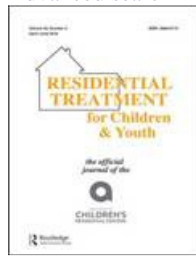


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Children in Residential Group Care With No Family Ties: Facing

Existential Aloneness

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Abstract

The issue of children living in residential group care in Israel completely without family ties is studied in order to explore the feelings of staff and uncover possible characteristics of these children. Data were collected through focus groups, questionnaires, and life stories of children who left group care at 18 years of age. Results reveal that the children's aloneness is central in their lives and arouses painful and powerful emotions that staff members tend to avoid. Facing the future alone without support and

guidance led to major crisis during adolescence. Those who had formed a long-term, significant relationship with an adult fared better.

Keywords: children-at-risk, no family ties, residential group care, foster group care, legal guardians