

## ASSESSMENT OF CHILDCARE'S QUALITY FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

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### Abstract

Like in many other European countries in Bulgaria have been identified childcare's severe consequences for the children placed in specialized institutions (orphanages). The necessity of change and synchronization of the Bulgarian's social policy with the European one stimulates the applying of deinstitutionalization's policy and developing a system of new alternative social services for raising a child in a home environment or a similar one. While exercising this policy just for a few years in Bulgaria were closed almost all of the specialized institutions for children (orphanages) and set up shelters, different types of Residential Child Care Facilities, crisis houses, etc. The main focus of the policy was the establishing of the foster care as a social service providing an environment closest to the family one.

After establishing the new social services the following questions have emerged – What is the quality of these services and how could it be measured? To what extent do the new social services satisfy the needs of their consumers and bolster the care they receive?

The main purpose of this research is to examine and to take forward a criteria capable of evaluating the social services for children. For the achievement of this goal has been carried out an extensive sociological research of the worldwide practice about the criteria that is being used in different countries. Afterwards a representative national research about the criteria of the consumers and the specialists in Bulgaria has been carried out. Therefore there have been taken forward series of criteria for evaluating of the social services and criteria for evaluating the childcare's quality. Based on these criteria a new methodology was created for the evaluating of the childcare's quality, approbated in Bulgaria, proving its capacity to evaluate the quality of the childcare.

**Key Words:** Foster care; child care; quality

### Introduction

Stoyan Stavru in his article, consider the care through different concepts. [1] The Bulgarian word for care “grizha” is of proto-slavic origin – “gryz-ja”. At first it was perceived as a concern and an aim to do something in order to calm this concern. [2] With time the word gains two basic but contradictive significances: (1) Worry, trouble, concern and (2) A possibility to be ensured someone else's wellbeing. [3] According to Seneca the care dignifies people and associates them with God. Much like people God has a rational potential for achieving good but in God the good is being refined only by his nature while in people “the good is being refined by care (cura). [4] According to Seneca care is the key to the opportunity to become truly human. [3,4]

Care could help us understand and integrate our lives more effectively. [5] Providing care as a job is a subcategory of the job which includes all tasks that are directly included in the process of caring when being done in a service of others. Providing care is different from all the other forms of jobs because it is thought that is internally motivated which means that people are motivated to do a job like providing care for reasons other than financial compensation. [6]

The job which in its nature consists providing care refers to the areas where are being provided services in assistance of developing people's abilities or the ability to accomplish those very precious aspects of their lives. An example of that is the childcare provided in all

stages of teaching (from kindergarten to university) and health care of all kinds. [7] Another example of that are the social services for children and adults.

The evaluation of childcare's quality provided in the structure of the social services brings up different conceptual and analytical challenges. The identification of good indicators for quality is a difficult task.

### **Literature Review**

Serious controversy exists regarding what the indexes for quality of childcare should be and what should they be focused on – on the process or the results. And even though the two outlooks are directly connected with the outcome of the service the indicators of the process are connected with the course which leads to the outcome while the indicators of the outcome are focused on the outcome of the service alone. The selecting of indicators focused only on the outcome are being used by the managers of the services as tools for improving the service because they are more prone to the direct management intervention. [8] Indicators for the achieved results like direct indicators of the definite effect of the service are preferable when it comes to comparing the quality of all the different types of services. [9,10]

In Spain the main method for evaluating the social services is based on a system of standards. The system is based on the principle that is being used in Bulgaria as well – exists one principal standardizing document concerning the services for children. In 2009 the Department of child protective services which is part of the National agency for adolescents passed a document called “Basic standards for quality of childcare” which is an opportunity for the children to get the best care possible that can guarantee their best individual development and minimize the risks regarding their security and wellbeing. [11]

In 2003 in the Czech Republic the Ministry of labor and social policy passes a Manual for social service's standards. It follows the British pattern by including quality and quantity measured criteria for the quality of all social services. [12]

For providing and measuring the quality of the social services for children in England 12 national minimal standards called “Standards focused on children” have been implemented. Each standard is connected to a defined expected outcome. Each standard is followed by a set of documents specifying the standard and a unique written down outcome which is expected to be reached by the application of the standard. [13] With time the evaluation of the social services' quality in England have focused on the results of the social service by claiming that in the end the point is for the service to reach a better outcome. [14] As a result, POF had been criticized on focusing on easily evaluated indexes and for creating of one very limited quality picture and whether or not the people's lives had been improved for real as a result of the service. During the last few years the politicians have been reconsidering the evaluation system focused on the results. User Experience Survey (UES) (a research for measuring the experience of the consumers) had been created precisely for this purpose. [15]

In Germany, according to the defined criteria of the National Association of Social Work for evaluation of the social services' quality the social work stands out with an aligned to the results help. The criteria for quality have been published for the first time in the year 2000 as a basis for a discussion and later on have been legislated by the Federal Assembly in 2001. The most appropriate methods for an evaluation of the quality are defined by the SRS (Social reporting standards). These are the methods based on the emotions of the consumers and their perceptions which are based on facts. [16]

According to The National Standards for Disability Services in Ireland, a key element in the evaluation procedure is analyzing the opinions of the consumers. To what extent the social services match up to their individual needs and whether the provider of the social

service achieves the anticipated outcome. The degree of these correspondences is a reason to be suggested a registration of the optional service with the optional valuation.

In Denmark the control of the social services is being implemented by the committee of the parents who monitor for the quality of the provided services and National Council for Children. The standardization of the social services in Sweden and Finland is based on a similar system. [17]

The new approach in the Finnish social strategy is putting the interests and the needs of the consumer in the center of the social system.

In Iceland a special attention is being paid to the measuring of the quality of life of children who are also clients of social services. The initial valuation is being made when is declared that the child is in need of a social service. And for a successful assignment of a particular social service 6 essential areas are being evaluated: social skills, physical skills, developmental skills, support from family and community, social status and activity, taking a part in the life of the community in which the child lives in. After the assignment of the right social service for the child the change in its life is being tracked by following valuations. The results of these valuations show not only the change for the client but also the effectiveness of the social service – the tied up find and human resource corresponding to the change for the client and the need of this kind of service. [18]

From 2003 on the organization EQUASS – The European Quality in Social Services (<http://www.equass.be>) is functioning in the area of the social services in Europe. It offers programs for certification of social service providers which are complied with the European quality requirements and are well known in many European countries. The organization's headquarters is located in Brussels. [19]

Ensuring the quality of the social services the organization has developed a system which consists of 50 criteria with 100 particular indexes for evaluation of the each criterion.

In the European countries where this system for evaluation of the social services is being used (Norway, Portugal, Estonia, Lithuania, Germany, Slovenia, Netherlands, and Ireland) the independent certificate for quality is an important reference point for the consumer to choose a particular service or a provider in order to get a support. The country also is able to set the certification of the quality as a condition for getting a financial support or to make a difference between certified and non-certified providers by the amount of the financial support or other privileges. [20]

### **Research Objectives**

The main purpose of this research is to explore and draw up adequate guidelines for evaluating the provided childcare's quality within the range of the social services. Subsequently to offer a questionnaire applicable for evaluating the childcare's quality.

### **Conceptual Model**

The main conception put in this research is that the criteria for evaluating care's quality should be a totality consisting of the criteria of all the participants in the social services – children, their biological parents, foster and adoptive parents, social workers and experts of higher positions.

### **Research Methodology**

The research has been done on several phases

- The first one includes exploring the opinion for the evaluation's criteria of the social services of the whole group of participants in the basic social services for children in Bulgaria – foster care and Residential Child Care Facilities: children, biological parents, foster and adoptive parents; social workers, caregivers and experts.
- The second one includes analyzing the importance of the extracted guidelines
- The third one – set apart the highest rated guidelines in the previous phase of the research and making the questionnaire for evaluating the abilities of the social service to

satisfy its consumers' needs Care assessment questionnaire for children in foster family Measuring the reliability of the questionnaire.

- The fourth one is using the questionnaire to assess the childcare's quality in foster families.

### **Methods**

- Focus group – The method is being applied for researching the opinion of the whole group of participants in social services for children without parental care; specialists engaged in the process of providing the services, social workers and criteria experts based on whom is to be evaluated the quality of childcare in foster families.
- Interview – The method is applied in the research of guidelines for an assessment of the quality of social services for children without parental care
- Content Analysis - The method is applied in the research of guidelines for an assessment of the quality of social services for children without parental care
- Questionnaire – The method is used for analyzing the importance of the extracted guidelines, analyzing the reliability of the newly created tool for quality evaluation and for analyzing the quality of childcare

### **Participants**

In the first phase a stratified representative sample from Northeastern Bulgaria had been made and includes: 36 children placed in specialized institutions; children placed in Residential Child Care Facilities; parents of children placed in specialized institutions; parents of children placed in Residential Child Care Facilities for healthy children; parents of children placed in Residential Child Care Facilities for children with disabilities; parents of children in foster families; 2 parents of adopted children; adoptive parents included in the research through content analysis of messages from work meetings; 31 specialists directly taking care of children without parental care- foster parents, caregivers from specialized institutions, caregivers in Residential Child Care Facilities; 37 other specialists providing social services for children without directly taking care of them – Social workers from Agency of Child Protection; Public support centers; Providers of the “Foster care” social service; Organizations accredited for Mediation in International Adoption; Agency of Child Protection; The Ministry of labor and social policy; Experts from the Ministry of justice; Experts in the area of the international adoption.

For the purposes of phase two of the research - analyzing the importance of the extracted guidelines, has been used the stratified representative sample from Northeastern Bulgaria from phase one. In the research took part 134 people in general: 31 children without parental care; 43 specialists working in specialized institutions and Residential Child Care Facilities; 34 foster parents; 3 providers of the “foster care” service; 13 specialists providing social services in the community; 10 experts.

For the third phase of the research - Measuring the reliability of the compiled questionnaire, a national representative sample had been made, Including 190 children and foster parents

### **Results**

After the first phase were extracted 185 guidelines for evaluation of the quality of the social services for children:

- Criteria linked to the organization of the work process.
- Criteria linked to the qualities and abilities of the workers
- Criteria linked to the ability of the social service to satisfy the needs of its clients

After the second phase of the research almost all of the criteria got a seriously high score for importance (the level of importance is measured on the scale from 1 to 6, when 1 is the lowest and 6 is the highest level of importance).

After the third phase of the current research all of the group three criteria with a high score for importance were included in a questionnaire for evaluation of the abilities of the social service to satisfy the needs of its clients. Later this questionnaire was called “Childcare assessment questionnaire for children in foster family” because in the course of the research the participants connected clearly satisfying the needs of the consumers with the provided care. [21]

All criteria were categorized in 5 parts:

- Part A: Basic needs or Physiological needs" of a human being: food, water, sleep, homeostasis, and excretion. (includes all of the criteria related to the children’s physiological needs)
- Part B: Safety Needs: Security, Order, and Stability. (includes all of the criteria related to this group of needs of the children)
- Part C: Love and belongingness need - friendship, intimacy, trust, and acceptance, receiving and giving affection and love. Affiliating, being part of a group.
- Part D: Esteem needs - esteem for oneself (dignity, achievement, mastery, independence) and the desire for reputation or respect from others (e.g., status, prestige)
- Part E: Self-Actualization needs - realizing personal potential, self-fulfillment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences. A desire “to become everything one is capable of becoming”

There were questions formulated in order to assess the criteria of each group. The phrasing of the questions corresponds entirely to the phrasing of the participants in the course of the research. For example a question from part A: “When you’re sick do they take you to the doctor?” reproduces the criterion – “When the child is sick do they take it to the doctor.”

The questionnaire is developed in two versions – for foster children and foster parents. The two versions are containing identical questions, phrased identically.

For the assessment of the care for children in foster families the two questionnaires are administered at the same time but separately for the child and its foster parents. The results report on the extent to which the foster parents think they satisfy the child’s needs and the extent to which the children feel their needs are satisfied. Also administered at the same time but separately the two questionnaires are giving the opportunity to report any agreements and disagreements in the children’s conceptions and of their foster parents. This gives the opportunity to work further in assistance of the mutual understanding and support of the foster family.

The content of the questionnaires is as follows:

**PART A: BASIC NEEDS OF A HUMAN BEING: FOOD, WATER, SLEEP, HOMEOSTASIS, AND EXCRETION.**

<b>BASIC NEEDS (Questionnaire for Children)</b>	Yes, always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Occasionally	Hardly ever	No, never
1. When you are sick do they take you to the doctor?							
2. Do they take you to the dentist when you have a toothache?							
3. Is the food you are given enough for you?							
4. Do you think the food you are given is varied?							

5. Do you think the rooms you live, play and eat in are clean?							
6. Do you think you have everything you need in your room?							
7. Do you have e personal space (a space only for you when you can be alone)?							
8. Do you have your own belongings (clothes, toys, notebooks, books, pens)?							
9. Do you think there are enough computers and TVs where you live?							
10. Is there an internet and a cable television where you live?							

**Table 1 Basic needs Questionnaire for Children**

<b>BASIC NEEDS (Foster parents Questionnaire)</b>	Yes, always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Occasionally	Hardly ever	No, never
1. When the child is sick do you take it to a doctor?							
2. Do you take the child to the dentist when it has a toothache?							
3. Do you think the food that the child gets is enough?							
4. Do you think the food that the child gets in varied?							
5. Do you think the rooms where the child sleeps, plays and eats are clean?							
6. Do you think in the child’s room there is everything it needs?							
7. Does the child have its personal space (a space where can stay alone)?							
8. Does the child have its own belongings (clothes, toys, notebooks, books, pens)?							
9. Do you think there are enough computers and TVs where you live for the child to be able to use whenever it wants?							
10. Is there an internet and a cable television where the child lives?							

**Table 2 Basic needs Foster parents Questionnaire**

**PART B: SAFETY NEEDS: SECURITY, ORDER, AND STABILITY.**

<b>SAFETY NEEDS: SECURITY, ORDER, AND STABILITY (Questionnaire for Children)</b>	Yes, always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Occasionall	Hardly ever	No, never
1. Before you came here did anyone told you about the place you’re about to live from then on?							
2. When something is about to happen does your foster parent explain to you what would that thing be?							
3. When your foster parent takes a decision regarding you does he/she shares it with you?							
4. When your foster parent is planning something regarding you does he/she ask you if you agree?							
5. When your foster parent takes a decision regarding you does he/she explain to you what could the consequences be?							
6. When you are being told not to do something do they explain to you why you shouldn’t do it?							

7. When there are disagreements/arguments/disputes here does your foster parent try to solve them?							
8. When you want to share something with your foster parent do they hear you out?							
9. When you share your experiences do you have the feeling as if you foster parent experiences the same as you in the situation you tell them about?							
10. Do you think your foster parent is interested in whether or not you're okay?							
11. Do you think you foster parent believes you?							
12. Does your foster parent support (cooperate/protect/help/encourage/approve) you?							
13. Do you think your foster parent accepts you for who you truly are?							
14. Probably there are people the relationships with whom are very important to you. Does your foster parent understand how important it is for you?							
15. Probably there are things that are very important to you? Does your foster parent respect that?							
16. Do you feel calm here?							
17. Do you feel safe here?							
18. Do you feel protected?							
19. Has it happened you to be slapped by them?							
20. Do you have the feeling as if your foster parent is pressuring you (you want to do one thing but the adults make you do something else)?							

**Table 3 Safety needs Questionnaire for Children**

<b>SAFETY NEEDS: SECURITY, ORDER, AND STABILITY (Foster Parents Questionnaire)</b>	<b>Yes, always</b>	<b>Usually</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Hardly ever</b>	<b>No, never</b>
1. Did you explain to the child (before it came here) how does the place where it is coming to live look like?							
2. When something that you know of is about to happen in the child's life do you tend to explain it to it?							
3. When you make decisions regarding the child how often do you share these decisions with it?							
4. When you or other adults (including social workers) are planning something regarding the child do you ask it whether or not the child agrees with what you've planned?							
5. When you or other adults, including social workers, make decisions regarding the child do you tend to explain to it what could the consequences be?							
6. When you tell the child not to do something do you explain to it why you want it not to do it?							
7. When a conflict arises how often do you try to solve it?							
8. How often do you listen to the child when it wants to share something with you?							
9. When the child shares its experiences with you how often do you feel as like you too are experiencing what it is experiencing?							

10. How often do you show interest in whether or not the child is okay?							
11. Do you believe the child?							
12. How often do you think you show support to the child?							
13. Do you think you are able to accept the child as it truly is?							
14. There are important people in the child's life. To what extent do you think you're able to respect that?							
15. Do you think you respect the things that are important to the child?							
16. How often do you think the child is feeling calm?							
17. Do you think the child is feeling safe?							
18. Do you think the child is feeling protected?							
19. Has it happened for you to slap the child?							
20. Has it happened for you to pressure the child (it wants to do something and you telling it to do something else)?							

**Table 4 Safety needs Foster Parents Questionnaire**

**PART C: LOVE AND BELONGINGNESS NEED - FRIENDSHIP, INTIMACY, TRUST, AND ACCEPTANCE, RECEIVING AND GIVING AFFECTION AND LOVE. AFFILIATING, BEING PART OF A GROUP.**

<b>RECEIVING AND GIVING AFFECTION AND LOVE (Questionnaire for Children)</b>	<b>Yes, always</b>	<b>Usually</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Occasional</b>	<b>Hardly ever</b>	<b>No, never</b>
1. Does your foster parent hugs you when you need it?							
2. Does she/he comfort you when you're feeling sad?							
3. Does she/he caress you when you need it?							
4. When something happens to you does your foster parent ask you how you feel?							
5. Do you think your foster parent is able to get exactly how you feel?							
6. When something happens to you and you can't shake off of it easily does you foster parent talk with you about it?							
7. When something bad happens and your foster parent finds out about it does she/he help you overcome it?							
8. Probably in the past had happened things that made you feel sad. When you've told them to your foster parent or she/he had found out about them in another way had she/he helped you deal with it?							
9. Every time you're feeling in a particular way there are important reasons for it. How often do you think your foster parent manages to identify these reasons?							
10. Do you think your foster parent understands that it is important to you to be with the people you feel close to?							
11. Does your foster parent gives you enough freedom to express your love for the people important to you?							
12. Does your foster parent give you the opportunity to stay in touch with the people important to you?							
13. Do you think your foster parent shows a good attitude towards your parents, relatives and close ones?							
14. How often do you feel your foster parent is careful with your feelings?							



15. Do you feel accepted by the other kids?							
16. Do you feel accepted by your foster parent?							
17. How often do you feel “warmth” in your relationship with your foster parent?							
18. Do you feel loved by your foster parent?							
	Yes, always	To a very big	To a big extent	To some extent	To a little extent	To a very little	No
19. Do you think your foster parent knows what you love?							
20. Does your foster parent know/ knows about your relatives?							
21. Are you attached to your foster parent? Do you feel strong feelings for her/him? Do you share with him/her? Do you miss him/her when he/she is far away?							
22. Do you think your foster parent has a good opinion on your past?							

**Table 5 Receiving and giving affection and love Questionnaire for Children**

<b>RECEIVING AND GIVING AFFECTION AND LOVE (Foster Parents Questionnaire)</b>	Yes, always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Occasionally	Hardly ever	No, never
1. Do you think you hug the child every time it needs it?							
2. Do you think you comfort the child every time when it is sad?							
3. Do you think you caress the child every time it needs it?							
4. How often when something happens to the child you ask it how it feels?							
5. Do you think you are able to get exactly how the child feels?							
6. How often when you find out that the child can't shake off easily of something that had happened you discuss it with it?							
7. How often do you manage to help the child to overcome something bad that had happened to it?							
8. Often in the lives of children without parental care there are events that can sadden or hurt them. When they tell you about them or you find out in another way how often do you help the child to deal with these feelings?							
9. Every time when the child is feeling in a certain way there are important reasons for it. How often do you think you manage to identify what these reasons are?							
10. Do you think you are able to get how important is for the child to be with its relatives and others it feels close?							
11. Do you think you give the child enough freedom to show love to the people important to it?							
12. Do you think you give the child the opportunity to stay in touch with the people important to it?							
13. Do you think you show a good attitude towards the child's parents, relatives and the people it feels close to?							

14. How often do you think you are careful with the child’s feelings?							
15. Do you think the child is feeling accepted by the other children here?							
16. How often do you think the child is feeling accepted by you?							
17. How often do you think the child feels “warmth” in your relationship?							
18. Do you think the child is feeling loved by you?							
	Yes	To a very big	To a big extent	To some	To a little	To a very little	No
19. Do you think you know what the child loves?							
20. Do you know who the relatives of the child are?							
21. Do you think the child is attached to you?							
22. Do you think you have a good opinion on the child’s past?							

**Table 6 Receiving and giving affection and love Foster Parents Questionnaire**

<b>INTEGRATION – BEING PART OF A GROUP; ACCEPTANCE. (Questionnaire for Children)</b>	Yes, always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Occasionally	Hardly ever	No, never
1. Have your foster parent ever explained to you why your social worker takes certain actions about you /for example why have he/she decided to put you in a foster family or to visit a therapist?							
2. For the children who are about to leave the service: Does your foster parent explains to you where you are about to go?							
3. When you’re about to move somewhere does your foster parent help you to adapt to the new place?							
4. When you came here did your foster parent help you with adapting to the new things (new home, new people, etc.)?							
5. When you started going to school or when you moved to a new school or kindergarten did your foster parent help you adapt to the new place?							
6. How often do you go to the theatre, cinema, camps or other activities?							
7. How much do you communicate with children who are not living in foster families?							

**Table 7 Integration Questionnaire for Children**

<b>INTEGRATION – BEING PART OF A GROUP; ACCEPTANCE. (Foster Parents Questionnaire)</b>	Yes, always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Occasionally	Hardly ever	No, never
1. Have you ever explained to the child why the social worker is taking certain actions about it /for example why have he/she decided to put it in a foster family or to visit a therapist?							
2. When there is a change about to happen in the child’s life or							

when it's about to get moved from one place to another do you explain to it where it's about to go?							
3. When the child's about to move somewhere else do you help it you to adapt to the change/ get used to the new place?							
4. When the child came in your family did you manage to help it adapt to the new things /new home, new people, etc./?							
5. Did you help the child in adapting to the new school or kindergarten (in case there has been a change made after coming to the foster family)?							
6. How often do you take the child to theatre, cinema, camps or other activities?							
7. Has it happened for the child to go somewhere with other children who are not living here or who are not living in foster families?							

**Table 8 Integration Foster Parents Questionnaire**

<b>AFFILIATING, BEING PART OF A BIRTH FAMILY (Questionnaire for Children)</b>	<b>Yes, always</b>	<b>Usually</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Occasionall</b>	<b>Hardly ever</b>	<b>No, never</b>
1. Do you think your foster parent understands your feelings towards your parents?							
2. Does your foster parent give you the opportunity to keep the relationship between you and your family?							
3. Does your foster parent give you the opportunity to meet with your family?							
4. Do you think your foster parent discusses with your family how he/she is taking care of you, when and why they took you to the doctor, what were the results, when and why they signed you up for an afterschool activities?							
5. When your foster parent makes decisions about you (for example which school you should go to, what activities to attend, whether you should go to camp or not) do you think they discuss it with your parents?							
6. Do you think your foster parents share with your parents what is happening with you here, how you feel, how you do in school, etc.?							
7. Do you think that if your foster parent has taken any decision about you without telling your parent first tells them later about it?							
8. Do you think your foster parent shares with your parents the good grades you get in school, the times when the teachers praise you and other positive achievements of yours?							
9. When you experience difficulties – for example in school or with other kids, teachers, adults does your foster parent shares this with your parents?							
10. Do you think your foster parent gives the opportunity to your parents to help you while you're here?							
11. Maybe sometimes your biological parents are unable to come and see you. When that happens does your foster parent help you understand what had happened and when you will see your parents again?							

12. Maybe your parents are experiencing a lot of difficulties. Do you think your foster parent helps your parents in learning to do something they've never knew how to do before – for example how to register with a personal family physician, how and when to take you to the doctor, how to cook, how to help you prepare for school?						
13. Do you think that while you are here your parents are able to be involved in taking care of you – to visit you, to spend time with you, to buy you things you need, to talk with you, to come with you to the doctor or the dentist, etc.?						
	Yes	To a very big	To a big extent	To some extent	To a little extent	To a very little
14. Do you think your foster parent likes your parents?						No

**Table 9 Affiliating, being part of a family Questionnaire for Children**

<b>AFFILIATING, BEING PART OF A BIRTH FAMILY (Foster Parents Questionnaire)</b>	Yes, always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Occasionally	Hardly ever	No, never
1. Do you think you understand the child's feelings towards its parents?							
2. Do you give the child the opportunity to keep the relationship with its family?							
3. Do you give the child the opportunity to meet its family?							
4. Do you discuss what happens with the child here with it parents – how does it feel, how it does in school, etc.?							
5. When you make decisions about the child (for example which school it should go to, what activities to attend, whether it should go to camp or not) do you discuss it with the child's parents?							
6. Do you discuss with the child's parents how you take care of it, when and how you take it to the doctor and what were the results, when and why you've signed it up for afterschool activities?							
7. When you make a decision about the child without telling its parent first do you tell them later about it?							
8. Do you share with the child's parents the good grades it gets in school, the times when the teachers praise it and other positive achievements of the child?							
9. When the child experiences difficulties – for example in school, in the communication with other children, teachers, adults in general and the adults here, do you discuss it with the child's parents.							
10. Do you think you give the parents the opportunity to help their children while they're here?							
11. Maybe sometimes the parents are unable to come and see the child. When that happens do you help the child understand what							

had happened and when it will see its parents again?							
12. How often do you help the child’s parents to learn to do something they’ve never knew how to do before – for example how to register with a personal family physician, how and when to take the child to the doctor, how to cook, how to help the child prepare for school?							
13. Do the biological parents are able to be involved in taking care of the child while it’s here – to visit, to spend time with it, to buy the child things it needs, to talk with it, to come with it to the doctor or the dentist, etc.?							
	Yes	To a very big	To a big extent	To some	To a little	To a very little	No
14. How much do you like the child’s parents?							

**Table 10 Affiliating, being part of a family Foster Parents Questionnaire**

**PART D: ESTEEM NEEDS - ESTEEM FOR ONESELF (DIGNITY, ACHIEVEMENT, MASTERY, INDEPENDENCE) AND THE DESIRE FOR REPUTATION OR RESPECT FROM OTHERS (E.G., STATUS, PRESTIGE)**

<b>ACCEPTANCE, SUPPORT, SELF ESTEEM (Questionnaire for Children)</b>	Yes,	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Occasional	Hardly	No, never
1. Do you think your foster parent notices your achievements?							
2. Do you think your foster parent shows a good attitude towards your achievements?							
3. Do you think your foster parent is careful to you even when you haven’t achieved what was expected of you?							
4. Do you think your foster parent encourages you when you fail at something?							
5. Do you think your foster parent presents you in a good way to other people?							
6. Has it happened for you to feel as if your foster parent is friendlier to other children than to you?							

**Table 11 Acceptance, support, self esteem Questionnaire for Children**

<b>ACCEPTANCE, SUPPORT, SELF ESTEEM (Foster Parents Questionnaire)</b>	Yes, always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Occasionally	Hardly ever	No, never
1. How often do you think you notice the achievements of the child?							
2. How often do you show a good attitude towards the achievements of the child?							
3. Do you think you’re careful to the child even when it haven’t achieved what was expected of it?							
4. Do you think you encourage the child when it fails at something?							

5. Do you think you present the child in a good way to other people/institutions?							
6. Do you think the child has ever felt as if you've been friendlier to other children more than to the child itself?							

**Table 12 Acceptance, support, self esteem Foster Parents Questionnaire**

**PART E: SELF-ACTUALIZATION NEEDS - REALIZING PERSONAL POTENTIAL, SELF-FULFILLMENT, SEEKING PERSONAL GROWTH AND PEAK EXPERIENCES. A DESIRE “TO BECOME EVERYTHING ONE IS CAPABLE OF BECOMING”**

<b>REALIZING PERSONAL POTENTIAL, SELF-FULFILLMENT (Questionnaire for Children)</b>	Yes, always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Occasionally	Hardly ever	No, never
1. Has it ever happened your foster parent to teach you how to get dressed, eat or make decisions independently?							
2. Has it ever happened your foster to teach you how to cook, clean, do the laundry or do other chores?							
3. Has it ever happened your foster parent to explain and help you in understanding what you need?							
4. Has it ever happened your foster parent to explain and help you to understand better whether or not what you want is good for you?							
5. Has it ever happened your foster parent to teach you how to manage to help yourself in difficult situations?							
6. Has it ever happened your foster parent to teach you to help the others or someone in need?							
7. Do you think you can go all by yourself to school, the activities or the sport you usually go to?							

**Table 13 Realizing personal potential, self-fulfillment Questionnaire for Children**

<b>REALIZING PERSONAL POTENTIAL, SELF-FULFILLMENT (Foster parents Questionnaire)</b>	Yes, always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Occasionally	Hardly ever	No, never
1. Has it ever happened for you to teach the child how to get dressed, eat or make decisions independently?							
2. Has it ever happened for you to teach the child how to cook, clean, do the laundry or other chores?							
3. Has it ever happened for you to explain and help the child in understanding what it needs?							
4. Has it ever happened for you to explain and help the child in understanding whether or not what it wants is good for it?							
5. Has it ever happened for you to teach the child how to manage to help itself in difficult situations?							
6. Has it ever happened for you to teach the child to help others or people in need?							
7. Do you think the child is capable of going all by itself to school, activities or sport it usually goes to?							

**Table 14 Realizing personal potential, self-fulfillment Foster parents Questionnaire**

<b>SEEKING PERSONAL GROWTH AND PEAK EXPERIENCES (Questionnaire for Children)</b>	Yes, always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Occasionally	Hardly ever	No, never
1. How often do you go to school/kindergarten?							
2. How often when you need help in preparing for school your foster parent helps you – to understand the lesson, to write your homework, to find the materials you need?							
3. How often does your foster parent give you opportunities to go out, to visit new and different places, to know places out of yours and ones you've never been before?							
4. How often when you ask an important for you question your foster parent talks with you and helps you find an answer?							
5. How often when your foster parent discusses with someone where you're going to study or what activities to sign up for he/she discusses it with you too?							
6. Do you think your foster parent helps you in doing what you have talent for?							
7. Do you think your foster parent knows what you're interested in?							
8. Do you go to activities that you want?							
9. In the school where you study are there classes which you're interested in?							

**Table 15 Seeking personal growth and peak experiences Questionnaire for Children**

<b>SEEKING PERSONAL GROWTH AND PEAK EXPERIENCES (Foster Parents Questionnaire)</b>	Yes, always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Occasionally	Hardly ever	No, never
1. How often does the child go to school/kindergarten?							
2. When the child is experiencing difficulties in the preparation for school and need help how often do you manage to help the child?							
3. How often do you manage to give the opportunity to the child to get to know more about the world around it or the environment?							
4. Children ask themselves a lot of question and often are searching for answers to those questions. How often do you talk with the child about these questions and do you help it to find answers?							
5. How often when you discuss where should the child study or what activities to be signed up for you discuss the matter with it too?							
6. Do you think you help the child to develop its talents?							
7. How much do you think you know what the child is interested in?							
8. Do you think the child is going to activities it wants?							
9. Are there classes in the school where the child is studying which it likes and is interested it?							

**Table 16 Seeking personal growth and peak experiences Foster parents Questionnaire**

The results of the analyzed indexes for Physiological needs show that about 70% of the questions foster parents are rating higher than the children the amount of satisfaction of their needs they provide. While on the questions about the food, the important things in the room and the availability of enough computers and internet children are rating higher than the foster parents.

Analyzing the rate of the satisfaction's amount of children's needs of safety and security in the foster families shows that in more than half of the cases the ones who prepare the children for the changes that the social services are providing are the adults – social workers and foster parents. They explain to the children where they are about to go and to get them to know the place where the child is about to live beforehand. The results show that according to the children the majority of the foster parents share their decisions and the plans they're making, listen to them and understand them, they care about them and believe them. The majority of the children are feeling encouraged and accepted as they are; calm and safe in the foster families.

On the other hand 38% of the children have been moved from the biological family or from one foster family to another without knowing what was like the place they were going to. Some of the children share that they were taken from school during class by the social workers and the police and then brought to another city without them knowing what is happening and why and also without the chance to meet or say goodbye to their parents. These children haven't known in advance the foster parents, their homes or the reasons. They haven't known the reasons why they were taken from their biological parents and placed in the foster ones. Between 12% and 16% of the children have never been introduced to the plans and the decisions of the foster parents and have never taken part by agreeing nor rejecting in the process of their planning. 3% of the children share that they have never been listened to by their foster parents and 8% of the children say that foster parents have never understood nor experienced with them their feelings or what has been happening. According to 5% of the children their foster parents have never cared about them; 7% have never been believed to and 5% of the children have never felt encouraged or supported; 2% don't feel calm and 6% of the children don't feel safe.

The results show that needs of safety, security and calmness of the big part of the children in the researched foster families had been satisfied and where the percentage of the children who think this occurs regularly is bigger than the percentage of the foster parents claiming the same. On the other hand there are cases where the children's need haven't been satisfied. The percentage of the children who stated this had never happened is considerably bigger of the foster parents' one.

The common impression from the research of these criteria is that foster parents rate higher the amount of satisfaction of the children's need they provide than the children themselves think their needs have been satisfied. The results from the research show that the cases in which the foster parents rate higher the frequency of the times they always satisfy the children's needs on this scale are when they need to be comforted, hugged or caressed; the children's need to freely express their love for the people important to them and to keep in touch with them; the need their foster parents to know their relatives and to have a positive attitude towards them; the children's need to be accepted by other children and as well as to feel closeness to their foster parents. Most significant are the differences related to the children's need to be hugged and caressed and the need to keep in touch with the people important to them as well as their foster parents to demonstrate a good attitude towards their parents and relatives. Regarding all of these scales foster parents are rating higher the amount of satisfying of the children's needs all the time than the children. Also the foster parents rate higher the extent to which the foster children are attached to them.



The results of analyzing the quality of care on the indexes – Receiving and giving affection and love show that according to the children the frequency of the times when the foster parent talks to them and helps them overcome something bad that had happened in the present or in the past is higher than the one claimed by the foster parents. Also the children rate higher the frequency of the times when foster parents are able to find out the reasons for their feelings and to respect them. The results show that the percentage of the children who always or usually feel warmth in the relationship with their foster parents is also higher than the one stated by the foster parents. Significant differences are noticed in the assessments of the two groups about the attitude of the foster parents towards the child's past. The positive assessment of the children is way higher than the foster parents' one.

It's noticeable that foster parents rarely respond negatively to the questions. On the contrary the children more frequently choose utmost negative answers. Over 10% is the difference in the cases in which the children state their foster parents don't ever hug them, don't caress them or ask how are they feeling and don't know about their feelings; aren't able to see the reasons for their feelings, don't demonstrate a good attitude towards their parents and relatives, don't know them and don't show a positive attitude in regard of their past.

The results of the research show that children's needs of knowing the environment, art, theatre and cinema as well as communicating with other children who don't benefit from the same social service are not satisfied in half of the cases. This could be explained with the town's size where the foster family lives, its ability to travel to a bigger town and with financial and domestic capabilities.

The results of analyzing the quality of care on the indexes – Affiliating, being part of a birth family show that nearly between 23% and 56% of the children claim their needs of keeping and developing their relationships with the biological families. Between 22% and 60% of the situations the foster parents confirm this. According to foster parents the reason for this is the way the social services regulate the relationships of the children with their biological families after placing them in the social service and then the way they treat this relationship once the child is included in the adoption registry. Basing on the data from this research after the including of the child in the adoption registry the relationship between children and parents had been ended and the contact between children and their biological parents had been forbidden by the social workers.

The results of the research of the last group of indexes show that the needs of the children are in most cases satisfied. Foster parents' positive answers are more than the ones children give and even sometimes there are ones that are 100%. In spite of the categoricity of the foster parent between 10% out of 20% of the cases children say their needs are not satisfied. The highest is the percentage of the children who say their foster parents are not gentle when they don't succeed in achieving the expected. The analyze of these indexes show that the children's need of help and support from their foster parents is greater than the amount they get from them. In some cases this is due to the misunderstanding of the needs in others is due to the limited opportunities provided by the small locality and sometimes is the motivation of the foster parents to do what the child needs.

### **Conclusions**

The research confirms the theories of J. Juran 2005 [22] and Philip Crosby 1984 [23] about the quality of care in provided childcare social services is closely connected to the consumers' needs and the way they rate the amount of satisfaction they're getting. The research confirms the classical view of the quality by proving that in the field of childcare the ideas for quality are resting upon the principles of implementing the requirements of care receivers based on the Abraham Maslow's theory (1943) of the hierarchy of needs. We can clearly see all the extracted criteria in the first phase of the research are closely connected to the groups of needs selected by Maslow. [24]

Even more, the participants directly connect the satisfaction of these needs with the childcare's quality assessment criteria as it is laid out in the model of the "Parasuraman" service 1985. [25] Reaffirming the Philip Crosby [23] and Armand Feigenbaum's theory the results are showing that participants are connecting the quality to the requirements they have about the care and respectively evaluate the care's quality by the accordance or disaccordance between the requirements of the care receiver and the abilities of the social service to meet them. [26]

All of the criteria that has been drawn out from the participants is connected to the consumers' needs and can be structured in groups. Evaluating the importance of each criterion shows a high rate of importance and this is enough reason for each criterion to be included in methodology for a care quality assessment.

Nevertheless the applying of approaches for assessing the care's quality by researching and analyzing the ideas of both the caregiver and the care receiver are providing us with the exceptional opportunity to determine the differences in the ideas for care of the two groups. In these differences specifically were determined a series of care's problems whose overcoming provided an opportunity for increasing the quality of childcare and also as a result the increasing of the quality of the social service for children.

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