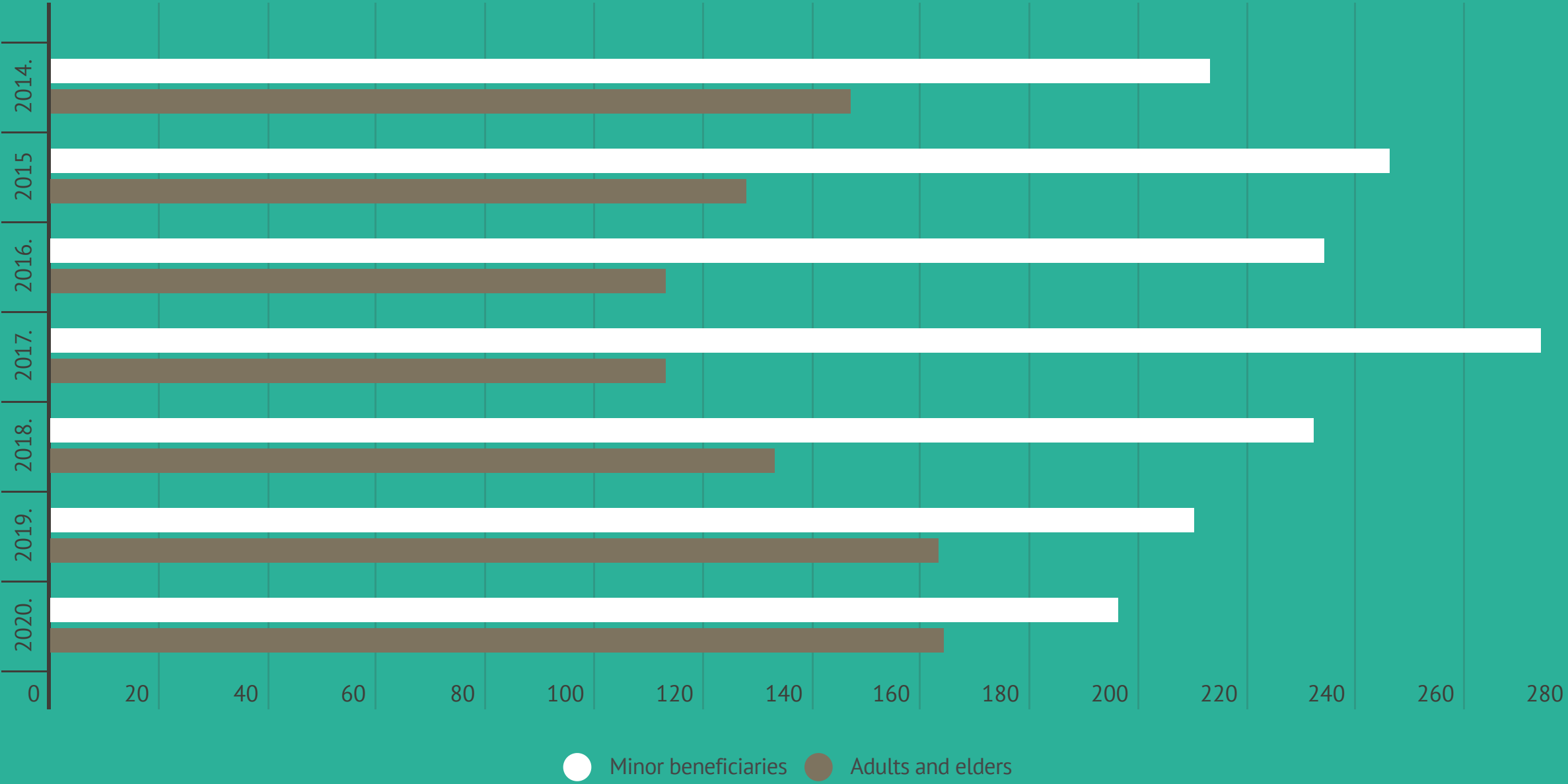
CESPASWON Regional Week, Sarajevo October 2022.

University of Banja Luka, Faculty of Political Sciences, Department of Social Work



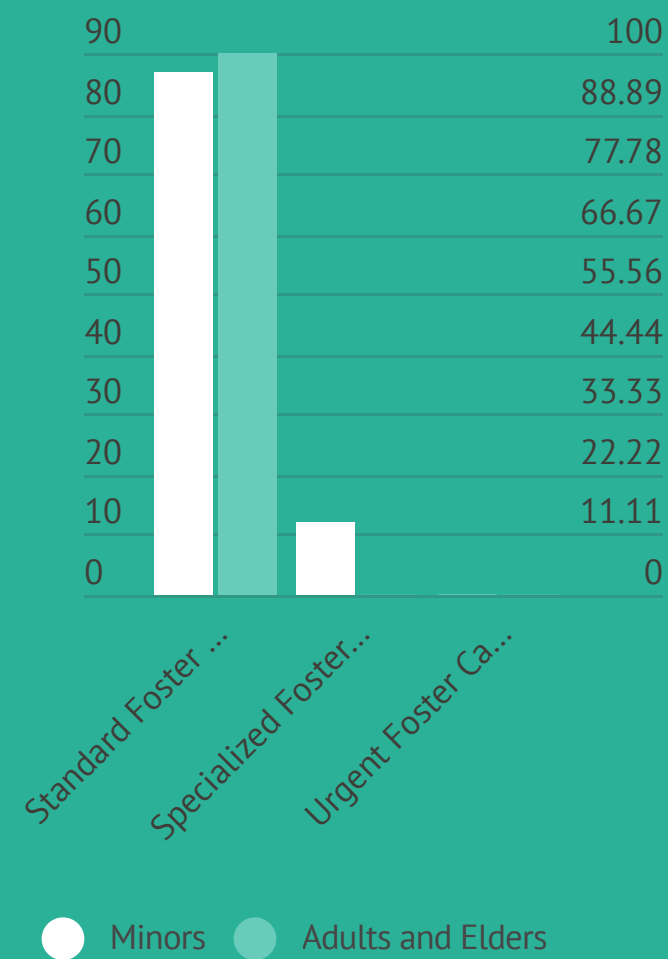
Foster Families in Republic of Srpska

The number of children placed in foster care is declining, while the number of adults and elders is remaining at the same level.

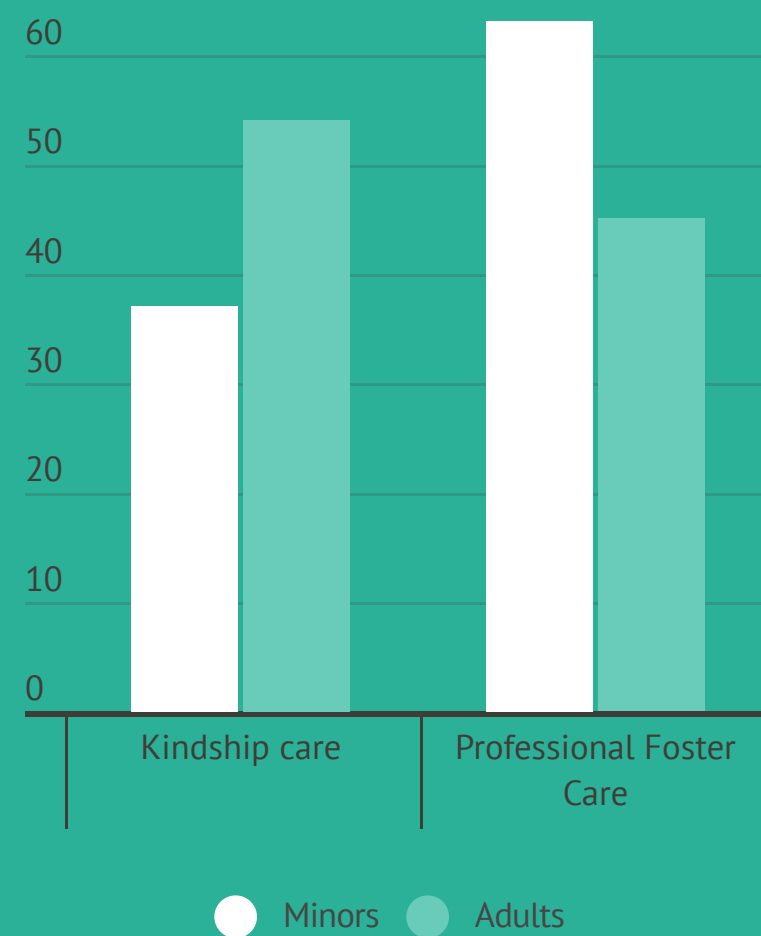


Research Findings

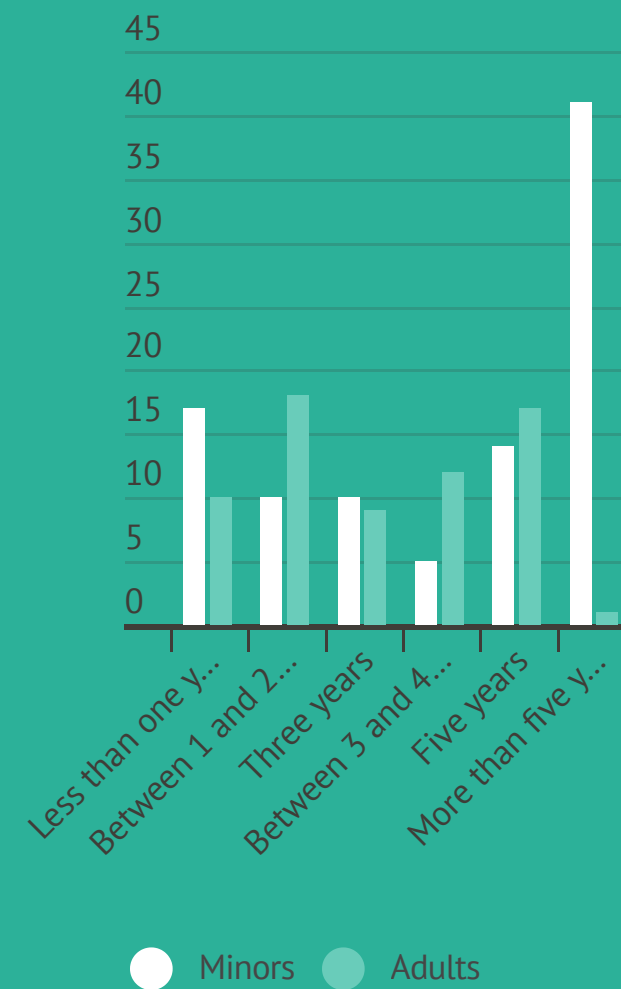
Foster care forms applied in RS



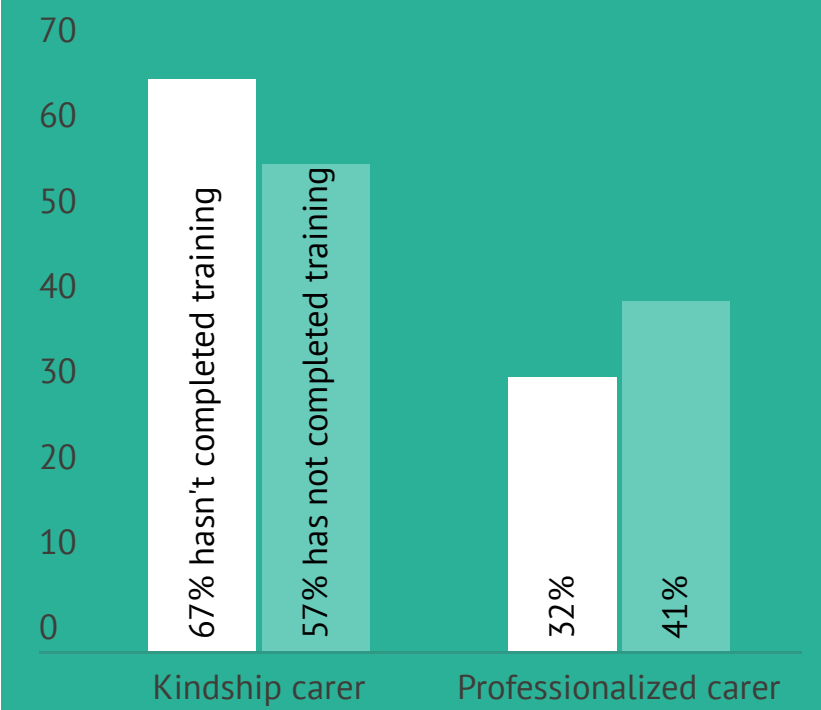
Foster Care in relation to kindship



Duration of Foster Care



Completed Foster Care Training



Research Findings

Opinions of professionals in Social Welfare Centers about the foster care in RS show that they are primarily determined to apply foster care, comparing to any other form of institutional care.

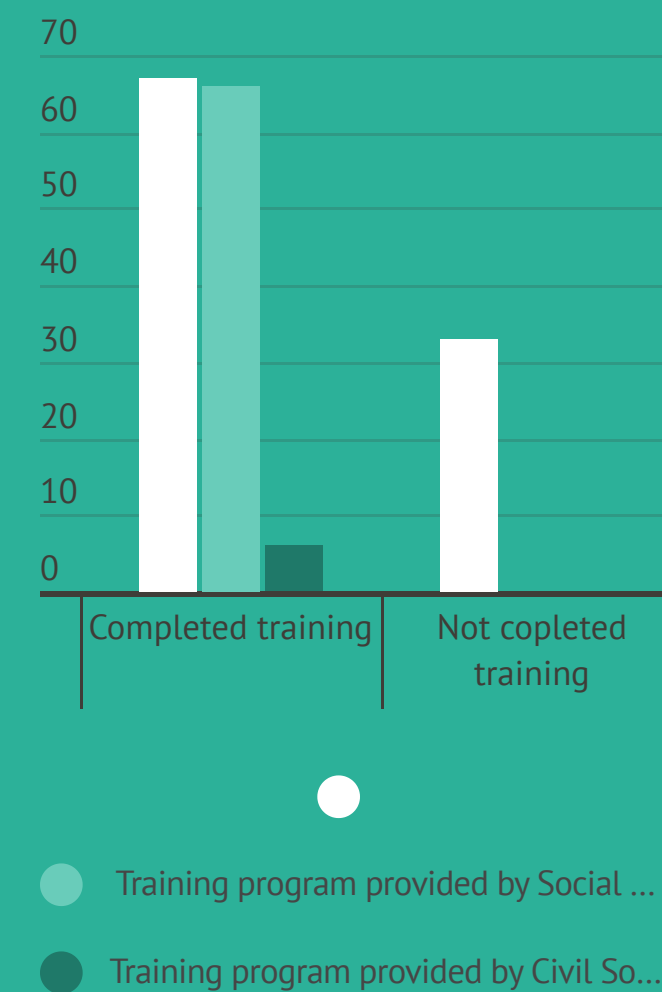
This finding opens a valid question : why is the number of foster care families so low in local communities across RS?

Ставови стручних радника центара за социјални рад о пракси хранитељства у Републици Српској	Средња вриједност
Систем социјалне заштите обезбјеђује континуирану едукацију за стручне раднике који се баве хранитељством.	2,97
Систем социјалне заштите обезбјеђује супервизију стручним радницима који се баве хранитељством.	2,48
Центри за социјални рад су спровели обуку свих постојећих породица у систему које се баве хранитељством.	3,19
Највећи број породица које се баве хранитељством у које су збринуте корисници центра долазе из реда сродничких породица.	3,45
Хранитељске породице у које се збрињавају корисници центра за социјални рад баве се стандардним хранитељством.	3,65
Прије збрињавања корисника у хранитељску породицу изврши се припрема корисника за збрињавање у хранитељску породицу.	4,28
Прије збрињавања корисника у хранитељску породицу изврши се припрема хранитељске породице.	4,28
У центру за социјални рад у коме сам запослен/а спроводи се групни рад са хранитељским породицама.	2,98
Центар за социјални рад у коме сам запослен/а редовно регрутује нове хранитељске породице.	3,07
Стручни радници центра за социјални рад у коме сам запослен/а врше редован надзор (једном мјесечно) над радом хранитељских породица.	3,81

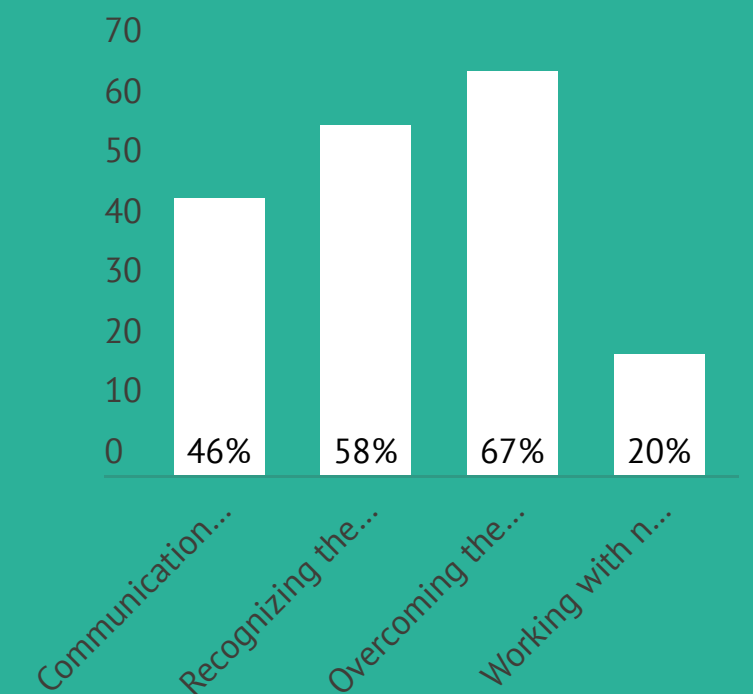
Research Findings

- 54,2% FCF live in cities, 21,7% live in suburbia areas, and 24,1% live in rural areas.
- There are over 83% of registered women foster parents..
- over 50% of foster parents for children are between 56 and 65 years of age.
- 62,7% FC carers have completed high school.
- 77,11% are unemployed.
- 61,9% FC families are complete families.
- In 67,5% cases foster care is used before training is completed.
- Foster Care families remain in the system for approximately 4 years..

The number of FCF for children that completed training

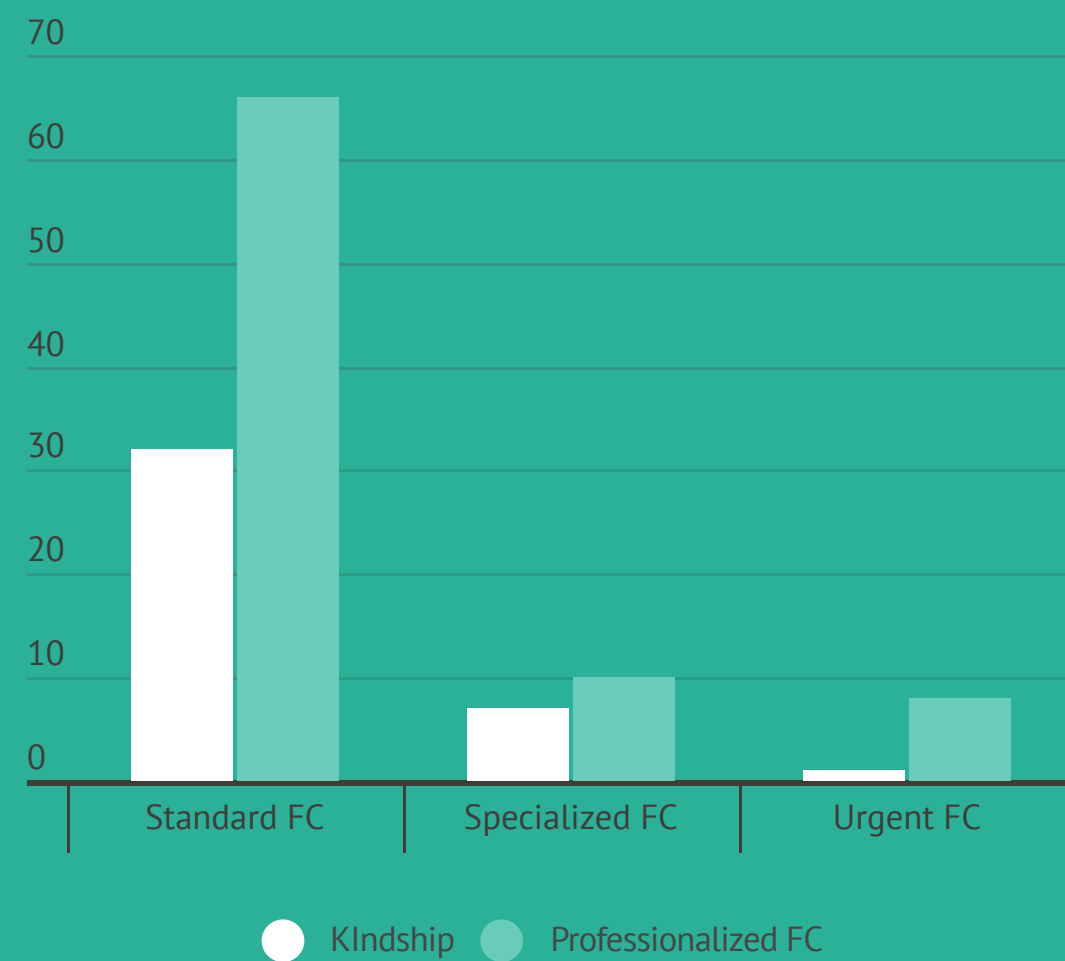


The influence of training on skills when working with children in Foster Care



Research Findings

Self assessment for FC forms as per norms

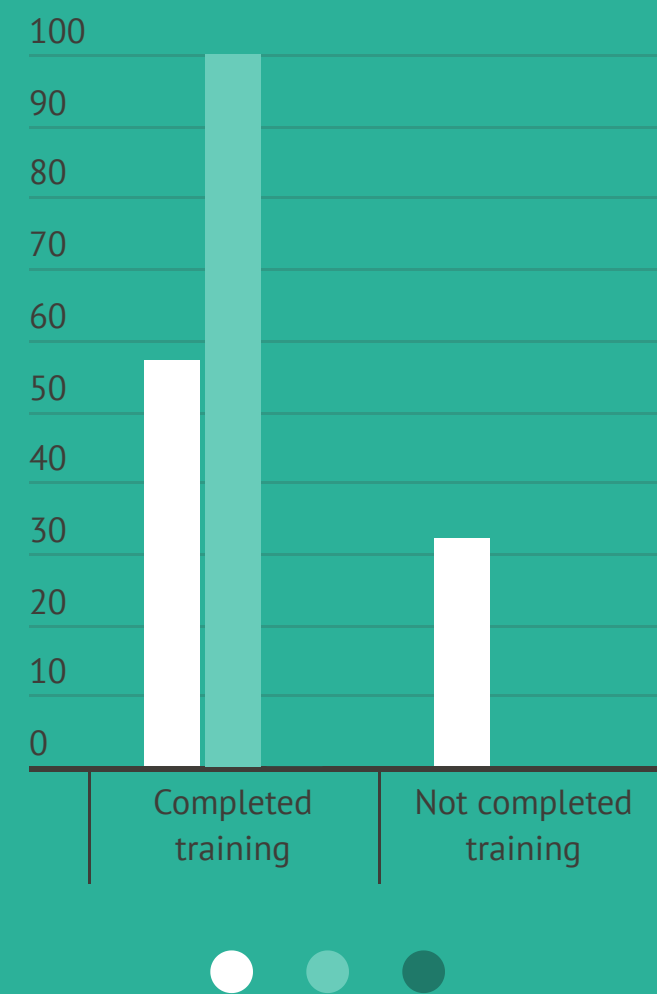


Motivation of FCF for further engagement

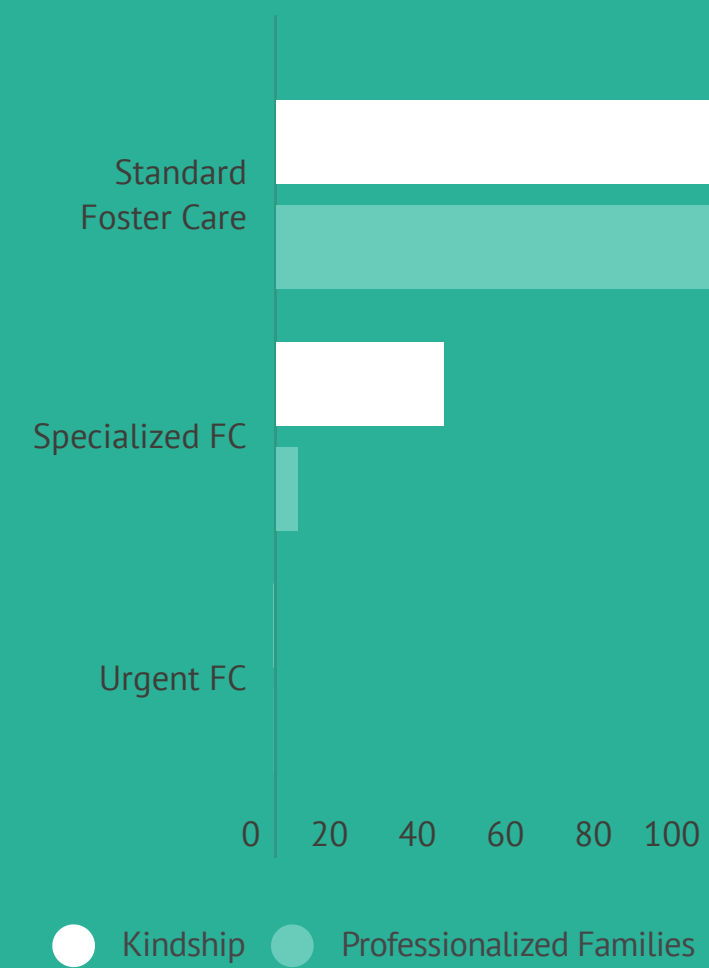


Research Findings

Implemented training program for Foster Care for adults and elders



Enabled for anticipated forms of FC for adults and elders



Motivation of FCF for further engagement



Research Findings

Assessment for QOL aspects (Children Comparison of children' satisfaction mean in FCF and SW Institutions

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Standard deviation
Health and activities	86	1,20	4,20	3,2395	,64119
General mood and emotions	86	2,43	3,71	3,1645	,29523
Family and Free time	86	2,86	5,00	4,4336	,56909
Friends	86	2,75	5,00	4,1424	,60457
School and study	86	2,00	5,00	3,9971	,64340
Total assessment on QOL	86	2,96	4,50	3,7954	,37054

Comparison of children' satisfaction mean in FCF and SW Institutions

	Minors in FC	Minors in institutions
Health and activities	3,23	3,06
General mood and emotions	3,16	3,20
Family and Free time	4,43	3,51
Friends	4,14	3,75
School and study	3,99	4,08
Total assessment on QOL	3,7954	3,52

Research Findings

Adults and elderlies in SW institutions assessed the quality of life with higher level (3,62), comparing to the beneficiaries in foster care (3,13) in all assessed aspects.

	Beneficiaries in Foster Care	Beneficiaries in SW Institutions
Physical Health	2,87	3,20
Mental Health	2,85	3,16
Social connections	3,14	3,55

Research Findings show that there is a need to improve the quality of foster care for adults and elders in RS in all segments that reflect on the researched aspects of quality of life (care, availability of services, support in psychosocial functioning etc.)

Main Challenges of Foster Care coming out of Research Findings

- The most dominant form for both categories of beneficiaries is the standard foster care
- Foster Care is more common form used in case of child protection.
- Foster Care in RS is present only in 22 local communities/municipalities.
- The number of Foster Care families is very low (135/95).
- Adults and elders placed in foster care assess the quality of life lower, comparing to placed in social welfare institutions.
- Professional capacities of Social Welfare Centers are not enough for developing the foster care system in future.
- Professionals and SWCs don't have enough opportunities for professional development.
- The number of Foster Care families is decreasing over the years.
- Foster Care Families do not get adequate professional support.
- Supervision is not provided as per the standards of our profession.

STRENGTHS

- Close to 50% of Foster Care Families are motivated to continue.
- Trained professional for Foster Care are in the middle age stage of their lives, which is considered to be a good resource
- Foster Care families have a satisfactory financial support.

WEAKNESSES

- Foster Care families exist only in 22 local communities.
- Not sufficient number of foster care families.
- Not all foster care families have the status of professional FCF.
- Limiter professional capacities of Social Welfare Centers.
- Low level of quality of life assessed by beneficiaries.
- Lack of well designed support to FCF.

SWOT ANALYSIS

OPPORTUNITIES

- Three forms of foster care for two groups of beneficiaries.
- Long tradition of family placement.
- Using existing capacities and cooperation between the institutions in training for FCF.
- Clearly defined forms of needed support by FCF.

THREATS

- One third of existing FCF will not continue to provide the services
- Lack of systemic support for professionals through education and supervision.
- Declining trend of number of FCF

The Results of the analysis point out the need for overall "interventions" in Foster Care. Two most significant elements of Foster Care (professional work and foster care families) need to be significantly improved and developed.

Recommendations

Development of Professional Capacities



Establishing Foster Care Services within the Centers for Social Work



Introducing unique standard in documenting and records



Developing different support models for Foster Care families



Promoting Foster Care





Thank You!