

# child & youth care

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

## 13th Biennial Conference : Masidibane Ngwalomntwana – “Let us come together about this child”

**O**ur 13th biennial conference was a powerful gathering of committed child and youth care practitioners from an array of regions and countries.

Very clearly our numbers are increasing and new regions are mushrooming across the country. This indicates that more people are embracing the transformation and coming on board.

The early morning drum beat and welcome by the youth set the tone on the first day. Colourful banners accompanied members from the different regions and this created an energy of pride and excitement which took us to our BGM and stunning opening.

First, the display of song and a focus on the circle of courage by the youth. Then the good news about our application for a professional board being accepted – a cause for celebration as we journey on as Child and Youth Care Workers in South Africa. The presence of the young people, their outstanding performances and courageous sharing is also something to be proud of. This demonstrates the competent child care that is happening in different regions. We are shining in our corners!

The highlight for me was definitely the opening address by Nkosinathi Biko and of course the powerful presentation by Dr Don Mattera. He captured the essence of our developmental model and the circle of courage so dramatically, sensitively, simply and beautifully. Through his story we revisited the painful political, social and economic history of our country. He also brought us back to the present with a sense of hope for our childcare, their future and our country.

Following his session most of us felt like taking a moment to sit and reflect on his message – as a host of feelings were surfacing after the presentation - but we had to move on to the next breakway – and move on my good friend and I did to yet another inspirational session.

Zeni and Merle took the time to applaud us on our successes but at the same time challenged us further. We were challenged to go the extra mile for “this child”; to risk moving out of our comfort zones and do things differently for the benefit of “this child”; to change the way we respond to children and youth in order to meet their developmental needs; to be less selective in embracing young people into our care facilities and most important of all to wake up – even when our world may be crumbling and carry out menial tasks essential for the holistic growth of “this child”.

The social evening held on the second night of the conference gave us the opportunity to celebrate ourselves and the Profession. We mingled, we danced, we renewed old friendships and made new ones. Our international guests were surprised at our spontaneity in taking to the floor the minute we heard a familiar rhythmic beat. Expressing our joy through song and dance is certainly our way – the African way.

The final day! A sense of achievement, jubilation and sadness was experienced by all as another successful gathering came to a close. Ashley role modelled for us – “taking responsibility” he apologized for “the state not delivering” and at the same time encouraged regions to lobby and advocate for programme funding to become a reality. He pledged his support to regions to avail himself to advocate with membership at meeting with provincial MECs, HOD’s and other “chiefs”.

The closure as always was emotional and renewing. This 13th conference has inspired me to recommit myself to the profession: “I will go with the flow, enjoy the process, live and work in the moment with the young people and families I am privileged to serve, and will not falter in my passion, belief and advocacy for them.

**Nazli Finch**

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Editorial Board: Merle Allsopp BA, HDE, NHCRC; Annette Cockburn LTCL, Dip.Ad.Ed.(UCT); Pumla Mncayi BA (SW); Adv. Ann Skelton, Ruth Bruintjies, Alfred Harris, Sonja Giese B.Sc (Hons) Psych



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## NACCW

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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.

### National Executive Chairman

The Revd Barrie Lodge, BA, UED, Bed  
P.O. Box 751013, Garden View 2047  
Tel: (011) 614-0212 Fax: (011) 484-2928  
Cell: 082 561-0927  
email: valbar@iafrica.com

### Treasurer

Roger Pitt, Dip Th.  
P.O. Box 482, King Williams Town 5600.  
Tel: (0433) 21932 Fax: (0433) 22252.  
e-mail: naccwkt@iafrica.com

### Members

Kathy Scott (Western Cape), Elwin Gallant (Eastern Cape)  
Mvuyo Manyungwana (Northern Cape), Nomisa Mandoyi  
(Border), Mandy Gobie (Kwazulu-Natal), Claude Vergie  
(Gauteng), Marian Murray (Southern Cape)

### Professional Staff

**Director:**  
Merle Allsopp BA, HDE, NHCRC.  
P.O. Box 36407, Glosderry 7702  
Tel: 021-762-6076 / 762-3142 / 762-4702  
Fax: (021) 762-5352  
e-mail: naccwct@iafrica.com

### Deputy Director:

Zeni Thumbadoo, BA Social Work  
P.O. Box 17279, Congella 4013.  
Tel: 031-205-3775 Fax: 031-205-3369  
e-mail: naccwdb@iafrica.com

### Consultants:

Sbongile Manyathi B.Soc.Sc. (Hons).  
P.O. Box 17279, Congella 4013.  
Tel: 031-205-3775 Fax: 031-205-3369  
e-mail: naccwdb@iafrica.com

### Cecil Wood BA, HDE

76 Circular Drive, Charlo Port Elizabeth 6070  
Tel: 041-374-4822 Fax: 041-368-7145  
email: naccwpe@iafrica.com

### Jeanny Karth BA, HDE, NHCRC

220 Ottery Road Office No.9 Ottery 7800  
Tel: 021-762-6076 / 762-3142 / 762-4702  
Fax: (021) 762-5352  
email: naccwct@iafrica.com

### Regional Secretaries

**Gauteng/Transvaal**  
Syvion Dlamini, PO Box 1613 Germiston 1400  
Tel: 011- 8275732 Cell: 082 4391569  
email: naccwjb@iafrica.com

### Kwazulu Natal

Nazli Finch, Durban Children's Home  
222 Manning Road Durban  
Tel: 031-201-1301  
email: naccwdb@iafrica.com

### Border

Moiria Freitag, East London Childrens Home  
PO Box 1584 East London 5200  
Tel: 043-7366233  
naccwkt@iafrica.com

### Western Cape

Nola Riley, 505 Woodleigh Third Avenue  
Kenilworth 7700  
Tel: 021- 674-4460  
email: naccwct@iafrica.com

### Eastern Cape

Themba Faleni, Stepping Stones Koetaan Street  
Extension 1 Port Elizabeth  
Tel: 041- 481-2147  
email: naccwpe@iafrica.com

### Southern Cape:

Rosaline Claassen, Masizame Shelter  
P O Box 2026 Plettenberg Bay 6600  
Tel: 041-533-0087

### Namaqualand

Father Anthony Cloete, RC Sending Kinderhuis,  
Kamieskroon 8241.  
Tel: 0257-608

### Northern Cape

Margaret Van Wyk P O Box 985 Kimberley 8300  
Tel: 053- 872-1010

Fund Raising Organisation 088004480002

Web site: [www.pretext.co.za/naccw](http://www.pretext.co.za/naccw)  
e-mail: naccwct@iafrica.com



**The problem: I don't know how many other child care workers have this problem, but we have one girl, fourteen, nearly fifteen years old, who is obviously in need of a lot of attention, but whenever she comes into the room, instead of feeling sympathy for her, I become knotted up and resistant. She asks unnecessary questions, makes obvious remarks, doesn't 'take hints' when it's time for her to go, and (I know this sounds harsh and unhelpful) she just seems to take up space and time. I find myself saying wearily "Yes, Marie, Yes Marie, Yes Marie..." almost sarcastically. I feel guilty about this — she never gets beyond this rather servile and irritatingly ingratiating style — and I'm not sure why I feel this way or how I should try to respond.**

You have outlined this situation very clearly and honestly. You begin by wondering whether other child care workers experience this kind of problem. Often we assume that we are the only people who have certain problems, but this is seldom the case. The problem you have described is one that child care workers often encounter — you are not alone in this! But as I reassure you, I also remind you that if you feel some hesitance, uncertainty and a sense of exposure in expressing this problem, remember this feeling. The next time you speak to a youngster about some difficulty that he or she may be experiencing, remember your own doubts as to whether this is a normal and natural response to a problem, and you will understand better how hard it is for children to put themselves on the line by expressing their worries.

By being in touch with our own feelings we are able to understand the experiences of our clients.

### **Working as people and as professionals**

You have described your impatience with this child's behaviour quite clearly. You resist giving her the attention and warmth that you know she needs, and that this makes you feel guilty. You seem to have a good sense of how you *should* respond to her in order to meet her needs and help her development. But you cannot quite get yourself to respond emotionally to her in the way that your head tells you that you should.

This conflict between ourselves as people (with our limitations and difficulties) and ourselves as *professionals* often arises in our work. At times our grasp of the needs of a child just does not match with what we, as people, have to offer. This is not comfortable for us, because we want to be of service to our clients.

# “The Irritating Child”

*Merle Allsopp*

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Not being able to meet our own professional expectations leaves us feeling bad. We often deal with such feelings by blaming others — our organisations, our supervisors and colleagues, and even the children. Instead of doing this, however, you have approached this problem in a thoroughly professional manner. You have taken a hard look at the child and a hard look at yourself, and you admit to yourself that you find it hard to respond to the needs of this child. Well done! *Defining* your problem so honestly is often half the battle. Now you can go ahead and start working on *solving* the problem.

### **Why the “irritating” behaviour?**

If this were a problem we could deal with in supervision, face-to-face, we would need to spend some time exploring your feelings about this child, and try to find out exactly what behaviours trigger your feelings of impatience.

- Is it that this child seeks you out during a time that you have set aside to do other important work, and that causes you to feel pulled in two directions? If this is so, why would she choose this time?
- Is it at a time when you are not surrounded by other children?
- Is it something in this child's manner that causes you to feel like this?
- You describe her as 'servile' and 'ingratiating' — does her neediness perhaps make you feel overwhelmed, as if her needs are too great for you to be able to meet?

In supervision it might be useful for you to explore your own feelings of neediness and depend-

ence. For example, do you feel impatient and irritated with yourself when you experience yourself as being needy? How do you feel when others appear to want or need more from you than you are able to give?

All this may seem silly to you, but remember that we as child and youth care workers are not machines — but human beings who bring to each and every interaction our own selves. We bring our personal histories and our personality styles. When we find our actions inconsistent with our expectations of ourselves we are offered some material for self-exploration.

Studying this material usually yields insights into our own emotional lives that have previously been covered up. Uncovering some of this can help us to understand our reactions. This understanding, in turn, helps us to take better control of those feelings. And this reduces the effect that our discomfort may have on the child in question.

### **Self-awareness**

What I'm talking of here is the old thing that we talk of again and again in child care — self-awareness. If you are able to understand your own feelings, it is easier to control them, and react in the most useful way for the child.

We cannot, at a distance, take this line of thought much further. But perhaps you have someone in your organisation who could help you explore some of those things. It need not be someone in authority, but perhaps a trusted colleague who would be happy to listen to you — don't overlook the value of peer supervision. Alternatively you could spend some time on your own thinking through these questions. Mull over them in your own quiet time and see what understanding emerges. Another thing you could do is write down your thoughts and feelings — putting thoughts down on paper helps us reach clarity.

Looking inwards to yourself would be one way of working at this difficulty — becoming aware of your own "issues" and how they affect your behaviour with this child. The second way would be to look outwards to the relationship.

### **Some suggestions**

Think of things you can do to improve the situation, and to minimize any negative impact your confusion may have when working with this child. Several practical suggestions follow:

**1. Arrange to spend a period of one-to-one time with her.** Figure out how much time you feel you could manage to be with her in a compassionate, professional and helpful mode. Contract to spend that amount of time, (whether it be 10 min-

utes or half an hour) as often as is realistically possible. Be sure to be accurate in your estimation of this time span. Then put the contract into operation sticking to the times you agree with her.

**2. Be assertive during other time that you spend in her company.** In child and youth care we are exposed to children in their life space. You cannot and should not avoid this child, and you cannot limit the time you spend with her to the one-to-one sessions. It is necessary for you to begin to set clear limits for her. You say she does not "take hints" (which is something you probably find annoying) so do not give them. Rather give her firm clear instructions before you become annoyed with her. "We must both be off now; I will see you at supper-time (or at 5 o'clock as we planned)." This will provide necessary and healthy boundaries without rejection.

***"Clearly this girl is "stuck" (like a broken record) at a difficult point in her life or in her development. We owe it to her to help her to get past this."***

**3. Listen to what this child is really saying.** You say she asks unnecessary questions and makes obvious remarks but use your listening skills to try to understand what she is trying to communicate with these seemingly inane comments. What is the subject matter she discusses? Is she trying to impress you ... or boast ... or perhaps even test you by boring you? Listen to the messages beyond the words. Is she simply saying anything she can think of to fill an awkward silence? Attend to her, and perhaps her meaning will become clearer. Youngsters often say the same things day after day because they think you haven't really heard them yet. Or does she simply lack social skills? If so, you will know how to follow this up. Is she so much in need of attention that she will take it whether positive or negative? Listen to her with your full attention and try to understand what she says from her point of view.

**4. Respond to her communication in an attentive and alive manner.** Often when we have negative feelings towards a person we block these off. Along with the blocked off negative feelings we block off positive feelings too. We hold onto the anger so tightly that no other more light, positive and inspiring feelings can emerge. Be sure to be re-

## Practice

sponsive to her. Express your feeling about the content of her communication. "You told me that yesterday; now I'm sure you have something new to tell me today." In this way she will get the feeling that you are interested in her. You will also be brightening up the communication from your side.

**5. Engage her in an activity.** It sounds as if this young person struggles in social situations. Try to engage her in an activity that she can pursue instead of simply hanging about in the manner you describe – whether that be peeling potatoes or helping to staple papers together. In this way she will feel useful and the activity will provide separate focus for conversation.

**6. Make her life more interesting.** Perhaps this child has little to offer in a social situation because her life is uneventful. This is often the case with young people who have spent a lot of time in programs. She sounds like someone whose creativity is not being challenged. Providing age-appropriate opportunities for her to experience herself as a human being capable of doing exciting and challenging things will help her to become more interesting to others.

**7. Provide opportunities for her to give to others.** We know that it is important for young people to feel capable of giving, not only taking from others. Some children do this spontaneously but many for whom we care do not, and thus miss the benefit of altruism. Some suggestions for giving or doing something for others need to be provided for these children. This would place her in an altogether different role, of giving something and not only seeking something.

**8. Use your team.** It is likely that other members of your team have similar experiences of dealing with this child and perhaps others who have an entirely different experience. Discuss this with the team and work out a strategy for optimal engagement with all the adults in her environment.

### Conclusion

Clearly this young girl is "stuck" (like a broken record) at a difficult point in her life or in her development. We owe it to her to help her to get past this. You will find that getting her to move on to the next stage will automatically end the irritating repetition, which is a sign of her being "stuck". Use this task also as an opportunity to extend yourself – your self-awareness and your own skills. Decide on your approach, apply it consistently over a period of time and then evaluate the situation to see if there has been any change. Good Luck. ▲

## National Children's Forum on HIV/AIDS

The National Children's Forum on HIV/AIDS will be held in Cape Town between the 22nd and 24th August 2001. The forum aims to create an opportunity for children to provide input into national decision-making processes around the issue of HIV/AIDS, and to raise awareness of the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS on children in South Africa.

As an organisation that works with children infected/affected by HIV/AIDS, you are invited to participate in this exciting event.

**How does HIV impact on children in SA — an invitation to children to Draw it! Write it! Say it! and Post it!**

Children and youth are invited to send in artwork, poetry, essays, recorded testimonials etc. as an expression of the impact of HIV/AIDS on children in South Africa. Children's work can be posted to:

**"National Children's Forum" — Children's Institute  
46 Sawkins Road, Rondebosch, 7700**

Please include some details on the children who submit their work, including ages and area in which they live.  
**Posted materials to arrive by the 14th August 2001.**

These submissions will be included in the National Children's Forum report and in an exhibition on the impact of HIV/AIDS on the lives of children in South Africa.

### Position Wanted

A qualified CYCW with 17 years of both Youth Work and Child and Youth Care experience seeks employment as a Senior CYCW or Manager of a facility which is in the process of embracing transformation.

#### Qualifications include:

UNISA Certificate in Child and Youth Care, Consultative Supervision, Training of Trainers, Tutor Training (Technikon SA), Part time Trainer/Tutor for NACCW & Technikon SA and a Fourth Year B.Tech student (Child and Youth Development)

#### Experience includes:

working at a children's home, as a youth chaplain, at a Secure Care Facility, Street Children's Shelter and Advocacy & Lobbying.

Drivers licence, computer literate and child and youth care worker committed to the transformation of the CYC field.

Able to assume duties as soon as possible preferably in the KZN region.

Contact Bonnie Tshabangu  
Telephone No. 082 335 7227 or 209 6048



# Empowering Staff

*Dr. Larry Brendtro in conversation with Norman Powell*

**A**lthough the concept of empowerment is useful, it has some limitations. Just giving power to someone doesn't ensure a desirable outcome. We have to see power as one of three elements that go together to make a healthy climate. Here I borrow from a classic definition of positive self-esteem. Many people say that positive self-esteem comes when you have three things: power, competence, and significance.

One cannot just walk into a cottage or into a treatment situation and turn over all responsibilities for decisions and say that he has empowered staff. Nor can one approach a group of adolescents and say, 'There is a new system in place. From now on you people are empowered.'

## Competence

One must have competent staff if one is to empower them. Staff need particular skills in order to develop a curriculum for educational and group living models. In the European educator model, child care workers enter the profession with a very long list of competencies, not only in understanding human behavior, counselling and teaching strategies, but also abilities in the areas of crafts, arts, music, and drama. There is a whole series of child care competencies which enable administrators to give staff power. It becomes more difficult in some traditional child care arrangements. An example is the pre-professional child care model which Mark Krueger calls 'careless' instead of 'caring' in

which incompetent parenting functions are mistaken for acceptable care. I suppose that concerned administrators in charge of agencies are quite right in not wanting to empower these types of people.

## Significance

The third element of power is significance, the feeling that one belongs, that one is a part of a whole. Many organisations fail to create this magic group bond. I think that it was William Glasser in *The Identity Society* who said that one of the earliest instincts that developed in the human animal was the sense of identity, being a part of or belonging to some social group.

We have not always created schools and treatment centres that have made children feel that they belong, and we certainly haven't created those kinds of organisations that make staff feel a strong part of those settings.

I read a paper recently on how one disciplines and manages behaviour in Native American children, by Hap Gilliland. He argued that the peer group process is the best way of managing the behaviour of Indian youth. If youths are not responsive to the peer process it is because they don't feel that they belong. If it's true that belonging, feeling part of this almost primary group relationship, satisfies one of our most basic human needs, then we must design organisations that make people feel that they belong — or these organizations are not likely to be effective. By tapping the resources of all the people in

the organisation, we release a massive power that generates the 'therapeutic community'. So I see this model as an ideal organisation for child care.

A programme that creates this therapeutic community is Fritz Redl's "therapeutic milieu" or Harry Vorath's "positive culture" which create a certain sense of significance and belonging for participants. One works very hard to develop the competence of all the members. Young people need to see that they are competent in helping to solve their problems, in achieving academically, physically, and socially. Likewise, staff need to develop in these areas.

## Adults and children

It may have struck you that I see very little difference, if any, in what you need to do to create an ideal community of young people, and what you need to do to create an ideal community of staff.

I think it was Jean Vanier, a pioneer working in communities for severely handicapped persons in France and elsewhere, who made it very clear that this is not a caste system of adults in charge and a lonely group of people being helped — but all people living in a kind of community and all having something to offer. If you listen to the workers in such a programme they will tell you how these severely handicapped, sometimes mentally retarded persons, are enriching their own lives and their own development.

It has to be seen as a two-way process throughout the whole organisation. ▲

*Conference Organising Committee leader, Harold Slabbert, celebrates an outstanding task performed by the committee and shares his thoughts about this historic gathering.*

**W**ow! What a whirlwind three days of plenaries, breakaways and information about practice models in the field of child and youth care work. It has been a growth experience that eclipsed anything I have had the fortune of being involved in since the decision was made to commit to this occupation.

The number of breakaways and may have left conference delegates with the feeling of "too much information and too little time" – but that is a sign of a good conference. The great thing about the breakaways was that there were a number of "Best Practice Models" and of particular significance were the personal experiences of those child care workers who have been in the field for a while lon-

ger than most of us.

The number of international guests who made the effort to share the various programs and ideas with us was also impressive. The international commitment to "This Child" must surely be an inspiration to us all. The parallel youth program brought the concept of "This Child" closer to home.

"On your marks, get set and look behind you to see if there is someone you can take with you" were words by Dr Don Materra, which will be remembered forever. They do however highlight the need to slow down our hurried lives and take the hand of "This Child" and make the journey together. And as Alfred Rens so aptly put it, "we must defeat the beast of complacency



**Masidibane  
Ngalomntwana**

*"Let us come together about this child."*

"and stay inspired by what has been learned and what can still be learned. What has been of particular inspiration is the increased number of delegates who made the effort to be there. The numbers far eclipsed those of previous conferences and posed many challenges for the team. It is my fervent hope that this is an indication of the tremendous growth of the Child Care field.

I would like to say to the Kimberley team, enjoy the challenges awaiting you, good luck and, above all, have fun despite the seriousness of the task ahead of you. ▲



**2001 CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**Back: William Ndonti, Lindi Bray, Riette Mitchell, Sanet Kapp, Cecil Wood, Hazel Barlow, Ronnie Naude, Elwin Gallant.  
Front: Mia America, Elizabeth Dulwana, Helen Carrington, Milna Grootboom, Harold Slabbert, Lillian Ncula**





# The Words to say it ...

Annette Cockburn

In a writing workshop at the NACCW Conference in Port Elizabeth, delegates were asked to write for three minutes without lifting their pens. The topics were chosen to elicit words from the heart!

**"At the moment my life is..."**

**"If I could have my life over again I would ..."**

**"The most important person in my life at the moment is ..."**

The following were some of the sensitive and spontaneous pieces which this exercise produced.

**At the moment my life is:** I feel like I am torn apart into two. I work in the North West Province and come from the Northern Province. I like my job but at the same time I want to help my people. It pains my heart when I drive home to find that the good things happening in other provinces are not happening in my province. That is why I would gladly sacrifice my time and work overnight to help them.

Donald Nghonyama  
Bokamoso Life Centre – Winterveldt



I thought that my son **is the most important person in my life**, (not that I love him less), but being reunified with my own biological mother after 30 years I realised that she is at this moment the most important person in my life. The reason being that I am born from her womb, who am I to reject her, question her or even judge her? She has so much love and passion to give and for the first time in my life at my birthday this year she says "I love you". One day my son will also appreciate me because we are both products of my mothers womb.

M. Van Wyk – Northern Cape Province



**The most important person in my life at the moment** is ME. It is my belief that if the ME is not okay nothing else that I do or share with others will be okay. I need to know what is important for ME,

what makes ME happy and to do it. Maintaining ME creates a source that I can share and live with, my family, friends, loved ones as well.

Elize



**If I could have my life over again** I would start my career with enthusiasm. I would focus on self development. I would focus on building my self esteem because the way I grew up affected me negatively and made me feel inferior. I would focus on accomplishing my dreams no matter what. I would look at ways of motivating me even when I meet challenges and stumbling blocks.

Joyce Mashamba, Social Worker  
Giyani - N. Province - Welfare Department



**The most important person in my life at the moment** is my son, Onkgopotse Kegolofswe Ntsamai. He turned 15 years on the 26th of June 2001. He is a very gentle, passionate, sensitive, yet rational person. Although I did not have money to buy him a birthday gift, he gladly accepted that. This year he used his own savings to buy himself a bike.

**If I could have my life over again...** I would have taken all the advice my parents gave me seriously. I would have planned before hand. I never realised there was so much to give, to be part of a bigger picture, to live reality. I'm so glad I exist.

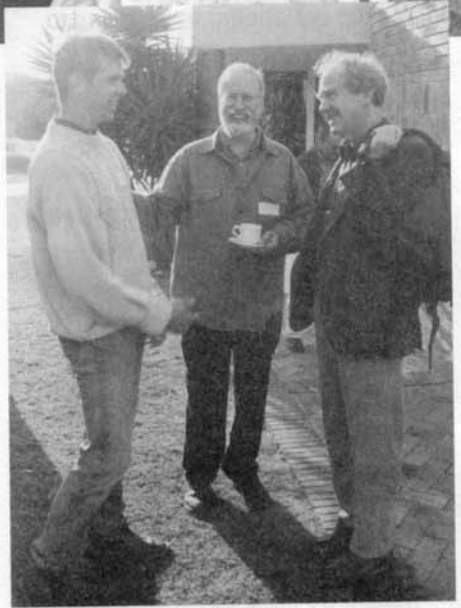
Simon Nunyango – Namibia

Long after the flowers have faded and the candlelight dimmed, the memory of slowly dawning confidence on a dozen faces will remain with me.

**If you can speak you can write – JUST DO IT!** ▲

# Conference 2001







# PRACTITIONERS COMMENT ON THE CONFERENCE



Masidibane  
Ngalomntwana

*"Let us come together about this child."*

## Elizabeth Owuor-Oyugi of The ANPPCAN Kenya Chapter

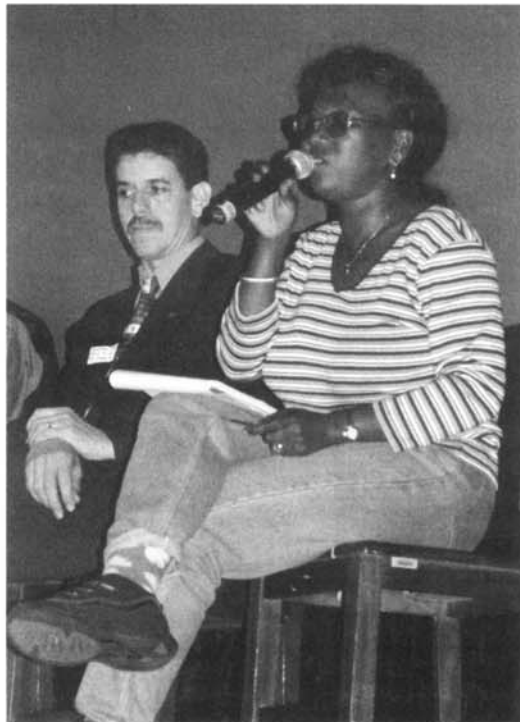
The conference was a great learning experience for me, starting with the opening ceremony and the performance by the children, which I can only describe, as spectacular.

*everybody's* business and precisely because it is *everybody's* business, it is *nobody's* business, hence all the child abuse and neglect that is so

much a part of our daily lives. If we all have to take this business seriously then, yes, *Let Us Come Together About This Child*.

When Merle and Zeni spoke, I again felt that the conference theme could not have been more appropriate. The thin thread that runs through all the three levels that we as child workers operate – at the policy, programme and practice levels – has a chain reaction effect that a jingle in one level will have ripple effects all through. If we as child workers at all the three levels

agree that the welfare of this child is our business then we need to talk to each other, to confer, to constantly share experiences so that we can learn from best practices and avoid mistakes that would lead to failure.



Elizabeth Owuor-Oyugi and Ashley Theron

The keynote address by Dr. Don Mattera touched a cord in me, as I'm sure it did in all of us. For a moment there, I was transported down memory lane, to all the abuses I had to endure as a child in the hands of those placed in authority over me, and as Dr. Mattera spoke, it occurred to me "hey that could have been me – I am this child!" Child Protection is

## Felicity Coughlan

The difference between this conference and many others is that this was a gathering of people genuinely seeking to improve their practice. The papers and their theoretical and practical applications were designed to offer suggestions for improved intervention. The questions asked were about finding out more so that the knowledge can be used in practice. The presenters were here to share and learn – to celebrate success and assess failure. The presenters did not appear to be trying to show how clever they were or to demonstrate how inadequate others were. There is a real risk in the growth of this conference – it is possible that as it gets larger it becomes easier to move further and further away from the theory-practice interface and to allow more esoteric debate to take over. This would be a loss. So many conferences today are gatherings of people who are present because they are required to be for career purposes and who listen to papers which pretend to offer the latest, definitive answer to questions that people do not think are really worth asking. Interaction is often about trying to poke holes in the ideas of others and to show where one is brighter, faster or



Circle of Courage Workshop

more secure. These processes were absent in your conference and as you develop you should guard against them.

This is a conference aimed at improving practice. Protect that. However, of concern in the presentations was the dual theme which emerged – the success of transformation which is being eroded and undermined by the failure of the government to deliver on its promises. We need to be sure that while we celebrate the transformation of the child and youth care system and support the democratically elected government, that we continue to recognise that we are partners with the govern-

ment. We are not their servants and we are not required to protect them against their own failure to deliver. We have to challenge. If we do not then this slowing down is going to destroy what we are working so hard to realise.



**Frank Mulhern  
Director of Professional  
Development – Pius XII  
Youth and Family Services**

Wow! The NACCW Conference in Port Elizabeth far exceeded all of our expectations.

There have been moments

over the past year when our American youth, in preparation for the conference, have questioned the Circle of Courage as a universal theme.

Those questions were forever answered when 6 youth and 8 adults from the U.S. attended the NACCW Conference in Port Elizabeth. We felt like we were at “home” when we encountered hundreds of youth workers and youth who were thoroughly familiar and well versed in the Circle of Courage. “They spoke a language that we understood,” said one American youth. Circle of Courage t-shirts and buttons decorated an entire audience as we all spoke of Mastery, Independence, Generosity, and Belonging.

These six American youth came to South Africa from children’s homes, group homes, and poor neighborhoods in New York State. They thought they were going on a trip far away from everything familiar when in actuality they were going to a place that felt like “home.”

The Circle of Courage serves as a universal vision among child and youth care workers worldwide. It answers the question, “what do youth need to succeed?”. It is a reliable symbol and navigational guide for youth no matter if you live in a settlement in Hout Bay, a children’s home in Port Elizabeth, a crime-ridden neighborhood in Harlem, or an after-school program in Poughkeepsie, New York.

The U.S. Youth to South Africa trip helped our group to live the Circle of Courage. Thank you to the NACCW and the Conference Committee for a marvelous job and a spectacular event!



American Youth Workshop – The Circle of Courage Kids

## VOLUNTEER CENTRE TRAINING WORKSHOPS

A Two-Day Training Programme in Effective Volunteer Management (EVM) covers the following aspects:

### **Six Steps to Effective Volunteer Management**

- Step 1:** Developing a volunteer policy
- Step 2:** Creating volunteers tasks
- Step 3:** Recruiting volunteers (marketing)
- Step 4:** Selection and screening
- Step 5:** Training and orientating volunteers
- Step 6:** maintaining enthusiastic, committed volunteers

### **VOLUNTEER POLICY COURSE**

The One-Day Volunteer Policy Course aims at assisting organisations in developing a Volunteer Policy for themselves which sets out guidelines on the following issues:

- Goals and Objectives of the Volunteer Programme
- Scope of Volunteer Involvement
- Confidentiality
- Rosters and Time Sheet Management
- Volunteer Recruitment Policy
- Acceptance, Appointment, Trial period
- Job evaluation and feedback
- Volunteer Benefits
- Volunteer Support and Recognition
- Resignation, Dismissal Policy
- Grievance Procedure

Any of the topics covered in the 2-day EVM course can be done in separate 2½ hour workshop according to the needs of the member.

To discuss your Training needs, contact :  
The Volunteer Centre,  
Attention: Shahida Dudley  
Somerset Hospital -Helen Bowden Res.  
Private Bag Green Point 8051

Phone: (021) 418-1116/7  
Fax: (021) 418-3707  
e-mail: volcent@iafrica.com

## *Annual National Street Children Alliance Conference*

### **Who is this conference aimed at?**

Child care workers, social workers, project managers, street workers, students, anyone interested in the street children sector

**Venue:** Maryland; Summit Road, Hanover Park,  
Cape Town

**Date:** 3-6 September 2001

### **Conference fees**

**(if paid in full before 15th of August 2001):**

1. per day R 80 (includes lunch and two teas)
2. full four days R300 (includes lunch and two teas)
3. daily attendance including accommodation R130 (includes breakfast, lunch and supper)
4. *Payment:*
  - The price increases by 10% on payments made after the closing date
  - Cheques must be made out to the Western Cape Street Children's Forum

**Closing date for Registration:** 15th of August 2001

**Programme:** Registration 8:30 am (daily) conference 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

### **Topics suggested for discussion:**

- Appropriate services for rural areas/small towns and urban areas (debate on shelters and non residential programmes for street children)
- Education for street children (various models for both formal and alternative education)
- Juvenile justice (progress on the child-justice system and diversion programmes)
- Management committee (training and orientation issues)
- Fund-raising (twin-city partnerships for example)
- HIV/AIDS (prevention issues and management) – by popular request a full day will be devoted to this topic.

### **For further information please contact:**

Pam Jackson or Philomène at Ons Plek Projects  
PO Box 3506, Cape Town 8000

Tel: (021) 465 4829 Fax: (021) 461 0530  
email: onsplek@new.co.za



# Thoughts of a Boy Awaiting Trial

I am 17 years old and have been in custody for two years for a crime that was committed. It changed my life so much that I'm willing to share it with people who need to know before they make the biggest mistake of their life!

I was arrested on 18 March 1999 for the crime that was committed. I stayed in Sea Point police cells and went to court where the case was postponed for 8 months. They then sent me off to a Place of Safety. When I arrived there I felt so frightened, I could not keep my body from shaking. When I first set my eyes on the awaiting trial boys I just wanted to kill myself.

I was 14 at the time and I didn't know how to be the person they wanted me to be. The boys pushed me around, hit me and forced me to do things I never dreamt of doing. The only way for me to get respect from those boys was for me to join their gang. The gang that I joined was the 26s. I thought that I would be safe but it only got worse. There was another gang, called the 28s. The 26s and 28s were two different gangs and there were rules we had to obey. These rules were not so easy to obey. I got beaten up and punished and I could do nothing about it.

Eight months passed and I went to court again. They postponed the case for another 8 months. So I went back to the so-called pit of hell, but in my first 8 months I got more courage and was wiser after what I went through.

In the first week into my second 8 months all hell broke out and the two gangs were fighting against each other. I had to join in and protect my camp. We fought with knives, poles, cups, glass, etc. It went on for days until those who were the cause of all the problems were sent to Pollsmoor. The fighting continued but it was not as bad as before. It was easier for me to sleep and walk around without always looking behind my back to see if I was going to be attacked.

I joined the soccer team and took part in so many activities. After a while I was well known.

About a year and ten months later I decided that I will get more respect from people by being me. So I put the gangsterism behind me and focussed on myself. Till this day I'm a young man beginning to be somebody I never dreamed of and proved this not only to myself but also to the people around me and to my family.

I have learnt from my mistakes and I am teaching others to learn from theirs.

I will be getting bail but my case will still go on until they find me innocent.

This journey was rough but I made the best of it. ▲

## Volunteer Agencies

### Overseas Training Programme (V 50)

317 Putney Bridge Road Putney  
London, SW15 2PN, United Kingdom

### International Volunteer Network

12-13 Huguenot Chambers,  
40 Queen Victoria Street, Cape Town, 8001

### Volunteer Centre

c/o Somerset Hospital  
Private Bag, Green Point, 8051  
Tel: 021- 418 1116/7  
Fax: 021- 418 3707  
email: volcent@iafrica.com

### AFS Interculture South Africa

Braamfontein  
Tel: 011- 3392741



In November 2000 the NACCW embarked on BQCC training in Windhoek after a lengthy period of negotiations around suitable training for colleagues in the beautiful country of Namibia.

After completing the module Belonging, Attachment and Relationships, in November, the second training opportunity was held in Mariental in February 2000, where 16 participants completed the Mastery module of BQCC 2000.

The group consisted of persons from three service providers in Namibia, namely, in Windhoek, The Ministry of Higher Education, Youth Affairs; The Bridge, Juvenile Justice facility in Mariental and the Change Of Lifestyle group (COLS) in Khomasdal Windhoek.

The Ministry of Higher Education – Youth Affairs was represented by two child and youth care workers from Namibia Children's Home (EROS); two child and youth care workers from the Aftercare Centre in Khomasdal; a youth worker from the International Youth Centre; and the coordinator of Youth Affairs in the Ministry of Higher Education.

The Bridge was represented by five delegates and COLS by five delegates of which two were of their many volunteers who assist in the work of this organisation that provides a residential

# Training in Namibia



facility for awaiting trial youths, an education curriculum, a youth group and HIV/AIDS training as well as a Youth Mediation Service in schools.

In August 2000 **Child & Youth Care** published an article on the work of The Bridge.

Participants were very open to this learning experience as they have not had any prior formal child and youth care training.

The different cultures in Namibia was of special interest to the trainer. The training accommodated the Nama Damara, Ovambo and Hereru languages. Participants freely shared experiences and customs of their respective cultures.

The next module of training is scheduled for the end of July 2001. ▲

## EMPLOYMENT NEEDED

First year Child and Youth Development student at Technikon South Africa.

Has Matric certificate.

Please contact:  
**Philip Perch**  
54 Herschell Street  
Strand 7140

Cell: 072 210 3241

## St Michael's Children's Home

Seeks to employ a trained child & youth care worker to work developmentally with adolescent girls.

Applicants should contact:

**The Principal**  
Tel: (021) 797-4186/7  
email:  
stmikes@freemail.absa.co.za

**T**here is a problem with one of the kids. He's been smoking up again or down in his school grades or roughing up one of the others; she's not talking to her mother or has angrily cut up someone's jeans or told destructive lies about her former friend. You have been asked by the team to "have a talk" with this youngster.

What to do? The easy thing is to get right to the point, to state unambiguous expectations, lay down the law, make clear demands about cleaning up acts and "getting your head right", right?

Maybe.

Maybe not.

To go into any encounter with a youth having already made up your mind as to the outcome you want, is to make a mistake:

- The kid doesn't get to feel heard.
- You have heard only one side of the story.
- You don't get to understand the needs behind the troubling behaviour.
- You impose your solution and don't give the kid a chance to build his/her solution.
- You forget that you are meant to be building internal, not external controls.
- You don't get a picture of the resources and skills you could be building in this youth.
- You assume that this is the one problem, and the kid is not going to have more problems in future.
- So you're not teaching problem solving; you are wanting to solve only this problem.
- You forget that it's the young person, not you, who owns the problem.

# Fools rush in

*Brian Gannon*



- You are limiting the possibilities which exist in this encounter, and in this kid.
- You don't get to see where the youngster might get to in dealing with this problem; only where you think you can get.
- And maybe you have a personal need to go back to your colleagues on the team with this problem "all sorted out" ...

Here we are already with twelve reasons to take it slow, to listen, to spend the time, to try to understand, to create possibilities, to build rather than bully, to give information and skills, to encourage, to wait upon the child ... to see where things might go ...

Always better to talk with kids, not at them. ▲

Reproduced from The International Child and Youth Care Network

<http://www.cyc-net.org>



# Students write about their experiences in the Technikon S.A. laboratory sessions

## Introduction

One of the marks of a true professional involves the ability to reflect on one's experiences. Simply put, one needs to consult with oneself! Reflection and evaluation help us to identify what is meaningful and useful so that we develop a sense of what works and what does not. Child and youth care work should be an ongoing process of reflection enabling us to refine our practice, and ultimately, provide a better service to young people and families.

Students need to develop the habit of thinking critically about what they do. The process of learning requires far more than memorisation of theory. Rather, child and youth care students need to be engaged in a process of holistic learning in which they are assisted to become conscious of all aspects of their own development.

Recently, students attending Technikon SA laboratories in Cape Town were provided with the opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings about the laboratory experience.

## Reflection of Child and Youth Care 1 students

The laboratories were a learning experience. It was good to meet others with whom you share a

common goal. The atmosphere was very pleasant and the interaction was great. The love and commitment which our tutor shared with the children in care were felt by all of us. Kathy brilliantly managed



Child & Youth Care 1 students with Kathy Scott

to teach us self-awareness. Our lives and also the lives of others are affected by this awareness. We now understand ourselves and more importantly understand why others feel the way they do and why they do the things which they do. Our experiences during the laboratory motivated us to want to make a difference in the lives

of children in care. In everything we do we need to use our knowledge, skills and self awareness in the best interests of the child.

**Randy (Nurenda) Williams on behalf of CYC 1 students – Western Cape**

## Reflection of an Applied Development 3 student

The lab often comes at a time in the year when it seems impossible to take a week off work and yet each lab has meant so much that at the end we ask ourselves: "How could we have continued without these sessions?" The lab represents a time when we as child care students can connect with

our own inner child, a time to gain skills, knowledge and have fun. It also provides us with a concentrated period to focus on just being a student. The relationships which are built during this time have sustained many of us in the difficult periods when we have contemplated leaving our studies or felt disillusioned about child care.

This year the lab was very special as it followed after the NACCW Conference. We have enjoyed implementing new skills such as building human sculptures to depict various roles in a multi disciplinary team. Each lab is a unique experience and I have gained so much as a person and as a student. When I complete my studies I shall miss these sessions which have meant so much over the years.

**Yvette Rogers – Third year student**

### Conclusion

These reflections indicate an understanding that the process of learning is facilitated by numerous factors including relationships with fellow learners and tutors, attitude of the tutor, time and space to reflect, fun, meeting of individual needs and motivation. Child and youth care students must be able to recognise and utilise the opportunities for personal and professional development provided for them. This process involves regular reflection through discussion, evaluation and consultation with colleagues. It is through such openness, courage and acceptance of our own fallibility that each of us may truly learn and grow as professionals and as human beings. ▲

## DATES TO REMEMBER

### AUGUST

27-19 Cerebral Palsy Week

### SEPTEMBER

1-8 Deaf Awareness Week

3-7 School Aids Week

8 International Literacy Day

8-15 Epilepsy Week

9 Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Day

## National Directory of Services for Children Infected/Affected by HIV/AIDS

Available on [www.childaidsservices.org](http://www.childaidsservices.org)

In December 2000, the Child Health Policy Institute, of the University of Cape Town, was commissioned by Save the Children (UK) to establish a National directory of services for children and youth infected/affected by HIV/AIDS in South Africa.

CHILD HIV/AIDS SERVICES provides information on organizations and key government contacts working with and for infected/affected children and youth. It is hoped that the directory will enhance our efforts to address the impact of HIV/AIDS on children in South Africa by providing a resource that facilitates collaboration, information sharing and research.

The directory will also be made available in hard copy and can be obtained from Save the Children (UK) on ph: (+27) (012) 341 1889  
fax: (+27) (012) 341 1889 or  
email: [saveuk@scfuk.co.za](mailto:saveuk@scfuk.co.za).

## WYLIE HOUSE

### Child & Youth Care Centre

#### FULL TIME CHILD CARE WORKER VACANCY

A full-time child care worker is required.

- Single female with no encumbrances aged 25-35 years.
- A non-smoker with a driver's license code 08 or a code 10 would be preferable.
- The applicant must speak English & Afrikaans which is essential for homework assistance.
- Appropriate training, qualifications and experience is a pre-requisite.

Fax CV and references to:  
**Senior Child Care Worker (031) 202-6007**



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# Song for "This Child"

*Let "This child's" bright eyes  
conquer the cold darkness  
shine across the tortured earth  
great pieces of crystal star  
to silence the drums of war  
flesh out the bones of hunger  
heal the frightened hearts*

*Let the voice of bruised innocence  
roll and cleanse every defiled hill  
austere mountain and prostrate lea  
the deep, bleeding gorge pour and fill  
with unfettered sounds of joy  
the raging river, the writhing sea  
remove the masks of false pretense*

*"This Child" in a world of befuddled,  
may sunshine and sweet parenthood,  
clear skies in the crimson East,  
warm the fire place of you dreams,  
and fill your house with love  
make gold the grain of childhood,  
brown the bread for Tomorrow's feast*

*Fly on the wings of the wind  
and soothe the plaintive pain  
of a world in haste to die  
bring out the living seed again  
and where we stand without dignity  
and we fall and cry, come "This Child"  
and plant a New Humanity*

*Arise with searing, searching eyes  
and seek out the solemn darkness  
silence the cold voice of death,  
bring back the glorious grain  
for the coming victory of "This Child"  
and heal our seething sombre souls  
that we might lift one another and so,  
live again...*

*by Don Mattera  
for "This Child" of the World*

