

# **Well-Being of Children and Staff in the Children's Nursing Home - Analysis through "Violence between Children" and "Violence from a Child to Staff"-**

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## **Abstract**

In child welfare institutions (especially children's nursing homes), how staff members maintain happiness of children is a big concern. The purpose of this study is to examine the possibility of constructing and maintaining happiness in children's welfare institutions or facilities.

First of all, the author suggests that we have to construct an adequate environment and empower individuals in institutions in order to maintain persistence of happiness. The author discusses that the concept "Well-Being" becomes the key to sustain happiness of children. In other words, Well-Being of staff members and children is very important for the sake of children.

In this study, the author added consideration about the concept "Well-Being" of children and staff members in children's nursing home from the task and problem of "violence between children" and "violence from a child to a staff or staff members" which wear out most staff members.

The author discusses that if a staff would not understand real reasons for the aggressive actions from a child to a staff or staff members, the staff have to react to a child or children through misunderstanding, and, as a result, the relation between the child and the staff worsens. This could cause the staff to drive away or frighten the child with FR behavior (threatened behavior or threatening behavior), and in the worst case scenario, the situation may cause the violent action to the child from a staff.

Based on these considerations, the author considers the possibility and necessity of constructing Well-Being in child welfare institutions.

**Keywords;** Well-Being, Violence, Attack action, Anger, Children's Nursing Home

## **I Child Welfare and Violence in Facilities**

The global social nursing system for abused children works greatly with the support from the foster parent in the world. But, on the other hand, high specialization is necessary for raising abused or neglected children. Therefore, it is understood that letting many experts and staff members take care of such children as good instructors at child welfare institutions, such as children's nursing homes, is crucial. Today in Japan, however, there are lots of problems dealing with difficult situations the children are in at Child

Nursing Homes.

Furthermore, children's nursing home in Japan are small in scale, while many group homes started to operate with a mission to improve children's life style at a nursing home.

The support in a family-like atmosphere has been pushed forward for maltreated children or neglected children. Those environments are thought to be effective for the development of children, especially in cases of disabled and abused children. However, on the other hand, the staff becomes impoverished, and the situation to reach Burnout and Compassion Fatigue (Figley, C. R 1995<sup>1</sup>) has been reported to be a difficulty in the support of maltreated children or children with Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD).

There are two factors of Violence creating the impoverishment or burnout of the staff. It is that correspondence does not go well in coping with violence between children or violence from a child to the staff. As a result, the staff with difficulty has serious situation leading to a leave of absence from duty or even quitting his/her job.

The present study was undertaken in order to analyze "violence from a child to a staff" and "violence between children" that are exhausting the staff members. Furthermore, the author discusses the Well-Being of children and staff members in children's nursing home.

In addition, this paper is a study notebook, and this article lists a lot of hypotheses that we should inspect beforehand. The author will not discuss about aggressiveness toward themselves by children, including wrist slitting and arm cut injuring own body for self-oriented attack action. However, about the dejection in such a self-attack action or a self-harm act and the background of this action, the author would like to take it up at another opportunity and paper.

## II Well-Being of a child and staff in Children's Nursing Home

It is a point of view on Well-Being that the author would like to discuss in examining the support for children in children's nursing home. According to Martin Seligman (2011)<sup>2</sup>, well-being is "persistence of happiness, and not a momentary feeling of happiness". And he points out the following five factors concerning the persistence of happiness. 1, Positive feelings. 2, Engagement (flow experience). 3, Meaning, significance. 4, Accomplishment. 5, a positive relationship. It is important that life is pursued with sustained feeling of happiness and definite aim.

In interpreting well-being on the standpoint of a child, the author describes as follows.

A child always has affirmative feelings in life and can live calmly. A Child has, for example, an object to be able to be absorbed in, such as soccer game and studying. It nurtures one's feeling of possibility. They would feel a meaning and significance in their life, and have confidence toward their existence. They feel a sense of accomplishment for oneself in study and sports, and feel that they could be recognized as someone with possibilities. They can make good relations with other children and staff members around them, and can have a good time with the support from staff members.

In addition, thinking from the standpoint of staff members in child welfare facilities, the author would discuss as follows.

They always feel joy and feeling of satisfaction in doing this work. They concentrate on work so as to

be absorbed with children, and to be able to spend good time with them. They feel one's own role when they can see the meaning of their work, and work with confidence. They feel sense of accomplishment (e.g., the child who was a school refusal state becomes able to go to school) provided in work. They feel that they are supported by co-workers and superiors. In addition, they are loved by children, and are recognized as someone whom children can talk with when they are troubled.

"Environment that can maintain persistence of happiness" and "Empowerment of individual power" are serious matters for children when I think in this way. In other words, Well-Being of children is Well-Being of staff members. And Well-Being of staff members is Well-Being of children at the same time.

Particularly, the engagement (flow experience) of staff members is connected directly with the living environment and the level in which they grasp the situation and state of children. More substantial inspection will have to be carried out how the staff gets well-being of children and staff oneself through a flow experience.

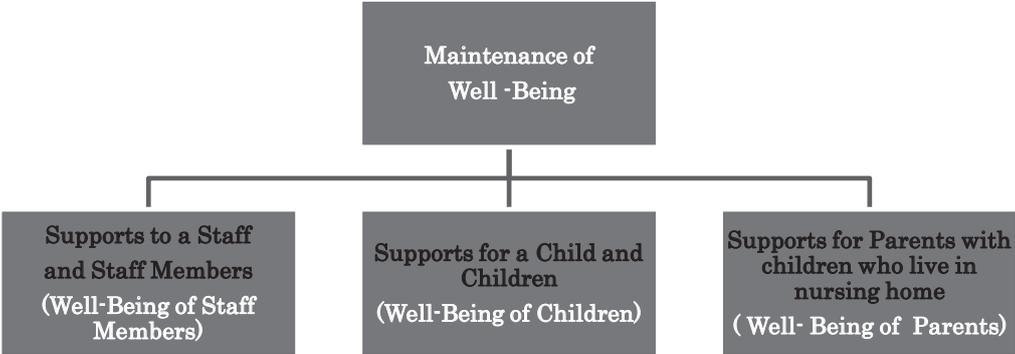
As an example, a flow experience in the support scene in children's nursing home includes the joint ownership of the episode among the staff members. It is important to "talk about a child" with staff members. It leads to an improvement of the "Mentalizing or Mentalization ability of staff members" (Allen J.G. & Fonagy, P. & Bateman, A.W. 2006<sup>3</sup>, 2008<sup>4</sup>; Fonagy, P. Gergely G., Target, M. 2007<sup>5</sup>). For the staff, it will be a serious point becoming more important to the staff supporting in life of child welfare facility to continue finding "oneself who can talk about a child". This means, "I do not lose sight of oneself or self-ownership" in any situation. It is thought that making self-ownership becomes the base "the container of the attachment" by a variety of staff groups.

We have to focus more on the importance of sharing (transfer the information to each other, or information sharing) to achieve the well-being (child, the staff) aimed at in the whole facility. A change of well-being produces it in the psychological sense of good or adequate distance with the child by making the feeling of the child, "he or she is pretty". The good episodes were reported by the staff as the example that came to think the figures of children profoundly, just like form a core of his or her mind. It is understood that it is important to accumulate such episodes. This means that Mentalizing of the staff to consider a feeling (oneself and others) changes Mentalizing of the child and the intentionality to the staff. Such a point reduces the violence between children, and it is thought that it leads to preventing the violence from the child to the staff (Table 1).

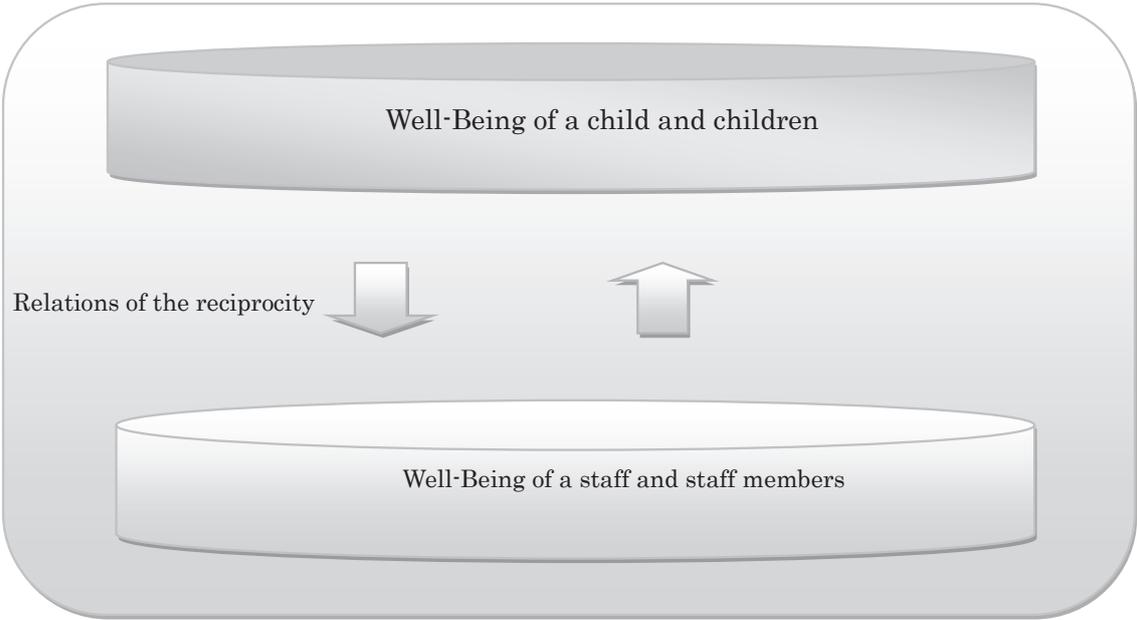
**Table 1 Maintenance of Well-Being**

<p><b>1. Support to a child and Children</b> Well-Being of a child and children. Support from the viewpoint of attachment.</p> <p><b>2. Support for a staff and staff members Supporter · · · support (Well-Being of the staff)</b> Parenting, support (well-being of the parent) to a support (meal, bathing, lifestyle, ...)</p> <p><b>3. Support for a parent and parents</b> Support to learning; Support parent in the life · · Parent in the internal world of the child, relations with the existing biological parent · · Family social work</p> <p><b>4. Disincentive of Well-Being</b> Violence between children Violence from a child to a staff Abuse and violence in facilities, from a staff to a child.</p>
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Verbal and physical violence include psychological violence. And it includes disregard, silence, negation of the existence to approach. It leads from supporter for a care giver to Well-Being of a child and a staff, "Supporter for a staff (a care giver )→ A staff or staff members (a care giver or care givers)→ A child or children" (Fig.1).



**Fig.1 Maintenance of Well-Being**



**Fig.2 Well-Being (relations of the reciprocity) of a child (Children) and a staff (Staff members)**

It is relations of the reciprocity. In other words, both well-being of a child and a staff are unified. Each well-being supports that of the other (Fig.2).

**III Analysis of Violence between Children**

One of the serious issues at a children’s nursing home is the violence between children. Specifically, it is a quarrel and a trouble to happen between children living in the same house. Why does the violence

between children happen? About this, the following reasons are suggested. This is regarded as the fate that the communal living of children in the child welfare institution causes. In the facilities, we professionals will work on this problem forever. The interest in a group is different among each age groups, and their concerns greatly vary..

A form spending from an infant to a high school student in the same house may cause an outbreak of troubles between children. Because it is a group different in age, interest and concern are different and varies in bedtime and those gaps become the cause of a big trouble among children.

## 1 Why does violence between children happen?

### **(1) The reproduction of the relationship of "control and controlled" (the relations that the one control the other, so the other are influenced by the one in one-way).**

Abuse is control by the power. Not only physical abuse but also psychological and sexual abuse exposed mainly by parents make influence to the way of human relations called "control-controlled" relationship.

### **(2) Immaturity of the emotion adjustment or experience-based lack.**

Management of Anger and impulsivity, coping of the aggressiveness are not easy for even mature adults, but are the situation difficult for children in the same way. When there is the member whose ability to control anger and impulsivity is lacking, it often becomes the cause of trouble. The affective adjustment between important persona and children is made since infancy. And the power in coordination with feeling of the child takes time to mature. However, there are children growing up without emotion being coordinated enough by some kind of abusive acts or nurture environment severer than required. Children entering facilities often have such tendencies, and, in various investigations, the difficulty of children in child nursing home has been pointed out( Y.Tsuboi 2008<sup>6)</sup>).

### **(3) Immaturity of the solution of troubles by speaking words.**

As for a normal child, the solution by talks or words is learned when a child reaches a certain age without depending on a physical quarrel. However, as for the abused child, the solution by words may become unripe when solution by the violence is shown for a child repeatedly by abusive parents.

### **(4) Learning of "solution by violence."**

An afterimage of violence was obtained from growing in houses and units in child welfare facilities. When a child has been abused by a parent, as a result, "the afterimage was continued in one's house." In addition, "the afterimage of violence was dressed with his or her seniors" at a house in facilities. The solution by violence were carved as "many afterimages" deeply in the mind of a child and cannot be wiped out easily by an abused child.

### **(5) Experience-based lack of "sustained feeling of happiness."**

The calm, easy environment without leading to the solution by violence and the attack is necessary for

growing of children. A sustained feeling of happiness is realized through the appropriate correspondence by parents in environment where a child can have a sustained feeling of happiness, because such an experience of a sustained feeling of happiness is not set for a abused child, where violence may be caused among children.

## 2 Why is violence between children not stopped ?

When a staff cannot notice and understand the following points, violence would rise.

- (1) The omen of the quarrel of exchanges between children.
- (2) The harbinger of a trouble expected by the placement of the child in the space, existence.
- (3) The harbinger of the "feeling of irritation" , "uneasiness", "anger" , "loneliness" and "unusual expressiveness of emotion" ... aggression or attack to be able to read from the expression of the child, for example, a gesture, the quality of the voice and so on.
- (4) The harbinger to be able to understand or read from growing of children, the abuse from a parent, the history in the nursery school building.

The staff with rich experiences and abilities to catch the meaning of children's behavior can catch such a harbinger and cope for violence. However, the harbinger of violence is overlooked by an unexperienced staff and by a staff to whom such points are paid off properly even if he or she has many experiences in facilities. Children understand that violence is not good than we had imagined. The following points are that the staff shares these with children about violence through interviews or being with children.

## 3 What a child understands about "Violence"

- (1) Violence is "not good".
- (2) Violence infringes the right of the other.
- (3) Violence is an act to be not enough in consideration and compassion for the other.
- (4) Other different acts are not available except for violence.
- (5) A child feels unpleasant when he or she use violence.
- (6) Violence is an act to hurt and harm the other.
- (7) Violence is an act disliked by everybody.

However, the aggressive child is going to express the aggressiveness across or beyond these points. Why is such an attack or violence repeated? In violence, the following reasons to be an aggressive child are thought about by the author.

## 4 Affirmation and justification of Violence

- (1) Violence is self-assertion.
- (2) Violence is means to survival.
- (3) Violence is a tool to get control of the other.
- (4) Violence is ostentation of the power.

(5) Violence is means to associate with a person.

(6) Violence is one of the "Communications" with the other that such a child was familiar with most.

In other words, this violence itself has a certain meaning and significance for a child when a child does not recognize destructivity and a non-human aspect that the violence lasts.

Furthermore, the author believe that it is important for the children to think that they are permitted in their mind by "someone", even if such violence by those children is an act to injure the other. Particularly, the damp and shady bullying and violence to steal the eyes of staff members, are carried out deviate from eyes of the monitoring and the eyes of the criticism, in the situation of "the staff is not" and will be repeated as style of the attack that it is very damp and shady and is dreary. It is thought that Violence, that is, the one-sided attack and bullying in this way often gets up because " violence is not good" does not be internalize in the heart of children well.

However, on the other hand, the following things are thought about a meaning of conquest of violence by a child when the author is to considers a developing child.

## 5 A meaning of conquest of violence by a child

### **(1) Violence expresses the problem that the child has.**

A problem by a child includes various emotional missing and tangles between children. As a result, various emotional missing and tangles may develop for a bigger trouble and violence among children.

### **(2) The aggressiveness conquest as an opportunity raising the ability of a child.**

When the underlying "adjustment imperfection of feelings" of violence does not go well, and violence will contribute to development and raising the ability of children.

### **(3) The aggressiveness conquest as an opportunity raising a feeling of control of the child.**

When a child is arrested in the scene causing anger or fear, it is converted to the reconfirming place that the child can control his or her emotion.

At such an opportunity, it can become "the defiant place letting a child belong to a situation-dependent and primary event". It is the opportunity when the problem action deepens the relation between a child and a staff. It may lead to the surge of adequate feeling of child oneself.

## IV Grasp of Aggressiveness.

It is very important to grasp the individual characteristic of violence in a child.

### 1 Grasp of characteristic and state in developmentally disorder disabled.

When the pressure to other children of the child, especially of the developmentally disabled base transforms to a sensitive feeling for lots of things and a hyperkinetic tendency and action itself may cause

induction of violence of other children. The child with a developmental disability may receive violence from others without intending.

## 2 Repeat and Reproduction of the control.

It is pointed out that reproduction or repeat of control by violence for "control to other children" in maltreated children. Violence is performed by a child, as a result, the child will feel an aptitude feeling and a sense of superiority for other children.

## 3 Relation with the family.

Violence of a child has been effected by the relations with the parent. For example, under the influence of relations with mother, the attacks from a child to a female staff may come out. The aggressiveness of the child may be replaced with the attack to other children. In addition, in the aspect of living in the facilities, the influence of the family is huge. Particularly, life itself in facilities is out of condition and may fall into a bad situation when coping with feelings by a child does not go well, as a result, a child has negative feelings toward a family(for example, a father who did physical abuse to his child, or a mother who abandoned her child.).

It is important for a staff to grasp what kind of relation with a family in now and past in each children. We can understand the state of anger and the level of attack to the other. It is important to grasp what kind of state reconciliation is in.

Particularly, if the anger realizes and was expressed in words or pictures through verbal interview and picture therapy (or art therapy) enough well, affirmative feelings bury the gap in a child. It is thought that the role of professionals is very important; for example, the family social worker and the clinical psychologist supporting to coping to the family who continues growing in support by life in facilities and inside of a true family.

# V Prevention and coping of Violence between Children

Based on the above-mentioned point, as for the stratagem to prevent the violence between children, the following things are thought about.

## 1 The assessment of the child.

At first the assessment of children is important. And, the grasp of the child who is easy to provoke the violence of the child. A staff have to concentrate the exchanges with children. As for this, if the situation would be dangerous, the staff have to intervene the situation rapidly. It is important that the staff have to guess the timing.

## 2 Prevention of development of violence.

In exchanges between children, there is a child who is easy to develop into violence between children. A

staff has to notice the exchanges with other children and can prevent violence beforehand by intervening. It is important that a staff deals early without missing the "switch on" of violence between children. A staff usually notices with the characteristic of happening of troubles among children in facilities. What kind of time is it? What kind of pair is it? It is child observation from a day. Is not all children on this occasion? A staff always have to notice to "a certain child" chiefly and not to forget the consideration to "children as the blind spot" too.

### 3 Relationship with the family

The family influence to a child including the interview with the family, after meeting with family, a child is upset unexpectedly, and irritation increases and may develop into violence between children. We have to notice this point, too.

### 4 Coping when violence between children happened.

If violence happens between children, at first a staff ensure the security, and the staff is always conscious of being a friend or an important person of both children. When a staff breaks among two children, he or she have to notice the position of "stand". A staff do not take part in the child of either more than required. Seemingly, in fact, "assailant" may be called or changed to "victim". A staff cooperates with children overall to quiet the feeling of children, and to quiet anger. The staff stands or becomes with a child and conducts "emotion adjustment" of the child. For a child an experience to quiet emotion, and take its ease is important.

## VI Violence from a child to a staff

The violence from a child to a staff includes many meanings. The staff thinks the attack action from a child is "to make a fool of oneself, and to have possibilities to look down" when a staff does not understand this meaning and thinks, "The child may dislike me". As a result, the staff has a firm relation to a child with FR (Frightened/Frightening) behavior (Abrams, K.Y., Rifkin, A. & Hesse, F. 2006<sup>7)</sup>) and may cause the attack action to a staff by the child.

### 1 Understanding from the situation of the staff of aggression and attack action from a child

- (1) The child dislikes the staff.
- (2) The child makes a fool of the staff.
- (3) The child looks down upon the staff.
- (4) The child thinks that the child does not want to associate with the staff anymore.
- (5) The child misunderstands the staff profoundly or easily.

## 2 Meaning of violence from a child to a staff

### **(1) Violence as Expression of Irritation.**

When a child cannot go to school and does not get along well at school, and always being told that the child must go to school and is irritated daily, the child may turn the feeling of irritation to aggression toward the staff. In most cases, there are some kinds of opportunities, and, for example, the violence from such a child to the staff is possible when there is not necessarily a fault or a misunderstanding to the words of the staff, "a staff said kindly that a child had better study".

### **(2) A Child recognize “the action” of the staff as “interference of the self-assertion”.**

When the staff is going to let a child take the different action suddenly when the child want to hold something in the side of the child, with not being consideration by the staff for it, violence as the big repulsion from a child may be turned to the staff. In addition, there is repulsion from the side of the child to the staff when a staff is going to apply the rule that is not yet fully internalized in the mind of the child, and for the child who is not very good at change. The child recognizes that one's claim was interfered by the staff.

### **(3) When a child takes the opposite action without being able to express the goodwill to the staff obediently.**

It may be said that a child takes the action that is contradicted seen in children with a problem in “Attachment” and does not bring close though a child want to approach the staff but is not structured. The staff thinks that a child do not like a staff, or a child may make a fool of a staff when a staff does not understand this point.

### **(4) Violence happens through the cause of misunderstanding to an action, an expression, a voice of the staff.**

In the study on face-expression cognition of maltreated children, there is a fact that the maltreated child reads anger in a deadpan (Pollak, S. D. and Tolley-Schell, S. A. 2003<sup>8)</sup>), but a gap of such recognition may cause violence by children.

### **(5) Difference between Nurture relations and Abuse-related relations.**

Maltreated children may not imagine symbiotic calm environment. It is judged in the world that it is “the survival of the fittest”, whether control or not-controlled, and strong or weak.

By psychological abuse, an abused child continues to be controlled by an abusive father or mother (already they do not live together with the child separated) influenced by the abuser.

### **(6) Violence as the flip of the dependence.**

This is an attack as dependence to have a child permit one's aggressiveness if the reflection of the dependence or violence. In this case a child is surprised when, for example, the staff is angry adversely. A child misunderstands a staff such as "this staff does not express aggression to me. Because I am accepted

by the staff.” The staff can really make a border with a child clearly by speaking, “Violence is painful, your words are strange for me. Please stop your attach to me any more if you would use violence for me”.

**(7) Appropriate understanding of the development age of the child.**

Imbalance of the development of maltreated children is often pointed out. But various attack actions such as the above or violence is limited infants to a primary schoolchild as misunderstanding happening quite often to the child nursing home staff of the new face.

As personal deflection, the understanding for problems by children was conscious of “delinquency” rather than “the developmental problem” in elder ages.

It is thought that children as junior high student and high school student could not change their personality and behaviors any more than younger children.

**(8) Violence as the adaptive outcome.**

Violence from a child to a staff is one of adaptive outcomes by a child basically. In other words, the abused children are forced to fit facilities (or a school), but it will be very hard for them to adjust with many problems. It becomes the point of contact of the relation with them in this sense.

**3 The following things are considered as stratagem to prevent violence.**

**(1) The individual treatment-related grasp of the child.**

For example, if the intentionalness that is going to let a child do something becomes strong in a staff for a child, it causes violence from the child to the staff. The limit of time to do something by a child and the limit of action by a child are good examples of violence induction. The staff may have to really have a child do it for a child by such a limited time. It is a problem whether the staff "can wait" for a child. When the staff cannot wait for a child to begin to move from oneself, there is the repulsion from a child, and, as a result, the violence to the staff will be caused by a child. In this, a child becomes “an assailant”. It is the point where the staff must notice enough to drive a child into the situation of the assailant for lack of understanding to the correspondence of the staff. The faith of the staff "not to make a child an assailant" is important.

**(2) A staff steps on "the mine bomb of the heart" of a child. The repulsion of the child by it.**

The child has words not to want him/her to say to each, the words that are easy to expire. The staff fails and, in pinpoint, will mention the negative aspect of the child. As for the staff, it is necessary for a staff to be keen what kind of words and way of speaking which children hate, after a staff met a child for the first time.

In it, a staff can understand and see "the mine bomb of the heart" in each children.

**(3) The standard of a staff in associate with a child consciously.**

Does the staff give off words in way of speaking, language, the tone of the voice, an expression, the timing to make the heart of the child calmly? It is demanded that the staff considers these points. In

addition, a staff has a standard in the feeling "not to be able to permit this, and to be able to permit this" as the staff. And what a staff changes a way of the expression into is necessary for each child. The standard in the heart of the staff does not change it, but devises how to convey standards by each child, and again by time. When a child is full (not hungry), before lying down, and getting up, lies down after dinner, setting of these time is important in the relation with a child before a child becoming aggressive and feeling anger.

## VII Conclusion-with the skill as the supporter who was stable in facilities.

The skill as the stable supporter is stability of the self to be keen with stability of a child from the viewpoint of attachment, stability of the self from the viewpoint of "standby support", an opportunity of an attack and the violence between children. These points are thought that Well Being of the child and Well Being of the staff are realized by noting it. On the other hand, what kind of time is it that the staff proves right for a child tightly? Hesse. E, Main. M.(2006)<sup>9)</sup> points out that FR action obstructs the formation of the attachment, but in a children's nursing home this fact is still not known enough. It is important to examine what happens to children and staff members at the time of FR behavior appearance, the meaning of FR behavior (Abrams,K.Y., Rifkin,A.& Hesse,F. 2006<sup>7)</sup>). When FR behavior happens, the staff loses the ownership of oneself. There may be an easy application of the principle on one's nurture there. A staff may lose the confidence for the child. A staff may feel isolation and the sense of estrangement that nobody helps the staff.

The staff may always think about oneself to do best in facility as a care giver, but think why the child in front does not try it hard. Consequently the staff may feel the difference with the child. A fret, anger, disappointment, hatred, despair, irritation of the staff may cause anger and the psychological attack to children. As for the attacks from a child to a staff, "disappointment to this work, the rolling of the prospects to the future" of staff oneself may be reflected the attacks from a child to a staff. And it may be said that "the throwing into confusion by presentation through existence of each child" for "an adult represented by the staff" is the attack from a child. A further study of Violence among children and from a child to a staff should be conducted. It is hoped that the outcome of the present study be of some use to support for staff members in child welfare facilities, especially children's nursing home in the world.

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