Better Care Network

• **What**: Interagency network facilitating active information exchange & collaboration on the issue of children without adequate family care

• **Who**:  
  – BCN Steering Committee  
  – Secretariat  
  – Advisory Group  
  – Newsletter members
Better Care Network

• **Mission**
  - To facilitate active information exchange and collaboration
  - To advocate for technically sound policy and programmatic action on global, regional and national levels

• **Purpose**
  - Reduce instances of separation and abandonment of children
  - Reunite children outside family care with their families, wherever possible and appropriate;
  - Increase, strengthen, and support family and community-based care options for children;
  - Establish international and national standards for all forms of care for children without adequate family care and mechanisms for ensuring compliance; and
  - Ensure that residential institutions are used in a very limited manner and only when appropriate.
Knowledge Management

- BCN Website: www.bettercarenetwork.org
- Largest clearing house of research, program and policy guidance and tools
- Access from 200 countries
Knowledge Management

- Monthly Newsletter
- Over 3,375 members
- Grown from 500 members in 2006

Welcome to the latest edition of the BCN Newsletter!

In this edition, we highlight recent research, tools and policy briefs relevant to children’s care, including:

- **Syria:** A new child protection assessment by the inter-agency Child Protection Working Group, with findings on separation and the impact of the conflict on caregivers.
- The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children presents her report to the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly, in which she highlights the need to prevent the institutionalization of children under 3.
- A major global conference took place in New Delhi, India, in November 2012 entitled The Better Way to Protect All Children: The Theory and Practice of Child Protection System, with important learning about placing children’s care at the heart of child protection systems.
- A newly published article takes a social justice perspective on Intercountry Adoption in the USA and addresses the responsibility of social workers in that context.
- **Azerbaijan:** A paper that looks at education reforms in the context of the State’s Program of Deinstitutionalization.
- An anthropologist reviews research on ‘orphans’ in Sub-Saharan Africa and calls for a different approach to understand the contexts in which children and their families live.

Also,

- China and India are coming up in front of the Committee on the Rights of the Child; we highlight the information provided by the governments of those countries on children’s care in their reports.

And of course, we have the latest news, upcoming events, conferences, webinars and job opportunities! Questions? You can reach us at contact@bettercarenetwork.org. Thank you for your continual subscription and partnership in promoting positive and appropriate alternative care options for children.

All the best,
The BCN Secretariat

**SYRIA: Child Protection Assessment 2013**

This report just issued by the Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) presents the main findings of an interagency child protection assessment in Syria.
Technical Assistance

• Access to global experts
• Facilitate peer exchange and sharing of experiences and resources
• Contextualize and tailor collective body of knowledge to the specific need of members
• Supporting partners in development of legislation, strategies and programs for child care reform
• Collaborating with key stakeholders to develop tools and standards
• Informing training and capacity building

*Free and public access to sector relevant information, combined with direct peer support and expert guidance*
Working Paper Series

– Risk of Harm to Young Children in Institutional Care (2009)
– Families, Not Orphanages (2010)
– Children with Disabilities and Alternative Care (2012)

Forthcoming
– Child Care Country Profiles in Sub-Saharan Africa
– Gatekeeping Paper
Technical Tools

• Better Care Network Toolkit
  http://bettercaretoolkit.org/bcn/toolkit

• Manual for the Measurement of Indicators for Children in Formal Care

• Inter-agency Tools
  – Moving forward: Implementing the “Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children”
  – Separated Children and Unaccompanied Field Manual
  – Inter-Agency Reintegration Desk Based Research
Brokerage & Convening

- Co-chair of NGO Committee Working Group on Children without appropriate family care
- Faith to Action Initiative: partnership with Faith Based Actors to support local family based solutions for vulnerable children
- Regional and Global Conferences
- Connect and strengthen national and regional Networks
- Document and Share Country Practices
- Regional Initiative in Eastern Africa
Next Steps

• **Learning Projects currently underway**
  – Country Care Profiles in Rwanda, Liberia and Ghana & Country Care Reviews on BCN web site
  – Gatekeeping Paper to examine the role of gatekeeping systems in care reform

• **Challenges**
  – Commitment and capacity of key stakeholders to implement child care reform
  – Research gaps: fragmented knowledge of the situation and what works
  – Persistent misconceptions, drivers and vested interests

• **Priorities**
  – Implementation of good policies and practices at national, regional and global levels
  – Child Care Research Initiative to identify and address knowledge gaps
  – Increased understanding of social norms to support existing positive family care and address misconceptions and vested interests
Thank You

For more information

• Visit BCN website:
  www.bettercarenetwork.org

• Visit BCN toolkit:
  http://bettercaretoolkit.org/bcn/toolkit/

• Sign-up for BCN’s newsletter

• Contact BCN Secretariat:
  severine.chevrel@bettercarenetwork.org
  florence.martin@bettercarenetwork.org
Context

• Importance of family care and growing evidence on negative impact of placement of children in harmful institutional care

  => Family preservation, reintegration of children separated from their families and family based alternative care such as foster care and kinship care.

• Significant progress to date
  • Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children
  • Momentum building at regional and national levels

• Much still needs to happen to propel the momentum