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# Everyday life in a foster family from a foster child's point of view

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The purpose of this thesis work was to point out a foster child's experience on everyday life in a foster family. Further, to describe her/his routines, feelings and important relationships with others in everyday situations. The thesis was done in cooperation with the department of foster care in child protection at Helsinki city.

The child's actions and feelings in everyday life situations were looked at. Further, in what way, by whom and how the child get the support needed. It was also pointed out, who are the people belonging to the close network of the foster child in and outside the foster family. The child's attachment and the way of upbringing were taken under consideration.

In Finland, the number of child protection clients is constantly growing. Organisations and municipalities are willing to place more and more children that have to be taken into care in foster families. Foster parents give the child the possibility to grow up in a family and to get support according to her/his needs. Through special trainings the foster parents are educated beforehand. Also throughout the time the child lives in the family, parents are further educated and their skills are reviewed.

The thesis was based on qualitative research. Semi structures interviews were conducted. Information was gathered while playing. The interviewees were three children at the age between four and five years of age. Through videoing and taping the interviews child's experience in the foster family on everyday situation were analysed.

All the participants have shown a number of emotional reactions during the interviews. Participants reactions were sensitive according questions belonging to their feelings and actions and the people in their close surrounding. Still, the thesis work might be just the beginning of concentrating the services provided even more on the children's needs. Through a higher number of participants more about general needs of the clients might be found out.

Keywords: Foster care, foster child's experience, everyday, routines, relationship, feelings

Miklau, Nikolas

### Perheeseen sijoitetun lapsen kokemuksia arjesta sijaisperheessä

Vuosi 2017 Sivumäärä 59

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Opinnäytetyön tarkoitus oli tuoda esille sijaislapsen näkökulma arjen kokemuksista sijaisperheessä. Arkea on kuvattu arjen rutiinien, tunteiden ja tärkeiden ihmissuhteiden kautta. Opinnäytetyön yhteistyökumppanina toimi Helsingin kaupungin lastensuojelun sijaishuoltoyksikkö.

Lapsen toimintaa ja tunteita arjessa kuvailtiin tarkemmin. Tämän lisäksi kuvailtiin sitä, mitä, miten ja kenen kautta lapsen tarpeita tuettiin ja keitä tärkeitä ihmisiä lapsen elämässä on. Lapsen kasvatusta ja kehitystä otettiin myös huomioon.

Suomessa lastensuojelun asiakkaiden määrä on ollut jatkuvasti kasvussa. Sekä järjestöt että kunnat suosivat lasten sijoittamista sijaisperheisiin. Sijaisperheet antavat lapsille mahdollisuuden kasvaa ja kehittyä heidän tarpeidensa mukaisesti. Sijaisvanhemmat koulutetaan etukäteen. Myös lapsen muuttaessa perheeseen vanhemmat saavat jatkokoulutusta ja heidän taitojaan kartoitetaan uudelleen.

Opinnäytetyö toteutettiin laadullisena tutkimuksena puoli strukturoitujen haastattelujen avulla. Aineisto kerättiin leikin kautta. Haastateltuina oli kolme neljä- ja viisi vuotiasta lasta. Videoinnin ja nauhoituksen kautta lasten kokemukset arjesta tulivat kuvattu ja myöhemmin analysoitua.

Kaikki lapset reagoivat voimakkaan emotionaalisesti haastattelujen aikoina. Osallistujat suhtautuivat herkkätunteisesti kysymyksiin, jotka liittyivät heidän tunteisiinsa ja toimintoihinsa. Opinnäytetyö voi olla alku sille, että palveluja keskitetään jatkossa vielä tarkemmin vastaamaan lasten tarpeita. Isomman osallistujamäärän kautta voitaisiin saada vielä enemmän tietoa lasten perustarpeista.

Asiasanat: perhehoito, sijaislapsen kokemus, arki, rutiinit, ihmissuhteet ja tunteet

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## 1 Introduction

*“Friday evening. Mum and dad have been drinking too much again. First they were laughing, then shouting and arguing. This has happened more and more during the last time. Now it was more serious than the last times. Dad was beating mum and then me. Probably Mrs. Wise could hear the shouting and called the police. After their arriving, everything went fast. I have been talking to a nice lady. She told me that now I’m going to be safe. They brought me to this place. Here I can stay, they told me. How long? Where am I now? Now all this stops, I also remember someone saying”,* Clair’s diary entry from the 15<sup>th</sup> of May. That day when Clair has been taken out of her family and has become a child protection client. (fictional)

A child that can’t stay at home because of physical or psychical violence, alcohol or drug misuse or other severe issues might be taken into custody. If she/he is lucky, she/he gets the chance to start a new life in a new family. A so-called foster family. In Finland there have been taken 10.675 children into custody in 2014. More than half of them have been placed in foster families. 13% of those (616 children) have been placed into a relative’s or near-by family. (THL 2015, 1) Foster care might open up new possibilities for the child but at the same time it is also the most changing step in child’s life that can be taken in child protection.

In foster care there are two options in Finland: Institutional care and family care. Through my work, I would like to describe the child’s experience on everyday life situations in family care. What are the routines for a foster child living a foster family? The constancy and continuance of routines has to be granted in the family. Foster care has the purpose to give the child an opportunity to a “normal” life. The services provided have to form a safe surrounding and be appropriate to the child’s development. This includes the child’s wishes, hopes and fears in everyday life situations. (Pride 2010)

This thesis should help adults, the parents as well as professionals, to understand foster child’s experience in everyday life situations in family care. The three main points that were looked at are the child’s routines, close relationships to her/him and her/his feelings in everyday situations. What experiences does a foster child have in family care? Further, it might also support the development of friendship and/or opening ways to different leisure time activities for the child. In addition, the cooperation work between biological and foster parents as well as professionals might be improved. The focus is on the child’s everyday life. As soon as different parties in family care get familiar with everyday situation of the child, they might understand those situations and their importance. Further, professionals and families might be able to work out ways to support the child in a brother way. The understanding of the need and the willingness to help the child are significant. There are

loads of services available. Often the problem in child protection is the reachability in a short time and its effectiveness. The aim of all the services available must be, to be there where and whenever the child needs it. Bring the service to the child, not the child to the service. To develop further services or adapt available services to the need of a foster child, those needs are gone to be focused on here.

The thesis work is conducted in form of a qualitative thesis work. Interviews are carried out with three foster children in family care. Through the department for foster care in child protection from the city of Helsinki I got in contact with the foster families and the children.

Children's point of view has always been important to me. During my work in different day cares as child caretaker or kindergarten teacher as well as counsellor in a child protection home. I have been working for over six year with children now. Personally, I am often wondering what the child thinks or why she/he is acting as she/he is. Through the work in different day cares, I could learn a lot about people's relationship and interaction skills. During an intensive time at the child protection home I felt that the child's mind isn't taken under consideration enough. Therefore, I started to wonder what I might do to have a bigger influence on that. I decided to write my thesis from a child's point of view concerning family care.

## 2 Child protection in Finland

This section gives an overview of child protection in Finland. It is described how the services were build up that are nowadays in use. In general, child protection is separated in open care and institutional care. Further, foster care, as part of institutional care, is more in detail described. As a special form of foster care, family care is looked at.

### 2.1 How services were build up

Child protection in Finland became part of municipal work already in the 1880<sup>th</sup> century. Before, it has been part of church work and was based on volunteer work. In the 1880<sup>th</sup> century associations provided mainly institutional services to the population in the beginnings. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there have been different thoughts and interpretations by different political parties according to child protection. The liberal party had for example different believes and values than the conservative party. In the 1910<sup>s</sup> child protection homes got common. In 1920 new child protection associations, like Mannerheimin Lastensuojeluliitto and Pelastakaa lapset (1922, earlier names: "Koteja Kodittomille" and before "Kasvatuskotiyhdistys"), were found.

The poverty-care-law (köyhäinhoitolaki) from 1922 built the basic for the child welfare act. It pointed out the work that has been done in the time before by volunteers. Pulma (197-210) stated in 1987 that child protection services vary a lot according to the needs of society and the political situation. More generalisation brought the strengthening of the child welfare act in 1936. At that time, the work of volunteers has been more acknowledged in the society. After the second world war, family work was the main area according to child protection. In the time from the 1930s to 1950s century social work education, open care services, child protection homes and foster care were developed. This was possible through intensive cooperation between the state, municipalities and many individual volunteer workers and associations. All parties have been working together flexible between cities and the countryside. Even though there has been changes according to the service law in the end of the 1950's century, changes according the child welfare act came into force in the 1960s. (Känkänen 2012, 29)

The time between 1960 and 1990 was of great change in Finland. Universal social care and family services were developed. Until that time, the number of children in institutional care was ongoing growing. From the 1960's onwards, the focus was more on open care services. The idea was to help families staying together. Providing services and different tools for them. That idea was ongoing growing from the 1960's throw the 1970's. Foster care and institutional care were the first and for a long time the only child protection services provided in Finland, but politicians and social workers were willing to change this. (Hämäläinen 2007, 36-73, 319) (Karisto, Takala & Haapola 2006, 245-246) (Pulma 1987, 216-220) (Lähteinen & Marjamäki 2007, 67)

In the year 1974 child protection congress defined in cooperation with the children and youth welfare committee child protection in a new way. The central point in the definition was that complex services have to be provided according to ongoing changes. The physical and mental well-being of the child as individual in the society is central point. In the 19980's century there has been done another reform in the whole social work field. The central point was the individual. In 1984 a new social care and child welfare act came into force. Through those laws the status of the child was supported. Her/his own rights got important. Further, the child's mind was taken more under consideration, e.g. understanding for the child, provide the feeling of safeness and to provide proper relationships with close people. The UN children's rights declaration from 1984 and the UN children's rights contract from 1989 build the basis for the Finnish child protection work onwards the 1980's century. The next change in the child welfare act happened according the status of the youth in the year 1990. Belong different changes, it was also decided that the voice of the 12 years old has to be heard. One reason for the increase of the need of family supporting service was the economical depression in the 1990's. At that time, it has been determine for families that day care

services were extended. Further, the cooperation work between schools and other social services has been improved. According to Hämäläinen (2007, 391-395) the 1990's century could be seen as a welfare crises in the Nordic Countries with an emphasize on universal social security. (Mikkola & Helminen 1994, 20-34)

Finland's constitutional law from 1999 includes human basic rights. This builds the basis for the children's rights according to the child welfare act that entered into force in Finland as from 13.4.2007. This law is based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child from 1989. In the law was defined the right of the child to an upbringing according to her/his development, the support of the guardian and caretaker in the upbringing process of the child as well as the right of the child to a safe care in all circumstances. This three facts are still main points in the reformed child welfare act from 2009. According to the law from 2007, there have been four more principles defined: To guarantee the benefits of the child, family focused, optimum orientated in all actions and interferences and the child's physical and mental freedom from injury. (Mahkonen 2010, 67)

The law has to go through a huge reform in 2009. Depending on the point of view and the time to refer to, there have been different changes. There may be mentioned five essential changes, that affect the child directly: The reform defines the beginning of the clientship more in detail. Further, which kind of services are need are looked at in a broader way. From 2009 onwards, there is also the right from administrative court for investigating the child defined. The close network of the child is more carefully looked at. After-care has to be as part of open-care services organized after the end of foster care (Mahkonen 2010, 45-46)

Preventive work has become even more important. Child welfare notifications are not anymore done just in the usual way. They may be made according to a request to evaluate the need of child protection services. Further, child welfare notifications have to be made preliminary by the stuff of criminal sanctions agencies, emergency as well as fire departments additionally to people who have been already before the reform be bound to make a preliminary notification. (Mahkonen 2010, 37)

With the 1.1.2012 the law (child welfare act 50§) has been enacted, that family care is the first option in alternative care. Family care versus institutional care has to be preferred whenever possible. Defined by law, the first option is a close related, possible related family member. Additionally, the family carer law (1§) includes also the ability and the skills that are required to provide the child a safe and her/his development appropriate surrounding. Through a required training, that all foster parents have to go through, their skills are practiced and screened before the child is placed at their home. The main fact is that the foster parents are able to respond to the child's needs. In the law is further defined that the

foster family get supported by a person in charge. Often it is the same as the social worker in charge of the child's affairs. (kunnat 2013)

Further essential changes according to the child welfare act and family carer law has been that the amount of children under school-age has been reduced to four. This law has been enacted with the 1.4.2015. From the 1.7.2016 onwards, foster parents minimum wage increased and welfare and health-checks are organized on a regular basis for them. (Perhehoitoliitto 2016)

## 2.2 Services nowadays

Nowadays, the main idea is to secure the children's rights, which are set down in the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child. Further, to make sure that she/he has the possibility to grow up in a safe environment. (Lastensuojelu 2016) In the child welfare act is clearly defined when, where and who needs to get what kind of service. Still, in a time like this, with ongoing changes and different family situations, it is not always easy to adapt those services regulated by law to every family situation. The needs for services are ongoing changing. Families' situations are different. All the time are things happening that are unpredictable. To fulfil every child's/family's needs are versatile actions and services required. (Heino, Hyry, Ikäheimo, Kuronen & Rajala 2016, 25)

When a family or child is faced with the child protection services in Finland, there are two different kinds of services: So called "support measures in open care" (Lastensuojelu 2016) or alternative care. Open care services are usually provided first to the family. The aim is that the family can stay together and some supporting services are provided to help them. If it is not possible, that the child is staying with his parent(s), she/he has to be taken into care.

Like above already stated, open care services are different. They vary from municipality to another. In some municipalities open care services are just provide in combination with other services. According to the THL project from 2013-2015, the less child, youth and family services are provided to those in need, the longer they are clients of the service. (Heino etc. 2016, 25)

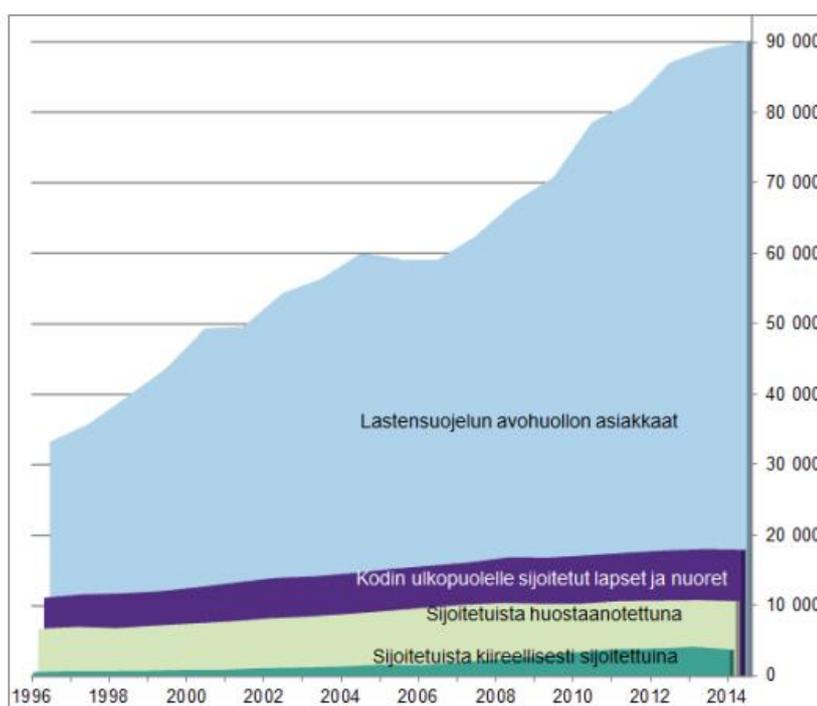
Institutional care, foster care and professional foster homes (fi: ammattilaiset perhekodit) are the main alternative care options for child protection clients in Finland. Professional foster homes are less common than foster care places. Institutional care is at the moment the highest in use. According to Kati Saastamoinen (2008, 27-31), foster care fits especially for young children. This is based on the expectation of a long-term placement. Further, if the child is very young, a place in a foster family provides less changes compared to institutional care. In comparison with all the other Nordic countries, children are placed less often in

foster care than in institutional care in Finland. Finland's foster care has decreased and institutional care increased during the last years. (Heino 2009, 11-13) (Sosiaaliturvan sanasto 1996, 195) (lastensuojelun keskusliitto 2016)

### 2.3 Statistics

According to services provided nowadays, the situation in child protection looks as followed: The number of clients placed out of their family and clients in open care is growing constantly. Just between the years 2004 to 2006 the number of clients in open care has been decreasing.

Nowadays there are nearly three times more clients than at the beginning of the statistics. Reasons for many. The most common are mental issues and alcohol misuse. The need for child protection services is growing. Information on child abuse is more often dealt with than in the past. Society is talking more about what is right and what is wrong. (Bardy 2013, 85-86)



\* Henkilötunnuksia sisältävän sijoitettujen lasten ja nuorten rekisteritietojen lisäksi kerätään tilastotietoa myös lastensuojelun avohuollon asiakkaista. Osa lastensuojelun avohuollon asiakkaana olevista lapsista ja nuorista sisältyy kodin ulkopuolelle sijoitettuihin. Kuviossa esitellyjä lukumääriä ei voi laskea yhteen.

Figure 1: Open care clients and additional in care clients 1996-2014 (THL 2015,9)

From the figure below can be seen the amount of children placed outside their families between 1991 and 2014. Additionally there is also shown the amount of children taken into care and children taken immediately out of their families. The amount of children placed

outside their families has also be increasing from the beginning of the statistics. Just during the time from 2012 and 2014 it has been nearly the same.

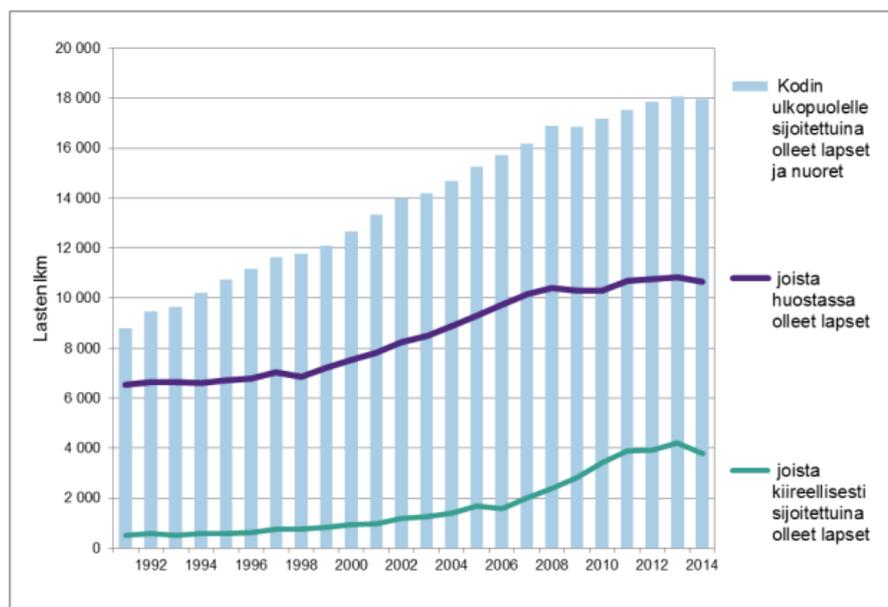


Figure 2: Alternative care clients including emergency placements 1991-2014 \* (THL 2015, 1)

\*The same child might be in the emergency placement as well as in the alternative care statistics

### 3 Family care

A foster care place may be provided at anyone's home who is in a close relationship with the child or at a foster family's place. Further, there is also the possibility that the child may stay at her/his place with foster parents. The aim is to provide a safe surrounding to life according to the child's social development. (Family care law 2015, 1§, 3§)

To guarantee less changes for the child and make it as comfortable as possible, foster care is preferred instead of institutional care. The reason for taking the child into care, individual's needs, relationship with siblings and other close related people have to be thought carefully while choosing a foster care place for the child. Further, according possibilities the child's language, culture and believe have to be taken under consideration. (Family carer law 2015, 50§, 4.1§)

#### 3.1 The family in family care

The foster family, who takes a child into care, brings up the child in a safe environment. The child learns about social rules and manners. The focus is on the child's development. It's the

families task to give the child the possibility to get and stay in contact with her/his biological parents. (lastensuojelun keskusliitto 2016) Trainings are provided to the parents beforehand and also throughout the upbringing process. In the capital city region, the PRIDE (Parents' Resources for Information Development Education) programme is mainly used. It has been developed in 1996 and Pesäpuu ry maintains and develops the PRIDE-program in Finland. It is based on strict planning, adequate resources and the combination as well as the cooperation of resources. Central principles are child's right to grow up in a family, families' right to get support and the cooperation between different parties. (PRIDE-ohjelma, 2016)

Further, it is important to understand for the foster parents beforehand, that there are happening many huge changes in the child's life. Not just people also routines, traditions and habits and the family's own habits are changing. For the child it's hard to understand when already automated routines are changing, e.g, in which order the morning processes are done. People have many different routines in their life. Things that are just happening in a way they seem easy and logical. For a foster child in a new family those things might be completely different than at her/his biological parent's place. Traditions in a family might be related to religion. It might be that all family members know those traditions well. For the child those might be new and hard to understand. A clear definition and explanation of them might help the child to understand and participate. To make it as easy as possible for the child it is important for the foster family to know about and understand the habits and traditions to those the child is used to. (Pride 2010, kahdeksas tapaaminen 7-9)

### 3.2 The child in family care

Every child has the right to live and grow up with her/his parents. If that is not possible, the child's right is to grow up in another way, primarily in another family. Right from birth, the family let the child understand where she/he belongs to and who she/he is. Every child needs this attachment right from the beginning to develop its self-confidence and to develop the ability to trust other people. The early attachment builds the basic for the child's feelings development and later relationships with other people. Further, the family has to respond to the needs of the child while offering her/him love and take care of her/him. Family also states common values as well as cultural habits and identities. Different areas of child's needs are physical, emotional, social and learning needs. (PRIDE-kirja, 2010, 15-20; THL. Kiintymyssuhteen merkitys ja sen tukeminen. 2015)

Municipalities, society and different organisations provide support-services for families. Through those services, the family might be able to respond to the child's needs. If it's not possible that a child stay with her/his parents, she/he has to be taken into care. After this,

one of the hardest steps is to guarantee constant and continuing care for the child. That requires that the child gets an answer to following questions:

Who am I?

To whom do I belong?

Where do I come from and what has happened to me?

What will happen with me? (Pride 2010)

For that reason, it is important to give the child the feeling that she/he belongs somewhere, where someone is caring for her/him. Further, that the child can trust the adult and that the adult bears the responsibility for her/him. The child knows about plans according to her/him, which makes her/his life predictable. It is important that the child experiences that she/he is loved and accepted as a family member. Also, that the child's origin is expected. In addition, the child must have the possibility to keep the connection with her/his biological parents and other important people to her/him. To guarantee a constant and continuing care it is also important that the child has the permission to become attached to the new family. How these issues are worked out in practice are depending on every child's and families special situation. A concrete working tool for this is the child protection client's plan (fi.: asiakassuunnitelma) This plan is made in cooperation work between the child, the biological parents, the foster parents, the social worker, the child and possible other important persons in the child's life. It is defined how and when child welfare services will help the client and the family. It has to be revised at least once a year, and always when necessary. (PRIDE-kirja, 2010, 15-20; lastensuojelun keskusliitto 2016)

### 3.3 Relationship and cooperation with others

When a child is taken into care and placed in a foster family lots of huge changes are happening. She/he gets to know lots of new people and has to build up trustworthy relationships. Who are those people included depends a lot on the age of the child. There are different social workers included. Some of them, the child won't even see, even though they are making huge decisions about his/her life. Further, the child gets in touch with her/his foster family and possible siblings. Other parties that are cooperating with the different social workers as well as the child are teachers, therapists and other important people for the child. (Pride 2010, toinen tapaaminen 10; kahdeksas tapaaminen 5-11) (Sijaisperheiden sijoittamisen prosessi)

Every child has the right to get information about her/his situation. The social worker in charge has to make sure that the child gets the information in a proper way according to her/his developmental stage. The child must have enough information to make the connection between different parts of information. Solutions have to be provided and towards

them has to be worked. On the other hand, no information that endangers the child's development can be given to her/him. Further, the child has a right to meet her/his social worker in charge. No matter what age the child is. The child's right is to meet the social worker whenever she/he wants to have a personal talk about her/his situation. (Saastamoinen 2008, 114-116)

#### 4 Everyday life

According to Jokinen (2005, 7-11) it's hard to define everyday life. It is self-evident in the situation. Sometimes it feels like easy going, so a person won't even notice the weekday. On the other hand, there are days that feel completely hard and difficult to get over. Those days might feel much more important than others. The difference in one day to another forms a paradox. What everyday life concrete means in someone's life is varying a lot. The term "everyday life" describes the human being and action at home or somewhere else. What everyday for every child means, is build up by the routines and repeating factors in her/his life. (Laakso 2009, 114-118)

Routines and repetitions give the child a feeling of order and safeness. Routines are for example the day-night- and the nutrition rhythm. Further, not just what, also in what way the child goes through those routines influences her/his experience on everyday life a lot. How a day look likes is varying from family to another. Also, what routines belong to a usual day has been either agreed on at an earlier stage. If it hasn't been agreed on routines earlier on, there is another reason why some facts are just repeating daily in a family. The structure of every day is build up in a specific way and may be changed if necessary. (Laakso 2009, 114-118)

The way of how to pay attention to a child in foster care is essential. It has to be adapted to the child's attachment, her/his development and the methods in use of upbringing. In that way, the presents of the child in the families' everyday life will be supported. Her/his being and action has a meaning and is significant to somebody else close to her/him. (Laakso 2009, 125)

##### 4.1 Constancy and continuence in care

To guarantee constant and continuing care for a child, the foster family has to provide a versatile package of life skills and safeness. Some facts according the needs of a child are care, safeness, emotional warmth, guidance and safe limits, constancy, continuence and predictability. The foster parents have to take care of the social, physical, mental and intellectual needs as well as health and wellbeing of the child. Safeness means to protect the

child from accidents and/or danger. It also includes teaching the child how to protect her-/himself. Every child is different as well as her/his emotional needs. The parents have to respond to those needs. Further, the adults have to show the child that they accept and appreciate her/him in the way she/he is. They also have to show understanding and warmth to the child. (Pride 2010)

Every child must also get the possibility, to go through what has happened. People react in different ways to things that they have experienced in the past. Some like to talk immediately what has happened other need lots of time to think about it and proceed it in their mind. According to Hakkarainen, Holmberg and Väливаara (2006) there is still a path that everybody is going through while getting over past experiences. At this point we are talking about negative experiences. Something that happened effected the self-esteem and/or health. That is followed by a shock. The shock might be visible through chaos, repudiation and/or the person might become depressed. The next stage is the reaction stage. Different feelings appear, mainly hate. That might be follow by depression and/or behavioural disorder. After the reaction stage, sorrow can be encountered. It is followed by despair and depression. Concluding through acceptance and understanding is the next stage. Through the understanding the person who has experienced something can get over it and reach the last, the survival stage. She/he gets a new orientation in his/her life, a wider understanding of feelings, things might get a new meaning and hope. (Pride 2010, 6)

Through understand of the path the child has to go through, the foster parents can help the foster child. The foster parents are able to adapt their methods of upbringing and to support the child's development even more according to her/his needs. It is important to let the child know that it is fine to sorrow what happened. Further, it is essential to talk about possible people/organisations that might help and in what way they might help. The child is asking when she/he is ready to deal with the information. It is important to provide her/him the facts as much in detail as it's required. Too much information might be too much for the child in the moment she/he started asking. The smaller the child, the more should be done physically, instead of speech. For the child it might be easier to get over what happened through play, painting or drawing, drama or with the help of stories or pictures. (Pride 2010, 12-14)

Further, it must also be possible to a child to share other experiences. She/he has to be guided in thinking and acting according to her/his development. Safe limits have to be defined according to the development and age. Constancy, continuance and predictability should be guaranteed as often as possible in the child's life. Further, it is essential for the child to know why she/he can't life with her/his parents. This builds the basis for the development of her/his identity. It's the parent's task to point out things that are constant

and continuing. This also includes daily routines. The child has to be supported to stay in touch with important people to her/him. Also the connection with the biological parents is very important to support. The experience to be rejected by the own parents is emotionally extremely hard to understand. Even though, the child and parent are not living together, their relationship isn't split up. The parent's juridical state may allow her/him to stay as the guardian of the child. That mean that she/he is responsible for adequate living conditions according to the child's development. In that case, these living conditions are provided at the foster family. Further, the parents work as a guardian of interests for the child and take care of the child's properties. Who finally is or becomes the guardian of a foster child decides the court or the Guardianship authority (registry office) according to every child's personal situation. (Guardianship services 2016) (Väestöliitto 2016, holhooja-huoltaja) (PRIDE 2010, kuudes tapaaminen 5-6)

#### 4.2 Upbringing

The upbringing is an ongoing learning process. It is the parents' action, which effects the child. Through interaction, the parent teaches the child how to act. Further, what are the family rules and in what way do they work. Through upbringing, the child learns to act according to the rules and what might happen if she/he is not observing the rules. She/he needs clear defines safe borders, which build a framework for her/his actions. If the child is not acting according to them, there have to be consequences. To improve the understanding of those borders and consequences, the child has to be taught about them. What there meaning and purpose is, is important to understand for the child. Just in that case, she/he will be willing to accept them. Always there is the idea of protecting her/him and to help her/him to control not accepted behaviour in society. If the child is able to influence or to work out rules in cooperation, she/he will be even more willing to observe the rules. In the upbringing process the child learns also to regulate and understand own feelings.

The child is taught by upbringing about her/his rights, responsibility and obligation. Interaction culture is also included in upbringing. The whole idea of upbringing is to support the child's growth. The aim is that the child is able to take care for her-/himself when she/he becomes an adult. The methods of upbringing have to be adapted to the child's developmental stage. In the process of upbringing, it is normal that sometimes things proceed and sometimes things back off. Than those actions have to be repeated and looked at from a different point of view. (PRIDE. 2010. kuudes tapaaminen, 6-7; MLL. Kasvatus ja kasvatustietoisuus 2016)

The upbringing is not just a one directed process. It is also a learning process for the parent. This process is especially influences by the child's temperament. Right onwards from birth,

the interaction between the child and the parent is depended on the needs of and the way in which way they are required by the child. (MLL. Kasvatus ja kasvatustietoisuus 2016)

Basic requirements for upbringing are patience, authenticity and transmission, friendly strength, good interaction, openness, clear child and adult roles and the fact that the upbringing starts from the child's needs. The child has to get examples of how to act right and in a way like others expect her/him to act.

Always to point of the child's strength and positive sides helps to develop the child's self-knowledge and self-confidence. Acknowledge the child's actions to point out what she/he has done right. Providing possibilities where the child may achieve a good outcome is the task of the parent. On the other hand, there should also be possibilities provided to the child where she/he has to find solutions on her/his own to solve problems. Always to remember, a child with a weak self-esteem might have a hard time to change her/his behaviour. So there has to be lots of positive feedback about her/his even little actions. (PRIDE 2010, kuudes tapaaminen)

Through activities together, the child and the parent get to know each other. Especially at the beginning, it is important for their relationship. In that way, the child will get the feeling of being accepted in the way she/he is. That is supported by feelings of cosiness, warmth and belonging to somewhere. Further, she/he will learn about the habits and rules in the family. To get the of being at home. (Laakso 2009, 126)

#### 4.3 Childs attachment

For every child's development it is important to have well developed attachment relationships with others. These relationships are build up in the close surrounding especially throughout the first years. The child's attachment describes the feeling of safeness and the interaction. It's varying from every child to another as everybody needs the attachment in a different way. In foster care it is important that the foster parents give the child the feeling that she/he has the possibility to attach to them, as it is not possible with her/his biological parents. To support the attachment process the child must have the feeling to be able to share whenever and wherever her/his feelings and needs. The child's needs have to be responded constantly. Further, the child has to be accepted as she/his is. The child must also have the feeling to get understood. Close people to the child have to be accepted as well by the foster parents. The child gets helped to get to know and control over her/his feelings. (Pride 2010, 3 tapaaminen, 19-22)

Every child is developing through interaction with others. Through a special connection with her/his caretakers and a good relationship with friends or other close people the child is

developing. Depending on the child's ability and willingness to learn the development is individual. It goes forward in steps. Those steps have been defined much earlier by Erik Erikson. He was talking about eight steps that are represented below. According to Erikson child's development is based on social and cultural interaction. Depending on child's life experience she/he might achieve one stage a bit earlier or later on but one stage builds the basis for the following stage. (PRIDE 2010, kolmas tapaaminen 5-6; Keenan, Evans & Crowley 2016, 28-30)

Stage of Development	Age	Crisis
Trust vs. Mistrust	Birth to 1 year	Developing a sense of trust in caregivers, the environment, and one's self
Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt	1 to 3 years	Developing a sense of one's autonomy and independence from the caregiver
Initiative vs. Guilt	3 to 6 years	Developing a sense of mastery over aspects of one's environment, coping with challenges and assumption of increasing responsibility
Industry vs. Inferiority	6 years to adolescence	Mastering intellectual and social challenges
Identity vs. Identity Confusion	Adolescence (12 to 20 years)	Developing a self-identity, i.e. knowledge of what kind of a person one is
Intimacy vs. Isolation	Young adulthood (20 to 40 years)	Developing stable and intimate relationships with another person
Generativity vs. Stagnation	Middle adulthood (40 to 60 years)	Creating something so that one can avoid feelings of stagnation
Integrity vs. Despair	Old age (60 years +)	Evaluating one's life by looking back; developing a sense of integrity through this evaluative process

Table 1: Erikson's eight stages of development (Keenan, Evans & Crowley 2016, 30)

Different areas of development are physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. Physical development describes body functions and movement. The child learns from the central point to control her/his moving. Physical development is mainly influenced by hormones and nutrition. However, cross-culture studies also show, the more parents emphasize on physical development the higher is the chance that children might learn practiced skills earlier. (Keenan, Evans & Crowley 2016, 92-100) According to Piaget the reaching and grasping is strongly connected to the cognitive development. When a baby starts to reach for something she/he isn't forced to do so. It is her/his own choice and so completely controlled by her/him. (Keenan, Evans & Crowley 2016, 99) According to the social and emotional development of the child, she/he is able to show her/his feelings. The parent's responsibility is to react to those feelings. Throughout the interaction the child creates a pictures in his mind how and who she/he is. Further, she/he starts to understand her/his actions and other people. (Keenan, Evans & Crowley 2016, 245, 277; Pride 2010, kolmas tapaaminen 6) Strongly connected with the understanding of her-/himself and others is the way of thinking and learning. All the information a child makes use of is connected to

feelings. This is shown in the use of language and the child's memories and actions. (Keenan, Evans & Crowley 2016, 43; Pride 2010, kolmas tapaaminen 6)

## 5 Qualitative research and methods

The research method used in this thesis work was a qualitative research. In qualitative research information that might be gathered is huge. To get the data wanted, the right method for collecting has to be chosen. Basic collecting methods were interviews, observation and documentation. I have chosen interviews as qualitative research method with foster children. Through the interviews the children had the possibility to describe their actions, feelings and thoughts. Further, I was able to lead the conversation into the direction I wanted. (Fortune, Reid & Miller 2013, 29-40)

This thesis work is conducted in child protection's family care with children at the age from four to five years. Interviews were conducted as qualitative research. The research questions was what experiences does the foster child have on everyday life situations in the foster family. Further, how she/he was feeling in those situations. Routines in everyday situations were important. The thesis work was also focusing on how much interaction the child had with other family members. In a broader way, the thesis work has also shown in what way the child's past has had an influence on her/his everyday life situations. Further, relationships with people close to the child were looked at. What did the relationship with the foster parents and siblings look like, and did the biological parents play a role in the child's everyday life. At the end of this section is described what tools have been used to conduct the interviews.

### 5.1 First contact

The first contact with the foster family was arranged through a social worker of the department for foster care in child protection from Helsinki city. Basic information about the thesis work (Appendix 3) as well, as a request for the allowance of conduction the interview with the foster child were provided to the biological parents as well as the foster family. (Appendix 4 & 5).

After receiving the permission for conduction the interviews, further information was provided to the foster families and through a telephone conversation, more information according the preparation of the interview was gained. During the talk on the phone it was possible to introduce myself to the family. Further, interview time and place were agreed on. The foster parents were asked to tell their children, that I'm come to play and talk with them for a while. During the phone call, the foster parents were asked to provide me the

information of figures or animals their foster child likes to play with. Therefore, I was prepared with the right material when meeting the child. Figures or animals were chosen as material to play instead of building material like bricks. Transformers were excellent material (if the child is interested) because of the fact that they are able to completely change their personality when changing obviously for the child their look in play. Through these creatures, the child had the possibility to play experienced happenings or share her/his actual thoughts.

## 5.2 Conducting the interview

When meeting the family face to face, the interview was structured in three parts: The warm-up, the play and the ending. First of all, I introduced myself to the child and made sure that she/he knows who I am and what we were going to do. Depending on the child's experience on everyday life situations the interviews varied. Topics like time spending alone or with friends/family members, eating, sleeping and other basic day routines were addressed. Also some contradictions were arranged to see how the child reactions. The idea was to get the child showing some feelings and actions. Further it has been described if the child is able to talk about her/his feelings. Further, with whom and in what way she/he is talking about them. After a period of play, the child was asked to draw a picture of her/his home and important people to her/him. That was followed by a conversation about everything that the child draws. Everybody who was important to the child appeared on the drawing. (Sharan 2014, 104) At the end, the foster parents were able join us and we finished the conversation.

Through the attendance at the foster families' home, an insight in their life could be got. Further, imagination made it possible, how their everyday life might look like. Just through the interview, clear answers could be got to questions according foster child's feelings and thoughts. In that way, lots of different experiences, values and perspectives were gathered. For that reason, interviews had been chosen as one qualitative research method. (Sharan 2014, 87-88)The aim was to get some specific answers according to the child's everyday life situation. Her/his wishes, hopes and fears and personal experiences.

The interviews with all participants were planned to be like friendly conversations during play. So I could make sure that they were responding in a natural way and according to the truth. The child had the possibility to choose a creature by her/himself. I asked the child what we might call the figure chosen. (Morrison & Anders 2001, 42-43) During the play some feeling cards were used. The child was asked in different situations during the play, how his creature feel. To make it easier for the child four different feeling cards have been shown to her/him.

Further, it was told to the child that the creature was as old as she/he. After this, we were going to build a home for the creature. In this home there have been as many family members as in the child's family. Depending on the creature the child had chosen, the home was a dollhouse or a cottage build out of blankets and sheets. After building the home with all essential details according to the child and her/his situation, it was defined if it was morning or evening. She/he was familiar with the surrounding of the play as well as the situation in the play. Through out the play, the child had the possibility to leave the house with his creature during the morning (to go to school/ day care) as well as in the afternoon (after coming home from the day care/school) to play outside. Further, the child has had all the time in the play the possibility to lead the play in the way or direction she/he wanted. If the child wanted to go out in the evening or night with his creature she/he had to go through a conversation with the creatures parents why it's not possible and had to accept (or not) the consequences. The child had to adapt to certain rules. This rules deferred a bit from what she/he is used to in real life at her/his home. Still, she/he was all the time able to negotiate about what may be possible to do or not.

While conduction the interview I have concentrated to be always at the same level or even lower than the child. Not always, the material available at the familie's place has be enough. Therefore, I have taken my own material with me.

### 5.3 Importance in the interview

Face to face interviews were planned. Structured, but not too firm. Semi-structured interviews according to Sharan B. Merriam (2014, 89-90). Open- ended questions with some kind of wording of questions beforehand were worked out. As already stated above, the interview was more like a friendly conversation with no predefined order of questions. Short but precise questions were worked out beforehand. There was a high range of different answers expected. Especially how personal experiences were described. Some facts, situations that were the same to all the clients, were asked in a more structured way. (Roulston 2007) The way of asking was determined. I wanted the children to tell me about her/his experiences and behaviours as well as their opinions, values and feelings in the situation. To talk about the child's own feelings was hard but I was looking for some adjectives in response. Through examples like "tell me about the time when ..." or "how did it look like..." a child's own point of view was asked. (Sharan 2014, 96-99) It was clear to me already beforehand, that I had to build a good relationship with the child to get answers to the questions I needed. To be respectful and to listen carefully and the way how to use body language I practiced beforehand. (Morrison & Anders 2001, 20)

Further, the ethnicity in interviews was important. Like in the Article "Participants' experiences of the qualitative interview: considering the importance of research work

paradigms” written by Wolgemuth, Erdil-Moody, Opsal, Cross, Kaanta, Dickmann & Colomer (2015, 353) already stated, ethical questions according to interview questions had to be worked out carefully. Participants in different qualitative social work research workers stated that answering questions was “emotionally intense, distressful and sometimes painful.” On the other hand, the same people experienced the interviews therapeutic and empowering. It was an opportunity for everybody to tell her/his own story. Qualitative research work was chosen to get to a deeper level of understanding the client’s point of view. According to Wolgemuth’s et al. research work’s (2015, 361) participant stated, that the interview let her/him feel comfortable while getting the feeling the research worker wants to understand the client’s situation. (Cooper, Endacott & Chapman 2009, 774-775) Still to remember, interviews conducted with children were not the same as with adults. The way that a child was thinking defers from the way an adult would think. (Hardwood, Miller, Vasta 2008, 230) Further, children’s thoughts were spread and versatile. Not long ago, studies were conducted *on* children. Here I would like to point out that this study was conducted *with* and *for* children. As Christensen and James in 2008 already stated, a child is a competent respondent on her/his personal situation. While interviewing a child, the way to get the required information has to be adapted to her/his skills. There was no rule or something in general to expect from a child age four or five. Therefore, the whole interview had to be completely adapted to the child’s personal skills and the actual situation. For children age ten to twelve years, there can be already standardized interviews used. With children over 16 years, the same questioners as for adults may be used. Determined skills were, according to the thesis work conducted by Susanna Vogl (2015) with children at the age from four to five years, verbal, cognitive and interactive skills.

#### 5.4 Supporting tools

During the interviews there have supporting tools in use. The child was able to choose between two different types of feeling cards, that helped the child to talk about her/his feelings in the situation. The only difference between the cards have been, on one type a fox and on the other type a bunny was showing different types of feelings. Further, I have had some Lego bricks with me to build some kind of home. Additionally I took also different types of figures to play with, with me. Depending on the telephone conversation beforehand, I have had either animal creators or Muumi creatures with me. Additionally there have been some Lego creatures always with me. Concerning the drawings, I have taken some white paper and different types and different colours of pencils with me. So, the child could choose the type of pencil and the colour she/he wants to draw with.

Further equipment has been my phone for tapping and videoing the interview. Also some stickers and creators have been with me at the interviews. After participating in my thesis work, every child has been able to choose one thing she/he wants from a little bag.

## 6 Outcomes

After conducting interviews at the foster families' places, the information was gathered and selected. All the information from the semi-structured interviews has been analysed in content analyses. According to each interview, there has been worked out a content analyse. Throughout videoing and tapping, it was possible to glance through the material and compare it carefully. Another source of information were the drawings. The content analyse as well as the drawings can be found attached.

Through a content analyse the subject can be systematically and objectively gone through. Specific characters are identified and looked at. Facts that are looked at are measured and compared. Important data is collected. A hypothesis is tested through theory. Further, there are no certain types of variables. Also the form of presenting these variables is not predetermined. (Neudorfer A. K. 2017, 16-20) Content analyse is often criticized because of the fact that data out of a text can be put into different categories just by the writer's point of view. Through the fact that there has to be build up a clear structure out of categories/themes and subcategories/subthemes, the problem has been minimized. Reasons for the common use of content analyses in the social feel are its wide range of applicability and the possibility of easily represent relationships between different values. (Cho J. Y. & Lee E.-H. 2014)

There was a variation in answers according to every child and her/his personal life situation but there could also be seen some basic values. So, according the thesis questions three main topics and basic values could be formed as: The child, the people around her/him and the daily routines. Through these three areas the child's feelings and actions in every day situations were looked at. Further, it showed who were the people close to her/him and what their roles were.

### 6.1 Routines

Routines were split up in the major categories of foster parent's action and predictable happenings. There is a high connection between the foster parent's action and the routines. For that reason the major section's name is "foster parent's action". As stated earlier, routines are providing a feeling of security for the child. These routines are often caused and launched by the action of the foster parents. Main topics according to it are how to act at home and/or with others. The predictable happening section showed that there might be

different happenings that were in some way predictable and through that they made life easier for the child.

#### 6.1.1 Foster parent's actions

In the first interview could be seen, the physical and mental contact with the foster mother was important. The child mentioned the "good- night kiss" for example. Further, it seemed important to the child that the foster mother told her what happened next. Through this, the child got a feeling of security.

According to the second and the third interview, the outcome was quite the same. The contact, especially before going to bed was important to the child. The child also made clear, that it is important to her/him that the foster mother is always available for her him. It's a routine for her/him to share her/his feelings with the foster mother. Also to know, what the foster mother was going to do next, was an important matter of security and safeness for all of the three children.

#### 6.1.2 Predictable happenings

Through the thesis work could be seen that the cultural background of the child is important to consider. The everyday child's surrounding is influences and build up under the consideration of the background culture. Four different cultures have been included in the thesis work. Even though, there have been the same issues and stages to go through in these families, it could be seen in a different way, depending on the culture. In one family the tone of voice is on a normal basis much louder than in the other one for example. The way, how to say something to the other one is also depending a lot on cultural differences.

The basic rhythm was for all three participants the same. None of them does have any planned free-time activity after day care. All participants are five days a week in the day care and do have the afternoons/evenings and weekends free time. Out of the play interviews there could be seen, that for the child from the first interview, the breakfast, as a predictable happening was important and relaxing at the same time. She/he enjoyed it that everybody was eating together. Further, she/he liked it to go to the day care. Also the children from the second and the third interview were eating together. There was still a difference: At the family from the second and the third interview, they were eating always while watching TV.

## 6.2 Important relationships

Important relationships as a main category was formed by the major categories of the biological family and important person out of the content analyse. Important person included beside foster parents and foster siblings also friends as minor categories in the content analyse. For a better understanding, the major section “important person” has been split up her into “foster family” and “friends”.

For all of the participants the people close to them, living with them were important. Some more than the others. The foster mother played an important role in all cases. Through the thesis work could be seen that the biological parents’ role wasn’t that present. On the other hand, for those with biological siblings, who were living still with the biological parents, they were important.

### 6.2.1 Biological family

All three participants mentioned right at the beginning that they have *siblings*. Through out the whole interview, they repeated it more often. The children from the second and the third interview have been biological siblings. Their strong connection could be also seen through the interview. Both were mentioning each other a lot, and their have been many feelings included in everyday life situations. Positive as well as negative feelings. Both of them mentioned also their smaller sibling, who isn’t living with them, but strongly in their mind. “My little sister is living in a different world”, the child from the third interview was explaining to me. The child from the first interview doesn’t have a biological sibling.

In the second and the third interview, the biological mother has been mentioned and even drawn on one picture, but the children didn’t want to talk about the biological mother. In the first interview the mother hasn’t been mentioned. Biological fathers haven’t been mentioned at all in any interview. The reason for that could\*t be found out. Either the biological father hasn\*t been included in the biological family life or his role hasn’t been that important to the child.

### 6.2.2 Foster family

The third child was talking about the biological child from the foster family, who is sharing with her a room. According to the foster mother and the interview, both are very important to each other. Also out of the drawing can be seen, the importance of the sibling for the child from the first interview. The child drew the sibling next to her and thought even about the friends of the sibling. The colours for drawing were chosen according to the colours the drawn person likes. The children from the second and the third interview don’t have a foster sibling.

Additionally, the foster mother played an important role to the child. It seemed, that she is the one who decides when is what happening (e.g. time to go to bed, brush the teeth). Also the foster family's other child was mentioned but there doesn't seem to be as a good connection as with the other child. Reasons for that might be the different sex and age. Further, the foster father was also mentioned. It seemed that they do have a positive but not very intensive connection.

According to the second and the third interview, the foster family members are the two foster siblings and the foster mother. Also here, the foster mother plays an important role as the only adult in the family. For both children from the second and the third interview the foster mother is important, as a person who is listening and there to talk to whenever they need someone. Also the need for protecting a person who is important to the child ("take care! Fire!"), could be seen out of the third interview.

### 6.2.3 Friends

Friends from the daycare have been important to all of the participants. The child from the first interview drew a friend from the day care and was explaining what she like to play together. While talking about friends from the day care, the child from the second interview shared the feelings of getting bullied there. She/he doesn't like to be there. Still she/he has a friend there that she/he mentioned and drew on the picture. But even she/he is sometimes treating her/him not nicely.

Friends living next to the child have been mentioned in two of the three interviews. In the second interview a friend living close was mentioned. The children often play together in the afternoon, after daycare. Further, one of the participants mentioned friends, living further away. The child has been also thinking about her friend's friends.

## 6.3 Child

This section in the qualitative research describes the child's feelings according to her/his own actions and actions from people close to her/him. Further, it describes the self-identity, self-defence, the ability of realistic thinking, the child's property and the child's problem solving/decision making ability. All these different aspects were sum up under the major category "child itself".

The way, how the children were speaking, it can be made the conclusion that all of the three participants were in a way aware of what had happened to them, even if they weren't yet able speak about it.

### 6.3.1 Child's feelings

It seems to me that all three participants are strong personalities. They knew what they want, even they were not 100% sure how to show it. All of them had strong feelings that they still have to learn to control. Feelings often turned out to be negative. Still, the child from the first and the second interview had already learned some techniques to change them into positive feelings. Or at least to talk about them. The child from the third interview used a lot of physical violence to get rid of negative feelings. All of the participants were able to speak about their feelings. Further, all three children had already of their age of four to five good problem solving techniques.

The child from the first interview has been directed a lot by it's feelings. In many situations it wasn't sure what might be the right answer. Through out the play it seemed that the child is also struggling in everyday life situations with the same issue. It doesn't know what people are expecting her/him to do, so it feels uncertain what to do. On the other hand, she/he also contradicted what the foster mother wanted her to do. The child was showing in some situations her/his feelings.

In the second interview, feelings were often mentioned in connection with the dreams. The child was quite often awake and struggling continuing sleeping. She/he still didn't ask the foster mother for help, but tried to continue sleeping, and always managed to do so. The child from the third interview mentioned negative feelings often in connection with some contradiction with his sibling. Further, she/he was afraid of the fire she/he was continuously speaking. In the interview, fire has been an important element to talk about. The child showed strong emotions concerning it. The family hasn't been willing to share if the child has been confronted with domestic coal or if it has seen just something belonging to it from the TV.

### 6.3.2 Child itself

Through all three interviews could be seen that the children are realistic thinking, good in problem solving and that they have already yet developed some kind of self defence. Some of them verbal others physical. Their own property is important to all of them, like for example the child from the second interview stated, "I do also have that kind of brick". Something that belongs to the child, not depending how small or cheap it is, is her/his property and this is very important to her/him.

The child from the first interview had strongly in mind that she/he wanted to decided her/himself when to get out of bed and what to do next. Still, as a reason of safety she/he

enjoyed it also to have some basic routines. Also at the drawing could be seen how important the child her-/himself is: The sentence, "draw everybody who is important to you" was followed by the child's action of drawing her-/himself and after that a brake before drawing anybody else.

In the second interview, the child was tested according to helping at home. The child had to help in the kitchen while the younger sibling could already continue playing. The older one, was sad, but kind. The child helped the foster mother, because she/he understood that all had to help together. Further, the child found a way how it was easier for her/him to continue sleeping after having nightmares.

Also the child from the third interview had good and realistic problem solving strategies and was able to think in a realistic way. She/he e.g. mentioned that driving a car is extremely expensive, which lead to the fact that they did not have a car. Another example is, that the child was able to talk about the fact that she/he can't hit her/his older sibling, but in the moment she/he is not (yet) able to control her/his (re)action.

## 7 Discussion

Qualitative interviews with four to five year old foster children were conducted. The aim was to find out the child's feelings on everyday life situations. The interviews have been semi-structured play interviews. The study problem was to get participants in the studies. It took nearly half a year until the first participant was found. The problem was the permission from the biological parents and the foster parents. Further, it was hard to get the child talk about her/his feelings, hopes and wishes. A lot of confidence and courage was required from four to five years old, as well as from the whole foster family. As third problem, I would like to mention the fact of getting background information. Children's early childhood education plans would have been important to look at, to adapt the interviews even more according their needs. Even after explaining the aspect to the foster parents, they weren't willing to send me the required paper. However, all the participating families made it possible to tape and video the whole interview at their place. Through that fact, I could get a good inside and a complete picture of their everyday life. Also, throughout the interviews a lot of information could be gathered. Children are different personalities but there could be seen many similarities like described in the chapters 7 and 8.

The participation of the three families might help to develop child protection services more in detail and according to the child's needs. In the future there has to be done a bigger research with more families included to get a higher number of basic values for foster children. Through a bigger research more basic values can be found out. This basic values

might help to develop services already at the stage of educating foster families. The idea is to educate the foster family exactly according to general needs of foster children.

Good cooperation work between all parties is essential to guarantee a foster child services according to her/his needs. All parties including also the biological parents. If all the parties are motivated to cooperate they all can work towards a satisfied outcome for everybody. Trustworthiness according to every participant and person or organisation involved is required. Further, the child and all other parties are required to be motivated to change something or to do some effort to feel good. Further, some knowledge about the other participants is required. (Ankersmit 2015) The less the biological parents are involved in the process the more all the other parties have to do.

In my opinion it is hard to generalize foster children\*s needs. The reasons and their past are very different. Still, there are some general facts, like already in this work can be seen, that may be improved on a general level. Foster parents empathies according to the child’s past is one important point to improve in my opinion. The parents have to be thought how to support the child according to he/his needs and experiences from the past.

## 8 Ethical considerations/reliability/validity

Child protection is a high sensitive area of trustworthiness. Each families’ and every client’s life is ongoing confronted with different services and professionals. For that reason, the permission for conducting the survey is needed from the authorities as well as the clients. The client has a right to stay anonym and that her/his information is handled with highly confidentiality. (Eskola & Suoranta 1998, 52, 56-57) According to Finnish law, it is not necessary to have a written permission that a child is allowed to participate in a survey. However, it has to be clarified with the parents beforehand, that it is fine for them. An oral permission is enough in this case. The permission of the child her-/himself that she/he is willing to participate is important. The participation is voluntary. According the self-determination law, the child as well as the parents can decide to participate or not. (Nieminen 2010, 33)

According to multiculturalism in the social service field, Finland may learn concerning integration and acceptance from the UK. UK’s experience last from the 1960s and 1970s with a large “labour-related movement” from Pakistan and India. The professionals and participants in this survey are from different cultural backgrounds. There is a difference between nationality and ethnicity, but on the other hand they are both parts of a person’s identity. The person’s identity is based on heritage, community and norms. (Hussein, Manthorpe, Ismail 2013, 178-180)

While conducting interviews with people from different ethnical backgrounds everyone's viewpoint has to be considered. A natural relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee has to be build up. Trustworthiness is gained and a honest conversation according to true facts appears. A clear strategy how to conduct the interview is important to give the interviewed person the feeling of a friendly chat rather than the fact that the interviewer is just gathering data. (McConnell-Henry, Ainsley, Chapman & Francis 2009)

In cooperation with the families, especially with the children, always has to be thought how much do they understand of the topic and their whole life situation. According to Thomas (2000, 175) there has always to be a free choice to attend or not attend. Does she/he participate in the survey or not. How much is she/he sharing. Is she/he aware of her/his rights and decision making possibilities. Further, does she/he know who is supporting her/him and how she/he may get help. At least, is she/he aware how anomy she/ he is. (Pölkki, Vornanen, Pursiainen & Riikonen 2012, 109)

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## Appendix 1: Interview structure

Day rhythm		Main questions	Supporting questions
Morning	Getting out of bed	Who is waking you up in the morning?	
		How does it feel when you are waking up?	Is it easy/hard to get out of the bed; are you tired
			Would you like to stay in bed
		What happens after you got out of bed	
	Brushing teeth and breakfast	Don't you brush your teeth?	
		What do you usually eat for breakfast?	Do you always eat something like that or just today?
			What do you normally eat?
		Are you in a hurry? Or do you have time?	
		Do you watch TV in the morning?	
	Going to day care/ school	Is it easy for you to leave to day care/school?	Do you like to go to school/ Day care?
How are you going to day care/ school? (with whom?)			
Day	At the day care/ school	Are your friends already at the day care/school?	
		How are you going home from day care/school? (with whom?)	
	Coming home	What happens when you come home from day care/ school?	
		Is somebody else already at home?	
		What happens when you all at home?	Are you doing something together
		What happens when you want to do something with your mum/dad but she has to prepare food?	How do you feel? What are you then doing?
			What are mum, dad, (others) doing?
Evening	Dinner	Do you like the food?	
		What happens if you don't like the food mum/dad has prepared?	

	<b>Day rhythm</b>	<b>Main questions</b>	<b>Supporting questions</b>
	Evening snack	What are we eating as evening snack?	
		Are you going to prepare something with me?	Why not? Don't you like to help me
			I would be happy if you would do it with me
		What happens then?	
	Taking a shower/ brushing teeth	Who is saying you that you have to go to brush your teeth etc?	What would you prefare to do?
		How does it feel?	What happens if you do...?
	Going to bed	How does it happen?	Is somebody comming to read you/ comming with you to your room/ saying you good night?
		Do you easily fall asleep?	
Night		What do you think before falling asleep?	
		What happens if you don't fall asleep?	

## Appendix 2: Basic information about the thesis work

**“Everyday life in a foster family from a foster child’s point of view”** is a thesis work. It is done in cooperation with the Department for Foster Care in Child Protection at Helsinki City. Through my thesis, I would like to point out the importance of the child’s point of view. Her/his experiences of everyday life in a foster family. Especially child’s feelings and thoughts in actions are looked at. Earlier studies have dealt with the topic from another point of view. The thesis may help to develop services provided to foster parents and children in child protection.

Children involved in this thesis work are interviewed while playing. In the play, different areas of everyday life situations like nutrition, free time activities, close people are gone through with the child. The place for the interview is agreed, but the most natural and easiest for the child might be at the foster families home.

The interview is planned to execute in the time between April and Mai 2017. It lasts around half an hour. After receiving the approval letter for participation in the thesis work more information according to the interview will be provided to the foster family. Parents are asked to provide information about their child before the interview. This is important to support a positive conversation between the interviewee and the interviewer.

Further information

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**“Everyday life in a foster family from a foster child’s point of view”** on opinnäytetyö. Tämä opinnäytetyö on tehty yhteistyössä Helsingin kaupungin lastensuojelun sijoituksen sosiaalityön kanssa.

Opinnäytetyön keskeinen asia on lapsen näkökulma ja kokemukset arjesta sijaisperheessä.

Pääasiassa haluan tutkia ja nostaa esille lapsen tunteita ja ajatuksia hänen arjestaan.

Aikaisemmin tehdyissä tutkimuksissa on käsitelty lapsen olemista sijaisperheessä, muttei lapsen näkökulmasta. Lapsen näkökulmaa ei ole riittävästi tutkittu. Opinnäytetyöni auttaisi kehittämään sijaishuollon palveluita sijaisvanhemmille ja lapsille.

Tietoa lapsista tulee haastattelujen kautta. Haastattelut tapahtuvat leikissa. Leikissä käsitellään eri osa-alueita kuten esimerkiksi ruokailua, ongelmanratkaisua, vapaa-aikaa ja lähi-ihmisten verkostoa. Haastattelupaikka on sovittavissa. Luonnollisin ja helpoin lapsille olisi sijaisperheen kodissa.

Haastattelu suoritetaan huhtikuussa ja toukokuussa 2017. Haastattelun kesto on noin puoli tuntia. Haastattelun kuvaaminen on tärkeää analyysiä varten, jotta lapsen ajatukset tulevat tallennettua ja tulkittua oikein. Suostumuskirjeen saamiseen jälkeen annan lisätietoa haastattelujen liittyvän perheille. Ennen haastattelua pyydän myös lapsesta lisätietoja, jotta haastattelu voidaan sopeuttaa lapsen tarpeisiin. Tarkoitus on, että haastatteluista tulee mahdollisimman luonnollinen keskustelu.

Lisätietoa

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## Appendix 3: Suostumusasiakirja biologisille vanhemmille

**SUOSTUMUSASIAKIRJA**

Lastani on pyydetty osallistumaan "Everyday life in a foster family from a foster child's point of view" tutkimukseen, jonka tarkoituksena on tuoda esiin sijaislapsen kokemuksia arjesta sijaisperheessä. Vanhempina olen lukenut tutkimusta koskevan tiedotteen ja saanut mahdollisuuden esittää tarkentavia kysymyksiä ja keskustella niistä. Tunnen saaneeni riittävästi tietoa oikeuksistani, tutkimuksen tarkoituksesta ja siihen osallistumisesta sekä tutkimukseen osallistumisen hyödyistä ja mahdollisista riskeistä.

Tiedän, että minulla on oikeus kieltäytyä lastani tutkimukseen osallistumisesta ja myöhemmin halutessani myös syytä ilmoittamatta peruuttaa suostumukseni. Tiedän, että minusta, lapsista ja sijaisperheestä kerättyjä tietoja käsitellään luottamuksellisesti eikä niitä luovuteta ulkopuolisille ja ne hävitetään tutkimuksen valmistuttua tai tarvittaessa arkistoidaan suostumukseni mukaan.

Suostun, että lapseni osallistuu tutkimukseen	Kyllä ___ Ei ___
– suostun antamaan lastani koskevaa tietoa	Kyllä ___ Ei ___
– suostun, että haastattelu nauhoitetaan	Kyllä ___ Ei ___
– suostun, että haastattelu kuvataan	Kyllä ___ Ei ___

Paikka \_\_\_\_\_ Aika \_\_\_\_\_

Tutkittavan nimi \_\_\_\_\_ Henkilötunnus \_\_\_\_\_

Tutkittavan huoltajan/edunvalvojan allekirjoitus \_\_\_\_\_  
ja nimen selvennys \_\_\_\_\_  
Osoite ja puhelinnumero \_\_\_\_\_

Suostumuksen vastaanottajan allekirjoitus \_\_\_\_\_  
ja nimen selvennys \_\_\_\_\_  
Osoite ja puhelinnumero \_\_\_\_\_

Tutkimuksesta vastaavana sosiaalityöntekijä toimii \_\_\_\_\_  
Osoite ja puhelinnumero \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 4: Suostumusasiakirja sijaisvanhemmille

**SUOSTUMUSASIAKIRJA**

Meitä on pyydetty osallistumaan "Everyday life in a foster family from a foster child's point of view" tutkimukseen, jonka tarkoituksena on tuoda esiin sijaislapsen kokemuksia arjesta sijaisperheessä. Sijaisvanhempina olen lakenut tutkimusta koskevan tiedotteen ja saanut mahdollisuuden esittää tarkentavia kysymyksiä ja keskustella niistä. Olen keskustellut meidän lapsemme kanssa tutkimuksesta ja antanut hänelle tietoa tulevasta tapaamisesta ja haastattelusta. Tunnen saaneeni riittävästi tietoa oikeuksistani, tutkimuksen tarkoituksesta ja siihen osallistumisesta sekä tutkimukseen osallistumisen hyödyistä ja mahdollisista riskeistä.

Tiedän, että minulla on oikeus kieltäytyä tutkimukseen osallistumisesta ja myöhemmin halutessani myös syytä ilmoittamatta peruuttaa suostumukseni. Tiedän, että minusta, sijaislapsistamme ja perheestämme kerättyjä tietoja käsitellään luottamuksellisesti eikä niitä luovuteta ulkopuolisille ja ne hävitetään tutkimuksen valmistuttua tai tarvittaessa arkistoidaan suostumukseni mukaan.

Suostun osallistumaan tutkimukseen	Kyllä ___ Ei ___
- suostun antamaan sijaislastamme koskevaa tietoa	Kyllä ___ Ei ___
- suostun, että meidän sijaislapsemme osallistuu haastatteluun	Kyllä ___ Ei ___
- suostun, että haastattelu nauhoitetaan	Kyllä ___ Ei ___
- suostun, että haastattelu kuvataan	Kyllä ___ Ei ___
- suostun, että kotimme kuvataan	Kyllä ___ Ei ___

Paikka \_\_\_\_\_ Aika \_\_\_\_\_

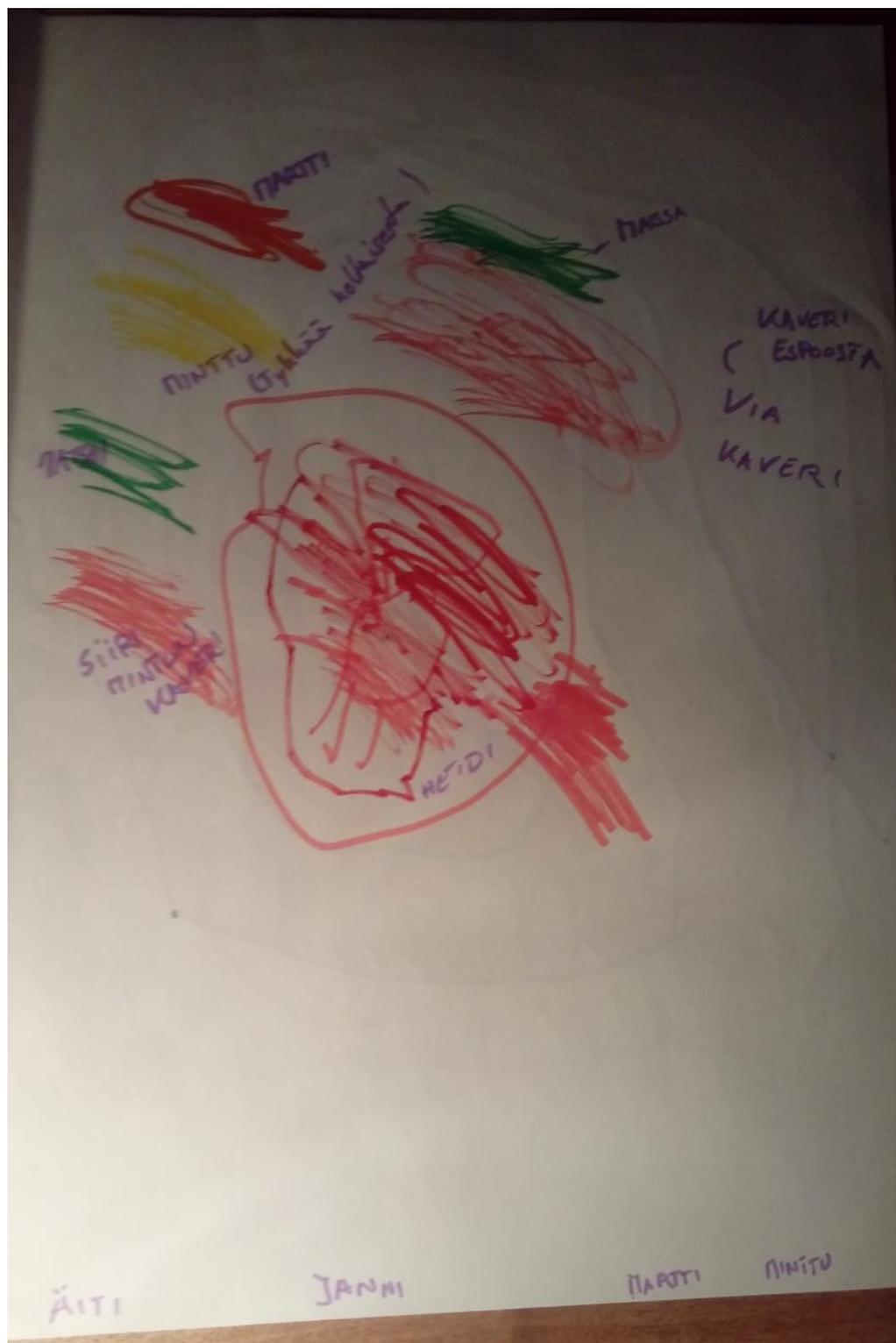
Tutkittavan nimi \_\_\_\_\_ Henkilötunnus \_\_\_\_\_

Tutkittavan huoltajan/edunvalvojan allekirjoitus \_\_\_\_\_  
ja nimen selvennys \_\_\_\_\_  
Osoite ja puhelinnumero \_\_\_\_\_

Suostumuksen vastaanottajan allekirjoitus \_\_\_\_\_  
ja nimen selvennys \_\_\_\_\_  
Osoite ja puhelinnumero \_\_\_\_\_

Tutkimuksesta vastaavana sosiaalityöntekijä toimii \_\_\_\_\_  
Osoite ja puhelinnumero \_\_\_\_\_

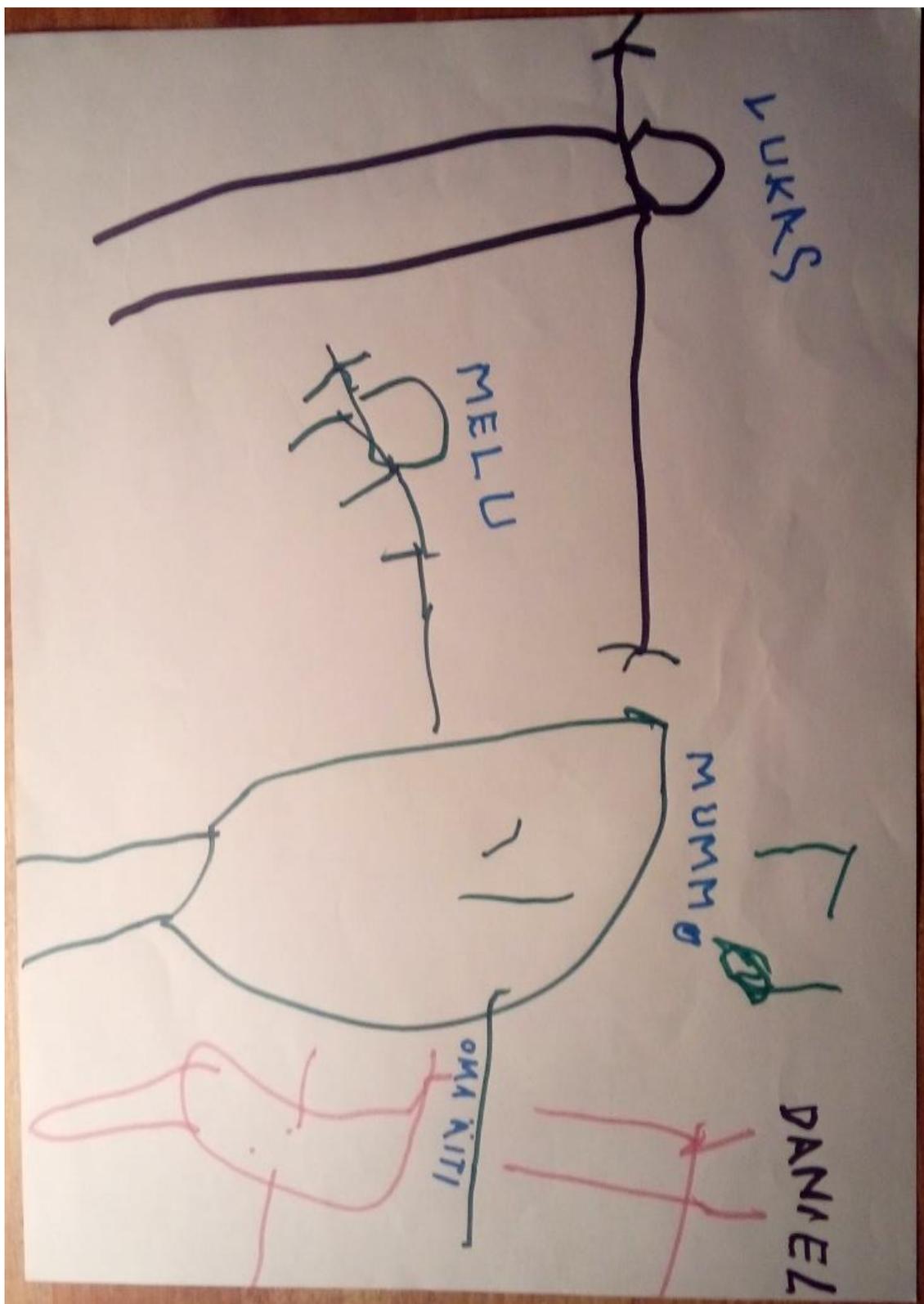
## Appendix 5: Drawing first interview



## Appendix 6: Drawing second interview



Appendix 7: Drawing third interview



## Appendix 8: Content analyse first interview

original expressions	reduced expressions	minor categories	major categories	main categories
1. otatko siitä vai tätä?	choosing between two options	problem solving	child itself	child
2. minä voin olla tällöinen (valitsi hahmon joka on erikoinen kun muut)	who are you	self identity	child itself	child
3. minullakin on sisko	importance of the sister	foster sibling	important person	important relationships
4. mikä tää on? - ei pystynyt vastamaan vasta kun on ollut kaksi vaihtoehtoja	doesn't want to say anything wrong	fear	feelings	child
5. miltä pellettä tuntuu- ei vastaus ilman tuntukortteja	no answer about the feelings	ability to talk about feelings	feelings	child
6. se on vihainen, koska se suutu aina kaikille	being mad and angry to everybody around	self defence	child itself	child
7. aina kun se leikkiä meidän kaa, se häviää pelissä	every time losing the game	self esteem	feelings	child
8. Lapsi hakee/etsi oikeita sanoja	searching for the right words	fear	feelings	child
9. pelelta tuntuu nyt hyvältä	feeling good	ability to speak about feelings	feelings	child

10.mitä sitten tapahtuu? - sitten ei mitään	what happens next	fear	feelings	child
11.meneekö se yksin sen huoneeseen? jo - Vai menekö se mies sen huoneeseen? jo	it goes alone there... no the other one as well..yes	fear	feelings	child
12.mitä nyt tapahtuu? (illalla pesun jälkeen tyttöjen huoneessa) - nyt on aamu...	changing the topic	problem solving	child itself	child
13.tyytyväinen ilme kun äiti antoi lapsille hyvää yötä pusun	good night kiss	feeling of security	foster parent's action	routines
14.leipää, murroja ja banaania (on yleensä aamupalaksi)	breakfast	feeling of security	predictable happening	routines
15.syödään yhdessä aamupala	eating together	feeling of security	foster parent's action	routines
16.lapsi hymyilee kun kaikki syövät yhdessä aamupala	satisfied	positive feeling	predictable happening	routines
17. lapsi istu rauhassa ja rentoutuneena kun puhutaan aamupalasta	child's body language is in peace	positive feeling	predictable happening	routines
18.tuntuu hyvältä kun ei tapahtuu	it is important for the child	feeling of security	foster parent's action	routines

mitään, kun ei suuttuu enää	that nobody is angry			
19. kun puhutaan suutumisesta lapsen kehonkieli muuttuu levottomaksi	talk about getting mad	ability to speak about feelings	feelings	child
20. jos äiti tulee koskea mua mä haluan vielä nukkua	the child get's mad when somebody wakes her up	self-identity	child itself	child
21. halun herätä itse	child wants to wake up itself	decision making	child itself	child
22. Äiti sano, nyt hammaspesulle	foster parent says what happens next	feeling of security	foster parent's action	routines
23. käydään pisalla ennen kun lähdetään - EI!	child is disagreeing	ability to speak about feelings	feelings	child
24. hyvätlä tuntuu kun lapset jäävät päiväkotiin	the child feels fine to stay at the day care	feeling of security	predictable happening	routines
25. piirä kaikki mitä on sinulle tärkeä - lapsi aloitti hänestä	the child itself is the most important one	self-identity	child itself	child
26. the child drew the foster siblings	foster siblings on the drawing	foster siblings	important person	important relationship
27. the child drew the foster siblings' friend	foster siblings' friend on the drawing	friend	important person	important relationship
28. the child drew its friend	friend on drawing	friend	important person	important relationship
29. värit kuvassa sen mukaan valittu mistä	colours carefully chosen for the drawing	decision making	child itself	child

pirettu henkilö pitää				
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## Appendix 9:Content analyse second interview

original expressions	reduced expressions	minor categories	major categories	main categories
1.Minullakin on tollainen ihan samanlainen pala	I have the same	child's property	child itself	child
2.hei tässä on tyttö	thoughts about the smaller sister	biological sibling	biological family	important relationship
3.ja muista mulla on vielä pikkusisko	importance of the little sister	connection between the siblings	biological family	important relationship
4.se on yleensä mun OMAN äidin luo	the little sister lives with the mother	biological mother	biological family	important relationship
5.se voi nyt olla meidän luo vähäsen vierailmassa	it's important for the child that the little sister is at his place	realistic thinking	child itself	child
6.me tullaan kohta (syömään) - kehonkieli tyytyväinen ja ilmoiselta vaikutta	soon the child is going to join	feeling of security	predictable happening	routines
7.tuun (auttamaan keittiössä)	helping the other	realistic thinking	child itself	child
8.D on surullinen kun se ei pääsyt leikkimään	feeling sad	justness (the chid doesn't get what the other does)	feelings	child
9.minä raivostuin	getting mad	ability to speak about feelings	feelings	child
10. (repii auto kädestä mutta antoi sen	take away something from the other	physical action	feelings	child

myöhemmin takaisin)				
11.me aloitetaan kiusa toisiamme	to annoy each other	self defence	child itself	child
12.se on pelottava kun meillä on riitää	something is frigthening	fear	feelings	child
13. voi kertoa mummulle (mitä on tapahtunut) happy face expression	tell the foster parent	feeling of security	foster parent's action	routines
14 olen väsynyt	tiredness	ability to speak about feelings	feelings	child
15. minä pesen näin (suihkussa)	able to handle the shower alone	prowdness	feelings	child
16. guess who is our friend. M. The child lives over there, quite close	a friend who lives close	friends	important person	important relationship
17. mummo tulee vielä käymään meidän huoneessa (ja sanoo hyvä yötä)	foster parent says good night	feeling of security	foster parent's action	routines
18. mä näen aina pelottavia unia	frightening dreams	ability to speak about feelings	feelings	child
19. otan nallen viereen sitten ei näe ne (pelottavia unia)	taking his teddy bear	problem solving (something to protect)	child itself	child
20. mä saikahdan aina kun näen niitä pelottavia unia	frightening dreams	ability to speak about feelings	feelings	child
21. katsotaan telkkaria aamulla	watching TV in the morning	feeling of security	predictable happening	routines

22.lapsi raivostuu kun toinen vaihtaa kanavaa	the child gets mad	ability to speak about feelings	feelings	child
23.the child is happy that it is morning and a new day	nice that it is a new day	possitive feeling	predictable happening	routines
24.me kohta valitaan yhdessä ohjelman	what happens next	possitive feeling	predictable happening	routines
25.yleensä syödään telkkarin edessä aamupala	eating in front of the TV	feeling of security	predictable happening	routines
26. mä meen nyt kertomaan	telling the foster parent	foster parent	important person	important relationship
27. et!!	listening what the brother is doing in the other room	self defence	child itself	child
28. drawing the brother	from the drawing	biological sibling	important people	important relationship
29. drawing the foster parent	from the drawing	foster parent	important people	important relationship

## Appendix 10: Content analyse third interview

original expressions	reduced expressions	minor categories	major categories	main categories
1."on mä nähnyt myös unta siitä tulipallosta"	dreaming from a domestic coal	fear	feelings	child
2."hei tää voi olla pikkusisko"	taking the sibling into the play that doesn't live with them	sibling	biological family	important relationship
3.näistä (kirjekureista) saa hyvät ohjeet	imagine what to do with something new/unexpected	problem solving	child itself	child
4.mun pikkusisko asuu eri maailmassa	thoughts about the smaller sister	sibling	biological family	important relationship
5.auton ajaminen on todella kallista	cars are expensive	realistic thinking	child itself	child
6.pitää aina laittaa ovi kiinni	closing the main door	feeling of security	predictable happening	routines
7.ei voi päästä toisen (ihmisen) taloon... ihminen voi siitä hermostua... .siksi pitää laittaa ovi kiinni	no stranger inside the house	realistic thinking	child itself	child
8.me syödään aina telkkarin edessä	eating in front of the TV	habits	predictable happening	routines
9.se (isovelj) rikkoi telkkarin	physical action	fear	feelings	child
10. pikkuveli on vihainen kun isovelj rikkoi telkkarin	he get's mad	self defence	child itself	child
11.minä sanoin äidille..."mummi" toi rikkoi telkkarin	foster parent is there to talk to	feeling of security	foster parent's action	routines
12.isovelj valehtelee, että minä olen tehnyt jotain paha mitä hän on oikeasti tehnyt	contradiction between siblings	ability to speak about feelings	feelings	child

13.sitten minä lyön häntä	beating the brother	physical action	feelings	child
14.sitten pitää pyytää anteeksi	know what to do next	ability to speak about feelings	feelings	child
15.minä en tule (hammaspesulle)	not going to brush the teeth	self esteem	feelings	child
16.(kun poika ei menee hammaspesulle) mummo tulee todella vihaiseeksi ja lyö siitä	after not brushing teeth the foster parent is beating her/him	fear	feelings	child
17. se karjui siitä (kun hänelle selitin ettei voi lyödä)	shouting when beating is not possible	problem solving	child itself	child
18.hei, missä mun... (poikka vaihtaa aihee kun ei halua puhua enää asiasta)	changing the topic	problem solving	child itself	child
19.milta L. tultuu kun mummo vie teidät päiväkotiin? Pikkusiskoo!! (hän ei reagoinut kysymykseen vain otti again his smaller sister)	importance of the smaller sister	sibling	biological family	important relationship
20.ei tykkää olla päiväkodissa	doesn't like to be in the day care	ability to talk about feelings	feelings	child
21.koska siellä kiusataan minua	bullying	friends	important person	important relationships
22.me lähetään pikkusiskon kanssa ulos	trying to include the smaller sister in everyday life	siblings	biological family	important relationship
23. saanko mennä olohuoneeseen	asking for permission	feeling of security	foster parents action	routines
24. tänään on kasvissekeitto....ai..minä haen toisen keiton	changing the soup	problem solving	child itself	child

25. varo mummi! tulipallo!	protecting the grandmother	foster parent	important person	important relationship
26. se oli pettynyt koska ei ole enää kotia (kun tuli tulipalloa)	being disappointed	realistic thinking	child itself	child
27. nyt pitää tehdä uusi koti	building a new home	problem solving	child itself	child
28. olen vihainen kun mun pitää aina niin aikaisin mennä nukkumaan	getting to bed earlier	justness	feelings	child