

The **child care worker**

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Cover Picture: A township group from the penny-whistle days. *Photo:* A. Kumalo.



NACCW

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHILD CARE WORKERS
IS AN INDEPENDENT NON-RACIAL ORGANISATION
WHICH PROVIDES THE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND INFRASTRUCTURE
TO IMPROVE STANDARDS OF CARE AND TREATMENT
FOR CHILDREN IN RESIDENTIAL SETTINGS



Fédération Internationale des Communautés Educatives
International Federation of Educative Communities (UNESCO)



Association Internationale des Educateurs de Jeunes Inadaptés
International Association of Workers with Troubled Children

A checklist of basic beliefs compiled by *Vanessa Lewis* (adapted from *Pinneger, 1987*)

Philosophy and Principles of Child and Youth Care

We see relationship as primary — that the quality of human relationships is the most powerful determinant of successful programs for the development and education of troubled children.

We see crisis as opportunity — problem situations are redefined so they are no longer viewed as trouble but rather as opportunities for growth.

We believe that assessment is ecological — behaviour is understood as part of the child's total life-space, including transactions between adults, peers and the education system.

We strive to offer the least restrictive and most reclaiming environment to all residents.

Belonging, mastery, independence, generosity, recognition and new experiences are viewed as essential to human development. They are acknowledged throughout the organisation and facilitated in numerous ways.

All young people deserve the support of caring adults to help them grow to become independent and self-sufficient.

All young people deserve an opportunity to learn the skills, behaviours and attitudes to equip and help them to become independent, responsible and self-sufficient adults and to feel proud of their accomplishments.

All young people deserve support when they make mistakes and assistance so they may learn from their mistakes.

All young people deserve an opportunity to live in a healthy environment where their physical and emotional needs are addressed and nurtured.

We believe the following about people:

- they are unique
- they deserve to be treated with respect and dignity
- they can change and grow (given adequate support and resources)

- deserve privacy
- they have certain inalienable rights
- deserve to be heard, understood and have their views considered
- they mostly want to better themselves and their situation

We believe in short term care

We believe in the importance of family life

We believe in identifying and mobilising the actual or potential strengths and resources of our clients.

We believe that each client has individual needs and responsibilities that must be addressed

We believe about children in care that —

- they should be provided with basic necessities: social, emotional, spiritual, educational, developmental.
- they should develop and grow into people that can interact in a competent manner according to their cultural group.

We strive to eliminate all forms of discrimination in our attitudes and practice.

We believe that children's needs are best met within a context of family life: to this end we work towards returning children to the care of the biological or adoptive parents or finding new placements, with families within the shortest possible time period.

We aim at developing children to their fullest potential and socialising them through exposure to various stimuli and active behaviour management and treatment.

We strive to maintain an atmosphere of warmth, genuineness, hospitality, open communication, inclusion of family, friends and visitors.



We adopt the principles of the child and youth care profession as in the frame below:

Principles

A. Normalisation

The child and youth care worker will be committed to ensuring the child/youth is exposed to learning activities which promote his or her developmental needs from the perspective of normal, healthy development, socially, mentally, physically and emotionally.

B. Child Advocacy

The child and youth care worker will respect and uphold the physical and social and emotional rights of the child/youth from a legal, moral and cultural perspective.

C. Privacy

The child and youth care worker will respect the need of the child, youth or family for privacy and personal space.

D. Individualisation

The child and youth care worker will respect the

uniqueness of each child within his/her care, and will provide appropriate management and treatment approaches according to individual client needs.

E. Systems Integration

The child and youth care worker will recognise and provide for the needs of the child/youth within the larger context of his/her family, community and will consider treatment within the larger environment of other social services, agencies and professionals.

F. Empowerment

The child and youth care worker will promote the resourcefulness of each client/family by providing them with opportunities to build and utilise their own support networks, and act on their own choices and sense of responsibility.

G. Quality Intervention

The child and youth care worker will provide quality of service through effective case

and management, and appropriate intervention strategies.

H. Continuity of Care

The child and youth care worker will ensure that the changing social, emotional, physical cognitive and cultural needs of the child/youth/family are maintained throughout the treatment phases, and will ensure that additional support resources are available after termination.

I. Accountability

The child and youth care worker will at all times consider him-/herself as a professional, his/her conduct will reflect the ethical principles as defined by the profession.

J. Professionalisation

The child and youth care worker will place importance on his/her continued personal and professional growth, and on the enhancement and expansion of the child care field as a developing profession.

A juvenile justice drafting consultancy has published proposals for policy and legislative change. Here they introduce their publication entitled

Juvenile Justice for South Africa

The document *Juvenile Justice for South Africa* is a first step towards the legislative creation of a juvenile justice system. At present there is no specific body of legislation which governs the handling of juvenile offenders. Those dealing with young people in conflict with the law have to wade through a number of Acts in order to find the few sections which deal with juvenile offenders, albeit inadequately. These Acts are the Criminal Procedure Act no. 51 of 1977, the Child Care Act no. 74 of 1983 and the Correctional Services Act no. 8 of 1959. For the most part, young people in conflict with the law are dealt with in much the same way as their adult counterparts.

Aims of the proposals

These proposals aim to:

- Emphasise accountability, encouraging the young person to acknowledge and take responsibility for his or her offending behaviour,
- Encourage restorative justice and the resolution of conflict,
- Bring young people, their family groups and communities to the centre of the decision making process,
- Protect the rights of the young person and the victim, with direct restitution to the victim being a particular feature,
- Provide alternatives at every stage of the process — at arrest, pre-trial and at sentencing — so that diver-

sion becomes a central part of the system rather than peripheral to it,

- Encourage plans to prevent re-offending,
- Provide methods to minimise the need for institutionalisation at any stage of the process,
- Be sufficiently flexible and ensure cultural appropriateness.

In addition to providing many effective alternatives for young people, the draft provides for sound structures and procedures for dealing with young people committing serious crime. These cases will generally proceed through a Juvenile Court structure under the normal rules of evidence and procedure, with certain additional rules built in to meet the particular needs of young people in conflict with the law.

Format

The proposals are set out in the form of a Bill as this was considered by the drafting consultancy to be the most useful and accurate way to present the information. The text consists of a section containing Definitions, followed by a section which contains the Governing Principles. (These will be printed in next month's issue). The remainder of the 14 sections set out rules for the handling of any young person who comes into conflict with the criminal law. In the Commentary section of the document, the 14 sections are referred to collectively as the

text or the draft.

This commentary should be read together with the text. It explains the rationale behind the proposals of the Drafting Consultancy. It also raises questions on issues which are controversial, and which require further discussion by a broader group of people in South African society.

There are some very important departures from the present system which should be noted:

- The young person may be cautioned rather than arrested.
- The young person is not charged unless the case is going to proceed to court (which would be the case with serious offences or when conflict resolution within the Family Group Conference breaks down).
- The most common way of handling the offending behaviour of a young person is through a Family Group Conference.
- It will be unusual to hold a young person in custody either at the pre-trial stage or at sentencing.

The guardian of a young person is defined broadly so that street shelter workers, extended family members or other caring adults may take responsibility for the young person.

In the past, thousands of young people have awaited trial in abysmal conditions in prisons and police cells in South Africa, often for months at a time. Frequently their parents and guardians have not known of their whereabouts, and they were seldom legally represented. Many have not even enjoyed the assistance of a probation officer.

Imprisonment and whipping have been standard sentences handed down by courts — in 1992 alone, some 36 000 young people were sentenced to whipping.

While the courts continue to use retributive punishment, we are constantly reminded through the media that an ever-increasing number of young people are appearing in court for increasingly violent crimes. Many have joined gangs and terrorise the community. It is clear that the numbers grow faster than the services necessary to deal with them.

And the present system merely continues to reproduce more of

the same, using systems and procedures that neither curb crime nor assist young people to take responsibility for their actions.

At present the complexity of the criminal justice system ensures that the moment a young offender collides with it, he or she becomes its victim. And victims generally feel self pity, and possibly the need for revenge. Rather than attempt to repair the damage or be accountable for their offending behaviour, the young person tends to blame the system that pits them against adults who have university degrees and are paid to charge, try and prosecute them.

Reviewing past efforts

Young people have always suffered most from apartheid. Millions in South Africa have been poorly fed, insufficiently clothed, indifferently educated and have lived with parents stressed by poverty, overcrowding, relocation and unemployment. In addition, boys are brought up to believe that macho is best — the more aggressive you are, the higher your chances of status, wealth and success. For these reasons, extremely high numbers of young people — especially historically disadvantaged young people and mostly boys — have chosen or have fallen into methods of coping with their lives in ways that transgress the law.

In the 1980's hundreds of young people were detained during the states of emergency, causing a national and international outcry.

However, young people detained for ordinary crimes were also slipping into the system, largely unnoticed. There was no strategy to ensure that these youngsters were treated humanely and with adherence to just principles. In fact, until then there was no acknowledgement by government departments that children in detention — and the lack of a comprehensive juvenile justice system — was a crisis.

In 1992 the campaign *Justice for the Children: No Child Should be Caged* initiated by the Community Law Centre, Lawyers for Human Rights and Nicro, raised national and international awareness about young people in trouble with the law. The report called for the creation of a comprehensive

juvenile justice system, for humane treatment of young people in conflict with the law, for diversion of minor offences away from the criminal justice system and for systems that humanised rather than brutalised young offenders.

This campaign followed many years of pressure on ministers from non-governmental organisations to respond to the issue, a struggle that was frustrating and unfruitful. Tragically it followed rather than prevented the death of a 13-year-old boy called Neville Snyman.

Neville was killed by his cell-mates in a Robertson police cell in October 1992. His crime? He had allegedly broken into a store to steal sweets, cooldrinks and cigarettes. He didn't live to stand trial.

Neville's death forced the realisation that effective and humane methods of dealing with youth in conflict with the law was imperative. South Africa was ready for the debate: it was an idea whose time had come. In August of that year the television programme *Agenda* had highlighted the plight of young people awaiting trial in detention. The National Working Committee on Children in Detention was formed. A paper spelling out the need for a comprehensive juvenile justice system was presented at the International Conference on the Rights of the Child in Cape Town and the Lawyers for Human Rights *Free a Child for Christmas* campaign continued to put pressure on state departments and local children in detention committees to find solutions, and effective ways to manage young people in trouble with the law. Nicro and state diversion programmes were started in a number of centres, and seminars, workshops and conferences discussed the crisis and planned local action.

The number of state departments involved, and the fact that no specific department could be found which could be held accountable for young people in conflict with the law, confused the role-players.

World standards

What was clear, however, was that young people in conflict with the law were not being treated according to internationally acceptable standards. Too many youngsters were be-

ing arrested, too many proceeded to court, and the process that these young people were exposed to was doing more to brutalise than to humanise them.

In 1993 a drafting committee was convened by Adv. Dullah Omar, then the director of the Community Law Centre and now the Minister of Justice, after the Seminar on Legislative Drafting run by the Community Law Centre, University of the Western Cape. At the seminar the paper *Raising Ideas for a Juvenile Justice System* was presented by Adv Ann Skelton. It formed the basis of the present document.

To be comprehensive and effective, the new vision needed to encompass ideas for the charging, arresting, diverting, trying and sentencing of young offenders in a system that would spell out the roles of the police, the prosecutors, probation officers and others dealing with young people. It needed to take into account victims' rights. In short it needed to be innovative, inexpensive and creative.

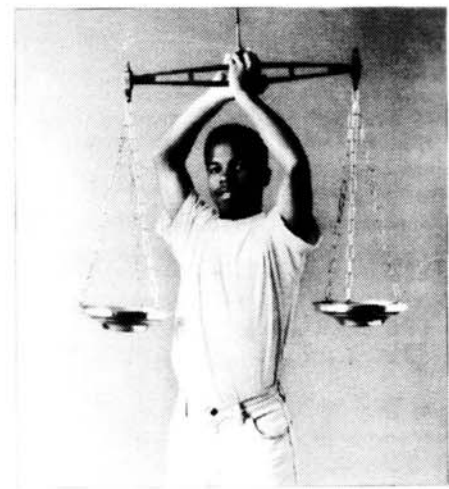
Information gathered by youth advocates and para-legals in the courts and through a number of workshops throughout Southern Africa has guided the proposals.

In addition, several skilled juvenile justice specialists from outside South Africa were consulted by the Drafting Consultancy in the process of formulating the present proposals. Support for a new system has come from President Mandela who has called for children to be released from prisons and police cells. And the Reconstruction and Development Programme has included awaiting-trial children in its brief.

Consultation and ownership

Unilateral restructuring will not work. Throwing money at the problem without completely altering the present policies and practice will simply result in more chaos. Money will be needed, but it must be money well spent. Building new and bigger institutions for children will just exacerbate the problem.

The proposals in this document are firmly based on national and international instruments such as the United Nations Conven-



... the proposals ensure that serious offences are dealt with in such a way that the young person is held accountable for his or her actions ...

tion on the Rights of the Child, the Beijing Rules, the Organisation of African Unity's Charter on Children, the South African Charter on Children's Rights and Chapter 3 of the Interim Constitution of South Africa. The acceptance of the principles and the tabling of legislation for juvenile justice will go a long way towards supporting the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. To this end, UNICEF has been supportive of this process.

The document *Juvenile Justice for South Africa* turns the present system of dealing with young people on its head. The proposals suggest that criminal charges should be a last resort, and that diversion becomes the pivotal method of dealing with young people in conflict with the law. In addition, the holding of a child in a secure facility would become an unusual occurrence.

At the same time, the proposals ensure that serious offences are dealt with in such a way that the young person is held accountable for his or her actions and is handled by a court governed by appropriate rules.

Court overcrowding as a result of hundreds of petty offences will be a thing of the past.

Through its links with Roman Dutch Law, South Africa has absorbed the notion that knowledge in law only flows in one direction — downwards — and that communities can contribute little to the process beyond being a source of evidence. These proposals suggest a way of changing this. They support community involvement in vital areas formerly closed to the

people who matter most in the young person's life.

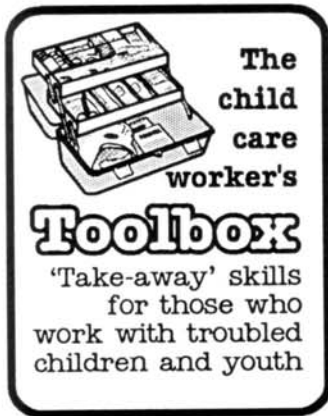
The family group and community is strengthened and decision-making becomes the responsibility of the young person, the family group, the victim, the police officer and anyone else close to the life of the young person or who is affected by the offending behaviour.

There is clearly a need to plan primary prevention of juvenile offending, as was discussed at the Human Sciences Research Council conference in Pretoria in February 1994. The proposals in this document, however, deal with young people already in conflict with the law.

Conclusion

In the spirit of the New South Africa, these proposals will be taken to as many people as possible for consultation and discussion before being written into law by the state legislative drafters. It is also vital that those people who will have to work within the confines of any new law be drawn into discussion. This will not only ensure that the final legislation is workable, but will also mean that everyone will feel a sense of ownership of the new juvenile justice system and will be empowered to transfer the paper rights and protections into living law.

Juvenile Justice for South Africa: proposals for policy and legislative change is available from: Institute of Criminology, University of Cape Town, Private Bag, Rondebosch 7700. This extract is published with permission. ■



Talking

II: Talking about what has happened

Brian Gannon continues this new series with the second part of his discussion on Talking as a tool in child care work.

Living with adults who are rational, concerned and protective can be dialogue enough for children to be able to face up to and manage their own feelings and fears.

Talking is probably the most important tool of the child care worker.

Last month we discussed talking about *what is going to happen* —

- to reduce anxiety about the future, to help children deal with their feelings about the future, and
- to prepare them to deal with future tasks with some planning and skills.

We used the illustration that children are often anxious about walking down a dark passage — but that if we turn the lights on to show them what is there, they can usually manage this quite well by themselves.

Things that have already happened

It is equally important for us to be able to help children by *talking about things in their past*. This could include things which happened months or even years ago, things which happened at school today, as well as something which has just happened a moment ago. In this month's feature we will deal with talking to children and young people about two kinds of events: (a) the traumatic and anxiety-provoking events which have happened to them; and (b) the day-to-day events from which they could derive better understanding about themselves and others.

Trauma

We have all learned in our training that a child who is preoccupied by anxiety or other strong feelings (hurt, bitterness, resentment, aggression) is not free to deal with the present demands and

tasks of his life.

A child who is overwhelmed by some trauma, who doesn't get time to prepare his defences against its attack or who doesn't have the cognitive ability to deal with it when it happens, usually 'swallows it whole'. The experience remains 'undigested', a tightly wrapped terror, best hidden away from his own thoughts and feelings.

Only in a very safe and supportive situation, will the child ever have the courage to 'unpack' the experience and deal with it for himself.

As he carries this hidden terror around with him, he is preoccupied by the fear of something like that happening again. The trauma takes priority over his normal day-to-day developmental work. The sunshine goes out of his life, his schoolwork goes downhill and his relationships get scratchy, and we say he is suffering from post-traumatic stress.

We must relieve him of his burden.

The harm was often done when there was no adult to accompany the child through times of trauma and transition.

Simple explanations, comfort and human company can help children to manage very frightening events.

A flash of lightning

A helpful illustration would be a child's first experience of a sudden flash of lightning and a clap of thunder. To any child this is a terrifying event, but any parent quickly moves to comfort and explain.

First of all, they use words: "That was lightning! Did you hear that thunder? Wow!

Wasn't it loud?"

This reply is brim-full of immediately useful messages for the child. It says:

1. The flash of light is called lightning.
2. The huge noise is called thunder.
3. Yes, it's very scary, "Wow!"
4. But we know what it is.
5. By laughing and exclaiming, we show that we share the feelings of fright, and so we reduce the child's anxiety.
6. More, we can give the child something to take away from the experience: "Tonight you can tell Daddy about what happened!"

Returning to an event

With children in care, helpful adults were unfortunately not around to talk with them when 'lightning' struck their families and their lives.

Perhaps it is only years later, when they have come to trust their environments and the people around them, that it becomes possible for them to unpack their histories.

One of the principles of psychotherapy when dealing with childhood trauma, is that the person can 'return to the event', with a more mature mind and in the company of a trusted friend, to try to understand what really happened.

When this can be achieved, the undigested trauma, which is causing so much discomfort, can be loosened up, talked about, and can become just part of our conscious experience, one of the 'lessons of life'. (See practice hint box on the following page: 'Talking about our problems'.)

'Opening up'

A word of warning. I have

often heard adults talking about 'getting a child to open up'. This reflects the very common experience of child care workers that children are seen to make a dramatic transition in their maturity and their relationships with adults after one particular heart-to-heart talk during which significant personal material is discussed. But wanting a child to 'open up' can be as much a sign of *our* anxiety to make some breakthrough in our work with that child, and we can focus too hard on the child's act of opening up. We must remember that the *prior* need of the child is to experience a positive and safe environment and a trusted relationship. He cannot 'open up' without these two conditions. Our major work in child care is to replace the child's former experiences of unpredictability and threat with experiences of reliability and consistency. Many children will then not need to 'open up'. Living with adults who are rational, concerned and protective can be dialogue enough for them to be able to face up to and manage their own feelings and fears.

* * *

So we use talking to help children deal with frightening events in their past. We also use talking to help them with day-to-day personal and social functioning.

Ego re-building

Children in care are commonly seen as awkward, selfish, destructive and aggressive. They have a poor sense of self, and with their negative self-image they experience the world as hostile and irrational.

Talking about our problems

Rod Durkin of the Sage Hill Camp in Vermont, USA, contributed this helpful practice hint on why it helps to talk about our problems — a suggestion for explaining to children.

In the course of doing child care work with latency-age children, I have often been asked "Why do we talk about problems?" Given appropriate timing and circumstances, I have often found it useful to respond with the following analogy: Sometimes when you are alone in your room at night

in the dark, it can be really scary, and the shadows look like monsters; but when you turn on the lights they go away and it's not so scary. Well, that's what it can be like when we talk about our problems, and get them out into the light so we can see what's really there! I have also found this analogy useful with adolescents and adults. From a theoretical point of view, this phenomenon can be readily understood in terms of insight-oriented analytical therapy and desensitisation in behaviour therapy.

This is not surprising when we look at their earlier lives, during which they received little guidance and feedback, and often had to fend for themselves. Social graces do not come easily in the jungle. But when these children move beyond survival needs, these negative qualities are a serious obstacle to their on-going development and relationships, and there are many overdue lessons to be learned. Sometimes we help children dismantle old perceptions about life and replace them with others that 'work better'. Child care writer Chris Beedel referred to helping tasks of child care workers as including:

1. *Exploratory ego building*, which makes up for past deprivation of ego building experience;
2. *Remedial ego building*, where a child's ego building has run into some sort of block, and where perhaps something has to be *un-learned*; and
3. *Personality integration*, where past experiences have led to tangled and unsatisfying patterns of behaviour and relationships.

Guilt or responsibility?

Why is it that troubled children so often have a reduced or distorted sense of their own part in their lives? To those who have been made to feel powerless, things "just happen", or they happen be-

cause someone else makes them happen. To those who have been scape-goated and blamed, things that happen are "their fault". Others, brought up inconsistently and punitively, deny responsibility for what they do and will see problems as being due to 'someone else's fault'. So today we hear them say things like "He just picked on me," "It wasn't my fault," or "Nobody likes me." Here, as a special 'tool of our trade', we use talking to link what happens in their lives to their own actions.

The key is that we want to make children feel responsible for what they do (as against feeling guilty or being irresponsible).

We do not want to reply: "You started it," or "It was all your fault," or "I don't blame people for not liking you." Rather, we try to help youngsters to piece together the sequences of events so that they can see the part they played.

Teaching, not moralising

We are tempted to moralise. "There you are," we say. "See what happens when you are rude to people." The children will pick up the *blaming* in this message, but not the *lesson* we want to teach. We have to be far more neutral and less critical in the words we choose. For example, we can say: "It looked to me that when you came in you bumped Peter. He felt

that you were attacking him or pushing him out of the way and he got angry. Because of that he hit out at you." This is a purely descriptive message, attaching no blame to anybody, and explaining the sequence of events. It helps the child to understand that the behaviour had a cause and that he played a part in it.

This is the whole idea behind the "I-messages" which child care workers are taught to give — as against "You-messages" which are seen as accusing, blaming, comparing, threatening, moralising, sarcastic, rejecting or directing.

1. We do not want to blame, put down or criticise. We do not say: "You are lazy and untidy about your room."
2. We do not want to load children with guilt: We do not say: "You upset me and cause me unhappiness by your unhelpfulness."
3. We do want children to understand the effect their behaviour has on others. We use I-messages like these: "I feel embarrassed when you shout ugly words at me" or "I feel worried when I don't know where you are and it's late."

The key element of an I-message is that it is descriptive, not attacking.

Describing and positive feedback

The Teaching Family Model (TFM) system of child care includes this non-critical *description* technique for helping children to change inappropriate

behaviour. Listen to this communication: "John, you are still walking back and forth. Would you sit down please?"

The way we talk is important. The message we give must be "I want you to get this right" not "I want you to stop irritating others."

Children in care usually got only one part of the message in the past: "You are annoying me" or "I'm sick and tired of you." This simply leaves them feeling disapproved of, without understanding why. Rather, we fill in the blanks for them by describing their inappropriate behaviour and indicating a preferred behaviour — without the message of rejection.

Today we may have to say: "You left your books at home this morning. This made you teacher frustrated." Tomorrow we can remember to say: "You remembered your books today. Your teacher appreciated that."

Instead of the old messages which said: "You are bad, you are a loser, we are fed up with you," youngsters begin to get these new messages: "I saw how hard you tried at that, I noticed your improvement at that, you did that well" — and their whole self-perception changes. Then, rather than denying responsibility for things, they want to *claim* responsibility for what they do. They discover what it is like to be the central character of their own lives.

It is we, by our talking, who have to tell them that. ■



"Well, if this play has some message, it's not getting through to me!"

Andy Andrews considers alternatives in the models we use to work with street children, with reference to her own involvement with the 'Twilight Children' in Johannesburg

An Experiment at Twilight

The need for "Family Units"

Many times, observing the chaos of 40 to 50 boys milling around, fighting over a blanket while bedding down for the night, the lack of some "family" structure had bothered me.

While acknowledging that it was a distinct improvement on sleeping on a piece of cardboard on the pavement, it too closely resembled a zoo! Many times, too, mindful of problems appearing at the medical clinic, it was clear that opportunity to discuss the many things which bother young boys growing up were scarce to non-existent. Staff were grossly outnumbered, at times by 100 to 1! Too busy, unaware, sometimes uncaring — we were clearly not meeting all these needs.

The reason for leaving home in the first place is often the lack of a confidant.

Many times too, thinking of the need to build up self-worth, (woefully lacking in a street child abused by most on the street); of the need for love and a hug, and being sharply aware of how far we fall short of the security of a home atmosphere, had me grasping at straws in frustration!

How could we, even in some small way, while maintaining the benefits of discipline, minimise the concept of "institution"?

The stigma of "institution" does need to be humanised — Twilight boys express the wish not to be advertised as "Twilight children", with the implied stigma of street boys and glue-sniffing.

Unfortunately circumstances such as these can be capitalised on by fund raisers.

So! Why not a family structure at Twilight?

Unfortunately Twilight has no cottages, such as those at Othandweni and SOS Villages, but why not restructure the dormitories of second-stage boys into smaller units, resembling families?

Much soul searching and consultation followed such a suggestion for it would entail drastic change.

Discussions with staff elicited positive feedback — but highlighted problem number 1: staff shortage! It could not be done with the current complement of staff.

Each family unit must have a parent, or rather two parents to accommodate the shift system (and would *that* work too? Would boys play the one 'parent' off against the other?)

However, management was approached for four new child care workers.

Problem number 2 arose in objections by the social worker to the use of the terms "family" and "parent." Psychological confusion could occur where a boy already had a home and a parent or parents (albeit unsuitable for whatever reason).

Opinion was canvassed among the boys about giving identity to the units and suggesting alternative names.

They came up with — *Kusasaletu* (out tomorrow) *Thandanani* (love each other) *Hlonipha* (respect)

Bamanani (trust each other) The choice of names was also offered to proposed "family" boys, who chose the first three for the suggested units (was it perhaps asking too much of an ex-street child to trust another?)

Male staff youth care workers would continue to be referred

to as "malume" (uncle). A solution for female staff was not satisfactorily resolved.

The nitty gritty of How?

Family units could not be implemented in isolation; any rearrangement would affect the whole structure and staff routine. The basic structure at Twilight was:

1. Admission of a new boy to first stage — sleeps on mattress on floor; attends Street-wise school.

2. He then progresses (on merit) upstairs to the in-between stage — sleeps on a bed before promotion to second stage, where he sleeps on a bed and attends formal school. (In-between stage boys might attend either the Street-wise or a formal school, depending on personal circumstances, ability etc.) Lockers provided all stages.

The senior bridging boys were not included in this survey. With the addition of four new child care workers it would be possible to have:-

3 child care workers (family) on duty; 2 child care workers off duty;

2 child care workers (first stage) on duty; 2 child care workers off duty.

The additional staff would give a ration of 20 to 1 in the first stage and 6 to 1 in the second stage, or "families".

The first stage child care workers would supervise the 'in-between' stage and the "family" child care workers would supervise first stage boys' lunch.

Implementation

Opportunity for implementation arose when I had to manage the shelter in October 1992 for a month in between managers.

Since schooling is compulsory at Twilight, the boys and staff rise early on school days — boys have breakfast, collect lunch and are seen onto a bus by "parents" who are then off-duty for the morning.

"Parents" return at lunch time when they supervise first stage boys (returned from Street-wise school) until the return of second stage boys (at about 3 pm) from school.

"Parents" then attend and supervise lunch (tablecloths and a change of school clothes supplied for "families").

Sport, supper and homework

precede the crucial family discussion at about 9 pm (folding tables and eight chairs supplied to each unit).

The proceedings of the discussions are recorded in a confidential diary by the "parent". Staff to encourage private consultation where necessary or desired by the boy.

Philosophy and some results

The determining factor in the establishment of family units was the need for this discussion period, arising as it did out of the need for identity, for the fostering of sibling relationships, respect for the "parent", and of respect for and pride in their "family"! Some results emerged from two cases. One concerned a collective reaction to a boy refusing to comply, refusing to tidy his bed and clothes, etc. Discussion with the social worker revealed ongoing personal problems which were satisfactorily dealt with.

Another case (personal consultation) brought to light personal problems — a boy needed guidance on conduct with this girlfriend!

An interesting sidelight was reaction to the tablecloths: the first stage boys requested their own tablecloths too! Staff responded by pointing out the need for improved behaviour to justify promotion. However, a second request for identity for the first stage did produce their own name — "*Hlanganani*" (togetherness).

Conclusions

The boys responded enthusiastically to the idea, and were practical in the implementation of the concept.

Such a concept should, however, be carefully monitored, success or failure being largely relative to the quality of input by staff — who were on the whole in favour of the concept.

With the basic structure in place, the possibilities are boundless. Confidential case studies could be presented for review, contrasting the "family" as opposed to the dormitory concept. Arguments for and against could contribute to the planning the structure of future street shelters.

I would welcome comments to Box 546, Parklands 2121. ■



Nancy Robson writing in the *Monitor*

Abigail: The Courage to Try

When I picked up nine-year-old Abigail, she was subdued. I thought perhaps she was exhausted.

School had been followed by a two-hour rehearsal for the dance recital. She curled against the door, head half-cradled in her arms.

"Tired?"

She nodded. "But that's not it."

"No? What then?"

Simultaneously, I watched the road and tried to study her face, marveling at how she had changed in the past year.

She's not little anymore, I thought. I can't kiss her and 'make it all better'. She has to learn her own lessons now.

"I'm not good!"

She sighed deeply, and I saw the quiver of her chin — a prelude to tears.

"I'm not good!" she burst out. "I'm just no good at this. I can't do the recital! I'll look like an idiot!"

Abigail's image is important to her, more important than I can remember mine being at her age, but perhaps my mem-

ory is faulty.

She always wants to be sure of her ground, to know what she is doing, and to feel confident in doing it well.

I have seen her study for parts in school plays and in community theatre with adult seriousness, learning not only her lines, but those of the people around her so she'd be sure to come in on cue. She has prompted other players, adrift in stage fright, in an effort to ensure the success of the whole production.

She takes her work very seriously and is intolerant of anything less than perfection in herself, if not in others. And while on occasion I can see how difficult that intolerance has made life for her and for those of us who love her, I cannot help but respect it as well.

But she needs to give herself space in which to try and a space in which to grow. She needs to learn that the attempt, even a failed one, is less wonderful than perfection. The attempt, overcoming the fear of failure, built courage. It is a lesson not taught, but absorbed.

"Why do you think you're good?" I asked after a moment.

She threw up her hands though unable to find the words to explain.

"Has anyone said anything to you?" She shook her head.

"I think you're expecting too much of yourself," I said gingerly, knowing I could be precipitating a storm of protest.

"I think you've improved tremendously since you began."

"Parents always say that!" she cried in exasperation.

"But what if it's true?"

"Parents won't tell you you're awful, because they don't want to hurt your feelings. They want kids to feel good about themselves!"

The thin line

It is a hard line to walk — encouraging without being too laudatory, correcting without crushing. I often seem to find myself on the wrong side of the line.

"Have you talked to Faith?"

Faith, older by one year, with two years more experience at ballet, was Abigail's toughest critic and most supportive admirer.

"Parents won't tell you you're awful, because they don't want to hurt your feelings. They want kids to feel good about themselves!"

Abby shook her head in silence.

"Faith will tell you what she really thinks. Why don't you call her?" I prodded.

I knew that Faith, in an act of courage, would encourage Abigail to try, just as she has learned to try despite her own doubts.

Abby curled up as though to put an end to the discussion. I fell silent, still debating with myself the parental question: Where was the line between respect for her decision and teaching perseverance?

Should I insist that she go? We didn't speak about the matter until the next day.

"I don't think I want to be a dancer," she informed me abruptly when she came down to breakfast.

She has wanted to dance since she was 3. I had never seen the discipline for practice in her, but I have seen enough of the world to be willing to encourage her to try.

"No one's forcing you to be a dancer," I replied, having begun to think more clearly about what her withdrawal at the last minute would mean to her fellow dancers in the teacher's carefully choreographed recital piece.

"I'm not going to the recital." There it was: the challenge. I was thankful she had waited until the next day to make it with such conviction.

"What about the other dancers? Won't your being absent leave a big gap?" She thought about that a moment, about her place in the fabric of this one piece, about each member's part in the integrity of the whole.

"And what about Miss Becky?" I continued. "She's worked really hard. This is her moment, too." Abigail had fallen silent, and on her face was a stopped-in-her-tracks meditative look.

When to back off

Without a word, she turned on her heel and walked off. Once again, I found it hard to know when to push and when to back off with my children.

My mother pushed me into ballet class. It was she who had wanted to be the dancer, not me. Her prodding had been well-intentioned, but I purposely got myself thrown out.

But this had been Abigail's idea. It was her own bargain that she must fulfil. I said nothing more. She went off to ruminate.

* * *

On Saturday morning, I went upstairs to wake her for the recital. There was no discussion: She offered no argument, voiced no reservations. She rose and raced up and down the stairs, collecting her costume and gear in a dramatic frenzy.

Sitting in the car on the way to town, she held herself rigid, steeling herself for what she feared would be the worst morning of her life. Yet, as fearful as she was, she had decided to go.

The dress rehearsal was a turmoil of last-minute costume adjustments and hair disasters, all pulled together in time for the opening number. The audience of parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters was crammed into one side of the church hall; the dancers had command of the other side.

Abigail waited across the room in a corner, commiserating with three of her classmates. She patted one of the girls, then smiled.

And in that smile, I saw renewed confidence. She had seen, reflected in her friend's eyes, her own doubt. She was no longer alone.

She remembered every step, every turn, counting out the measures, moving in rhythm with the others.

As she turned for the last arabesque, she flashed me a grin that made my heart leap.

On that Saturday morning in the basement of the church, Abby had discovered triumph in the attempt.

She had overcome her fear enough to try.

10-Minute CHECK-UP

Kathy Mitchell collects some guidelines which keep people in the helping professions on track. Check yourself out with these ...

Survival Skills for Professional Child Care Workers

1. A well developed sense of self awareness.

Evaluation of your own quirks and personal styles will provide some insight into the climate of your unit. Child care workers live in a world of false cues: children will frequently tell you what they perceive you want to know; child care workers will hear what they want to hear.

2. The ability to manage you work and your personal life.

Feeling as though you are juggling 25 ping-pong balls at once will wear you down. Decide which ones to drop. Set your priorities to accomplish what you do best — this will give you a sense of achievement, which will encourage you to develop yourself in the areas that do not come so easily — that require persistence and perseverance.

3. Time for activities that make for a sound and well rounded life.

This makes you more valuable and interesting to the children and the team. Plan for a variety of personal, educational, cultural and recreational experiences.

4. Interpersonal sensitivity.

Listen to others. Listen to both verbal and non-verbal cues — both from staff colleagues and from children. Sense the 'vibes'. Focus carefully on the total person communicating with you.

5. Enhancing the self-esteem of others.

Make sure to encourage and complement others — both staff colleagues and children — on their efforts. This will take away unhealthy competition and lessen your own self-absorption.

6. The courage to take risks.

Always maintain a healthy curiosity — and the ability to think creatively. Risk looking ridiculous! Learn the joy of a lively mind and playfulness (creativity and play are the same thing) in your setting.

7. The ability to use and 'grow' from negative feedback.

Relax! You will mess up somewhere. Just learn what you can from your mistakes — and try to avoid making the same mistakes next time! Ask for specific help and support when you need it; don't be above asking for advice or back-up. Analyse immediately why something failed, and use your findings to inform future decisions.

8. An experiential attitude.

Be optimistic. 'Let's try' and 'Let's see what we learn from this' should be heard often in your unit.

9. 'Problems are for solving.'

Learn to view problems as opportunities, as chances for you to sharpen your creative thinking skills. All problems have solutions — some solutions are simply more or less effective than others.

10. Tolerance for sustained work.

Child care is seldom an eight-hour day. If that is your expectation, have another look at the work you have chosen.

11. A sense of calling or mission.

There is meaning and special fulfilment to work that involves personal commitment.

12. Dealing with insecurities.

If an individual really makes you feel insecure or anxious, get to know that person better. Brief yourself more carefully before you jump into difficult situations. Try to understand why you feel anxious.

13 Working out how to work with your boss.

Your boss directly influences your career and your success within the organisation. Understand your boss is a person with even more responsibility and pressure than you have. Keep your boss well informed — never let him/her get a surprise about your work.

14. Keeping up with trends.

Understand your society and its trends. Understand current thinking in child and youth care theory and practice. Try to know what is happening in the world, with families, children, writing, culture, politics ...



In putting the case for university-based training for the child and youth care profession, **James Anglin** sketches the special nature of this work — and studies some differences between child care work and social work.

Child and Youth Care: A Unique Profession

It is important to recognise the diverse origins of child and youth care as a profession.

The early pioneers came from the fields of medicine, education and psychology, primarily, with some from sociology, social work, nursing and general arts educations. This eclectic history is still reflected in the make-up of the field today, particularly amongst the educators and agency directors who tend to be older and who reflect on the fact that many formal child and youth care educational programmes are relatively new.

Five characteristics

I see five key elements of the child and youth care profession. Taken together, these five characteristics differentiate this profession from other allied human service disciplines.

Although some of these characteristics are shared with some other disciplines, this particular cluster is unique to child and youth care work.

1. Child and youth care is primarily focussed on the growth and development of children and youth.

While families, communities and organisations are important concerns for child and youth care professionals, these are viewed as contexts for the care of children and young people. For us, the development of children and youth is the very heart of the matter.

2. Child and youth care is concerned with the totality of a child's functioning.

The focus is on young persons living through a certain portion of the human life cycle, rather than on any one facet of functioning, as is characteristic of some other human service disciplines. For example, physiotherapists and physicians are primarily concerned with physical health, psychiatrists and psychologists with mental health, probation officers with criminal behaviour, teachers with cognitive development, and so on. Only the emerging field of gerontology appears to share child and youth care's concern with the totality of a person during one portion of the life cycle. With such a holistic perspective, we specialise in being child-focussed generalists. We cannot work alone, and need to work closely with a variety of other professionals.

3. Child and youth care has developed a model of social competence rather than a pathology-based orientation to child development.

This is sometimes referred to as a "developmental perspective". Child and youth care workers believe that children are doing the best they can at any given moment, and that we can best assist the child by working towards the "next step", by building on existing strengths and abilities. The

writings of such pioneers as Pestalozzi, Montessori, Korczak and Makarenko demonstrate this orientation.

4. Child and youth care is based on (but not restricted to) direct, day to day work with children and youth in their environment.

Unlike many other professionals, child and youth care practitioners do not operate in a single setting, or on an interview or sessional basis. We work "at the coal face", as they say in England (or "in the trenches", as they say in the U.S.), at all hours, and we work in residential centres, schools, hospitals, family homes, day care, on the streets, etc. Although child and youth workers also assume professional supporting roles, such as supervising, directing, training, policy-making and researching, they remain grounded in the direct care work.

5. Child and youth care involves the development of therapeutic relationships with children, their families, and other informal and formal helpers.

Such therapeutic relationships lie at the very centre of our work, and they combine the richness and intimacy of the "personal" with the rigour and goal-directedness of the "professional". The development of such therapeutic relationships requires an

integration of a complex constellation of knowledge, skills, and elements of self. In short, it requires a high level of personal/professional development on the part of the worker.

A definition

In brief, child and youth care is work with children and youth, as whole persons, in order to promote their social competence and healthy development, by participating in and using their day-to-day environments and life experiences, and through the development of therapeutic relationships, most importantly the relationship with the particular child or youth who is the focus of attention. (The word 'therapeutic' is taken to mean "having healing or curative powers; gradually or rithodically ameliorative".)

Differences

But how does the curriculum for child and youth care work differ from that for social work, for example? I have heard a variety of views on the different emphases between social work and child and youth care, most of which are generalisations which do not hold true in every programme or every jurisdiction. However, they may indicate a leaning, or difference of emphasis, between social work and child and youth care. Some of these differences include:

1. Social work focuses more on the social and community networks, child and youth care more on individual and interpersonal dynamics.
2. Social work focuses more on social problems, child and youth care more on human development.
3. Social work focuses more on organisations and policies, child and youth care more on people and relationships.
4. Social work focuses more on knowing about children and families, child and youth care more on living and working with them.
5. Social work focuses more on a wide variety of societal groups and issues, child and youth care on the needs of children and youth.
6. Social work focuses more on problem solving, child and

youth care more on the helping and growth process.
7. Social work focuses more on gaining power and societal influence, child and youth care more on gaining self-awareness and personal growth.

Tension

I have come to think that, fundamentally, the reason for tension between social work and child and youth care work (and such tension is discernible to some degree in all of the countries I have visited — England, Hungary, Israel and Sweden, as well as in the US and Canada and, it seems, in South Africa as well) is the presence of two underlying and eternal ways of understanding human society and social change. This is simply an intuition of mine I do not know if it fits with your experience:

On the one hand we have a belief, dominant in social work and in people attracted into social work, that human beings are essentially good, and that if we can only re-structure society, (for example, create equity in our legislation and policies; eliminate poverty; give primacy to social concerns over economic ones; and give more influence to social workers and their clients), all will be well in the world. Thus, if this is the underlying belief, mobilising adults (who have votes and potentially strong voices) for social change is likely to be the most effective strategy to achieve the profession's goals and aspirations for society. Thus, social work tends to be quite good at managing and influencing political dynamics. On the other hand, we have the belief, dominant in child and youth care work and in those attracted to child and youth care work, that people are essentially good, and that if we can only help them to achieve order within themselves and in their daily lives (for example, develop a sense of personal esteem, relate to others more effectively, gain competence in some area of work or learning), all will be well. In this approach, influencing young people while there is maximum opportunity for personal change is likely to be the most effective strategy

to achieve the profession's goals and aspirations for society. Thus, child and youth care work is not focused so much on managing the political dynamics as on facilitating growth, development and the learning of life skills.

Equal partner

Of course, as I know full well, having served for five years as the head of a department in one, that universities are far more political than developmental or therapeutic by nature! Thus the successful evolution of child and youth care within the university as a full and equal partner can be made easier or more difficult depending on the stance assumed by those who are more politically motivated and involved.

In its healthiest manifestations, the two viewpoints or models outlined above can combine to offer a powerful "one-two punch" or "win-win" dynamic for social change. In its most dysfunctional manifestations, these two perspectives and approaches can engage in a life and death battle or no-win struggle with each other. If you can permit me, as an ignorant outsider, to comment on the possibilities which may exist in South Africa, I would venture the opinion that a conscious acceptance and celebration of this difference and the diversity of approaches would be most in harmony with the vision and mission taking shape within the country as a whole. Heaven knows there will be more than enough for both professions to do in the years and generations ahead. It really doesn't make sense, to my mind, for one approach to try to control or dominate the other, and the real losers of such a struggle would always be the children and families we are supposedly there to serve.

Complementary

To my mind, the two professions are very complementary, and there is clearly a greater need than we can meet for graduates from both approaches. At the same time, there is a degree of incompatibility between the two approaches, and attempts to

combine child and youth care preparation within the social work orientation, both in Great Britain and North America, has resulted in the child and youth care role being devalued and de-emphasised, with the result that children and young people are not well served.

The apparent similarities between the two professional approaches can be misleading. While both work with families, for example, the social work profession is involved with the family *per se*, as a social agent, ensuring that the family receives appropriate social benefits and that the family unit is not abusive to any of its members, and so on. Child and youth care workers with university-level training, on the other hand, are involved with families where there are children or youth involved, and are trained in addressing the developmental issues and day-to-day dynamics of relationships, within both the home and the community environment, on a flexible schedule, as determined by the nature and intensity of the needs of the particular family.

Similarly, while both need to learn communication skills, the types, purposes and contexts of communication are so different that the appropriate teaching format and course content need to be significantly different. In other areas, such as human growth and development, social work is only interested in, and only

has room for, an overview or introduction, while child and youth care workers require an in-depth understanding combined with intensive integrative practice experience at the interpersonal level.

Similarities not real

In summary, the apparent similarities between social work and child and youth care are just that — appearances rather than realities, and one needs only to compare the overall quality of child care programmes being provided in places with well-developed child and youth care educational programmes (i.e. in most of Europe and parts of Canada, especially British Columbia and French-speaking Quebec) with those where there are few or no such programmes (i.e. the U.S.A. and Great Britain). While many social work leaders would like to see social work education provide the type of training characteristic of child and youth care/social pedagogy programmes, the fact is that, in practice, such a focus tends to be watered down and displaced by the demands for more generic preparation of a much broader scope. The ultimate and major reason for supporting a university-based child and youth care degree programme is that it is better for children and young people to have well-trained child and youth care workers and well-trained social workers. ■



"A child care worker? Oh, I get it! Your wife is a career woman and you have to stay at home to look after the kids?!"

For supervisors, **Alenka Kobolt** discusses in the *FICE Bulletin* the respective merits of individual and group supervision in child care organisations.

Group Supervision and the Supervision of Teams in Residential Care: the Slovene Experience

Before starting to describe group and team supervision, it is important to clarify the different meanings of the word "supervision". In the minds of the public the prefix "super" gives the idea of overview or control. But I would prefer another meaning for this prefix: "a view from outside", or the process in which professionals reflect on their own working experiences.

In this context I understand the supervision process as the process of "professional reflection" or even a longer definition "the reflective process about how a service occupation (i.e. a profession that deals with people) is carried out".

The goal of such reflection is to become aware of one's thinking and behavioural strategies, professional themes and patterns, and the ways of solving them.

The standard ways of professional work are being questioned as well as the effectiveness and ethics of one's work. The expert reflects on the limits he reaches, those he steps over and those he respects; he reflects about how, where and when his interventions prove useful to his client; how they can support and motivate, or hinder and inhibit him.

Models of supervision and their theoretical base

An indispensable theoretical base for supervision is, in my opinion, the non-directive Ro-

gerian model, which focuses on professional growth, and development of the supervisee's competence.

This model also serves as a framework for creating stages in the process of supervision and for establishing the basic non-directive approach which enables the supervisee to search for answers by himself through his own learning process, instead of simply getting the answers to his questions.

The Balint group model is considered as the standard for group supervision, to which the group dynamics model can be added. The latter serves as the base for understanding group structures and processes.

An important theoretical base for group supervision is also the 'theme-centred' interaction (TCI) of Ruth Cohn, emphasising the importance of balance between —

- the needs of the individual on the first side,
- the group as a unit and a new entity in group supervision on the second side, and
- the discussed topics — supervision questions — on the third side, of an equilateral triangle.

Correct leadership in the supervision process requires the integration of basic knowledge of communication, the monitoring of group discussion, knowledge of the characteristics of reflective learning on individuals' cognitive learning styles and the recognition of communication sources.

Group supervision and supervision of team

Raguse defines group supervision (1991, p. 249) as a process of professional reflection, whereby next to the leader or supervisor, more people are involved in the learning process, interchangeably taking the role of the supervisee. Team members are not interdependent in their work.

In team supervision group members are at the same time also closely connected in their work and in the supervision learning process they try to solve questions arising from work. They search for answers to the question about the structuring of interrelationships and about the possible hindrances or standstills they experience in carrying out their tasks.

The advantage of individual supervision is that at each meeting attention can be focused on one supervisee who can devote all his time to his own reflection.

The advantage of small group supervision is that it includes the characteristics of group dynamics, which enable the participants to learn from one another. There are also openings for richer communication, additional alternative interpretations, and different viewpoints regarding one and the same thing.

Thus a wide net of social learning and support among members of the supervision group can be observed.

The basic disadvantage of group supervision might be that the supervisee receives

less attention for "his material" (i.e., analysis of his case, situation, problem or question). In an individual process or in a small supervision group, participants can in this respect be more active. Group supervision can also be hindered by a competitive spirit in the group or by complex dynamics, which do not leave room for balanced communication. There might be problems that should be handled by the head of the institution, such as organisational questions and other conflicts arising from the use of inappropriate management methods in the work.

About the process of group supervision

The group supervision process is distinguished by its characteristic stages, which represent the particularities of the situation and its advantages. Thus Raguse (*ibid.*, p. 250) reports how important it is for the individual in the first stage of group supervision to have enough room and time available in order to present his material, problems and questions without being interrupted. The supervisor cannot interrupt, nor can the group members. The supervisor should not be directed nor asked questions. We could say that he needs time to form his "Gestalt" (or whole view). In the second stage, communication in the group is established, which does not have as its goal the interpretation of the "presented Gestalt", but rather the mirroring of the heard material.

This is cognitive and connotative mirroring of what the supervisee has presented and what the other members, including the supervisor, have heard.

In this stage the advantage of group supervision becomes apparent. The individual member of the supervision group does not only get the supervisor's "reflection"; he experiences the feedback and the echo of the rest of the group. Of course the learning process, which is the basic aim of supervision, is by no means finished.

The reflection of the group members enables the supervisee to reconstruct his original question. He can now see

Now the new perspectives offered by the group members and the supervisor enable him to see his situation in a new light; they offer him new information and possible new solutions.

the question from a new angle and can decide by himself whether his original perspective or understanding was appropriate and reasonable. He has probably raised issues in supervision because of the dilemmas, ambiguity and vagueness he felt in carrying out a work task in a concrete situation. Now the new perspectives offered by the group members and the supervisor enable him to see his situation in a new light; they offer him new information and possible new solutions.

In this way the supervisee develops the so-called "expanded understanding" of his professional situation.

In the stage following expanded reflection, a discussion about what actions and behaviour should result from the different understanding of the situation takes place. This leads to some diversity in the examination of concrete professional actions and interventions.

To the level of different ways of seeing, the level of different ways of action is added, which means a good learning situation for one seeking new alternative ways to work.

Engagement of the group members

The process described above necessitates the engagement of group supervision members in the process, and not only the supervisor's personal reflection of how one does one's work work.

Group members also get insight into the questions their colleagues are faced with in their work. The group offers a wide learning context, much

wider than the one offered by individual supervision. At the same time this situation requires something that should not be forgotten or avoided: the need of the members to check continuously where they stand in the group, and how safe they feel, in order to open up and tackle the real questions. It might sound simple. Yet in this process it is not easy to achieve quickly the level of safety needed for all members.

Team supervision in residential care

A team of colleagues who work together and are interdependent is a special supervision group. Here we need to differentiate as to whether the professionals work in different institutions, or whether the team belongs to only one institution, with the team members relating closely.

Within each institution there exist unwritten rules, standard patterns of practice, norms, the hierarchy, the history of the institution and the team itself. Therefore one of the essential characteristics of team supervision is that these questions are faced properly.

If we really want team supervision to be effective, the process has to be directed equally to the following three levels:

1. The level of individual team members;
2. The level of group processes;
3. The level of purpose or tasks of the team.

The individual level means that questions have to be answered such as:

- How does the individual team member feel?
- How does he assess his position within the team?
- How important does he see his role and contribution to the common goal?
- What is his relationship with other members of the group and vice-versa?

The group process level can be evaluated if enough attention is paid to the questions and reflection about how the team works together and whether the set goals have been reached.

What are the basic guidelines of the work? Which group processes take place in the group? How do the members feel? Where has work in the

group come to a standstill? How and when has this come about and what should be done to overcome such a situation?

There are also organisational and contextual problems which require a certain approach.

The level of team tasks can be evaluated if the team is able to face questions such as:

- How clearly defined are its tasks and goals?
- Are they in accordance with the philosophy of the institution as a whole, or of individual team members?
- Do they meet the needs of clients?
- Have the tasks defined so far proved to be sensible, or should they be corrected or re-considered?

Conditions

Before starting the supervision process, the following conditions should be made clear:

- The goals of each supervision meeting and the goals of the whole supervision group should be defined.
- The number of meetings to be held should be decided.
- The supervisor's role and the special targets of the supervision process need to be agreed.
- The relationship necessary between the didactic, supportive and directional elements of supervision must be determined.
- Evaluation should find its place in the supervision process. It enables the correction of goals — and if necessary a change of direction — due to any newly arisen needs identified by its members.

The Slovene experience with supervision in residential care teams

In Slovenia supervision was first tried out and experience was gathered in the field of clinical psychology. Supervision had already been introduced in certain special education institutions in the 1970's. Today it has gained a strong foothold there and it is also available in most new projects in the area of social and educational work.

Those who have experienced supervision state that it enables the following:

- Evaluation of individual and team goals, thus bringing indi-

vidual endeavours in line with the work of other members;

- Reflection of individual and group expectations concerning individual segments of the professional field;

- Answers to the question of defining the limits and responsibility of individual team members;
- More or less successful work styles, methods and process;
- Reflection about the institutional framework, together with justification of (and experimentation with) greater flexibility of rules;
- Motivation for work, reflection about the experiences of the professional in regard to the people he works with and in regard to the team.

Conclusion

Considering the answers of those who have been involved in the process of professional reflection, we can safely say that in the future supervision will develop still more in order to be of service to the children and young people — and indeed all the people professionals in social and the child care field work with — for the purpose of helping, leading and directing them or compensating for their handicaps. Supervision also brings greater satisfaction to the professional with regard to his own work, and it decreases burn-out for individuals in this strenuous and personally demanding job.

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Death of UNICEF's James Grant

James Grant, a crusader for adequate health care for children, died of cancer at the end of January at the age of 72. Only a few days previously he had resigned as Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Child and Youth Care Task Team Progress

The first phase of the government Task Team's work was to undertake a needs analysis to establish the justification for a profession of child and youth care. Many hundreds of members and other child care people were consulted in order to produce the NACCW's initial submission. (Ask your Regional Chairperson or any NACCW office to let you see a copy of this report.) The second stage involves wide consultation to recommend a shape for the profession, definitions of practice, qualifications, responsibilities and salaries and service conditions. "This is a wonderful opportunity for our profession to influence the shape of our own professional infrastructure," says NACCW Director Lesley du Toit. "Please take this very seriously. Whatever is decided upon now will influence the future of the child and youth care profession and the service to children in the future."

SA campaign to end physical punishment

Peter Newell of the worldwide EPOCH (End Physical Punishment of Children) campaign is in South Africa hoping to set up a national alliance to promote its goals here. 29 people attended a two-day workshop in Cape Town this month and agreed on a number of educative and legislative moves. It is intended to adopt an initial unambiguous statement that protection from all forms of

physical punishment is a basic human right. However, any initiatives will make clear that the campaign is about encouraging, not opposing, discipline, particularly self-discipline, and will include advice on alternatives to physical punishment. Enquiries to Peter Newell at UCT's Child Health Unit, telephone (021) 685-4103 x 250. E-mail address: chu@rmh.uct.ac.za

Black Hills Seminars

Oh to be in South Dakota in June or August 1995! Larry Brendtro and Martin Brokenleg are Director and Dean respectively of Black Hills Seminars entitled *From Rage to Responsibility* and *From Risk to Resilience*.

Content of the first of these includes creative conflict resolution, gangs, guns and safe schools, the great boot camp debate, building positive peer cultures, social skills and anger management, bully-proofing schools, life-space crisis intervention, alternatives to exclusion, strengthening families, safety in volatile situations, empowerment counselling, and celebrating diversity — a feast of positive and practical teaching for anyone who is looking for new ideas and methods in work with troubled young people. For information on these seminars contact the Editor of this journal.

New NACCW course launches

"Adults who work with adolescents often feel ill-equipped to meet effectively the developmental needs of this group," say the developers of the new course *Working with Youth at Risk* to be introduced this year.

The full certificated course includes two modules (though each can be taken separately if desired).

Module 1 deals with Developmental Work with Youth, while Module 2 is the official *Professional Assault Response Training (PART)* course to be trained and introduced in June 1995 by Prof. Nick Smiar of the University of Wisconsin.

An important feature of this PART programme is the key *Training of Trainers* component whereby a number of PART trainers will be trained to offer

Module 2 of this new course in their own organisations. Another valuable aspect to make the course widely useful to a variety of youth programmes is that the training curriculum will be adapted to suit the needs of a particular student group if requested. Enquiries may be directed to Jackie Winfield or Lesley du Toit on (031) 463-1099.

'Ma' comes to the rescue

Many single parents experience immense difficulties in obtaining the child-support to which they are entitled. On this premise, a new organisation called Maintenance Assistance Services (Ma's for short) has set up in Cape Town to help parents who have this problem.

Child care workers are familiar with the problem, since it is often a factor in a single parent's ability to help with the child in care.

In answer to commonly asked questions — like Has caring for your child become a financial strain? Is the other parent paying their fair share? Do you hate going to court? and Do you wish you could avoid confronting the other parent? — Ma's offers a helping service on a sliding scale according to income. Perhaps the idea will later spread to other cities, but in the mean time, enquiries to Ynze de Jong at (021) 461-8816.

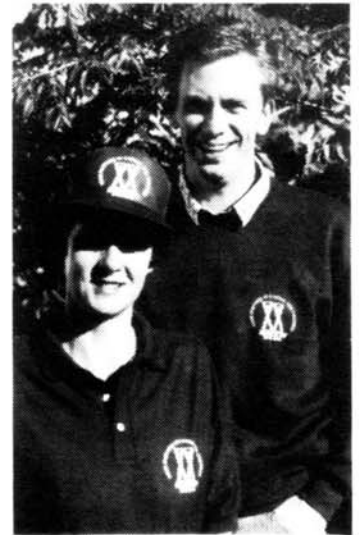
High interest in courses

More than 150 students have registered for the First Year of UNISA's Certificate in Child and Youth Care — over twenty more than last year's intake. This is the first-ever university-level course in our profession, and it offers a two-year theory programme with practice laboratories run in a number of centres by the NACCW.

BQCC students are numbered in the thousands, but many are this year enrolling for the short courses which go towards making up the required eight credits for the certificate.

These short courses include Social Skills Training, HIV/AIDS: Education, Care and Policy in Child and Youth Care.

The Diploma in Child Care Administration (DCCA), being an intensive course, only admits a small number of students each year, and has got off to a busy start for 1995.



BE THE FIRST on your block with a royal blue T-shirt or golf-shirt sporting the NACCW 20th Anniversary logo. Brenda and Martin of the NACCW Publications office model the golf shirt (R37 for M, L and XL, R40 for XXL), and the T-shirt (R48 for M, L and XL, R51 for XXL). The cap is R15.00. Fax order to (021) 685-7411 or mail Teen Centre, 24 Campground Rd, Rondebosch 7700. They will send you your order with invoice — you just add the postage you see on the package. Very quick! Very smart!

Child Care Workers

St Theresa's Home requires four trained Child Care Workers with matric and at least two years' experience in Child and Youth Care.

Kindly reply enclosing C.V. and references to: The Principal, St Theresa's Home, Mayville, Durban 4091

Social Worker

This position is available in March 1995. Please contact Mrs Shone on 0331-423214 to arrange for an application form to be forwarded.

Pietermaritzburg
Children's Homes

CHILDREN'S

BILL OF RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES



CHILDREN HAVE THE **RIGHT** TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY

AND THE **RESPONSIBILITY** TO LISTEN TO OTHERS



CHILDREN HAVE THE **RIGHT** TO QUALITY MEDICAL CARE

AND THE **RESPONSIBILITY** TO TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES



CHILDREN HAVE THE **RIGHT** TO A GOOD EDUCATION

AND THE **RESPONSIBILITY** TO STUDY AND RESPECT THEIR TEACHERS



CHILDREN HAVE THE **RIGHT** TO BE LOVED AND PROTECTED FROM HARM

AND THE **RESPONSIBILITY** TO SHOW OTHERS LOVE AND CARING



CHILDREN HAVE THE **RIGHT** TO GET SPECIAL CARE FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

AND THE **RESPONSIBILITY** TO BE THE BEST PERSONS THEY CAN BE



CHILDREN HAVE THE **RIGHT** TO BE PROUD OF THEIR HERITAGE AND BELIEFS



AND THE **RESPONSIBILITY** TO RESPECT OTHERS ORIGINS AND BELIEFS

CHILDREN HAVE THE **RIGHT** TO A SAFE AND COMFORTABLE HOME



AND THE **RESPONSIBILITY** TO KEEP IT NEAT AND CLEAN



CHILDREN HAVE THE **RIGHT** TO MAKE MISTAKES

AND THE **RESPONSIBILITY** TO LEARN FROM THE MISTAKES



CHILDREN HAVE THE **RIGHT** TO BE WELL FED

AND THE **RESPONSIBILITY** TO NOT WASTE FOOD



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Publications Department:
pretext@iaccess.za

EDITORIAL

A personal invitation to take up your pen ...

On the 2nd February the Editorial Board of this journal did not hold its usual monthly meeting.

Instead, we invited a number of additional people from all levels in the child care field (together with the Director of our local Child & Family Welfare Society) to talk generally about *The Child Care Worker* — its purpose and format, its language and content, and more specifically, about encouraging new writers.

Purpose and format

When we talked of the journal's purpose, the following words tumbled out: training, information, entertainment, education, communication, enhancement of the profession, calendar and notice-board.

If we were to develop a mission statement, we felt it should include the words *inform, teach, challenge and outreach*.

The format had in recent years become more variable, so that there was room for both short and long features, as well as serious and more light-hearted material. Those present felt that we should not limit ourselves to any one style — that there was room for comics, short stories, classified ads and also jokes and 'fillers'

New writers

The meeting noted that our readership was extremely wide — including child care workers, principals, social

workers, students, lecturers, supervisors, old hands, newcomers, management committees, state departments, universities ...

And because of this wide range of readers, we should have a wide range of writers.

Not good enough?

We had a long discussion about why people might be unwilling to write for the journal. Many people say "But I am not a writer, and therefore what I write will not be good

enough." There are two answers to this: Yes and No.

1. *Yes, you may not be a writer, but you certainly are a communicator.*

Whatever your job in child care, whether it is as an on-line worker, a manager or a teacher, communication is one thing that you are probably very good at. You converse with children, you consult with colleagues on your team, you explain to students. *And you have a lot to communicate.* Whatever you do in your job is of interest to others in the child and youth care field. Readers do want to hear of your ideas, your observations, your practice and your plans.

2. *No, your writing may not be good enough at first, but helping you to develop your writing skills, and preparing your contribution for publication, is what the Editorial*



Board is there for.

You may be interested to know that no article is ever published exactly as it is received. There are always i's to dot and t's to cross. Even the brightest writer gets his prepositions back to front or leaves out a verb!

How it works

Whenever we receive an article, we may do one of two things:

1. We may edit it (tidy it up, improve some spelling, re-write the occasional sentence, shorten some paragraphs) and then publish it; or
2. We may write back to the author and make some suggestions as to how it could be more interesting and have more impact. Often we get a long article dealing with a lot of subjects, and we suggest that just *one* of the ideas would make a good page, column or box.

Why not try?

We need writing from all people who work in child care.

The impressions of the newest worker are of as much interest as the insights of the most experienced.

You might like to send just an idea first, so that the Editor can comment and guide. Or you might like to send a whole letter, story or article and see what happens.

Whatever you decide, we promise that our response will be helpful and appreciative — and, above all, honest! If your writing really is too terrible for words, we'll even tell you that!

But the chances are that you are better than you think. Why not try?

The child care worker

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