

The development of foster care during the crisis: challenges for foster families and social workers

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8th International Foster Care Research Conference
Siegen September 17-18 2015



Fondazione Emanuela Zancan onlus

*50 anni di formazione, studi, ricerche, sperimentazioni,
proposte culturali, a servizio delle persone*

Focus

Foster families and their perception about the foster care experience. Are they willing to undergo other foster care placements? How to build on their experience to further develop foster care at local level?

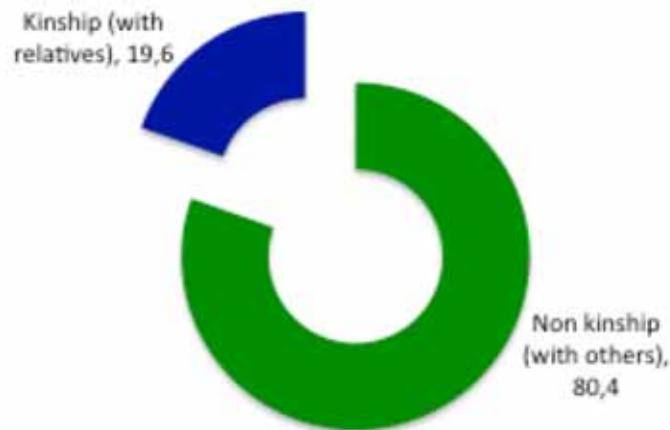
Social workers. To what extent does the activation of services also depend on poverty and deprivation?

What do they suggest in terms of
future development of foster care?



Foster families

	N	%
Married without children	10	26,3
Married with children	23	60,5
Not married without children	1	2,6
Non married with children	1	2,6
Other situation	3	7,9
Total	38	100,0



38 families
70 children in foster care
80% non-kinship care

Motivations

Motivation (far)

	N. casi	Percentuale*
Solidarity with disadvantaged people	18	51,4
To testify faith	3	8,6
To share with other own resources	12	34,3
Love for children	16	45,7
Openness of the family	6	17,1
To teach children solidarity and gift	3	8,6
To complete the family	2	5,7
A family can give a lot	5	14,3

*% on total foster families.

Motivation (close)

	N	%
Specific motivation as a couple	22	57,9
Direct knowledge of people in difficulties	18	47,4
Knowledge with other foster families	4	10,5
Explicit request from social services	8	21,1
The desire to have children	1	2,6
Books or movies	1	2,6
Previous experiences	2	5,3

*% on total foster families.



Promotional campaigns

How much promotional campaigns did contribute to your decision?

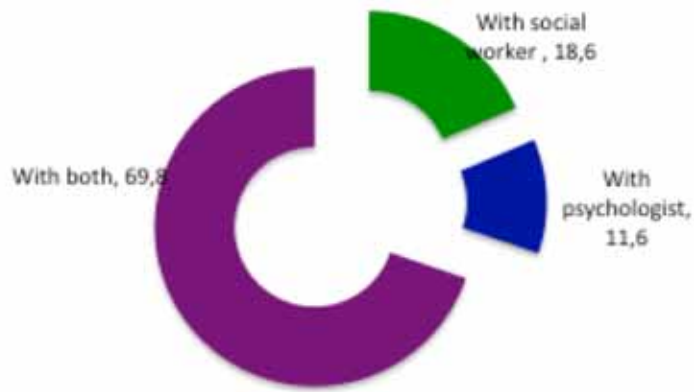
	N	%
A lot	1	5,9
Enough	7	41,2
Not a lot	6	35,3
Nothing	3	17,6
Total	17	100,0
<i>Not Indicated</i>	21	
Total	38	

How to connect promotional campaigns
and decisions to be foster carers?

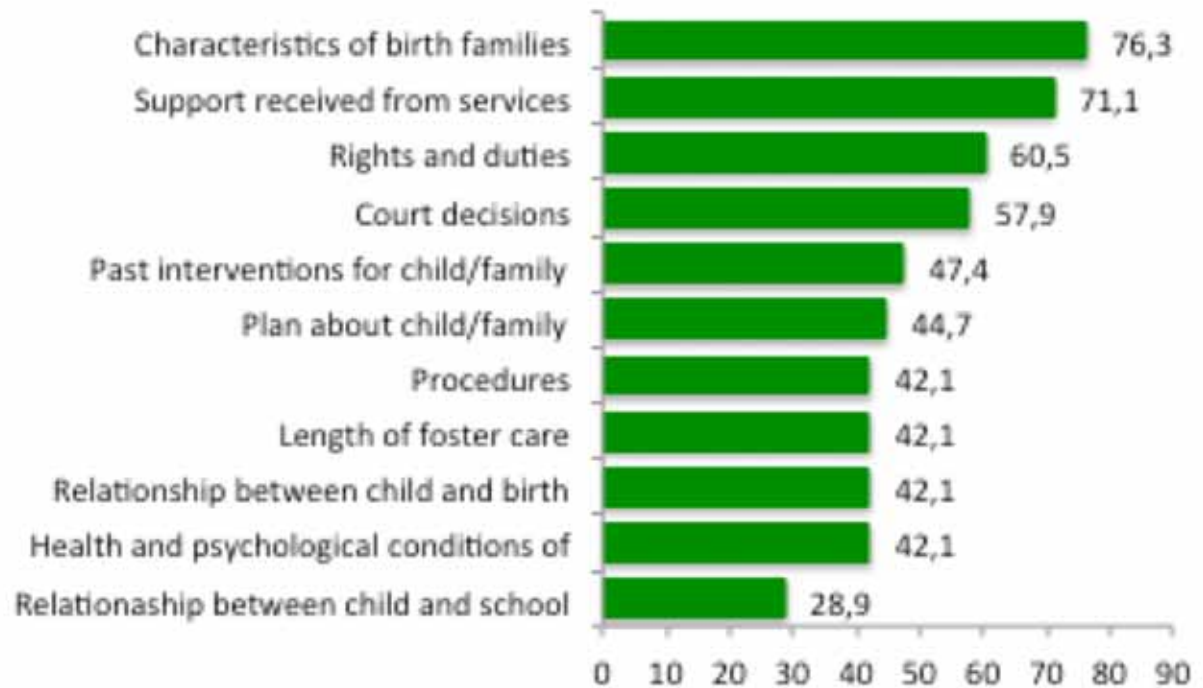


Interviews before foster care starts

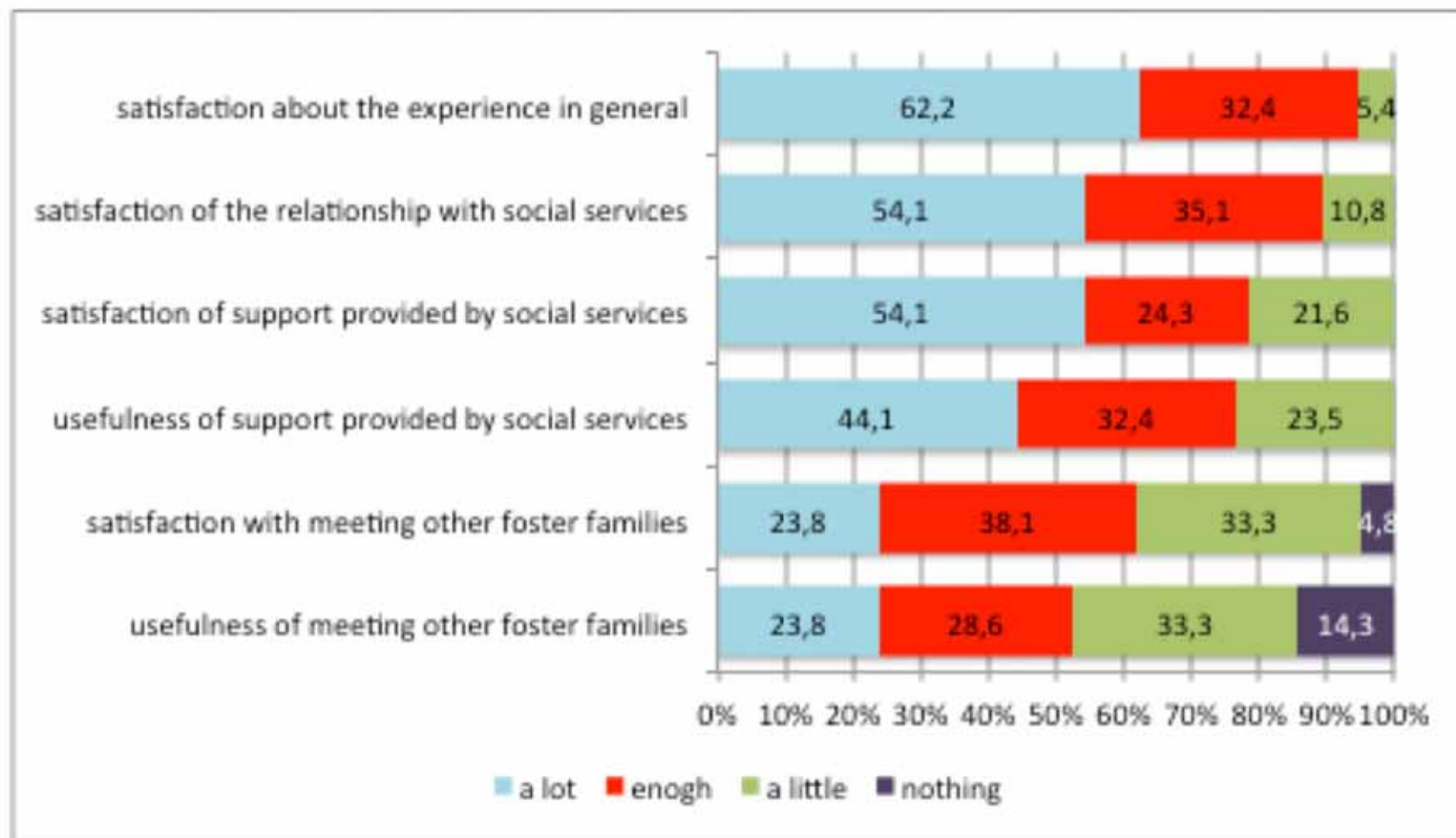
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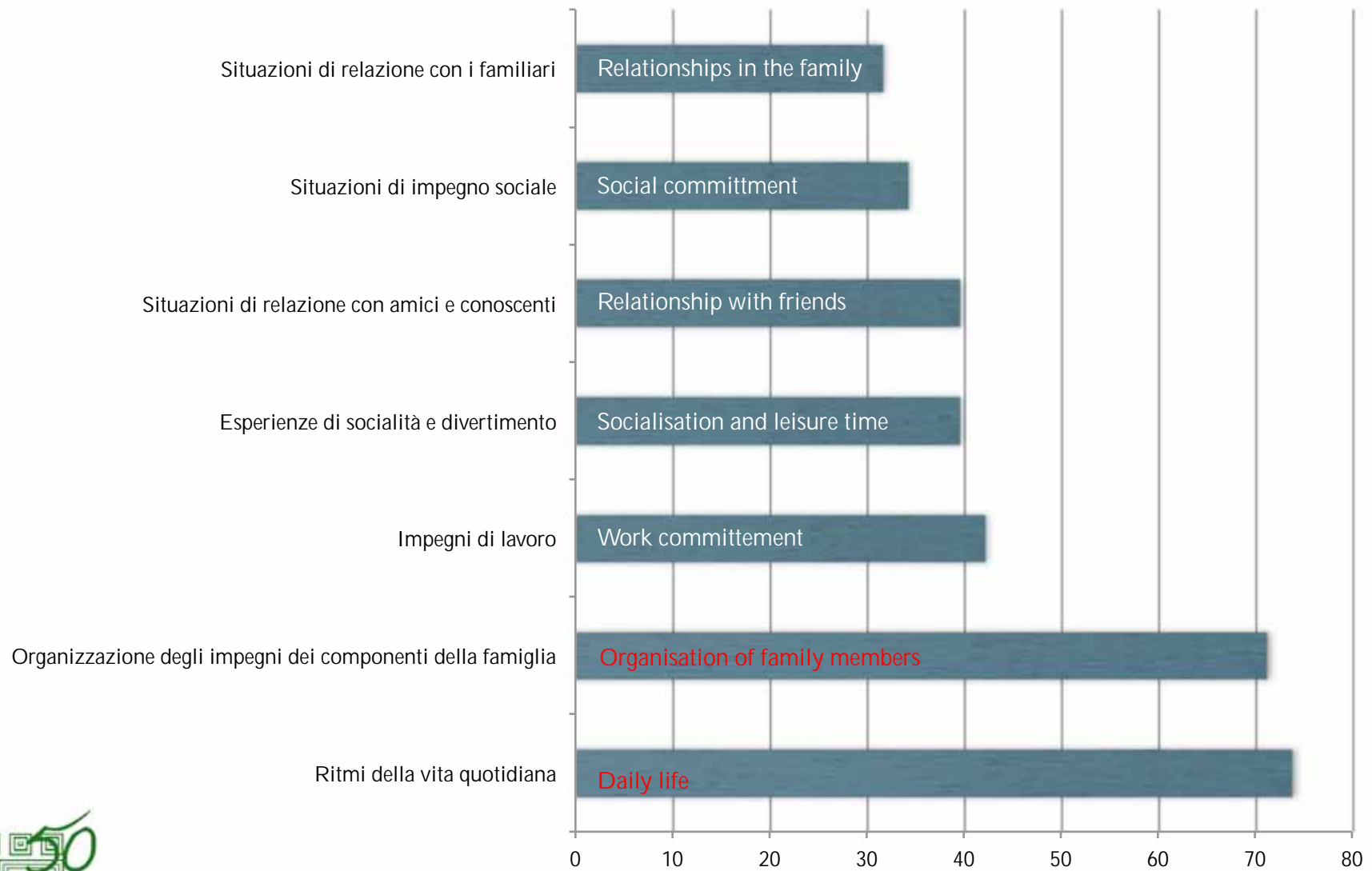
Contents of interviews



Satisfaction and usefulness



Consequences on family life



Consequences on children

+

Cultural consequences: "*orientation to social commitment and solidarity*", "*knowledge of unknown situations*"

Positive attitude towards other people: "*openness*", "*sharing*", "*responsibility*"

Help building their own personal identity: "*to have a vision about myself*"

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Unexpected feelings, such as jealousy or uneasiness of children (especially adolescents), or in general forcing children to live in an environment that is less calm (and with a reduction of privacy)



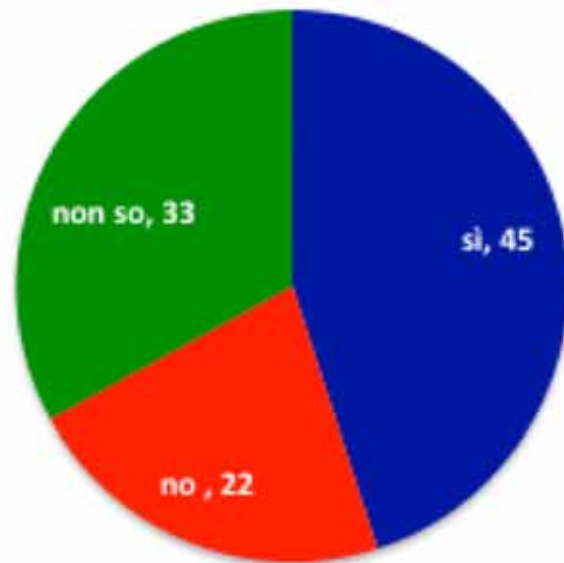
Before and after the experience

	N	%
More than expected	15	44,1
As expected	13	38,2
Less than expected	6	17,6
Total	34	100,0
<i>n.i.</i>	4	
Total	38	

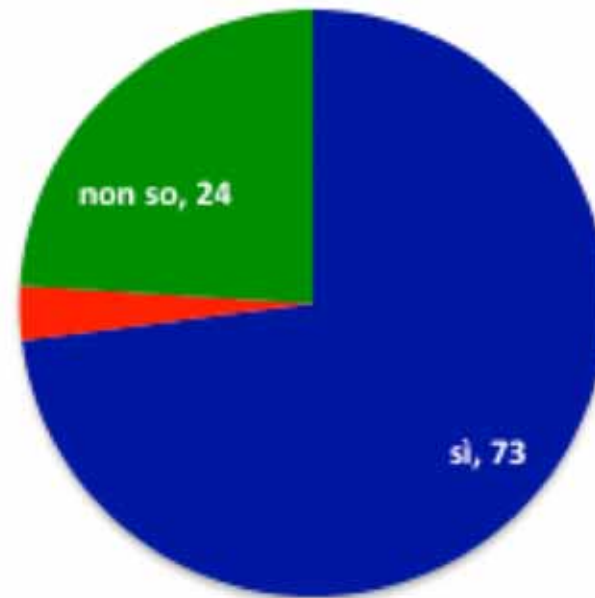
Future developments should consider:

- A better planning of the foster care placement
- A stronger relationship with birth families

Orientation to new foster care placements



Available to support other families



How to improve?

They would like a foster care that is planned in advance, with higher autonomy inside the plan provided by services/court and a better communication and information with social services.

Social Workers (Tfiey)

European and North American foundations have established the **Transatlantic Forum on Inclusive Early Years**, aiming to bring together leading scientists, practitioners, civil society members, business leaders and political decision-makers from different countries to explore policies and projects supporting the early childhood development of children from migrant and low-income families.

The aim is to exchange research results, strategies, policies, innovations and best practices as well as to create the opportunity to scale-up existing knowledge and evidence-based research, with a view to making early childhood education and care for children from migrant and low-income families a priority on the political agenda in Europe and beyond.

www.tfieyitalia.org

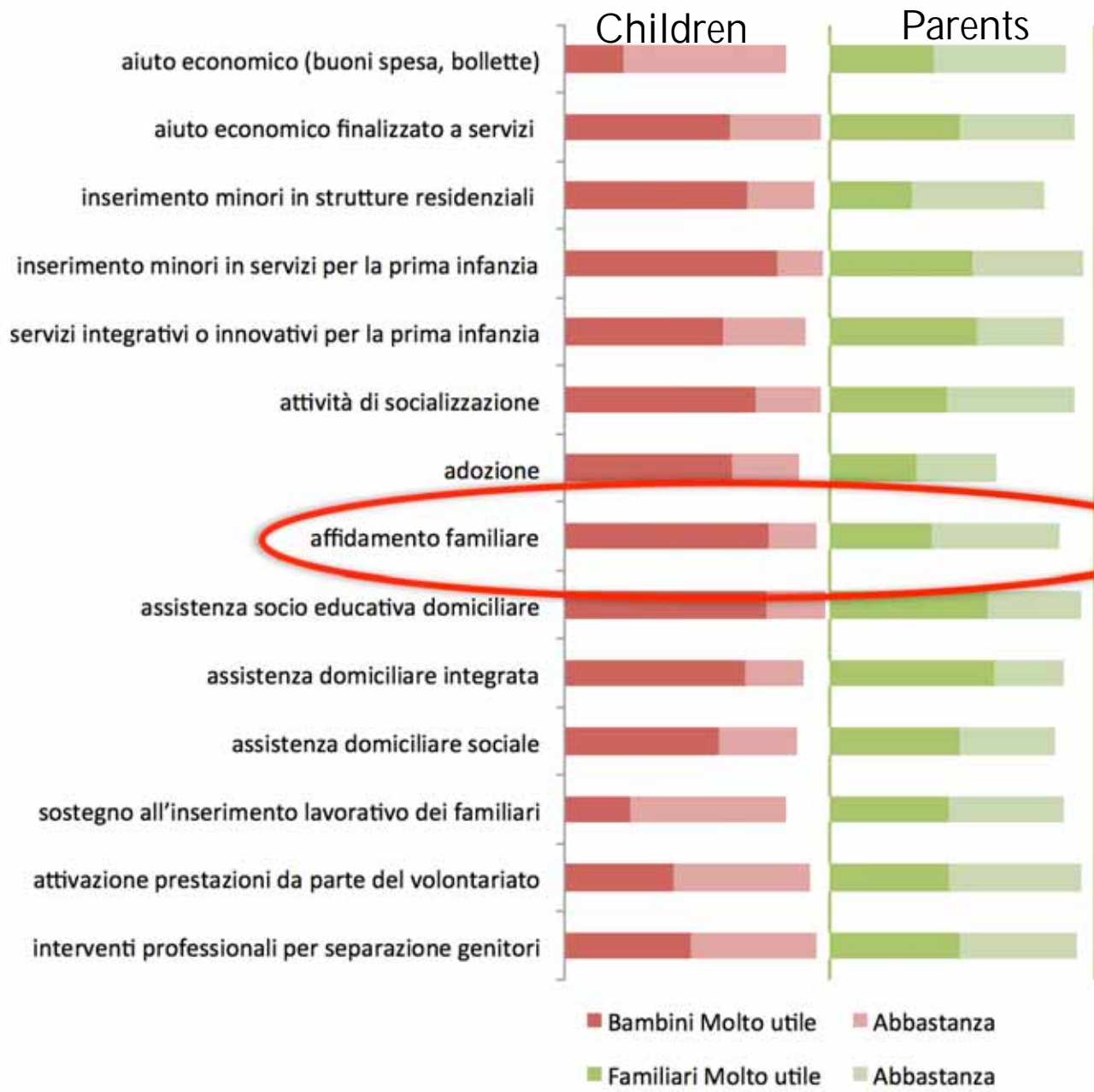


National Survey Social Workers (Tfiefy)

Services provided to children in poverty

	Percentuale*
Aiuto economico (buoni spesa, bollette, affitto ecc.)	37,8
Aiuto economico finalizzato a servizi (mensa, retta nido/scuola infanzia ecc.)	26,2
Attivazione prestazioni da parte del volontariato (pacco vestiti, pacco spesa ecc.)	22,7
Affidamento al servizio sociale	12,9
Inserimento dei minori in servizi per la prima infanzia (asili nido, scuole dell'infanzia)	12,1
Attività di socializzazione (inserimento dei minori in gruppi sportivi, centri estivi ecc.)	11,2
Inserimento dei minori in strutture residenziali (casa famiglia, comunità madre-figlio ecc.)	10,5
Interventi professionali in caso di separazione dei genitori	10,4
Assistenza socio educativa domiciliare	10,3
Orientamento e sostegno all'inserimento lavorativo dei familiari	10,2
Affidamento familiare (intrafamiliare e eterofamiliare)	6,2
Assistenza domiciliare integrata (es. Per bambini disabili)	4,0
Servizi integrativi o innovativi per la prima infanzia (nidi famiglia, centro bambini e famiglia)	2,7
Assistenza domiciliare sociale	1,9

Usefulness of interventions provided



A message

Foster carers and social workers provide relevant indications for further development of foster care. Our role is to better explore these perspective and build innovative way of working involving professionals and non professionals, especially at a time of crisis, with increased poverty and fragility among families.



Thank you for the attention

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