

# *child & youth care*

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

## Put Children First

It is not for me to offer any advice or encouragement to those engaged in Child and Youth Care work, since I have no hands-on experience in the field. My main expertise in relation to children is the ability to engage in non-verbal communication with children under two. This is because for my first few years in South Africa – starting in 1960 – I worked in a remote rural area and the babies were the only ones who shared my inability to speak Zulu.

My lack of such experience, however, has never inhibited me from pontificating about the broader issues that concern children. Children, I believe, are even more affected by macro-economic and political issues than adults are, since they are usually unable to express their demands and they lack the one thing that politicians are interested in – apart from their kissability at election time – the vote.

Over the past six years or so I have written some forty editorials for ChildrenFIRST and they have all said much the same thing: that the vision painted by President Mandela for the future of children was never brought sharply into focus and has now disappeared from view completely.

Eight years later, the number of hungry children has increased, as have the infant mortality rate and the incidence of child abuse, while added millions face the prospect of either dying painfully and prematurely of HIV/AIDS or of being orphaned. Even those who are fortunate enough to be healthy and

receiving a decent education have little hope of finding a job.

The government's ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child also implied an endorsement of the UN's 1990 Summit on Children's Declaration and Plan of Action for the Survival, Protection and Development of Children. Our own National Plan of Action for Children was officially launched on June 16 1996; though it then appeared to be kept under wraps for many years.

According to the Convention, the Declaration, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Plan of Action and various other pieces of paper that have been ratified, endorsed, promulgated or whatever, children should be accorded priority in the allocation of resources – even before the defence budget and debt repayment. This is clearly not happening. The 'First Call for Children', which was heeded and approved by President Mandela, finds few ready hearers in government. On the contrary, the burden of meeting the needs of children is falling more and more heavily on civil society; on NGOs and other voluntary bodies but, particularly, on the poorest communities.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the case of HIV/AIDS. I have visited a number of HIV/AIDS projects recently. While it is most inspiring to witness the dedication of small groups of people providing home-based care, hospice facilities, and different forms of foster homes and families taking in orphans, this does not absolve the government of its responsibility. Most people

seem to agree that orphans are best cared for in their own communities. This is happening to a great extent but often the feeding of an extra mouth means less for the rest of an already poorly nourished family.

It is the government's responsibility to assist with resources. A universal Basic Income Grant and easier access to other social security grants would go some way to meeting this responsibility. We can all lobby for this by supporting the Alliance for Children's Entitlement to Social Security (ACCESS).

### Cosmas Desmond

*Cosmas Desmond is a former Roman Catholic priest who worked as a missionary in KwaZulu-Natal from 1959-1969. He exposed the Nationalist government's forced removals policy and published his research in 'The Discarded People' in 1970. For his pains, he was placed under house-arrest, 1971- 75. Following death threats, he returned to England in 1978 and was active in the campaign for disinvestment and financial sanctions. He returned to South Africa in 1991. He has edited ChildrenFIRST since it was launched in 1995.*

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## DATES TO REMEMBER

<b>March</b>	
21	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
21	S A Human Rights Day
22	U N World Day for Water
<b>April</b>	
3	National Blood Donor Month
7	World Health Day
10	Chris Hani assassinated - 1993

## 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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Cover picture: © SURVIVAL: Undugu Society - Kenya

IN LAST MONTH'S ISSUE, THE PICTURE ON PAGE 9 SHOULD HAVE BEEN CREDITED TO ONS PLEK. OUR APOLOGIES FOR THIS OMISSION.

# How do I build Self-Esteem?

*This question frequently asked by child & youth care workers all over the world leads to an in-depth response on the CYC-NET discussion forum. Here are the profound views of leading practitioners in the field.*

**My name is Angie Parker and I am a second year student in a youth care worker program at New Brunswick Community college in Miramichi, Canada.**

**I am currently taking a class in program development. I have decided to do my program on Self-Esteem, for privileged populations in youth correctional facilities. The group that I am designing this program for consists of youth that receive special privileges and added responsibility because of good behaviour. Would it be possible to send any information or lead me to a few journal articles about self esteem and positive self image.**

Dear Angie

It seems that you are at the beginning of your Youth Care career. If so, you will probably have lots of people telling you about how to raise the self-esteem of kids with a combination of achievement and approval. So let me slip in a "deviant" perspective for you to consider before you get hooked to this time-tested approach.

Most people seem to believe that Self-esteem comes from the approval of others. So, in our work with kids, the basic idea is that we reward them by telling them about what we like (ignoring what we don't like).

In the kid's mind, it's supposed to go something like this: 'Well Angie approves of me, so I must be a good person. I also beat Bill at pool yesterday so at least I'm better than him, right Angie?'. Your privilege system works on the same principle. And, indeed, self-esteem measures tend to show that this "works".

BUT when we tie our sense of personal worth to the approval of others, we pay a very heavy price in the long run. Our dependency becomes addictive as we go around looking for our daily "fix". In effect, we live our lives in the agenda of other people. If we really internalize all this good stuff to the point that what other people say, we become rigid, blind and arrogant.

SO as an alternative, consider the possibility of a form of self esteem that comes from the inside — not as an idea in our heads but as a sense of well-being that is experienced in both body and mind. Sounds stupid? Well, maybe, but I believe that deep down, we all know that we are legitimate

and worthwhile. A newborn baby who has enjoyed a secure and loving pregnancy does not have self-doubts. It takes others to sow these seeds. SO what does it take to tap into that feeling of "rightness" on the inside and how can we work with kids in this way?

WELL first and foremost, we have to invite them to experience what is happening on the inside and explore that sense of "rightness". "How are you feeling?" is a reasonable start. Then we need to recognize that essence of the Self when it's expressed. In other words, our stance should be "I simply want to be with you because you are YOU. We do this through "being there" not through our words.

Please note, this does not mean that we simply accept anything the youngster says or does — it means that we recognize that, on the inside, is a Self that, just like our own, is already perfect. Only when this is experienced and recognized will the youngster begin to evaluate Self from the inside out. The standard he or she will use will take the approval of other into consideration but, in the final analysis, the inside "knowing" will always prevail. Such children have a solid sense of their own Self efficacy and Self responsibility. The locus of control is on the inside. What a gift.

ONE MORE THOUGHT. We often try to build children's esteem around their achievements (was my performance better than average). Again, this draws a flimsy sense of worth from outside appraisals. Try working toward competence and "mastery" through which the youngster makes or her own appraisal based on a self-directed task. Remember, to have healthy self-esteem, you first have

to have a Self to feel good about. You could decide to dismiss all of this and go back to the cook-book, 'Well done Frankie, you get six points for that. Is this what you really want. PERSONALLY I'm okay when I have low Self esteem – this means that I have let my Self down. I call it "shame" NOT "guilt".

**Gerry Fewster**

I have been thinking about Gerry's comments. It is interesting to me how much we focus on the 'external' while talking about something that is so internal. With the proliferation of programs to 'develop self-esteem'. "manage anger", develop communication skills", etc., I sometimes feel like I am back in the land of the hard core behaviourists, searching for external techniques to manipulate an internal experience. Cut to the chase? I remember the times when I have felt truly loved, or cared for – it was always in how someone was with me – not when they did 'to me' or 'for me'. Be with me because you want to be with me. If I feel someone wants to be with me – really 'be' with me - then I know I am worthy. In simple terms... **when you do to me, I am a thing. When you do for me, I am helpless. When you 'be' with me, I feel worthy.**

**Thom Garfat**

I think that child and youth care workers are less concerned about "how much" self-esteem kids may have, than they are about those who have none at all, those who have such a diminished sense of themselves as separate and viable people that they don't get past the threshold of their own doors. I know how our conceptions of things like self-esteem get co-opted and find their way into commercial "packages" for use in middle-class schools and families. I see this with the "packaging" of related concepts like "social skills" and "anger management". The packaged social skills course has little to do with the kids we are working with, who need some basic literacy-level currency with which to better manage elementary day-to-day functioning. The packaged anger management course is for the most part unduly cerebral and presupposes high levels of verbal



and cognitive function and what we used to call "ego control" – not even close to the needs of our kids who can be overwhelmed by unmanageable feelings of rage. So with self-esteem. Working down at the bottom of the ladder with kids who don't yet believe that they have permission to be or think or feel in their own right, for me self-esteem (the sense that I am someone and it's OK for me to feel that I am some-

one and I can be someone and someone notices me and reflects for me that I am and can be ... ) for me, self-esteem is an essential and creditable goal in my work. This is not a tub-thumping feeling of superiority, but the good-enough awareness that I am here, worth enough to be noticed, listened to, heard, responded to, respected... and from here on allowed to participate, interact, and take my own chances. And I have no problems with the idea that we may have to "bestow" this, that a sense of self emerges in relation to other selves, that autonomy grows from healthy

dependence. I have never met a child and youth care worker who doesn't agree that with really troubled kids we often have to "re-do" much of this groundwork, that, however awkwardly, we are concerned about unfinished early developmental rebuilding, that people who are physically fifteen are often stuck emotionally or ontologically at ten or more years younger than this. And that adults can help with this.

Otherwise why do we acknowledge, respect, value, engage with and spend time with kids who are not our own – if it is not to invite them across a divide to where they might feel – esteemed – and thus self-esteeming?

**Brian Gannon**

Having read Brian Gannon's comments on Self-esteem, I'm quite happy to stay in the same room and talk some more. I agree that CYC practitioners often find themselves working with kids "who have such a diminished sense of themselves as separate and viable people that they don't get past the threshold of their own doors." The most common response is to use external approval in an attempt to boost the youngster's Self image and this, I believe, draws attention from the inside (Self) to the outside (Other). Such methods produce results that

## Self-Esteem

are clearly measurable on Self Esteem inventories and create behavioural outcomes that many adults (even CYC practitioners) find "encouraging". In my opinion, however, "real" Self-esteem is founded upon the awareness of a "real" Self and the first priority is to encourage the youngster to experience that Self WITHOUT judgment (positive or negative) from the outside. In other words, the Self on the inside needs only to be seen and heard on the outside — as a separate, yet related, entity. This sense of Self is neither "good" nor "bad" — it is perfect just the way it "is". At this level, Self-esteem is experienced as a sense of well-being in body and mind and not as an evaluative "thought". From here, it becomes possible to consider external feedback (even feel good about it) without becoming a slave to it. For me, this is where the work begins and that inner sense of well-being becomes the cornerstone for integrated growth and development — being true to myself, rather than simply being approved of by others. Unless this foundation has been established, the only points of reference come from the appraisals of "significant" others (a term often used in text-books to define Self). As I said before, I need to know my Self before I can begin to feel "good" about it. In Brian's words, kids should be allowed to feel and think in their own right. In my experience, however, most professionals are either unwilling or unable to support their "clients" through the process of internal Self exploration. CYC practitioners, through their direct involvement in the lives of kids, have a unique opportunity to work from the inside-out. This, I believe, is what makes this profession unique. Such work also means that the Self of the practitioner must be brought fully into the process, but that's another story.

So, full esteem ahead I'll consider all appraisals of me and my thoughts — I might even change my mind — but, in the final analysis, it will be my judgments that rule the day.

### Gerry Fewster

Brian, bestow away. I'll try to "be with ..." Never met a kid who didn't have self esteem, even the most troubled. It was there waiting to burst out in a good caring relationship. I tried to reinforce it with my presence and actions, but had none to bestow, nor was there much that I could undo... they did that as well, assisted by my presence. No divide to step across either, only the understanding that existed in spaces between our experiences. Probably just a matter of semantics. I like much of the other stuff you said.

### Mark Krueger

## OBITUARY

One of our Gauteng Trainers, Boetie Damane, died on the 29th December 2001. Boetie was a registered Child and Youth Care Practitioner. He trained the BQCC last year but was unable to complete the course due to ill health.

### *Jack Lundin, Senior Editor of the Financial Mail writes about his experience of Boetie:*

*Boetie Damane, who died after a lengthy illness at the age of 47, was a whiz of a writer, a gritty and talented photographer and a child care worker dedicated to the upliftment of street children. He had great empathy for the problems of street kids, having been one himself in Hillbrow when he was 12.*

*Until his release from prison (a seven year stretch for a dagga offence) in 1994, Boetie's life had been unremarkable: Street musician in Yeoville 1982-84; Telkom, as technician installing telephones 1980-82, ran his CV. Within two years Boetie was a prolific writer for Homeless Talk, a member of its board and finally distribution manager of this remarkable newspaper written and produced by Johannesburg's homeless.*

*Boetie produced searing stories about street life, which were published in mainstream nationals like the Mail & Guardian and the Sunday Independent. Boetie's photography also became outstanding. It was during this training that Boetie confided his big dream in life: to qualify as a Child Care Worker and devote himself to the upliftment of street children. The Financial Mail rallied around, funding Boetie through the two-year certificate course at Unisa. We would have put him through his degree as well. But we ran out of time.*

*For nearly three years Boetie worked at the Street Wise drop-in centre for street kids in Hillbrow's Esselen Street. He was firm with the children, but they knew he really cared and without exception they adored him.*

# The Words to Say It – Writing for Publication

*Annette Cockburn facilitated a writing skills workshop at the NACCW Biennial Conference last year. As a result we are receiving many enthusiastic contributions for publication. In this article Annette provides all aspirant writers with a few pointers.*

## **Know Your Audience**

The type of writing you do changes depending on who you are aiming at. Newsletter Funding, Appeal, Magazine Journal or an Annual Report. Some writing needs to be quite formal and at other times you can be casual.

## **Plan! Plan! Plan!**

A lot of people make the mistake of missing out this step. You really do need to decide on how your piece of writing is going to be constructed. Jot down some headings, for example, if it is a Newsletter you may like to write about highlights for each season of the year. If you are writing something for the Child and Youth Care Journal about a programme in the Children's Home, you might want to write about why it was started, what are the aims, difficulties encountered and successes achieved. If you write under headings your article or newsletter will automatically be orderly (If you can include a couple of photo's, this makes a big difference and remember that close ups of individuals are much better than big fuzzy groups).

## **Review and Rewrite**

Step three is to take a close look at what you have written or better still, ask someone else to. This is called editing – most magazines will also make some corrections before they print your story. You may need to cut out some "groot woorde", you will certainly need to put in some more full stops. Most of us ramble on without enough pauses. (This has the same effect as talking too fast without pauses). People lose the thread and get bored.

## **Be Brief! Be Brief! Be Brief!**

Too short is always better than too long. Try to cut out all the unnecessary bits. Use a red pen like a teacher, cut out a sentence here and a word there – be sure to cross out any repetitions. Then rewrite once more. By now your piece of writing will be tighter and easier to understand. It will have a clear plan and no big words or jargon. It will have plenty of full stops and above all it will be short and to the point.

## **So Just Do It!**

Here are some addresses to which you can submit articles on all aspects of Child and Youth Care:

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# DQA – A Journey of Discovery

*Mandy Goble, Principal of Durban Children's Home, presented a paper at the NACCW Conference 2001. This article is an extract of her presentation.*

***“Life unfolds for each of us and within every experience lies infinite possibilities.”***

It was with this quote in mind that we at the Durban Children's Home accepted the invitation to undergo a D.Q.A.

This invitation was offered early in 1999 while the D.Q.A. was still in the pilot stage. Despite the opportunities attached to this experience, our team experienced mixed feelings.

Although we had embarked on the transformation process some time earlier, and as a result had initiated many changes within our organisation, we often felt as though we were drifting through the process, with no real sense of direction, no indication of what we were doing right and what we still needed to do.

It began to feel as if the process could help us to answer many of our questions – that it would provide us with an indication of whether we were headed in the right direction, and as a bonus provide us with the necessary support needed to address areas that were missing or causing blockages to the organisation's development. As a team, in preparation for the D.Q.A. teams visit, we began to develop a list of expectations of the process:

- that clear areas of growth would be identified
- that a clear plan of how to address these growth areas would be provided
- that practices that were ineffective and unhealthy for young people would be identified
- that, as a team, we would experience growth and development, just by partaking in the process
- that our attempts to address our developmental areas would be supported
- that through this process, in spite of having our shortcomings identified, that the D.Q.A. team would see our commitment to and passion for helping young people.

On a professional level we could clearly see the benefits that this process would have for us, as individuals and as an organisation. However, in spite of this logical reasoning we were all experiencing varying levels of anxiety and fear.

Our anxiety stemmed from a variety of sources :

- for some, being appraised by strangers was an intimidating thought.
- for others, knowing some of the D.Q.A. team was even worse
- knowing that our efforts to transform could be off track
- or even worse, that we had not made a concerted enough effort
- what the young people would say about us and our practice
- that as the first childrens home to undergo the D.Q.A. process, the findings would be open to the scrutiny of many strangers who would and could pass judgement on our practice.

As the leader of the organisation, knowing these anxieties which our team was experiencing, I realised that it was my responsibility to ensure that we, as a team, focussed on the benefits of this process. My challenge was to encourage the team to face the D.Q.A. with courage and integrity.

I encouraged our team to demonstrate this courage and integrity through openness, honesty and willingness to expose all. We would face the D.Q.A. process with humility, admitting that we had made mistakes, but most importantly that we had the desire to provide young people and their families with a service that reflected respect and quality.

We prepared the young people for their interviews by encouraging them to speak openly. We explained that their honesty would help us learn what we needed to do in order to provide them with the best service possible – and so a united and committed team prepared to 'face' the D.Q.A. team, keeping the following quote foremost in our minds: “Commitment is the ability to stay dedicated in the face of every challenge.”



I will now take you through the principles of the D.Q.A. by relating our organisational experience of each of the principles.

### **1. Non-judgemental attitude**

We experienced the D.Q.A. team members to be open-minded and accepting. Although they needed to be direct on certain issues, they communicated in a respectful and non-judgemental manner.

### **2. Strengths based**

We were encouraged by the strengths identified by the D.Q.A. team. As they had identified strengths that we had not been aware of, we felt appreciative for the depth of their assessment. It was a wonderful feeling to have our strengths acknowledged.

The identification of our developmental areas, was communicated clearly and directly. We were surprised that once identified, they came as no surprise to us. It was reassuring to know that we had been on the right track all along.

Re-labelling our weaknesses as 'developmental areas' was helpful, it enabled us to see the potential for growth in these specific areas, realising that with the necessary support and guidance we could strengthen these developmental areas.

### **3. Diversity**

As most of our team and young people are Zulu speaking, it was a relief to have someone on the D.Q.A. team who could communicate with them in their own language. Her understanding of their culture also allowed them to feel comfortable opening up to her.

The D.Q.A. team's diversity provided us with a valuable model of how diverse teams can function. As the need to address issues of diversity within our own team had been identified as a developmental area, the example set by the D.Q.A. team was especially helpful.

### **4. Appropriateness**

The D.Q.A. team demonstrated this principle by displaying respect and patience for the daily processes within our programme. They carried out their activities with minimum disruption to the programme.

In drawing up the organisational developmental plan they were mindful of financial and time constraints. They suggested fair time frames for growth with these two restrictions in mind. Although they advised us on which areas needed priority attention, they did not communicate this in a prescriptive manner.

Indeed in our enthusiasm, against their advice, we set ourselves unrealistic time frames, pushing ourselves to near exhaustion in the first six months of the D.Q.A.

### **5. Competency**

The combined skills, knowledge and experience of the D.Q.A. team provided us with clear guidelines for addressing developmental areas. It was a relief to receive this direction from people who clearly knew good child and youth care practice.

### **6. Rights-based**

The D.Q.A. should respect and protect human, constitutional and special rights of individuals throughout the process. This is the core component and should be given priority over and above developmental support and mentoring.

### **7. Participation**

We were involved in the process from the very beginning. The D.Q.A. team's processes were made clear to us from the start and then step-by-step. Concerns were discussed at the Organisational Development Plan meeting, and discussion and comment from us on their observations was encouraged.

At no time did we feel excluded from the process. In fact we felt that the D.Q.A. team was as committed as we were to ensuring that our service delivery to young people and their families, was developed, ensuring quality and efficiency.

The D.Q.A. process involves a number of steps:

- notification, by telephone and then in writing.
- details of what preparation the organisation needs to make, that is, an internal D.Q.A. – one months notice.
- the visit, which lasts 3 - 4 days.
- the developmental assessment, where the D.Q.A. team and the organisational team together draft an Organisational Development Plan.
- the D.Q.A. team compile the official report.
- a mentor is assigned to the organisation.
- 8 -15 months later the organisation undergoes a D.Q.A. review to assess progress made on identified developmental areas.

Our D.Q.A. resulted in being one of the most enriching and supportive experiences of my career. The following quote captures my feelings with regards to the experience:

"When you come to the end of the light that you know, you'll either step out onto something solid, or you'll be taught to fly".

The D.Q.A. process ensured that something "solid" was in place to provide the support that we needed to deal with our developmental areas, however the recognition of our commitment and dedication to facing and even managing even the most difficult of our challenges, enabled us to "fly". □

# A Child & Youth Care Worker Taps Hidden Potential

*Mark Gamble tells the story of skateboarding with Christopher.*

**O**nce upon a time... yes, even child care stories can so begin.

Once upon a time there was a young man with a strange hair-style. He spent a lot of time thinking, sharing the company of people who live on the street, being mindful of God and skateboarding. He was rather good at all these things. He was also studying for his B.Tech Child and Youth Development.

One day he came to work for us. What did he come to do. Well not that it matters, but his job was as one of the facilitators on our Adolescent Development Programme. He did his job well. More than that he allowed his being to flow into and throughout our programme. Kent, skateboard, and his respect of and joy in life became a new entity in our work.

This entity met up with our adolescent boys who live in the residential facility.

He came to me one day, big smile, universe of enthusiasm. "Christopher can skate, man, I mean really skate." "That's good." says I, busy with matters of consequence. (refer reader to The Little Prince.)

And here's what happens. An International Competition on the calendar. Kent reckons Chris should enter. Chris reckons Chris should enter. A problem of no money. Did I say no problem? Sorry, a challenge to overcome.



Christopher on his skateboard

Included in this article is a copy of the letter Kent wrote for sponsorship and a copy of the contract signed by Chris.

What else, were his peers at James House jealous. No, Kent explained to them that this was a skill, a gift that Chris has been given. They said great, can we come to the competition to cheer for you. What of the family, well they also came with. I was the taxi driver. It's more fun than matters of consequence.

Once upon a time there was an emerging profession, Child and Youth Care, in an emerging democracy. There were many problems of consequence. People were pulling their hair out.

Once upon a time there was a young man with a strange hair-style. No money, no problem, making a difference.

## Christopher's Contract

### Payment towards equipment:

Christopher has agreed to make a monthly payment of R10 to Kent toward his skateboarding and purchasing of equipment.

### Times for use of skateboard:

Christopher has agreed to only ride the skateboard under supervision of Kent and will use protective gear when riding his board. I will also allow my friends to have a chance to ride on my skateboard when I am here.

***I, Christopher Windvogel, agree to abide by this contract and if I fail to do so, I will give the skateboard back to Kent.***

## A Letter of Appeal

### To all those interested and involved in the life of young Christopher

In my first week of work here at James House in August of this year, Christopher asked me if he could ride my skateboard down the very small, but steep incline in front of James House. Whilst observing how he sat on my skateboard and made his way down the incline, I was impressed with his naturally ability to control the skateboard safely and easily at a considerable speed. After spending some more time with him, he became very interested and fascinated by the sport of skateboarding. I call it a sport because we, as skateboarders, hold regular downhill competitions around Cape Town in which I also personally partake. We compete against one another, in a protected and organized setting ( I stress this part! ) to see who can get down a hill at the fastest, but safest speed. The great thing about these competitions is that they also give us as South Africans a chance to be ranked internationally with other international downhill skaters, and therefore also allow us to see how we rank against the best in the world. Now this, to me is amazing and to be really honest, a boost to my commitment and love for the sport of skateboarding and I feel that this would have a similar, if not greater impact on young Christopher.

Looking at it in terms of Christopher and his need for **Mastery**, I see this as the perfect opportunity for him to excel at something which he is really good at. He could also to be recognized nationally, even internationally as an amazing young person with tremendous talent .

In terms of his need for **Independence** I can also see him taking responsibility for his skateboard-

ing and also making the right decisions around it, like deciding which equipment works best and how he feels that he can improve his technique of riding.

This will also help Christopher with his **Belonging** needs as he will be able to identify with a group of skateboarding young people. He will be able to communicate with them as peers and also as someone who is really good at skateboarding, the common bond that we, as skateboarders, all share. I can also see Christopher as someone who will be able to learn **Generosity** by sharing with other skateboarders, sharing different techniques and skateboard products. I see this as a step in helping Christopher to deal with issues he may be faced with in his life ( besides skateboarding of course) and to be able to reach out to others. He could share with others if one day he is approached by someone seeking his guidance and help. I strongly believe this will happen, considering the strength and sensitivity that is evident in him now.

I ask your help in helping Christopher explore an area of his life that has the power and ability to really help him grow and mature into an amazing young person whom we can be even more proud of in the future. Christopher and I would really appreciate your consideration and assistance in this a big step in his life.

Please feel free to contact Kent at James House if you have any queries or want to make a contribution towards helping our Christopher, an amazing skateboarder and someone who can become truly great in our world.

*Yours in caring for Christopher  
Kent and Christopher*

### Secretary

The NACCW Head Office in Cape Town requires the services of a mature, energetic person with computer and communication skills as well as the relevant experience. The successful applicant will need to be able to work within a dynamic team in a fast-paced office.

Please fax or email a two-page CV to 021-762-5352 or naccwet@iafrica.com

**Closing date for applications: 18 March 2002**

**NACCW**

# The Professional Code of Ethics

*Jackie Winfield introduces students to the Code of Ethics of our field and will over the next few months explore the Code step by step offering practical ways of applying the Code of Ethics in different situations.*

## Introduction

As a student of child and youth care, you should know that one of the hallmarks of a profession is that it has a code of ethics. Of course, all people have their own personal ethics which influence how they behave in particular situations. Our ethics provide guidelines about what is right or wrong and result in actions which are congruent with these standards. For example, if you hold the personal ethic that "adults should never apologise to children", it is likely that you would never say "sorry" to a young person. Think about what some of your personal ethics are. Note them down and spend some time exploring each one a little. In what situations do you apply this guideline? How do you act? What are the possible consequences of your actions when you behave according to these ethical standards?

## Diversity

Now, imagine what would happen if we all used our own personal ethics to guide our behaviour as child and youth



care workers. Clearly, the experiences which we would provide for young people would be fraught with inconsistency and confusion. One worker tells Thembi she should make eye contact with others to show respect; another worker tells her that she should avoid eye contact to show respect. How on earth is Thembi ever going to learn what behaviour is truly expected of her? This particular example also illustrates the point that our personal ethics are

rooted strongly in culture. In a country where there is so much cultural diversity, what would happen if each of us worked with children and youth only according to our own cultural norms and values? Yes, it might make our work much easier (and nobody ever stayed in professional child and youth care because they thought it was easy), but it will not be effective. Young people need to be taught how to function in their own cultures, yet at the same time, be introduced to diversity so that they are able to appreciate the uniqueness of every human being.

We must work with children and youth according to their needs, not according to our own needs.

## Consistency

The vast majority of children and youth at risk have had ongoing experiences of unpredictability and insecurity. When they enter our programmes, we are expected to deliver a service which is quite different to much of what they have experienced previously. Young people learn

through consistent experiences which result in changed thoughts and feelings. Child and youth care teams which comprise workers who operate according to their personal ethics are unable to provide the necessary consistency and predictability, and therefore, are not delivering a quality service. Such workers, teams and programmes, cannot be considered to be offering a professional child and youth care service.

**Goals**

Professional child and youth care work is goal-directed. The general goal in our work with young people is to facilitate their holistic, healthy development. Let's return to our example of the worker who holds the personal ethic "adults should never apologise to children". If you behave according to this standard, you will not apologise to a young person even when you have clearly made an error. What does this teach children? Does it help them to feel respected? Does it teach them that it's OK to make a mistake? Does it teach them to apologise when they are in the wrong? Does it make a useful contribution to their long-term development?

**Professional Code of Ethics**

To promote high standards, achieve goals as a team and ensure a measure of uniformity in the way we carry out our work, a professional code of ethics is necessary. A code of ethics is a document which is used to guide the behaviour of professionals and assist them to act responsibly. According to Mattingley (1997:18), the principles and standards embodied in an ethical code are related to five areas of responsibility:

- (1) responsibility for self (e.g. the worker's continued professional development),
- (2) responsibility to the client (e.g. protection from harm),
- (3) responsibility to the employer/organisation (e.g. respectful treatment of colleagues),
- (4) responsibility to the profession (e.g. reports ethical violations), and
- (5) responsibility to society (e.g. makes services available to society).

In signing the code of ethics, a child and youth care worker is agreeing to be accountable for her/his actions, accountable to self, accountable to children, youth and families, accountable to colleagues and accountable to communities. Nobody should sign the code of ethics without being fully aware of the implications of what they are doing.

**Future Issues**

The professional code of ethics is something which all students of child and youth care should understand comprehensively. Everything you do can be measured against this yardstick and as such, it provides useful guidelines in your daily work. During the next few months, "Spotlight on Students" will feature a series on the code of ethics, exploring the nuances of this document and how it may be applied in various situations. □

**BOOK REVIEW**

Eleven year old  
Candyce Titus reviews

**'DON'T TALK TO BRIAN!'**

by Jamie Suzanne  
(March 1996)



**Outline of story**

Brian Boyd is the class bully and Elizabeth can't stand him. If she could have her way he would be out of her school. He is always bragging about how much fights he's been in. But the truth is his parents physically abuse him. His mother and father are both alcoholics, and when they drink there is trouble for Brian. When riding home one day Elizabeth notices a police car in front of his house.

Soon the news spreads and everyone feels sorry for him. In the cafeteria he has a violent outburst and many people are worried for their children's safety.

Will Brian go back to his parents? Will he be able to forgive and forget?

To find out more read "Don't talk to Brian!"

**Moral**

Children who are abused have no control over their situation.

*(This review is unedited.)*

# Children have the Right to be Protected!

*Andre Viviers offers a comparison of the Protection Rights of children as safeguarded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the OAU Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the African Child as well as the South African Constitution.*

**T**he Survival, Development and Participation Rights of Children were published last month.

The table below provides an outline for the comparison of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child; the OAU Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the African Child and the South African Constitution. It should be noted that these three instruments define a child as a person under the age of 18 years and this provides common

ground for the comparison and discussion.

These three instruments compare well in affording children their rights. There are not always exact comparisons in terms of the wording, but in general it safeguards the survival, protection and development of children. Thus from international, continental to national level, the same golden thread runs through in creating the parameters to serve the best interest of children.

## PROTECTION RIGHTS

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child	OAU Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the African Child	S A Constitution
<p><b>Article 6:</b> Guarantees the right to life and places the duty on the state to ensure the survival and development of the child to the maximum extent possible.</p>	<p><b>Article 5</b> Deals with the survival and development of children and provides for the right to life, the right to survival, protection and development and that a death sentence shall not be pronounced on a child with the obligation on the State.</p>	<p>Section 11 guarantees the right to life and section 28(1) affords protection to children from maltreatment, neglect, abuse, degradation, and exploitation.</p>
<p><b>Article 7:</b> Provides for the registration of a child and a child's right to a name and nationality, as well as for parental care.</p>	<p><b>Article 6</b> Provides for a child's right to name and nationality from birth and registration of births.</p>	<p>Section 28(1)(a) affords a child the right to name and nationality from birth.</p>
<p><b>Article 8:</b> Provides for the child's right to preserve his/her identity, including name, nationality and family relations.</p>	<p><b>Article 6</b> Refers to child's right to preserve his/her identity, name and nationality.</p>	<p>Section 20 safeguards that a child should not be denied the right to citizenship.</p>

<p><b>Article 9:</b> Determines that a child shall not be separated from his parents, unless where it is determined by competent authorities to be in the best interest of the child, and that the state must ensure, unless not in the best interest of the child, that the child maintains close relationships with both parents. It also provides for the access to information where a parent or a child is detained.</p>	<p><b>Article 19</b> Indicates that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents unless when a judicial authority determines that in accordance with law and that the best interest of the child shall be taken into consideration.</p> <p><b>Article 25</b> deals with the separation of a child from his or her parents specifically and that a child is in such circumstances entitled to special protection.</p>	<p>The Constitution does not indicate the same rights as the said conventions, though the order of wording in section 28(1)(b) implies that alternative care should be only a resort if parental or family care is not possible.</p>
<p><b>Article 10:</b> Deals with family re-unification across state borders.</p>	<p><b>Article 25</b> Deals with family re-unification that is caused by internal and external displacement.</p>	<p>Section 28(1)(b) in terms of the child's right to family care provides for child not to be deprived of family care.</p>
<p><b>Article 11:</b> Prohibits the illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad.</p>	<p>No specific provisions</p>	<p>No specific provision.</p>
<p><b>Article 16:</b> Deals with a child's right to privacy.</p>	<p><b>Article 10</b> Deals with the child's right to privacy</p>	<p>Section 14 safeguards people's (Children) right to privacy.</p>
<p><b>Article 19:</b> Deals with physical and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment.</p>	<p><b>Article 16</b> Deals with the protection of children from all forms of torture, inhumane or degrading treatment, especially physical or mental injury or abuse, neglect or maltreatment including sexual abuse.</p>	<p>Section 10 deals with the person's right to human dignity. Section 28 deals with the child's right to be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse and degradation. Section 12 safeguards the security of the person and that all persons shall be free from all forms of violence and torture and not be punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading manner.</p>
<p><b>Article 20:</b> Grants special protection to children temporarily or permanently deprived of their family environment.</p>	<p><b>Article 25</b> Grants special protection to children temporarily or permanently deprived from their family environment.</p>	<p>Section 28(1)(b) refers to appropriate alternative care for children not being with their parents or family.</p>
<p><b>Article 21:</b> Governs adoption of children.</p>	<p><b>Article 24</b> Governs the adoption of children</p>	<p>Section 28(1)(b) by implication creates the opportunity for adoption through the provision of a child's right to parental care.</p>
<p><b>Article 22:</b> Deals with child refugees.</p>	<p><b>Article 23</b> Deals with Refugee children</p>	<p>No specific provision</p>
<p><b>Article 26:</b> Deals with the child's right to benefit from social security.</p>	<p>Article 20(2) deals implicitly with children's rights to social security</p>	<p>Section 27 provides the right to social security in that every one has the social security if they are unable to support themselves and their dependants.</p>

## Child Rights

<p><b>Article 32:</b> Prohibits the economic exploitation of children i.e. child labour</p>	<p><b>Article 15</b> Deals with child labour and protect children from all forms of economic exploitation.</p>	<p>Section 28(1) (e) and (f) protect children against exploitative and harmful labour practices.</p>
<p><b>Article 33:</b> Protects children from narcotic and psychotropic substances.</p>	<p><b>Article 28</b> Protects children from the use of narcotics and illicit use of psychotropic substances.</p>	<p>No specific provision</p>
<p><b>Article 34:</b> Deals with the sexual exploitation of children</p>	<p><b>Article 27</b> Deals with the commercial sexual exploitation of children</p>	<p>Section 28(1)(d) protects children from all forms of abuse, which shall include then Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. If read with Section 28(1)(e), and considering that ILO refers to Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children as the worst form of child labour, children are protected under the constitution.</p>
<p><b>Article 35:</b> Requires measures that prevent the abduction, trafficking and sale of children.</p>	<p><b>Article 29</b> Deals with the measures to prevent the abduction, sale or trafficking of children.</p>	<p>No specific provision</p>
<p><b>Article 37:</b> Protects the child's freedom and security as a person, including the right not to be subject to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment.</p>	<p><b>Article 16</b> Deals with the protection of children from all forms of torture, inhumane or degrading treatment,</p>	<p>Section 12 deals with the security of the person and that all persons shall be free from all forms of violence and torture and not be punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading manner.</p>
<p><b>Article 38:</b> Protects children in situations of armed conflict.</p>	<p><b>Article 22</b> Protects all children under 18 from being involved in armed conflict</p>	<p>Section 28(i) states that no child shall used directly in armed conflict and be protected at all times from armed conflict</p>
<p><b>Article 40:</b> Contains extensive provisions on juvenile justice.</p>	<p><b>Article 17</b> Deals with the Administration of Juvenile Justice</p>	<p>Sections 33 (just administration action), 34 (access to courts) and 34(arrested, detained and accused persons) deals implicitly with children in the criminal justice system and should be read with section 28(1)(g) that deals with the detention of children.</p>
	<p><b>Article 21</b> Deals with the protection of children against harmful social and cultural practices.</p>	<p>No specific provisions except that section 31 requires that the rights to cultural and religious practices shall be exercised consistent with the provisions of the Bill of Rights.</p>
	<p><b>Article 30</b> Deals with the protection of children of imprisoned mothers.</p>	<p>No provisions made.</p>
	<p><b>Article 26</b> Deals with the protection of children against apartheid and discrimination.</p>	<p>Section 9(3) deals with equality and intrinsically prohibits any form of discrimination.</p>



# Goal Setting

*Edna Rooth offers guidelines to assist young people with setting goals.  
Use these ideas in your next life skills group session.*

**When we have goals we know where we are going.**

**T**he year is still in the first few months; life is exciting and full of promise. It is important to use this optimism about a new year to encourage our youth groups to set goals for themselves.

Goal setting is an important life skill. Goals are objectives and targets we set to achieve our aims. Youth need to be encouraged to:

- set goals,
- devise strategies to achieve their goals; persevere with achieving their goals, both long and short term,
- assess their progress,
- accept and celebrate their successes.

In addition, they need to be aware of potential stumbling blocks as well as the support that is available to them.

This article focuses on an activity to assist youth with goal setting. Use is made of the journey metaphor, which is a beneficial tool for learning life skills. The journey metaphor gives youth the freedom to give meaning and interpretations according to their needs and experiences. The use of symbols help youth to recall, reflect and explore the different aspects of goal setting. The metaphor of a journey is apt, as goal setting is similar to going on a journey.

<b>Journey</b>	<b>Goal setting</b>
We need to know where we want to go. We could visualize our destination.	<i>We have to know what we want to achieve. We could visualise ourselves achieving our goals.</i>
We have to know which road to take in order to get where we want to. A road map may be useful.	<i>We have to make decisions about what we want to aim for. An action plan may be useful.</i>
We must take breaks and check if we are still on the right road.	<i>We must evaluate our progress.</i>
We need to be aware of roadblocks and hazards on our journey.	<i>We need to take the things into account that can stop us from achieving our goals.</i>
We have to set realistic time frames- we can only travel a certain distance a day.	<i>We have to set realistic time frame targets for achieving our goals.</i>
We can use a range of transport methods.	<i>We can use many strategies to achieve our goals.</i>

Think about the symbolism of a journey. When we set goals, it is similar to planning a voyage (see table above).

There are many other similarities between a voyage and goal setting. You can ask your group to give more examples.

### **Introductory Energiser**

Ask the children to stand where they can stretch without bumping into each other. This is a si-

lent exercise. If they feel comfortable to do so, they may close their eyes.

You can play quiet music in the background. Guide the group with the following words:

Stretch your arms and hands out in front of you – as far as they can go. Yes, stretch your fingers too, further and further. Good. Now stretch your arms and hands above your head, up, up, up as far as you can go. Even

## Lifeskills

further! Yes, stand on your toes. Stretch as high as you can! Imagine you are touching a cloud... Try to tickle the cloud. Keep going, reach up, higher and higher, you are reaching very high.

Good.

Now slowly come down and put your feet firmly on the floor. Let your arms hang loose by your side. Breathe in slowly. Breathe out slowly. Open your eyes. Have a brief discussion with the group. Introduce the topic and ask questions about reaching up, aiming high and the connection to goal setting. Remember to acknowledge all their responses and weave their ideas into your session.

Further introduce the topic if necessary by asking the group to mention any journeys that they had been on. Ask for comments about the process of the journey and discuss the similarities between a journey and goal setting.

### **Core Activity: The Journey**

You need: flipchart paper, scissors, glue, crayons. Collect recyclable waste items such as cardboard, empty toilet rolls, egg boxes, material off-cuts, broken shoelaces, string, plastic packets and bottles, bits of brightly coloured paper, wool, sticky labels, corks, bottle tops, small boxes and fused light bulbs. Gather objects from outdoors as well without harming the natural environment, such as a few small stones, flowers, feathers, shells, twigs, leaves and sprigs of herbs.

Distribute the items more or less equally into large packets. Give each group of five a packet as well as a sheet of flipchart paper, a pair of scissors, glue and crayons. Add a few old magazines or newspapers per group. Give the groups the following instructions:

- Use as many of the items in your packet as you want. You can transform your resources by cutting, pasting, tearing, tying, folding, colouring and merging. You can use your flipchart paper in any way you want. You can cut, fold, tear, roll and paste!
- Your task is to plan a journey towards achieving your goals. Use the resources you have to symbolise the different stages of your travels towards your goals. First discuss with your group what you all want to achieve.
- Now create a road. This can be any kind of road. It may be the usual one that cars or people use, or a race track, a footpath, railway track, across water, up a mountain, in an airplane, a hot air balloon, ship, underground, in a forest, or even between planets and universes. You decide!
- Map out your road from where you are now, to where you want to be when you achieve your goals.
- Use the contents of your packet to symbolise the various important aspects and stages of your voyage.
- Show where you would rest, how you would assess your progress, where you would get help, how your short term and long term goals may be connected, where you would possibly be diverted from your goals, how you would persevere, what kinds of skills you need, where you would get information, where the trouble spots may be, and how you would travel in order to get to where you want.

Once the groups have completed their journeys, ask one person from each group to explain their creation. Allow time for questions and discussions.

To consolidate this exercise, hand out paper and ask the youth to each draw out a footprint on the paper. Inside the footprint, they must write or draw symbols of the steps they have to take in order to achieve the goals they have indicated in their journey creations. They need to put a date next to each goal. Put these footprints up on the wall and revisit periodically in a supportive and respectful way to encourage goal attainment.

### **Comment**

This activity stimulates whole brain thinking and allows the youth to actively participate in their goal setting. They can express themselves and explore the dimensions of goal setting in an informal and fun way. Working together and sharing ideas in a group context allows for support and learning from each other.

### **Powerful Pointers**

**POINT** towards your goals – know what you want to achieve, visualise and focus on getting there.

**PLAN** actions carefully and give yourself time frames.

**PRACTICAL**, reasonable and measurable goals are useful.

**PRIORITISE** and decide what is important.

**PROGRESS** checks need to be made at regular intervals.

**PERSEVERE** even when it seems unattainable.

**PARTY** and give yourself praise when you have achieved a goal – celebrate and acknowledge your success.

Edna Rooth is from the Schools Development Unit at UCT and can be contacted at [erooth@education.uct.ac.za](mailto:erooth@education.uct.ac.za)

## Child & Youth Care Workers

Mafikeng, North West Province - Department of Social Services

### Post

Child & Youth Care Workers X 8

### Salary

R57 405 p.a.

### Centre

Boikagong Children's Home

### Requirements

- Certificate in Child & Youth Care Work and/or BQCC
- 3 Years appropriate experience in working with young people
- Code 8 drivers licence will be an added advantage.

### Duties

- Implementing IDP's, staying with and supervising children in the facility, implementing preventative and developmental programs
- Building and maintaining positive relationships with the young people.

### Post

Senior child and youth care workers X 2

### Salary

R71 502 p.a.

### Centre

Boikagong Children's Home

### Requirements

- 3 Year Diploma in Child Care
- One year appropriate experience in working with young people
- Code 08 drivers licence

### Duties

- Assisting with compilation and implementation of IDP's
- Ensuring the creation of developmental programs
- Supervision of child and youth care workers

Enquiries: Mr T B Kola, Tel. 018-381-7490/89  
Send applications to: The Deputy Director General,  
Private Bag X6, Mmabatho, 2735  
Attention: Mr Ditlokwe

## HOLY CROSS CHILDREN'S HOME

### CALA (Eastern Cape)

This Home requires the services of a Qualified Senior Child & Youth Care Worker (female, age 30-35 years, Xhosa/English speaking) with BQCC and/or higher Child Care training, Consultative Supervision certificate and experience to work within the new paradigm of developmental work with children, and online supervision of Child Care Workers.

Salary negotiable.

Please submit your CV and application to:

*The Principal*  
*Holy Cross Children's Home Cala*  
*PO Box 431, Elliot 5460*

**Tel: 047-877-0130 Fax: 047-8770687**

### Child & Youth Care Worker

Marsh Memorial Homes has a vacancy for an energetic, committed child care worker with at least two years experience. A BQCC will be an advantage and the successful applicant must have a valid drivers' licence.

Please fax a short CV to the Principal at 021-686-4501

The **Consultative Supervision** course is being offered in the Western Cape.

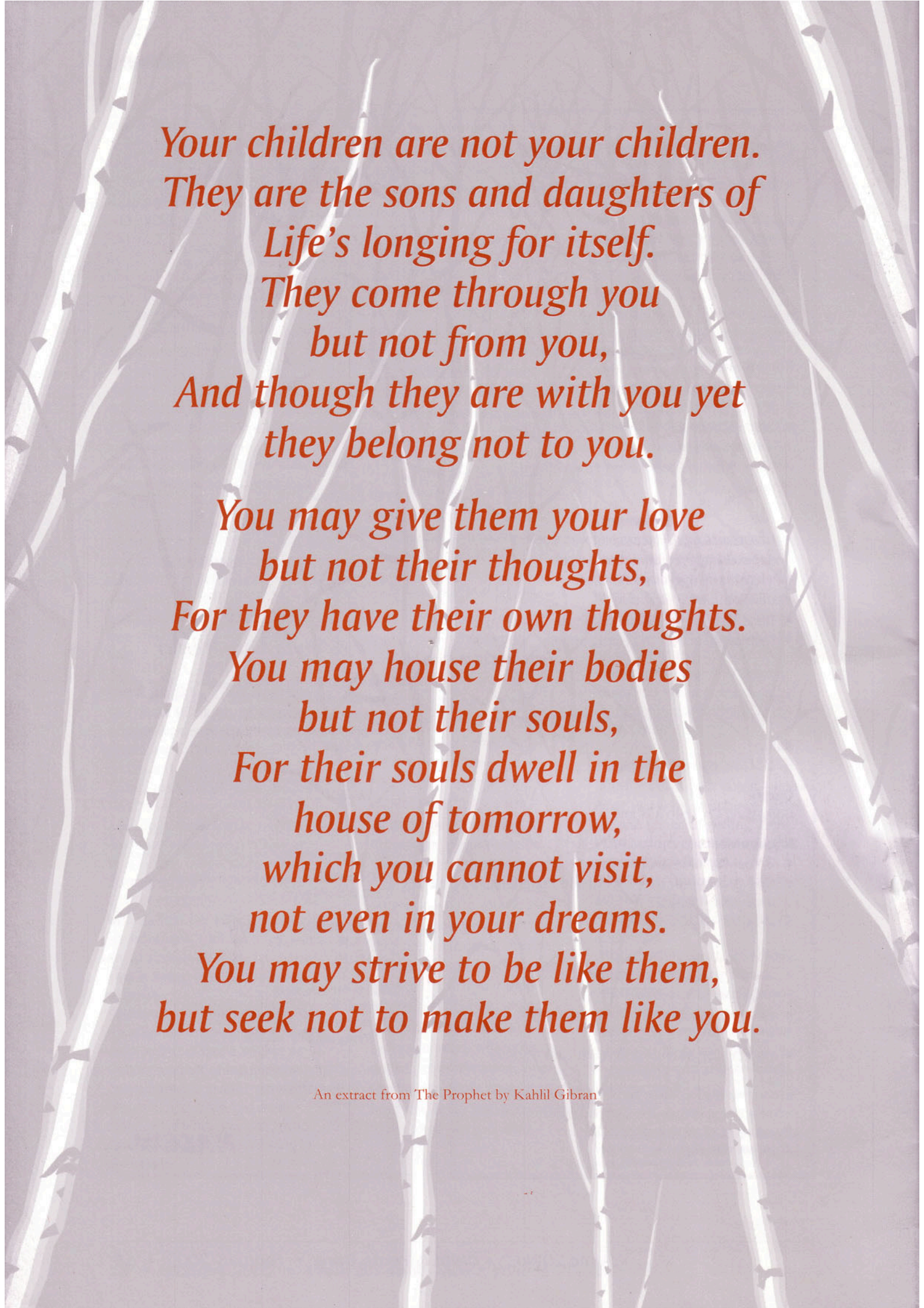
**Course duration: 3 full days**  
**Time: 8.30 - 3.30 daily**  
**Cost: R350**

#### Criteria for selection:

- At least five years on-line experience
- Presently employed in a senior position
- Training in Child and Youth Care

Please send applications to Jeanny Karth at NACCW Head Office  
Fax: 021-762-5352

**NACCW**



*Your children are not your children.  
They are the sons and daughters of  
Life's longing for itself.  
They come through you  
but not from you,  
And though they are with you yet  
they belong not to you.*

*You may give them your love  
but not their thoughts,  
For they have their own thoughts.  
You may house their bodies  
but not their souls,  
For their souls dwell in the  
house of tomorrow,  
which you cannot visit,  
not even in your dreams.*

*You may strive to be like them,  
but seek not to make them like you.*

An extract from *The Prophet* by Kahlil Gibran