

Child & Youth Care

**A JOURNAL FOR THOSE WHO WORK WITH
TROUBLED CHILDREN AND YOUTH AT RISK**

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**HIGH-OCTANE PROGRAMME FOR YOUTH OFFENDERS
WELFARE MINISTER'S ADDRESS AT CONFERENCE
AFRICA: THE UNDUGU SOCIETY AT WORK IN KENYA**

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Travelling light: the art of the possible in future child and youth care programmes

When I see news and pictures of new child and youth care facilities and programmes being planned or built, the most depressing sight possible is the image of a large building being officially opened or of a hotel-sized kitchen being tiled! These are signs of programmes which will be hanging the millstone of institutionalisation around their necks at the very time when we are looking for something leaner and less expensive.

The minute we throw concrete foundations and start putting bricks one upon the other, we are in danger of buying into a daily domestic routine of cleaning up, meal times, school hours and homework, laundry and linen, electricity bills and "lights out". These things (which I suspect are based on our desperate need to make institutions look as "normal" and "homely" as possible) can fill our days with meaningless and repetitive tasks, leaving no time at all for the essential developmental, re-educative and rehabilitative work for which the children and youth were referred to us.

Pure programme

Mark Gamble has just returned from two months' work in a programme which deals with difficult youth offenders — yet which completely avoids the dreary domestic encumbrances and expectations of large institutional buildings. Turn to the back page to see the possibilities of a focussed programme which has the courage to separate out the core tasks from the unnecessary and unhelpful clutter.

As I talked with Mark I came to the realisation that the whole physical plant of the Ohiopyle Village he described could burn to the ground tonight, and the programme would survive intact! They may lose a few items of clothing and a cooking pot — but

tomorrow morning the programme and its content would be able to pick up where it left off. Perhaps that is a good test of a new programme in South Africa: would it survive a good fire?!

Home base

It is no doubt necessary that a programme such as that which Mark describes would need the support and back-up of an experienced organisation. This organisation would know the field, have read the literature, be familiar with the client group, have developed the philosophy and built the systems for this work. Nobody is going to send a bunch of people out into the woods without some very clear ideas as to what is needed and very highly developed methods to achieve this.

There's an object lesson here for those who will devise better subsidy systems —

- As long as change in the present system continues to be neglected, we are in danger of losing the experienced organisations capable of setting up such programmes;
- As long as change in the present system continues to be neglected, nobody will be in a position to develop from their home bases these new non-residential programmes which are needed.

The reports on the IMC's Pilot Programmes aroused considerable interest at the recent NACCW Biennial Conference.

But pilot programmes are just that — their purpose is to chart the waters and show the way so that others may replicate their work and apply what the pilots have discovered.

We must get the timing right: if everyone else can only stand idly by and look on, without being enabled to study and apply the new learning, and thus participate in the transformation of our child and youth care system, then the pilot programme is in danger of being wasted.

Messages of hope

Set against this, the Minister of Welfare delivered a most positive message at the NACCW's Biennial Conference this month (see page 4). The Minister makes the very important point that good foundations of change have first had to be laid at the constitutional and legislative level, and that very good beginnings have been made in our field in particular through the IMC and its pilot projects. In passing the responsibility on now to the practice level, the Minister assures us that she has heard the concerns of those in the field and that the government is committed to dealing with those concerns.

NACCW Director Merle Allsopp, on her return from Conference, noted: "Prof Jim Anglin referred to the Conference in his opening address as 'a gathering of spirits' and as I said goodbye to people at the end of Conference I thought that that was exactly what that few days had turned out to be — a time when we were filled up by the richness of the spirits of our colleagues. Another friend was pleased that she had come to conference because it had given her the inspiration to go back to her own place of work and practise courage." Given opportunity, given a realistic and challenging subsidy system, that is exactly what most people in our field are keen and willing to do right now — to practise courage — to develop new programmes and contribute to change and development.

New addresses for Web Sites

As from 1 August 1997 the URLs of these web sites will be changed to the following —

NACCW

<http://www.pretext.co.za/naccw>

All e-mail addresses remain as in the left-hand column on this page.

CYC-net

<http://www.pretext.co.za/cyc-net>

Are you connected? If you send e-mail to cyc-net@iafrica.com you will be connected to a network of child and youth care colleagues world wide. Or sign on at the web site. You are welcome!

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Cover picture: Mark Gamble (See story on back cover)



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International Federation of Educative Communities (UNESCO)



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

NACCW

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People



Michael Gaffley

Michael Gaffley is Principal of Leliebloem House, a children's home in Belgravia, Cape Town. Chairperson of the Western Cape Region, he was recently confirmed as National Vice-Chairperson of the Association. Michael started his child care career ten years ago at Bonnytoun Place of Safety when Ashley Theron was Principal. Within a month he was asked to fill an unexpected vacancy at the Witwatersrand Place of Safety in Johannesburg for 18 months before returning to take up the position of Principal Care Officer at Vredelus, a new place of safety in Cape Town. In 1991 he was appointed Principal of Leliebloem House.

Community

Michael's first job was with a firm of accountants but he felt called to the ministry and completed his theological training in 1978. His experience as minister to the congregation in Bonteheuvel opened his eyes to the pain and struggle of people and communities — dislocation, aimlessness, divorce, delinquency, overcrowding, unemployment, drug abuse — these issues challenged him.

Building, re-building

Much of Michael's experience has been related to developing new things. Bonnytoun under Ashley Theron was in a process of radical change. The Witwatersrand Place of Safety

went through much re-direction during his time there, and his task at Vredelus was to start the programme and see to staff training before the first children were referred.

His years at Leliebloem have been a time when the whole profession has been challenged to look beyond the confines of the campus towards families and communities.

It was important to measure up practice at Leliebloem against the criteria of permanency planning, and the team aimed for features such as family-like settings, least restrictive programmes, as well as developmental and ecological principles. Including families in work with the children required workshoping with the parents, with the staff team and also with the outside family welfare agencies, reaching agreed and shared goals with which all felt comfortable.

Personal growth

These practice developments are backed up by Mike's on-going personal development. He has completed many of the NACCW's courses (including the PPA and the Supervision Course) as well as the UNISA Certificate in Child and Youth Care. More recently he has gained his Master of Science in Child Care Administration through Nova University in the US and is presently engaged upon his doctoral studies at the same institution. He is a registered Child and Youth Care Administrator.

Michael was born, the last of six children, on the day Elizabeth II was crowned Queen of England. He is married to Desirée, and they have four children — John (17), Michaela (7), Timothy (5) and Stephen (19 months). It seems Michael's life has been filled with children even without joining our profession.

The address by Minister Fraser-Moleketi read on her behalf at the NACCW's Biennial Conference in Durban on 3 July 1997.

Our common journey through change and transformation in child and youth care

Chairperson of the Conference and the NACCW, international visitors (Canada, USA, Australia), child and youth care workers, colleagues ...

Two years ago in Cape Town I had the honour of meeting with you for the first time. You will remember that we were about to launch into a major change process for children and the system that supports and protects them. Today I am glad to be with you again, to have the opportunity to join you for a brief while in these days of learning and growth and once again to share with you on the journey of change for the child and youth care system.

Train trip or roller-coaster

We have two eventful years of travel behind us and I want to reflect on this journey with you today. Jim Anglin said two years ago that the "future is not what it used to be". Well I want to tell you this trip we embarked on has not been what journeys usually are either!

It has *not* been a train ride, where you get on at one station and get off later having travelled on railway tracks all the way — a predictable, safe journey of relaxation and fun. This has been a roller coaster ride with dark tunnels, unpredictable sharp curves, and steep hills which take forever to climb — only to find that you virtually drop over a cliff when you reach the top! There have also, of course,

been the thrills and the fun, the joy and the challenge, which makes you buy the next ticket and climb back on when a few minutes before you swore you would never do this again as long as you lived!

Coming along for the ride

It was in response to the crisis in the residential care system and the release of children in prison in 1995 that the Cabinet, as you know, established the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Young People at Risk (IMC) to design and facilitate the transformation of the child and youth care system. I have chaired this committee and it is this process of transformation upon which I would like to reflect, because it is the process which makes the most impact on *your* work and *your* field — and it is the process in which I would hope to have you all participate to the fullest degree. Roller coaster rides are only worthwhile if you're sharing the ride with others — one or two people doing it alone would make it terrifying, would take the excitement out of it, and would probably mean closing the ride altogether for lack of interest!

I want to start, therefore, by thanking all the child and youth care people who have participated and assisted over these two years, and I particularly want to pay tribute to the NACCW for the central role you have played in the process to date. You have not only trained



many child and youth care workers and others in residential care, but the NACCW staff through Zeni Thumbadoo and Merle Allsopp have consistently given of their time and energy to support other components of the IMC work.

I am impressed by the work you do and I want to express my appreciation on behalf of our government for the critical role you have played over the past 22 years, and continue now to play within the transformation process.

Going nowhere?

I read the NACCW journal editorial a month or two back which suggested that the transformation of the child and youth care system had gone nowhere. I'd like to pick up this and reflect with you now on the child and youth care transformation process, as well as the wider processes of reconstruction and transformation in South Africa and in welfare.

I do believe that we cannot see the child and youth care system in isolation from other more comprehensive programmes of change, and yet I do understand how much this particular process means to you and the children you serve, and how important it is to you that you see significant progress as soon as possible.

I understand very well your frustration with the facts —

- that too little has changed for children and child care workers directly,
- that the child and youth care Personnel Administration Standard (PAS) has yet again to be changed,
- that the subsidy system for residential care has yet to be

addressed,

- that children continue to await trial in our prisons, and
- that the general response to the problems highlighted in the Cabinet investigation into residential care last year has been almost non-existent.

These are very real concerns and I want to assure you that they will continue to remain on our agenda until they are resolved appropriately.

Living through change

Change, as we are learning in our country is not simple, it is not necessarily at the speed we all long for, and it is not linear. Change is complex, sometimes painfully slow, and tends to move in the pattern of three steps forward and two steps back.

Change in the child and youth care system reflects these same elements. Also, the period of transition in this country is a very difficult time for all — when nothing seems to be happening, yet everything is happening — a period of chaos and frustration.

We know what the new paradigm should mean for children and youth, but we cannot make it happen instantly or by magic. At this conference I believe you will hear about the various pilot projects which are testing out aspects of our new child and youth care system. From these I am sure you will hear a story of great struggle mixed with incredibly hard work. You will hear of endless frustration and wonderful success.

Beginnings

New paradigms in theory are great — but putting them into practice is the painful challenge, and we do not achieve that easily and instantly. Although Horace said (and I quote): “He has half the work done who has made a beginning.”

I believe we have indeed made important beginnings —

- Within this country we have a new government, and a *new Constitution* — a constitution which clearly places the child at the centre. “The best interests of the child shall be paramount” as stated in our Constitution, is a profound move towards a new dispensation for children in South Africa.
- We have signed and ratified the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* and this year we report to the UN on our progress. I and the government are deeply committed to the implementation of this Convention, and however slowly we may get there, we are intent on living up to our commitment. I am particularly committed to ensuring that young people at risk do not suffer at the hands of the system, and do not have their rights

violated.

- Within *welfare we have a new policy and approach* which focusses on the development and empowerment of families and communities, and which seeks to provide equal access to resources and equal opportunity to all.
- Within the *child and youth care field* we have a newly designed system — a new framework and a set of paradigm principles which the Cabinet has supported and which we can implement immediately. This new framework will fundamentally transform the system over the next five years. The sooner we start implementing it, the sooner we will have the changes which we all so badly want to see take place.
- We have many hundreds of probation officers and child and youth care workers who have received new training.
- In spite of the difficulties at the ‘auxiliary’ level, we have, since July 1996, the first ever PAS for child and youth care workers — and thus we have full recognition that child and youth care is indeed a discipline in its own right.
- We have secure care programmes in South Africa for the first time ever — facilities — *not prisons* — which will contain young people in trouble with the law, which will preserve the dignity of youth and provide developmental programmes.
- We have six pilot projects which are proving each day that the new approach works and that we can do things differently for children and their families.
- These projects alone have positively reached more than 2 000 young people at risk and their families in the past 12 months.
- We have government departments working together for the first time — in the best interests of children — and we have government departments working in partnership with NGO’s — another first.

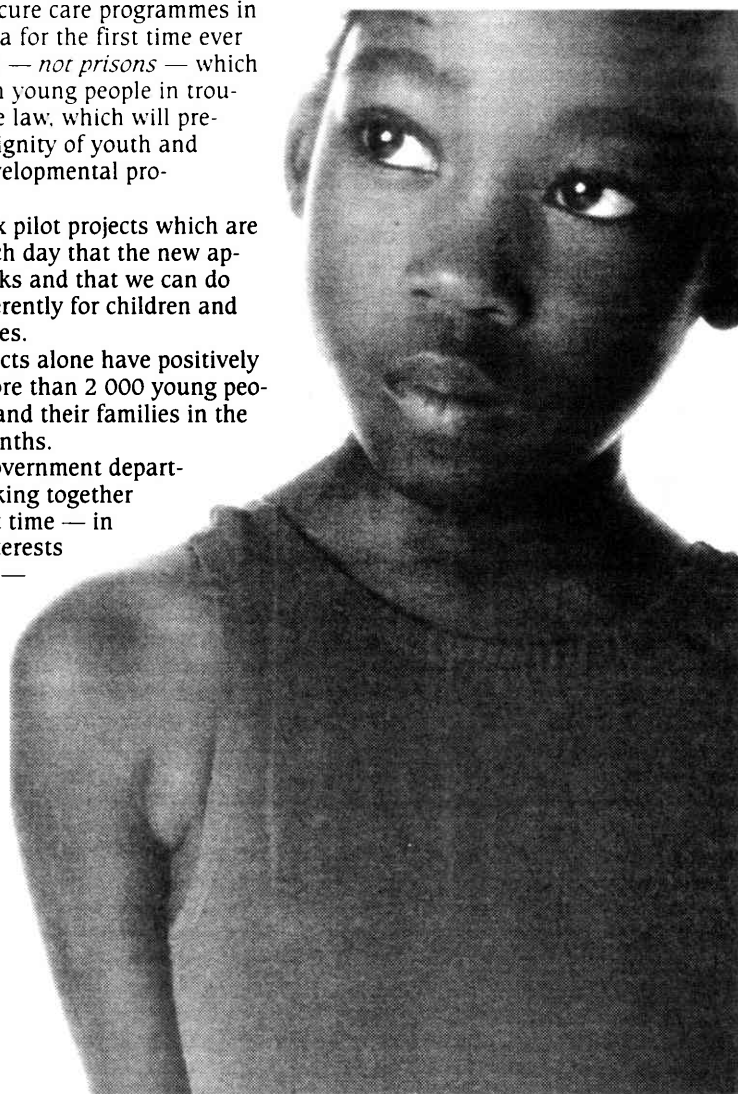
And then, perhaps most important of all (yet the hardest to measure),

have been the changes and growth which has taken place in individuals — individuals in government at various levels, in NGO’s, in communities, and in families. Individuals who are influencing other individuals each day and who in their own way, are, inch by inch, each making the transformation happen.

Maintaining the momentum

We have indeed made a beginning! Whether that beginning becomes an unfolding of a vision and eventually leads to a transformed child and youth care system, depends on a number of factors and I’d like to highlight some of these before I close.

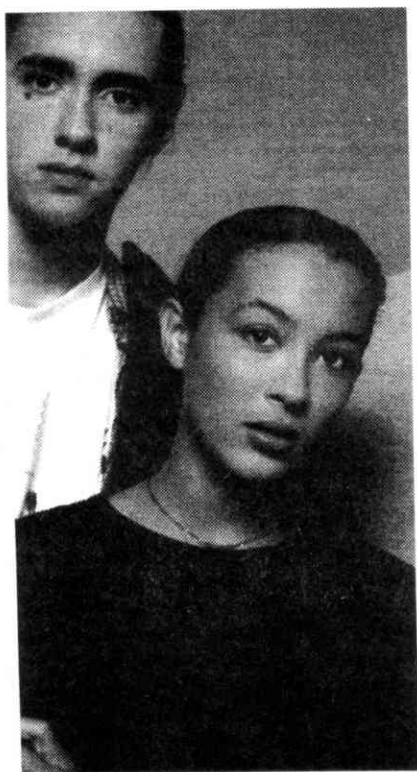
Firstly, the fulfilment of transformation will depend on how effectively we deal with *endings*. Blockages in the change process seem to be linked back to the fact that many of us do not in fact choose to break with the old paradigm, with our familiar comfortable ways of doing things. We may not be happy with the system, but we choose to stick with the “devil we know”. Somehow we perceive that change is “out there” somewhere but not “in here”. Every-



thing else and everyone else must change —but we don't need to end anything.

I would like to challenge us all to look closely at what we are choosing to hold on to. We must indeed have better salaries for child and youth care workers, and better working conditions. We must have an effective subsidy system and we must have more staff. All of these and many other issues are extremely important BUT at the same time —

- We must, for example, end our practices of hitting children, isolating children, leaving children unprotected and unsupervised.
- We must end the fact that programmes for children are so often theoretical concepts or just ideas on paper.
- We must end the fact that we are quicker to advocate for our own needs before we stand up and fight for children.
- We must end the fact that we keep children isolated from the families and communities and spend more time punishing everyone than building on their strengths.
- We must end our anxieties about power, ownership and territory.
- We must end the suspiciousness and criticism which exists between government departments and NGOs.
- We must end our intolerance of diversity and our unwillingness to respect the individual needs of every child and family.
- We must end our willingness to remain spectators to change. Don't wait for someone out there



—change starts with you and me as individuals.

Individual change

That is the second point I want to make — the transformation of the child and youth care system is a joint enterprise but each individual and each organisation has to go through the ending and the birth for themselves. There is nothing collective about giving birth to a baby —although many can enjoy the child and many will contribute to his or her development.

Bridges, in his work on *transitions*, says some interesting things about beginnings and change — I quote: "It is when the endings and the time of fallow neutrality are finished that we can launch ourselves out anew, changed and renewed by the destruction of the old paradigm and the journey through nowhere. This simple truth goes against the grain of our mechanistic culture. We live in a context where things start with a switch or a key. If things don't start properly, there are procedures to follow in order to discover what is wrong. These assumptions even influence the way in which we deal with that primal beginning — child to birth. Although there is evidence that attitudes are changing, birth has usually been regarded as a surgical procedure and pregnancy as a form of disability. The implications of these attitudes are far-reaching — for as a society views birth — so it will view re-birth or transformation. Without fully realising it, we tend to imagine that somewhere there are psychological obstetricians who know how to get us out, whack us on the back, and get us functioning in the new way."

There is nothing mechanical about the transformation of the child and youth care system and we don't have psychological obstetricians waiting in the wings. We can provide the framework and the guidelines, and we can provide support and capacity building, but we will each need to go through this birth and the first unsteady steps of learning how to live and work within a new paradigm. And as we have learned in the IMC, you will probably have to give birth on a roller coaster!

The vision

In closing let me say again that our government is fully committed to the transformation of the child and youth care system, and to the vision for children, youth and families in South Africa.

The process of transforming welfare in South Africa is likely to be a long and hard road and, within that, the transformation of the child and youth care system will be equally tough.

There will be no quick fixes and no short cuts. I want you to be prepared to fall pregnant and give birth to this new baby called the new child and youth care system — whatever that may mean for you specifically and as an organisation or department, and then I want you to stand together as an extended family to this baby as you provide nurturance and support, developmental opportunity and plenty of patience!

From the side of government, we will continue to refine policies, review the funding, improve the PAS for child and youth care workers, and deal directly with the problems and blockages in the residential care component of the system. This latter aspect will be receiving particular attention in the next four months and the IMC will need the full co-operation of government departments, children's homes, shelters and NGOs to facilitate the plan that children are assessed and moved through the system, and that we create placement opportunity for the young people who are presently awaiting trial in prisons.

Nurturing

The "baby" called the transformation of the child and youth care system is ours — *together* we need to provide for its full and healthy birth — and *together* we need to plan for its development to maturity. I have no doubt that the deliberations at this conference will add positively to the process. I trust that even here you will make decisions about endings and how you will support the birth of new processes and new practices. I want to express again my appreciation for your involvement, your patience, the daily hard work which you do, and your willingness to make a difference to the children and youth in South Africa. I sincerely hope for, and I personally will work together with you, towards the goal of having a "toddler" on our hands within the next two years — a child and youth care system which is at least "walking" and "talking". I know that we will have many little struggles to get through in this time and I know that we will all no doubt have to deal with the frustrations and pain of allowing the process to unfold. I hope that we will keep an open line of communication and a sense of partnership as we do meet these challenges.

Finally, let me leave you with this saying from André Gide, a French Novelist who says:

"One doesn't discover new lands without consenting to lose sight of the shore for a very long time."

The Regions

"Kimberley recruit" **Sabitha Samjee** arrives home from Conference with a sense of renewal — in her programme and in her self.

From Mine Shaft to Mind Shift

This was the title of our workshop held in Kimberley on the 14th July and presented by the NACCW's International Consultant Prof. Jim Anglin.

Jim conjured up this most appropriate title as he was driven on a guided tour through the township's mine dumps and one of Kimberley's famous tourist attractions, "The Big Hole".

Jim's presentation focussed on the relationship between paradigm shifts and self transformation in our working towards a meaningful change in the child and youth care system. His audience was a mixture of child and youth care workers, social workers, principles and superintendents and D.D.G's.

Kimberley's community, and the child care world in particular, is making every effort to work intersectorally with consultations at every level. Many are involved in developing early intervention strategies, in particular for young people at risk of removal from their biological families to residential care.

Kimberley in the Northern Cape is the first region in the country to have taken on the challenge of working with the I.M.C. pilot project on Professional Foster Care.

Mission of the project

To design and implement a model of community-based care to place children and youth with emotional and behavioural problems between the ages 10 and 17 years in short-term community based developmental environments, moulded on the principles of the White Paper and the proposed child and youth care system.

A definition: Professional foster care provides substitute care and protection for children who are at risk of removal from their biological parents/families to residential care facilities by a highly trained and skilled group of people. Professional foster care is an early in-

tervention strategy, preventing children and young people at risk being placed inappropriately in care facilities such as places of safety, children's homes and correctional services. This pilot project focuses on short-term substitute care with the goal of family preservation and re-unification. In the transformation of child care and in building a continuum of care, we need to consider the spirit of *Ubuntu*, which is the principle of caring for each others' well-being in an attitude of mutual support and respect.

Getting off the ground

The embryonic stage of our pilot project has been the most difficult and brain draining phase, which has involved marketing and building community awareness — convincing the community that (in the words of the African proverb) "It takes a whole village to raise a child".

It's a pleasure to be able to report that we are now in the 'adolescent stage' of this pilot project, which involves the recruitment and training of foster parents and the multi-disciplinary team. We would welcome ideas and suggestions from the child care field and other disciplines in contributing towards the success of the programme.

Barriers and strategies

Now back to Jim Anglin's 'mine shaft to mind shift' workshop. Groups worked on two questions:

1. *Barriers in the system towards transformation process.*

2. *Strategies to overcome the barriers.* It was interesting to note commonalities in the groups. Transformation of self emerged prominently as a *barrier*. Many people admitted that self transformation is a rocky road — a painful and slow process.

The recommended strategy was that we should embark on a national campaign of training and awareness programmes, to sensitise people and to eradicate myths.

Further, it is imperative that these training programmes reach all sectors and all levels, including our judicial system, magistrates, the education system, etc., to create a deep understanding of the needs of children and young people at risk in our country.

Chief Social Worker Lizette Standaar, in thanking Jim Anglin, rounded off the workshop most beautifully with the thought provoking challenge: "If we have been part and parcel of apartheid and if we have been victims of apartheid, then we are in the struggle together and have a responsibility in rebuilding our country together."



Child Care Worker

EPWORTH CHILDREN'S VILLAGE believes in integrity and compassion for all people.

Do you have these qualities and are you prepared to join a team that is making strong headway in breaking the cycles of abuse and despair? We are only interested in individuals who have positive attitudes towards life and children in particular.

We offer residential care and support to children from our rainbow nation between the ages of 4 and 21 years. Our houses are situated in a middle-income suburban area on the East Rand in Gauteng. A driver's licence is essential and Matric + BQCC certificate is a minimum requirement.

Please call Thabang or Megan for an appointment at (011) 827-5732 between 09:00 and 12:00 week days.

Position Wanted

Situation required either in Pietermaritzburg or other Kwa-Zulu Natal town for 'live-in' child care worker who has completed the diploma from the Ethelbert College and has spent the last 18 months doing temporary work including looking after a young child on a Free State farm and has also worked at a Day Care Centre.

Please contact Terry Calmeyer on Tel/fax 039-695-1998.



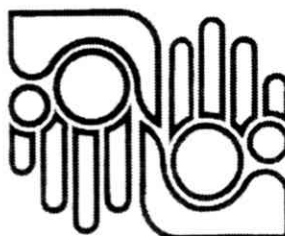
As we seek new models and programmes in South Africa, we benefit from looking at initiatives in other African countries which have tackled this continent's problems

THE UNDUGU SOCIETY OF KENYA

Undugu's primary working area is the Kenyan capital Nairobi. The philosophy of this organization is based on the principles of "respect, involvement and helping each other". The word "Undugu" means in Kiswahili "solidarity" — and that is exactly what it is about. Undugu was founded in 1972, when father Arnold Grol arrived in Nairobi. As member of the "White Fathers", he was asked to work in the poorer areas in densely populated areas of Nairobi. Soon he broadened his scope of work and made contact with the street boys, the so called "parking boys". These were treated as non-members of society, but Father Grol came to the conclusion that they were victims of circumstances beyond their power. He got some help from others and in 1975 Undugu was subscribed as a society named "The Undugu Youth Centres". The current name "Undugu Society of Kenya" (USK) became official in 1978 when the organization reorganised according to the rules of the Societies Act of the Laws of Kenya. Up to now Undugu has grown to an organization of more than 150 people, led by a Kenyan director. Undugu today does not care only about the rehabilitation of the street boys and girls. It is a development organization which targets the many poor groups with little hope in the slums of Nairobi.

The 'parking boys'

It started with the parking boys. Searching for workable methods with which the parking boys could get a place again in the Kenyan society, Fr Grol started to organize sporting and games activities. In this way the (now famous) Undugu jazz band was founded. As more youngsters became involved in this, there was more opportunity to get in touch with them and to talk about their actual problems: how to



survive under difficult circumstances. A first step in solving these problems was the setting up of a shelter-centre where the parking boys could get a meal and a place to sleep.

Reintegration

It soon became clear that the boys using these facilities wanted to continue: a logical step to re-integration could be basic, and later more formal, education. In this way, they might be able to survive later on their own. After this idea was born, it became clear that also something had to be done about the circumstances which caused the children to come onto the street.

Initially it was the intention to give the parking boys a better

view of themselves, and that the communities from which they came would get a better impression of them. But when the communities became involved it was clear how extremely difficult the circumstances are in the slums. It was obvious that the appearance of the parking boys was only one aspect of a much more basic problem: that whole communities were living under very bad conditions in the slums. Since then, Undugu has broadened its scope and has started to stimulate the self-consciousness of whole communities, encouraging initiatives emerging from those communities.

The dynamic character of the slum society forced Undugu continuously to change its approach to its work in the slums. With the constantly increasing and changing population, it is difficult to see clear successes or results. So Undugu has aimed to continuously improve, change and experiment, based on the life circumstances and experience of their target groups. Undugu tries to influence the complex factors which impact on the people living in the slums and to improve them, and on this basis has built its own development model. The model aims for self reliance of communities, which implies they have to care for their own social and economic progress. Working on communities' own ideas and offering training in managing programmes appear to be basic elements for durable development. Also, looking for workable solutions to underlying questions such as unemployment and appropriate housing, is behind Undugu's theme: "Help people to help themselves."

Source: leaflet "Ontstaan en geschiedenis Undugu Society of Kenya"



less children are able to go to school, all efforts to eliminate the street children phenomenon will be futile. That the key is education which brings self-reliance and employment and which would make them responsible for themselves and the society — education for life." Grol's Mathare Polytechnic and later the Undugu Basic Education Programme (UBEP) offered alternative education and training to children who could not get a chance in the ordinary schools. There were even those who could not fit into the UBEP schools, and a further type of school, the Machuma schools, were founded. "It will be remembered," says Opiyo, "that even when Undugu began to establish institutional care programmes to provide love, food and medicine among other things, Fr Grol maintained that such institutions must be avenues through which children with no homes can pass to acquire education and training. Anything else was secondary."

John Ochieng Obado of the Undugu Outreach Programme writes: "If it were not for Undugu where would people like us be? Undugu has been so helpful to us. I am speaking as a beneficiary of the outreach programme where trips like the one to Outward Bound Mountain School in Loitoktok was of great benefit. The self-discovery course provided not only certificates to put in our files, but also a manual for living and boldness to face life."



The Seeds of a Plan

A student observes need — and thinks of a solution. Is this how good programmes are born?

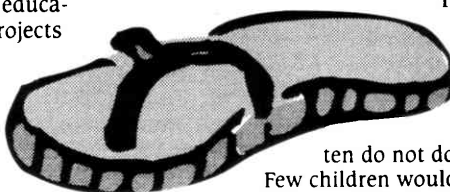
Walk down the street in downtown Nairobi, and you will be approached by a lot of street children, without much food, clothing, or shelter. Fortunately, the Undugu Society, as the largest organization in East Africa (perhaps all of Africa) serving the urban street population, provides children with their most basic needs. The root of the Nairobi street children problem is the modern state of the city's economy. On the African continent, over 70 percent of the population is destitute. Several years ago, Kenya's population growth rate skyrocketed to 4.1%, the highest of any nation in the world. Many Kenyans are flooding urban centres in search of employment and a more modern life. Nairobi's growth rate, as of August 1992, was 10%. One extreme result of a poverty-stricken economy is children who no longer live with their parents. It is estimated that as many as 130,000 street children exist daily in Nairobi, often high from snorting glue, who sleep in the streets and in alleyways, who panhandle and scavenge for food, shoeless and barely clothed. A countless number of these children grow up with severe physical,

social, or psychological problems, as they are left to fend for themselves in society, without anyone caring and providing for them.

A plan

The Undugu Society takes in children off the Nairobi street and into their Dandora Reception Centre. I intend to fill a void at the Reception Centre, where the students stay for a period of time (no more than several months) before being taken to a more permanent Undugu shelter. My plan is to develop educational projects for the children, primarily vocational ones. I will start by creating a program to teach the children how to make shoes out of used tyres. While I will initiate the project and its organization, long term planning will be overseen by a Steering Committee of current and former street children. Such a committee will give the children power over their own lives, as well as organizational experience. It is very important to the project that the children are engaged in activities that they want to be involved in. Thus, the children themselves will pick and plan them. The program will be established with the input of the Kenyan children themselves, and will eventually (within one year) evolve into a project fully run by the Steering Committee. In addition, the used-tyre shoe project (and perhaps other projects as well) can be

expanded to be a sort of Junior Achievement, selling the shoes to shoe stores in the Nairobi area. A small business project such as that one will not only help the children to gain a better understanding of Nairobi businesses, but also will help fund the project — and perhaps contribute to the Reception Centre as well. The goals of the project focus on developing life skills. First, the project presents and challenges the children with an education in a fun environment.



The children who are able to attend school often do not do very well.

Few children would pass up the opportunity to learn practical skills that can immediately be used in their daily lives. In addition, these children often have low self-esteem. The success of using one's hands to make something that is worn on a daily basis can only serve to build self-confidence. The project also aims to provide exciting activities to any street child who is willing to go to the Undugu Society. Often, children will come to the Reception Centre and leave shortly after, within a few days. This project aims to retain more children by helping the Reception Centre become a more exciting place where the benefits of staying are immediately recognizable.

Small beginnings

There are also ecological aspects implicit in the used tyre project. Certainly, the used

tyre shoe-making project presents the children with a creative rechild and youth care of used resources. With junk heaps increasingly appearing along Nairobi streets, such a lesson is an important one for the children to understand at an early age.

In December 1992, having completed a semester of study with a St. Lawrence University program in Nairobi, I volunteered in the Reception Centre wearing a pair of used tyre shoes that I had bought several weeks earlier. Several of the children were enthralled by my shoes. I noticed that few of them had shoes of their own. One day later I returned with a Swiss Army Knife. I told the kids my plan to start a used tyre project, and they were quite excited. We all walked to a place where we bought a used tyre and went back to the Reception Centre. The shoes did not work out too well. A Swiss Army Knife is not a sufficient tool to cut a tyre, no one in our group making the shoes had ever made them before, and I was scheduled to leave Kenya within a week of starting the project. Needless to say, the shoes were not masterpieces. However, there is little question in my mind that, using appropriate resources, such a project can work, and the skills the children could learn are valuable ones.

The Undugu Story, by Ezra Mbogori.

Experiences in Community Development, Biennial Report of the Undugu Society of Kenya (1990-1991).

Adolescent Sex Offenders

Adolescent sexual offending is a deeply complex issue, one which poses fundamental challenges to us on a personal and a social level, and one which has the potential to expand upon our understanding of what is going on in our society.

Only hurt and pain

For me, sexual offending has always been a deeply personal issue, one steeped in contradictions, confusion, and emotions. Until very recently, sexual offending meant only hurt and pain to people close to me. It has been about individuals, and really only individual victims. I could not and did not want to consider individual perpetrators beyond blaming them for the pain they had inflicted. Yet my understanding of sexual offending has changed and begun to evolve. As I have matured and become more exposed to its occurrence and its effects, I have begun to understand the offending as a social issue, a community issue, with causes and effects that reflect upon us as a society. As an adolescent girl, I understood sexual offending as something that strange men might do to me. It was about unclear warnings from my

mother and stilted, confusing discussions in my sex education classes. What these strangers might do to me was never made explicit, and although I did not understand it I knew that it was wrong. The strongest emotions I can remember in relation to sexual offending are embarrassment and shame; it was something secret.

In high school I understood sexual offending as being about sex. It was about strangers forcing young women to have intercourse. It was about men who could not control their urges. It was rape in a back alley. Sexual offending also began to be about my friends. It was rumours of a girl in class who had been raped; a "friend" who had gotten drunk at a party and ignored the quiet "no" uttered by the girl he was with; the confusing whispers about incest and abuse in families.

Power

At university I began to understand sexual offending as more about power than about sex. It was an expression of women's oppression, an inevitable part of a patriarchal society. It was fear of the campus at night, an awareness of acquaintance rape, "no means no" campaigns. I began to understand it as something that happened between individuals who knew one another, not strangers on a dark street. At the same time that my understanding was becoming more political and more social, it was also becoming more personal. Sexual offending was happening to my friends, and it was only from this perspective that I could understand it. I understood it in terms of effects in that sexual offending was about the victims, about the pain and hurt

and destruction within their lives. On many levels I felt I could not and did not want to see it from the perspective of the offenders. I could not understand it in terms of causes. I perceived the offenders as sick and evil individuals, as social deviants. I could only despise the people who had offended against people close to me, wanting them to pay somehow, to feel the same pain they had inflicted. As such, I was unable to reconcile my abstract understanding of sexual offending as social and political with my personal experiences and subsequent biases.

From victims to survivors

This one-sided understanding began to change as I watched my friends grow from victims to become survivors and then fully thriving human beings. I watched these individuals who, despite fundamental attacks on their trust, love, and integrity, continued to develop into kinder, gentler, more caring and loving beings than I could possibly imagine. This exceptional resilience has helped me to move beyond being angry and vengeful. It has helped me to look at the offending behaviour and to try to understand what may motivate such behaviour and how we can help individuals move beyond it.

I continue to struggle to reconcile my social understanding with my personal and emotional biases, to reconcile my commitment to my friends with my obligations to the offenders. Yet this struggle has enabled me to look more honestly at the personal, social, and political dimensions that the issue holds for me. My understanding has evolved so that offenders are no longer simply evil deviants but rather social beings who are a reflection of the society that I live in and act to perpetuate. This evolution has enabled me to move from embarrassment and secrecy, beyond anger and labelling, to a place where I can try to understand and work to address the complexity of the issue from many perspectives.

Melissa Innes is a private consultant associated with the Centre for the Study of Sexual and Community Violence at Woods Homes in Calgary, Alberta. This article reprinted from the *Journal of Child and Youth Care*, Canada.





South Africa is not alone in its crime-ridden and stressful society. In this article by Karen DeBord and Marilyn Gore of the University of North Carolina, we listen as others seek to understand and find solutions to struggles and challenges faced by youth today.

Facing Life-Sized Issues: Empowering Teens with Problem Solving Skills

Being a teenager today is risky business. Among the risks are alcohol and drug dependency, pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and violence.

Consequently, high risk acts may lead to single parenting, prolonged poverty, or physical danger. The reality of the lives of youth in our country are evidenced in statistics such as:

- The firearm homicide rate for ten- to fourteen-year-olds more than doubled between 1985 and 1992 (Carnegie, 1995).
- From 1980 to 1992, the rate of suicide among young adolescents increased 120 percent (Carnegie, 1995).
- One in 15 teenagers say they currently use both alcohol and illegal drugs (Children's Defence Fund, 1991).
- Almost 1.8 million teens were victims of violent crimes in 1988, and 3.2 million were victims of theft (Children's Defence Fund, 1991).

The problems facing youth are so immense, many adults throw up their hands in frustration. And in many communities, teens are written off as "unsalvageable by their schools (pp. vii, Children's Defence

Fund, 1991)." Early adolescence, however, is recognised as the last best chance for communities to ensure that youth have the coping mechanisms in place to prevent their entry into high risk practices (Scales, 1996).

Answers to many complex societal problems are costly, but professionals are working diligently to discover solutions. In response to glaring statistics, politicians and others are calling upon families and community organisations to address human values. But even this does not represent a clear cut response.

There is controversy over ambiguous definitions between what values to teach and whose values are taught.

Comments by youth

This brief article uses comments made by 15 urban North Carolina youth, 14-17 years of age. Their collective comments address the issues that concern them the most. They were asked to respond to one open-ended question in a non-random sample. Their comments, gathered as part of a teenage needs assessment, provided the impetus for youth

professionals locally to begin to rethink their practices with adolescents labelled as "at risk" of failure in the social, economic, and educational world. Their responses to "What issues are youth facing today?" focussed not only on issues of concern, but were sprinkled with concerns about growing up and being exposed to high risk environments. Each youth comment is followed by examples of how a preventive or educational organisation can recognise and respond to their expressed concerns. A programmatic framework — based in the "caring" literature — is offered. The caring framework can undergird training programs for adults working with youth in schools, families, and community organisations.

Youth concerns and society's response

'All you hear anymore is some "certified doctor" telling why there are so many problems with our country. Everybody blames everything on someone else. What they need to teach is responsibility and real

family values. I think that the nation is too concerned with dealing with issues and not concerned enough about the family.'

These words exhibit a concern with instability in community leadership and few solutions to daily concerns. Teachers and parents are seeking solutions. As community educators in North Carolina, professionals who teach using the research-base about children and families have experienced an increase in requests for information about the development of family values and youth ethics.

The traditional work of scholars such as Kohlberg, Piaget and Freud have long been theoretical supports to undergirding practices in communities. But this research base may not be enough to guide *practice* when youth express heartfelt concerns such as:

"On the news there's nothing but kids (12-17) getting shot. When I'm home alone I worry that someone will rob the house while I'm alone and if they have a gun, I'm afraid they will kill me."

Levels of stress

The level of stress is different for youth today. Their stress is a picture of life or death viewed through an incomplete developmental lens. Reality for children is different from reality for adults. There are major concerns today that were not present in generations past. Children are exposed to adult decisions at earlier stages in their lives (Elkind, 1994). Youth views are not only affected by an incomplete cognitive understanding, but also the context of the environment comprised of individuals living, working, and surviving in neighbourhoods and communities.

Multiple community systems interact either to create a violent unsafe setting or to form safety nets to build resiliency. Community organisations offer services but often fail to interact efficiently; instead forming barriers in a segmented system that does not adequately serve families. Thus families and youth are faced with complex decisions just to meet their basic needs.

Right and wrong

From a moral standpoint, just knowing what is 'right' is not enough. In his research on moral development, Lawrence Kohlberg (1969) implies that moral knowledge is sufficient for moral behaviour (Noddings, 1992). But, from an ecological approach (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), it is unmistakable that responses — including moral responses — vary according to *contexts* in which the individual is placed at almost any age. For example, a 12 year old youth said:

"When I grow up, I'm going to try my best not to do the wrong

thing. When I get old enough to make my own decisions, I'm going to try and make the right choice for living."

Simply wanting to do the right thing does not take into consideration the situations in which youth may be placed in neighbourhoods or communities. Professionals working with youth must be aware of the combination of *KNOWING* what is right, with the *context* in which youth are placed to make decisions.

When children are in the early learning stages, who is teaching them right from wrong? One child said:

"The parents are not teaching their children right from wrong. I know all about it because I see it every day in school."

Many community organisations and agencies have begun to recognise the importance of teaching problem solving skills, teaching responsibility and building human resiliency.

Resiliency is the process of healthy human development, whereby the individual dynamically interacts with the environment. What results is determined by the balance among risk factors, stressful life events, and protective factors (Werner 1990).

For communities to build protective safety nets, relationships with families can not only be defined by the services and programs offered — but rather in resources of people and organisations. A resource-based model emphasises formal and informal supports using community resources valued as rich, expandable, and renewable. Solutions are defined from within the people comprising the community and supportive human organisations. Many professionals recognise that an active collaboration between families affected and the support services available are a powerful combination. Even youth recognise that the families who are affected directly by problems should be involved in making the decisions. One youth said:

"If we could all just come together to be one, we people would have nothing to worry about."

Relationships

In addition to building resource safety nets, professionals must realise that the development of human potential requires more than simple policies and practices. Youth need time with caring adults who can assist youth in exploring their own developing sense of right and wrong, good and evil. Adults, including teachers, parents, and policy makers, can't assume that children will learn their sense of values from the school, at home, or in youth groups. Collectively adults must provide multiple opportunities for youth to exercise their developing sense of caring.



The first component is modelling which remains one of the strongest teaching methods. As adults model caring behaviours, young children and others learn this trait.

Understanding 'right' and 'wrong' — 'good' and 'evil' — is developed out of a foundation of caring relationships. Everyone wants to be accepted and to elicit a response. Youth join clubs, groups and even gangs to elicit a response and to fulfil their need for acceptance during their adolescent search for identity and affiliation (Elkind, 1984).

Caring relationships are developed by experiencing full receptivity, one of another. The act of caring is a dynamic encounter, brief or long term. Loving, trusting, caring, and developing relationships play central roles in ethics and moral education (Noddings, 1992). Caring is missing when youth feel compelled to comment:

"Youth are facing crimes and drugs. Crime is in the world because people are starting to hate one another. So the person that got mad will go home and get his gun to kill someone for something stupid."

Four components of care

From the perspective the work of Nel Noddings (1992), the development of caring has four substantial components.

The first component is *modelling* which remains one of the strongest teaching methods. As adults model caring behaviours, young children and others learn this trait.



When parents exempt themselves from rules expected of their children, they create confusion and often rebellion. One youth makes an observation about how children learn negative behaviours from their parents:

"Youth are facing drugs. Kids are taking drugs because they see their parents doing it. Kids 12-15 aren't fully developed so their lungs can't take it."

In addition to modelling, youth need to be presented with *opportunities for dialogue* about their concerns with each other and with caring adults. This allows youth to explore developing feelings, and challenges individuals with higher order thinking and subsequent action. By definition, dialogue is open-ended with neither party knowing the outcome of the dialogue from the outset. Dialogue is practice in receiving others, while attending fully and openly. Through dialogue, there is a common search for understanding, empathy, and appreciation. It can be playful, serious, imaginative, or goal oriented (Noddings, 1992). Dialogue provides the opportunity to question *why*. It connects us to each other. It is the foundation for caring. When youth have had the chance to practise making wise decisions in safe situations, they are better prepared for real life higher risk situations. Many times they may not realise the reason for what appears to be a socially accepted behaviour among their peers. For example one teen said:

"People get beat up because they have on some shoes or jacket that others want. That has been a problem with my brother."

Depending on their life experiences, youth develop ways of reacting and develop skills and attitudes to fit a range of circumstances. Some attitudes are considered insolent or cocky, but attitudes shaped by experience are developed through positive practice in caring environments — resulting in more caring attitudes. The capacity to care is a mark of good morals. This being the case, teachers and parents must seek ways to increase opportunities to show how to care. Often youth are not empowered with appropriate reactions for stressful situations yet

there are indications that they are stressed and worried about the same things adults worry about. One youth said:

"I worry about crime and violence — that it will hurt or kill someone I love, or me. I worry about my dad and grandparents."

Empowering youth with problem solving skills is one factor that contributes to resiliency (Bogenschneider, Small, Riley, 1990). Problem solving through dialogue is an area in which schools rarely recognise achievement or give credit. Many schools spend more time on fact-based drill than on life-sized problem solving situations. The third component of the framework of caring is *confirmation*. Confirmation is encouraging the best in others. Confirmation involves identifying something admirable and encouraging the development of that trait. This lifts youth toward a vision of hope for the future and a positive view of self. To build from this point, continual trust must ground the confirmation. Caring and engaging in more dialogue with children, particularly adolescents, may be one solution. The implicit problems in our schools of large classes and rigid attitudes toward our youth can be shaped through different ways of viewing youth and providing opportunities for youth to

think about their developing feelings, explore their sense of values, and develop a repertoire of solutions. Practice in adult caring is a skill that expands the conversation on values and morals. The use of *caring* is a seemingly easy application but a learned skill.

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Written by Karen DeBord, State Extension Specialist, Child Development and Marilyn Gore, Area Extension Specialist for Children, Youth and Families, North Carolina State University

The Natal Regional Office is Moving ...

As from 1st August the Natal office will be located at

**104 Gounden House
20 Moore Road (corner Sidney Rd)
Berea, Durban 4001**

**Telephone: (031) 305-3872/5
Fax: (031) 305-3855
e-mail remains: naccwdb@iafrica.com**

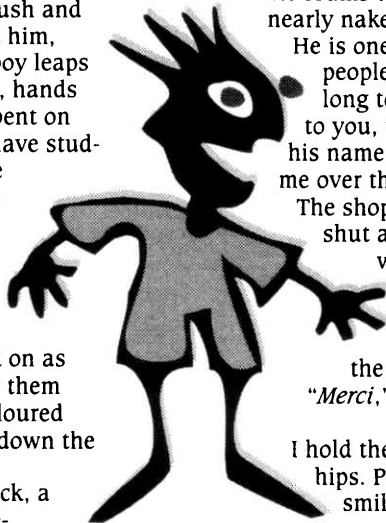
At 09:30 on 22nd August there will be a Bring 'n Share "do" to launch our new premises. (Welcome 'house-warming' gifts would be chairs for our Training Room and crockery, etc.)

Call to enquire about the **Diversity Training Course** to be held from 09:00 to 15:30 on the 13th and 20 August.



IT TAKES SO LITTLE

In the marketplace of Dakar, Senegal, amid the welter of vegetables, chickens, dried fish, and shouting women, a small boy leans against a crumbling wall staring into space. His bare toes knead the sand; rags flop around his skinny frame. A gang of older boys push and shove their way past him, turning to jeer. The boy leaps into a Ninja position, hands like scissors, knees bent on rigid legs. He must have studied the nearby movie poster where a Ninja film had been showing. His eyes are fierce and belong to a world of warriors. The older boys laugh and walk on as the child glares after them balefully. His dirt-coloured pants have two rips down the back. At the back of his neck, a tender hollow lies between the two tendons. The sight of that babyish nape brings tears to my eyes. Keeping the boy in sight, I cross the dirt road to a stall where used children's clothes hang, and ask the vendor for a pair of shorts, cheap, 200 francs. He drags out a cardboard box full of old clothes and flings a pair of white denim shorts onto the counter. "Four hundred francs!" he barks. We haggle about the price for a few minutes before I give him a long look and tell him I'll be right back. I find the boy and ask him to come with me. He stares at me for a moment, then docilely puts his hand in mine.



I wonder briefly what I'm doing as I lead the child across the crowded street. I should mind my own business instead of making a fool of myself, I think. But I am propelled by an instinct stronger than my fear of embarrassment. Some sort of truth has me in its irresistible grasp. I can make no mistake.

I present the boy to the shopkeeper. "Look at this child," I say, and turn the boy around by his bony shoulders so that the shopkeeper can see his ripped shorts.

"He roams the marketplace like this, nearly naked. Are you not ashamed?"

He is one of your sons. Senegalese people tell me that children belong to everyone. So he belongs to you, though you may not know his name. How can you argue with me over the price of these shorts?"

The shopkeeper squeezes his eyes shut and clenches his jaw, as if I were trying to pull his teeth.

"Eh, bien" he growls.

"All right!" He throws the shorts at me. "Take them."

"Merci," I smile. "Thank you."

I hold the shorts against the boy's hips. Perfect fit. He takes them.

He smiles up at me, revealing a gap where his front teeth

should be. His permanent ones

have not grown in yet.

He dashes away waving the shorts above his head. He stops to jump high into the air and click his bare heels together. The boy turns to wave before he disappears into an alley.

The shopkeeper has been watching the boy, too. He shakes his head slowly and closes the flaps of the cardboard box.

"It takes so little," he muses, "to make a child happy."

"So little," I agree. "Make no mistake."

Leïla Kaldi, writing in the *Monitor*

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE ORANGE FREE STATE

Academic Development Bureau

Child Psychiatry Congress

Date: 26—20 October 1997

Venue: Sand du Plessis Theatre Complex, Free State Province, Bloemfontein

ENQUIRIES

Organizational Aspects: Mrs. A Church
(08:00 — 12:30)

Trade and Exhibitors: W. Adendorff Congress Services:

University of the Free State
P O Box 4345, Bloemfontein, 9300
Tel: (27)(051)402425
Fax: (27)(051)4306714

Programme content: J.F. le Roux
Department of Psychiatry
Faculty of Medicine
University of Free State, Bloemfontein
Tel: (027) (051)4079382/241 Fax:
(27)(051)4053139

PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

Sunday: Registration

6 00 — 19.00
Cocktail Party 19:00

Monday: Evaluation

Variables in the diagnosis and assessment of childhood disturbances

Tuesday: Treatment

Variables in the therapeutics of childhood disturbances

Wednesday: New directions

New advances, future directions and impact of current events

OVERSEAS GUEST SPEAKER

Dr. Simon Davidson, Ottawa, Canada.

St. Anthony's Home

St Anthony's Home cares for boys and girls aged 0 to 18 years — orphans and semi orphans, abandoned, destitute and neglected children, and children awaiting committal.

The Home invites application for the position of Social Worker

The ideal applicant will have experience in the field of social work, be Zulu speaking, be committed to working in a team, and embrace the values of the Home.

Interested persons should fax their applications/CVs to (0431) 23950 or post to St. Anthony's Home, P O Box 1824, Newcastle 2940.

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Interested and experienced in work with HIV/AIDS affected children, and in work with families and community.

Contact Marian Murray, after office hours, on (021) 47-7901

Liebe Kellen addresses a recent consultation workshop on Vision, Principles and Strategies for the Future

Children and Youth living on the Streets and the Education System

A quotation by Paulo Freire seems apt for a paper being presented to educators:

"No education is ever neutral. Education is either designed to maintain the existing situation (i.e. domesticating people, as one tames an animal to obey its master's will) or education is designed to liberate people, helping them to become critical, creative, free, active and responsible members of society."

This paper focuses on two broad aspects, namely, the role of education in preventing children and youth from coming to the street in the first place, and the educational needs of children and youth living on the streets.

Prevention

While schools may not be able to prevent every child or youth at risk from coming on to the street, they do have the potential to reduce the incidence of this phenomenon substantially. In the past, the schools that

had adequate facilities and resources (both material and human) were able to provide a safety net for children who experienced problems at home. Schools have the potential to enable children and youth to experience success and achievement, and to develop a sense of self-worth.

Schools can be experienced as a nurturant environment, and social as well as family values can be learned vicariously through methods such as storytelling and drama.

There is a high correlation between school drop-out rates and the incidence of children and youth coming to the street, and therefore we need to take a closer look at what contributes to children and youth dropping out of school.

Dropping out of school is often a process. A typical scenario is that of a child not coping with his or her schoolwork, being in trouble for poor performance at school, truanting, being punished at home because of the poor school report, increased truanting — and then finally no longer attending school.

The factors that contribute to poor performance at school include: learning problems; lack of remedial education; large and overcrowded classes; and inadequate nutrition. Children whose parents are unable to afford school uniforms and proper school shoes are also likely to experience school as a stressful environment because they feel different from other pupils and because of punitive attitudes towards them from teachers and principals. The problems outlined above can be addressed through measures such as remedial assessment and remedial education, a reasonable teacher/pupil ratio, feeding schemes at school and schemes for assisting families who are unable to afford school uniforms.

Not all parents are informed about learning problems and therefore they are not in a posi-

tion to understand their children's difficulties at school. These are often the parents who do not attend parent/teacher meetings at school, and consequently they remain unaware of the possibility that their children may be in need of remedial education.

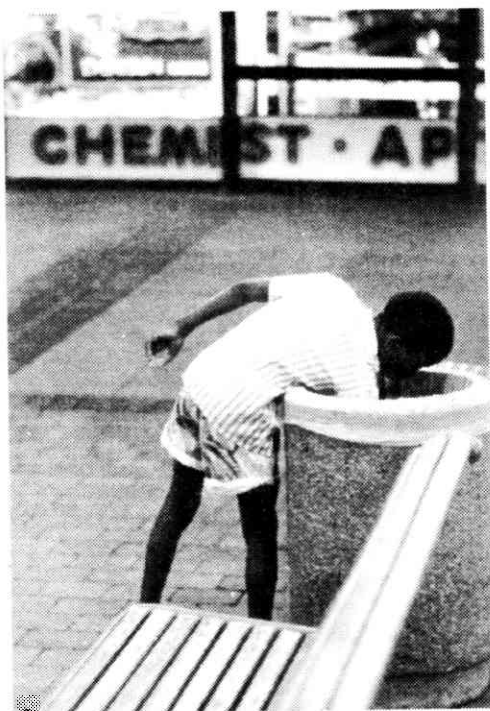
Information about learning problems needs to be made available to a broader spectrum of parents. One method of doing this is through television programmes. Other methods of sharing this information also need to be explored.

The home circumstances of many children and youth are not conducive to their being able to do their homework. Facilities such as Community Centres could be helpful in this regard.

However, it is important for the staff at such centres to be aware that an authoritarian and overly regimental approach to after school programmes could be met with resistance. Children also need the opportunity to play.

Educational needs

The second aspect that this paper focuses on is the educational and training needs of children and youth living on the streets. This is a complex issue because we are not looking at a homogenous group. While these children and youth may share similar survival strategies, there are differences in terms of the ages at which they left home, their reasons for leaving home, the amount of schooling they may have had prior to leaving home, the length of time they have been out of school and differences in terms of interest and abilities. Those who have already completed several years of schooling and have been out of school for less than a year are likely to adapt to mainstream schooling with relative ease. However, it is important for teachers to be supportive of their return to school. A peer support system



or a 'big buddy' system could also contribute to their reintegration in the school environment.

The ones who have had little or no schooling will need to acquire literacy and numeracy skills.

It is important to bear in mind that the methods of teaching these skills to young children are not appropriate for older children and youth. An Adult Basic Education Training (ABET) approach could be considered, where the contents of courses are geared towards the interests of youth.

The principles of adult education need to be incorporated in terms of methodology.

These principles include:

- to learn, people need to be active not passive; the experience and knowledge of learners must be respected;
- learners need to be able to link new information to what they already know;
- people learn through doing, thinking about what they did, getting new information, using new information to do better;
- learners need to understand the purpose of what they are learning.

An example of an approach that incorporates several of these principles would be to use the games the children are already familiar with in order to facilitate the acquisition of numeracy skills. A participatory approach is very important in terms of engaging youth in the learning process and in terms of their taking ownership and responsibility for their learning.

Vocational training can and should play an important role in preparing youth for independence. This needs to be accompanied by programmes that encourage self-reliance and independence.

The interests and abilities of youth should be assessed in order to ensure that suitable courses are chosen and that the skills gained are used.

Vocational training may also need to be accompanied by ABET courses because literacy and numeracy are vital to youth functioning independently in society.

Hopefully this paper has presented challenges to you as educators and people who are concerned with education, and has stimulated ideas in terms of approaches and methods.

The role of education in preventing children and youth from coming to the streets in the first place, and then in maximising their ability to function independently in society, needs to be regarded as a priority. ■

Hope, A., Timmel, S. and Hodzi, C. (1984). *Training for Transformation. A Handbook for Community Workers*, Mambo Press, Gweru, Human Awareness Programme (1993). *Adult Learning. Educator Manual*.

CREATING POSITIVE MOMENTS

Coming back for more

Well-known family therapy writer Minuchin observed twenty years ago that *"the first rule of therapeutic strategy is to leave the family willing to come again to the next session."*

How useful that idea is in child care work! Instead of always wanting to achieve some intervention goal, to make some point or reach a "break-through" with a youngster, most times it is enough that he or she would want to come back and spend some more time with us.

The point is that many children at risk have not been successful in relating to others. One of our tasks as child care workers is simply to demonstrate that they *can* be successful in relating to people. We don't always have to tell them what they are doing wrong or instruct them as to what they should be doing; just by spending time with them, listening to what they have to say, they suddenly realise that they are *already doing* what they so much want to do — getting on with somebody, being of interest to somebody, being valued by somebody.

Keeping kids functional

Brendtro (1969, 75) quoted a care worker who said: "I was standing by the waterfront, chatting with Mac about canoeing, fishing, and things in general. As Mac seemed very open and communicative, I suggested that instead of standing we 'go and sit down on that log over there'. He gave me a funny look and said: 'Oh no you don't! You can't pull any of that psychology stuff on me!' He turned and walked away, avoiding me for the rest of the day."

Holding his own in a conversation with an adult was probably a very affirming experience for a troubled kid. Mac must have felt good about himself, having something to contribute to such a discussion, being listened to. It was the kind of experience he would probably want to repeat — tomorrow, on the next outing. If the care worker had finished off by saying: "I really enjoyed talking with you," he would have confirmed for Mac that he was capable and interesting, and this would have made him more confident in his next encounter with someone else.

The care worker was on a roll, but he didn't recognise this. Brendtro goes on to warn: "If the child thinks that the

worker is 'zeroing in' on his personal problems, it is not unusual for him to become frightened."

Why go backwards and try to focus on the past and on problems, when you have spent some while with a youngster who is experiencing some positive achievement?

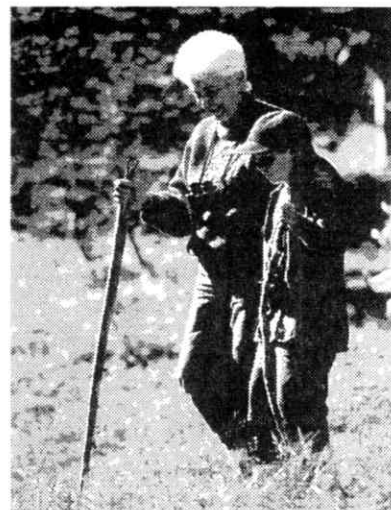
Strengths

The so-called "strengths" approach suggests that we look for the qualities and skills which enhance a young person's ability to function, and encourage and reinforce these, rather than being preoccupied with the problem behaviour which brought him into your programme in the first place. The positive experiences have the capacity to 'overbalance' the negative ones, and both of you will suddenly discover that the youngster is already practising the pro-social behaviour you were seeking.

Some time today we, the child and youth care workers, will be spending some time with children or adolescents in our programme. At the end of our time together, no matter how short, when we part company, will the youngsters be feeling hopeful, reassured, welcome, inspired, affirmed, encouraged, satisfied, capable, accepted, understood, forward looking, willing, strengthened — or will we mess it up by reminding them of what they do wrong, of their past failures and weaknesses, of our mistrust of them and our negative expectations? In short, will they be somewhat relieved to get away from us — or will they want to come back for more?

The interesting thing is that the way *they* will feel is usually the way *we* will feel after an encounter. If we leave them down, we will feel discouraged, depressed, ineffective; if we leave them up, we will feel capable, helpful and encouraged — wanting to come back for more.

Find a way to create a positive moment for a child today — and thus create one for yourself at the same time. — BG



Teachers and child care workers have much in common — they work with children and are concerned with teaching and guiding them towards healthy and independent function. In this Digest from the Educational Resources Information Centre we listen in on a helpful seminar for teachers, and see what we can learn for our own work.

Enhancing young peoples' socialisation: Some key elements

Coping with youngsters who display problems in personal and social adjustment can be frustrating. Success in teaching problem students often requires extra time, energy, and patience. Recent research reviewed by Jones (1996) indicates that teachers rank individual students who have serious or persistent behaviour problems as their chief cause of stress. However, teachers can take direct actions toward minimising classroom conflicts by socialising students into a classroom environment conducive to learning.

Key elements of successful student socialisation include:

- modelling and instruction of prosocial behaviour;
- communicating positive expectations, attributes, and social labels; and
- reinforcing desired behaviour (Dix, 1993; Good & Brophy, 1994, 1995).

Successful socialisation further depends on a teacher's ability to adopt an authoritative teaching style for classroom management, and to employ effective counselling skills when seeking to develop positive relationships with individual students.

Modelling

Modelling prosocial behaviour is the most basic element for enhancing student socialisation, because teachers are unlikely to be successful socialisers unless they practice what they preach. Modelling, accompanied by verbalisation of the self-talk that guides pro-

social behaviour, can become a very influential method of student socialisation because it conveys the thinking and decision making involved in acting for the common good. In situations in which prosocial behaviour is difficult for students to learn, modelling may have to be supplemented with instruction (including practice exercises) in desirable social skills and coping strategies. Note that such instruction should convey to the child three kinds of knowledge:

- *propositional knowledge* (description of the skill and an explanation of why it is desirable), but also
- *procedural knowledge* (how to implement the skill) and
- *conditional knowledge* (when and why to implement it).

Projecting positive expectations

Consistent projection of positive expectations, attributes, and social labels to students may have a significant impact on fostering self-esteem and increasing motivation toward exhibiting prosocial behaviours. Students who are consistently treated as if they are well-intentioned individuals who respect themselves and others and who desire to act responsibly, morally and prosocially, are more likely to develop these qualities than students who are treated as if they had the opposite inclinations, especially if their positive qualities and behaviours are reinforced through expressions of appreciation. When delivered effectively,

such reinforcement is likely to increase students' tendencies to attribute their desirable behaviour to their own personal traits and to reinforce themselves for possessing and acting on the basis of those traits.

Authoritative teaching

Teachers, as the authority figure in the classroom, need to be authoritative rather than either authoritarian or *laissez-faire*. Teachers have the right and the responsibility to exert leadership and to exercise control, but they increase their chances of success if they are understanding and supportive of students and if they make sure that students understand the reasons behind their demands. Focussing on desired behaviour (stressing what *to do* rather than what *not to do*) and following up with cues and reminders is also effective. Teachers should be prepared to supply objectively good reasons for their behaviour demands. When situations calling for disciplinary interventions arise, it is important for teachers to handle them effectively. General principles for doing so can be identified: minimise power struggles and face-saving gestures by discussing the incident with the student in private rather than in front of the class; question the student to determine his or her awareness of the behaviour and explanation for it; make sure that the student understands why the behaviour is inappropriate and cannot be tolerated; seek to get the student to accept responsi-

bility for the behaviour and to make a commitment to change; provide any needed modelling or instruction in better ways of coping; work with the student to develop a mutually agreeable plan for solving the problem; concentrate on developing self-regulation capacities through positive socialisation and instruction rather than on controlling behaviour through the assertion of power. Teachers who employ effective student socialisation strategies can develop genuine solutions to students' chronic personal and behavioural problems rather than merely inhibiting the frequency of misconduct by applying sanctions.

Counselling skills

Basic socialisation and counselling skills may be needed for working with individual students, especially those who display chronic problems in personal development or adjustment. These basic skills include developing personal relationships with problem students and reassuring them of your continued concern about their welfare despite their provocative behaviour; monitoring them closely and, if necessary, intervening frequently but briefly and non-disruptively to keep them engaged in academic activities during class; dealing with their problems in more sustained ways outside of class time; handling conflicts calmly without becoming engaged in power struggles; questioning them in ways that are likely to motivate them to talk freely and supply the needed information; using active listening, reflection, interpretation, and related techniques for drawing them out and helping them to develop better insights into themselves and their behaviour; insisting that the students accept responsibility for controlling their own behaviour while at the same time supportively helping

them to do so; and developing productive relationships with their parents.

Attributes of successful teachers

Good and Brophy (1995) have identified some general attributes of teachers that contribute to their success in socialising students. These attributes include:

- **Social attractiveness**, based on a cheerful disposition, friendliness, emotional maturity, sincerity, and other qualities that indicate good mental health and personal adjustment;
- **Ego strength**, exhibited in self-confidence that allows teachers to be calm in a crisis, listen actively without being defensive, avoid win-lose conflicts, and maintain a problem-solving orientation;
- **Realistic perceptions** of self and students, without letting perceptions become clouded by romanticism, guilt, hostility, or anxiety;
- **Enjoyment of students**, while maintaining their identity as an adult, a teacher, and an authority figure; being friendly but not overly familiar; and being comfortable with the group without becoming a group member;
- **Clarity about teacher roles** and comfort in playing them, which enables teachers to explain coherently to students what they expect;
- **Patience and determination** in working with students who persist in testing limits;
- **Acceptance of the individual**, though not necessarily of all of his or her behaviour, and making this attitude clear to students; and
- **The ability to state and act** on firm but flexible limits based on clear expectations, keeping rules to a minimum and liberalising them as students become more independent and responsible over time.

Developing these personal qualities and using research-based principles for managing the classroom will set the stage for student socialisation and will go a long way toward minimising the need for disciplinary interventions.

Conclusion

Teachers are asked to take responsibility for an increasingly diverse population of students in situations where individual differences are to be expected and accepted. An attitude of caring and an orientation to students is crucial to success in socialising students into a classroom culture that fosters learning. Interacting with students for several hours each day in various situations puts teachers in a position to take direct action in helping students cope with their problems.

Research shows that teachers' feelings of confidence are correlated with their effectiveness ratings. Developing the skills for enhancing student socialisation represents an expansion of the teacher's role beyond that of instructor or classroom manager. Teachers who believe that they possess, or at least are developing, good management and student socialisation skills will be able to remain patient and focussed on seeking solutions when confronted with difficult problems. In contrast, teachers who view management and socialisation skills as talents in which they are lacking may tend to become frustrated and give up easily. Through developing their role as facilitators of students' socialisation into the learning environment, teachers can create the potential for having a significant impact on the lives of problem students.

Adapted from Brophy, Jere. (1996). *Teaching Problem Students*. New York: Guilford.

Some Key Words and Concepts

authoritative, authoritarian. An *authoritative* person is one who is in control of him/herself and knows what they are doing; an *authoritarian* person tries to be in control of others and does not tolerate any individual differences or choices in others

chronic problems. Problems which have existed over a long time.

controlling style. When an adult makes a child behave in an expected way, instead of encouraging the child to develop the behaviour himself.

laissez-faire. The opposite extreme of an authoritarian or controlling style — "letting things happen by themselves." The phrase usually indicates someone who avoids taking any responsibility.

modelling. Showing by one's own behaviour what one expects from the children. Leading or teaching by example.

positive expectations. When we let the child know that we expect the best from him, he will more often give us his best.

prosocial behaviour. Behaviour which is co-operative and productive (the opposite of anti-social behaviour.)

reinforcing. Following a child's acceptable behaviour with an appropriate positive experience, which has the effect of encouraging further acceptable behaviour.

socialisation. Teaching a child what society expects of him; teaching the attitudes and behaviours which help him to interact harmoniously with others. Socialisation is also about teaching a child what *he* can expect *from* the society in which he is learning to live.

My 7-year-old daughter Elizabeth dumps her schoolbag on the kitchen table and pulls out a batch of slightly crumpled pictures she drew at school. She lays them on the table and looks at me expectantly.

So begins a ritual I used to love but have come to dread. As I consider her drawing of a family of grinning bears dancing with her in the forest, I am enchanted. I want to exclaim, "I love this! It's precious!"

But I swallow my words and stand there like a mummy, searching for something less effusive.

You see, for the past several months I have felt bombarded by warnings from child development experts of the dire consequences of overpraising my daughter. Or, heaven forbid, praising her *The Wrong Way*. So parental terrain I once strolled with confidence I now walk as if it were a field of verbal land mines.

A poorly-phrased compliment (I am told) could turn my daughter into a praise junkie who always looks to others for approval instead of herself. Or I could flatter her so much that she will feel inadequate and spend her life terrified of not measuring up.

But right now, she's growing impatient.

"What do you think?" she asks.

I try to remember the Politically Correct Praise (PCP) chart taped to my refrigerator. Finally a phrase comes to mind.

"What do you think?" I recite. "It's what you think that's important."

"I like it," she replies. Then, again, "What do YOU think?"

"Those bears look really happy." I finally manage.

When did "Nice!" become a four-letter word?

I'm angry, though. What should be an inalienable right of parenthood — being madly, indiscriminately in love with my daughter's artwork, stories, singing and dancing — is suddenly being viewed as 'bad' child-rearing skills. How did we get here? In the '60s,

psychologists found that children whose parents bolstered their self-esteem got better grades and had more confidence. So parents heaped on the accolades, to the point where they ceased to have meaning. Enter the '90s, where the praise pendulum has swung the other way.

The subject came up at our grammar school's Winter Sing-Song when I sat next to an outspoken mother of four. "Oh, I never praise my children," she said, pronouncing "praise" as if it were a four-letter word. "The most I'd say

about a drawing is, 'That grass is really green.'" How do they react?" I asked. "They've stopped show-

"Oh, I never praise my children," she said, pronouncing "praise" as if it were a four-letter word. "The most I'd say about a drawing is, 'That grass is really green.'" How do they react?" I asked. "They've stopped showing me their drawings," she said, without a touch of regret. I'd regret that plenty.

In Praise of Praise



ing me their drawings," she said, without a touch of regret. I'd regret that plenty. I'm thrilled when my daughter wants to share her efforts. When she presents me with a stapled-together book she has written and illustrated, is it a sin

to say, "What a wonderful book"? I don't think so. She doesn't need me to be her critic; she needs me to be her mom, looking at her accomplishments through my uniquely short-sighted vision. She knows what's good and what isn't. And if she doesn't, a day will come when other people will tell her. Don't misunderstand: I'm not suggesting I should say, "That is the best book I have ever seen," or "You are the

world's greatest painter." Constant, overly lavish praise does make its recipient cringe — whether she's a child or an adult. But there must be room for spontaneous delight, like the way I felt when my daughter read me a book for the first time as we cuddled on the couch. "I'm so proud of you," I said, beaming. Oops. That comment could make her want to read only to please me, not herself.

Eventually I mastered PCP. After another reading session, I said, "You've learned a lot of new words." It was true. But the words tasted artificial and unsatisfying as if I had chosen them from a phrase chart — which I had!

I'm tired of praising from this prepared chart. I'm ripping it off the refrigerator and untying my tongue. The next time my daughter dances up a storm to my old Saturday Night Fever album or paints a charming portrait of her stuffed bear, I will draw my comments from the best source around — my heart!

Marla Paul, writing in *Parents* magazine, is a freelance writer who lives in Chicago.



COVER STORY

Mark Gamble has just returned from a two-month practice study with the Pressley Ridge Schools in Pittsburgh, where he focussed on the Ohiopyle village programme for youth offenders. He talks to *Child & Youth Care* about the experience.

High-Octane Programme for Youth Offenders

The physical 'plant' for this programme is a series of six camps, each with ten youngsters and three teacher-counsellors, set about a kilometre apart from each other in state forest land, 10km from the nearest shop.

The kids are 10 to 17 years old, average 15, who have mostly been involved in petty crime (shoplifting, car joy-riding, housebreaking, etc.) and who need a period of relearning. For this brief report, just a few striking features of the programme, but there's lots more to talk about with anyone who is interested.

Programme

First of all, there really *is* a programme! The youngsters do not merely come to stay: from the first minute it is perfectly clear that the place has a function and a structure and no time is wasted pretending that this is anything else. Each day is filled from moment to moment, and each activity has a beginning, a middle and an end. First thing, the boys are grouped for a 'huddle' (a sort of team talk) which plans how the 'tents' (see picture below) will be tidied. As soon as this is done, the boys are again huddled so that the task can be reviewed. In fact every activity goes through this process of planning/motivation, execution, and then review/debriefing. A prominent feature of the programme is this repeated experience of planning, activity, involvement, achievement and

success. It is obvious to the visitor within five minutes that the boys are contained by this structure — not imprisoned by it but secured, focussed, guided, channelled.

The structure reaches every aspect of their day — from the way the tables are laid, who takes duties, how people are greeted, to routines for showering, etc. The structure ensures that things are done, and also that the underpinning resources for doing them are in place. It is reliable.

Activities

A wide range of healthy activities is always on the go — but central to these is a regimen of productive work — learning to organise things, build tents, repair outhouses, cut and strip trees, tie knots. A remarkable feature of the six camps is that they have no permanent buildings. Lean-to's and 'tents' are made with untreated wood cut from the surrounding forest, so that all structures are constantly in need of repair and replacement. The boys are thus coming into contact all the time with adults who have various skills — or maybe adults who do not have specific skills and may even have to learn something from the boys. Running through it all is the structure: each segment of each task is talked about, planned, put into practice, evaluated and celebrated.

Three or four times a year there is a major activity, such as a two-week river expedition, which requires considerable planning and preparation.

An important goal is to move youngsters back into school routines, and so they may move from the first camp to another one where schooling fills more of the day.

Relationships

Everything stands or falls by the quality of the relationships between adults and boys.



The day is filled with productive activity, learning new skills, doing things together — and then talking about it.

These are facilitated by the long working hours of staff: five 24-hour days on duty with two days off. This sustained interaction moves relationships along quickly to deep and productive levels. It is essential that staff are experienced and enthusiastic about life. No great emphasis is placed on their specific human services education, though new staff undergo intensive training and there is on-going in-service training. All counsellors are graduates who will move off after a year or so to careers in engineering, law, education or whatever. Such a staff turnover presents no problem since the children's stay is also around two years, after which it is OK for people to move onwards in their lives.

Different

Of course there are a few glitches in the programme — some staff become demotivated, the good success rate could be better, the after care and follow up may need attention — but the lasting impression is of how different this is from the residential work one is used to seeing.

For example, the programme really focusses on priorities: kids in need of radical re-orientation probably need to concentrate on this for a period rather than keeping up with school; kids who are busy with intensive activity and interaction experiences probably don't need electric lights, TV and health department approved bathrooms; kids learning to discover their skills and their value, and how to relate to others pro-socially, need a few ordinary, accepting people around.

Telephone Mark on (021) 761-8939 or e-mail to educ@iafrica.com. In next month's issue we talk with Dolly Naidoo of Durban who visited another of the Pressley Ridge programmes.

