



“MY LIFE ON THE OUTSIDE”: A PERSPECTIVE OF YOUNG CARE LEAVERS IN BRAZIL ON THEIR CARE EXPERIENCE

Patrick Reason



Movimento Nacional
Pró Convivência Familiar e Comunitária

From Orphanage to ACRC



HOW BIG BRAZIL IS?



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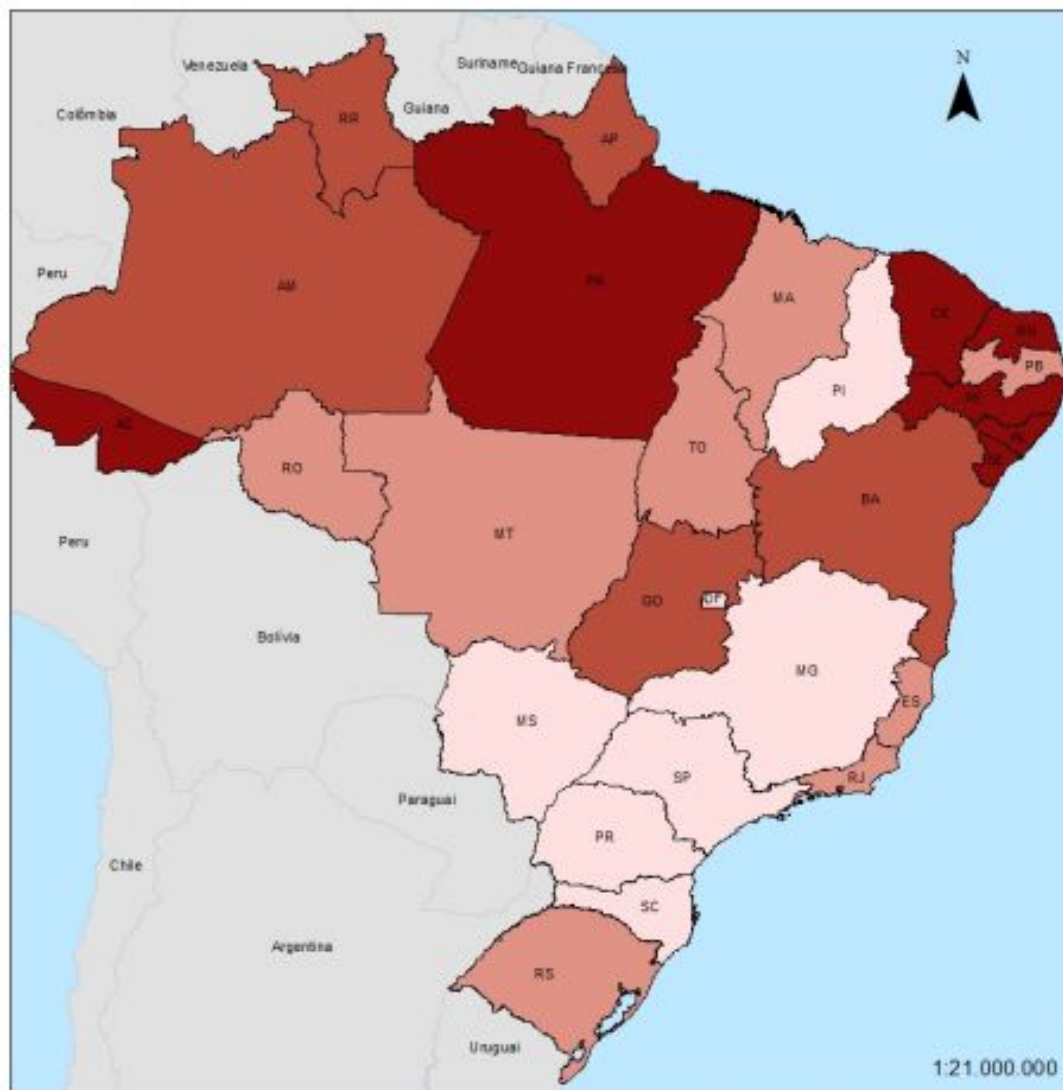
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Survey of Alternative Care - COVID19



Índice de Violência Doméstica contra mulheres, crianças ou adolescentes por Estado

Brasil: taxas de homicídios por UF (2017)



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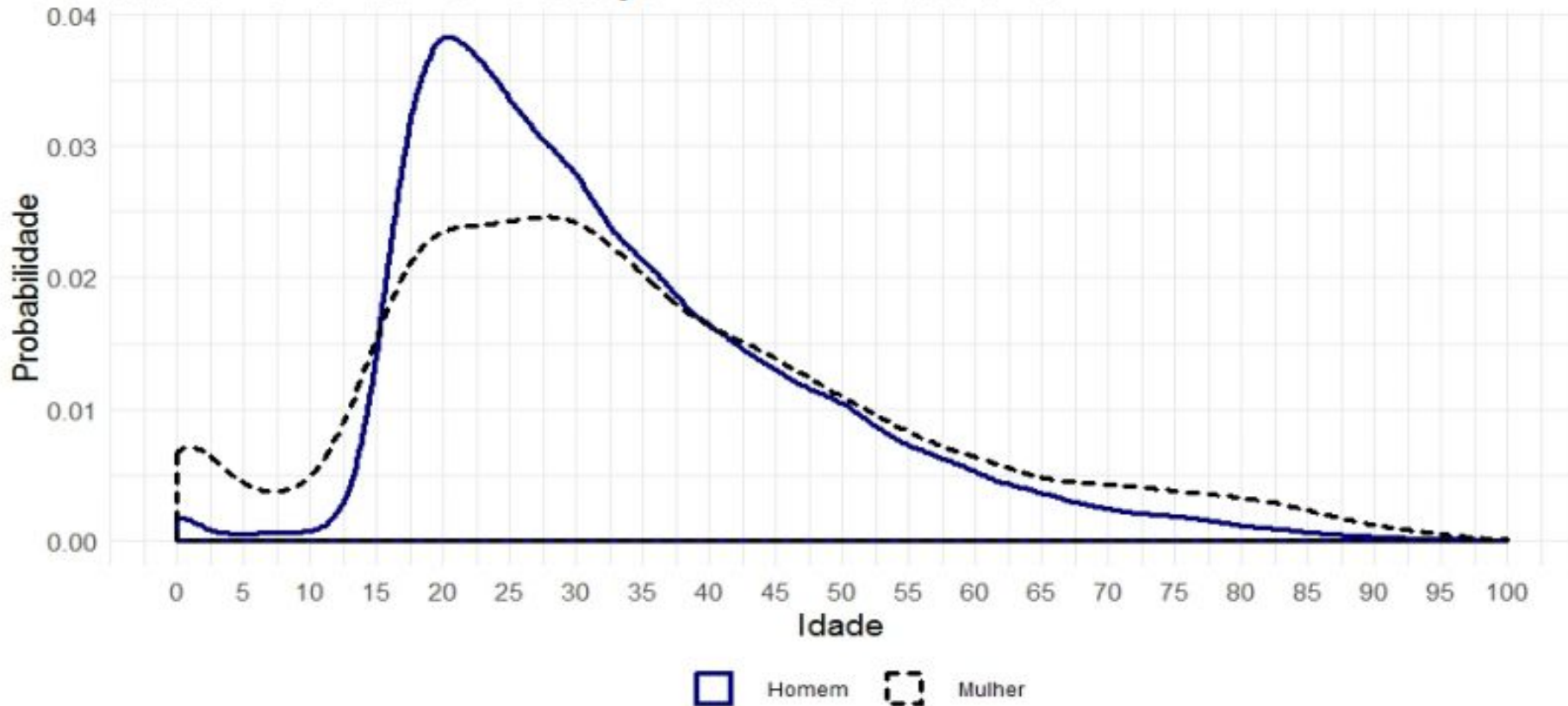
Number of homicides per country



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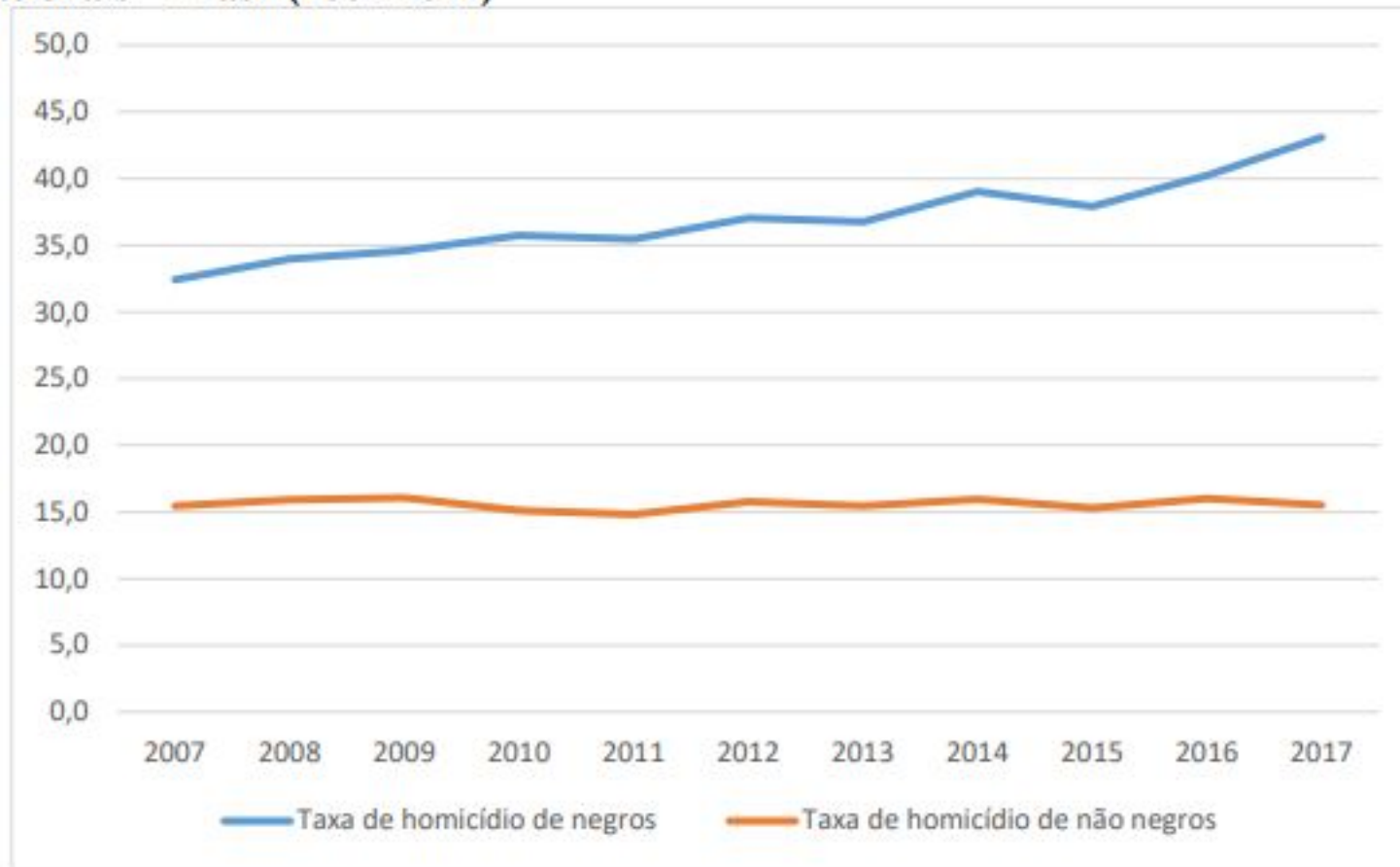
Number of Homicides by Gender and Age

Densidade de Kernel dos homicídios por idade e sexo da vítima



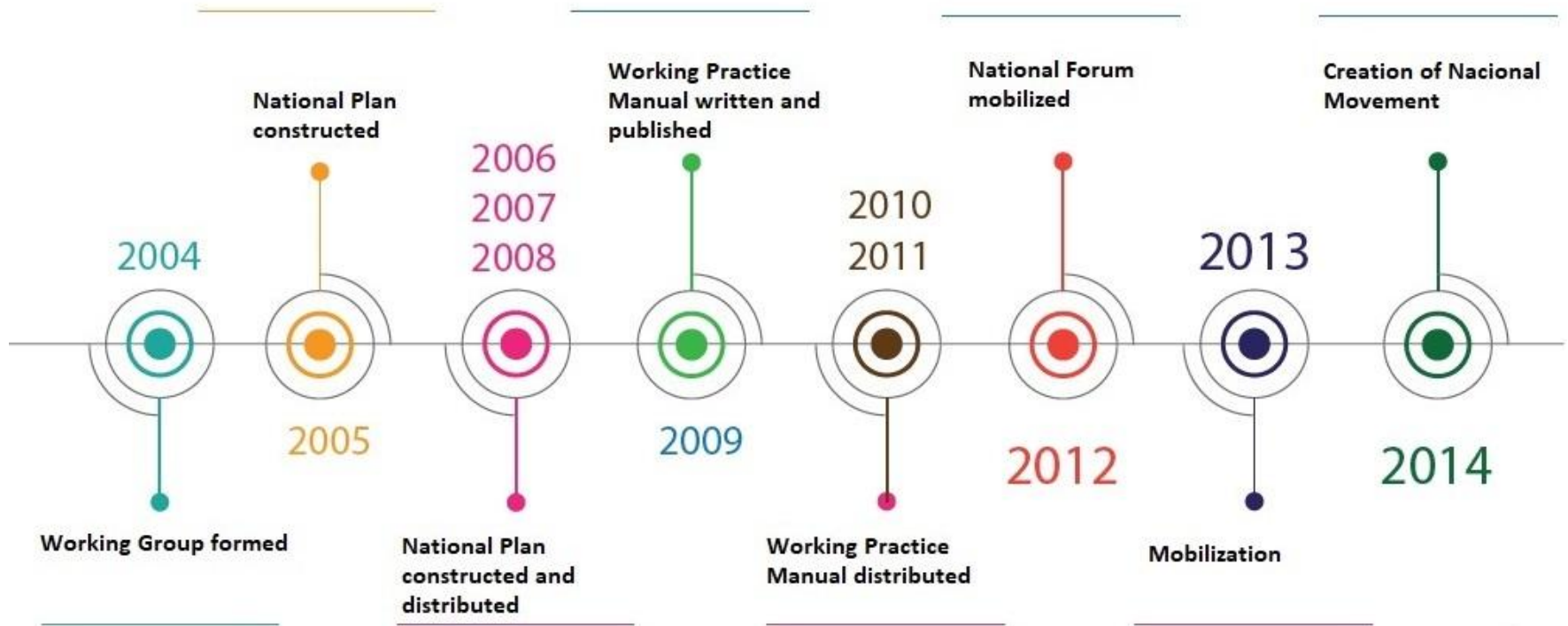
Number of Homicides by Race

Taxas de homicídios de negros e de não negros a cada 100 mil habitantes dentro destes grupos populacionais – Brasil (2007-2017)



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Brazilian National Movement for the Right of Children and Adolescents to live in Family and Community



Brazilian National Movement for the Right of Children and Adolescents to live in Family and Community



Alternative Care Guidelines

I would like to thank the government of **Brazil** for its leadership in convening the Group of Friends and tirelessly working towards the recognition of the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children. Of course, this work would not have been possible without the dedicated support from NGOs and other relevant partners, most notably the Geneva-based NGO Working Group on children without parental care.

I am very happy to express the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's sincere hope that the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children will provide invaluable guidance in the implementation of the UNCRC, and welcome this publication as a first step in the dissemination of the Guidelines.

Prof. Yanghee Lee

Chairperson, UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

Seoul, Korea

November 20, 2009

UNGA 2019

United Nations

A/74/395



General Assembly

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Original: English

Seventy-fourth session
Agenda item 66

Promotion and protection of the rights of children

Report of the Third Committee

Children without parental care

21. *Recalls* that the Convention on the Rights of the Child recognizes that a child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality and potential, should grow up in a family environment and that a child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State, and that States parties shall, in accordance with their national laws and their obligations under the relevant international instruments in this field, ensure safe and appropriate quality alternative care for such a child;

National Advocacy Plan



National Alternative Care Policy Evaluation



Young Care Leavers Evaluation of Brazilian Care Policy



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Young Care Leavers Evaluation of Brazilian Care Policy

REALIZATION

National Movement of the Rights of Children to Live In Family and Community

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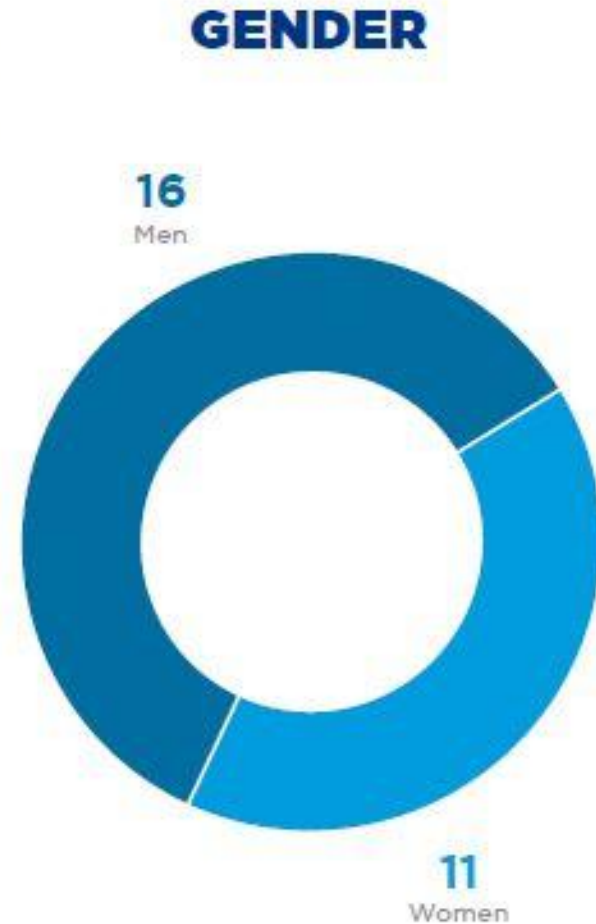
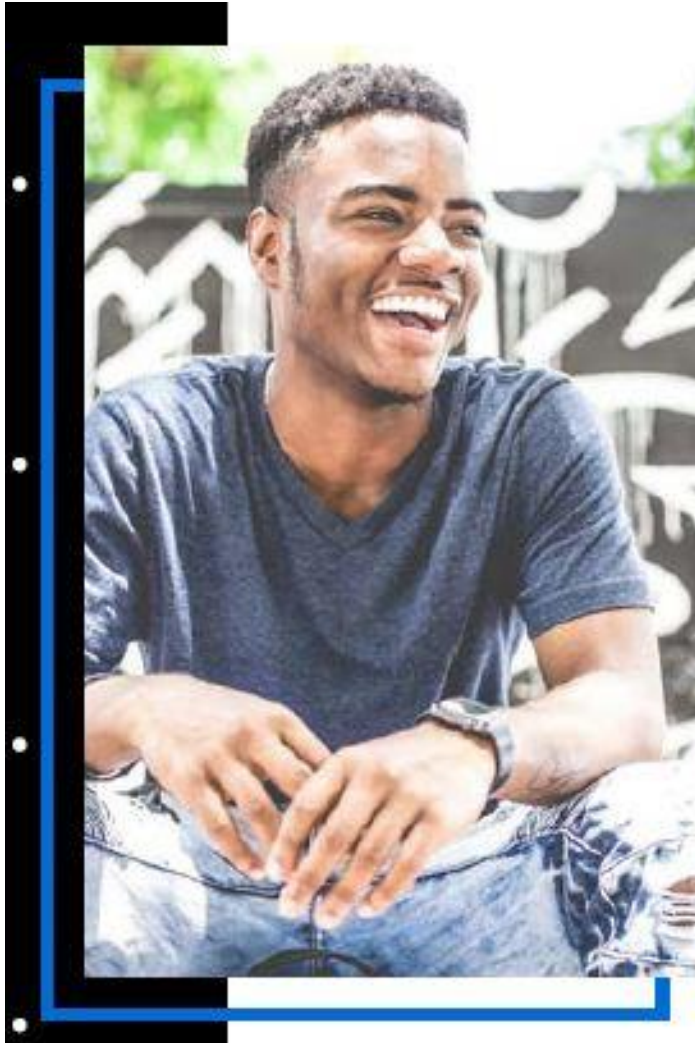
THE STUDY

This study aimed to understand care-leavers' perspective, highlighting positive and negative experiences in relation to the three main dimensions of the PNCFC: (1) support for the family and prevention of family separation; (2) reorganization of alternative care services; and (3) adoption centered on the best interests of the child and adolescent.

The research heard the opinions of twenty-seven young people who had been in care services for children and adolescents, from the five different Brazilian macro-regions. This took place during the months of August and September 2020, using focus groups and individual interviews. All of these were carried out online respecting the implications of social distancing imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

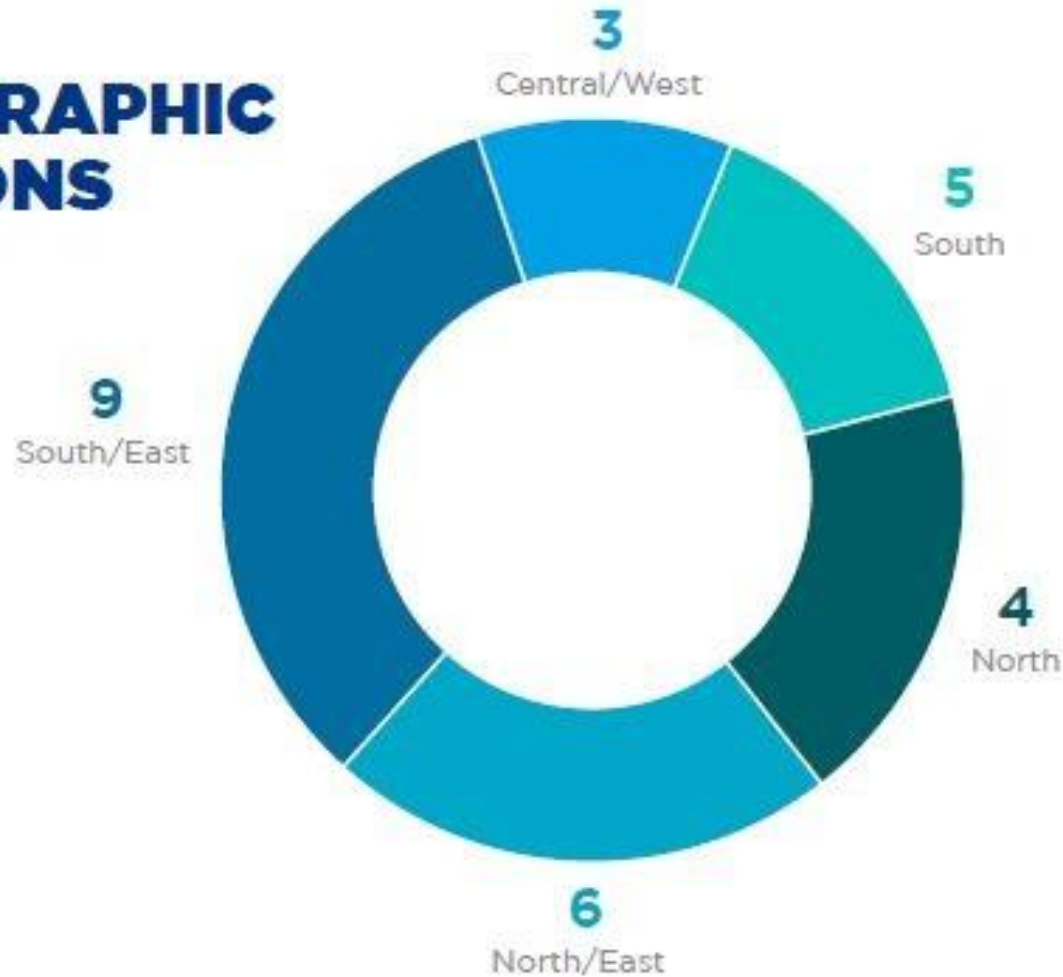


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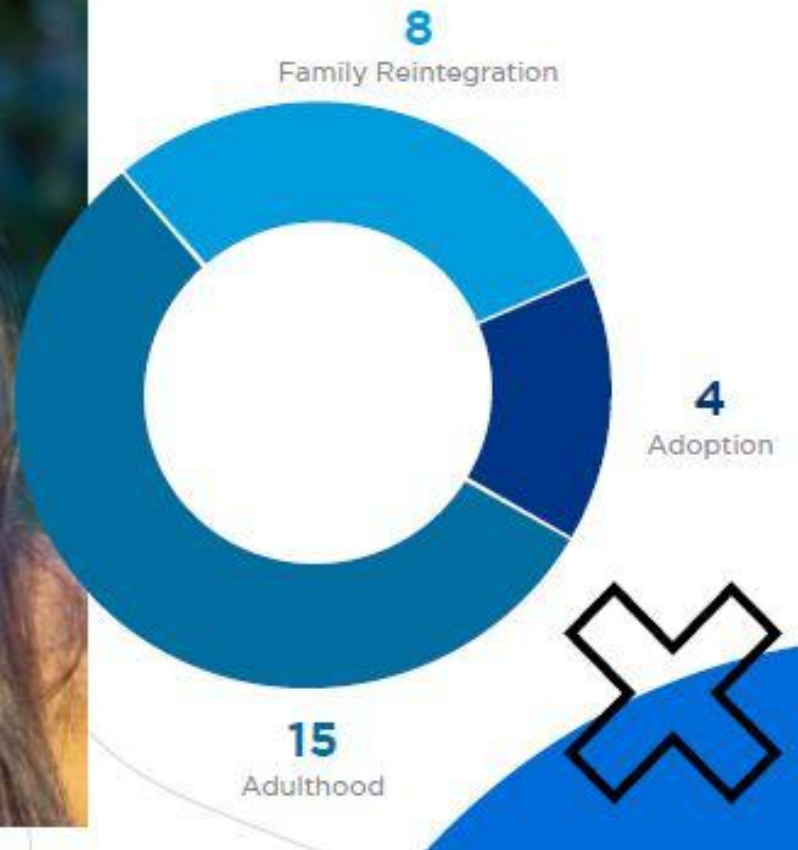
GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS



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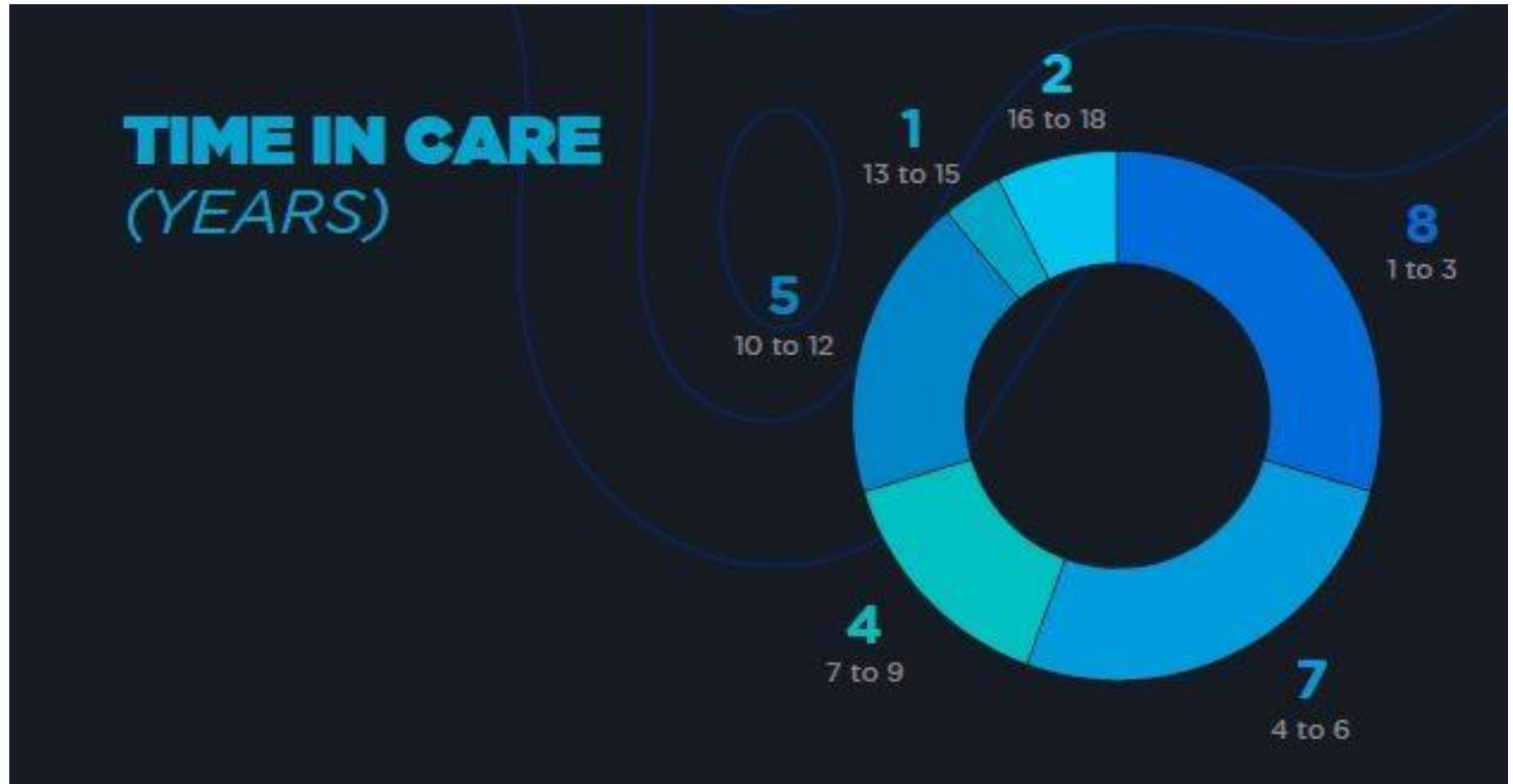


MOTIVE FOR LEAVING CARE

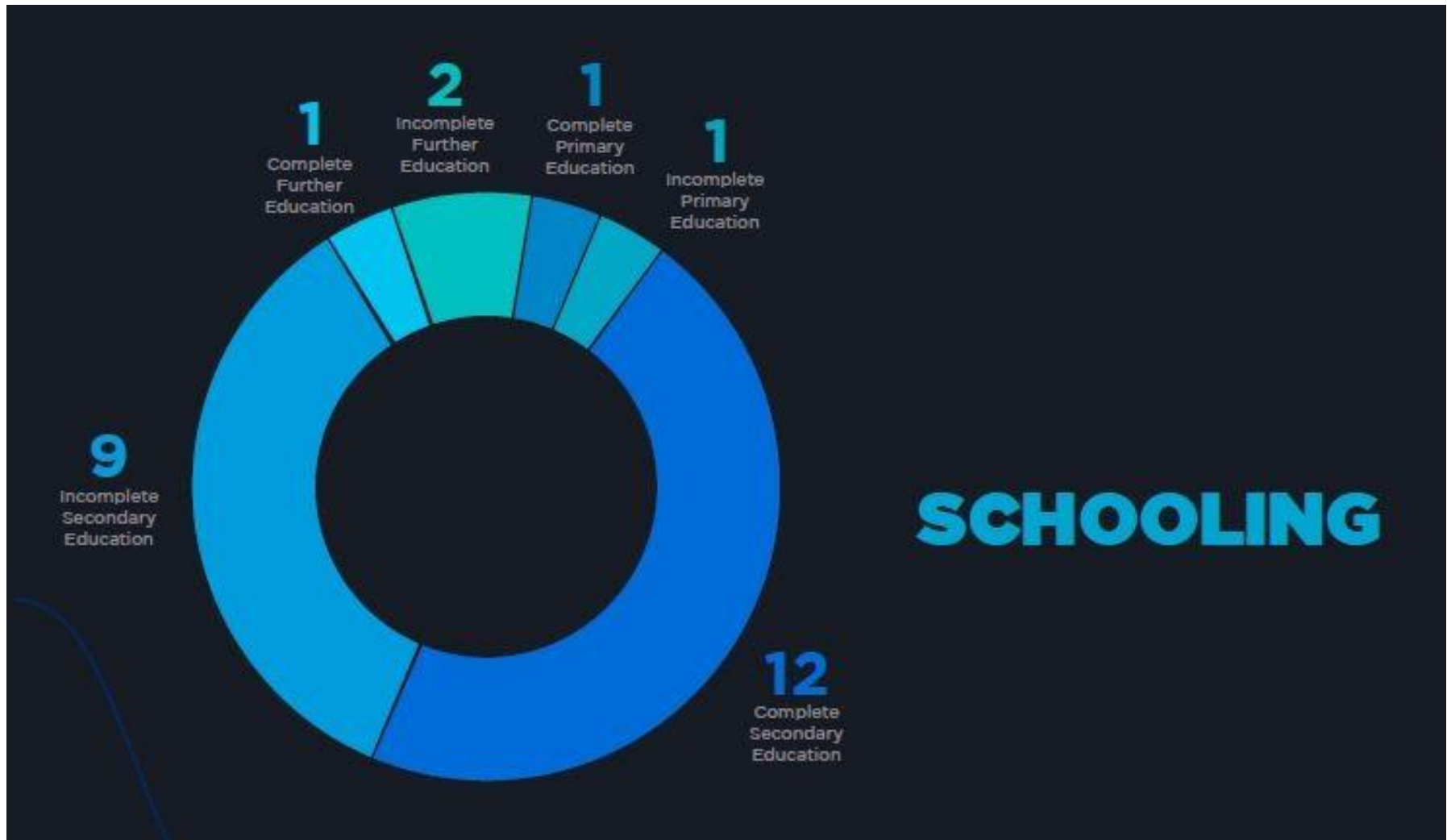


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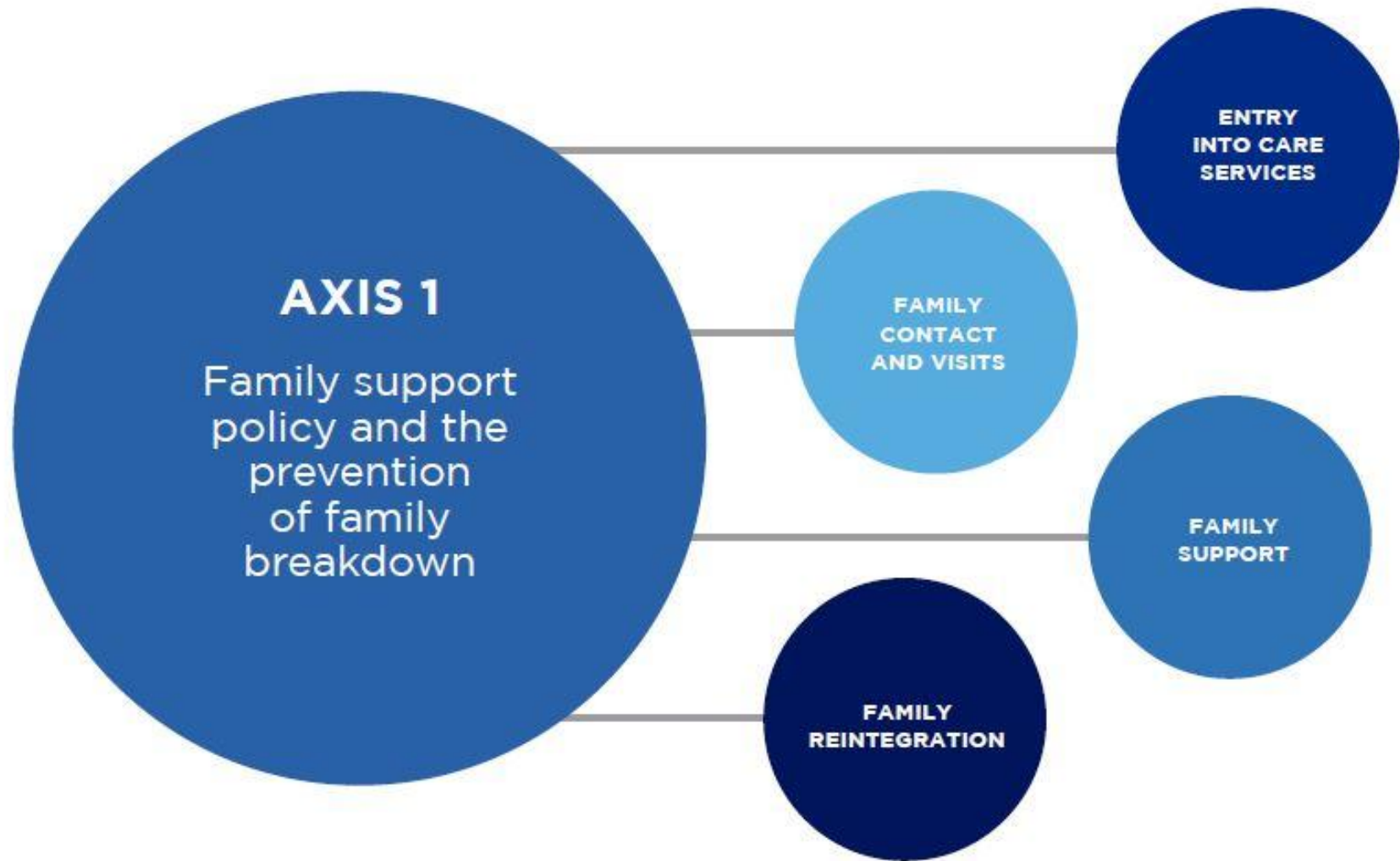
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*"No, there was no [preventive work]. (...) Then they arrived at my home, talked with my mother, they talked to me, and they took my things, and they already took me to the shelter. Get it? They got there and they just took me away".
(Tulip, from Pará, 18 years old)*

*"... My brothers and sisters and I were separated at the time, I had five siblings, with me there were six. They separated us. I have two sisters who were adopted and haven't seen for ten years. I have one that is still in care and there are others who are already adults and have left care".
(Dorado, from Minas Gerais, 19 years old)*

Axis 1
Family support
policy and the
prevention of family
breakdown



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"... if they had searched for him at the beginning when I went into care it could have been different. It could be that my father would have tried harder and want to stay with me. It could have been that it would be a different outcome, but it took too long to happen".

(Lynx, from Pernambuco, 20 years old)

"The difference that the [name of the institution] makes is this. The support that the visiting case worker gives to families can be to go to the health center with them, to help them get a job, to help with school, even help those children who have already left care".

(Dorado, from Minas Gerais, 19 years old)

Axis 1

Family support policy and the prevention of family breakdown



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Young Care Leavers Evaluation of Brazilian Care Policy

AXIS 1

STRENGTHS

- Removal from family of origin as a last resort;
- Promotion of accompanied reintegration into the family;
- Preservation and strengthening of ties;
- Intervention with families that are vulnerable.

NEGATIVES

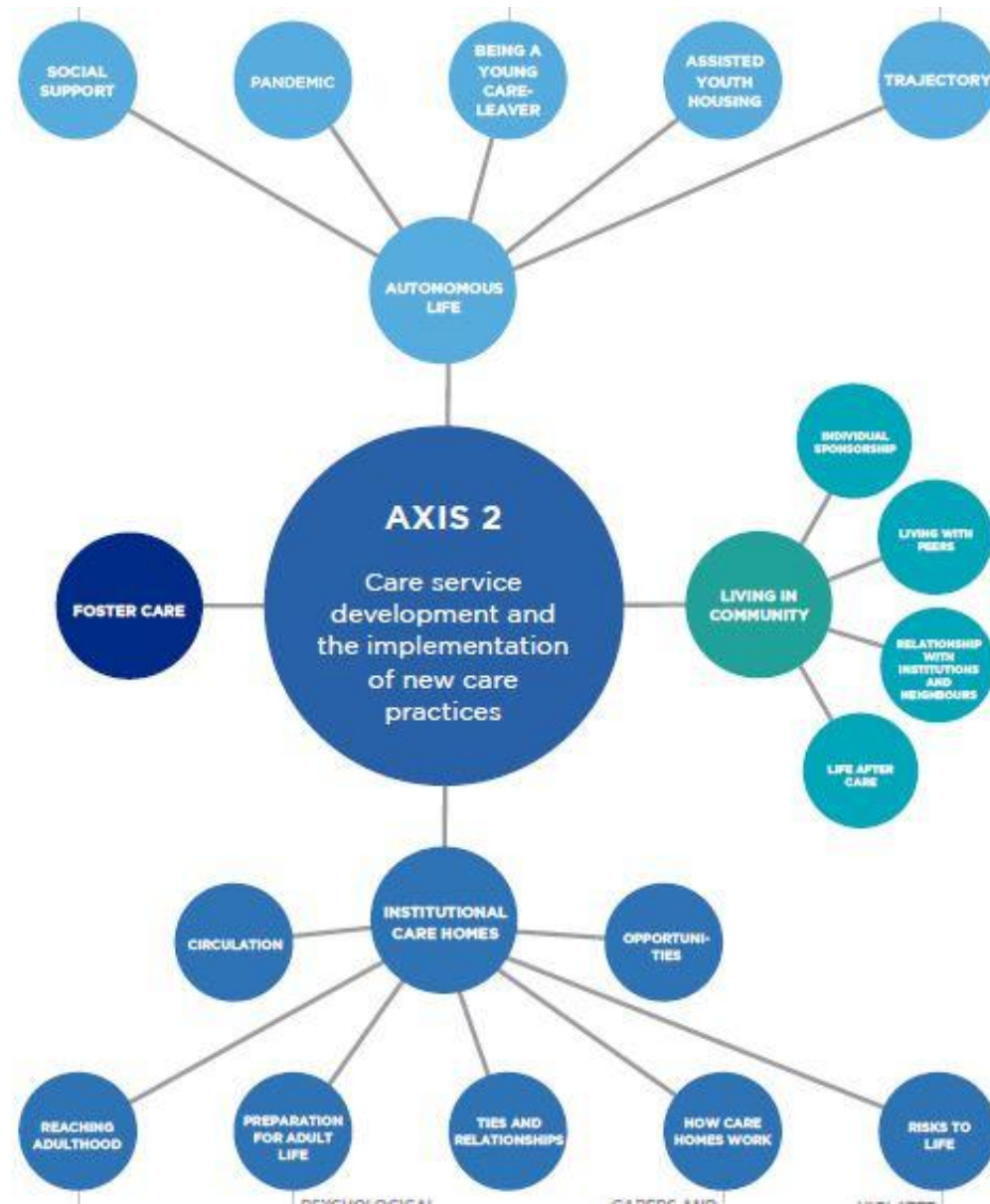
- Failure to preserve family ties;
- Social and family support only happens in some services and contexts and not in others;
- Abrupt removal from the family of origin without due preventive work;
- Family reintegration without listening to the children.

WHAT STILL NEEDS TO BE DONE?

- Ensure the shortest possible time in care;
- Removal from family as last resort;
- Better support for children as they leave their family and enter care;
- Develop standards for preventive, social and family support;
- Encourage the active participation of children in decisions regarding their reintegration into the family.



Young Care Leavers Evaluation of Brazilian Care Policy



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*“... the question of participation that is very important for young people to participate in your own choices, that would be a great improvement and this issue of working out the possibilities that young people have, you know (...) to have an option of choice and study also, right? Talk to the young person to know his dreams”.
(Cetus, from São Paulo, 21 years old).*

*“... I learned that I could get help from welfare, this kind of thing, help with rent and everything else that I had a right to have after I left care. I only found out when I had already left. It's like I didn't have that right, I didn't even know I had that right”.
(Rosa, from Distrito Federal, 24 years old).*

Axis 2
Care service
development and
the implementation
of new care
practices



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Young Care Leavers Evaluation of Brazilian Care Policy

"Then I went to a foster family for only a short time (...) I met this foster family that helped me get out of care-home. At first I thought that they were going to help me out for a while and then I'd leave, but then they talked to me and we ended up deciding that I will stay here for as long as I want. (...) Several things are falling into place little by little".

(Azaléia, from Goiás, 18 years old)

"Actually I got a foster family (...) I stayed with this family for months. I was humiliated a lot in this strange people's house. I often cried in silence for not being able to return to the care-home where I had lived. I went through four foster families, the last one I lived with I suffered so much because I was being raped by a friend of the family and when I went to tell the social worker they didn't believe me. To this day I hate everyone who doesn't believe me".

(Jasmin, from Amazonas, 25 years old)

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"Many young people that I saw leaving care(...) after a while they were not in a good place. They had spent all money they had saved, and they were not living in the same place anymore. I managed to save my entire salary when I was in care, but today I basically don't have anything left and I'm not even living where I first lived when I left care".

(Taurus, from São Paulo, 20 years old)

"... it's really easy for you to return to crime. If you're unemployed and have the opportunity to earn easy money (...) I know many young people who left care and went into crime and today a number of them have died". (Sirius, from Rio Grande do Sul, 20 years old)

"... girls left and got involved in alcohol and drugs, and many of them still young, like 15 or 16 got pregnant out there, so today they are bringing up the child on their own".

(Gérbera, from Goiás, 19 years old)

Axis 2
Care service
development and
the implementation
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STRENGTHS

- Support of adults of reference such as sponsors, educators, older siblings or adoptive parents in the experience of leaving care;
- Efforts to promote community living giving visibility and empowerment;
- Foster care favouring the transition process to adult life.

NEGATIVES

- Majority of care homes house children in large groups;
- Children feel "stuck" without interaction or access to services and opportunities outside of care;
- Carers and technical staff have excessive work demands;
- Discontinuity and insecurity in relation to caregiver and location of care with high circulation between different care services;
- Lack of active participation by those in care and little information about their rights;
- Care leaving without due planning;
- Little preparation towards a gradual autonomy;
- Few foster family services;
- Foster families with little interest in welcoming teenagers;
- Rights abuse by foster care families;
- Few Youth Supportive Housing for care leavers;
- Youth Supportive Housing without necessary support from professional teams.

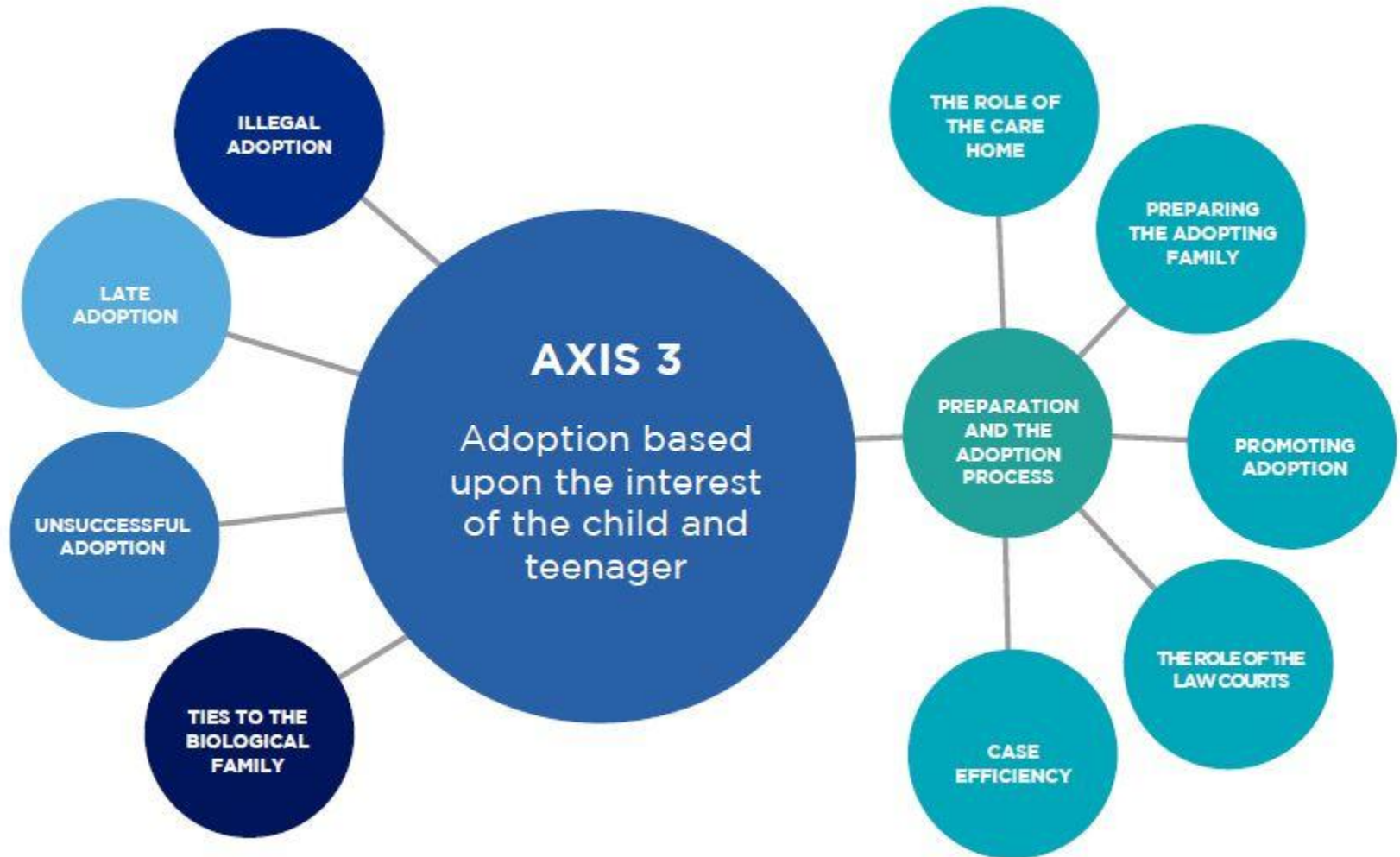
WHAT STILL NEEDS TO BE DONE?

- Ensure that no care home exceeds the maximum recommended number of twenty children per home;
- Offer and enforce training for carers and professional team;
- Increase the use of the local network of services and participation in the community;
- Reduce the circulation of children amongst different care homes;
- Undertake care leaving gradually;
- Increase the number of foster families with proper training and monitoring by professional teams;
- Increase the number of Youth Supportive Housing as an alternative for the young care leavers;
- Increase the listening to and participation of children and adolescents in making decisions about their processes and plans for the future;
- Inform children and adolescents about their rights, the progress of their legal processes and services with which they can count on after leaving care;
- Develop and implement specific measures to facilitate the transition out of care to adult life;
- Guarantee good working conditions for carers and professional staff;
- Promote the networking of young care leavers in order to increase their peer to peer social support network and facilitate youth participation.



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"This last Father's Day I went with my adoptive parents to my biological dad's house to give him a father's day gift. (...) shortly after, I got corona, and my biological father heard about it. He wanted to know what he could do for me and I found that very cool because we had no longer had contact as father and son for about 10 years. For me it was really cool, you know, seeing him and he making himself available, saying that if wanted I just needed to call".

(Pegasus, from Tocantins, 20 years old).

"... you really have to be better prepared. Who tries to adopt has to understand that a child takes their emotional baggage with them and it will not be easy. An adopted child is not a robot that you can just clean the memory and it will be reconfigured".

(Serpens, from Minas Gerais, 23 years old)

Axis 3

Adoption based upon the interest of the child and teenager



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STRENGTHS

- Adoption as an alternative only when the possibilities of retaining ties with the biological family are fully exhausted;
- Active promotion in the search for adoptive families for older children and teenagers;
- Maintaining communication with members of the family of origin after adoption;

WHAT STILL NEEDS TO BE DONE?

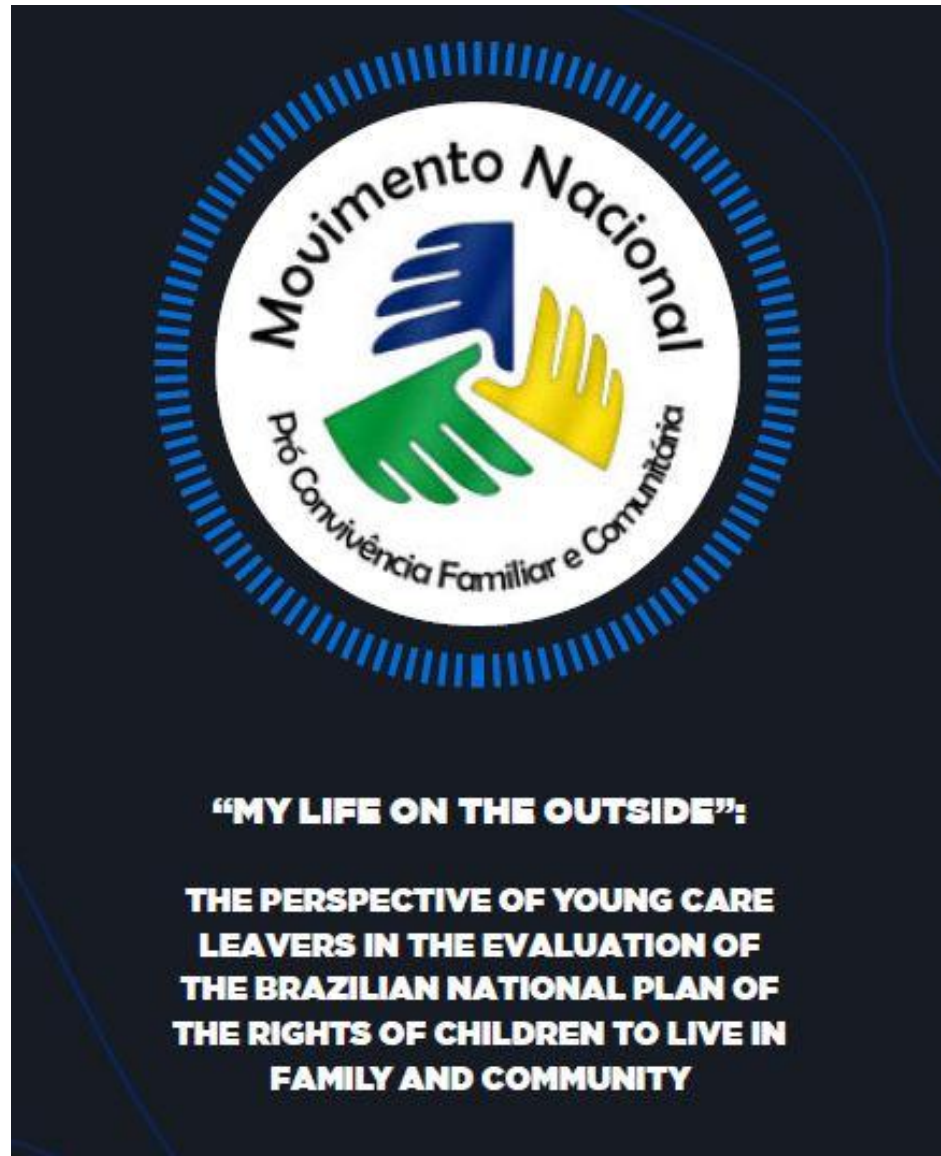
- Improve the communication between care homes, Child and Youth Courts and Adoption Support Groups;
- Develop a methodology for the monitoring of adoption processes by care services which prioritize listening to the opinion of the child;
- Offer care and listening to siblings who have not been adopted and want to remain in contact;
- Expand the active searching for adopting families for older children and teenagers.

NEGATIVES

- Lack of involvement of teams from care homes in the process of adoption;
- Lack of preparation of adopters in relation to expectations regarding adoption;
- Lack of preparation and management of the expectations of children and adolescents during their adoption processes;
- Little articulation between care homes and Child and Youth Courts in monitoring adoption processes;
- Few families interested in adopting teenagers;
- Excessively bureaucratic processes in some cases and decisions taken with too little information.



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Obrigado!

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