



# Child & Youth Care

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A Journal for those who work with troubled children and youth at risk

Hlokomelo ya bana le baswa: Ke mogomo wa bao ba dirago ka bana le baswa bao ba tshwenyegilego,  
ba ka welago kotsing

## NACCW Leaders ready to change the Child & Youth Care Landscape

To mark the end of the NACCW's first Leadership Development Gathering, held in Bloemfontein, participants were given a specially designed and remarkable poster. It is captioned with a portrait of Mr Nelson Mandela and his now famous quotation "..... *If enough people were touched and imbued with the spirit of caring, it could in time change the whole landscape of how children are treated in this country.*" Also in the poster is Margaret Mead's words "*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed people can change the world: indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.*"

We were twenty-seven, I think, thoughtful, committed people all touched and imbued with the spirit of caring. So the potential was there for NACCW leadership to establish a vision and direction that could impact on the way children and youth at risk could be treated in this country. The leaders were drawn from throughout the country, each beleaguered with the usual battering from their Regions that we have come to expect from the critics. Questions of how relevant is the NACCW now that the State has taken on a leadership role in the transformation of the child and youth care system in this country? Is the NACCW only a training institution and is that function further weakened by the role of State? In our so-called partnership with State, has the NACCW become a toothless watchdog in its advocacy

for quality services to children and youth at risk? Is the NACCW now rendered powerless in the face of the tardiness of State to implement the transformation system and the financial policies that under-pin it? This little eddy of negative energy was only a momentary expression of opinions sometimes heard by leaders in their Regions but it didn't take long before the real qualities of our leaders showed, rising above petty despondency. Marie J Kane is also quoted in our poster. She says "*Leaders create positive change not only by what they know, but simply by who they are.*"

In Bloemfontein the NACCW leadership was able to take stock of what has been achieved so far. The NACCW has been an integral part of the visionary team which has created the direction for the transformation of the child and youth care system in this country. When the country's child and youth care system was in crisis, we were with those who climbed a tall tree in the forest and said to State – that way! That's the way we must go. This created the vision of a transformed system that will "*in time change the whole landscape of how children are treated in this country.*"

As we have the vision and the direction, the NACCW leadership realised that it is poised in the best possible position to use its circle of influence in the Regions. It can be one agency that can powerfully assist to transform the quality and nature of services to children and youth throughout the country. Leaders in the NACCW throughout the country

showed that they have the knowledge, and "*are open to change ..... Possess distant vision and close-up focus, unusual self-discipline, balance.*"

With these and with their special qualities, NACCW leaders were able to recognise that they don't have to wait for State or funding policies. They are able to go back into their Regions and work toward inspiring the mindset and practices of Child and Youth Care Workers. They can lead their Regions into positions that can make NACCW Children's Homes and Agencies into models of transformed services: position them ready for the new financial policy implementation. They can lead Child and Youth Care Workers into creative, transformed ways of providing quality service to children and youth in this country. They can help position the organisations that work with children and youth in readiness for the Developmental Quality Assurance by implementing the Minimum Standards.

Each of our leaders is ready to "*take special responsibility for what is going on inside of him or herself, inside his or her consciousness*", to touch others with the spirit of caring that could in time "*change the landscape of how children are treated in this country.*"

Our leaders are ready to make the vision happen and they don't have to wait for anybody or anything. What could be more relevant than this as a role for the NACCW? What more challenging?

**Barrie Lodge**

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# Family Treatment In Residential Homes

Dr. Steen Mogens Lauge Lasson, Consultant in Child Care  
and Honorary President of FICE International

**M**aladjusted children, troublesome kids, problem children – what is the meaning behind these labels, often used on children who do not fit into adult patterns of living. Some of these children are demonstrating very adequate and healthy reactions considering their insufficient emotional and social living circumstances. In fact these children are often very normal and clever children. Far too often our measuring standards are only set by the adult world. The question of problem children can always be seen from two very different angles:

- the one as children with serious personality problems
- the other as children who cause their adult world serious problems.

Often both viewpoints are relevant.

Teachers, psychologists and childcare workers sometimes try to explain these problems of today as a result of “the new character of children”. Here they normally refer to the omnipotent, narcissistic and need fixated children and youth of today.



Most of these children have painful experiences of emotional dependence and socially coping, and are indeed troublesome for family, schools, friends, society and most of all themselves. Many such children will be referred to treatment and/or experience extra familiar placements in order to stimulate and develop their personalities and social skills. But unfortunately only a few of these children will get an understanding of how much their own family was a part of their daily problems. Here I am referring to those children from

the families where the relations between the family members were damaged seriously and healing them should be the aim of the treatment plan.

So – why do we not talk about “the new character of parents”, and how to prepare modern parents for parenthood? This is the logical beginning of the therapeutic process in order to prevent developmentally threatened children. The characteristics of the child of today are of course the result of a new concept of the family. Too many children

*Why do we not talk about “the new character of parents”, and how to prepare modern parents for parenthood?*

have been left in the hands of professional caretakers, with frequently changing, caring adults, who are strangers. Children’s personalities are therefore often moulded more from their relationship with other children than from those with responsible, stable, concerned and caring adults. Thus we easily get ‘video-children’ with strong action oriented needs. Many of

# CONTENTS

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## IN THIS ISSUE...

### EDITORIAL

#### NACCW Leaders ready to change the Child and Youth Care Landscape

Barrie Lodge

2

#### Family Treatment in Residential Homes

Dr. Steen Lasson

4

#### African Caravan for Peace and Solidarity

An Africa Network report from Burundi

6

#### Water Pots

7

#### Children awaiting trial in prisons investigated

Advocate Ann Skelton

8

#### Student Page

#### — The Ipopeng Youth at Risk Art Exhibition

12

#### Real Justice Conferencing

Harold Malgas and Norman Kgobe

14

#### On being a Professional — Registration, Role and Responsibilities

Barrie Lodge

16

#### Update on the NPO Act

19

*'Justice is love correcting everything that stands against love'*  
MARTIN LUTHER KING JNR.

## NACCW

The National Association of Child Care Workers is an independent, non-profit organisation in South Africa which provides the professional training and infrastructure to promote healthy child and youth development and to improve standards of care and treatment for troubled children and youth at risk in family, community and residential group care settings.

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these children have not had their needs for being together intimately with closely related adults satisfied – adults for whom they had strong feelings and whom they would hate to disappoint. Adults who show affection and love for the child, who provide the child with ethical understanding, in the daily demonstration of the difference between right and wrong, beautiful and ugly, safe and unsafe, etc. Adults ready for the possible conflicts necessary for demonstrating the frames for acceptable behaviour. The upbringing of so-called problem children has often been done by weak, exhausted, and/or immature parents. These parents, as all parents, love their children and wish them the best from life, but for many different reasons are unable to support a positive development of the child's personality. Such parenting is characterised by the assignment of uncontrolled and irrelevant freedom, sometimes with a strong touch of material spoiling, overprotection or laissez-faire instead of planned caring and support of the child's will power in order to counteract anxiety in a safe way. Such an upbringing seldom offers children the opposition and the trouble necessary for demonstrating the boundary posts of the unsociable land.

Among the reasons for this shift in the concept of family life, might be the movement from rural to urban life with its present sharp division between work life and leisure time. This fact causes a split



up in everyday life for the modern family. Children especially are taken hostages in this development. Family members often leave early every morning in different directions. Ten hours later the family meets exhausted again. The family has become a rather unproductive spare time community of separated generations, where modern technology ensures the fewest possible demands from family members, and where cosiness and relaxation have become the target in itself.

In developed welfare states the dramatic increase of family income gave possibilities for more consumption and more speculations in the acquisition of material goods. The possibilities for buying certain liberties such as the care and the responsibility for the daily life of children and elderly in the family were obvious. The public service systems in welfare states were ready to take over more and more.

Day-care became normal life for many children. More and more elderly people were hospitalised or brought into residential care, not because they were sick but because their own family was not ready for the necessary support and care as they were too

busy occupied by other matters. In the same period the family became smaller and smaller in number of persons.

Fewer children were born. The rise in divorce rates produced more single

parents families. The number of family members was reduced to an absolute minimum. Two or three persons, often make up a nuclear family, and a very vulnerable one. In many countries, family life must be seen as being at risk where emotional problems are disturbingly escalating.

The number of developmentally threatened children and families is growing alarmingly. There is a big need for a supportive network for the modern family to guarantee healthy mental growth. Residential care may at times be most relevant for the child and sometimes for the whole family, to build or rebuild the needed relations and to secure a healthy family. Therefore it is important that residential care nowadays include the family in the caring and treatment of the child. This is part of what we today are calling "networking". Thus residential care becomes much more a supplement to modern family life than an alternative, though the latter might be relevant where no family exist or can be found able for parenthood.

The time has come for establishing enough of good institutions offering "Family Residential Care" ! Too often the treatment of interpersonal problems has been directed toward the individual. It would have been far more professional to focus on the disrupted interpersonal relations in the family. Relation therapies and work will be important tools for the care worker. □

*This is the first of a two-part article.*

*In the second article, Dr. Lasson describes the family treatment services in UDBY, Denmark.*

The newest organisation on our Africa Network, the International Martin Luther King Centre, Burundi, provides this information on the



# African Caravan for Peace & Solidarity

**A** Caravan for Peace and Solidarity will take a year-long journey across Africa. Beginning at Robben Island (South Africa) on June 26, 2000, the African Caravan will go through Southern, Central, Western, Northern, and Eastern Africa, ending its journey in Arusha (Tanzania) on June 21, 2001.

## Background

The African Caravan for Peace and Solidarity is an initiative that originated in the context of the Alliance for a Responsible and United World. The Alliance is a worldwide collective process taking its source in a humanist ideal. It has taken up the challenge of building a future where people live in a world of unity and diversity. The Alliance dynamics are driven by a major ambition: to invent new forms of collective action, at the local and global levels, and bring them to bear upon the future of an increasingly complex and interdependent world.

In June 1999, a group of African Alliance members established an 'African Caravan for Peace and Solidarity' that would combine with and lead to a collective writing process of an 'African Charter for Peace and Solidarity'.

## Presentation

The Caravan for Peace and Solidarity will take one year, started at Robben Island, Cape Town on June 26, 2000 (the anniversary of the 1955 South African Freedom Charter). The Caravan will cover every region of the continent - Southern, Central, Western, Northern and Eastern Africa. It will culminate with a continental meeting and the launch of the African Charter for Peace and Solidarity on June 21, 2001 in Arusha, Tanzania. Other continental meetings initiated by the Alliance for a Responsible and United World will take place simultaneously in Europe, America, and Asia. In turn, these will culminate in a World Assembly in December 2001. At this Assembly, the African Charter for Peace and Solidarity will be combined with other continental charters to form the 'Charter for a Responsible, Plural and United World'.

The African Caravan represents a symbolic travel across the continent. During its year-long progression, groups of people will journey through the various sub-regions of Africa. To emphasise the link between the various sub-regions and the unity of Africa, two symbols will be handed from one group to the next: the African Charter for Peace and Solidarity and a sculp-

ture that will carry the different soils of the countries of Africa. Along its route, the African Caravan will be marked by social and cultural events as well as debate and reflection on various issues of a particularly sensitive nature to the continent. The issues covered will include: political renewal and governance, social movements, health, youth and education, economy - in particular rural and agricultural issues, decentralisation and regional integration, culture, values and art. In this way, diverse African peoples will contribute progressively and collectively to the elaboration of an African Charter for Peace and Solidarity that is people-driven and -developed. It is further envisaged that this African Charter will be developed into a plan of action, which can then be implemented in the different countries that the Caravan has visited.

For further information on the African Caravan for Peace and Solidarity or if you want to join us on our journey to make the African Caravan for Peace and solidarity a success, please contact the Continental Secretariat:

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# Water Pots...

A heart warming story about recognising strengths and the unique role of each person.

A water bearer in India had two large pots, each hung on the end of a pole which he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a crack in it, and while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water at the end of the long walk from the stream to the master's house; the cracked pot arrived only half full.

For a full two years this went on daily, with the bearer delivering only one and a half pots full of water in his master's house. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, perfect to the end for which it was made. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do.

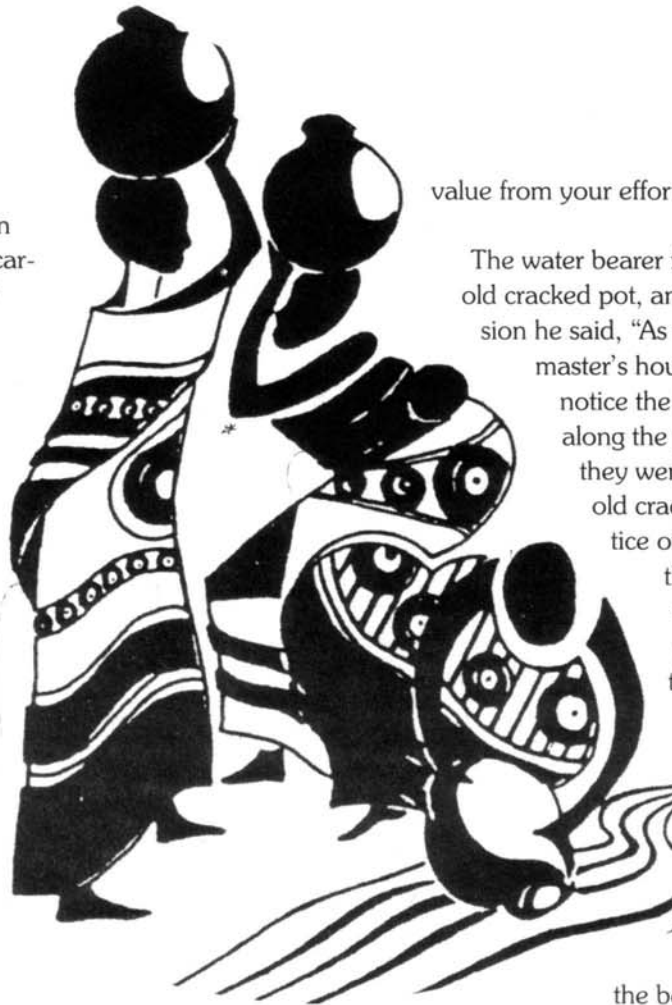
After two years of what it perceived to be a bitter failure, it spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself, and I want to apologize to you." "Why?" asked the bearer. "What are you ashamed of?"

"I have been able, for these past two years, to deliver only half my load because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your master's house. Because of my flaws, you have to do all of this work, and you don't get full

value from your efforts," the pot said.

The water bearer felt sorry for the old cracked pot, and in his compassion he said, "As we return to the master's house, I want you to notice the beautiful flowers along the path." Indeed, as they went up the hill, the old cracked pot took notice of the sun warming the beautiful wild flowers on the side of the path, and this cheered it some. But at the end of the trail, it still felt bad because it had leaked out half its load, and so again it apologized to the bearer for its failure.

The bearer said to the pot, "Did you notice that there were flowers only on your side of your path, but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, and I took advantage of it. I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back from the stream, you've watered them. For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate my master's table. Without you being just the way you are, he would not have this beauty to grace his house." Each of us has our own unique flaws. We're all cracked pots. □



# Children Awaiting Trial in Prisons Investigated

Advocate Ann Skelton summarises the findings and recommendations of the investigation into the situation of children in prisons.

In the past few months the Child Protection Project of the UNDP has been working hard on the issue of children awaiting trial in prisons and police cells. Earlier this year it became apparent that the numbers of children awaiting trial in prison were steadily rising, and in April they had reached an all-time high of 2700.

An inter-sectoral team was set up to gather information and make recommendations for specific intervention. The team was led by the Department of Justice and is made up of representatives from the departments of Justice (Directorate for Children and Youth, NDPP's office), Social Development (formerly Welfare and Population Development), Correctional Services and Safety and Security, and the UN Child Justice Project. The Child Justice Project co-ordinated the investigation.

## Objectives of the Investigation

The investigation had the following objectives:

- Visit Gauteng, Kwa Zulu-Natal, Western Cape and Eastern Cape within 6 weeks of the commencement of this plan to gather first-hand information;
  - Gather all available written information and statistics, including departmental circulars;
  - Identify root causes of the blockages in the criminal justice system as it pertains to children;
  - Propose solutions for the reduction of the number of children awaiting trial in prisons;
  - Obtain commitment from all relevant role players, at national and provincial level for the implementation of necessary interventions and the sustainability thereof;
  - Facilitate effective collaboration, both in problem identification and problem solving between all relevant departments;
  - Report within 3 weeks of the last visit, setting out the problems discovered and making clear and specific recommendations for action.
- The visits to each of provinces referred to above included:
- Visit to prisons in Johannesburg, Durban, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town;
  - Visits to secure care facilities and other relevant Welfare facilities in the four earmarked provinces;
  - Visits to the courts dealing with child offenders;
  - Pre-arranged meetings with personnel from Departments of Justice, Welfare, SAPS and Correctional Services, relevant NGOs; and
  - Meeting with the awaiting trial project staff (Integrated Justice System).

## Summary of the findings of the Task Team

The Deputy Minister for Justice and Constitutional Development officially launched the investigation on 1 June 2000 (International Day of the Child) and also visited the Johannesburg Prison with the National Commissioner of Correctional Services. The Director-General for Justice and Constitutional Development accompanied the Task Team on visits to the Eastern Cape and Western Cape holding meetings with the various departments in the provinces. Some of the major reasons for high number of children in prison that were identified can be summarised as follows:

- Parents and guardians are not contacted and therefore children cannot be released into their care on first appearance.
- Children are not always assessed by probation officers





(particularly regional court cases) and/or courts do not always follow recommendations regarding placement.

- Regional court is the focal point of the problem of children in prison for long periods of time. Cases take a long time to be completed and several reasons were cited for this, including crowded court rolls, lawyers requesting distant trial dates and slow investigation of cases by police. There is no specialisation relating to the trials of children in regional court, regional court magistrates tend to be out of touch with alternatives to imprisonment such as secure care, and many take the view that the children that they are dealing with should be in prison.
- The issue of bail for children is a cause of confusion. The new provisions on bail contained in the Criminal Procedure Act seem to “pull in the

opposite direction” from the provisions contained in section 29 of the Correctional Services Act. Regional Court magistrates in particular tend to proceed on the lines set out in the Criminal Procedure Act, which provides very stringent conditions for release on bail in serious offences. This makes it difficult for the spirit of section 29 which is basically “imprisonment as a measure of last resort” to be achieved. Several

cases were found by the team where amounts of bail less than R500 had been set but families had been unable to pay this, and children were thus still in prison.

- The rule included in section 29 of the Correctional Services Act requiring that children detained in prison must appear before court every 14 days, which was originally conceptualized as a procedure to promote the protection of children in prison, met with widespread criticism. Those working in the courts are of the view that not only is the rule not assisting children, it is actually creating problems in the form of crowded court rolls, parents not coming to court because the remands are so frequent.
- There is a discretionary clause in section 29 which allows magistrates to detain children in prison on any offence “in circumstances so serious as to warrant such detention.” It

was found that this sometimes results in inappropriate placements of children.

- With regard to the provision of secure care for the accommodation of children awaiting trial it was found that in some regions there are insufficient secure care beds. Secure care facilities are not evenly spread resulting in the need to transport children long distances (or unlawfully remanding them in police cells). Magistrates also lack faith in the security of alternative facilities. In addition, there is a lack of other alternatives, for example, release under the supervision of a probation officer.
- There is a lack of proper inter-sectoral management system to deal with children in the early stages.
- The attitudes of personnel and lack of specialized knowledge which is linked to the high turnover of court personnel was found to be a problem in some instances.

### Recommendations

The task team has compiled a set of recommendations. These have been signed by the Director General of Justice and have been referred to the Minister of Justice for his approval. A similar process is being followed by the other departments involved. The recommendations for the Department of Justice focus on the speeding up of trials and the careful consideration of placement by magistrates. They include:

- Providing extra courts at Regional court level in Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth. These

courts will focus primarily on cases involving children accused of crimes even if co-accused with adults.

- Establishing local inter-sectoral case review teams to visit prisons holding children awaiting trial and thoroughly assess children's cases. The team will include a social worker and a lawyer.
- Conducting 14-day remands at prisons (Westville, Pollsmoor, North End and Johannesburg Central) once a week. Once this procedure is established other venues for this procedure should be identified and established.
- Hold discussions to consider regional court jurisdiction vis-à-vis One Stop Child Justice Centres.
- Ensuring improved quality of legal representation through a meeting between Department of Justice, Legal Aid Board, Association of Law Societies and the General Council of the Bar.

The recommendations to the Department of Social Development (formerly Welfare) focus on the following:

- The provision of adequate secure care alternatives to imprisonment
- The development of probation supervision as a pre-trial release alternative
- The appointment of additional probation officers
- The development of additional family finders programmes

The recommendations for the Department of Correctional Ser-

vices relate mainly to minimum standards for the management of children awaiting trial in prisons, as well as improved monitoring systems.



The SA Law Commission handed its final report on Juvenile Justice to Minister Penuall Meduna in early August. From left are Hennie Potgieter (SALC), Prof. Tandabantu Nhlapo (SALC), Minister Maduna and Advocate Ann Skelton (SALC Project leader on Juvenile Justice).

The recommendations for the South African Police Service are that the issue of children in police cells should be urgently investigated, as children in police cells were not included in the scope of this investigation, and that police should find ways to improve the service of contacting parents and guardians. Some of the recommendations are not the responsibility of only one department, and are inter-sectoral recommendations:

- A national protocol for the management of children awaiting trial has been drafted and will be consulted on by all relevant departments.
- Intersectoral monitoring system to be established at national, provincial and local level to be initially co-ordinated by the Child Justice Project.
- The development of a na-

tional intersectoral policy and guidelines for the establishment of One Stop Child Justice Centres.

### Expected Outcomes of the Investigation

The expected outcome is a sustainable model of monitoring and intervention which will:

- Ensure the reduction of the numbers of children in prison;
- Ensure effective inter-sectoral co-operation regarding children awaiting trial, through working agreements or a protocol;
- Prepare for the smooth and effective implementation of the proposed new Child Justice system;
- Improve the conditions of children in detention;
- Shorten the trial period for children in detention; and
- Provide additional alternatives to imprisonment for children

The implementation of the recommendations, once approved



by the Ministers, will be overseen by the Directors General of the relevant departments.

**From the newsletter  
Article 40 – September 2000**

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## Child & Youth Care Workers

**Emmasdal High School** a Child Care School for boys in Heidelberg, Gauteng, invites applications for new positions as Child Care Workers

The ideal applicant will:

- have a BQCC qualification
- have experience in residential care
- be prepared to work shifts.

A possibility of accommodation exists.

Interested persons to fax CVs to **(016) 342 2514**  
email: 340208@gde.za.net

# The Path for Connecting with Difficult Kids

by John Seita and Larry Brendtro

*Recast all problems as learning opportunity.*

*"Please coach me, don't scold me"*

*Provide fail-safe relationships.*

*"A person like me really needs a fan club"*

*Increase dosages of nurturance.*

*"I need to believe that you really care"*

*Don't crowd.*

*"When you get close, I will back away for a while"*

*Use the back door.*

*"If you can help me do well, you are important"*

*Decode the meaning of behavior.*

*"I try to hide what I really think"*

*Be authoritative, not authoritarian.*

*"Help me learn to control me"*

*Model respect to the disrespectful.*

*"Your respect helps build mine"*

*Enlist youth as colleagues.*

*"We are the only real experts on ourselves"*

*Touch in small ways.*

*"I watch little things you do to discover who you are"*

*Keep positive expectations alive.*

*"I look in your eyes to see if there is hope"*

*Give seeds time to grow.*

*"Please be patient with me - I am still under construction"*

*From: Reclaiming Children and Youth, Vol.7 No.3*



Jonathan Ndlovu

**R**eaders of "Child and Youth Care" may remember a recent article about the Ipopeng Art Project in 1999 (Making Art Work for Young People at Risk. 1999. Child and Youth Care, 17(11):6-7). In 1999, the Ipopeng Project conducted art workshops with approximately 100 young people at risk and their child and youth care workers in Gauteng, Eastern and Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. One of the results of this was the "Nation's Alphabet" exhibition consisting of carved and painted panels compiled into sculptural art boxes. As part of their course work, child and youth care students at Technikon Natal visited the exhibition at the Durban Art Gallery. The vast majority of students thoroughly enjoyed the exercise and developed insight into the potential of art as a tool in effective work with children and youth at risk. Many students also acknowledged how impressed they were by the creativity of young people. This article includes some of the comments from third year students.

*"One box depicted a child and a mother sitting in the kitchen, I think that this young person ... remembered the times they used to have with the mother in the kitchen, sharing food together, family quality time ... The colour of the paint in the kitchen was yellow which is bright (perhaps showing) that there was a warm atmosphere in the home."*

**Ntombenhle Mbili**

*"These children had a lot happening in just a short time of their lives but still they had the courage to do arts mostly about their experiences and feelings. I admire them for that."*

**Zamahlubi Hadebe**

*"I must say that it inspired me to never give up, or lose faith and if we put our mind to something we can achieve it; but start off with small goals and take one day at a time."*

**Sheri-Lee van Dalen**

*"Child and youth care workers must try to create activities ... that will help the child to express his/her feelings. Art will help the child and youth care worker to*

## Spotlight on Students

# Students visit the Ipopeng Youth at Risk Art Exhibition and share their impressions with us

*understand the behaviour of the child and know the background ... if the child does not want to talk about it."*

**Patricia Nxele**

*"The arts keep young people in touch with their roots, their cultural and religious identity."*

**Zandile Cele**

*"When I first went to see the art, I never expected to see such beautiful pieces of art. I ... expected to see pictures but ... there was more ... I felt that each box had some kind of a secret meaning. It was like, usually you keep things in a box, and I felt that for these youth they had their stories boxed up and now they have a chance to express themselves, letting it all out of the box."*

**Pragashnee Nadasen**

One of the boxes which caught most people's attention was called "Will to survive." The box was decorated with pictures but it was the words of the story that really made an impact. This is what the young person wrote: "One day, there was a boy who

was dependant on his grandmother. He didn't like his parents and one of the bad days they were going to visit his brother, because it was his brother's birthday. On the way they got a car accident, and they all died and only that boy survived and his grandmother, but two weeks later his grandmother dies too and he ended up in the street. That time he was young. He was having a dream. But that dream did not exist, it just disappeared like water into the soil but even if he was having a problem he did not give up. He still believed that one day he will be a better person, and his grandmother taught him to believe in God, and he believed in God. He knows that he is not alone. God is there for him, God is going to protect him wherever he goes." Perhaps this young person was writing about a personal experience or the experience of another. From this story of sadness and pain, we learn about the power of hope and dreams, and the importance of spirituality, factors known to promote resiliency and the positive development of human beings.



Viewing the art of young people at risk assisted students to understand more clearly that children and youth require opportunities to explore their inherent potential and that effective developmental work requires innovative approaches. Let us hope that the Ipopeng Project continues to make a contribution in the lives of young people and that South African child and youth care workers are inspired to seek creative methods in this challenging profession. □

## THINGS THAT I HAVE LEARNT ALONG THE WAY

- I've learned that being in child care is the hardest and the easiest thing I've ever done.
- I've learned to take my job seriously but myself lightly.
- I've learned that child care is extraordinary because we do ordinary things so well.
- I've learned that a good child care worker will say "I've no idea what's going on with this child, please help me to figure it out."
- I've learned that if a child tells me that he wants help with a school project the night before it has to be handed in, I'm thankful that it's not a teenage pregnancy meeting.
- I've learned that if I don't take care of myself, I can't take care of anyone else.
- I've learned that if I can't cure, I can still care.
- I've learned to separate between a minor event and a major episode.
- I've learned that the spirit of my job is more important than the letter of the law. (Form 56A!)
- I've learned that everyday I can make a difference in someone's life and that I choose to make it a positive difference.
- I've learned that the more troubled kids are, the more they need to be cared for.
- I've learned that professionals give advice but child care is about caring for kids
- I've learned that a child care worker without a sense of humour is not going to last the pace.
- I've learned that lots of kids function okay in spite of us, but even more function okay because of us.
- I've learned that most kids aren't perfect but parts of them are excellent.

**Chris Smith — Cape Youth Care**

# REAL JUSTICE CONFERENCING

HAROLD MALGAS and NORMAN KGOBE report on the Real Justice Workshop held in Durban recently and share an example of implementing this valuable approach to working with children and families.

**O**n 2- 4 September this workshop was hosted by the NACCW who were privileged to have Ted Wachtel from the USA and Romola Trebilcock from Canada to facilitate the training on Conferencing and Restorative Justice. The group comprised of social workers, child & youth care workers and educators from six different provinces from both NGO'S and State facilities.

Ted Wachtel is the founder and director of Real Justice. Romola Trebilcock is a licenced Real Justice trainer in Canada.

On the first day Romola Trebilcock contextualised the process by focusing on the aboriginal people from Canada and some of their native practices. She explained the burning of herbs and plants and the significance of the smoke as a cleansing process. Romola also spoke about the significance of the feather – how much symbolism is attached to this in terms of the spirit and freedom.

She told us about the medicine wheel which has four dimensions viz. physical, emotional, social and cognitive, and that it has a connection with relationships in life. A lot of emphasis was placed on the importance of the elders –



how they made use of their wisdom and experiences; and the construction of their councils and rituals as it still happens today. Ted Wachtel conducted day two. He introduced the concept of conferencing and how it can be used in families, schools and institutions. We did a lot of role plays to get used to procedures of conferencing and facilitating. Emphasis was placed on the fact that Real Justice should not be punitive but that it should be restorative. We watched videos about how things can take place in various settings.

## How does it work?

The concept of conferencing entails the following:

- A Real Justice facilitator arranges the conference.

- Whenever somebody has been wronged a conference is held to enable the offender to make amends to the victim.
- This serves as a diversion from the Juvenile Justice System.
- It is imperative that the offender acknowledges his/her wrongdoing.
- Both parties are allowed to have supporters of their own choice.
- After an amicable agreement has been reached, a contract is drawn up that entails all the conditions of the agreement. This technique can be used in schools, homes, institutions and the broader community.

## Conclusion

The general feeling is that this

kind of conferencing will be of value to us in South African Child & Youth Care. Some of the obstacles from various parties were that people should be properly trained to be able to facilitate this kind of conference. The various departments like Justice, Correctional Services and Education should be on board and be exposed to the necessary training before implementation. Adaptation to the needs of our South African context is very important. We need to take into account that this is a 'new' concept and must be implemented carefully in order to draw the best from it. □

### **We experienced an incident at Matete Matches Secure Care Centre and used this method of conferencing:**

Five boys ganged up against one boy and a fight ensued. The victim did not fight back and laid a complaint with management. We listened to the victim's story and recorded the incident. We then called the offenders and listened to their version of the story. The story was very different to that of the victim's. We then called one of the witnesses and got a similar story to the one that the victim relayed to us. The offenders were then called in one by one and were told that the witness' account of the incident was not the same as theirs but more or less the same as the victim's. We told them that they would be afforded the opportunity to tell the truth and one by one except for two of the five offenders, the story changed. This time it was similar to the story of the victim. The other two were encouraged to speak the truth. Eventually after a few hours they decided to speak the truth and admitted that they had planned to hit / assault the boy for reasons they thought were right. The manager then convened the conference with the victim, offenders and the supporters of both parties. The manager asked them what they thought could be done to make amends for their wrongdoing. Their conclusion was that they would like to tell the victim that they acted wrongfully and apologise to him. They were also willing to attend sessions that would help them to make better decisions in the future. The manager spoke to the victim and asked him if he was willing to give the offenders a chance to say how they felt and apologise. At first he felt that they would be making empty promises and not honour the agreement but later agreed to listen to them. The boys individually apologised to the victim and both parties spoke freely about how they felt. This was the most powerful part of the conference. After an exhausting session, a contract was drawn up and signed by the boys.

### **National & International**

## **DAYS TO REMEMBER**



- November 1:** Universal Children's Day
- November 13:** Africa Industrialisation Day
- November 14:** International Day for Tolerance
- November 25:** International Day for the Prevention of Violence against Women
- Nov 25 - Dec 10:** National Days of Activism
- December 1:** World AIDS Day
- December 2:** International Day for the abolition of Slavery
- December 3:** International Day of Disabled Persons
- December 5:** International Volunteers Day for Economic and Social Development
- December 10:** World Human Rights Day

# On being a Professional – Registration, Role and Responsibilities

BARRIE LODGE continues the discussion about the importance of statutory registration of child and youth care workers and the implications of this milestone in our field

There was once a King who had a favourite young son and a favourite pack of hunting dogs. He took great pleasure in taking both of these hunting in the woods where they hunted wolves. Over time, the King was teaching his young son to hunt; and to use a gun. On one of his hunting trips into the woods the young son asked his father if he could go ahead and hunt with the pack of dogs. So the King, thinking that the boy had learnt enough gave his permission for the boy to go on ahead with a gun and the pack of dogs. He would follow behind. It happened that in one hilly part of the forest the King was suddenly beset with fear when he heard ahead of him a huge cacophony of noise. Barking, growling, howling, attacking noises of the dogs and the desperate screams of his son. Rushing up the hill he looked down onto a small clearing to see the pack of dogs in a circle around the lifeless bleeding body of his son. The mouths, fangs and muzzles of the dogs were bloody. Filled with rage that his dogs had attacked and killed the boy, the King raised his gun and one by one, shot the dogs in his favourite hunting pack. As he approached the now lifeless bodies of his son and his pack of dogs,

just below the level of sight, hidden by the dogs, he saw the largest wolf that he had ever encountered. It was bloodied and torn, its throat ripped out and dead. Only then did the King realise that the dogs had circled the boy to protect him, and as he was attacked by the wolf, the dogs had fought it off protecting the boy as best they could. The King had lost both son and his pack of hunting dogs.

***We become professionals when we intervene with knowledge and skill. When we don't just shoot from the hip.***

This story is often used to show that things are not always what they seem to be, that we can make fatal mistakes of judgement when we do not **observe holistically, carefully assimilate information**, and guard ourselves against simply reacting intuitively or instinctively. People can be hurt and situations made worse if we solve problems by not being able to read dynamics, or if we simply *shoot from the hip* as it were no matter how well intentioned we may be. Dynamics are often not what they seem to be in child care. We become professionals when we intervene with knowledge and skill. When we don't just

*shoot from the hip.*

Child Care over the last 20 years has been struggling to have the field of practice recognised as a profession in which we use well-considered, knowledgeable and skilled interventions in the lives of children. Through a marriage of research and time tested practices our field has built up an international body of literature and evolved sets of skills which, when applied with integrity and ethically, have been proven to develop children and youth from where they are not coping developmentally, and to help them to be more developmentally appropriate. This developmental interaction between child and youth and the care worker takes place in the life space of the child. Sometimes this is in the life space of a residential facility, in the passageways, sleeping spaces, and living spaces of the residential facility where children live out life in a group that approximates that of a home; sometimes in the community, school, recreational facilities, neighbourhood, streets or hospitals. It mixes formal moments of educateurship with informal moments of life space intervention. It is a unique profession; related but quite different from education, therapy, psychology and social work. It has something essential and unique to offer children and youth, and it



can make a unique contribution to any multi-disciplinary team that sets out to make a developmental difference to the life of a troubled child or youth.

To be a professional in this field, Child and Youth Care Workers, have to consistently demonstrate that they apply the ethics, knowledge and practice of the field.

***As a professional you must expect to be called to account and explain what your behaviour was and why it was in the best developmental interests of the child.***

We cannot enjoy the status of being a professional and then ignore, forget or drift back into behaviours that shoot from the hip, we can't react without thinking professionally, react without applying our professional knowledge and ethics like the King and his dogs. To enjoy the status of being professional we have the responsibility that accompanies this status – it is the responsibility of **accountability**. Professionals are called upon to give account for what they do, what they say; to give good and professional reasons for their behaviour in each and every situation and intervention. As a professional you must expect to be called to account and explain what your behaviour was and why it was in the best developmental interests of the child. This is where the Statutory Registration of child and Youth Care Workers is so important. It means registration in terms of the laws of the country. It means equality with the other professions. It will mean that the same conditions that apply to teachers,

medical personnel, psychologists and social workers must be applied to us. It means we will have to make our names and our status known and that our names and our status can be held to account if we behave outside of the agreed code of ethics or if we apply interventions that cannot be explained to be clearly, and professionally within the best developmental interests of the child or youth placed in our care. This level of accountability is required from the other professions; it is also required of us.

To keep our profession in line with the other professions, we must expect that the same demands for qualifications made in the other professions, will be made on us. It is expected that because we are a new profession some system will probably have to be evolved that will assist child and youth care workers to be phased into the system. The NACCW is currently developing an application through the S.A. Council of Social Service Professions to establish a Professional Board for of Child and Youth

Care Workers. Throughout the Regions, Executive Committees have been using different methods of ascertaining the views of child and youth care workers on whether they want statutory registration. In Gauteng an interesting approach was adopted in which the other professions were also asked to say whether they wanted Child and Youth Care Workers to be Statutorily recognised as a profession.

There is little doubt that the profession of Child and Youth Care Work will have huge demands placed on it for services in the community over the next four years or so. This is especially so when considering the impact that HIV/AIDS will have on the economically productive sector of our communities and on youth, escalating the number of orphans into figures that are frightening. Some rough calculations and predictions can give us some idea of the extent of the problem we will face. There have apparently been 150 000 recorded deaths in this country of causes known to be as a result of AIDS related diseases and this is



clearly an underestimation because of those not recorded as AIDS related. If each of these impacts on the lives of 3 children there are about half a million children orphaned as a result of HIV/AIDS in this country. So far they seem to have been largely absorbed into communities but there is no doubt that we will feel the real impact over the next 4 years as the numbers escalate.

***The future of Child and Youth Care is up to each one of us. Through what each of us does, through our integrity and ethical behaviour, through our level of practice, Child and Youth Care will earn the respect it deserves as an equal among the caring professions.***

The problem will be blatant and demanding when the already overburdened communities racked by poverty and unemployment become saturated and not able to cope. Already the signs are clear that communities and families acting as care-givers will need the support and expertise that the field of child and youth care is eminently suited to give. And especially as alternative caring patterns emerge out of necessity, such as child-headed families and children rearing children in children's communities, the need for the professional expertise of the child and youth care worker in the community becomes apparent. There is a lot of work to be done and a huge responsibility that faces us professionals and as a country in which the largest percentage of our population is indeed children and youth. It is said over and over again,

but bears repeating. The professionalisation of Child and Youth Care as a field and we as professionals does not rest only on the important legal steps of Statutory Registration but in the way we behave as Child and Youth Care Workers in our field. For us to behave as professional child and youth care workers and to put our practice into operation in our various settings, there needs to be partnerships of understanding and trust between the different professions as we work together in a multi-disciplinary approach. But especially I believe that that partnership and trust needs to be clearly demonstrated between the management of our organisations and the child and youth care workers in the front ranks. The future of Child and Youth Care is up to each one of us. Through what each of us does, through our integrity and ethical behaviour, through our level of practice, Child and Youth Care

will earn the respect it deserves as an equal among the caring professions.

- We are challenged to be unscrupulously ethical in what we say and do in the professional arena and whether we like it or not this flows over into the way we behave in our communities.
- We are challenged to give attention to the finest detail of our interventions and practices.
- We are challenged to constantly seek out new and imaginative child and youth care practices to keep our professional knowledge developing and relevant.

We are challenged, and we **can** rise to that challenge because we are passionate about growth, the very best in developmental care for children in this country. We don't just shoot from the hip — do we? □



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## UPDATE ON THE NPO ACT

The Non Profit Organisations Act came into operation on 1 September 1998. It hopes to achieve its objective of creating an enabling environment for NPOs and setting and maintaining adequate standards of governance, accountability and transparency, primarily by creating a voluntary registration facility for NPOs which is administered by the Directorate of NPOs in the Department of Welfare.

In addition to its registration function, to date, the NPO Directorate:

- has made available a model NPO constitution;
- has effected certain technical amendments to the Act;
- has together with the National Welfare and Social Services Forum piloted the Nonprofit Organisations Training and Information Project;
- is in the process of producing a guiding Code of Ethics for registered NPOs;
- has gazetted for comment, but not finalised, guiding models for the annual narrative and financial reports which registered NPOs are required to submit once per year.

The Directorate says that it intends finalising the guiding Code of Ethics and model annual report formats by the end of this year.

NPOs, please take note that non-compliance by a registered NPO with the material provisions of its own constitution and its obligations in terms of the Act, after receipt of written notification requesting it to comply within a certain period, may result in cancellation of its registration and its referral to the South African Police Services for criminal investigation should the non-compliance constitute an offence.

If an NPO constitution states that it must appoint a Management Committee consisting of at least five members, the Directorate requires that the details of at least five office bearers are supplied in the application form. Also, although the Act does not require the submission of audited annual financial statements, an NPO will be expected to submit audited statements if its own constitution requires it to do so.

For more information contact

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## Greetings and Congratulations from Tanzania

Dear Rev. Lodge,

We have gratefully received your February and March issues of *Child & Youth Care*. We are also now online so we would like to use this opportunity to respond to your invitation to build our African connections. We are working with street children and children involved in the worst forms of child labor in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania at a Center which we began in 1992 called Dogodogo Center. Dogodogo is the Swahili word for small. We try to cater to the youngest on the streets. We concur with Sr. Celine Jones comments in Volume 18 No.2 February 2000, that you are very much established and that is a different picture here in [Uganda] Tanzania. So we appreciate your outreach to your northern relatives. There are so many useful ideas and articles in your magazine for implementation here in Tanzania. So we congratulate you for your efforts and outreach.

We are particularly interested in the Biennial Conference in Port Elizabeth, July 2001 and the preparations that precede such a Conference.

We have attached a separate document for information about the scope of some of our activities with children in difficult circumstances. Further we are attaching 2 other documents regarding 2 conferences we had the privilege of participating in. One Conference the Global Network of Religions for Children held by a Buddhist Foundation in Japan collaborating with the WCC and UNICEF. It was well attended by more than 300 participants. It is hoped to begin forming a network of Religions for Children in East and Southern Africa. We were happy to see that there were about 8 delegates from South Africa. We were only a handful from the African Continent communicating the plight of the African Child. We were very fortunate to have also been able to send to a second conference called Conference for Children of Coming Generation (CCG) 5 of our children. They were the only voices of Africa. We are attaching for you their platform document. The Statement from this children's Conference is out and we will try to get a copy and forward it to you.

We hope this is the first step to forging the links that bind us through our children and through our Mother Africa.

In caring for our children, we remain,

**Nicholaus Shemsanga & Sister Jean Pruitt, M.M.**

# *What AIDS Can't Do*



AIDS is so limited  
it cannot cripple  
**LOVE**

It cannot shatter  
**HOPE**

It cannot corrode  
**FAITH**

It cannot take away  
**PEACE**

It cannot destroy  
**CONFIDENCE**

It cannot kill  
**FRIENDSHIP**

It cannot shut out  
**MEMORIES**

It cannot silence  
**COURAGE**

It cannot invade the  
**SOUL**

It cannot reduce  
**ETERNAL LIFE**

It cannot quench  
**THE SPIRIT**

Our greatest enemy is not DISEASE  
but **DESPAIR**

