

EXPLORING THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF CHILDREN IN A VOLUNTARY CHILDREN'S HOME (VCH) IN SINGAPORE

An Abstract of the Thesis By

Yu Wei, Yong

This qualitative research explored the perspectives of children and young persons who had lived in a Voluntary Children's Home (VCH) in Singapore and gathered their views on how residential care could be improved. Using the Narrative Interviewing (NI) technique, in-depth interviews were conducted with 4 participants, ages ranging from 16-20 years old, who had lived in a VCH for a period of four to eight years. Significant themes gathered included the presence of complex group hierarchy and peer violence within the VCH, the difficulties faced and lack of supportive services during transition into and out-of-care, the importance of rules, and the quality of relationship between staff and residents in determining the overall experience of care. Recommendations were given to hire staff that were more caring, to train staff in interacting with children and young persons in developmentally appropriate manners and to organise more activities suitable for all age groups that can increase interactions between residents in different dormitories.