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# **Child and Youth Care**

A Journal for Those Who Work with Children and Youth at Risk and Their Families



**Putting Principles into  
Practice: Five Foundations of  
Successful Re-EDUCATION**  
By Mark D Freado and Gino  
DeSalvatore

**Beliefs determine behaviour!**  
by David Patient and Neil Orr

**Zambia works together with  
the NACCW for the  
betterment of services to  
children in Africa**  
By Rev Barry Lodge

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# In Search of Miracles ....

Ten years into the democratic South Africa our field and our sister occupations are attempting to realize a child rights culture in South Africa. The miracle of the peaceful transition to a democratic society brought with it rights and responsibilities – for both children *and* adults. Many of us have struggled at very deep levels with expectations that have been introduced in respect of the rights of children. Again and again people working with challenging young people insist that such young people not only have rights but responsibilities, a point most succinctly underlined by Mahatma Gandhi when he spoke of a “charter of human *duties*”. Nowhere is this denied. However, what we often overlook is the fact that the children and youth with whom we work, often have not had the advantage of being taught such responsibilities. For a myriad reasons many challenging young people are in fact challenging to us *because* they are not able to manage themselves in responsible ways. In the context of working developmentally and therapeutically with such young people, it is the responsibility of all who intervene to provide young people with opportunities to experience themselves as responsible; to teach them to behave responsibly.

So often we get stuck in a mindset that comes not from the ‘new’ South Africa, that tells us (rather illogically) that these children ‘should’ behave responsibly. If they are not doing so, we feel justifiably annoyed. The old medical analogy applies here. Would medical staff be justified in reacting with irritation to people presenting with ill-health in a hospital? Young people come into our programs because they need to learn from us about this issue of being responsible... we are there to teach them such skills. Simply expecting and demanding responsibility could well be a demonstration of irresponsible behaviour on our parts!

It seems to me that often the plea for

responsibility in children comes from a very helpless place in ourselves. We lack the capacity to provide effective learning opportunities for young people. We do not know what to do - so we blame the children or we blame the ‘system’ in an effort to protect our sense of our own professional competence. And we look for the quick-fix... that Behaviour Management course that will teach the staff all they need to know about discipline; that new colleague or employee who will put things right; that program that if implemented will be the answer to the discomfort that we feel in the face of needs of the young people in the program. The careers of consultants, trainers, activists and academics alike flourish in this context. It provides fertile ground for pontificating, for crash courses and for reworking of old ideas into fashionable format.

But there is no quick-fix. There is no wand to wave. Injections of more funds are often disappointingly without impact. But miracles *can* be made to happen. In their article “Putting Principles into Practice: Five Foundations of Successful Re-Ducation” published this month, Freado and DeSalvatore provide an overview of *all* the elements that together can result in us running successful programs. No one thing can be done to make this transformation occur, but concerted effort towards implementing all of these aspects (here described in relation to Re-EDucation but applicable to programs of any theoretical orientation, in most contexts) is the way to create environments in which children’s rights are protected – and where they are able to learn to be responsible. In my experience this is the only way to enshrine a child rights culture in our programs. If we are fulfilling our obligation to be responsible adults, we will seek *this* route to developing responsible children.

Merle Allsopp

## 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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## Tell us what you think ...

Whether you are a regular or a first time reader of the journal, PLEASE drop us a line or a note and tell us:

- **what was of use to you**
- **what you would like to see covered in future**

Thanks *Child and Youth Care* values your opinion.

# Putting Principles into Practice:

## Five Foundations of Successful Re-EDucation

By Mark D Freado and Gino DeSalvatore

This article provides a philosophical and operational framework that can be used in creating or refining a Re-EDucation-based program. Re-EDucation programs are value based and principle driven, meaning there is a set of defined principles for working with children and youth woven into the life of the program. A principle driven program can be implemented for any type of service delivery model, including residential-based care, day treatment, alternative school programs, or school-based services.

The twelve principles underlying Re-EDucation (Hobbs, 1992) are:

1. Life is to be lived now
2. Trust is essential
3. Competence makes a difference
4. Time is an ally
5. Self control can be taught
6. Intelligence can be taught
7. Feelings should be nurtured
8. The group is very important to young people
9. Ceremony and ritual give order, stability and confidence
10. The body is the armature of the self
11. The use and benefits of community must be experienced
12. A child should know some joy in each day and look forward to joy tomorrow.

How do we put Re-ED principles into action? Here we describe five basic components essential to a Re-EDucation program's functioning:

- safety and containment
- staff skill support
- structure and organization
- youth involvement
- validation of individual worth.

All 12 Principles of Re-EDucation are explicitly involved in how these five components can be constructed.

### 1. Safety and Containment

Of all the elements that are crucial for any successful program, *safety and containment* are the most critical. This component refers to the ability of the program to

*Of all the elements that are crucial for any successful program, safety and containment are the most critical.*

contain and address those behaviours that led to the youth's identification as troubled or troubling. A program cannot be successful if a resident believes that aberrant behaviour can "destroy" a facility or disable staff, or if the setting's culture is laden with unsafe practices that are physically or psychologically damaging. Regardless of the "acting out" reasons they are sent to us, these youth are victims, as well. As a result, many have learned to be survivalists, developing strategies that hinder them from addressing those very needs that have motivated them to survive.

*Youth cannot channel emotional and psychological energy in doing what it takes to improve and engaging in the treatment process if anxious about his or her safety.*

contain and address those behaviours that led to the youth's identification as troubled or troubling. A program cannot be successful if a resident believes that aberrant behaviour can "destroy" a facility or disable staff, or if the setting's culture

A youth cannot channel emotional and psychological energy in doing what it takes to improve and engaging in the treatment process if anxious about his or her safety. If kids are not safe, they must look sideways and backward, not forward to the future.

In either the initial development or the re-tooling of a program, the following elements should be contemplated, addressed, implemented and continually evaluated in order to make the program safe. The goal here is to increase each youth's ability to make safe and healthy choices to get what he or she wants and needs, and not rely on acting out to satisfy their demands.

Safety and containment require we do the following:

- Identify which youth we serve and follow through with services they need. Program integrity makes us ask these questions: *Are we who we say we are? Are we serving the youth that the system/community needs us to serve? Are we doing what we say we will and are we doing it well? Do we have outcome measures to determine consumer well-being and satisfaction?*
- Assure physical safety of the milieu and physical management of dangerous behaviour.
- Ensure psychological safety with freedom from verbal abuse, neglect, and emotional abuse.
- Provide rules as guidance for interaction and accountability.
- Employ standard protocols for prevention and management of unsafe behaviours, such as: suicide precautions, destruction of property, aggressive acting out, and running away.

Involving youth in decision making about their physical environment helps them invest in both the culture and its surroundings. We must not only effectively supervise residents, but also give them strong reasons to stay; every positive experience contributes to those reasons.

While providing the necessary elements to ensure a safe program, the potential pitfall is too much containment that can curtail and suppress creativity, staff initiative, and the thinking outside the box that often is necessary for success.

## 2. Staff Skill Supports

Teacher/counselor and supervisor training and development are essential, ongoing elements. Nicholas Hobbs (1982) emphasized the importance of selecting the right staff for positions in our programs. Hiring "natural" teacher/counselors makes programs more effective than any training process alone. Those teacher/counselors have certain innate abilities to create and sustain meaningful relationships with students, can share their creativity with others, and have the resilience to restore their focus and energy regularly.

*Preparing staff:* Starting from a point of order means having pre-service training in place that prepares workers with what to do before they are alone with kids. Aside from organizational orientation and personnel issues, the pre-service training provides the foundation for understanding the philosophy and principles of Re-ED.

The initial interaction between the teacher/counselors and their students must start not only from a point of order, but also from a point of basic staff of competence. Whether pre-service training occurs as a separate component or in the context of on-the-job training, the following specific elements should be included:

*Values and Principles:*

- Organization's principles mission and values
- Re-ED philosophy overview and Re-ED principles

*Orientation to Youth and Families:*

- Nature of youth and referral sources
- Description of current youth and families
- Relationships with youth and families (professional and responsible)

*The Therapeutic Process:*

- Treatment assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation
- Student and family involvement in the process

*Foundational Skills Training:*

- De-escalation skills
- Psychological worlds, the Conflict Cycle, and Life Space Crisis Intervention
- Listening and communication skills
- Opportunities to practice skills (video models, role-play, feedback, supervision)

*Counter Aggression:*

- Understanding aggression (origins, functions, and forms)
- Our own buttons (staff triggers and reactions, how to objectify our responses)
- Skills to minimize and avoid power struggles

***For supervisors, and to some extent administrators, it is a matter of "being a part of the team, rather than being apart from the team".***

*Building Team*

*Strength:* In addition to the awareness and skills necessary to begin with competence and confidence in themselves, it is also important for new staff to have the opportunity

and means to become part of a strong, supportive professional community. For supervisors, and to some extent administrators, it is a matter of "being a part of the team, rather than being apart from the team." The task is to establish a culture where crisis is seen as opportunity and used to help both staff and youth grow.

Accomplishment involves including literally everyone on the premises in the “team” seeking those same ends.

*Relating to Youth:* Identifying student needs and providing them with support before a crisis occurs reduces the need for intervention. There is a delicate balance here, however. Prevention is not always desirable; if we “control” an environment too effectively, students do not have a chance to learn and practice the skills necessary to succeed in other environments. It is not enough to teach them to “be good” in our presence;

### *Identifying student needs and providing them with support before a crisis occurs reduces the need for intervention.*

we are responsible to teach them to do well wherever they are. Staff must recognize that in areas of their lives, these children and youth are within the range of normal development. Relationship building requires reinforcing where things go well, teaching what is needed, and supporting youth throughout. Staff are expected to have meaningful personal and professional connections with youth. Training elements preparing staff to build positive relationships include:

- Developing one’s personal qualities (leading to increased understanding of how to mesh the need for limit setting with the needs of the students)
- Providing skill-based interventions (such as Life Space Crisis Intervention, curricula for social skills and anger management, and crisis prevention and de-escalation strategies)
- Taking initiative to connect, get to know youth as individuals (begin to build rapport and plant the seeds of trust, create opportunities for belonging)
- Sticking with youth through their problem behaviours, without giving up on them
- Establishing and maintaining program limits for consequences of extreme behaviour, without ejecting youth from the program
- Providing a process for transition that maximises a student’s chance for successful return
- Making program values explicit and shared.

### **3. Organization and Structure**

Structure and organization provide the program’s operational form and define the way in which staff and clients will participate, interact, and address the issues facing all youth in the program. Types of structure range from oppressive and controlling, to guiding and teaching, where the student is a part of the process. Structure makes the environment less amorphous, defining the “laboratory” in which youth work and

live, where they perform the “experiments” necessary to grow. Without structure, staff must spend a great

### *Without structure, staff must spend a great deal of time and energy controlling problems.*

deal of time and energy controlling problems, overusing the components described for safety and containments. In essence, any added time spent on maintaining safety decreases the time left to seek growth.

In a principle-driven system, structure and organization should be flexible, allowing programs the freedom to develop treatment components that enhance opportunities for youth to change. In addition, structure and organization are dynamic processes that must be constantly evaluated and changed to accommodate the degree of problems and changing needs of all youth and their families. One way to provide ongoing assessment of the structure is through “program development” meetings where professionals and youth who are involved in the program come together to discuss issues that deal with structural elements. In a Re-ED program, structure and organization are designed to:

- Emphasize teaching
- Promote change in children and youth, rather than control of them
- Address symptoms and needs, while maintaining focus on strength
- Help maladaptive patterns of behaviour change to new patterns using skills gained
- Assist youth to consider consequences of actions
- Help youth learn control of impulses through analysis of choices
- Allow for creativity and adaptation of the program to meet all youth’s needs
- Identify, support and strengthen each child’s strengths, skills and competencies
- Provide an atmosphere of openness to new or different interventions that are philosophically consistent
- Develop the ritual and ceremony that are crucial to the success of a structure, providing predictability for both staff and youth
- Handle problems and celebrate successes

### **4. Youth Participation and involvement**

Re-ED programs place a great deal of emphasis on teaching and creativity. Experiential learning is accomplished by what we do *with* youth in our care, rather than what we do *to* them. We involve youth in

our programs in a variety of ways. Services in all Re-ED programs are based on the individual needs and interests of each youth and family. Some of those programs emphasize group process, while others

***We believe that the behaviour management system, as it is typically implemented, should not be viewed or promoted as the program.***

operate in individualized ways with youth participating in specific groups. All Re-ED programs do emphasize the importance of building relationships as the cornerstones for change, but many things can help set the stage for relationship building. Daily activities are the critical stage for any movements toward growth, and much energy is placed into proactive planning for each day.

Almost all programs have behaviour management systems in place to direct and evaluate youth progress. We believe that the behaviour management system, as it is typically implemented, should not be viewed or promoted as the program.

Behaviour management systems are primarily sources of feedback. The information we derive from them generally tells two things: (1) How the youth is doing in that part of the program, and (2) How the program is working for the youth (specifically, that part of the program). If a youth cannot rise above the lowest level in the system, we can conclude he is not doing well in the behavioural areas addressed by the system. We must also conclude, however that the program is not doing well by the youth either. It is easy for an organization to fail to attend to this critical second part.

Principle-driven organizations (like Re-ED programs) do pay attention to what data tell us about our own effectiveness, and respond by adapting the program's approach to better meet the needs of the youth. Program adaptations include lowering initial expectations to allow the youth to experience some

***Program adaptations include lowering initial expectations to allow the youth to experience some success, and then gradually raising them as the youth's competence increases.***

success, and then gradually raising them as the youth's competence increases. Another adaptation is to ensure that where the system demands certain performance

(such as speaking respectfully to adults), those behaviours are being modeled and explicitly taught by teacher/counselors working with the youth. Once taught, opportunities are devised that place youth in positions that require positive practice of those skills in a variety of situations, encouraging healthy development to proceed.

Where behavioural systems are used, we believe it is worth considering a level system in which youth earn levels that cannot be lost. Instead of moving up and down in a system on a daily or weekly basis, youth work through a series of skills to meet identified criteria to attain a level of competence. Once that level has been attained, both youth and staff know the youth's capabilities and that the status has been earned.

There may be times that privileges of a level are not available to the youth because of their actions. When sanctions are imposed, they are temporary and the level is maintained. Staff help youth analyze difficulties and work to regain the privileges of their rank. In Re-ED programs, any management system or strategy is aimed at facilitating relationship building. Relationships with teachers/counselors are recognized as the basis for most meaningful positive changes that youth experience.

## **5. Validation of Individual Worth**

Developing a sense of one's own validity and worth is essential to our human growth. Many youth in our programs lack the ability to self-evaluate and have lowered self-esteem and a flawed self-concept, often as a result of neglect, abandonment, and poor adult role models. In such cases, a youth's sense of self must be nurtured, rebuilt and supported. Often youth can find this nurturing foreign and uncomfortable because it does not fit with what they are accustomed to or with what they have been led to believe about themselves or others. As a result, they may sabotage our best efforts at praise and rewards. Finding the right time and opportunity to challenge a youth's self-esteem by identifying their good qualities is sometimes difficult.

The process of validation is built on trust and developed over time. This process usually moves from an external locus of control (where positive reinforcement must use concrete and tangible systems) to an internal locus of control (where youth reward themselves and find intrinsic satisfaction). The process of validation occurs on an hour-to-hour, person-to-person, and group-by-group basis, carried out through group process, schedule activities, reinforcement systems, and in spontaneous and unconditional positive events. It should occur from the time youth get up in the morning to the time they go to bed, implemented by all adults in the facility.

A number of key elements must be part of the process of validation, if we are to build and maintain a positive and rewarding culture within the milieu. An aura of respect, good feelings, and success should permeate all aspects of the program, fostering an image of a place where change and positive growth takes place. Validation involves self-esteem, feedback, and positive relationships.

Youth in our programs often come lacking a lasting, meaningful connection with a caring, trusted adult; their developmental Circle of Courage is broken at "Belonging" (Brendtro, Brokenleg & Van Bockern, 2002). Gaining trust can enable them to progress through the four quadrants represented by the circle, from "Belonging" through "Mastery" to "Independence," and on to "Generosity." Teacher/counselors and youth spend much time together engaged in a wide array of circumstances involving teaching and learning, fun, problem solving, and crisis resolution. There are numerous opportunities and ways for relationships to be created and many tests through which they can be sustained.

A sense of mutual respect developed between each professional staff and youth enables the youth to trust that the adult will both help them and teach them to help themselves. Part of validation that must be emphasized is that no matter what type or level of problems that come with the youth, staff must respect and embrace them.

### Outcomes and Evaluations

A crucial component in any Re-ED program design is measurement of outcomes and other areas that can make the difference in a program's effectiveness. This leads a program to ask:

- How effective are we in our work with youth and families?
- Did we do what we said we were going to do?
- What are the long-term effects of our services?

While there are many ways to measure program effectiveness, a good Re-Ed program evaluates how well youth do internally while part of the program and how well they do after discharge back into the community.

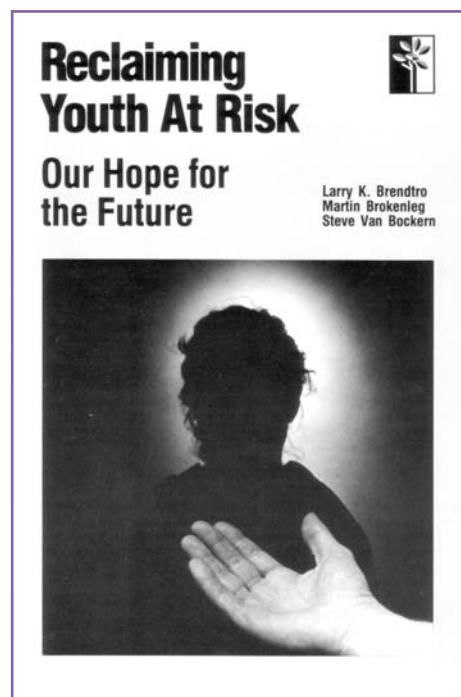
### Conclusions

Successful programs that serve children and youth require planning, skill, and a sound values-based and principle-driven foundation from which to work. We believe that the goal of a successful and effective program is to have the components outlined here woven seamlessly with intuition, creativity, resilience, and tenacity. Guided by principles and values, programs

can and should promote, enhance, and teach healthy, successful, and positive growth as a way of helping all youth experience as normal a developmental experience as possible – lifelong. ▀

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In South Africa to teach on the pilot program of the Masters: Child and Youth Development,

## Dr Thom Garfat

esteemed Child and Youth Care Worker, and author recipient of the Governor General's Gold Medal at the University of Victoria in 1996 for his doctoral research in the field, speaks to *Child and Youth Care*.



**C&YC: You have a long and impressive career in Child and Youth Care – what can you tell us about it?**

“Well, my career in child and youth care started when I was 14 years old. I had broken into a store and a policeman came to arrest me. In the small town jail where he put me (we had no juvenile facilities then) I was ranting on as adolescents will do, when the policeman dragged a chair over to the cell and sat and waited until I calmed down. Once I was calm, he started talking to me. This was the place where I began to learn about engaging with and being with kids.

I started my Child and Youth Care career working in a reception and diagnostic centre for a year. It was a place where workers placed youth and then hoped for the best for them. Over time I became concerned about the fact that no-one seemed to be making decisions about these kids – they just stayed in the program and nothing really seemed to be happening for them. So, I decided that I wanted to be a decision-maker and went to get an education to enable myself to do this. I studied for an MA in Clinical Psychology and got a job running a community-based family treatment program where we began to develop outreach programs. Then at one point I was invited to lecture students at the University of Victoria on family work and from that arose a position with the School of Child and Youth Care, just at the time it was becoming a school. Like so many of us in this field, most of my career has been accidental and I learned to take the opportunities that presented themselves.

My beliefs and philosophy about child and youth care have evolved from my own experiences. Most people feel like child and youth care is home or that they ‘belong’ to the field. I certainly have always felt this about my profession.”

**C&YC: You have been to SA three times - tell us about your experiences and impressions.**

“My first contact with the NACCW began about 20 years ago when I met Brian Gannon at the First International Child and Youth Care Conference in Vancouver where he spoke about NACCW. Of course, we knew little about South Africa then and I was very surprised to see this white man arrive from South Africa but soon realised that this was a non-racial association. Brian and I developed a connection at that conference.

I first came to SA to the 8<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference 18 years ago. The conference was held in Johannesburg. It was my first invitation to speak somewhere else and it still remains one of the best experiences I have ever had. It was the most generous accepting child and youth care experience. I felt appreciated, welcome and useful.

My friendship with Brian developed over time and eventually we began to talk about how we could help the field be more connected and from this we began talking about CYC-NET which was at first developed for 12 -15 people to talk together about child and youth care. It now reaches over 2000 people around the world. I came back again in 1999 for Brian's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday and attended another NACCW conference. This is my third visit to SA and I really like it here. I like how it feels to be here.”

**C&YC: What changes do you see in SA?**

“There are certainly changes in SA but it would be presumptuous of me to give any opinions about this. I like it here and respect you. I can only imagine what it must be like but this is your world and I can only bring what I can bring, offer it up, and hope that it is of some use. I can't tell you what to do.”

### **C&YC: What are the differences between Canadian child and youth care and SA?**

"In North America there are pockets of great things happening but not all over. It is difficult to judge. So, it would be a mistake to assume that this is representative of all North American Child and Youth Care practice. For whatever reason, there are these small pockets of voices which are being heard, but there are many other voices which are not heard. I imagine that from outside of Canada, for example, one might think that all Canadian Child and Youth Care is well advanced, but this just isn't so. There are places with no opportunities for education, no associations and no access to other child and youth care workers. There are programs in Canada which are still practicing what we might call an old form of Child and Youth Care where families are uninvolved, workers are controlling and authoritarian and where there is little respect for the worker. So, while there are voices of Child and Youth Care from Canada which are heard outside of the country, it would be a mistake to think that these voices represent the state of Child and Youth Care in Canada as a whole. And the people I have met this past week in the Master's program are as advanced as those I have met anywhere.

I want to come back to CYC-Net for a moment, because it originates here in South Africa and is probably the most important forum available right now for connecting people, providing information and providing the opportunity for other voices to be heard. But I wonder sometimes why so few women write on CYC-NET, or for other publications for that matter? Our field is dominated in numbers by women, yet their voices are less present in the writing of the field.

Men think in a more linear fashion and then get to write about it. Would it be different if women wrote? The classic traditional model of writing is a masculine one but in child and youth care it is changing, as the style of writing is changing. We need to encourage more women to write.

Ultimately, I believe that women are better at this relationship focus than men are. They live in the world differently to men. Most of the relational influences in my life have been through women. They taught me a way of being in this world that is different than the way I was taught by men. As the field moves more and more to a relationship based focus, I think we would benefit from hearing more of the voices of women. Just as we need to create ways for all of us to hear the voices of the newer generations of Child and Youth Care workers.

I learnt about "voice" from women and I believe that people find voice over time. I encourage people to describe what they want. This way they will eventually find their voice. But then again what is voice?

### **C&YC: How do you see the Master's Degree in Child and Youth Care Development contributing to child and youth care in SA?**

I find it interesting that the participants on the Master's are talking about finding a SA model or approach to child and youth care. In reality you do have a SA way of doing child and youth care and what you need to do is to articulate what this is, rather than asking what you are going to do or should be doing. During this class this past week, for example, there were at least two examples of very South African ways of thinking about Child and Youth Care practice which, although bearing some resemblance to other forms of Child and Youth Care practice, were distinctly different. So, some of your models are there, and they just need to be articulated. I am also fascinated, for example, by the fact that you have a whole bunch of people from different cultures and places in the same room discussing and reflecting on things rather than complaining about cultural representivity.

The Master's class will be altered by this whole experience, and you all have a wonderful opportunity to shape the Master's program for the future. It is a very unique experience and reflects a very different culture. You seldom, in my experience, get all the Master's students gathering and learning together as you are doing. This is a different, perhaps a South African, approach in and of itself. ▀



Supported by the Royal Netherlands Embassy in South Africa, a long-held goal of developing a Masters program in the field of Child and Youth Care is being realised in South Africa. A pilot student group is participating in the course and contributing to the development of a local curriculum for the MA degree through UNISA (former TSA) to be used for future cadres of students. Seen here with course co-ordinator Lesley Du Toit are students from left to right, back row: Dr Thom Garfat (lecturer), Sbongile Manyathi, Lesley Du Toit, Jackie Winfield, Jacqui Michael, Merle Allsopp, Verosh Nadesan. Front row left to right: Karen Hector, Zeni Thumbadoo, Geeta Somasundram, Lesiba Molepo, Kathy Scott and sitting in front is Mirriam Siluma.

# Changing Paradigms for Working with Street Youth: The Experience of Street Kids International

**The third of a 3-part series from Stephanie Sauv  provides a case study on SKI's work in the Former Soviet Union.**

One part of the world beginning to receive more international attention is the cluster of Newly Independent States (NIS) that stretch along the southern border of the Former Soviet Union (FSU). These countries share the common characteristics of having gained their independence in the early 1990s, of having suffered profound economic and social upheaval during the transition from Soviet rule to full self-government, and of having more than 50 percent of their population under the age of 24. These countries are historically Islamic and have seen both a resurgence in religious practice and a rise in extremism.

The population under the age of 24 has been particularly hard hit by the social upheaval and economic dislocation brought on by the collapse of communism in the early 1990s. In 1999, UNICEF published a groundbreaking study of "the impact of ten years of transition" upon children and youth in the 27 Newly Independent States of the FSU. Findings across the FSU were disturbing, but nowhere more so than within the Central Eurasian countries of Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Azerbaijan.

In these three countries, a generation of young people find themselves significantly less healthy, less educated, and less likely to be employed than their parents. In Tajikistan, for instance, where 61 percent of 15-18 year olds were enrolled in school in 1989, by 1998 enrollment had dropped to 24 percent (UNICEF 1999). Young people all too often find themselves left off the agenda, and socially and politically alienated. Not surprisingly in light of this profound social dislocation, the UNICEF study also documented a dramatic rise in depression, suicide, violent juvenile crime, and street involvement—along with significant increases in the interrelated issues of drug use and HIV/AIDS.

Beyond the economic upheaval caused by the shift from centrally planned to market economies, the newly independent countries of Central Asia and the South Caucasus have also faced episodes of armed conflict over the past decade that have had a profound impact on the lives of the region's children and youth.

Out of school, out of work, dislocated and disconnected youth in the region are just the kind of population that extremist groups turn to when recruiting

new members. As one young Tajik observed to a SKI staff member during a 1999 assessment mission:

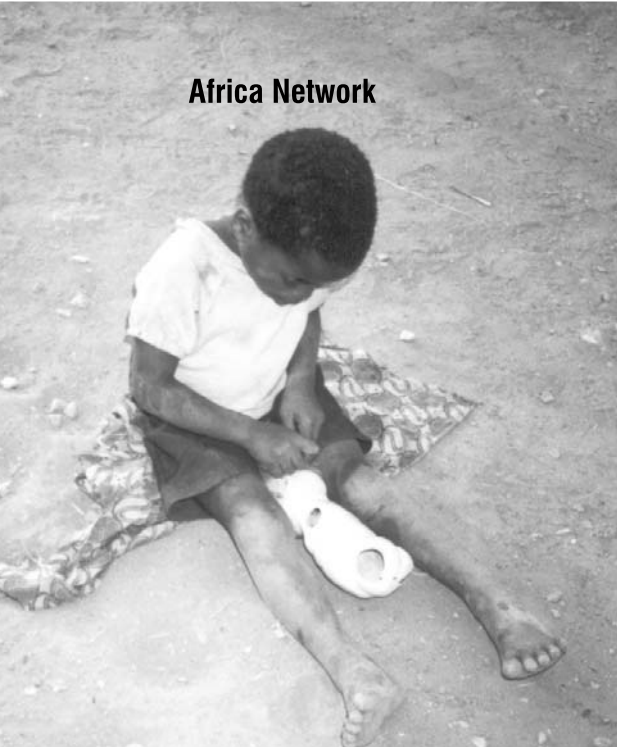
"You have heard about 'war affected children'— the orphans, the homeless, the refugees. Well, my friends and I are 'peace-affected youth'— when the civil war ended and they did not need us to fight, they forgot about us— no schools, no jobs, nothing. They will only think about us again when they want to fight the Uzbeks or the Kyrgyz or someone else we must hate..."

There is a broad consensus within the youth-serving sectors in many of the transitional countries that they are witnessing a disturbing convergence of two phenomena. First, the collapse of long-standing centralized political and economic structures leaves youth aged 12-18 facing acute social upheaval during a life stage when personal support, social stability, and guidance from family and community are crucial.

Second, while witnessing such social alienation and related risk behaviors among these youth, the institutions that serve them (both government and non-government) are themselves experiencing significant instability and uncertainty.

Although the focus of most policy and advocacy initiatives is at the level of national governments, SKI and its lead local partners have come to realize that when it comes to addressing the needs of marginalized youth, perhaps the most important public policy makers reside at the municipal level of government. While broad macro policy is debated and conceived of at the level of national governments, the really pertinent meso-level reform initiatives most often occur where policy rubs shoulders with practice in municipal level school boards, police departments, public health programs and vocational initiatives. SKI and its lead partners have begun advocacy work at the municipal level on the themes of drug use, sexual health, and economic empowerment, and are putting in place the structure for leading broader debate about the holistic needs of marginalized youth with these same stakeholders. This work is a new and necessary branch of its Street Rights programs. ▀

(see Volume 21 No11 and Volume 22 No 1 for the first two parts of this document and for all references.)



## Zambia works together with the NACCW for the betterment of services to children in Africa

**In December 2003 Barrie Lodge visited Lusaka in Zambia to share the NACCW experience and vision and to develop a working relationship with Child and Youth Care Workers in Zambia. He writes of the significance of this partnership from an African perspective.**

Professional associations for child and youth care have networked with each other world-wide in an interesting and predictable historical pattern. North America has structures of child and youth care associations which link together. They meet in regular conferences and lean on each other when they put together significant policy and practice criteria.

The same can be said of the United Kingdom and of Europe. Europe became a special area of focus for the networking of professional associations in the field of child and youth care when the International Federation of Educative Communities (FICE) created a special forum of organisations in Europe. History and geography have perhaps determined that FICE is somewhat European in its focus. However recently, Francophone Africa is making an attempt to develop a forum linked to FICE on the same lines as the European Forum.

Australia has a national association similar to our NACCW which networks well with their Universities nation-wide.

What is apparent is the lack of a cross-continent structure to network professional child and youth care associations (and therefore workers) across Africa. Some pan-African organizations do bring some structure to the field in Africa. The Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (APCAN) has a pan-African network as does SOS Children's Villages and Child Hope. These are valuable pan-African links, as is UNESCO and therefore to an extent FICE which is UNESCO related. However, most of these organizations do not have the same objectives or concerns as the NACCW in South Africa or the networks of professional associations on the other continents. The only professional association with a focus on the professionalisation of child and youth care in Africa appears to be the NACCW (South Africa).

For many years the NACCW has been advocating for what is unique in African child and youth care to be made known to the world-wide field – because we believe that Africa has a special and unique contribution to make. The NACCW has also been advocating for the development of African networks of child and youth care associations. Already significant African connectedness has been developed through the distribution of *Child and Youth Care* to over 200 addresses in Africa North of the Limpopo. All-Africa Conferences hosted by



the NACCW were initiated by the Gauteng Region in 1993 and since then NACCW Biennial Conferences have promoted all-African delegations. Our African connections have grown over the last years, precipitating requests for collaboration or partnerships from Ghana, Cameroon, Togo, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mozambique, Zambia, Namibia, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Burundi and Gambia.

Training in the BQCC was provided in Namibia and an initiative seeded to start a Namibian Association of Child Care Workers but changes in governmental appointments was said to have slowed the process down.

A start toward an African network began in Zambia at the end of last year and must be regarded as most promising.

NACCW provided BQCC training in Lusaka resulting in a significant number of graduates. These graduates together with an existing committee called the Network Committee were mandated to carry forward a process to establish a Zambian Association of Child and Youth Care Workers and work in partnership with work with the NACCW to:

- develop skills
- create exchange programs
- train trainers
- develop links with the international networks of Child and Youth Care Associations
- develop business plans to fund the development of a Zambian Association of Child Care Workers
- develop an electronic resource team around the process to help towards professionalisation and policy making in Zambia.

The issues facing the NACCW and the Zambia

Network Committee (apart from funding) are the issues of finding a suitable basis upon which to formalize our network or collaboration, and then to find a basis upon which a wider African network of professional associations can be formulated.

The city of Lusaka has a head-start in a journey towards the professionalisation of Child and Youth Care in Zambia. The process has the pledged support of the Department and Minister of Community Development and Social Service as well the Ministry of Sport and Child Development. They have the declared support of UNESCO, of funders and of local government in Lusaka. More especially there is leadership and a will among child and youth care workers in Lusaka.

It leaves us now with the task of ensuring that the seeds of a professional association of Child and Youth Care Workers sown in Zambia are carefully nurtured toward fruition and later used to grow a formal network across Zambia – which can then be used as a model for networking the rest of Africa. ▽





# Beliefs determine behaviour!

**In the context of the HIV/AIDS crisis  
David Patient and Neil Orr strongly challenge  
the origins of the painful issue of stigma.**

**A**t the core of any behaviour you will find a belief (or series of beliefs), that support individuals or groups, to behave in a specific manner. More often than not, these beliefs are presented as facts, however, they are simply beliefs. At the core of stigma are a set of beliefs, presented as facts, that are creating discrimination. It is not possible for us to influence any long term changes in behaviour unless we have the courage to challenge people's core beliefs. All too often we are so busy worrying that we might offend a community's sensibilities that we do them a disservice, simply by being too scared to take the risk of challenging these beliefs. For years apartheid was the law in South Africa, based on the fact that specific groups believed that they were superior to people of colour – so much so that it became part of the scriptures taught in churches and schools. Even the bible of the ruling party reflected that people of color were inferior and second class humans, never mind citizens! The belief that white people are superior to people of color started as a belief and quickly moved into 'factual reality' which determined the behaviour of many white people towards people of color.

In many parts of the world, the belief around those of us living with HIV is that we are sinners, sluts and degenerates. At the end of the day, we deserve what we have. And where were these 'beliefs' born? In the annals of morality and culture. Everybody and their grandmothers in the world of organized religion all had their five cents to add about how we, the infected, are deserving of our infections. We have done something to anger God and therefore our retribution is living with, and dying from, HIV. Sadly, religious communities, globally added fuel to the fire and 20 something years later, here we sit, with stigma that is rampant. Many religious leaders assumed the role of the God they worship and in this case, they became egomaniacal,

hugely insecure and tyrannical in their condemning of the infected. And when the likes of people like us have the gall to question their superior knowledge of God, we are either labeled heretics or accused of being insensitive to religious customs and or long standing traditions of any given group.

Culturally we are no better. We simply follow 'what people like us' do/have/be without questioning the origin of these norms. It's just what we do and have done for years. Often cultural norms were born out of survival, but more often than not, out of a need to control. Many norms were based in myths and legends and have become part of a culture and many follow blindly, without question as they lead into the abyss of ignorance and manipulation. The only way to end this 21<sup>st</sup> century 'dark age' is the open questioning of what we hold to be true in our cultures. I was doing a talk a few weeks back to a largely Black audience and during the question and answer section, a lady, who had taken a cell call while I was speaking, put her hand up and

said, 'It is not in my culture to discuss sex with my children.' My response? "It is also not in your culture to carry a cell phone, but you've adapted to that with great ease." The cultural card is a pretty lame excuse to do nothing.

In order for us to be effective, we must, repeat must, challenge people's core beliefs.

***We must challenge  
people's beliefs.  
When we can  
do this, we can  
then make a real  
impact on stigma,  
discrimination,  
and associated  
behaviour change.***

We have spent 20 years trying to fix everything except what really needs to be fixed. We are addressing everything except our core beliefs and it is these beliefs that are creating the problem, which in this case is HIV/AIDS, poverty, gender inequity and food security.

There is only one solution if we hope to make any difference at the social level. We must challenge people's beliefs. When we can do this, we can then make a real impact on stigma, discrimination, and associated behaviour change.

Why don't we start by discriminating against those who discriminate and stigmatize? It's been working in SA for almost ten years. Try using a derogatory name or connotation to describe a person different from yourself and see what happens in South Africa. At the very least you'll get a glaring look of disapproval, and at worst you'll end up in court. This process came about when we as South Africans, changed our beliefs. This in turn directly impacted on our behaviour. So it is not only

possible, it's probable! At the end of the day, HIV is no different.

One more very important issue we must consider... We also need to look at the role of those who are stigmatized or discriminated against. What is their role in all of this? One thing living in the USA taught me is that if anyone violates my rights, there are legal ramifications. Eight years ago, upon my return to SA, I applied for a bond on a piece of property I wanted to buy. At the eleventh hour I was turned down because I am HIV positive and couldn't get insurance to cover the loan.

What was on my side was that I not only know the laws around discrimination, I am willing to use them to protect my rights. I made the head office of this bank very aware that I would sue them on the grounds of discrimination and would do so publicly. To-date I have bonded several properties all with the very same bank and I still do not have life insurance. So it's all very well and good that we the infected are discriminated against but we have to be fully aware of the fact that people will treat us in a way in which WE TEACH THEM TO TREAT US! If I was self-loathing I'd still be renting a home versus owning one. ▀

## *Worker Rights, Children's Rights and Professional Development: A Principal's Letter to Child and Youth Care Workers*

*As the Principal, it is my responsibility to set the tone in our facility. Often when one enters a facility as a new child and youth care worker, there is already an ethos or climate or culture that is in place. In most transformed facilities, this climate and structure is very present and tangible. The individual worker adapts, adjusts to fit into this structure, ethos and climate.*

*Here however, due to a number of factors including the struggle to transform, this has not yet been established. It is my responsibility to develop this professional culture at our facility.*

*I have been appointed as the leader of our team, and I am a leader in the Child and Youth Care field. I have been in this field for many years and can stand before you and confidently say that Child and Youth Care work is not a job – it is a career. My gift to you is securing training and professional support to ensure that you develop to your full potential. Once we achieve this, then only can we offer complex Child and Youth Care programmes to our most troubled children and youth. If you do not develop, then we cannot transform as an organization to meet these complex needs of children. Do take note that you too are held responsible for your own professional growth and development.*

*There will always be times when I will make decisions with which you may not be happy. Given my position and expertise, the Board of Management and the Profession expects this of me. There are definitely issues that will not be negotiable. Debate will not be entertained around some of them. These relate to upholding the rights of the child, which is paramount in our work. Worker rights will be addressed in the context of Child Rights and how they (the children) are protected.*

*You should know and will always know where you stand with me. If you disregard my decisions on such issues and violate the rights of children I will not be able to accommodate this and will make no compromises. I am bound by a professional Code of Ethics, which directs the way that I function. I do not have a personal agenda. I have an obligation to ensure that you receive the best possible training and support to be able to put children first. That is my legal responsibility to our facility and the field of Child and Youth Care.*

# Gloria Luthuli's case summary

## report illuminates the process of

# Family Preservation: Intensive Family Support

### Introduction

Judging by the number of successes witnessed, the intervention of the Intensive Family Support (IFS) team has made a difference in this family. The goals the family had initially set have been accomplished. The IFS team thus had achieved their chief aim, of keeping the family together, thereby helping them to overcome their crisis and preventing the removal of Nokuthula to an institution.

### Summary of the intervention

Before the scheduled date for termination, the IFS team received news of Alice's collapse at work and subsequent hospitalization. She had suffered a miscarriage. The team could not terminate with this family at this stage as it was felt that they required emotional support. Whilst Mandy was in the hospital the IFS worker received reports from Nokuthula's class teacher that she was performing poorly again at school and had poor concentration. She was also reported to have started to flirt with the boys.

The IFS worker then negotiated with the class teacher to give Nokuthula some academic tasks and to give the worker the days' lessons so that the team could help her at home. The IFS team rotated in assisting Nokuthula with school work at home in the evenings. Nokuthula was also accompanied on several occasions to visit her mother at the hospital and she was happy about this as she missed her mother. She even expressed that at school she could not concentrate as she was afraid that her mother was going to die.

Alice was discharged from the hospital two weeks later and she took three weeks leave from work. The team and the family mutually decided to give Alice some time to fully recuperate and then hold the termination meeting.

The team's concerted effort to help Nokuthula with school work seemed to have inspired Nokuthula's aunt, Gugu as she began to participate in helping Nokuthula

with school work. The class teacher reported an improvement in Nokuthula's school work saying that she even asked questions during a lesson. The team thus complimented aunt Gugu on her willingness to help and also praised Nokuthula on the effort she was putting into her school work.

Nokuthula even disclosed that there were some boys at school who were proposing love to her and she realised that they were actually ridiculing her or testing her morality. She revealed that she usually did not think clearly when she was disturbed emotionally. The IFS worker discussed with Nokuthula what was disturbing her - her mother's hospitalization and her fear that she was going to die. They talked about a person she trusted with whom she could share her worries. Nokuthula mentioned the IFS worker, her aunt Gugu and her class teacher as people she trusted. The worker pointed out that that was very resourceful of her as everybody needed somebody to whom they could express their feelings. The IFS worker let the child as well as the whole family know that the team admired and appreciated their struggles and the strengths that came from those struggles. This is substantiated by Glasser and Glasser (1970), in their argument that clients' struggles to survive despite the chaos and contradictions of the larger social environment in which they are trapped should always be validated.

In the termination session, the family was reminded that the brief time frame that the family was informed about initially and throughout the course of IFS team's service had come to an end. The family was also reminded of the previous session where they prepared for this ending phase. It was stated that their corresponding reports had also given positive reasons for the termination, that they were satisfied with the gains made and they were finding their problems less stressful. The family was then asked to evaluate the IFS intervention.

The great grandmother started by saying that she remembered when the IFS team first introduced itself and



described the purpose of its intervention with the family. She revealed that she thought that we were wasting our time as she did not think positively about Nokuthula. When she saw our commitment and patience she too began to have a sense of hope, and was able to see the small changes that the team kept capitalizing on. She conceded that even the good and positive things that Nokuthula was doing used to be overshadowed by her negative behaviour, so that the family had tended to focus on that negative behaviour.

Alice then expressed her gratitude for the team's unwavering support, especially when she was feeling despondent. She revealed that there were times when she had considered vanishing from home as she had felt overwhelmed by anger and frustration over Nokuthula's behaviour. She disclosed that this was also precipitated by the desire to fulfill her personal needs which she felt were neglected as a result of Nokuthula's behaviour which demanded all her attention. Alice conceded that she had harboured feelings of resentment towards Nokuthula and even towards the IFS team for persisting with work with the family instead of removing Nokuthula. She maintained however that, the way that the team had kept relating to her and responding to her needs as well as those of her child, had made her trust that they could help the family cope with their situation. This had also made her realize how much she loved her child and would not want to be separated from her. Kinnely and Haapela (1989) summed up Alice's sentiments when they argued that by responding immediately to the family's most pressing needs, the worker demonstrates not only sensitivity and desire to help, but also the capacity of facilitating a positive experience in the family's life.

Alice also remarked that she had become very relieved when Nokuthula was engaged in a human sexuality program as that was coincidentally the time that she had started to menstruate. She appreciated the IFS worker's help with Nokuthula's school work.

Alice revealed that the team had taught her to always think of the positives whenever faced with a difficult situation and this has helped her to make informed decisions and be resourceful in times of crisis. She had learned to be more loving and expressive towards Nokuthula specifically, and to

other people in general. She was no longer afraid to let her feelings show and talk about them. As a result, people were beginning to know what to expect of her.

Nokuthula shyly expressed that she was grateful to the IFS team for helping her go back to school, and for giving assistance with schoolwork as this was helping her cope at school. She also expressed that she had learned a lot about the facts of life and life skills from the programs that she participated in.

Aunt Gugu, expressed that she had been impressed by the team's dedication and commitment in helping the family. She had even developed an interest in helping Nokuthula with school work, something that she had taken for granted before. She also expressed that she was touched by the team's efforts to embrace her in the family's activities, despite joining the family at a later stage of intervention. This had made her feel part of the family to a fuller extent.

The team then discussed the issue of termination. Alice expressed that she was sad that she was breaking the bond with the team as she had come to regard some of the team members as part of her family. She worried about Nokuthula's attendance of classes being affected by termination as Nokuthula was used to sleeping overnight at one of the IFS worker's home after classes as they finished late in the afternoon. The IFS worker assured the family that Nokuthula would be welcome at her house any time she wished to visit and this brought a smile to Nokuthula's face.

Alice then assured the team that as she was feeling more in charge of her life, and was also better able to nurture and communicate with Nokuthula. She felt



confident enough to cope with problems or crises in the future. She added that she no longer felt as isolated as she did initially as she now could call a broad range of resources from her extended family, as well as other specialist agencies. She wished that the termination session could have been held after she had gone back to work as she wanted to do something like throw a braai for the team to show her gratitude. Her thoughts were greatly appreciated by the team.

The team members then expressed that they had also enjoyed working with the family as they had shown eagerness to work with the team. The team members also expressed their pride in the family in having so many strengths that had enabled them to weather their crisis and thus remain together. The team also pointed out that even though the family was no longer going to be seen routinely, they should rather not hesitate to call any IFS member if they needed additional assistance. The team then brought up the issue of the parenting skills workshop that the IFS group was contemplating holding in the near future. Alice showed keen interest and wanted to know the date.

We then discussed the issue of ritualizing our termination as suggested by Alice. We brainstormed all ideas of how to do that but eventually felt that a braai would be convenient for all of us as everybody would be able to participate financially as well as in the preparation. The session ended on that jovial note.

### Evaluation

The family was ready for termination. Much emphasis had been put on the positives as a way of instilling the

sense of hope that their problems could be solved. They had thus managed to achieve the goals that they had set for themselves, and regain control of their lives by becoming independent.

The IFS team had brought the empowerment philosophy to practice by using the following techniques:

- Always being respectful and having good manners
- Creating a non-judgemental atmosphere
- Paying attention to the details of what was important to the family
- Looking to the family for what was next and where to go for it
- Consulting with the family on all points, not making decisions for them behind their backs
- Listening actively to all what they were saying
- Tapping on their dreams and strengths
- Helping them to set goals and carrying out that plan for change
- Giving them information on certain issues that they needed help on linking them with appropriate resources. (Coe and Duva 1991)

Although this family may have problems again (a possibility they were aware of) they were now more aware of their strengths and competencies and knew about the resources at their disposal. This is in line with Glasser and Glasser's (1990) argument that termination does not mean that the family will never have problems again. Rather it means that the family has solved small but significant problems, and in the process learned a great deal about how to find solutions. Thus it is with

pride that the IFS team says that this family successfully completed the transition from dependence on IFS to independence. ▲

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# Reflecting on Relating.....

## Child and Youth Care Worker Vincent Hlabangana shares lessons learned

Looking back at my years in the child and youth care field, I think of some at-risk young people with whom I have spent long hours and days in silence. At times there were long stretches when I could not figure out whether my relationship with these young people had any meaning at all.

Some were uncommunicative, seemingly indifferent, relationship-reluctant and inarticulate. Most of those young people had seldom affirmed themselves. They had never in any meaningful way said, "I feel," "I live," "I have a right to be." More often than not they had, instead been passive recipients of life's hurts. How can we initiate positive relationships with such young people? It takes great patience to wait for the germination and budding of the will to assert, "I am; I deserve to be". One way to stimulate this is for child and youth care practitioners to use the careful expression of their own feelings in ways that do not impose on young people. I remember as a child and youth care worker myself, voicing such feelings as "I feel quite content with our being silent today. Sometimes when we are not talking, I feel sort of impatient and want to know what is going on but today it feels good just to be with you quietly." With another relationship-reluctant child I recall myself saying, "I feel that you are angry and you shy away from me. I am not sure, of course, because you haven't said so. But I keep on wondering if this is so?" I have experienced that such statements put child and youth care workers as people into the relationship without threatening the child with demands.

It has been important for me to repeatedly behave in ways that say, "I am here, I am offering a relationship. I am a person with feelings, with perceptions and sensitive to you and anything you are willing to reveal about yourself." I have learnt to draw on my own experience and find there an ever-present reservoir from which I can draw, and with which I can initiate, deepen and carry on an effective relationship – even with an unmotivated, reluctant and silent young person. Doing things with young people, having patience and trust and allowing them to learn by making mistakes, are for me, indispensable characteristics that have allowed me to move toward allying with hidden, unrevealed young people. How often do we hear young people say,

"I just do not care." It is an ongoing challenge for all child and youth care workers to behave professionally and in ways that demonstrate consistency, care and acceptance of young people.

I have discovered that many young people in care crave for and fear deep human relatedness. Moments of real relatedness with at-risk young people are the essential reward for all of us as child and youth care workers. ▀

## Rooms Katolieke kinderskool Kamieskroon

**Vakante betrekking: Kinder- en Jeugsorgwerker (vroulik)**

**Diensaanvaarding: so gou as moontlik**

Vereistes:

- Minimum Graad 12 sertifikaat
- 'n Basiese kwalifikasie in Kinder- en Jeugsorg met minimum 2 jaar ondervinding
- 'n Geldige bestuurslisensie (kode 08) met openbare bestuurspermit sal as aanbeveling dien.

Take / Pligte sluit in onder meer die volgende:

- Fisiese en emosionele versorging van kinders
- Om kinders te ondersteun en lei in hul ontwikkeling na adolessensie
- Opstel en aanbied van opvoedkundige en ontspannings programme om kinders se vaardighede te ontwikkel
- Inslap en naweek diens verrig.

Geïnspireerde, energieke persone wat eie inisiatief aan die dag kan lê en 'n opregte begeerte het om 'n verskil in kinders se lewens te maak, kan 'n volledige aansoek en CV met relevante dokumente rig aan:

**Die Prinsipaal  
RK Kinderskool  
Posbus 180  
Kamieskroon 8241  
Wes-Kaap**

**E-pos: [kinderskool@lantic.net](mailto:kinderskool@lantic.net)**

# Child and Youth Care Work and Learnerships

**The term “learnership” has emerged in previous articles on SAQA. This month’s discussion seeks to begin to clarify this concept in response to readers questions. A further article will appear in next months issue on this subject.**

## What is a Learnership?

Learnerships are new paraprofessional and vocational education and training programs. They combine theory and practice and culminate in a qualification that is registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). A person who successfully completes a learnership will have a qualification that signals occupational competence and which is recognised throughout the country.

## What makes a learnership different?

Learnerships will include traditional apprenticeships, but will also go beyond them in important ways. As in a number of other countries, traditional training programs are not proving to be sufficiently flexible to meet changing needs.

Learnerships are important because:

- The emphasis of the programme is on its *outcomes*. The success of a learnership is whether at the end the learner can practically **use** the skills that s/he has been taught.
- A learnership combines both theory and practice. A learner is trained in **how** things are done, and this training must be undertaken in normal workplace conditions. But a learner is also taught the **“why”** and must understand the theory that lies beneath the practice.
- At various stages the learner is **assessed** to see if s/he is progressing and is able to perform the tasks for which they have been trained. This assessment will have a strong practical element.
- Learnerships are intended to help us meet the skill shortages that our country faces.
- Apprenticeships tended to be for younger people starting their working lives. Although learnerships will be available for young people, they will also provide training for more mature people as well. Learnership

programmes will also be designed at different levels on the National Qualifications Framework, and will range from introductory to paraprofessional levels.

## How will the new training programs work in practice?

Employers will enter learnership agreements with learners and training providers. They can be both large and small employers and a group of employers might join together to provide learnerships. An employer need not just be in the private sector. Any public entity, for example a government department, can provide learnerships. So can a non-governmental organisation (NGO).

In most cases an employer will provide the practical part of the learnership and a training and education provider will offer the learning part of the total programme. Some employers, especially larger ones, may be able to offer both elements of the learnership.

The *Learnership Agreement*, which employers enter with each learner, will spell out the duties and obligations of the employer, the learner and the training provider.

## Are there learnerships for child and youth care work?

The field of Child and Youth Care Work does not have learnerships developed as yet. As mentioned in previous articles, the Standards Generating Body is currently in the process of generating standards and qualifications for this field. The qualifications need to be registered with SAQA on the National Qualification Framework before learnerships can be developed. The Health and Welfare SETA has made funding available for this process and is very eager to support the development of learnerships in Child and Youth Care Work. Although this will be a lengthy process, it is envisaged that learnerships will be in place towards the end of 2005. ▀

Please submit any questions you might have to The Director, PO Box 36407, Glosderry, 7702 or fax 021-762 5352.

(Taken from: [www.vhutsila.org.za](http://www.vhutsila.org.za))



## Feziwe Bacela

**Regional Chairperson  
- Free State**

I entered the field of child and youth care in 1988. I applied for a nursing assistant job

as advertised at Tshiroletsong Place of Safety and Children's Home. To my surprise I was appointed as a "Versorgingsbeampte". I had never heard about this career before, and I didn't even know the meaning of the word. I accepted the post without any knowledge of what is expected of me as a care officer, as we were called. Later I found it challenging and interesting.

I was fortunate to have my late sister who was a social worker. She is the person who gave me a lot of support and encouragement and encouraged me to share art and creative activities with the children. At that time child and youth care workers were managing their duties using their creativity, without any training.

My aim was to further my studies in the nursing field as I was already a nurse, but when I entered this new field I changed my mind. In 1990 I was translated to Occupational Therapist Assistant in the same facility. This translation was influenced by the creative activities I was doing with the children. In 1997 I decided to register with the Technikon of SA for National Diploma in Residential Child Care. In the same year I was also attending training in Occupational Therapy Assistant. I was prepared to stand the strain of studying two different courses in the same year because I regarded myself as a child and youth care worker although I was rendering occupational therapy services.

In 1997, when I was still very much involved with the trade unions, I was involved in the discussions of the Inter-Ministerial Committee reports on young people at risk. This is one of the processes that was very informative to me.

At the end of 1998 when I was doing my second year in Residential Child Care I was informed that the course will be phased out and Child and Youth Development

will be introduced. In the same year I was appointed as Chief Child and Youth Care Worker in the same facility. I became a member of the management, and I am still holding that position.

With the knowledge I had gained from my involvement in the field and from my studies, I felt very responsible for the transformation of child care practice. I started engaging my colleagues and management in debates about the policies and laws guiding child care services. I even approached the head of the social development department, raising my concern about the poor implementation of these policies. There was a stage in 2003 when I felt that the standard of child care practice was low and I appealed to everyone who could help about issues pertaining to children. I used to say, "Now I'm blowing the whistle". When making this call I even involved portfolio committees in the Provincial Legislature. I then initiated a meeting between child and youth care workers and social workers to discuss the scope of practice of both categories, and see how we give support to each other for the benefit of the child. Through the planning session that was held with the child and youth care workers we managed to forward recommendations on the transformation of child care services to the department. I have since seen a lot of changes. Every day I go to work I feel motivated and satisfied.

In the year 2000 I registered for the National Diploma in Child and Youth Development and I'm still busy studying. I find it very exciting studying and implementing child care.

In 2000 and 2001 I was involved in recruiting child and youth care workers in the Free State Region to join NACCW, with the help of André Viviers, Harold Malgas and Francisco Cornelius. We managed to launch a region in 2001. I was elected as the secretary of the regional executive. In 2003 I was elected as the Regional Chairperson.

I thank all the young people and colleagues who have contributed to my development, my family and fellow workers in the child and youth care family for the support they give me.

*We often spend so much time coping with problems along our path that we only have a dim or even inaccurate view of what's really important to us.*

*Pete Senge*

# A glimpse into the inner world of the child and youth care educator

**Sue de Nim**

## Thoughts ...

It is the beginning of another year. I am sitting in my office wondering about what 2004 will bring. I am thinking about the students who will be in my classes this year. I am filled with a mass of thoughts and feelings, hopes and dreams – about them, about myself and about what we will do together. I am thinking about *you*. I want you to know about some of what is going on inside me, perhaps similar to what is going on inside some of your other lecturers, tutors, mentors, trainers and supervisors. I hope that by letting you see inside, it will help us to work together and that the journey we will take will be more meaningful.

## Greetings!

But, hold on a moment! I haven't even greeted you! So let's do this properly...

Hello. I'm very pleased to meet you. I am thrilled that you have chosen to learn about child and youth care work. I believe that children and youth are our most precious treasure and I can think of no other work of such importance. The fact that you are here tells me that you think young people are valuable too. You think that they are worth your time, your energy, and even your money. If you don't think that, you're in the wrong classroom. Children and youth don't want to be with people who don't want to be with them. If you *do* want to be here, welcome!

## Expectations

I'd like to talk a little about expectations, what you can expect from me, and some of what I expect from you. You can expect that I will arrive in class on time. I will be prepared and make every effort to facilitate an enjoyable learning experience. You can expect that I will treat you with respect and that I will not discriminate



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in any way. You can expect that whenever possible, I will involve you in decisions which affect you. You can expect that I will listen to your questions and concerns and help you to find your own answers. You can expect that I will challenge you, and at times, this might be uncomfortable. You can expect to learn from what I *do*, from how I am with you, and that this will be consistent with what I say about ethics and professionalism, use of self and relationships, and all the other things that I might seem to go on about. You can expect me to give of my best because I want you to get the best and be your best, because ultimately, children and youth at risk deserve the best.

And of course, there are things I expect from you. I expect you to attend and to arrive on time. This shows me that you are interested and responsible. I expect you to do the work that is set for you. I expect you to participate, to ask questions and share ideas. I expect

you to treat me, your classmates, colleagues and children with respect. I expect you to behave according to the code of ethics. I expect you to try out your skills so that they become part of who you are. I expect you to look critically at yourself – to identify those areas where you need to change, and to take the necessary steps, no matter how painful they may be. I expect you to use your full potential to be the most creative, honest, genuine and caring human being that you can be. And to assist others to do the same.

**A Vision**

I don't know you very well. I don't know your family and your history. I don't know who has hurt you and how. I don't know of your many talents and successes. I only know what you've shown me. But I have a vision. I see you in the future. I see you working with groups of troubled children and youth. You are building strong relationships with them. They like you because you can be trusted. You do what you say. You are honest. The children have fun with you. You have graduated from your studies, and your family and friends are proud of your achievements. You are employed as a child and youth care worker in an innovative programme where children and youth are valued. You are a role model to young people and to other child and youth care workers. People in your community view you with respect because you are a person who gives to others, who contributes to the well-being of fellow human beings. You have learned that your greatest riches are not sitting in your bank account; your greatest riches are those moments when you connect with others, when a child allows you to hold her while she cries, when a teenager asks you to help him practise his football skills, when a mother thanks you for helping her keep her family together.

It is my honour and privilege to work with you. Your development as a child and youth care worker has been entrusted to me and I take this very seriously. I have many ideas about what we will do together. This year, I will try some new things. Some of them will work and others might not. That's OK. We can learn from the mistakes as well as from the successes. I like the quote by the scientist, Niels Bohr, who wrote, "An expert is someone who has made all the mistakes that can be made, in a narrow field." I know that there will be times when we might get frustrated with each other. I might say things which you don't like or you might feel that I expect too much from you. I *do* expect a lot from you. I expect a lot from myself too.

**Anticipation**

I hope that this has given you some sense of knowing me and why I do this work. I look forward to the day

when you look at me and say, "today I understood what you said in that classroom all those years ago". I look forward to the day when I read an article written by you in *Child & Youth Care*. I look forward to the day you are elected onto the Professional Board for Child and Youth Care. You may feel like an acorn but the oak tree lies within and it's up to you how big and strong it grows. We are at the beginning of a wonderful journey together. I will see you again soon. For now, I have to prepare. ▲

**Child and Youth Care Trainers**

The NACCW wishes to increase its team of Child and Youth Care Trainers in the Western Cape, Free State, Southern Cape and Border regions. Applicants are invited from registered professional NACCW members who are employed in the child and youth care field and who have:

- A commitment to the profession of child and youth care
- Tolerance
- Patience
- Self-Awareness
- Available Time
- Transport
- Self-presentation skills
- Good language skills

Active involvement in and awareness of the field of child and youth care as well as an understanding of the transformation of the child and youth care field will be further considerations.

Please send a letter of application as well as an updated CV to:

Kathy Scott  
 NACCW, P.O. Box 36407, Glosderry, 7702  
 Fax: 021-762 5352  
 E-mail: kathy@naccw.org.za

**Closing date: 30 April 2004**



**Days to Remember**

**MARCH**

**NUTRITION CAMPAIGN MONTH – CANSA**

- 5 World Day of Prayer (First Friday of March)
- 7 Foster parent's/ care Day (1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of March each year)
- 8 United Nations Day of Women's Rights and International Peace (INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY)
- 17-22 National Library Week (TBC)
- 20 Earth Day
- 21 International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- 21 Human Rights Day – South Africa
- 22 World Day for Water – UN
- 22-28 National Water Week
- 24-30 National Kidney Awareness Week
- 24 World Tuberculosis Day (WHO)

The real act of discovery  
consists not in finding new lands  
but seeing with new eyes.

Marcel Proust



Which face do you see? Now look for the other face.