



Friluftsliv in residential youth care: a resilience perspective on character-forming outdoor experiences

Joakim Jiri Haaland & Børge Baklien

To cite this article: Joakim Jiri Haaland & Børge Baklien (19 Apr 2024): Friluftsliv in residential youth care: a resilience perspective on character-forming outdoor experiences, Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning, DOI: [10.1080/14729679.2024.2344031](https://doi.org/10.1080/14729679.2024.2344031)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14729679.2024.2344031>



© 2024 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.



Published online: 19 Apr 2024.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

Friluftsliv in residential youth care: a resilience perspective on character-forming outdoor experiences

Joakim Jiri Haaland ^a and Børge Baklien ^b

^aDepartment of Social Studies, University of Stavanger, Stavanger, Norway; ^bDepartment of Social and Health Sciences, Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences, Elverum, Norway

ABSTRACT

We explore care workers' descriptions of friluftsliv (outdoor life) in Norwegian residential care homes in the context of child and youth care. Tracing a brief history of friluftsliv in Norway, we describe how it is appreciated for its health benefits and character-forming qualities. We also touch upon barriers to friluftsliv, which largely follow socioeconomic patterns, and situate friluftsliv in a broader international context of outdoor approaches. The data consists of nine semi-structured interviews describing care workers' experiences with friluftsliv at residential care. Using thematic analysis based on descriptive phenomenology, we generated two themes that depict what care-workers describe as character forming qualities of friluftsliv that are relevant for the adolescents: 'coping with challenges' and 'becoming familiar with culturally valued pursuits.' We use resilience theory as a framework to examine these qualities of friluftsliv.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 16 December 2022
Accepted 11 April 2024

KEYWORDS

Friluftsliv; outdoor;
residential care; resilience;
adolescents

Introduction

Norwegian child and youth care (CYC) residential care homes provide round-the-clock care to meet the residents' needs and promote healthy development (Lillevik et al., 2020). Accordingly, care workers provide opportunities for adolescents to thrive by engaging in essential areas of their lives, such as daily routines, meals, hygiene, school and homework, family relationships, and leisure time. Leisure time and recreational activities can support personal growth and development (Carruthers & Hood, 2007; Iwasaki, 2002; Iwasaki et al., 2018), and allow adolescents to learn essential coping skills (Sletten et al., 2015). In this article, we focus on nature-based activities organized by the staff known as friluftsliv, literally meaning 'open air life' and often translated as 'outdoor life' (Gurholt, 2008). Access to natural areas is claimed to support positive experiences and a feeling of nature connection for young people (Chawla & Gould, 2020). Encountering the natural world and developing a deeper relation to nature is an essential part of the idea and practice of friluftsliv (Henderson & Vikander, 2007). Adventurous and challenging activities is another important part of friluftsliv, which has also attracted attention in international research on outdoor programs regarding its potential to facilitating healthy coping (Booth & Neill, 2017). We use resilience theory, a framework commonly used to explain how challenges or adversity can lead to personal growth (Booth & Neill, 2017). Outdoor programs can lead to healthy coping if participants are gradually and appropriately

CONTACT Joakim Jiri Haaland  joakim.j.haaland@uis.no 

© 2024 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

exposed to challenges. Booth and Neill (2017) note that this is a question of balance, where the aim is to cope with manageable amounts of stress (eustress) successfully and avoid exposure to overly challenging situations that lead to psychological distress.

Costa et al. (2022) found that higher self-esteem, positive coping strategies and personal growth/autonomy are important protective factors concerning health and development for adolescents in residential care. Friluftsliv has long traditions in Norway and it has been argued that it provides personal development through character-forming experiences. However, not all young people have the same opportunities to participate in such activities. The social and economic resources that children and young people bring with them from home have a bearing on whether they participate in organized leisure activities (Jacobsen et al., 2021; Stebbins, 2011). Moreover, research in Norway shows that adolescents in residential care homes have more problems later in life than the general population (Drange and Hernæs, 2020; Kääriälä & Hiilamo, 2017). Many adolescents in residential care homes have interrupted schooling, lower education, lower income, and are more often outside the workforce than comparable groups (Kristofersen & Clausen, 2008). The resilience framework is appropriate because it aims to understand how we can create positive outcomes for target groups that experience adversity.

Our study is important because adolescents in residential care are potentially less likely to participate in friluftsliv activities, a context that can arguably support their development and mitigate some of the risks they are facing. As Gurholt (2023) and Steigen et al. (2016) argue, there is a need to study drivers and praxis developments forming and advising adolescents disposition and quality of life. There is an increased focus on quality in Norwegian child and youth care and how to replace as much as possible of the artificial institutional life with what we understand as a home and good care (Bufdir, 2010). Friluftsliv is a practice largely learned informally through family, friends, associations, or volunteerism (Tordsson, 2008). In a care home setting, care workers pass on knowledge of friluftsliv to adolescents. We explore what ideas and assumptions the care workers have about what they do and what they want to teach young people through friluftsliv. We aim to provide a deeper understanding of what character-forming qualities care workers find in friluftsliv, and examine these qualities of friluftsliv with regards to promoting resilience for this group of adolescents.

Friluftsliv

We use a broad definition of friluftsliv which includes a range of activities, from short walks or fishing trips in the nearby countryside to a weekend or week-long excursion on holidays. Typically, such excursions involve a stay at second homes, and these can vary from holiday houses relatively near a road to remote cabins without electricity and running water out in the wilds. Friluftsliv includes traditional activities like sleeping outdoors, either under the stars or inside a tent, gathering around a bonfire, and it also includes various modern activities such as downhill skiing and rock climbing.

While we use a broad definition of friluftsliv that includes a range of different activities, we focus specifically on its character-forming qualities. Norwegian practice of friluftsliv historically emphasizes adventure and exploration, as established by crucial advocates such as Arne Naess (1912–2009) and Nils Faarlund (born 1937) (Gurholt, 2008). Mastering challenging conditions in nature, they argued, develops a person's character, fosters independency and trust in one's capabilities (Tordsson, 2000). The character-forming qualities of friluftsliv can also be found in the famous explorer Fridtjof Nansen (1861–1930). In his speech from 1921 called 'Friluftsliv' (Wisnes, 1942) he idealized the character-forming qualities of what was defined as a solitary encounter with the elements of nature. In this traditional way of thinking, friluftsliv values self-reliance, character-forming and personal development through hands-on experience with wild nature. Thus, friluftsliv is believed to have prepared people to handle unexpected situations and take care of themselves (Gurholt, 2015).

Traditional friluftsliv, as described by Naess (1990) and Faarlund (2015), emphasizes hands-on encounters with nature. However, not merely as a means of adventure but also as a lifestyle and way

of gaining a deeper connection with nature. Guidelines for this type of friluftsliv imply respect for nature, living a natural lifestyle, and taking time to adjust to nature's stillness (Naess, 1990). Friluftsliv is portrayed as a quest to leave the hectic, urbanized everyday-life behind. To experience a simple lifestyle was key to experience a closeness to, and respect for nature (Naess, 1990). Gurholt (2015) argues that first-hand experience of nature is a core part of the self-enculturation afforded by friluftsliv. However, she adds that there might be a cultural shift '... from an emphasis of the formative experiences of nature, and nature literacy, towards placing a premium on vivid moments when nature adventurers feel fully alive' (Gurholt, 2015, p. 293).

Friluftsliv has become an increasingly important part of Norwegian public health, which also shows in government guidelines and policy initiatives promoting an active life outdoors. Being physically active in the outdoors promotes well-being, a healthy life, and experiencing a nature connection is considered to develop pro-environmental attitudes and lifestyle (Derivo et al., 2014; Ministry of Climate and Environment, 2016; Ministry of the Environment, 2010). Friluftsliv is frequently associated with a healthy lifestyle and plays a significant socio-cultural role in Norway (Gurholt, 2008; Gurholt & Haukeland, 2020; Riese & Vorkinn, 2002).

Being an outdoor person carries positive connotations that can help create a healthy self-image (Trangsrud et al., 2022). Accordingly, people over the age of 16 report having participated at least once in the following activities within the last 12 months: 79.2% of the population took walks/hikes of under three hours, 52.7% took hikes of over three hours, 36.6% took short cross-country skiing trips (<3 hrs), 19.2% took long skiing trips (>3 hrs) and 40.8% went fishing (Statistics Norway, 2021).

As this shows, the practice of friluftsliv is of great cultural value and recognized in the context of public health as a source to promote health and well-being for practically all Norwegians. However, while friluftsliv is an important part of Norwegian culture, Gurholt and Haukeland (2020) remind us that we should take issue with the taken-for-granted picture of friluftsliv as comprising a shared framework for identity. The use of friluftsliv differs between individuals and groups within the population, arguably reflecting a pattern of social inequality. Notably, participation in friluftsliv was statistically found to increase with membership in friluftsliv organizations, higher educational levels, access to a second home, and living in rural areas (Gurholt & Haukeland, 2020; Tangeland et al., 2013). Moreover, children from low-income and immigrant families are less active (Broch, 2020; Gurholt & Haukeland, 2020). Even though most people in Norway have access to natural areas and hiking trails, cultural barriers are significant.

Ungar et al. (2005) divide outdoor approaches into two categories. The first category is programming where adventure is essential, emphasizing challenging participants. In this way of thinking, nature is primarily the context where activities occur. The second category is environmental education, which emphasizes engagement with the natural environment and the participants' relationship with nature. Also Sandell and Öhman (2013) address this dualism regarding the role of nature in outdoor experiences. They argue that nature can serve two purposes, either as a scene we utilize to achieve other goals, or it represents intrinsic values where connecting with nature is a goal in itself. Both Sandell and Öhman (2013) and Ungar (2005) note that clear distinctions are not followed in practice. These distinctions form a continuum and it is more a questions of orientation, where different approaches and programs lean more towards one use of nature than the other.

Where it is most appropriate to place friluftsliv, compared to other outdoor approaches, also depends on how friluftsliv is conceptualized. Friluftsliv is historically defined through adventure, physical activity, and closeness to nature (Gurholt, 2008, 2015; Henderson & Vikander, 2007). Hofmann et al. (2018) argue that when examining the practice of friluftsliv it can be difficult to distinguish between elements of outdoor education and recreation. The authors present different expressions of friluftsliv, as exemplified by what are called the traditionalist view and the modernist view. These views differ in how they regard the use of technical means of transportation (relying on self-propelled transport promotes sustainability, physical activity, and contact with nature), and with regard to competitive elements (often argued to distinguish friluftsliv from sports). Hofmann et al. (2018) contend that this is no

black-and-white division, but more a question of different orientations. While some choose excitement and action as the main goal, others primarily seek the nature experience. In other words, in friluftsliv there are different motivations for venturing outdoors. Haaland and Tønnessen (2022) discuss the discrepancy between the philosophical ideal of friluftsliv and people's day-to-day practice of friluftsliv in an increasingly affluent society. The friluftsliv activities presented by our participants in this article largely represent a more modernist view. The friluftsliv they describe from the care homes includes the use of technical aids and a focus on activities, though the friluftsliv activities still maintain some degree of promoting contact with nature.

Across different outdoor interventions, and within different perspectives on friluftsliv, one common denominator is the value placed on overcoming challenges. Challenges figure as a core element in a range of outdoor interventions, e.g. Outward Bound (Outward Bound, 2018), adventure therapy (Gass et al., 2012) and wilderness therapy (Fernee et al., 2015). Studies find that challenges offered by outdoor approaches teach youth coping strategies (Trangsrud et al., 2022), challenge youth physically (Fernee et al., 2021), and provide an increased sense of agency and independence (Fernee et al., 2021; Thurber et al., 2007). Moreover, they teach participants that they are capable of more than they and others think (Conlon et al., 2018; Hall, 2007), and allow participants to re-invent themselves (McIver et al., 2018). Challenges are argued to benefit self-concept, personal growth and coping skills, i.e. areas that were highlighted as important protective and risk factors for adolescents in residential care.

Resilience

One reason for applying resilience theory is the positive outcomes related to the challenges of friluftsliv mentioned above. In Michael Rutter's seminal article (1987), he writes that resilience is about understanding how people respond differently to risk circumstances. One mechanism that can reduce the impact of risk is controlled exposure, where the protection lies in the 'steeling' qualities that derive from successful coping. Another mechanism concerns healthy self-concepts, like self-esteem and self-efficacy. Rutter (1987) argues that self-concepts are influenced by accomplishing tasks, e.g. by acquiring crucial skills. This in turn may increase the feeling of self-efficacy or higher self-worth based on the appraisal of others. In 2001 Ann Masten published the article 'Ordinary Magic,' arguing that resilience is a rather ordinary phenomenon that results from basic human adaptational systems. Masten contends that resilience is possible if children and their environments get the basic resources, opportunities and experiences needed to nurture the development of adaptive systems (2001).

Another reason for applying theory of resilience is due to friluftsliv understood as a culturally valued pursuit. According to Michael Ungar (2006b), resilience researchers need to pay more attention to adolescents' environments and their capacity to provide access to health-enhancing resources. Ungar defines resilience as 'both an individual's capacity to navigate to health resources and a condition of the individual's family, community and culture to provide these resources in culturally meaningful ways' (2006a, p. 55). Ungar (2013) calls this a socio-ecological understanding of resilience, focusing on the capacity of individuals and their environments to interact in ways that optimize developmental processes. While changes directed at an individual are important (first-order adaptation), Ungar (2013) argues that addressing the environment's shortcomings (second order change) is more likely to foster resilience. Any asset is only helpful if it is contextually relevant.

Two important principles involved in the social-ecological perspective on resilience are navigation and negotiation. Navigation concerns finding the available resources, e.g. discovering friluftsliv to increase well-being. Navigation refers to a person's capacity to seek help and the availability in the environment of the help sought (Ungar, 2006b, p. 225). Negotiation concerns discrepancies rooted in cultural and socio-demographic differences in the evaluation of strengths and resources (Ungar,

2006b, p. 225). Any assets or strengths that adolescents develop or gain access to only lead to resilience insofar as these are realized in their lives as shaped by their culture and context.

Adolescents in out-of-home care

The other reason we apply a resilience perspective is because it offers a way of understanding what it takes to promote positive development for target groups facing adversities. Adolescents have typically been placed in out-of-home care (OoHC) due to challenging circumstances in their family, substance abuse or severe behavioural disorders. The general goal of the placement is to ensure appropriate care, good living conditions and development support (Child Welfare Act, 1992). The Office for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufetat) establishes and runs residential care institutions in Norway (<https://bufdir.no>). Care homes primarily target adolescents of 12 years and above, as younger children placed in OoHC usually enter foster care. Most adolescents in care in 2018 were 16–17 years old (Drange & Hernæs, 2020, p. 8). According to statistics provided by the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir, n.d.), 834 adolescents (0–17 years old) were in residential care at the end of 2021. The legal grounds for placement according to the Child Welfare Act were care takeover (382), assistance measures (251), severe behavioural misconduct and/or substance abuse by the adolescent (123), and emergency removal (78). Gender-wise there is a slight majority of boys, with 513 boys and 458 girls at the end of 2021 in the age range 0–24 (Bufdir, n.d.). As for ethnic background, 461 adolescents in placement were ethnic Norwegians, while 371 adolescents immigrated to Norway or had at least one parent born abroad (Bufdir, n.d.). The duration of stay in residential care varies from a few months to a few years, with the majority leaving before 12 months (Drange & Hernæs, 2020, p. 12).

Kääriälä and Hiilamo (2017) conducted a systematic review of outcomes of adolescents in OoHC (including both residential and foster care) in the Nordic countries. They argue that young adults with a history of OoHC fare systematically worse than the general population, and that disadvantages tend to accumulate, often into complex problems. Their results show that adolescents in OoHC faced higher risks than the general population concerning self-supporting problems, educational challenges, mental health problems, crime, teenage parenthood, mortality, suicidal behaviour, alcohol and drug use, and disability pensions (Kääriälä & Hiilamo, 2017). Describing adolescents in Norwegian residential care, Drange and Hernæs (2020) find that 60% of boys and 75% of girls had been in touch with a child and adolescent mental health clinic at least once a year, while 30% of boys and 45% of girls went to the clinic at least 10 times a year (Drange & Hernæs, 2020).

Disadvantages and risks accumulate for adolescents that are placed in residential care. Our aim with this article is to describe and examine the character-forming qualities of *friluftsliv* in relation to promoting resilience for adolescents at residential care. Through interviews with staff at CYC residential care homes we reveal ideas and assumptions that care workers have about what they do and want to teach young people through *friluftsliv*. The descriptions provided by the care workers offer unique insights into the values and principles they perpetuate through their practice. The theoretical framework of resilience allows for a further examination of the purported character-forming qualities of *friluftsliv*. Our first research question is empirical; How do care workers describe character-forming qualities that *friluftsliv* affords for adolescents in residential care? This question is answered in the result section. Our second research question is more theoretical; In what ways can these potential character-forming qualities of *friluftsliv* promote resilience for adolescents? This question will be discussed using our theoretical framework in the discussion section.

This article contributes with insight that is relevant for practitioners and researchers with an interest in outdoor programmes for adolescents in OoHC. In our understanding, the use of outdoor recreation in OoHC receives less attention in international research compared to outdoor programmes as applied in the fields of therapy and education. Residential care workers' perspectives

contribute to the research field by shedding light on how friluftsliv ideas and principles are contextualized in modern-day practice at CYC residential care in an effort to meet the adolescents' needs.

Materials and methods

The data that form the basis of this article were generated through a thematic analysis of nine qualitative interviews with staff of residential care homes. In this section, we describe our research process and its ramifications.

Recruitment procedures and participant characteristics

Participants were recruited using purposive sampling (Guest et al., 2013). This is highly recommended in phenomenological research as the quality depends on selecting participants who have extensive experience of the phenomenon of interest and are able to describe this experience (Shorey & Ng, 2022). In our sample, one participant was recruited from a care home already included in the first author's ongoing research project. The other participants were recruited by responding to an e-mail invitation. The main inclusion criteria were that the participants had experience with nature-based activities in the context of residential CYC.

All participants were informed in advance that the questions in the interview concerned their thoughts and experiences regarding the use of friluftsliv in their work with adolescents. Most of our participants reported having long been involved in friluftsliv and described taking an active role at work to initiate friluftsliv activities. One could also argue that we used intensity sampling, since we recruited those care workers that had a special interest in friluftsliv (Guest et al., 2013).

The participants had extensive experience in CYC institutions, in CYC in general, and in facilitating various nature-based activities. Six participants were currently employed at care homes (four different homes in total) in different regions of Norway. The three other participants currently held other positions but had prior experience from residential care. Seven of the participants had more than ten years of experience from residential care homes. Of the remaining two, one had two years of experience from this work, while the other had worked for six years in care homes and nearly twenty years of experience in other areas of child and youth care. Six of the participants held a university degree in social work or another relevant area.

Data generation

The data consist of in-depth interviews with one female and eight male participants. Six interviews were conducted through Zoom, while three were face-to-face. The interviews took place from spring 2020 to summer 2021, and lasted a total of 13 hours and 45 minutes, giving a mean length of 1 hour 31 minutes. All participants were asked to bring 3–5 photos to the interview, depicting their experience of doing friluftsliv. However, only four brought photos. While we do not consider this material sufficient to warrant a separate analysis, the first author found that photos stimulated the conversation and helped produce rich data, as has been the experience in photo elicitation studies (Banks, 2018; Flick, 2014). Leonard and McKnight (2015) argue that using participant-produced photos in interviews also helps the researcher to be open for unexpected insights.

All interviews were conducted by the first author following a semi-structured interview guide with questions exploring the participants' experiences with friluftsliv activities at the care homes. The main themes from the interview guide were: 1) the participants' understanding of friluftsliv in relation to themselves and the adolescents in their care, 2) their observations of the adolescents'

mastery and struggles during friluftsliv, 3) their reasons for using friluftsliv in the child and youth care context, and 4) what adolescents would potentially miss out on if they were not introduced to friluftsliv in residential care. Semi-structured interviews allowed the participants to provide rich descriptions of their experience.

Ethical considerations

The research project (project number 368,276) was approved by NSD (the Norwegian Centre for Research Data), which evaluated our procedures for handling and storing sensitive personal information. Participants were advised not to share personal information revealing the identity of children and families they have worked with. Participants did not receive compensation for their efforts.

Data analysis

We used Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step thematic analysis based on descriptive phenomenology (Sundler et al., 2019). Descriptive phenomenology seeks to examine experience through lifeworld descriptions. Our lifeworld concerns our everyday first-hand experiences of the world, independently of any theorizing (Husserl, 1970). These everyday experiences derive their meaning from the social and historical context in which we live (Schutz, 2005). In our understanding, the concept of lifeworld fits in well with the ecological perspective on resilience, as the latter seeks to explore how resources are provided in culturally meaningful ways (Ungar, 2006a).

In a phenomenological analysis of our experience of something, 'things' are examined as they present themselves to us. We examined the phenomenon of friluftsliv in residential care, as it appeared in our participants' experience, and its meaning to them. In descriptive phenomenology, which is based on Husserl, it is argued that such meaning can be described (Sundler et al., 2019). Descriptive phenomenology does not provide causal statements, but the descriptions produced can offer a deeper understanding of care workers' experience with friluftsliv at residential care homes and the values and principles they perpetuate through their practice.

After familiarizing ourselves with the data (phase 1) through conducting and transcribing the interviews, and reading the material as a whole, we continued the analysis by generating initial codes (phase 2) (Braun & Clarke, 2006, pp. 88–89). Our generation of codes was inductive, as we wanted to describe the care workers' experience. Inductive reading includes being open for unexpected insights (Sundler et al., 2019). In descriptive phenomenology the researcher must withhold his own assumptions, e.g. those caused by prior knowledge or prejudice (Giorgi, 2009). This is known as bracketing, and the goal is to stay with the data as the participants provide them. Interpretative phenomenology, on the other hand, is more concerned with attempting to interpret the meaning of experience (Smith, 2011). However, striving for openness towards data does not translate to being directionless. Giorgi (2008) argues that we need to adopt a disciplinary attitude when analysing data, as we need direction and perspective to make our analysis feasible. In our case we employed a broad social work attitude during the analysis. Our specific theoretical framework was only added after the analysis was finished, which is suitable in order to withhold our pre-understanding and be open to the phenomenon as experienced by our participants (Shorey & Ng, 2022).

During phase 3 the codes were collated in groups, or patterns of meaning, which were then sorted to form overarching themes (Sundler et al., 2019). The second author was included in the grouping of codes and naming of themes. Keeping a reflective attitude and questioning one's pre-understanding are important to ensure scientific validity, which is strengthened via collaboration between multiple researchers (Sundler et al., 2019).

During phase 4 we proceeded to review the themes, checking them in relation to coded extracts and the entire data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The first author generated a map of the themes, which

was then further refined (phase 5) in collaboration with the second author. The coding and theme generation were revisited with the generated themes in mind, before arriving at the final themes as presented in the findings. Moving back and forth between codes, naming themes and the transcribed text is considered important to ensure scientific validity (Sundler et al., 2019). The presentation of findings that follows below is considered as phase 6.

Results

We generated two major themes that convey the care workers' descriptions of the character-forming qualities of friluftsliv for this group of adolescents at care homes. We labelled these themes *coping with challenges* and *becoming familiar with culturally valued pursuits*. To maintain anonymity and confidentiality, our participants were given pseudonyms and the names of locations and care homes were removed.

Coping with challenges

The care workers viewed friluftsliv as a context that provides a stimulating environment for adolescents and emphasized the role of facing and overcoming challenges. They also described friluftsliv as a context that provides experiences that make a lasting impression on the adolescents.

Arnljot says: . . . for me it's about giving him challenges. For instance, I parachuted with one of them [adolescents] last year, I take them rock climbing, I went for a swim in the sea with some girls from the care home on New Year's Eve. These are the kind of things they remember, and they grow from them and they feel a bit proud.

The care workers wanted the youth to feel proud of their accomplishments. They described friluftsliv as an opportunity for adolescents to get a real sense of achievement from their efforts. Our participants wanted the adolescents to improve their self-perception through the feats they accomplish:

Morgan: . . . the mountain might be around 1300 metres high. You make it to the summit and do a high five—'we did it.' And you're standing there, it gives such an incredible sense of achievement. You can hardly describe it, but I will try. Just to see how they [adolescents] light up when they've accomplished something they've never tried before, they've never even hiked in the mountains, and then there they are standing at the summit. And you can brag a lot about it and tell them that this kind of achievement is not something everybody does . . . On the return trip down again, they have experienced something, and they feel almost like kings and queens.

The care workers described friluftsliv as a context rich in opportunities for adolescents to accomplish feats after facing challenges. They mentioned a few examples of activities that require physical strength and/or involve a sensation of high adrenaline, e.g. the parachute example of Arnljot. Our participants also described meetings with nature as more than simply earning 'bragging rights.' Many of the activities that promote mastery are also about connecting with nature and with traditions of friluftsliv.

Brage: Just to look into the bonfire and feel a bit weary and it's dark all around you. And there are stars, and it might start raining or snowing and so on. Yes, it varies a lot. I think that it's just as much about that, as the climbing itself, or the hike, or looking at something or other. I think it's more the magical moments you can have.

The areas crossed and the mountains climbed often have names of personal, local or national significance. The care workers emphasized that friluftsliv provides 'real' accomplishments for youth. When young people are challenged and feel that they are struggling, they know that the praise they get is not faked. The challenges of being outdoors give immediate feedback, such as making a bonfire or dressing according to the weather. The care workers thus appreciate that the challenges related to friluftsliv are non-negotiable and require the adolescents to take action. They narrated how they include the adolescents in the relevant tasks, as everyone is expected to

contribute. If the adolescents can cope with the challenges, they may realize that they are truly capable and that their efforts matter:

Ansgard: He realized that he had to contribute to succeed. He had to cooperate. To know what it's like to be cold. To kind of [realize] that if we get our shoes wet, we cannot just lie down and cry. Then we need to be active to keep warm. That time it was so cold, when it snowed like crazy, it was hard to get the fire started. And if he wanted to eat, he had to get the fire started, so he couldn't just quit. Thinking about it, I reckon it must feel satisfying to see that you've succeeded, that they too can make it.

An important benefit from challenges is that adolescents learn more about themselves and face emotions they would normally avoid, like cold, hunger, exhaustion or their own fears (e.g. fear of heights). Although our participants mentioned a few examples like Ansgard's example above, many also stated that just being outdoors in nature could be unsettling. The participants highlighted the unfamiliar noises from animals, the darkness at night and the stillness in nature as unfamiliar to many of the adolescents.

Brage: To get a feel for limits. It doesn't have to be 71 Degrees North [Norwegian TV programme where contestants go through arduous and extreme wilderness experiences, similar to the TV programme in the USA known as 'No Boundaries']. But it can quickly feel like 71 Degrees North for many adolescents just to go to NEARBY NATURAL SURROUNDINGS [a ten-minute walk from the care home] and sleep in a tent ... at night it's completely silent. There are animal noises, you know, there are lots of frightening things in those woods. At least for many of these youngsters. And you miss out on this when you go bowling.

The participants described how they use friluftsliv to help adolescents push their boundaries. They saw it as their task to provide support by not giving up on the adolescents when they feel disheartened. They described the importance of helping adolescents overcome challenges, and related this to the creation of positive memories and a sense of mastery that they believe will make adolescents more robust to handle later challenges.

Tirill: You [as a care worker] need to put up with a bit ... We've maybe walked up a mountain or a hill. There's been complaining the whole time, all the way up to the summit. And then we make it to the top and then they're super happy. And later they only talk about fond memories from the trip, while I remember all the complaining. Probably half an hour of complaining, but you just need to put up with it.

The participants also found it valuable for adolescents to experience a range of emotions. They believed that many adolescents miss out on this possibility when they spend much of their days on screen time, expressing a concern that this kind of escapism cuts them off from being intimate with a broader range of emotions:

Louis: It has, it's the whole emotional spectrum that you find on a trip like that. And they get a chance to connect with their emotions on such a trip. Maybe you don't have the time to do this when sitting in front of a screen. Then it's mostly about getting sad when you get shot [in a video game].

While the care workers saw many benefits of friluftsliv, they described an inherent risk of failure when the challenges were too difficult to overcome. In such situations, they emphasized the need to react by turning the situation around. It was important for them that adolescents return with a positive perspective on the experience, enabling them to keep on trying:

Arnlot: I actually had to take off his skis and he had to go on foot down those hills that the others skied down. Then he found that he couldn't overcome the challenges. And then he hits the snow with his pole, and gets disappointed in himself, and then he gets angry at me or some other things. So then he can get annoyed and sad ... And that's when it's crucial to choose a path and distract him and say something funny ... and make him laugh a little. Suddenly he's forgotten and then we carry on.

Becoming familiar with culturally valued pursuits

Our participants express concern that adolescents would be at risk of missing out on friluftsliv experiences if they were not introduced to them. In the care workers' understanding, many of the adolescents in the care homes have less experience with friluftsliv than their peers.

I: Have these adolescents participated less in friluftsliv activities than young people in general?

Louis: Yes, that's true. And they may also have a negative attitude to it. When there's a [school] skiing day, they don't have skis. When there's a [school] outdoor day, they don't have woollen clothes, or layer 1, as we call it. They don't know what layer 1 is when they put on their clothes ... it could be due to their parents' financial situation or a lack of interest in friluftsliv. Maybe parents don't realize it's useful for their children to have some equipment. And then they [the adolescents] won't have the experience either.

Our participants mentioned a connection between lack of experience and lack of interest.

Kurt: And it's not everyone that's interested, most probably because they've never tried. Very few of these adolescents come from families ... with access to second homes who take them to the mountains and have taught them things all the time. Many come from families that don't have a second home, haven't used nature, haven't been hiking and haven't done things.

Our participants also expressed concern that adolescents in care generally devalue their own capabilities. They stated that adolescents need first-hand experience to change their perceptions, as they find that adolescents tend to underestimate their own capabilities.

Morgan: We often find that it's all too easy to refuse things that are new and unfamiliar. 'I can't do this' or 'that's scary' or ... the unknown often seems intimidating ... And it's probably due to them [adolescents] likely having experienced lots of uncomfortable or sad situations ...

In addition to being a new experience for the adolescents, friluftsliv activities were described as highly regarded culturally. The care workers felt that sharing these experiences would cast adolescents in a positive light. Friluftsliv experiences were described as a counterweight to less valid experiences that these adolescents already master, such as drugs and delinquent behaviour, which do not invoke positive connotations. Friluftsliv experiences are described as providing positive stories for adolescents to share with others proudly, stories that would grant them respect or admiration. Sharing such stories was seen as taking part in the larger community, making adolescents feel that they are of equal worth to others. Louis described how one boy's family reacted when they saw photos depicting the different outdoor activities at the care home:

Louis: And I remember that one boy who has participated in an incredible number of things and [we] had about 20 thousand photos. When he had his [Christian] confirmation, we made a slideshow that went on endlessly ... And I noticed that his family were positively thrilled by this. They thought it was very exciting, and they were sort of proud of what their boy had taken part in. And I remember his cousin came and asked me: 'Does it cost a lot to live at the CARE HOME?' (Louis) 'What did you have in mind?' (cousin) 'Well, you see I'd like to join activities like that myself, but I don't think Mum and Dad can afford it.' He probably thought it was like an event agency or something.

The participants also described how friluftsliv, because of its novelty and the unforeseen events that happen, creates lasting memories for the adolescents. Examples are the changing weather, the struggles involved in hiking, and wildlife encounters. Such events also bring out connection with nature as a part of the friluftsliv experience. Louis described an area he often uses himself for wilderness trips, a place where he also brings the adolescents. That area is known for its abundance of bears:

I: Is it the excitement related to bears you'd like to give the adolescents?

Louis: Yes, and it's also very beautiful. It's a beautiful area. And there's good fishing. The youngsters can really just sit back in the canoe holding a fishing rod while the adults paddle. And then they can paddle a bit when they are tired of fishing. And you go downstream, you know. You just must experience that area.

The care workers described moments where they felt that 'everything clicked' and the mood of the friluftsliv experience really settled in. Those were moments they wanted the adolescents to experience, as it was a powerful way of conveying the allure of friluftsliv:

Frans: Then you arrive, you're exhausted, then you light the fire. Then it gets nice and warm the way it does, when you don't have central heating or an electric heater . . . That's really experiencing nature, you know.

Arnljot [describing a cross country skiing trip starting from the skiing centre and going into the mountains]: I remember that he [adolescent] said he found it very beautiful. He noticed the landscape and the snow glistening. There were beautiful formations, wavy snowdrifts, and it was very pretty. There he stood, really absorbing the nature experience.

The care workers were asked what youth at the care homes would miss out on if they did not get any friluftsliv experience. Their answers largely reveal that they view friluftsliv as a way to enrich adolescents' lives and help them see possibilities they had not noticed before. Friluftsliv is portrayed as providing adolescents with life-long interests that extend beyond the time and space of their stay at the residential care home.

Tirill: You would have a limited life, I think. You would have a limited view of what is possible . . . I believe many people live like that . . . So I believe friluftsliv opens a bigger world.

Our participants do not portray friluftsliv as one-off events, but as introductions to activities that they hope adolescents will want to continue after leaving care. In addition to giving them lasting memories, the care workers tried to teach the adolescents skills and values, socializing them into the ways of friluftsliv. They talked about involving the youth in packing, helping them by making lists and checking that they packed the correct gear. During friluftsliv the care workers teach the adolescents important skills needed to take part in friluftsliv practice. Some care workers help adolescents take the necessary courses and certificates, like the Scuba Licence or an introductory course to kayak paddling. Learning is also experiential through the different tasks that adolescents are involved in during friluftsliv:

Frans: . . . you can learn about simple cooking on a trip. And you can learn a bit about what you ought to bring. And I remember when I was a scout leader, I wrote on the packing list that they should bring a juice drink [that you mix with water before drinking]. One of the boys, a 12-year-old, brought a 4-litre jug of pre-mixed juice from home. Poor lad, just that juice drink made up half the weight of his backpack [laughs].

Friluftsliv is portrayed as a normal experience for youth to have, a type of experience that others can relate to. Introducing adolescents to friluftsliv is framed as including adolescents in broader society, showing them that they belong through participation in activities that are highly regarded culturally. Care workers see friluftsliv as a positive counterweight to the negative settings familiar to youth in care homes. Friluftsliv is a way of showing adolescents that they are not so different from others.

Morgan: When we hike in the mountains it's a nice gesture that we greet other hikers.¹ And there are those that stop. And it's a funny thing with these adolescents, that it's a complete stranger that I don't even know. And they stop and [say] 'Hello, how sporty you are. Are you out hiking?'. And then it gets completely normalized that they're standing there chatting to someone they don't even know. This is not something they're used to, people stopping to ask questions and take an interest.

Tirill: It's often a problem our adolescents have, that they feel so different from everyone else. It's important that they have experiences that they can actually share, they've been to that [particular] destination or completed that [particular] hike.

Our participants pass on friluftsliv to adolescents while acknowledging that it represents values they believe in, and many share their knowledge, their private network and personal equipment. Rather than performing designated tasks out of their duty as care workers, they present friluftsliv as closely linked to their personal motivation and interest. In this way, friluftsliv is primarily taught by way of including adolescents in a practice and value system that is important in the care workers' lives overall.

Kurt: Before my family put their foot down, I spent a lot of my spare time in SKI CENTRE, and then I often dropped by the care home to bring some of the boys and girls.

I: Even in your time off?

Kurt: Yes, it was not a big deal having them there. I needed to keep that up. Because it's a lot easier for me to venture outdoors at work, if I manage to continuously keep a certain level [regarding adolescents' interest and skills]. To make sure it doesn't die out, you see.

Discussion

Our results show that care workers describe challenges and inclusion in culturally valued activities as character-forming qualities of friluftsliv. This suggests that care workers retain traditional friluftsliv values related to the role of encountering challenges and using friluftsliv to include adolescents in culturally valued skills and practices. We will now discuss the potential that challenges and the cultural significance of friluftsliv afford in promoting resilience for adolescents at residential care.

Resilience through coping with challenges

Our participants described the challenges afforded through friluftsliv as a way for adolescents to test their limits and push their barriers. These assumptions are supported in research linking challenges and mastery with improved self-regulation (Weeland et al., 2019) and adaptive coping skills (Biggs et al., 2017; Rutter, 2006). Self-regulation is a significant predictor of mental health and well-being. Adolescents previously exposed to maltreatment generally struggle with emotion regulation and have an increased risk of using avoidance coping strategies (Gruhn & Compas, 2020). The care workers described the challenges related to friluftsliv as an antidote to withdrawal, offering opportunities for adolescents to face challenges hands-on and experience mastery.

Mastering challenging situations has been proposed as a way for adolescents to locate their resources and cope better with stressors in their lives. Lazarus and Folkman (Folkman et al., 1986) have laid the groundwork for understanding coping processes. They distinguish between problem-focused strategies that target the source of stress, and emotion-focused strategies that concern attempts to regulate the emotional distress caused by a stressor. The descriptions provided by our participants show that they believe friluftsliv can involve dealing with both kinds of strategies. Targeting the source of stress is practised by practicing skills necessary to cover basic needs, like cooking and dealing with being outdoors in all kinds of weather. Regulating emotional distress is practised through dealing with fears (heights, darkness) and through perseverance, e.g. not giving up halfway on a hike.

Our participants described friluftsliv as a setting where the activities are offered as recreation, not competitive or performance oriented. The sense of self-efficacy achieved from coping with new situations is argued to provide adolescents with new evidence about themselves (Norton, 2010). Care workers describe the importance of these challenges being real and visceral, e.g. when both care workers and adolescents need to make contributions to cover basic needs such as food or warmth. Resilience research has long claimed the benefits of accomplishing tasks (Rutter, 1987). The 'realness' that our participants highlighted frames the challenges encountered in friluftsliv as meaningful. In our understanding, this meaningfulness is more apparent in relation to basic needs (reaching a cabin that offers shelter, making a fire, catching fish), compared to adventure-focused activities like reaching a summit (just to turn around and walk back down) or swimming in the sea.

The care workers narrate how adolescents can encounter difficult emotions during friluftsliv, and that they see it as an essential task for them as care workers to support the adolescents to cope successfully. Adolescents are encouraged not to withdraw, but to dare to try out new things and to keep going. Our participants also described how they aim to take each adolescent's capacities into account. Emotional safety needs to be a foundation when attempting to expand barriers, something

that various outdoor approaches have been criticized for forgetting in programmes where challenges are too extreme or necessary support is lacking (Davis-Berman & Berman, 2002). The support our participants described entails not giving up when adolescents struggle during a hike, taking part in friluftsliv activities with the adolescents, taking individual capacities into account, providing a positive atmosphere and encouragement, and bringing spare clothes and food. Other studies further elaborate on the topic of supporting adolescents (Conlon et al., 2018; Klevan et al., 2021). While friluftsliv might afford opportunities for exposing adolescents to challenges, care workers have the complex task of supporting adolescents to successfully cope. This responsibility aligns with Booth and Neill (2017) arguments on the importance of finding manageable amounts of stress in order to promote coping skills.

Our participants described friluftsliv as more than mere challenges, especially in terms of nature experiences. In our descriptions we find that they emphasized the value of moments where adolescents connect with nature. As examples they mentioned heat from a bonfire, darkness at night, and beautiful surroundings, thus portraying the nature experience as a benefit of friluftsliv. According to Sandell and Öhman (2013), there are two ways of motivating outdoor experience. One is through instrumental values, meaning that the outdoors is a means to achieve different goals, such as improving physical and mental health. The other way of motivating is through intrinsic value, e.g. achieving a feeling of belonging or connectedness with nature. Sandell and Öhman (2013) note that it is not a question of either/or, but rather a question of balancing intrinsic and instrumental values. Sandell and Öhman (2013) argue that intrinsic values are only realizable by direct contact with nature. In our understanding, the word 'intrinsic' has more positive connotations in relation to nature experiences than instrumental values. The descriptions provided by the care workers offer some nuances, as they also portray nature experiences as potentially challenging for adolescents in residential care. This indicates that exposing adolescents to nature experiences also requires thoughtful consideration and support.

Resilience through culturally valued pursuits

Our participants described adolescents in residential care as lacking in friluftsliv experience, suggesting that this might cause adolescents to avoid such activities. The descriptions from our participants correspond with research linking the practice of friluftsliv to socioeconomic status (Broch, 2020; Gurholt & Haukeland, 2020; Tangeland et al., 2013). To introduce adolescents in residential care to friluftsliv can thus be interpreted as an effort to create equity. Adding missing experiences or resources is in resilience literature referred to in terms of the concept of compensatory effect (Masten, 2001). The idea here is that if enough assets or resources are added to a child's life, this will counterbalance the unfavourable effects of socioeconomic differences.

While adding assets can potentially lead to resilience, friluftsliv also serves as an example of how recreational assets is necessarily tied up to questions of identity and culture. If equity is the goal of friluftsliv, we find it important to recognize the power dynamics between majority and minority groups in society. One may ask whether the staffs' efforts to pass on their passion for friluftsliv is an expression of cultural assimilation. However, the care workers also described how basic experience with friluftsliv is necessary for adolescents to make informed choices. Their argument was that adolescents' apparent distaste or lack of interest in friluftsliv is disguising a lack of experience or a lack of confidence. In this manner, the practice of friluftsliv at residential care is about creating equity for the adolescent by elevating their starting point in life to the same level as what care workers perceive that majority youth have.

As friluftsliv experiences are appreciated in the Norwegian culture, and endorsed in public health, the effort to create equity make sense given an ecological perspective on resilience where interactions between individuals and the environment are linked to optimizing developmental processes (Ungar, 2013). One example is our participants' descriptions of how families react with praise and admiration when they see photos or hear stories from the care home's friluftsliv outings. Whether or

not these families are able to provide friluftsliv experiences, their reactions as portrayed by the care workers, indicate a positive attitude towards friluftsliv. By enabling adolescents to participate in friluftsliv, care workers have the capacity to facilitate 'resources in ways that are culturally meaningful' (Ungar, 2013, p. 256). Via friluftsliv activities, care workers can show others that adolescents in care are also able to pursue activities considered healthy and worthwhile. Adolescents can not only convince others, but also learn to see themselves as people who can live up to cultural expectations of a healthy life (Conlon et al., 2018). The care workers described the friluftsliv experiences as a way for adolescents to convey positive self-representation and connect with others, e.g. by sharing culturally appropriate stories. By gaining positive experiences of friluftsliv, adolescents can add being a 'friluftsliv person' to their identity.

The care workers largely present friluftsliv as an ongoing project, as opposed to one-off events (although there were exceptions, e.g. expensive activities). We interpret friluftsliv as an ongoing project due to the care workers' focus on enabling adolescents to continue with friluftsliv activities after leaving the care home. One way care workers do this is through teaching them practical skills. One example mentioned by Louis is that practical skills, and arguably the confidence that follows, allow adolescents in care to participate in a school skiing day. The experiences gained at the care home thus becomes valuable also in other areas of their lives. Our participants teach the adolescents the skills required to enjoy the possibilities of friluftsliv, such as paddling, scuba diving, and how to handle wilderness elements. They also try to make the adolescents hungry for more, in other words creating motivation and interest, by emphasizing the importance of adolescents returning with a positive experience.

Introducing adolescents to novel activities and experiences is known as navigation in resilience terms (Ungar, 2006b). Our participants portray friluftsliv in the care homes as a way to expand the adolescents' repertoire of experiences. Friluftsliv thus serves as a memorable experience that contrasts with familiar urbanized settings and activities, e.g. the cinema, gaming or bowling. In our understanding, the notion of navigation (Ungar, 2006b) applies to enabling adolescents to join friluftsliv activities. As we understand negotiation it involves convincing others to make necessary adjustments so that adolescents in residential care are welcomed into the realm of friluftsliv. We found few descriptions of processes related to negotiation. The reason we did not get more descriptions of such attempts might be due to our questioning, this was not something we were asking about. We are therefore not implying that negotiation is lacking in the care homes. Ungar (2013) argues for the importance of addressing shortcomings in the environment (second-order change), as this is more effective than changing the adolescents (first-order change). The concept of negotiation suggests an added benefit if schools, families and organizations are involved. One way would be to support families with equipment and skills, to enable adolescents to continue friluftsliv when they return home as their stays in residential care are often relatively short. Another way would be to help organizations and schools to be more inclusive, lowering barriers to help adolescents with little, if any, friluftsliv experience feel welcome. Our participants mentioned the recognition that adolescents can receive from friends and family when participating in friluftsliv activities. Our participants attached great importance to friluftsliv, seemingly portraying it as an essential ingredient in a good childhood and a good life. A life without friluftsliv was described as limited. While friluftsliv practice can promote resilience by providing access to activities that fit in with cultural conceptions of a healthy lifestyle, the concept of negotiation reminds us that resilience is also a question of recognizing a variety of skills, backgrounds and cultural preferences as worthy traits and pursuits (Ungar, 2006b).

Strengths and limitations

This article has provided a thematic analysis of descriptive accounts from nine care workers with extensive experience of using friluftsliv in residential care homes for adolescents. One limitation is the relatively small sample of participants ($n = 9$), although this is not uncommon in descriptive

phenomenology (Giorgi, 2009) and purposive sampling (Guest et al., 2013). A strength of typical case purposive sampling is that through rich descriptions, participants can provide accurate insight into general patterns and processes across larger populations (ibid.). Our participants' backgrounds represented a breadth of experience in terms of length, geography, and educational background. Of our nine participants only one was female. Thus, we did not achieve gender balance, and our findings may perpetuate a male dominated perspective on friluftsliv. Gurholt (2008) argues that friluftsliv metaphors and practices have historically emerged as male-oriented and elitist. She argues that this has served to keep friluftsliv in a gender conservative 'grip,' limiting how we understand friluftsliv (Gurholt, 2008). Future research would benefit from including more female participants to provide a more nuanced perspective.

Another limitation is related to recruiting participants with a particular interest in friluftsliv; our sample does not represent the population of care workers in general. We risked gathering a less nuanced perspective more prone to bias and reproduction of 'truths' from within a cultural group of friluftsliv enthusiasts. However, this study illustrates how idealized traditional friluftsliv values are enacted through care workers who believe such values are essential for adolescents to develop into independent persons. From the care workers' experience of friluftsliv in residential care, we can learn how they consider friluftsliv qualities to be relevant in the context of CYC residential care, and in what ways friluftsliv can possibly promote resilience. Care workers' perspectives provide a deeper understanding and indicate the role of challenges and cultural significance as qualities of friluftsliv that are worth looking into. We need further studies, both longitudinal studies and insight from adolescents' own perspectives, to determine how adolescents experience friluftsliv and how it affects them.

A final remark on limitations concerns the restriction of the study to the Norwegian context. While this context is particularly relevant for the concept and practice of friluftsliv, further research focused on outdoor activities involving youth at risk in other cultural and institutional contexts would help to solidify our findings. This paper has focused on friluftsliv as a socio-cultural practice of recreational activities in Norway. Human-nature contact is an essential part of the benefits of friluftsliv and plays a major part in its historical and philosophical underpinning. Due to our focus on the character-forming qualities of friluftsliv, we may have paid less attention to the human-nature relationship than readers would expect, given the philosophical traditions of friluftsliv. These qualities of friluftsliv are arguably important to study considering that modern childhood reportedly is linked to a decrease in contact with nature and increased sense of eco grief (Chawla & Gould, 2020). Our participants describe a friluftsliv practice in the residential care settings that includes modern activities, thus portraying their practice to be in line with the modernist view on friluftsliv. This suggests that friluftsliv in the residential care settings we have studied shares similarities with other international outdoor approaches, e.g. focusing on adventure activities and coping with challenges.

Friluftsliv as a green life philosophy was mentioned by our participants, e.g. through nature encounters and conveying basic skills necessary for practicing friluftsliv, though it did not have a prominent role. This might be due to our questioning, or the short stays at the care home may explain why a closer human-nature relationship was not described in more detail. Haaland and Tønnessen (2022) argued that nature experiences are not often mentioned when adolescents describe friluftsliv in residential care, though it appears that many participants in that study made initial steps in that direction. This resonates with our findings that care workers described the activities as initiation into a friluftsliv culture, providing adolescents with basic experiences and skills. In this sense, they are passing on traditions, where friluftsliv is more of a way of life than stand-alone events.

Conclusion

Based on our empirical material we conclude that care workers describe the challenges afforded and cultural significance as character-forming qualities of friluftsliv. Care workers see friluftsliv as

experiences that counteract negative trends associated with urban living, for example reduced contact with the outdoor environments and tendencies to seek avoidance coping strategies. Adolescents in care are described as a target group that is deprived of opportunities to seek out healthy challenges. Care workers describe the opportunities afforded through urban living at the residential care homes as insufficient in this regard, and they see friluftsliv as an opportunity to complement these shortcomings. Care workers portray direct experience with friluftsliv as a way to increase adolescents' confidence and to rectify a potentially limited scope of leisure interests and capabilities stemming from lack of prior experience. The care workers' emphasis on the cultural significance of friluftsliv contributes to portray friluftsliv as being about more than challenges alone, and thus differentiates friluftsliv from more standalone events that focus on experiencing thrills and vivid moments.

We have discussed the potential that these character-forming qualities of friluftsliv have for promoting resilience for adolescents in light of resilience theory, which claim positive benefits related to successfully dealing with adequate and meaningful challenges. Giving adolescents friluftsliv experience is also depicted by care workers as a way to open future possibilities for recreation and create equity by including them in a recreational setting favoured by the majority population. If equity is to be achieved, an ecological framework on resilience suggests the importance of including other arenas and significant people surrounding the adolescents. One example is to advise schools and organizations on how to be more inclusive of adolescents from residential care. Another example is to include the adolescents' families and networks, enabling them to practice friluftsliv together, insofar as friluftsliv is a common interest.

Our findings contribute by providing accounts from care workers indicating select friluftsliv qualities and how these are translated to practice at residential care homes for adolescents. Friluftsliv ideals of providing character-building experiences to help adolescents develop independence and belief in their own capabilities play a prominent role in the care workers' descriptions. The inclusion of action-oriented or motorized activities indicates how the practice of friluftsliv is adapting to accommodate developments in modern leisure preferences. While one-off events may attract attention and offer thrills, the care workers descriptions reveal their intentions to pass on skills and values that stimulate a continued relation to friluftsliv for the adolescents.

Note

1. Greeting other people is very common when hiking in Norway, and comparatively uncommon in urban settings.

Acknowledgments

First, we wish to thank the care workers involved in this study for allowing us to involve them in our research. We would also like to thank Morten Tønnessen of the University of Stavanger, who is the PhD supervisor of the first author, for his thorough and very useful feedback on this paper.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Notes on contributors

Joakim Jiri Haaland is a PhD fellow at University of Stavanger (UiS) in the department of social studies. The PhD is in the field of child welfare. His main research interests are in green social work and therapeutic residential care within child welfare.

Borge Baklien, PhD, is an associate professor at Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences (INN). He has a PhD in health sciences, specifically in the field of positive mental health and human relationships. He also has a master's degree

in social anthropology and additional postgraduate education in public health and substance abuse prevention. His research interests include mental health, phenomenology, and sociocultural determinants of health.

ORCID

Joakim Jiri Haaland  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2508-3271>

Børge Baklien  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-1494-2838>

References

- Banks, M. (2018). *Using visual data in qualitative research (Vol. 5)*. Sage.
- Biggs, A., Brough, P., & Drummond, S. (2017). Lazarus and Folkman's psychological stress and coping theory. In C. L. Cooper & J. C. Quick (Eds.), *The handbook of stress and health* (pp. 349–364). John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118993811.ch21>.
- Booth, J. W., & Neill, J. T. (2017). Coping strategies and the development of psychological resilience. *Journal of Outdoor and Environmental Education*, 20(1), 47–54. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03401002>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Broch, T. B. (2020). *Urbant ungdomsliv, natur og følelser [Urban youth life, nature and feelings]*. Cappelen Damm AS.
- Bufdir. (2010). *Kvalitet i barneverninstitusjoner*. The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. https://bibliotek.bufdir.no/BUF/101/Kvalitet_i_barneverninstitusjoner.pdf
- Bufdir. (n.d.). *Barn i institusjon [Children in institutions]*. The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs. Retrieved May 31, 2023, from <https://www.bufdir.no/statistikk-og-analyse/barnevern/Barn-i-institusjon>
- Carruthers, C. P., & Hood, C. D. (2007). Enhancing leisure experience and developing resources: The leisure and well-being model, Part II. *Therapeutic Recreation Journal*, 41(4), 298–325.
- Chawla, L., & Gould, R. (2020). Childhood nature connection and constructive hope: A review of research on connecting with nature and coping with environmental loss. *People and Nature*, 2(3), 619–642. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pan3.10128>
- Child Welfare Act. (1992). *Act relating to child welfare services (LOV-1992-07-17-100)*. Lovdata. <https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/1992-07-17-100?q=barnevern>
- Conlon, C. M., Wilson, C. E., Gaffney, P., & Stoker, M. (2018). Wilderness therapy intervention with adolescents: Exploring the process of change. *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning*, 18(4), 353–366. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14729679.2018.1474118>
- Costa, M., Mota, C. P., & Matos, P. M. (2022). Predictors of psychosocial adjustment in adolescents in residential care: A systematic review. *Child Care in Practice*, 28(1), 52–81. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13575279.2019.1680533>
- Davis-Berman, J., & Berman, D. (2002). Risk and anxiety in adventure programming. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 25(2), 305–310. <https://doi.org/10.1177/105382590202500209>
- Dervo, B. K., Skår, M., Köhler, B., Øian, H., Vistad, O. I., Andersen, O., & Gundersen, V. (2014). *Friluftsliv i Norge anno 2014—Status og utfordringer [Outdoor life in Norway 2014: Status and challenges]*. NINA report No. 1073. NINA - Norsk Institutt for Naturforskning/Norwegian Institute for Nature Research. <https://www.nina.no/archive/nina/PppBasePdf/rapport%5C2014%5C1073.pdf>
- Drange, N., & Hernæs, Ø. M. (2020). *Kvantitativ beskrivelse av institusjonspopulasjonen [A quantitative description of the population in institutions]*. Report 3/2020. Frisch Centre. http://www.frisch.uio.no/publikasjoner/pdf/rapp20_03.pdf
- Faarlund, N. (2015). *Friluftsliv: en dannelsesreise*. Ljå forlag.
- Fernee, C. R., Gabrielsen, L. E., Andersen, A. J. W., & Mesel, T. (2021). Emerging stories of self: Long-term outcomes of wilderness therapy in Norway. *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning*, 21(1), 67–81. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14729679.2020.1730205>
- Fernee, C. R., Mesel, T., Gabrielsen, L. E., & Andersen, A. J. W. (2015). Therapy in the open air: Introducing wilderness therapy to adolescent mental health services in Scandinavia. *Scandinavian Psychologist*, 2, e14. <https://doi.org/10.15714/scandpsychol.2.e14>
- Flick, U. (2014). *An introduction to qualitative research*. Sage.
- Folkman, S., Lazarus, R. S., Dunkel-Schetter, C., DeLongis, A., & Gruen, R. J. (1986). Dynamics of a stressful encounter: Cognitive appraisal, coping, and encounter outcomes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 50(5), 992. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.50.5.992>
- Gass, M. A., Gillis, H. L., & Russell, K. C. (2012). *Adventure therapy: Theory, research, and practice*. Routledge.
- Giorgi, A. (2008). Difficulties encountered in the application of the phenomenological method in the social sciences. *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, 8(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20797222.2008.11433956>
- Giorgi, A. (2009). *The descriptive phenomenological method in psychology*. Duquesne University Press.

- Gruhn, M. A., & Compas, B. E. (2020). Effects of maltreatment on coping and emotion regulation in childhood and adolescence: A meta-analytic review. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, *103*, 104446. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2020.104446>
- Guest, G., Namey, E. E., & Mitchell, M. L. (2013). *Collecting qualitative data: A field manual for applied research*. Sage.
- Gurholt, K. P. (2008). Norwegian friluftsliv and ideals of becoming an 'educated man'. *Journal of Adventure Education & Outdoor Learning*, *8*(1), 55–70. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14729670802097619>
- Gurholt, K. P. (2015). Friluftsliv: Nature-friendly adventures for all. In Humberstone, B., Prince, H., & Henderson K. A. (Eds.), *Routledge international handbook of outdoor studies* (pp. 288–296). Routledge.
- Gurholt, K. P. (2023). Governance of nature-based health promotion: Public policy and volunteer organisations' innovations of outdoor activities among urban youth. *Sport, Education and Society*, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2023.2209105>
- Gurholt, K. P., & Haukeland, P. I. (2020). Scandinavian friluftsliv (outdoor life) and the Nordic model: Passions and paradoxes. In M. B. Tin, F. Telseth, J. O. Tangen, & R. Giulianotti (Eds.), *The Nordic model and physical culture* (pp. 165–181). Routledge.
- Haaland, J. J., & Tønnessen, M. (2022). Recreation in the outdoors—exploring the friluftsliv experience of adolescents at residential care. *Child & Youth Services*, *43*(3), 206–236. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0145935X.2022.2044771>
- Hall, M. (2007). Mentoring the Natural Way: Native American approaches to education. *Reclaiming Children & Youth*, *16* (1).
- Henderson, V., & Vikander, N. (2007). *Nature first: Outdoor life the friluftsliv way*. Natural Heritage Books.
- Hofmann, A. R., Rolland, C. G., Rafoss, K., & Zoglowek, H. (2018). *Norwegian friluftsliv: A way of living and learning in nature*. Waxmann Verlag.
- Husserl, E. (1970). *The crisis of European sciences and transcendental phenomenology: An introduction to phenomenological philosophy*. Northwestern University Press.
- Iwasaki, Y. (2002). Exploring leisure coping processes: Roles of leisure activities and psychosocial functions of leisure coping. *Annals of Leisure Research*, *5*(1), 27–50. <https://doi.org/10.1080/11745398.2002.10600897>
- Iwasaki, Y., Messina, E. S., & Hopper, T. (2018). The role of leisure in meaning-making and engagement with life. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, *13*(1), 29–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2017.1374443>
- Jacobsen, S. E., Andersen, P. L., Nordø, Å. D., Sletten, M. A., & Arnesen, D. (2021). Sosial ulikhet i barn og unges deltakelse i organiserte fritidsaktiviteter. *Rapport fra Senter for forskning på sivilsamfunn og frivillig sektor*.
- Kääriälä, A., & Hiilamo, H. (2017). Children in out-of-home care as young adults: A systematic review of outcomes in the Nordic countries. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *79*, 107–114. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2017.05.030>
- Klevan, T., Bank, R.-M., Borg, M., Karlsson, B., Krane, V., Ogundipe, E., Semb, R., Sommer, M., Sundet, R., Sælør, K. T., Tønnessen, S. H., & Kim, H. S. (2021). Part I: Dynamics of recovery: A meta-synthesis exploring the nature of mental health and substance abuse recovery. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *18*(15), 7761. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18157761>
- Kristofersen, L. B., & Clausen, S. E. (2008). *Barnevern og sosialhjelp*. NOVA Notat 3/2008. Oslo Metropolitan University - OsloMet: NOVA. <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12199/3287>
- Leonard, M., & McKnight, M. (2015). Look and tell: Using photo-elicitation methods with teenagers. *Children's Geographies*, *13*(6), 629–642. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2014.887812>
- Lillevik, O. G., Landmark, B., & Stokvold, Ø. (2020). Miljøterapi i barnevernsinstitusjoner: Juridiske, teoretiske og praktiske perspektiver [Milieu therapy in child care facilities: Legal, theoretical and practical perspectives]. Fagbokforlaget.
- Masten, A. S. (2001). Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development. *American Psychologist*, *56*(3), 227. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.56.3.227>
- McIver, S., Senior, E., & Francis, Z. (2018). Healing fears, conquering challenges: Narrative outcomes from a wilderness therapy program. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, *13*(4), 392–404. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2018.1447415>
- Ministry of Climate and Environment. (2016). Friluftsliv—Natur som kilde til helse og livskvalitet [Outdoor life: Nature as a source of health and quality of life]. *Stortingsmelding No. 18*. <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/9147361515a74ec8822c8dac5f43a95a/no/pdfs/stm201520160018000ddpdfs.pdf>
- Ministry of the Environment. (2010). *The nature experience and mental health - Report of the "outdoor life and mental health" Nordic project*. (pp. 1–27). <https://www.regjeringen.no/globalassets/upload/md/vedlegg/rapporter/t-1474e.pdf>
- Naess, A. (1990). *Ecology, community and lifestyle: Outline of an ecosophy*. Cambridge University Press.
- Norton, C. L. (2010). Into the wilderness—A case study: The psychodynamics of adolescent depression and the need for a holistic intervention. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, *38*(2), 226–235. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10615-009-0205-5>
- Outward Bound. (2018, February 4). *Outward bound*. <https://www.outwardbound.org/intercept/intercept/>
- Riese, H., & Vorkinn, M. (2002). The production of meaning in outdoor recreation: A study of Norwegian practice. *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift - Norwegian Journal of Geography*, *56*(3), 199–206. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00291950260293020>
- Rutter, M. (1987). Psychosocial resilience and protective mechanisms. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, *57*(3), 316–331. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1939-0025.1987.tb03541.x>

- Rutter, M. (2006). Implications of resilience concepts for scientific understanding. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1094(1), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1196/annals.1376.002>
- Sandell, K., & Öhman, J. (2013). An educational tool for outdoor education and environmental concern. *Journal of Adventure Education & Outdoor Learning*, 13(1), 36–55. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14729679.2012.675146>
- Schutz, A. (2005). Hverdagslivets sociologi [*The sociology of everyday life*]. Hans Reitzel.
- Shorey, S., & Ng, E. D. (2022). Examining characteristics of descriptive phenomenological nursing studies: A scoping review. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 78(7), 1968–1979. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.15244>
- Sletten, M. A., Strandbu, Å., & Gilje, Ø. (2015). Idrett, dataspilling og skole –konkurrerende eller «på lag»? *Norsk pedagogisk tidsskrift*, 99(5), 334–350. <https://doi.org/10.18261/ISSN1504-2987-2015-05-03>
- Smith, J. A. (2011). Evaluating the contribution of interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Health Psychology Review*, 5(1), 9–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17437199.2010.510659>
- Statistics Norway. (2021). *Sports and Outdoor Activities, Survey on Living Conditions*. <https://www.ssb.no/en/kultur-og-fritid/idrett-og-friluftsliv/statistikk/idrett-og-friluftsliv-levekarundersokelsen>
- Stebbins, R. A. (2011). *The idea of leisure: First principles*. Transaction Publishers.
- Steigen, A. M., Kogstad, R., & Hummelvoll, J. K. (2016). Green Care services in the Nordic countries: An integrative literature review. *European Journal of Social Work*, 19(5), 692–715. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691457.2015.1082983>
- Sundler, A. J., Lindberg, E., Nilsson, C., & Palmér, L. (2019). Qualitative thematic analysis based on descriptive phenomenology. *Nursing Open*, 6(3), 733–739. <https://doi.org/10.1002/nop2.275>
- Tangeland, T., Aas, Ø., & Odden, A. (2013). The socio-demographic influence on participation in outdoor recreation activities – implications for the Norwegian domestic market for nature-based tourism. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 13(3), 190–207. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15022250.2013.819171>
- Thurber, C. A., Scanlin, M. M., Scheuler, L., & Henderson, K. A. (2007). Youth development outcomes of the camp experience: Evidence for multidimensional growth. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 36(3), 241–254. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-006-9142-6>
- Tordsson, B. (2000). “Risikotakeren” i lys av forskjellige perspektiver på friluftsliv [*The risk taker’ in light of various perspectives on outdoor life*]. Paper presented at a seminar of the sports research programme of the research council of Norway. <http://www.naturliv.no/nalle/sartre.pdf>
- Tordsson, B. (2008). Friluftslivets politisk-institusjonelle marginalisering. *Nytt norsk tidsskrift*, 25(1), 42–54. <https://doi.org/10.18261/ISSN1504-3053-2008-01-04>
- Trangsrud, L. K. J., Borg, M., Bratland-Sanda, S., & Klevan, T. (2022). Shifting the eating disorder into the background—friluftsliv as facilitating supportive strategies in everyday life recovery. *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning*, 22(2), 165–179. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14729679.2021.1894954>
- Ungar, M. (2006a). Nurturing hidden resilience in at-risk youth in different cultures. *Journal of the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry = Journal de l'Academie Canadienne de Psychiatrie de l'enfant Et de l'adolescent*, 15(2), 53.
- Ungar, M. (2006b). Resilience across cultures. *British Journal of Social Work*, 38(2), 218–235. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcl343>
- Ungar, M. (2013). Resilience, trauma, context, and culture. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 14(3), 255–266. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838013487805>
- Ungar, M., Dumond, C., & McDonald, W. (2005). Risk, resilience and outdoor programmes for at-risk children. *Journal of Social Work*, 5(3), 319–338. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468017305058938>
- Weeland, J., Moens, M. A., Beute, F., Assink, M., Staaks, J. P. C., & Overbeek, G. (2019). A dose of nature: Two three-level meta-analyses of the beneficial effects of exposure to nature on children’s self-regulation. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 65, 101326. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2019.101326>
- Wisnes, A. H. (Ed.). (1942). Nansens Røst: Artikler og Taler av Fridtjof Nansen II 1908–1930. In Wisnes, A. H. (Ed.), *Nansen’s voice: Articles and speeches by Fridtjof Nansen* (Vol. II, pp. 1908–1930). Jacob Dybwads Forlag.