

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

Child & Youth Care

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“To harm never; to heal often; to comfort always.”

Calvin & Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Just a case

To restore the human subject at the centre — the suffering, afflicted, fighting human subject — we must deepen a case history to a narrative or tale; only then do we have a 'who' as well as a 'what', a real person.

— OLIVER SACHS

IMPORTANT CHANGE OF ADDRESS

The address of this journal is no longer P.O. Box 23199, Claremont 7735 but is now the same as that of the NACCW's National Office:

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*Please note that
 telephone number 788-3610
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 will no longer be in use.*

Some years ago a child care worker named Dave Damschen wrote this letter to say goodbye to team colleagues. It seemed appropriate.

A Farewell

"Man is the only animal that laughs and weeps; for he is the only animal that is struck by the difference between what things are and what they might have been" — HAZELETT

Dear friends,

I am occasionally asked why I do what I do. Work with kids, that is. With the low pay, high stress and all. And I occasionally seek to answer that question, more for myself than for others. Well, the kids are, of course, one answer. No child should have to experience the kind of pain our kids endure daily. They live our worst nightmares, and that's just not right!

I, like all of you who work 'in the trenches' or very near, laugh with these kids and weep with them. And once in a while, perhaps in a rare moment, I am "struck by the difference between what things are and what they might have been". And it is this understanding, and their pain, that makes my personal sacrifices seem meagre and easily palatable.

Another reason is perhaps selfish. It has been said that every child care worker chooses his/her profession in order to rework his/her own childhood issues. I don't know if this is true but I do know that every day I work with these kids I get more than I give. Every day I work, my belief in the human spirit is reaffirmed in their struggles. Every day my heart is touched. I find their courage inspirational, and hauntingly gratifying. Their gift is far greater than mine.

These reasons seem to me to be sufficient to justify my 'work' but there is one more reason, perhaps the greatest of them all! That reason is YOU! It gives me pain to watch your sacrifices and struggles — financial, emotional and personal. But when I see you fight the battle, day after day, week after week, always coming back — I know a better world for children is possible. No. Inevitable. You are heroes. And you are my heroes. Mere association with people of your quality is more compensation than any amount of money or prestige ever will be. You alone made this job worth the effort.

True contribution to a team effort comes only with time. Regrettably, my 'time' on the team has been relatively short. I can only hope that whatever humble contributions I have been able to make are worthy of your effort. Please know that I am richer for the experience.

I leave this place with a very heavy heart. It is a heart, fuller and warmer. For that, I thank you.

Gratefully Yours ...

(From a newsletter of the California Association of Child Care Workers)

COVER

Image 20 (Kissing away the tears), 1966.

A sepia photograph by Jan Saudek of himself and his son. Saudek worked full time in a factory in Prague to support himself and his art. He focussed often on the elemental human relations, usually from a paternal perspective.

Child & Youth Care

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Rediscovering Pinocchio

Carlo Collodi, the original author of *The Adventures of Pinocchio*, said of himself, "I was the most irresponsible, the most disobedient, impudent boy in the whole school." With this realization, he persuaded himself that he was losing the good will of teachers and the friendship of fellow students. Then, he explained, "I too became a good boy. I began to respect the others and they in turn respected me" (Commire, 1971, p. 76). In this article **Allan D. Nass**, writing in the journal *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, takes a fresh look at the sophisticated lessons wrapped in this classic children's tale.



The bedtime story ritual was well under way. The lights were turned down low, and they cast a warm glow on the two young children who were tucked snugly into their beds. Their covers were pulled up around their chins, and their eyes were round with anticipation. The silence in the room was palpable. "Keep reading, Daddy!" the 3-year old finally blurted out. I sat on the edge of the bed staring at the book in my hands. The six-year-old chimed in, "Daddy, what's wrong? You said you would read us Pinocchio." It had suddenly occurred to me that the story I was reading was very different from what I remembered from my own childhood.

I continued the story in my best Geppetto voice. "Do you see those children?" I read, "They are going to school. Now that you are a little boy and not a puppet, you must also go to school." My daughters rolled their eyes and giggled at my accent. As I continued the story, I marvelled at the exquisite way in which the fable depicts the transition a child must make to become a young man or woman. I was suddenly aware of all of the "Pinocchios" I've known in my life. I also had forgotten how accurately this fairy tale depicts the conflict in a youth searching for identity and the vital importance of a reclaiming environment. Pinocchio is the story of a troubled lad searching for self-worth, self-esteem, and positive discipline. He is in desperate need

of, and unconsciously seeking, what the authors of *Reclaiming Youth at Risk* described as a "circle of courage" (Brendtro, Brokenleg, & Van Bockern, 1990). Brendtro et al. drew from the teachings found in traditional Native American wisdom, which identify independence, mastery, belonging, and generosity as the universal ingredients necessary for positive child-rearing. The character of Pinocchio is that of an awkward youth snared by the pitfalls of the adolescent stage of development. He is a vulnerable adolescent who, in today's world, would undoubtedly be labelled as a maladaptive juvenile delinquent suffering from attention-deficit disorder, lacking impulse control, and needing external controls and supervision. Additionally, early childhood trauma, family disruption, a single-parent home, and negative peer influences are clearly present as environmental risk factors and precursors of Pinocchio's straying misadventures.

Pinocchio does a remarkable job capturing the dynamic and contradictory forces found in burgeoning youth everywhere. The idiosyncratic and ungainly way in which teenagers grapple with decision making is a universal dilemma that is clearly portrayed in this drama. It poignantly captures the adolescent's capacity to rationalize destructive and self-defeating

"A lie keeps growing and growing until it's as plain as the nose on your face"

behaviour. It was suddenly apparent to me that this fable provides a diagram of the human psyche and offers a map for understanding the quandaries with which many of its youngest members grapple.

An authoritative scholar of mythology, Joseph Campbell, recognized the magic of classic children's stories in capturing suffering, healing, and unfathomed wonder (1972). These familiar fables possess magical and spiritual symbolic and universal themes; they are permanent vestiges of the human spirit. Campbell suggested that the purpose of these old tales and images is to keep us in touch with our "secret and motivating depths" (p. 24). An Italian author, Carlo Collodi, wrote the famous children's story *Le Avventure di Pinocchio* (1883/1965) toward the end of his life. It is an archetypal fairy tale of the inward conflict associated with the process of change, growth, and development. It is also noteworthy that *Pinocchio* contains the prescription to remedy these human dilemmas. Like many classic stories, fables, and myths that have weathered the passage of time, it carries the symbolic blueprint for social and emotional conflict and the potential for resolution: Pinocchio has many unhappy adventures as he progresses from his wooden and dependent state to true independence as a real boy. He finally attains fulfilment and happiness when he completes his symbolic quest for the psychological foundations of courage.

If you have forgotten some of the intricacies of this allegorical tale, allow me to outline the main features.

Pinocchio is the creation of a kindly woodcarver named Geppetto. As a toy puppet, he is subject to the commands of his maker. He is totally dependent on Geppetto, who makes him walk and dance by manipulating his strings. Geppetto truly wants a real boy, so he makes a wish, "Star light, Star bright. First star I see tonight. I wish I may, I wish I might have the wish I wish tonight!" (Disney, 1986, p. 9). The Blue Fairy appears, and with a wave of her magic wand makes his wish come true. Blue is the symbolic colour of divine intervention and represents the intervening miracle of the gift of life. Now Pinocchio has the freedom to move on his own. The fact that he is still awkward and wooden typifies the transitional nature and uncertainty found during the pubescent state. "You may be a real boy some day," the Blue Fairy instructs, "but first, you must prove yourself brave, truthful, and unselfish" (Disney, 1986, p. 14). This becomes the symbolic test that Pinocchio must pass to prove himself wor-

Pinocchio

thy of achieving the rite of passage from a dependent wooden toy to an authentic, independent person.

Besides his freedom, he is also given "that still, small voice"—a conscience in the form of a cricket named Jiminy, whose unwavering commitment to Pinocchio is expressed through his consistent and dependable comradeship. He hops tirelessly after Pinocchio to provide unconditional acceptance, regard, and guidance. Jiminy models the vital reclaiming quality of "presence" (Krueger, 1995).

Pinocchio begins his journey toward independence full of enthusiasm, good intentions, and confidence. He immediately falls into trouble, however, as he is influenced by circumstances and external influences. Like many youth I've known, Pinocchio is driven by a strong need to fit in and be accepted. He is led astray by mischievous friends. One such chum is a fox named J. Worthington Foulfellow, who explains, "my friends call me Honest John" (Disney, 1986, p. 28).

The dubious characters Pinocchio encounters personify the predatory elements that feed on innocent and naive children everywhere. Pinocchio's lack of experience makes him highly susceptible to negative peer influences and criminal elements. "School!" sneers Honest John. "Why waste your time going to school?" "Come with us ... we'll make you a star" (Disney, 1986, p. 31).

Lured by the temptation of instant gratification, Pinocchio quickly forgets his original quest and is abruptly caught up in circumstances that are beyond his ability to control. The wooden boy succumbs to the youthful qualities of experimentation, narcissism, and rebellion. When his actions lead to his being locked up in a cage, he responds by concocting elaborate excuses laced with rationalization and lies. It is at this point that the Blue Fairy intercedes in the youth's conflict cycle (Menninger, 1976; Powell, 1989; Wood & Long, 1991) by facilitating self-discovery. Her problem-solving approach to Pinocchio's conflict is to engage him in a life-space interview (Redl & Wineman, 1952). She conducts a highly empathetic interview that emphasizes the importance of effective communication while recognizing that problems may be a catalyst for positive change. Her commitment to understanding Pinocchio's

Pinocchio begins his journey toward independence full of enthusiasm, good intentions, and confidence. He immediately falls into trouble, however, as he is influenced by circumstances and external influences.



version of the story conveys a strong sense of acceptance, even as his nose continues to grow longer and longer with every prevarication. "You see, Pinocchio," the Blue Fairy explains, "A lie keeps growing and growing until it's as plain as the nose on your face" (Disney, 1986, p. 47). When confronted by the discouraging results of his poor choices, Pinocchio is supported in learning from his mistakes and offered opportunities for redemption. Pinocchio faces another challenge when he is lured to Pleasure Island by the promise of games, toys, and all the candy he can eat. As a result of his unconscionable actions, he turns into a donkey. Once again Jiminy follows Pinocchio to the source of the problem and intervenes in the crisis by demonstrating unconditional acceptance, understanding, and nonjudgmental guidance.

When Pinocchio returns from Pleasure Island, he learns that Geppetto, while searching for him, was swallowed by Monstro the Whale. At the bottom of the ocean Pinocchio finds Geppetto in the cavern-like belly of the whale. He saves his father and carries him on his back to shore. When they arrive, washed up on the beach, Geppetto discovers that Pinocchio is lying face down and lifeless in the water.

Geppetto carries Pinocchio back to the village. He lays Pinocchio on his bed and kneels by his side.

"Little Pinocchio, you risked your life to save me," sobs the old man, lowering his head in sorrow. The Blue Fairy appears once again, waves her magic wand, and declares, "Now you have proven yourself brave, truthful, and unselfish. Today you will become a real boy. Awake, Pinocchio, awake!" (Disney, 1986, p. 92). Like countless other time-honored tales, rebirth is symbolically manifested as a vital component of the transformational process.

Surrounded by his family and friends, the lifeless wooden boy arises as a living person. He is resurrected by the authentic trials and tribulations of his experience and the reclaiming environment provided by those who care for him. Redemption, forgiveness, and salvation are central themes of his catharsis and are facilitated by the vital quality essential for reaching troubled youth: the spirit of love (Brendtro & Ness, 1983). By demonstrating perseverance over the tumultuous challenges of the growing up process, Geppetto and Jiminy teach us that "love is exactly as strong as life" (Campbell, 1972).

Pinocchio demonstrates how vitally important it is that children have continuous support and guidance from caring adults.

Despite the seemingly inescapable problems Pinocchio faces, the guardians in his life continue to place him in the centre of their circle of support. Their persistence in surrounding him with a reclaiming environment allows him to receive the vital lessons from his struggles and challenges. Despite the exhausting effort, the circle of committed and compassionate caregivers in Pinocchio's life never falter in providing respect for his journey. By nurturing the positive qualities of healthy connection and attachment, Pinocchio's supporters find that a strong bonding takes place in their relationship with Pinocchio. Through their actions, Geppetto and Jiminy illustrate that creating a sense of belonging is a more essential need than self-esteem or self-actualization (Maslow, 1962).

The story shows that until belongingness occurs, the development of a healthy self-concept and conscience may not be achieved. This may suggest an important clue for addressing the staggering increases in juvenile delinquency, crime, and violence in our contemporary society. In the absence of nurturing, consistent, and healthy relationships, children and youth will seek out and find alternative attachments. Pinocchio's realization of interdependence with those who care for him is the culmination of his journey.

The Polish physician, child advocate, and innovative educator, Janusz Korczak (1878-1942) personified this absolute devotion to and respect for children. Although he understood that child-rearing is challenging and exhausting work, he resisted the notion that we must eventually tire of stooping to the child's level of intellect. Instead, Korczak emphasized that the real work is in having the courage to rise to the challenge of providing greater sensitivity, understanding, inclusion, and involvement. He concluded that the true accomplishment is when we learn to raise our experience of troubled youth beyond the limits of blame, accusation, and threat to embracing the most reluctant and resistant (1991a, 1991b). We must lift our capacities to teach by example the indispensable principles of courage and caring.

* * *

As I gazed upon the peaceful, sleeping faces of my own children and quietly went about the business of turning out the lights, I found myself genuinely admiring the colossal efforts of Geppetto and Jiminy in their tireless pursuit of Pinocchio. Their child-centered commitment to him conveys an ageless wisdom known by heroic parents, educators, and advocates everywhere. The commitment to reclaim troubled youth is a covenant, a sacred pact and responsibility toward caring for life's most precious resource.

"Through their actions, Geppetto and Jiminy illustrate that creating a sense of belonging is a more essential need than self-esteem or self-actualization."

Allan D. Nass is a national mediator, trainer, and consultant with over 20 years' experience assisting organizations to move from conflict to teamwork. He can be contacted at: Allan D. Nass & Associates, 823 East Fourth Ave., Durango, CO 81301.

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TALKING TO

"I will have a talk to her." "I explained to him why he shouldn't do that." "She has been told exactly what we expect."

These commonly heard remarks which may be adequate when referring to rational adults — but which are probably expecting too much when we deal with troubled kids. Many of us who work with young people are tempted to make "rules" in our organizations, as if those rules will guarantee compliance from the kids. If it were that simple, they would not have been referred to us in the first place!

I recently tried to find a programme to help a very troubled youngster. At one place I was told yes, they had a vacancy, but there were certain non-negotiables which had to be "contracted" prior to admission: the child was "not permitted to leave the premises, was not allowed to have or use any drugs, alcohol or other addictive substance, was to co-operate fully with the programme and attend all required sessions, was not to verbally or physically attack either a staff member or fellow client ..." Well, if this kid could do all those things, I wouldn't be looking for a place.

The developmental view

We must briefly remind ourselves that everyone has to travel from raw unsocialised babyhood (where they know only two emotions — dissatisfied rage and gurgling contentment — and display no finesse at all in telling us how they feel) to mature, independent adulthood. The young people we work with have had that journey seriously interrupted and disturbed, and our job is to get them back on this developmental road. And more important, nobody gets from babyhood to adulthood merely by being told what to do. *They take each step only by seeing the way ahead and by experiencing for themselves the safety to do so.* Anyone who is preoccupied by present anxiety gets "stuck" there and cannot see the way ahead. Anyone who feels vulnerable and at risk is unwilling to move forward. And this is our job: to understand and deal with the anxiety and its causes; then to be a reassuring guide accompanying the child on his or her next developmental step. It's no good just giving them a "talking to" or stating your demands. Also, the journey is often longer that we think it is. Even a normal youngster in

What's the difference?

In a recent study at McLean Hospital in Massachusetts, neuropsychologist Dr Deborah Yurgelun-Todd conducted tests on recognition of emotion with adolescents and adults. The adults quickly and accurately identified the presented emotion, but the teens almost all got it wrong. "They identified fear as worry or anger or something else." More interesting were brain scans during the process: the teens showed increased blood flow to the amygdala, a structure which governs our "gut" reactions, while the adults registered greater activity in the prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain which uses thought and reason to tone down our instinctive reactions.

— *Psychology Today*

mid-adolescence, who might be brilliant at languages and computers and things, may yet be functioning at more primitive levels in other areas. (See box above)

Present adults

The media today are telling kids they are independent and must make all their own choices. Many parents are made to feel that they must butt out of their kids lives and not expect ordinary family things like talking and eating together. *Who said?!* Even with the most OK kids, parents have to continue in their supporting role as long as necessary — and, while trying to keep the balance, never erring on the side of being unsupporting. (Haim Ginott's immortal words about adolescents and parents ... "Our need is to be needed. Their need is not to need us. To let go when we want to hold on requires the utmost generosity and love. Only parents are capable of such painful greatness.") *But from us as child and youth care workers, much more is asked.* The kids we work with are, by definition, difficult, anxious, easily seduced by quick fixes like drugs and alcohol, angry and distrustful with adults, more likely to fail, harder to reach, quicker to condemn and reject. It is so tempting to simply tell them to shape up, "Do this, or else!" But that seldom works. Rather, we have to be with them — *and want to be with them* — through their deepest despairs and darkest rage so that they *feel* that we are trying to understand and so that they *experience* our commitment and support. Of course we will convey much of this with words — but "talking to" is not enough.

BG



Four panelists in Zambia gather to debate at a local level an issue which had just been debated internationally on CYC-NET, the world-wide electronic child care network.

Child and Youth Care Work: A Profession or a Calling?

"The word *care* itself is not professional," observed Rogers Mwewa, Executive Director of Fountain of Hope. "The word more properly reflects a calling – an inner urge to care for the child."

This statement was just one of many opinions that were passionately expressed as CHIN members gathered for a discussion in February at the Alliance Française in Northmead, Lusaka. Four panelists, including Ireen Tembo, Youth Programme Co-ordinator from MAPODE; Dr. Geoffrey Nsemukila, a demographer from the University of Zambia; Petronella Mayeya, a psychologist from Chainama Hospital; and Rogers Mwewa, met to debate the question: "Child and youth care work: Is it a profession or a calling?"

Except for Rogers Mwewa, none of the panelists was willing to take a side. Everyone agreed that a calling – an "inner urge" – is necessary for working with children. But most also stressed the importance of professional skills. Ms. Mayeya expressed this well when she said that "care work has to be a calling, but maybe not in the sense that you become so emotionally involved that you forget how best to do it." She went on to emphasize the importance of networking, sharing experiences, learning from colleagues, and finding out what children really need. Professionalism, she said, means effective work. Dr. Nsemukila made a similar point, saying that it is necessary to have both a profession and a calling, *both the ability and the motivation* for effective child and youth care work.

While Ms. Mayeya and Dr. Nsemukila warned about the dangers of a calling without skills, they were also wary of people who consider themselves professionals without being called. Ms. Mayeya pointed out that the word "professional" means many things. Some people think that being a "professional" simply means getting a good salary. NGOs and other groups that work with children can be disastrous if their employees are working for selfish reasons.

Dr. Nsemukila mentioned the "optical illusions" that sometimes afflict professionals who have spent too much time in the classroom and not enough in the field.

This was the first time CHIN members had gathered to reflect on themselves and the mo-

tivations behind their work. As Ms. Tembo put it in her opening remarks, "I don't call myself a professional. I just ask: who am I?" Ms.

Tembo said that when looking after orphans, she always asks herself, "If I died today, who would keep my child?"

At one point CHIN Co-ordinator Louis Mwewa (no relation to Rogers Mwewa) asked the panel, "Where do you draw the line?" There are situations in which one feels "called" to help a child in an easy way (for example, by giving money), even though this won't much help the child in the long term. Ms. Mayeya replied, "It has to be a calling first. In fact, it has to be a calling 100% ... but you have to be sure that as a person who is called, you acquire the right skills to look after the children." Rogers Mwewa agreed. "Am I going to let that kid die of hunger?" he asked. But he also stressed the importance of following up one's work with a child, not just feeding them.

The discussion went off on many tangents, especially after the moderator opened the floor for questions. But this was perhaps a sign of how much CHIN's members have to share, how many concerns they have in common. Both the audience and the panel were interested in the issue of institutional care for orphans. There was a broad consensus that orphanages should only be used as an emergency measure, and that in the long term, orphans should stay with their families and communities. Community-based orphan care was described both as a professional technique – an effective way of working – and as a sign of a calling, a more caring approach.

Discussion group

The original idea for the discussion came from Louis Mwewa, who heard the same question debated on CYC-Net, an international electronic forum for child and youth care workers. People working with children and youth around the world (though mainly in the United States and Canada) had been pondering the same issues over e-mail. But there were a



number of differences between the electronic discussion and CHIN's discussion. In North America, the word "profession" raised the question of standards and licensing – whether people working with children should have to have certain training and skills. A "profession" should be able to regulate its members, banning people who lack the proper abilities. A profession would also have a professional association, like a medical or legal association, that could lobby on behalf of its members. Some electronic debaters thought that the word "calling" might be demeaning to their work. They worried that a "calling" might make it sound like they were looking after their own inner needs (or those of a higher power) before those of the children.

The discussion was opened by CHIN Publicity Secretary and ZACEF Chairperson Annie Sampa-Kamwendo, and moderated by Dr. J.K. Sikalumba, professor of French Language and Literature at the University of Zambia. CHIN would like to thank the Alliance Française for the use of their colourful conference room. If you have Internet access and are interested in joining CYC-Net, send an e-mail to cyc-net@iafrica.com or visit <http://www.pre-text.co.za/cycnet> to learn more. .





Stepping Stones Youth Justice Centre

We visit another of the IMC Pilot Projects which will become one of the Learning Centres where those wishing to replicate new approaches will have the opportunity to observe and participate in practice.

This Centre offers a service to children aged seven to seventeen who are in trouble with the law in the Port Elizabeth Magisterial District. Since our official opening on 15 August 1997 to 22 September 1998, 3411 young people passed through the Centre and benefited from the specialised services that we provide. The Centre operates on a 24-hour basis, seven days a week, including public holidays. Probation Officers work shifts to ensure young people receive services when they need it. Weekend court sessions are held to ensure speedy release of all youth where possible. The idea is to avoid unnecessary delays and to centralise planning for youth in trouble with the law.

Programmes

The NICRO Social Worker facilitates the following diversion programmes:

- YES Programme
- Victim Offender Mediation
- Pre-Trial Community Service
- The Journey

Probation Officers also facilitate the following programmes:

- Programme for the Education of Drug Related Offenders (PEDRO)
- Parental Skills Workshops
- Family Group Conferencing
- Responsible Living Programme

For the period 1 September 1998 to 22 September 1998 78 children were diverted away from the normal court procedure. Another twelve children were involved in the Family Group Conference diversion option.

The restorative justice approach

Youth justice services in the previous paradigm were based on the retributive justice approach. Stepping Stones however, in line with the transformation process, bases their service on the restorative justice approach —

where young people have an opportunity to put the wrong right, and to take responsibility for their actions.

The principles of the old 'retributive' justice model were:

- crime violates the state and its laws
- justice focuses on establishing guilt ...
- so that "doses" of pain can be measured out
- justice is sought through conflict
- rules and inten-

tions outweigh outcomes;

- one side wins and the other loses.

By contrast, the principles of restorative justice are that:

- crime violates people and relationships
- justice aims to identify needs and obligations
- justice encourages dialogue and mutual agreement
- victims and offenders are given central roles
- justice is measured by the extent to which responsibilities are assumed, needs met and relationships healed.

Restorative justice has benefits for both offenders and victims, as it is based on the healing of relationships. Both parties

At Stepping Stone we believe that there is no such thing as a bad child, that badness is not a normal condition, but the result of misdirected energy. We believe that every child will be good if given an opportunity in an environment of love and activity.

are given central roles and the victim has a chance to state his or her feelings of hurt and anger and the offender the opportunity to put the wrong right.

Child and youth care workers

The team has consisted of management, probation workers and administrative staff. But there have also been two child and youth care workers, who commenced duties on 1 May 1998. It is clear that the young people passing through the Centre, benefit from the services of these two workers as they are responsible for seeing to their immediate needs after arrest. The two child care workers are building meaningful relationships with children and also provide support services to them after their court proceedings have been finalized. They have also, amongst other things, successfully negotiated some of the children's readmittance to schools. During the project the need to have Child and Youth Care Workers, as part of our team became more clear. Two posts for child and youth care workers, were therefore created after consultation with the Manager of the IMC team. The successful candidates were already trained and experienced in the field. They adapted quickly to the Probation and Justice components of the team, but had difficulty in being accepted by the SAPS component of the team. Some of the SAPS members experienced them as a threat, since the young people in custody chose to co-operate with the care workers instead of SAPS members. They also experienced these workers as watchdogs in terms of the way the young people were treated in custody.

We have now reached a point where these two service providers complement each other in working with the young people in custody. The child care workers look after the young people in terms of food, shower facilities, clean clothing, someone to talk to, etc. Their genuine interest in the young people has resulted in them being able to build meaningful relationships. The care workers also engage the young people in games and this has had a positive effect on SAPS members who now also voluntarily play games with young people.



One-Stop Youth Justice Centre

Private places of safety

The Centre has successfully recruited and trained 8 families who will act as Private Places of Safety. These families will take care of children whose cases have been converted into Children's Court Inquiries. Some children in custody at Enkusweni Place of Safety and detention will now be transferred into the care of these families.

Two-way training

A characteristic of the training has been that the Centre staff have both received and offered training. The staff successfully completed Family Group Conferencing and Computer Training in addition to their initial training. One child and youth care worker is presently undergoing BOCC training with the NACCW and needs two modules to complete his course.

In return, a delegation from the Stepping Stones Centre consisting of the resident Magistrate and the Public Prosecutor, the NICRO Provincial Diversion Manager, two of the Centre's SAPS members and the Assistant Project Manager present submissions and training to other Magisterial Districts of the Eastern Cape. The main aims of these visits are to:

- Explain the transformation of the child and youth care system and the IMC processes
- Convey the service delivery of the Stepping Stones Centre;
- Promote the Restorative Justice Approach to dealing with children in trouble with the Law;
- Build capacity of the core role-players; and
- Encourage intersectoral collaboration amongst the different role-players.

Recently the delegation has visited Jansenville, Graaff Reinett, Humansdorp, Hankey, Patensie, Cradock and the Port Alfred Magisterial districts. The end result of this outreach has been that young people are now involved in our programmes whereas in the past they did not benefit from diversion from the normal court procedure. The Centre is successfully conveying alternative ways of dealing with young people in trouble with the law.

Community networking

The Centre has managed to build good relationship with the community. Some highlights of our community involvement have included

a celebration of Youth Day, the establishing of a good relationship with the Volunteer Bureau in Port Elizabeth, a Constitution week with the focus on Children's and Women's Rights, a cocktail function for business people and an Open Day which included learners from the various schools in Port Elizabeth.



One strength is the caring, friendly, professional and relaxed environment in which we deliver our services. This is one of the first impressions visitors have of the Centre and on which we are often complemented.

Benefits

We are an Intersectoral Pilot Project of the IMC, and have included the following:

- Welfare
- Justice
- SAPS
- Correctional Services
- NICRO.

We practise an integrated programme for young people in conflict with the law, and have proven that it is possible to form inter-departmental working relationships that not only work to the benefit the young people and their families, but also to the staff working in this field, and also the state departments and the broader society.

Strengths and challenges

The following strengths were identified:

- 2385 young people and their families have received services at the Centre since the official opening on 15 August 1997.
- The design and implementation of parental empowerment workshops to contribute to the successful reintegration of young people into their families and communities.
- The scope of involvement of communities, NGO's, CBO's, the Welfare fraternity and youth groups in the Centre has broadened and much interest is now being shown in the Centre.
- The caring, friendly, professional and relaxed environment in which we deliver our services. This is one of the first impressions visitors have of the Centre and on which we are often complemented.

■ A team which has grown in depth and who are still delivering their services with enthusiasm and commitment. The team is envied by many, and a popular question is — how do we manage to keep a team, which functions so well, intact?

■ The viewpoint that the family remains the primary caregiver and that young people are in most cases better cared for within their communities instead of residential care facilities. The families and communities are therefore viewed and treated as part of the team in service delivery.

■ The extension of Probation services to all the courts in Port Elizabeth starting on 24 August 1998, due to commitment received from the Department of Welfare.

Alongside these positives, we experience the following challenges:

■ Court proceedings for young people are still not finalized as soon as possible due to three main factors:

(1) The workload of detectives. A solution would be the establishment of a special unit that only deals with cases which involves young people.

(2) Some lawyers who are appointed by the Legal Aid Board to represent young people in court do not give priority attention to these cases. A solution for this problem would be the introduction of a public defender system; and (3) Lengthy court rolls in the Regional Court which result in young people (already found guilty) being detained in prison for a up to four months before their trial commences in court. A possible solution for this problem would be to set aside one of the Regional Courts to specialise in cases involving young people.

■ The number of young people who after their successful reintegration into family and community life, fall back into a life of crime in the absence of employment or opportunities for self employment.

■ The large number of young people still in detention in the two prisons in Port Elizabeth.

■ The staff shortages at residential care facilities, which influences the number of children that they can accommodate. The possibility of securing houses in the various communities which can be managed by child and youth care workers should be explored. These houses could then accommodate youth aged 16 to 17 years.

Smoking legislation in South Africa gets tougher and there are more and more controls as to where people can smoke, yet more and more young people take up the habit. Thousands will start today.

"I know I'm not going to be a smoker when I get older, says one high school pupil, "It's just a phase. I smoke socially." That is exactly what 90 per cent of adult nicotine adults told themselves once. Ask any chronic smoker — nearly every one will admit that he or she started as a teenage "social smoker."

What's the problem?

It seems that forever child care workers, along with parents and teachers, have fought a running battle with kids over smoking. All adults seem to "have a rule" about smoking — yet many of those who make the rules are also habitual smokers. Many are not. We asked child care workers how they saw smoking, and the responses were very varied. Some saw it simply as "naughtiness". Others saw it as a religious thing and quoted a verse from the Bible. Some saw it in common-sense health terms and pointed to the incontrovertible medical evidence of harm from smoking. To others, smoking was an "image" thing or a peer group thing — kids smoke for the look of it, or because "all my friends" smoke.

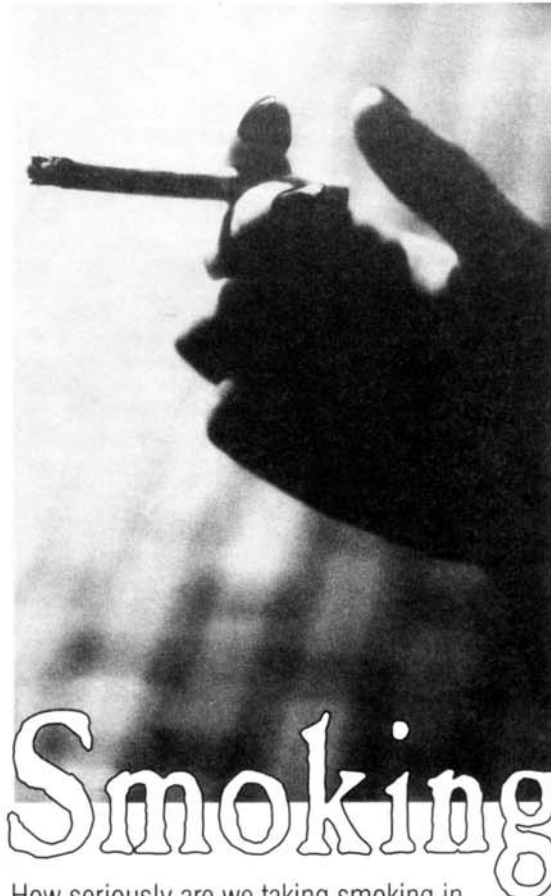
Increasingly smoking is seen as a legal matter. There is an age requirement to buy cigarettes, compulsory health warnings on packs and adverts, and growing restrictions about smoking in public places. In a few cases people we spoke to saw it frankly as substance abuse, and regarded it as seriously as other drugs and alcohol. Probably most of these views have some validity, and although many of those we spoke to tolerate smoking in some way, all agreed that smoking was to be discouraged.

Image

It's hard to establish why people start. A smoker says: "The first time I had a cigarette I was 8. My parents smoked ..." A non-smoker says: "Growing up I was surrounded by smokers ..."

The need to fit in with the crowd is, however, a common thread. The smoker above continues: "Even though I hated smoking, in junior high school I would do it every once in a while to fit in. Then someone in our group pointed out that I wasn't inhaling. I was mortified, and from then on I inhaled! By that summer I was smoking a pack a day. I was hooked!"

There is a high correlation between youngsters smoking and parents who also smoke. This could be because approval is more likely or policing a rule is harder. It



How seriously are we taking smoking in our programmes? This discussion reminds us of some of the issues involved.

"I never knew this would happen to me. We all want to quit — but it's so hard."

could also have to do with the role-modelling of smoking parents — "I want to be like my dad or mom."

Substance abuse

There is justification for seeing smoking in terms of substance abuse — not just because smoking is often seen to be a "bridge" to more serious drugs. A neuroscience team at the University of Cagliari in Italy recently observed in rats that nicotine had exactly the same effect on the nucleus accumbens of the brain as did cocaine, amphetamines and morphine. This an area of the brain which appears to control the process of addiction. "The brain, in other words, appears to make no distinction between addictive drugs and what smokers prefer to think of as just a bad habit."

Weed or serious drug?



Managing smoking

How do children's organisations deal with smoking? Everyone we spoke to mentioned that more children have been smoking from an early

age. "By the time they come here, many are hardened smokers. We understand that we cannot simply say Stop!" Most residential facilities impose restrictions as to the times and places where children of a certain age may smoke. This age may vary from 14 to 16 and upwards. "It's ironic," said one principal. "Ten years ago we would have taken smoking much more seriously, yet now, when laws and controls are so much stricter, we seem to tolerate it more." This is not to say that smoking is encouraged. When the smoking rules are broken, this is treated as a discipline issue and certain punishments or "consequences" are applied, perhaps a fine, a task — or worse: a lecture! One children's home developed what everyone thought was a brilliant plan. If a child was caught "illegally" smoking, a fine was imposed and the money went into a personal deposit — which for some grows into a sizeable amount. When the child gave up smoking, he or she was given the full amount which had been forfeited in fines. "But," reflected the principal sadly, "There was no single success with this plan. It didn't work with even one kid!"

Promoting health

One of the better ways of managing smoking has been through positive rather than negative influences. In today's world, fitness, sports, health and good looks are highly valued and reflected in the media — and therefore an opportunity to be seized in discouraging smoking. The illustration opposite from a teen magazine provides a good illustration.

A non-smoker says: "My friends didn't start smoking until this year — about half of them smoke. Sometimes they offer me cigarettes jokingly, but they know I wouldn't smoke. I play tennis, run in the athletics team and I'm really quite serious about modern dancing — I want to pursue performing arts as a career. I wouldn't be able to do this if I smoked — track workouts are hard enough as it is!"

The good child and youth care programme which includes sports, gym, jogging or walking (whether seriously or just socially) is effective in adding value to a healthy lifestyle.

This positive approach has another side to it: it often makes quitting something the kids want to do for themselves, not something the adults are leaning on them to do.

Acknowledgements for material to Dana Silbiger and Carlos Serrao, Jump

TOBACCO: *the truth and consequences*

Most teen smokers think they haven't been smoking long enough to do any harm. Here's the head-to-foot fiasco that starts with the first drag.

HAIR

You'll have nice, smelly locks.

NOSE

Weekends will be spent with a thermometer. Smokers get more respiratory tract infections, like bronchitis and pneumonia. Oh, and when you *do* feel good? You'll probably have to skip sleepovers with friends. Smokers snore—a lot!

HANDS

No guy will hold your hand because your fingers will stink and your nails will have yellow-brown discoloration.

LUNGS

Two words: **LUNG CANCER!**

OVARIES

When you're ready to have kids, you'll have a higher chance of being infertile.

Taking the pill and smoking dramatically increases your risk of having cardiovascular problems, especially blood clots.

WALLET

Your automobile insurance may go up. Smokers crash cars more often than non-smokers.

If you're a typical smoker, studies show you fork out \$700 per year on cigs. That's a lot of missed concerts, movies and, well, fun!

You'll spend lots of cash on Kleenex and/or therapy. Smokers are more likely to be depressed, to engage in high-risk sexual behavior and to get into fights. They also have a higher rate of suicide.

YOUR ENTIRE BOD

With each puff, you inhale 4,000 chemicals including cyanide, carbon monoxide and formaldehyde.

LIPS

You'll ruin your makeup. When you suck on cigarettes, wrinkles develop around your lips and, tah-dah, your lipstick bleeds.

You won't get many kisses because your breath stinks. (Kissing a smoker is like licking an ashtray.) Besides, in a survey, 49 percent of guys said smoking makes a girl look insecure, and 78 percent of boys said they don't want to date someone who smokes.

Forget flashing your pearly whites—you'll have discolored teeth.

HEART

The resting heart rate of teen smokers is two to three beats per minute faster than that of nonsmokers. So in competition, your body wastes a lot of heartbeats just to keep up.

BACK

Teenage girls who smoke have a lower bone mineral density, which can cause all kinds of yucky stuff, including osteoporosis, later on.

SKIN

You'll speed the aging and, therefore, wrinkling process. Wanna look like the freak à la *Scream*? Smokers get hollow cheeks from the repeated muscular motion of inhaling.

FIRST CALL

Children don't have the vote — but the "Children's Budget" is an advocacy project which looks to their interests regarding government spending

All reports deal with three aspects of quality services to children, namely equity, access and redress.

The "Children's Budget" is a joint project of IDASA's Budget Information Service and the Youth Development Trust. The project tracks what the government is spending on children in key areas, and asks whether the government is directing its spending in the best way to deliver on its policy commitments to children in South Africa.

The project concentrates on five key areas important for children:

- Health
- Education
- Welfare
- Justice, and
- Police

Research

The Children's Budget is not a separate budget, but a research project which looks at what some key government departments are spending on children — and whether they are able to meet children's needs.

The project calls for more awareness on the part of government about what it is doing for this large constituency — children. "If we want to be able to monitor what our country spends on children, resources for children must be specified in budgets. Information systems which monitor what is spent should also be improved," says the project.

The project is intended for individuals and groups who promote the rights and needs of children, and those who make policy, implement policy and assist with drawing up legislation.

The Children's Budget provides:

- information on budgets;
- details of ways in which budgets are being used — and particularly whether or not they are being used to implement new policies for children;
- recommendations for improved services to children;
- ways to measure and evaluate the redirection of funds towards children;
- support for increasing the capacity of NGOs to do research and start engaging in budgetary debates; and
- information on other sources of support for children.

Other projects

Historically, government assistance to children and children's services was directed toward "curing" social, health, housing and educational ills — and really only for those lucky enough to be included. The shift in spending has moved more towards preventive and developmental projects. The National Programme of Action for Children (NPA), for example, targetted such areas as nutrition, child and maternal health, water and sanitation, early child-

hood development and basic education, social welfare development, leisure and cultural activities and child protection measures. The aim has been to promote "healthy children in healthy families in healthy communities" rather than directing money to those expensive projects who worked with children and families "after the damage was done."

Legislation followed which put some of these ideas into practice, for example, the Health Department's policy of free health care for all pregnant women and children under six years old, and the 1996 Schools Act which made schooling compulsory from the age of seven.

Child and youth care

In our child and youth care service we have seen new policies develop, yet we have also become aware of the many other children who have a "call" on the financial resources of our country. And the size of the "pie" from which the various slices must be cut has not been growing significantly. Over the past five years we have seen spending on defence reduced and modest increases in police and education spending. Spending on welfare has increased from 8.5% to 9.8% of the national budget. But the welfare budget is mostly allocated to social pensions, and only a small percentage goes towards specific welfare programmes such as those offered by NGOs.

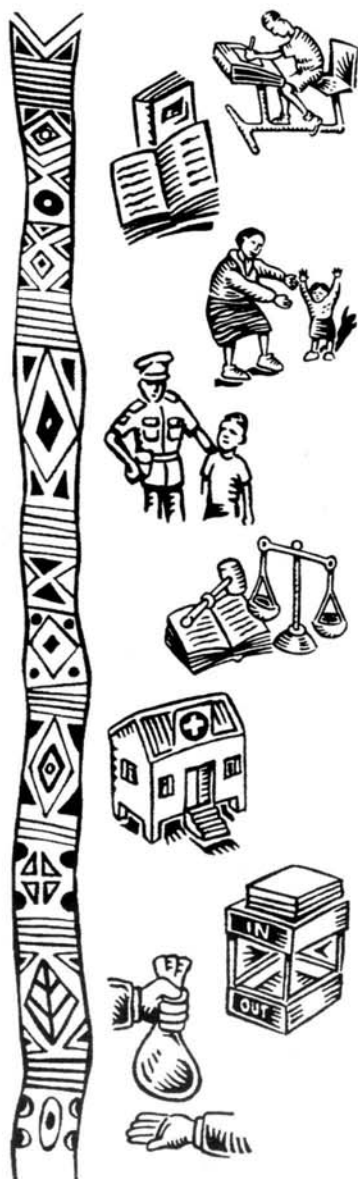
As advocates for children — and as members of a particular service or profession — we may find that we are at conflict within ourselves. Opposing claims for a share of the pie are usually resolved by a process of prioritising — but the Children's Budget project at least tries to raise the voice of children within this debate.

BOOK

FIRST CALL: THE SOUTH AFRICAN CHILDREN'S BUDGET

Shirley Robinson and Linda Biersteker (eds.)
ISBN 1-874864-53-5, 330 pages, R59.95.
Available from IDASA Publishing Department, 6 Spin Street, Cape Town 8001.
Telephone (021) 461-2559.

You can also order information sheets free of charge by contacting this same telephone number.





BOOKS

Helping traumatised children

An Adult's Guide to Childhood Trauma: Understanding traumatised children in South Africa

Sharon Lewis

Published by David Philip, Cape Town
R84.95

The trouble with trauma (as against such experiences as fright or shock) is that a terrible thing happens before the child has a chance to mobilise his or her defences. The child then carries around an incapacitating experience of undigested and unworked-at horror.

Working with traumatised children may well become a more common task for caregivers in the years ahead, and the subject should be included in the training of all who work with children. Sharon Lewis makes an intelligent and practical contribution to this field.

Two immediate positives of this new book are:

- it is written in accessible language for adult caregivers, not particularly for professionals;
- it looks realistically at what might be traumatic for a child in South Africa today.

Lewis has worked in the field in this country, and with all case studies based on actual events, the book has a good local focus, acknowledging that the most com-

mon ways in which our children are traumatised is through violence, abuse and neglect.

Trauma as experienced

The important point is made that a trauma is a trauma when experienced as such by the child. An adult cannot, by objective observation, decide what is and what is not traumatic. Trauma is defined as "an experience that is sudden, horrifying and unexpected", and the author distinguishes between single traumas, multiple traumas, and complex traumas where, for example, the trauma is compounded by a double-bind relationship. Children react differently to frightening experiences. On resilient children, Lewis writes that "some children are able to survive traumas and able to continue to develop without permanent emotional scarring." Factors which render a child more or less vulnerable include temperament, age, sex, environmental factors and past experiences of stress and trauma. There is a good discussion on the effects of trauma. The levels and phases of post-traumatic stress responses are described, and there is a helpful set of checklists of indicators of possible trauma at various ages – including adult reactions to childhood trauma.

Practical

The practical meat of the book is to be found in Chapters Two (How to help a traumatised child) and Three (Trauma and violence). Chapter Two deals with:

- What to do when you find out about the trauma
- Responding to the traumatised child
- Coping with the post-traumatic stress symptoms
- Working with groups of traumatised children.

Throughout the book there are highlighted boxes with extremely useful step-by-step procedures. Those in Chapter Two, for example, include:

- Responding to the disclosure
- Practical steps to follow after disclosure
- Supporting the traumatised child
- Responding to a child's feelings
- Relaxing children
- Managing angry children
- Responding to sexual acting out
- Dealing with somatic symptoms
- Boosting self-esteem
- Helping children to cope with medical procedures.

Chapter Three offers good background to

the traumas of abuse and violence, pointing to both awareness and prevention, and there is a good treatment of

medical and legal processes. Chapter Four deals with traumatic bereavement and grief. The final chapter is on the role of mental health professionals, and provides a good survey of how to decide whether professional help is indicated, what help might be needed, obstacles to seeking help, and places to go for help.

Evaluation

Initially I missed an index in the book – one tends to want to look up specific subjects in a book of this nature – but I was mollified by a more than ordinarily generous contents section. Above all, the structure and clarity of the book is commendable, and its clear signposting makes navigation easy.

I would strongly recommend this book for the staff library of any organisation working with children. Indeed, it would also make ideal curriculum for an in-service training course on the subject. BG



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WELFARE

The following posts are being offered in the Northern Province at Brits (Secure Centre)

Assistant Director (Manager)

Appropriate Bachelor's degree or RVQ13 or Senior Certificate, 6 years' experience in child and youth care work. Managerial experience will be favoured. Refs: NWH/1605/1

Social Worker

Degree in Social Work, 4 years' appropriate experience, registration with the SA Interim Council for Social Work. Refs: NWH/1605/2

Senior Child & Youth Care Worker

Appropriate recognised Bachelor's degree (or equivalent) with a RVQ13 and 2 years' appropriate experience. Refs: NWH/1605/3

Child & Youth Care Workers (8 posts)

Appropriate Bachelor's degree (or equivalent) with a RVQ13 or Std 10, a BQCC and 2 years' experience. Refs: NWH/1605/4

Enquiries: Ms M Mothobi or Ms M. Sepeng
Tel: (018) 387 5129/ 387 5132. Applications on Forms Z83 and Z27, obtainable from any public service department, accompanied by a CV (experience must be comprehensively detailed), certified copies of qualification certificates and the names of two references.

Direct application, quoting the relevant reference number to: Mr M.O. Tshumkeng, Department of Health and Developmental Social Welfare, Private Bag X2068, Mmabatho, 2735.

Closing date: 21 June 1999.

LABOURS OF LOVE



Sister Sindi Basi, a Franciscan nun, is Supervisor of St Anthony's Children's Cottage Homes, near Newcastle, KwaZulu-Natal which cares for orphans, abused children and street-children.

Sister Basi completed her Diploma in Child Care Administration through the NACCW last year. She advocates a conciliatory and co-operative approach to household chores.

All our child-care workers have been having a problem about household chores in the Home. They say it is a daily battle with the children, who end up arguing and protesting that they are being exploited and used as labourers. My own experience, perhaps, throws some light on how the children feel.

In January, I was on my annual home leave for three weeks. My sister asked me to help her to plant the mealies in the garden. I hated doing this and was annoyed at having to do it, because I knew that I would not even eat the mealies. Normally I enjoy doing the garden. Here at St Anthony's I enjoy gardening because I live here and everything I do here I enjoy, because it is home. I love planting flowers and arranging pot plants, because it beautifies the place; but I don't want to do it in somebody else's place!

Their own place

After my holiday, when I received lots of complaints from the child-care workers about children hating and dodging chores such as gardening, washing dishes, sweeping — I decided to look at their reports from their vacations. There was one particular child whose parents were very

grateful for his help with the household chores. We could not believe this, because in the Institution he is 'labelled' *ivila*, a lazy child, and is very aggressive when asked to do his chores.

So I tried to work out what the problems might be. I concluded that:

1. Children know and feel this is not their home, so why should they beautify it?
2. They do not want to be given instructions by people who are not their parents. When they come to the Home, they sometimes have no idea about being tidy or hygienic. They do not understand, therefore, why their rooms and gardens should be nice and clean.
3. Sometimes they feel that household chores are a punishment and that they were separated from their parent to be labourers. So we find that we get into power struggles over household chores. There is not a day that passes without negative expressions from child-care workers: "Nokuthula, you have not done your job properly. Come back here!" "Awuzwa. Uyisilima!" (You don't listen, you idiot!) Such expressions do not help the child to do the job properly tomorrow. We are also not helping the children if we try to punish them; we are simply instilling fear and anger.

Care workers not indunas

Sometimes child-care workers have to humble themselves in order to help the children in our care; sometimes we have to stop behaving like an induna (overseer). We should try to make chores enjoyable for the children. Let's make them see that they are contributing to the household as they did in their parents' home. Let's try and thank them for every little thing they have done; give praise where it is due. Express your gratitude, instead of saying: "I want this passage clean", when it has already been cleaned.

Children enjoy doing household chores with adults. The words "Let's do" sound much nicer to children than "Do". If the chores are hard, try to help them. For example, you can say, "Oh! it's a lot of dishes today, let me help you to dry them."

It helps children to see you doing household chores, rather than just pointing out jobs for them to do, because you are



Let's try and thank them for every little thing they have done; give praise where it is due. Express your gratitude, instead of saying: "I want this passage clean!"


afraid of getting dirty. Our children need to be spoiled sometimes; so it helps to let them choose where they are going to work.

Why make so much fuss about household chores? That is not what our children are here for; it is just one part of their development. They are brought to us to be 'cared for'.

We must help children to overcome their problems, to develop and mature and be responsible for their own homes. Once the children trust the child-care workers, and accept the Institution as a place for them, they will happily contribute to different parts of the programme, including chores.

Acknowledgements to ChildrenFIRST

What are your ideas on chores? How do you avoid the hassles of housework in your programme? What have you found helpful — and unhelpful? Write in and tell us.



Report on a Working Visit to

the Nether- lands

Merle Allsopp and Zeni Thumbadoo

The purpose of this visit from 8 to 17 November 1998 was to evaluate how efforts in transforming the child and youth care system in South Africa compared to innovative programmes in the Netherlands, and to understand the range and quality of training options offered to child and youth care workers/youth workers in that country.

The organising team from the Netherlands was very efficient and helpful and the programme was very full and structured.

MONDAY 9 NOVEMBER

The morning was spent on learning about the Dutch policy on youth at risk. It was very interesting to note the differences in some of the philosophical perspectives in comparison to those in the IMC's Interim Policy Recommendations. The integrated approach between justice and welfare was a strong positive in the Dutch policy. The apparently limited exploration of broader global trends for historically disadvantaged youth was a noticeable limitation. This was particularly pertinent in relation to the general target group of youth at risk in the Netherlands (the Moroccan and Surinamese youth) who are second generation Dutch citizens.

All three broad aims of their youth policy, namely: to enlarge chances for young people; to prevent dropping out; and to improve children's position in society, were demonstrated in the different programmes visited.

The "right" people

The afternoon visit with the Department of Welfare of the City of Amsterdam was a wonderful experience of the power of the "right" person putting policy into practice with caring and sensitivity towards young people and their families in mind. There was a sense of "people making policy" – the need for networking with young people, their families and communities, and the creativity, energy and passion that was put into youth programmes in Amsterdam. The attention to differentiated policy was explored as well as integrated services to youth and their families.

The concept of safe schools (no discrimination, no sexual harassment, no stealing and no drugs) has the potential to be explored in many different ways in our country – for example, safe parks, safe streets, etc., within a family preservation programme.

Self-referral of youth was also effectively used to encourage and support youth to avail themselves of appropriate programmes.

Strengths-based work was introduced at this point and again demonstrated in programmes visited later.

TUESDAY 10 NOVEMBER

The visit to the New Perspective programme demonstrated the integrated approach, creative use of networking, flexible and dedicated youth workers who are able to use police and other youth effectively in their youth work.

Again there was the "right" person in a position who was able through extraordinary personal commitment to breathe life into the programme. Interesting was the emphasis placed by the youth workers on their use of personal networks. It appeared that workers established connections with one another, and these were more valuable in working effectively than the "official" networks.

Youth workers also placed great value on skills which enabled them to connect or engage with youth. They spoke with pride of their ability to speak the language of the youth, to understand their cultural backgrounds and

know "where they come from".

These factors raised interesting considerations for us, for example, the notion of using youth (care) workers from target groups. Aspects of this model have already been experimented with in the youth mentor component of the Inanda Family Preservation project.

Family preservation

A meeting with staff from a family preservation programme at a Centre reinforced the work we are engaged in, and the fact that we face similar challenges, for example, appropriate risk assessments, the value of written referrals, implementing strengths based work, and working with family preservation in traditional and unresponsive environments.

Their perspectives of "activation of strengths" and "compensation for identified needs" had also been demonstrated in the Inanda project. The technique of video home training has been very successful in their work and needs to be explored creatively in our training programmes.

The Juvenile Reception Centre was a well run and functional facility. While effective, one was left with some disquiet about young people being locked up away from community and family, and the bleakness of that experience for effective developmental work. It raised questions as to how such programmes can possibly contribute to enriching the lives of young people, and the wisdom of employing them in the South African cultural context.

WEDNESDAY 11 NOVEMBER

The Bureau Maatwerk, which includes training and professional education for long term unemployed adults and unemployed youth, is a wonderful programme based on the view that an unemployed youth will be forced to commit crime. The concepts of learning on-the-job, internalising the rhythm of work, and creating work paths for youth was very positive. The issue of language difficulties being supported was noted – a valid point for us to remember in such programme designs. The one-day

A Working Visit to the Netherlands

work and one-day school model (with certification) seems a positive pathway to follow in a programme like the Phandulwazi Life Centre. The Maatwerk project involved work which was inherently meaningful, and conveyed pride in achievement in addition to the focus on solid social and job skills.

We visited the Welfare Organisation Western Suburbs (IMPULS) which again reflected the commitment of individual youth workers in synergistic team work, and on-the street inter-sectoral connections and networks. This was reinforced by one team member's very practical advice: "Work with people – identified people, not with organisations – it works."

The pro-active nature of the work on the streets with youth was evident in the language used by youth workers and the familiarity they exhibited with the youth. A creative and non-intrusive style of engagement was apparent.

The opportunity for youth to work in a multi-cultural restaurant showed a creative entrepreneurial project that could be developed in partnership with catering schools, life centres, restaurants, etc.

THURSDAY 12 NOVEMBER

Street-corner work was introduced with a most stimulating presentation by a senior police officer who emphasised the community approach, skill in working in the moment, family preservation and neighbourhood support. He emphasised the need to be visible in the life space of the youth and the creative use of self and self-awareness. Police training was essential, as well as learning how to talk to youth, how to react to aggression, how to "think solutions", to be pro-active, influence through example, and establish partnerships with neighbourhood and peace programmes. He stressed the use of the discretionary powers of the police, the rewarding of creative responses from policemen in promoting the "changing role of police in Amsterdam". Once again the impact of one well-placed person was evident.

The youth worker's ability to identify with target youth is most critical in establishing helpful professional relationships. Here too we witnessed the positive energy associated with effective teamwork and a strong sense of identification on the part of the workers with the values and goals of the programme.

The visit to the Streetcornerworks shelter for homeless youngsters and hard drug team was of particular interest to the South African Youth Workers, and indicated the calibre of workers required for such work.

Suggestions from these experts were to

- promote abstinence
- keep programmes short
- create job options if applicable
- use programmes that promote use of

hands, sport, computer work, music, and

- consciously promote a real sense of future.

The integrated approach attempted also to be relevant and culturally sensitive to marginalised youth, and to offer drug-free, culturally sensitive and fun opportunities for youth in high-risk areas. The value of informal youth programmes staffed by trained personnel who are able to engage in life-space work and create vibrant programmes was reinforced.

FRIDAY 13 NOVEMBER

The Capabel programme working in a multi-cultural environment with parents and families in preventative work raised a range of question for us:

Is the programme sensitive enough to the cultural issues of the people serviced? Is the attempt to integrate different cultural groups into the dominant Dutch culture too "colonialist" in its approach? Are the health programmes sensitive to cultural rituals and customs? Are there inter-cultural programmes at schools? Are materials presented in an experiential way to capture the experiences and struggles of this second generation immigrant population? Does Capabel advocate enough for this type of "peace" programme? Is the educational support offered holistic enough?

Is it too academic/intellectual without enough of the expressive components like music and art? Are libraries appropriately stocked with information that will promote a sense pride and history of these immigrants, adults and children?

We met with students of the De Factor programme. The process of training youth workers who were themselves once youth at risk was very interesting. The qualities identified in these workers were their leadership skills, commitment, their potential and ability to articulate and transfer their experience to different situations. They work with experienced co-workers and receive supervision and support. They also attend formal training on themes like living, liaison, justice, finances, health, social relations, free time and education.) In experiential workshop sessions they attempt to integrate practice into theory. We believe that there is tremendous potential in elements of this training, not least in creating jobs which draw on the real experience and resilience of youth at risk who have been successful.

MONDAY 16 NOVEMBER

Representatives from the Netherlands did a presentation on training and practical work in the Netherlands. The South Africans did a four-part presentation on

trends in youth work training, child and youth care training, probation training and the partnership the Technikon.

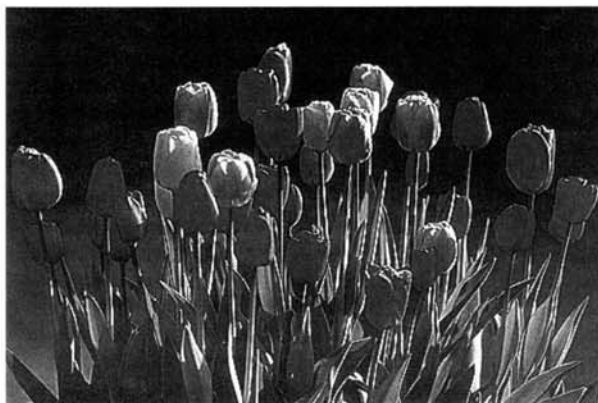
There was much discussion about this working visit, and questions about training processes. Some of the interesting comments from the discussions for me revolved around:

- global policy for youth with an awareness of indigenous trends
- experientially based training, especially linked to the cultural backgrounds of the young people served.

Replication of programmes

The following suggest themselves for exploration:

- Youth mentor programmes with a specific focus like gangs/violence, substance abuse, diversion programmes for children in trouble with the law, etc.
- Integrated programmes (for example, involving welfare and labour) promoting work skills training that include historically valued skills that can be useful today, such as thatching, creative painting, repairing of historic sites, building huts, etc.
- Creative peace programmes such as peace schools (safe school concept), peace parks, safe houses, safe communities, etc.
- Networking with the Amsterdam police programme to train/retrain a group of policemen/women that work with children and youth to be more skillful, sensitive, compassionate, creative, etc.
- Re-designing training programmes to include youth who have been service recipients in our programmes.
- Promotion of self-referrals to programmes through use of newsletters, including success stories, positive living suggestions and tips and information on how to access programmes.
- Use of home video training for child and youth care workers working in situations requiring a high skill level.
- Creating opportunities for inter-sectoral groups of people working with youth together at local level to meet in order to promote the establishment "on the ground" of effective networks.





1999 PRACTICE THEME

Engagement: Making it happen

Over the past five months we have talked about several aspects of engaging with children as the essential act of our work. All of these require some level of commitment and action on the part of the adult who engages.

It is no good an agency having principles or values around engaging if we don't also make the act of engaging meaningful and possible for our child and youth care workers.

Crime-busters hone in on two basic factors when working out "who dunnit?" — let's use those same factors in talking about engagement — *motive and opportunity*.

Motive

When child care workers have participated in assessments and planning for the youngsters they work with, they understand the need for the interventions that are planned, and they understand the nature of the interventions decided on. When staff are included at this level, they are more likely to *want* to go out and achieve the goals of the child's treatment plan. A good administrator will want to give

child and youth care workers strong motives for engaging with a particular child:

- for the child, to help the child past problems and onwards to continuing development and achievement;
- for staff colleagues, to contribute to the team's efforts and gain a sense of achievement from helping to reach goals;
- for themselves, in that a helped child is always easier to live and work with than a child continuing in difficulties.

Opportunity

Timetables in our programmes often fight against the interventions we plan for kids. When we want things to run smoothly in our organisation it is easy to prioritise the wrong issues — laundry, meal times, bus schedules, staff rotas, chores and administration — and then wonder why an on-line worker didn't get to spend some time with a needy kid this week! We all know that "the agency is there for the children and not the other way around" but organisations are hungry for tidiness and habitually low on mission.

The three-rank priority ranking takes courage to implement:

1. The kids' needs come first. That is why we are here and why we spend x dollars a month to run the place. We are not talking about spoiling the children by meeting their *wants*, but attending professionally to their assessed *needs*. If I am in a hospital with an acute heart disorder I am not interested in the health professionals messing around with pyjamas or making sure that supper is served at exactly 6 pm. When you've attended to my heart, then you can change my pyjamas.

2. It is possible to combine the child care work and agency administration. A good strategist knows that laundry, meal times, bus schedules, staff rotas, chores and administration can all be written into the curriculum of our programme. We are not running hotels or holiday camps, but are living in a residential community which (just like home) has us all participating according to our abilities in all its aspects. In all of these functions there is opportunity to engage — and in a child and youth facility all these functions should be so designed.

3. Then comes tidiness, punctuality, social delicacy — as we get ready to go back home. The nurse says "OK Mr Jones, you can put your clothes back on now" as we leave the doctor's surgery. So with the kids we work with. An important part of our work is facilitating their move back into their own particular lives, to take up their roles and responsibilities again.

Making time

In all treatment planning we look for the opportunities to engage. "How do I get to spend some time with this kid I am supposed to be working with?" is an essential question for a care worker. Being "in the right place at the right time" is a precondition for all child and youth care work. Engaging does not, of course, necessarily mean one-on-one time: if the worker regularly does something with the youngster — play basketball, eat lunch, supervise study period in the library, hang out on the lawn before dinner — opportunities to engage can be found (or made). And it is unlikely that we will ask a worker who does not regularly share time with the kids to work with that kid.

Administrators as schedulers

It has always been my view that the only task for administrators is to schedule meetings. We rely on our directors and principals to ensure that the right people meet with each other for the right purposes throughout the day. When we have been through a day filled with encounters and conversations and joint activities and planning and reporting and listening and sharing ideas and encouraging and problem-solving and thanking (add a hundred of your own words here ...) then we have truly been in an engaging child and youth care environment, and we have all truly grown a little and moved forward a little.

Who could ask for more?

PICTURES: SIDIMA MNTUBU



Until recently, Damny Almiero harboured an abiding hatred for police officer Gene Kowalski. The Dade County cop caught him stealing cars and helped put him behind bars. But today, Almiero's anger toward Officer Kowalski is gone. In fact, he can even tell you that Kowalski likes his hamburgers cooked well-done.

The two have been brought together in an unusual juvenile-justice programme known as Teen Cuisine. From a tiny cantina trailer in the lobby of the two-story Dade County Juvenile Justice Centre, the 14-year-old makes \$32 a day cooking meals for cops, judges, lawyers, and social workers.

The programme is the idea of Juvenile Court Judge Tom Petersen. When teens are finished doing time, they serve meals. They are transitioned back into society by attending a special high school behind the courthouse and juvenile jail facility and by working in the cantina one day a week.

As simple as it sounds, Teen Cuisine offers a potential solution to one of the most complex questions facing the criminal justice system: reconnecting kids coming out of jail to society, so they don't end up in the adult system as career criminals.

For years, states have built more jails and meted out tougher sentences to juvenile offenders. But increasingly states are turning their attention to what happens once teens are released.

"Earlier on, a lot of effort was spent on locking individuals up without time, thought or resources spent on whatever else is going on once they get out," says David Altschuler, principal researcher at the John Hopkins Institute of Policy Study in Baltimore, who focuses on ways to ease young offenders back into society.

"But now that a lot of them are coming out," he says, "there's more of a focus on 'What do we do now?'"

■ In Ohio, the Department of Youth Services gives cash to counties that find ways to keep youths out of prison.

■ In Boston, police officers, parents, and community leaders collaborate with probation officers in supervising troubled youths.

■ In Vermont, officials are looking into setting up a high school within the state prison system.

■ In Stoneham, Massachusetts, juvenile offenders run a landscaping business.

"The beginning notion of a more aggressive kind of after care is taking hold," says Yitzhak Bakal, president of the North American Family Institute in Danvers, Mass., which runs the Stoneham project and 22 other programs for troubled youths in nine states.

"The new thinking is, 'This is a time when a young person will pick up a skill,'" he says. Preparing kids for life in the real world after they live in the intense structure of a residential facility is complex, and expensive. It in-

Helping troubled kids earn self-respect – and a little cash



TIDY CAFE: A worker at Teen Cuisine in a Miami courthouse cleans off a sign. Teens get paid \$32 per day for working at the cantina, which serves cops and judges.

volves understanding what leads a kid to commit a crime – a violent school, drugs, or negative peer pressure.

"Just giving kids a job doesn't do it," says Mr. Altschuler. He says good after-care programmes involve a combination of schooling, job skills, family intervention, and mentoring. But the lack of funding and the public's demand for harsh punishment still stand in the way, most experts say.

Judge with a juvenile plan

Yet in Miami, Teen Cuisine creator Judge Petersen says he's waging a lonely battle against the "incarceration mentality" of his state. Florida, he says, leads the nation in terms of the number of kids being tried as adults. He says he first learned the value of work in inspiring confidence as a volunteer working in one of Miami's most depressed neighbourhoods. Later, when taking a break from his job in the state attorney's office, he worked with public-housing residents to set up grocery stores to help them get out of the

welfare cycle.

When Petersen came back to the Dade County justice system in the mid-1980s, this time as a juvenile judge, he knew that at-risk kids too had to invest their energies in something constructive.

What he saw alarmed him: 90 percent of the kids going through the system ended up getting rearrested. Most couldn't read or write beyond the fourth-grade level. Petersen embarked on a crusade to re-route kids through schooling and work.

"The alternative is go back to their regular school and fail," Petersen says. To change young people's behaviours, Petersen says, the system must "give them an alternative they will buy into, with some status and some economic rewards."

In 1989, he set up a food business inside the justice centre for youths who'd gone through the system.

A few years later, he launched the school that uses the cafeteria as a focus. Today, with a budget of roughly \$800,000 a year, the school serves 50 youths.

Most of the students have been referred by the courts to the school as an alternative to jail sentences, or they come after they've spent time in a lock-up facility. Most have committed violent crimes, including armed robbery and carjacking.

With its cafeteria component, Petersen's school is one of the most promising after care programmes Florida has to offer, says Carlos Martinet, a researcher at the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice who has evaluated the programme.

Mr. Martinet says youths leaving the programme are committing fewer crimes. Their grades have improved, and they've been suspended fewer times. "It works because kids buy into it," says Peterson from his office, up stairs from the cafeteria.

Service with a smile

Downstairs, in the busy lobby of the Dade County Justice Centre, the food business is going full speed. Today's chef is Latron Steadman, a boyish looking 16-year-old.

As he hands a security guard a dish of chicken wings over the pickup counter of the trailer, a smile creeps on his face. It's been a long time since he smiled much. He says that when he was in jail, he only thought about smashing cars, breaking into stores, and stealing clothes. He's now proud that he knows how to cook, a skill that's "changed my whole game plan," he says.

"When he first got here, he was angry, his rage was just below the surface," says Jennifer Schuster, who runs the school. "It's amazing this change in him. He's beginning to connect with the people around him. All of a sudden he's coming out smiling."

Isabella de Pommereau in *The Monitor*

Conference at a Glance

To give delegates a picture of what to expect, here follows a *Draft Programme* as at the end of May. The full Conference Programme will be available shortly.

Day One: 5 July

07h30 - 09h00 Registration

09h00 - 11h00 Biennial General Meeting

11h00 - 11h30 Tea

11h30 - 12h00 Opening Ceremony

12h00 - 12h30 Opening Address

12h30 - 13h30 Lunch

13h30 - 13h45 Announcements

13h45 - 14h45 Key Note Speaker
- Lesley du Toit

14h45 - 15h15 Tea

15h15 - 16h15 Plenary
- Thom Garfat

16h00 - 16h30 Closure, Day One

Evening: Mayoral Reception
- Provisional

Day Two 6 July

08h00 - 09h00 Registration - Tea/Coffee

09h00 - 09h15 Greetings/Announcements/Opening Entertainment

09h15 - 10h15 Plenary - Zeni Thumbadoo and Merle Allsopp

10h15 - 10h45 Tea

10h45 - 11h45 **First Breakaway**

1. Indigenous Innovative Alternatives for Youth at Risk through Professional Foster Care - Sabitha Samjee and team

Masihambeni

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5 to 7 July, 1999. Johannesburg, South Africa

2. The Life Centre Model - Alan Pitt and team
3. Developmental Assessment
4. Stepping Stones - a Secure Care Pilot Programme in Port Elizabeth IMC team
5. Trauma Counselling with children and youth. Cyclone Devastation in Eastern Cape - Nomsa, Cecil Wood and team

12h00 - 13h00 **Second Breakaway**

1. Family Preservation - an IMC Pilot project
2. Safe House Project - Child Line Johannesburg
3. A Programme of Promise - Residential Programme for abused and troubled children and youth
4. Details awaited
5. Challenges and experiences in rural training and child and youth care workers S bongile Manyathi

13h00 - 14h00 Lunch

14h00 - 15h00 **Third Breakaway**

1. Skills Development for Youth - IMC Pilot project
2. Moving from homelessness to belonging - a panel discussion with homeless girls Elmarie Kennedy
3. Children and Youth and their families - Guild Cottage team: Joyce Siquzoa, Adi Ware, Zelda Kruger
4. New Millennium, New Ideas, New Practitioners in Secure Care Facilities - Mirriam Siluma
5. Training Traditional Healers in handling Child Sexual Abuse - Mpumi Tyawa and Karen Weissensee

15h00 - 15h30 Tea

15h30 - 16h30 Plenary - Thom Garfat: Skills in Working with very Troubled Youth

16h30 Closure

Evening Cocktail Party at the Conference Centre

Day Three: 7 July

08h00 - 08h30 Registration - Tea/Coffee

08h30 - 08h45 Greetings, Announcements Opening Entertainment

08h45 - 09h45 Plenary

10h00 - 11h00 **Fourth Breakaway**

1. Agencies moving from Residential Care to Community Care - Phineas Molepo
2. Seeing the resilience and strength in youth and families (1) - Jack Phelan
3. Victories and defeats - working with volunteers in a residential setting - a model that works - Barrie Bramley and team
4. Working therapeutically with juvenile sexual offenders (1) - Dr Vilia Lyell and Luke Lamprecht
5. Technikon RSA Presentation - B Tech Degree

11h00 - 11h30 Tea

11h45 - 12h45 **Fifth Breakaway**

1. Children who need to grieve - a programme using music and drama - Thobile Hlope and Frida Rundell
2. Seeing the resilience and strength in youth and families (2) - Jack Phelan
3. Is your Agency 2000 compliant? - Michael Gaffley
4. Working therapeutically with juvenile sexual offenders (2) - Dr Vilia Lyell and Luke Lamprecht
5. Trust and team building games for Child and Youth Care Workers - Mark Gamble and Jacqueline Roberts

12h45 - 13h45 Lunch

14h00 - 15h00 Plenary - Jim Anglin: What South Africa can contribute to International Child and Youth Care in the next Millennium

15h00 - 15h30 Conference Resolutions

15h30 - 16h00 Closing Ceremony

Masihambeni

into the new millennium

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e-mail: masihambeni@iafrica.com

NACCW

CONFERENCE 99 NEWS

Draft Programme

On page 19 of this month's issue is the Draft Programme for the Conference as at May 1999. As the content begins to take shape, we get more of an idea of what to expect.

A feature of the programme is the combination of plenary sessions for all delegates and the five smaller "break away" groups where delegates can attend items of particular interest to them. The emphasis of the breakaway sessions is on new ideas and new practice models — with more opportunity to interact with presenters.

The programme reflects the very wide range of settings in which child and youth care workers operate in South Africa.

Partnership

Interesting, also, is the fact that three visitors from Canada will be presenting: Thom Garfat, Jim Anglin and Jack Phelan are all well-known to child care people in South Africa. Most of the presentations are, however, by South African practitioners, with some participation from other African countries.

Not only does this offer interesting variety, but it reflects the valued partnerships with which we work in our field in this country.

Accommodation

Limited accommodation is available at Children's Homes, Retreats and Hotels — information will be provided on receipt of Conference Registrations. Technikon accommodation has to be booked through the NACCW Gauteng office.

"When we were very young ..." Delegates at the NACCW's Second Biennial Conference entitled "The Dilemma of Risk", Durban 1979.

