

Family support and foster care services

Amalthea, Family support and foster care services

Amalthea is an NGO offering social, educational and therapeutic services to families with children and ensures social and legal protection of children.

Beneficiaries of the service

Amalthea aims to help children live in a family-based environment by empowering the biological families and strengthening foster care. Beneficiaries include families in vulnerable situations (financial difficulties, precarious housing, lack of necessary skills to care for their children, illnesses, domestic violence, child placement, substance abuse).

The staff

Composed of mainly **social workers**. Methodological supervision sessions are held monthly for teams and team members, along with training courses by experts from relevant professional fields.

The approach

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The social workers of the organization assess the situation, needs and possible risks of the families.

②

An individualised plan is created with the family.

③

Social workers visit the family in their natural environment, where they offer support until the parents are capable of caring for their children and managing their everyday lives independently.



Chrudim, Czech Republic

Amalthea

Contacts

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The model

Amalthea operates two main services, aimed at helping children live in a family-based environment:



Support services for the biological families and their children

The services offered depend on the needs of the family. They may support families to manage the care of their children, reinforce the relations within the family, help arrange external services to assist families in their negotiation with authorities in defending their rights. Other areas include supporting families with financial difficulties by identifying ways to increase their income, finding volunteers to tutor children or accompany them in their leisure time activities, offer material support (food, toys, school aids).



A Substitute Family Care Center

Through this centre, Amalthea offers short and long-term foster care for children who must be separated from their families. In short-term foster care, children live with a family from 1 month to 2 years until a foster care family is found. The organisation holds awareness-raising events to recruit foster care parents, who undergo training before they can foster a child. Supportive Services offered to foster care families include: crisis intervention, counselling, support in communicating with other services, training for foster care parents, respite services during afternoons or weekends, as well as support at home, and helping children maintain relationships with their biological families. Foster care parents receive financial support from the state which is equal to an average monthly salary.



Strengths

- Constant improvement in the ongoing cooperation in the social sector and in the interconnection with different services.
- Development of new approaches, methodologies and practices.



Weaknesses

- Occasional mismatches in the foster care programme due to the use of services from different organisations.
- Lack of funding makes it difficult to ensure continuity of services.