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**EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY INVOLVEMENT  
AND OUTCOME IN RESIDENTIAL INTERVENTIONS FOR CHILDREN.**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Family participation in residential interventions for children has been reliably shown to enhance children's adaptation to the community following discharge. This finding, however, had predominantly been observed in long-term residential programmes in North America. This thesis examines the influence of family involvement on outcome for children in a short-term residential intervention - the Children's Health Camp, in Auckland, New Zealand. This service offers children and families, who may be experiencing social, emotional, physical and/or behavioural challenges, individualised interventions that often include a five-week residential stay. A 'high family involvement' condition, a community-based programme that followed a residential intervention, was compared with a 'low family involvement' condition (the traditional residential programme). No statistically significant differences were observed between the groups on parent-report measures of child behaviour and parenting practices, although significant improvements in children's behaviour (including emotional, social and conduct aspects) for both groups were found. Reasons for the lack of difference between the groups, and the difficulties inherent in conducting outcome research in a residential facility for children are highlighted. Other influences on outcome for children and families, such as residential staff members' attitudes toward family involvement were also examined. The optimal conditions for successful short-term residential interventions for children are proposed.

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