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Child and Youth Care

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



Changing Paradigms for
Working with Street Youth:
The Experience of
Street Kids International
by Stephanie Sauvé

Toward the Peaceful School
by Allen N. Mendler and
Richard L. Curwin

SOUTHERN AFRICA:
Special Report -
New thinking needed on
"AIDS Orphans"

Looking Forward ...

A new year – and a new look for *Child and Youth Care*! In our 22nd year of publication, we burst into colour in celebration of reaching some important milestones on our journey towards professionalizing child and youth care! We hope that this inviting, fresh presentation reflects something of ourselves as people who work with vulnerable children and their families. We hope that the content of the journal reflects our profession's national character. In this edition you will notice the editorial board's commitment to indigenizing our publication; to ensuring that there are articles catering for the broad range of experience and training in our readers; to as many easy-to-read articles as possible for busy people to read on the run; to remaining a resource for students; and most importantly, to providing a resource for practitioners.

Child and youth care, if practiced professionally and in a dedicated way, will continuously offer challenges to us to further develop our capabilities. It has always been our intention to circulate ideas for effective work at the interface between the young person or family, and the worker. We know that our respectable policy framework, and our commitment as a nation to the Rights of the Child will remain words on paper unless people know how to give life to these ideals in the real world of daily interactions. Writer John O'Donohue (Anam Cara: 1997) says that "life is made up of the days we inhabit". Child and youth care is perhaps made up of the moments we inhabit with young people. Inhabiting those moments with care and compassion means that we have to be able to call on a range of skills, and much knowledge. *Child and Youth Care* remains committed to the development of the individual practitioner; to publishing articles on how we *do* our work with children and families – how each of us in our own work can change things for the better.

Last year's bibliography is included in this edition. Do take a look at the list and see how many of the names you can put a face to, or that look distinctly South African! We thank all of our contributors, particularly local practitioners who do not feel that they are writers – but write anyway! The South African child and youth care fraternity has much of which it can be proud. In sharing information in these pages we celebrate our achievements and develop an indigenous discourse. We look forward to hearing from more from our local colleagues this year!

2004 is also the Year of the Family. As Zeni Thumbadoo points out in this edition, we have much to do to ensure that families are our partners. We look forward to more on family work, and also to keeping you up to date on developments taking place as our Professional Board begins its work. (At present we await the Minister for Social Development making his appointments and officially beginning the life of the Board). And we expect there to be much debate – heated debate – as the Children's Bill makes its way through Parliament. The Standards Generating Body will also be working hard to develop national standards for the training in our field, and we will run a regular column on this very complex process. As we see more organized and concerted effort being put into work with children affected and infected by HIV/AIDS we will publish on innovations and best practices as they emerge.

We live in interesting times. As we complete the last stretch of our first decade of democracy, may you be blessed in the work that you do towards improving the lives of our country's precious 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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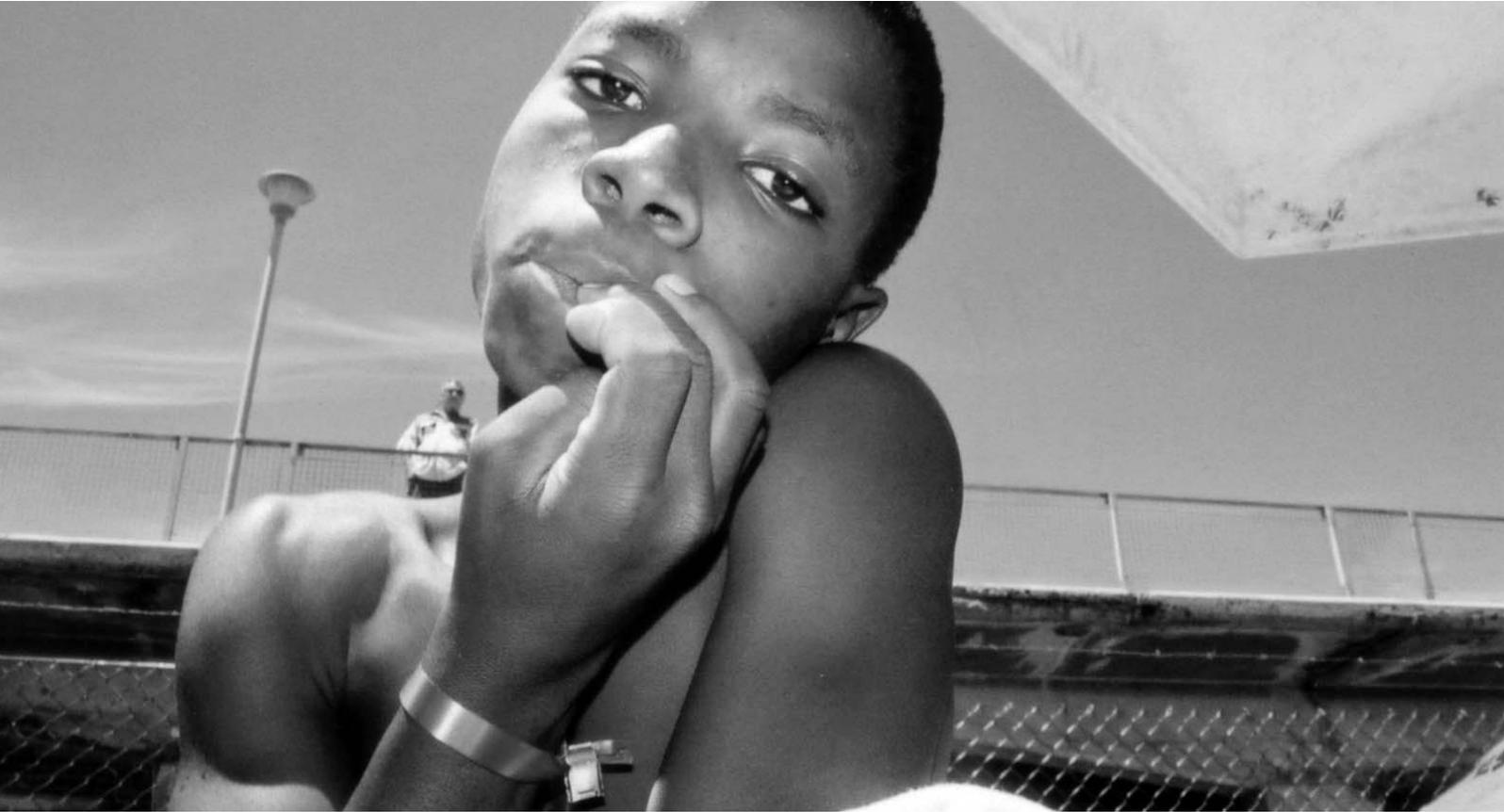


Benny Gool

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*
- *what you would like to see in future*



The Homestead

Changing Paradigms for Working with Street Youth

The Experience of Street Kids International

Stephanie Sauvé

Street Kids International

Part two

Citation: Sauvé, Stephanie. "Changing Paradigms for Working with Street Youth: The Experience of Street Kids International." *Children, Youth and Environments* 13(1), Spring 2003. Retrieved [date] from <http://cye.colorado.edu>.

Abstract

The United Nations estimates 100 million street youth across the globe. They are products of poverty, war, urbanization, political instability, family breakdown, and HIV/AIDS, among others. Many are not homeless, but primary income earners for their extended families. Many participate in the sex and drug trade because of limited income generation alternatives. How can we support these youth and increase their opportunities while respecting them as independent actors in their own lives? Street Kids International suggests a critical paradigm shift as the basis for being responsive and effective and describes its approaches for working with street youth as participants and assets within their present communities.

The Use of Stories

To every relationship street youth bring their stories of personal experiences, ideas, feelings, and dreams. If we do not base our relationships with youth on hearing

these stories and learning from them, then we are still working according to the old paradigm. If we do want to hear these stories, we must first create a trusting environment where sharing can take place and where street youth do not fear judgment or reprimand for the lives they have lived. SKI has learned that one of the most effective ways of creating a trusting environment is through its storytelling. SKI shares fictional stories and vignettes, based on work experience, that have street youth as their main characters.

It uses these stories to create a space where lived stories can be shared safely. We have found that street youth are comfortable discussing their thoughts and experiences in reference to a "fictional" story's characters and a plot that mirrors their own thoughts and experiences, without having to disclose personal information, until they feel ready.

Karate Kids and Goldtooth: Animations for Street Health

For example, Street Health programs use two animated films produced by SKI in the late 80s and early 90s: *Karate Kids*, which addresses HIV/AIDS and the sex trade, and *Goldtooth*, which addresses substance abuse. Each video portrays the lives of street youth – their humor, friendships, abuse, and exploitation. At

first criticized for their explicit content, these videos soon became internationally recognized for their capacity to facilitate dialogues with street youth. Karate Kids, in particular, received the Peter F. Drucker Award for Non-Profit Innovation in 1993.

The videos were not designed to define the signs and symptoms of sexually transmitted diseases or drug addiction. Instead, the videos aim to act as a medium that adults and street youth can share and discuss openly. Youth workers play the videos with groups of street youth and, on a second viewing, stop the video at various points to hear the group's thoughts on the characters and plot. This is not a comprehension quiz, nor an interrogation; it is a time for sharing and non-judgmental listening and discussion. Through these dialogues street youth have shared their views on why the sex trade sometimes appeals to them, how drugs help them get through the night, who sells them their drugs, and what they fear most and want most. Through these dialogues street youth have the opportunity, sometimes their first, to openly contemplate the daily risks and decisions they take, and to discuss safer lifestyle alternatives with adults who listen to their perspectives and respect their sense of personal autonomy. In this way, SKI's Street Health programs have used stories as a means for communication.

**Speed's Choice:
Animation for Street
Work**

In SKI's Street Work programs, stories also play a role as tools for learning new skills. In developing the Street Business Toolkit, SKI sought to identify the most effective way to advance street youths' business knowledge and understanding, despite their low literacy and numeracy skills. Street youth always came to business training with their own experience regarding pricing, customer retention, and the like. SKI needed to find a way for them to realize how much they already knew and then to build on that knowledge. It was soon clear that business concepts were most accessible to street-involved youth when introduced through a story instead of through definitions and calculations. Much like the oral storytelling tradition, lessons stayed in their memory and prompted new ideas and questions when first introduced through anecdotes about other street youth.

In this way Speed's Choice was born: an animated video about five street youth encountering the challenges and adventures of running their own small businesses. The experiences of each character have been further developed into case studies, used within an extensive curriculum of interactive activities and worksheets to guide street youth in developing a basic business plan. Each new business concept relates to specific characters and their stories and each story enables street youth to relate the new business concepts to their own experiences.

By creating programs in which street youth and adults can speak candidly with one another, we begin

to undermine the entrenched power dynamic that often hinders the progress of youth work. Over years of experience, in diverse countries and cultures, stories have repeatedly proven their capacity to stimulate communication, facilitate new learning, and allow adults to learn from street youths' lived reality. Their success inspires us to learn further ways of leveraging our work using stories.

Re-Branding Street Youth and the Nature of Youth Work

If we truly work within/according to a new paradigm for adult-youth relationships, it should not only inform how to work with youth and create the tools for doing so, it should also inform our communication with the public and our relationships with front-line workers.

SKI takes responsibility for witnessing and informing the public about the reality lived by street youth. As long as street youth do not have the public voice that they should, we have the responsibility to capture their true experiences as they wish to have them known by a greater public.

Most of us have winced at the tired stories about street youth, written to provoke pity from donors and sympathy from media. These stories rarely present a complete picture of these youth's lives. They depict

only the abused and abandoned street youth, instead of those who choose to run away, determined to make better lives for themselves. They prefer to depict street youth shoeless and begging in the street, instead of street youth who invest a small

part of their profit in second hand clothes to appear more professional to their customers. They prefer to depict street youth who combine their daily earnings to buy drugs instead of street youth who befriend each other to replace the family support they have lacked.

While it is easier to communicate a one-dimensional view of youth's lives, it is unhelpful to underestimate the public's ability to appreciate more complex realities. By portraying street youth as helpless victims and poster children, instead of as valuable members of society we continue to stigmatize them. Any story written purely to be provocative reinforces the clichés and stereotypes that hinder youth work and the lives of these youth. Taking the time to communicate accurate representations of street youths' lives builds the authenticity and effectiveness of work with street children.

How does SKI apply the new adult-youth paradigm to its work with front-line workers? We like to use the metaphor of a toolbox: in the new adult-youth paradigm, adults recognize that youth come with previous experiences, street skills, goals, and ideas metaphorically, their own box of tools. SKI offers them additional tools for taking control of their lives, such as a training program about ways to improve their small businesses. They will add these to their toolbox and use whichever tools a given circumstance demands.

As long as street youth do not have the public voice that they should, we have the responsibility to capture their true experiences as they wish to have them known by a greater public.

SKI approaches its engagement with front-line workers much the same way. Each front-line worker comes with a box of tools – experience, materials, and ideas that they have used in their previous work with street youth. SKI sees itself as a tool-maker, creating tools, be they materials or techniques, which front-line workers can use in their work. SKI could never supply front-line workers with a complete toolbox, just as it could never supply youth with all the knowledge and skills they need. It enters into relationships with front-line workers expecting a mutual exchange of ideas and resources, a mutual exchange of tools, and the collaborative formation of new ones. After contributing to each other's toolboxes, we look forward to meeting again, many months later, when we will share the new and different ways we have used each other's tools. The process continues endlessly as best practices are developed, improved, and shared worldwide over time. Street Kids International collects all documented best practices in their Toronto office for sharing upon request.

Case Studies

Despite a growing understanding of how best to support this population of youth, the phenomenon of over 100 million street youth worldwide remains complex and almost impossible to grasp. Understanding the context for what “makes” a street youth is not simple. The complex factors that cause youth to take to the streets include war, conflict, abuse, poverty, family breakdown, rebellion, and insufficient income. The phenomenon of street youth crosses borders and boundaries, and is replete with myths, stigmas, and stereotypes.

Most importantly, there is no one way to adequately capture a population that spans a wide spectrum that includes street-living youth, street-involved youth, and street-based working children. Some youth maintain a regular family connection, some attempt to maintain a degree of family connection, albeit irregular, and others have no family connection at all. Some youth are not registered in school; others, who are registered, can

often attend only periodically because of household responsibilities or the need to earn money. Even definitions by age do not adequately capture this population- SKI has experience with street youth from eight years to about 24 years of age.

The following case study captures the diversity of situations influencing the phenomenon of street youth.

Case Study: Africa

Across Africa one can find some of the highest levels of HIV/AIDS in the world. In these countries, the percentage of youth forced to assume roles as surrogate parents and primary income earners for their families is rapidly growing. UNAIDS states that by the year 2010, an estimated 106 million children under the age of 15 are projected to have lost one or both parents, with 25 million of this group orphaned due to AIDS. Today, approximately 13 million children under 15 have lost one or both parents to AIDS. Most of these children live in Sub-Saharan Africa. This number will continue to rise for the next two decades due to the rhythm and pacing of the disease (UNAIDS 2002).

When SKI first arrived in Lusaka, Zambia in 1996, one of its partners described street youth who spent their nights stripping passersby and selling the clothes at the second-hand market. They did not spend their earnings on novelties. They took no pleasure in hurting the passersby. The money they made bought food and basic needs for them and sometimes siblings and families. In response, SKI joined efforts with the Zambia Red Cross Society and the YWCA Council of Zambia to develop the Youth Skills Enterprise Initiative (YSEI) program: a program that later informed the design of the Street Business Toolkit.

The YSEI program targeted boys and girls aged 14 to 22 years who had minimal education and sub-standard living conditions. Information about the program was introduced within the communities and interested participants were interviewed in order for selection to confirm their commitment and eligibility. Participants underwent extensive training in business and life skills during which they developed a basic business plan for a small business such as tailoring or selling dried food goods. After successfully completing the training, participants were given a loan in the form of the assets needed to start their business, such as a table and baskets for their new vegetable stand or a sewing machine for their new tailoring business. During a three-month repayment period, program officers provided business guidance, personal support, and education on health and social issues as participants encountered the challenges and benefits of their new responsibilities. After repayment of their first loan, participants were eligible for second and third loans to improve and expand their businesses.

In many cases, the participants in the YSEI program were the primary income earners for their families. They were determined and creative, and they found ways to bring home money and food even if it meant begging, stealing, or sex work.

During three weeks of training, the participants gained basic business and life skills that impacted not only the success of their businesses but their capacity to make healthy and safe decisions in other areas of their



Armanda Mann

lives, such as no longer participating in the sex trade and using their money to buy healthy food and basic hygiene products. Through training, participants also built a support network of youth workers and peers. They learned to take on new challenges with confidence, knowing they had friends and mentors to turn to if needed.

Above all, participants learned to set and strive for personal goals. Their participation in high-risk activities decreased as they dedicated more time to improving their businesses. Some used their profits to save for future education, some expanded their business, and others began investing more in their personal health. The youth workers had previously shared information about HIV/AIDS, nutrition, and hygiene with these youth and did so during the YSEI program as well, but only now that the youth had safely earned a profit could they act on this knowledge and better take care of themselves.

One participant explained how, before she joined the program, she couldn't afford basic things, and how she would rinse her baby's nappies out in water and use soap only once a week. She proudly explained that with the profit from her business she could now buy toiletries and clothes.

By 1998 the YSEI program was independently run by the Zambia Red Cross and the YWCA, and it still is today. Since 2001 SKI has renewed its work in Zambia and is building new partnerships in South Africa, in the west around Burkina Faso, and in the east starting in Tanzania. SKI is focusing initially on the Street Health program that will supplement existing programming for front-line workers and street kids to deal with HIV/AIDS and substance abuse. The Street Work program with the Street Business Toolkit will then be brought on stream to increase the income earning opportunities for street kids within the informal sector.

SKI will continue its work in Africa by building regional expertise and capacity that can disseminate the Street Health and Street Work programs to street kids quickly and skillfully.

Conclusion

SKI has been consistent, and for many years unique, in its focus on working with street youth. It challenges the street kid stereotypes based on first-hand experience, and promotes an alternative understanding of street youths' problems and prospects. First, it argues that street youth are persons with the same inherent dignity and right to self-determination as others, and deserve to be respected as such. Second, SKI has learned that the best way to help street youth is to approach them as people with their own needs and aspirations, and enable them to consider how they might best address their own challenges. Third, street youth face economic as well as personal challenges and they can successfully address these challenges through their own initiatives - including entrepreneurship - and should be deliberately assisted in doing so.

Working with street youth inevitably includes risk and uncertainty, which does not appeal to most donors. Sophisticated strategies for working with street youth require a high tolerance for ambiguity for processes that are neither tidy nor time-bound. They do not produce

the measurable and compelling outcomes typical of more controlled programs, such as food aid and immunization.

However, with continued dialogue these youth will gain greater respect and support. In the meantime, we must put street youth on the policy agenda so that the critical next steps can unfold: developing micro-credit institutions that embrace marginalized youth as viable credit recipients, creating a shift to youth-centered global youth work strategies, building institutional capacity, such as the social and health services, in civil society, and reforming policy at the municipal government level, including support for street youth's security and rights.

Since its founding in 1988, SKI's work has reached over half a million street youths around the world through training and sharing of best practices with front-line workers and youth-serving organizations. Yet, its non-proprietary methods and tools, combined with its commitment to sectoral strengthening, make it difficult to count its true impact. Therefore, its goal is first and foremost to demonstrate that change is necessary and possible. SKI aims to demonstrate street youth's capacity to make safe and healthy decisions, to grow successful businesses, and to contribute to their communities when given basic support and respect. Through demonstration and transformative dialogues it is possible to increase respect for street youth's humanity and human rights, and to grow the global investment in programs and initiatives for integrating these marginalized youth into mainstream society.

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Child & Youth Care will publish a second Case Study in next month's issue.

Creative Education with Youth at Risk

By Yolaan Adams

It is time to be real about what is happening to our children behind bars...

Creative Education with Youth at Risk (CRED) started as an initiative between youth volunteers and community-based artists who recognised a need for programmes to be implemented in prisons as a creative alternative to crime. In order for CRED to meet its objectives of reducing the stigmatisation of incarcerated and released prisoners, CRED provides five distinctive Lifeskills Programmes using Art as a methodology to young people in Pollsmoor Prison, Cape Town. There is the Behavioural change programme using Hip-Hop as a methodology that is functioning in the Awaiting-trial section for 14 to 17 year old boys. Within that age group and gender is a programme for sentenced youth using Capeoria as a reflection tool, which aims to encourage youth

to access school programmes in prison, as well as CRED's pre-release programme which is aimed at preparing for reintegrating youth into their communities – those who have six months or less of their sentence. CRED has also developed and facilitated a Lifeskills programme that looks specifically at HIV/AIDS and self-esteem in the Female Section. CRED facilitated a programme that specifically looks at the factors that affect relationships and victim empathy using Visual Art as a reflection tool.

The workshops held have specific outcomes in mind. One of them being the strengthening of juveniles' social abilities using Lifeskills and Art to enable successful re-integration into their communities and another one is to minimise recidivism.

CRED also provides supportive social services to incarcerated and released youth, as it is ridiculous to assume that without consistent support from an outside source these youth would be able to avoid becoming involved once again in criminal activities and abstain from the use of drugs and alcohol as a method of escape. Supportive services such as counselling are not easy to do in a prison setting as there are various problems that not only external service providers experience in Pollsmoor Prison, but also the prison staff.

The prison has a well-stated mission statement about its fundamental function of rehabilitating prisoners and to provide the best care for prisoners incarcerated. Yet there are so many



factors that hinder the prison in achieving its goals such as the shortage of manpower and the fact that the prisons are overcrowded to such an extent that it results in there being inadequate facilities as well as inadequate space to render service to the prisoners. On 18th December 2003, 2067 young males were in Pollsmoor Prison and 1386 of them were Awaiting Trial!

There is a high count of drug trafficking amongst the prisoners and the cells within the prisons can accommodate +/-20 prisoners, but currently the figures are around 72 prisoners per cellblock. Then there is the growing threat posed by HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis, which is spreading increasingly amongst the prisoners. Yet the immediate threat towards the rehabilitation programme is the obstacles faced in the successful reintegration of prisoners into the communities. These obstacles can be classified as the hostile and uncooperative attitude on the part of many community members towards released prisoners. Communities cannot be blamed for having this attitude. How is one supposed to welcome a murderer, thief or rapist back into one's community if one is firstly unsure if the individual received rehabilitation in prison and secondly, if one was not prepared for the individual's re-integration?

It is important to keep in mind that youth Awaiting-trial do not fall under the responsibility of Correctional Services and therefore do not receive any services provided by the prison such as seeing a social worker, going to school and



involvement in programmes. So the 1386 young 'alleged' offenders are not engaged in any rehabilitation or prevention programme for the time of their incarceration.

It is CRED's belief that any programme that wishes to rehabilitate sex offenders should first include a basic lifeskills programme. This programme should deal specifically with relationships and the factors that affect positive relationships such as HIV/AIDS, conflict, substance abuse, crime and a lack of victim empathy. Prevention programmes should be implemented in prisons to reduce or eradicate the high rate of sexual abuse in prison. In most cases, inmates will not admit to being victims of sexual abuse. In the female section, 75% of the 40 young people that CRED has worked with tested HIV positive. All of those young women were involved in relationships with other inmates, more than 60% of them having been coerced into those relationships.

CRED therefore wishes to advocate that Correctional Services as well as Social Services take some responsibility for the sexual abuse that occurs within prison settings that are overcrowded and understaffed. One step would be the distribution of Anti-retrovirals to prisoners, especially those who have been victims of sexual abuse. Prevention programmes should be implemented in communities where the role of gangsterism is recognized as a causal factor of sex offences. Gangsterism is a contributing factor to the increase in crime and sexual abuse in the communities. Rape has very much become a gang activity. ▲

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Update on Children in Prison

by *Lukas Muntingh, Nicro*

South Africa is currently ranked number four in the world in terms of imprisonment rates, after the USA, Russia and Belarus. As at 31 July 2003 there were a total of 185 217 people in South African prisons, of whom 4 032 (2.2%) were children. Children also constitute 7.8% of all awaiting-trial prisoners in South Africa.

Of the 4 032 children in South African prisons, 2 187 were unsentenced and 1 845 were sentenced. Despite the Department of Correctional Services' claims that there are no children under the age of 14 years being held awaiting trial in prisons, there were six male children aged between seven and 13 years being held awaiting trial in prisons.

The offence profile of children in custody (sentenced and unsentenced) shows that if one compares the two major categories, property and violent offences, it is only in the case of 17-year-old children that violent offences constitute a higher proportion than property offences. This profile confirms common knowledge that many children are in custody as a result of poverty-driven crime.

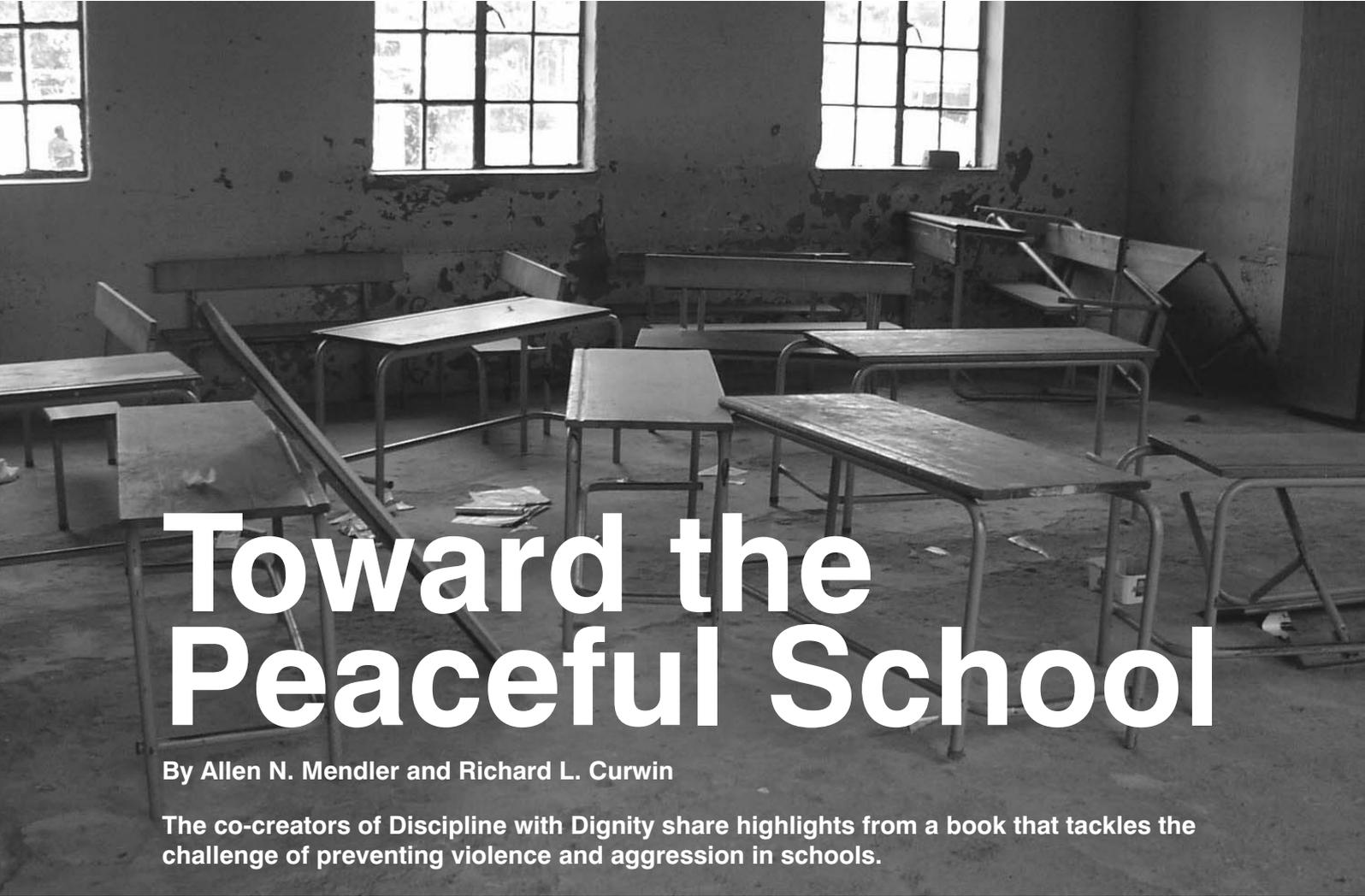
A number of trends have become clear over the last couple of years regarding children in South African prisons:

- Despite numerous efforts, the number of awaiting-trial children continues to increase. Although there have been interventions that

resulted in decreases, these have not been sustained and within months the number of children has reverted to previous levels.

- Children are being detained in prisons for primarily for property offences, and not for being violent young thugs.
- The number of unsentenced children now outnumbers sentenced children in prison. This is an extremely worrying trend and does not bode well for children in conflict with the law. While children are being arrested and taken into custody, their cases are not being processed and finalised at an acceptable rate. However, this does not only apply to children.
- Children under the age of 14 years are being held illegally in prisons, despite claims from the Department of Correctional Services that there have been no children in prisons under this age since April 2003.
- The Department of Justice appears to keep a safe distance from this problem and it does not appear as if it acknowledges that low productivity in the criminal justice system is the main reason why the number of children awaiting trial in prisons has not been able to come down to an acceptable level.

Ref: Article 40, Vol 5, No. 4, Nov 2003



Toward the Peaceful School

By Allen N. Mendler and Richard L. Curwin

The co-creators of *Discipline with Dignity* share highlights from a book that tackles the challenge of preventing violence and aggression in schools.

Sadly, violence is a reality in schools just as it is in society; and yet, the school remains perhaps the safest sanctuary for many children confronted by daily assaults to their physical and psychological well-being. Nevertheless, the last few years have seen an explosion of initiatives, designed to curb the problem of school and social aggression that leads to violence.

We define violence as an assault to one's person that may take three forms: bodily (physical injury), esteem (verbal harassment such as name-calling), and property (things one owns). It is bred in an atmosphere of hostility and aggression, where it feels and looks better to hurt than it is to resolve and tolerate. The image of a hero as one who escalates and conquers is pervasive; the image of the hero as one who stays calm and finds real solution is nearly nonexistent. All educators realize that there is a serious impact on learning when children and teachers feel unsafe: Learning has a hard time flourishing when students are worried about being hurt or put down, or having things they value defaced or destroyed.

The causes of violence are complex and often interwoven. Abused children grow up to be abusive adults who perpetuate a cycle of violence directed toward those they can victimize. Other causes include the continuing erosion of a nurturing family structure, the absence of fathers, increasing depersonalisation within our communities, and the diminishing role of values and community in many lives.

For those who do not have a healthy family life, gangs become a substitute family. Others join gangs out of fear or for the excitement they envision.

The media present pictures of shootings so often that these acts of violence are seen as a natural part of living by many impressionable youth, who are exposed to a barrage of images of death and other violence. By age 18, the average child will have viewed 200 000 acts of violence on television ("Youth Violence Rampant," 1993). Commercials promote the acquisition of "quickly, easily obtainable" goods and status, as do high-profile sports stars and team owners who demand and get staggering amounts of money. The values of loyalty and stability are not taught by these highly visible sports figures. Drugs are viewed as a viable or even preferable economic and life-style option to both the financially and emotionally impoverished.

Technology generates as many problems as it solves by creating an impersonal set of obstacles to human contact. People often prefer an answering machine to a live connection because it is easier to leave a message than to converse. Dating on the Internet allows us to be anything we want to be: without acne, thin, funny and safe.

For many people, there are moments when we long for a return to a simpler and saner time when authority figures were the good guys. These feelings of frustration can unwittingly and dangerously lead to simplistic solutions that may make us feel momentarily

empowered but no safer. We must push beyond our anger if we are to really make a difference.

If we expel a student from school who then creates havoc at the local mall, have we done anything more than displace danger from one location to the next? It is not enough to fortify the gates of the school. We can be far more successful by transforming schools into institutes that teach our children to control their violent nature, to reduce aggressive and hostile attitudes and behaviours that lead to violence, and to change the self-destructive path.

A School-Wide Approach

When social problems reach Main Street, schools are asked to fix them. Why should educators add violence to the myriad other social skills we are asked to cure?

Even if most students are not chronically hostile, those who are cause fear and disruption for everyone else. What can we do about the problem when our society itself seems powerless? We cannot do everything, but we had better do something. For too many children, school is their only chance.

We advocate a comprehensive school-wide approach that includes five basic components and provides specific, practical strategies.

These are:

Teach Students How to be less Violent, Aggressive, and Hostile.

Students behave violently as a way of satisfying one or more of their basic needs. They may be expressing anger or frustration, showing off, seeking a sense of control, or protecting themselves. Throughout their lives, children have learned how to express their feelings by observing their parents and teachers, as well as the Power Rangers, Roseanne, Bart, and Beavis and Butthead. The more tools available to students to meet their needs and to express their feelings, the greater the likelihood they will use them.

Many of the methods of *Discipline with Dignity* teach alternatives to violence. Teaching students skills in conflict resolution, peer mediation, and anger control provides them with non-violent ways of setting disputes and getting their needs met. We can teach our students positive skills both for preventing disruptive events and for dealing with the consequences of violent encounters.

Teach Students How to Make More Effective Choices.

Once students have additional skills, they need to know when to use them and how to choose among them. Every time a student breaks a rule or behaves disruptively, he or she needs both firm limits and significant choices. Firm limits demonstrate that adults mean business about what we will and will not accept.

Real choices help students realise that they are capable of selecting non-violent alternatives, for example, "you have chosen to give yourself a time-out (limit). Come back when you are ready to learn (choice)."

Model Alternative Expressions of Anger, Frustration, and Impatience

School personnel, need to model the same choices and behaviours that they want from their students. A young person cannot do what he or she has never seen.

By using the same skills and making positive choices, we as adults show students that (a) real people use non-violent strategies, and (b) these strategies work, even when we feel hostile. For example, fighting student disrespect with sarcasm and removal often validates the very

behaviour we seek to change in the student. It is best to respond in the same manner expected of the student when the student is angry: "I don't like it when you make fun of me, but I understand that you might be angry or embarrassed. Let's talk later and see if we can work it out."

Create and Nurture Community Networks.

We need hugs big enough to surround the entire school. It is no longer possible for teachers to meet the learning needs of all students in a typical classroom – with the growth of inclusion, the diversity of learning needs is greater than ever. No matter how talented, one person cannot simultaneously teach five reading groups, manage four students with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, facilitate a conflict mediation between two upset children, and take a child with autism for a walk. In recognition of this diversity, educators, particularly classroom teachers, must create a network of resources in order to meet the needs of all their students. The regularly scheduled utilization of such resources as parents, senior citizens, and volunteers is a trend that will need to be expanded in order to really make differences in the lives of students.

Reflecting upon his life a child, ex-convict Kenneth Barksdale told what he needed when younger.

I hated everyone – cops, my father, my mother. All of my life I was told I wouldn't live to see my 14th birthday...But deep down inside, I wanted someone to hold me, tell me I was special. I wanted the attention I never got when I was home. (Rochester [NY] Times Union, 1992)

Sadly growing numbers of students need lots of support to know that they "belong," that they are someone "special" and "capable" and that they can "influence" what happens to them by how they act toward others.

These feelings of frustration can unwittingly and dangerously lead to simplistic solutions that may make us feel momentarily empowered but no safer.

Emphasize the Value of Human Dignity.

Until students learn it is wrong to hurt another person, strategies alone will not change their behaviour. If the family has failed, other institutions must do what they can to return us to a culture of values and principles. Religion can teach values to those who will listen. Businesses can treat customers with respect and dignity. Youth groups can teach good behaviour to children. The school also has a responsibility to teach values.

We need to transform every school into a community that actively demonstrates, models, and advocates the spirit and courage of, and commitment to, the premises that all life is precious and needs to be respected, protected, and valued. Educational values that relate to cooperation, safety, ethnic harmony, learning, and altruism must be taught and reinforced at school. Students need to have their altruism awakened by serving others and such service should be part of the school curriculum. With proper commitment, modelling, and instruction, students themselves can and will create strategies and ways of making the school a better place. When students violate the rights of another, they should face their victim and their victim's support network, listen to the hurt caused by their behaviour, and work toward making material and/or emotional restitution.

The Bigger Picture

We do not wish simply to teach children to rise above their impulses, drives, and emotions. We want to teach them to reach out and aspire to go to a higher dimension, one inhabited by values, a strong sense of what is right as well as what is wrong, and an understanding of and belief in the essential sanctity of the human spirit.

Rick Curwin and Allen Mendler are the authors of *Discipline with Dignity* and many other publications. They do training and staff development with educators and youth workers throughout the country. The authors can be contacted at: Discipline Associates, PO Box 20481, Rochester, NY 14602; phone 800/772-5227, fax: 219/663-8530

Authors Note

This article is adapted and condensed from a new book by the authors on violence, aggression, and hostility, published in January 1997 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

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Taken from: Reclaiming Children and Youth, Volume 5, Number 4 Winter 1997

Benny Gool



An *Exquisite* Moment

Mark Gamble

I sit now, mug of tea in my hand. Day is at an end. My three year old daughter, Emma, climbs onto my lap. My eyes close. Thoughts drift back to my day at the Child and Youth Care Centre.

Morris is in my office again. Run-away. He has only been back for a few hours. Skinny, bedraggled, fifteen years old. Outside a young girl in tears. Morris's fist into her face. "Jou Ma se poes."

Now in my office, the anger palpable, primal, you can smell it. He knows me now this boy, knows he is safe here. In time the anger fades, chamellion-like as the grief and despair bring there own colour and texture forth. Loss, primary loss, rejection, violence. All there in my small cubicle office wrapped into fifteen short years of life. And at fifteen the world of the gangs beckons to Morris.....he is heeding the call.

Emma's voice: "Daddy look I cooked supper for you, its pancakes." A plate of flattened playdough held enticingly under my nose. Bringing me back to the present moment.

My thoughts, troubled return to Morris. How do we reach through the experiences, through the walls, the violence, to the soul of Morris. Reach him in the place of mystery, where divinity finds accord with our humanity. Say to him: "Morris look there is another path, how about it?"

"Daddy, Wake-Up!!" Emma indignant now.

"Oh sorry darling." My arm bends and folds to take the shape of an ostrich which pecks her lightly on the cheek.

She looks at this strange apparition, daddy's arm, and steps into her own fantasy. "Is that a baby ostrich?" she asks.

I shrug my shoulders, "maybe you should ask the ostrich," I suggest.

A little face turns to my hand and arm, and she asks: "are you a baby ostrich?"

My hand nods.

"Oh," there is some amazement in her expression, she continues: "do you have a mommy?"

The ostrich, my hand shakes its head.

"Ah," she takes my arm pulling it towards her. For Emma no hand or arm. For her there is a baby ostrich that needs a Mommy, she strokes the baby ostrich and plants a feather-light kiss on the top of its head. "Shh, shh now, I will look after you, I will be your Mommy."

I watch my daughter as she rocks her baby ostrich to sleep. I love her as much as God allows. Love her for the medicine of innocence she has brought to her dad, love her for the purity of her being. This moment is exquisite by contrast.

You cannot do child and youth care without opening the gateway to your soul, the heart. And in opening the heart the dark stuff will pour in. You will know pain and sorrow beyond the ego and you will weep. For this after all is child care.

You and I both know the story of Morris, his anger and despair. You might know his story in a child by another name, but you know. And you too might walk home with a heart that is troubled.

May you then also receive the gift of an exquisite moment. ▴

Letter to the Editor

Client Care in Child and Youth Care

A renowned trainers in Child and Youth Care asked a question during training on how we would like to be treated if we were in the trying moments in our lives. A further question related to how we would feel if we were granted an opportunity to bring our children, our babies, kith and kin for a month or so to stay at places where we work. I could sense a sudden silence.

I need not define the business that we are in. I assume that all of us know and are aware of the clients we have to work with on a daily basis. Brown (Child and Youth Care 1999; 14) rightly put it "when you work in a program with troubled kids, YOU enter THEIR life space by choice and they don't enter YOUR life space by choice." Like a Nurse who can not choose to work with a particular patient, we also are not in a position to choose with whom we work. Period.

The client in our care may show and display a number of challenging behaviours. It is difficult to relate with them because some do not trust adult figures anymore and it is not easy to re-develop that trust.

For years I have been perturbed by the manner in which we in a profession called Child and Youth Care handle our clients. The move to professionalise Child and Youth Care are at a more advanced stage and maybe will result in monitoring inappropriate activities committed against our clients. It will be indeed a tall order for the Board if some of us act as accomplices to the continuing abuses of young people in our care. I wonder if all of us have begun to see the children, young people and their families as clients. The undeniable truth is that they are indeed our clients, because if we remove them from the settings where you and I interact with them we are all left without a job.

We need to start talking about these things. Period.

Nkwapa D Moloto

Reference

Child and Youth Care Vol. 17, October 1999, page 14

Tame your Tongue!

Barrington Makunga from the Eastern Cape focuses our attention on the impact of the spoken word in child and youth care programs.

There is a great need for us as child and youth care workers, irrespective of our operational ranks to “tame our tongues or face the consequences”. What you say and what you do not say are both important. Listening and responding with respect, offering emotional and developmental support, building rapport and relationships are some of the most critical interactional dynamics. This involves managers relating to their subordinates, staff relating to their clients as well our reactions to the feedback we receive. Proper speech is not only saying the “right words at a right time” but “controlling your desire to say what you shouldn’t say”. It is very important for every child and youth care worker to ask the following questions:

- Is what I want to say true?
- Is it kind?
- Is it necessary?
- Is it ethical or acceptable to the society?

Causing Damage

An “uncontrolled tongue” can do terrible damage. Young people in residential care facilities often find their behaviour deteriorating because of the foul language used by some of our staff. This is often accompanied by threats. Threats don’t work. Some young people have developed difficult-to-handle behaviours, and may feel powerful and everlasting – and are likely to say provocative words. Then if threatened with disciplinary action, they might well demonstrate that our threats are empty ones. If we respond with idle words, these may be damaging because they spread destruction quickly. “Words are like feathers from the pillow, once they protrude can never be forced back”.

I appeal to all child and youth care workers not to be careless or cruel with their words, thinking they can apologise later. A few words spoken in anger can destroy a relationship that took years to build. We must

remember that building relationships is a process which involves much time and effort. It is not wise to destroy work done by colleagues through words and claim to still have interest in working with such a person. Even if we do not achieve perfect control of the tongue, we can still learn enough control to reduce the damage it can do. “It is better to fight a fire than to go around setting new ones”. Exposure to literature, interaction with experienced colleagues, practising good listening skills, as well as genuine concern about the well-being of families and young people, may help us fight inappropriate use of our tongues.

Labelling

Sometimes we are tempted to view children as delinquent and deviant, intellectually defective, thieves, murderers, rapists, aggressive, dysfunctional, dangerous, lazy, rude etc. These attribute the problems experienced by the child to the child himself. We use such words to label them thereby destroying their well-being. We need to view young people as competent and with rights as future citizens of this world. The future is totally dependent on them not us; we are only boats to carry them across. If we can familiarize ourselves with respect and compassion, then their dignity will be protected and the use of destructive words can be avoided in all our interventions.

The careless and destructive use of our tongues is also responsible for the following:

- Abscondments of young people from our care
- “Defiance of authority” by young people
- Resistance towards participation in programmes by young people and staff
- Unnecessary conflicts within the context as a whole. If used by managers towards staff, staff become demotivated and lack interest, thereby creating a bad image for the profession itself.

Rumors

Child and youth care workers often act on rumors and foul speech begins as rumors. It is as hard not to listen to a rumor, as it is to turn down a delicious cake. Taking just one piece of either creates a taste for more. We can resist rumors the same way a determined dieter resists Kentucky Fried Chicken. Never take a bite. If you don’t nibble on the first bite of gossip, you can’t take the second and third. Corridor-gossip is always powerful and often endangers staff development. Most people utter far more destructive words than constructive ones in this situation.

Speech Patterns

Four common speech patterns can be distinguished as follows:

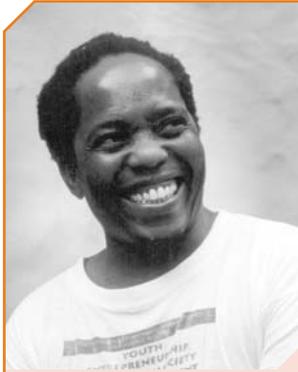
- **THE CONTROLLED TONGUE:** Those with this speech pattern think before speaking. They know when silence is best. Their speech is full of mercy,

empathy, love, peace, courtesy, yielding, sincerity, goodness, patience, frankness, honesty and trustworthiness. They always give wise and courageous advice.

- **THE CARING TONGUE:** Those with this speech pattern speak truthfully and have reframed attitudes towards children who struggle with their behaviour and indeed to people generally. Always seek to encourage and avoid harmful words.
- **THE CONNING TONGUE:** Those with this speech pattern are filled with wrong motives, gossips, lies, flattering, exaggerations, insults, arguments, and quarrels. Their speech is full of jealousy, selfishness, disorders and the creation and formulation of false statements against other innocent people.
- **THE CARELESS TONGUE:** Those with this pattern are filled with curses, quick-tempered words which can lead to rebellion and destruction.

Managers, colleagues, child and youth care workers, plan your words and say them with concern for their impact. Your words should have a therapeutic purpose and should always be in the best interests of the child. Tame your tongue and sustain the caring environment!!!

- Abstain from **bad company** and seek for **good**
- Maintain your positive **thoughts**, because they will become your **words**
- Maintain your positive **words**, because they will become your **actions**
- Maintain your positive **actions**, because they will become your **habits**
- Maintain your positive **habits**, because they will become your **values**
- Maintain your positive **values**, because they will become your **destiny**
- Seek to be part of a **team**, because you will find it easy to work in difficult situations



Mvuyo Manyungwana

Regional Chairperson - Northern Cape

When I started working as a child and youth care worker I knew nothing about the work. I got my training on the job from the experienced child and youth care workers. Luckily the care worker who guided me, was completing the Unisa Certificate course. After some time on the job I realized that it would be important for

me to involve myself in studies. Although I knew nothing about the work I could see from the team I was working with, that we were not working in the best interests of the child. This prompted me to register for the Unisa certificate myself. During this time many workers were focused on danger allowance, overtime etc. and were shooting down almost every new approach in child and youth care by mobilizing each other in the name of the Union.

After registering with Unisa, I was afforded the opportunity to do BQCC. Core Concepts and Behaviour Management training by Sabitha Samjee. Knowing Sabitha, was a blessing because this led to a long term relationship and through contact with her I was able to develop into a more knowledgeable child and youth care worker. As I was starting to understand the work I started engaging my colleagues in debates. My exposure to other professional child and youth care workers led to my self-confidence in my work and as a result I formed part of a group who would challenge and question issues. I remember myself and a colleague going to challenge the Mayor about issues relating to children! From there on I never looked back. I then invested myself in all child and youth care issues and structures. This led to other child and youth care workers being influenced by us. Some were saying, "Julle is hastig en nuut en julle se wiede sal pap word!" Fortunately this did not happen!

In 1999 I moved to probation services where I was working with youth living on the streets, youth in prison, and gang-involved youth. In 1998 I formed part of the professional foster care pilot team working as a child and youth care worker rendering support services to families. During 1997 I was introduced to Umtapo Center where I was exposed to peace education training.

My Accomplishments

In 1997 I was elected Acting Regional Chairperson and from 1998 to date, Regional Chairperson. In 1997 I volunteered to promote recreation programs in crèches and communities through the South African National Games and Leisure Activities (SANGALA). Through this program I completed level 1 and 2 in Sports and Recreation Management with the University of Potchefstroom.

In 1998 I enrolled with TSA for the Diploma in Child and Youth Development and graduated in 2001. Currently I am doing the B-Tech. In 1998 I was afforded an opportunity to go on an educational tour to Denmark by the NACCW. In 2000 I was appointed as a supervisor and in 2001 I was appointed as Control Child and Youth Care Worker. In 2002 I formed part of the provincial delegation on an educational tour to Sweden.

My thanks go to every NACCW member who contributed to my development. God bless you all.



Family (Preservation) Work in Child and Youth Care

As we enter 2004, the International Year of the Family, Zeni Thumbadoo comments on our field's progress in the area of family work in South Africa.

How it was

The history of residential care in South Africa holds many horror stories of both the absence of work with families in residential care facilities, and at times the deliberate ostracising of families.

In 1992 Sipo was placed as a baby in a traditionally white residential facility far away from his rural home. Sipo lived in this facility for many years and was unsuccessfully placed in a few foster care placements. Eventually he was placed in another children's home – one with a commitment to family preservation work. This facility worked relentlessly to find Sipo's family. When she was found his aunt then told the story. She had travelled from her home in rural Kwa/Zulu Natal to the city to find Sipo. She did not know the community in which the children's home was located. The transport costs were high, the travelling complicated. The residential facility was in a traditionally White

area – complicated to find without English language skills. When she arrived at the facility it was late. She approached the sophisticated office and asked to see Sipo. She was told that it was not possible – as it was not visiting hours. She was also told that Sipo did not speak Zulu any more, and she would not be able to communicate with him. The Aunt left and did not see Sipo for years thereafter. Later when she met Sipo through the efforts of the family preservation program at the second residential facility, he was a troubled, culturally confused teenager searching for his identity. (He has since been successful reunited with his family in the rural community after a long, sensitive and complicated reunification process.)

Staff in residential care facilities at this stage in South Africa often demonstrated a judgemental attitude towards abusive, neglectful families and a disregard for cultural traditions. In the best programs, well organised parenting programs or visiting programs were arranged so that they did not pose any disruption to the facilities' routines. Visits after work (evenings) were generally not acceptable; food prepared by families for children was often not allowed; cultural rituals during illnesses and times of stress were not usually accommodated; and 'unmanagable' parents were prohibited from visiting. It was the field social worker who worked with the family – and the usual complaint was that they actually did nothing significant towards reconstruction/reunification!

This resulted in many children living all their childhood years in institutional care. Many progressive residential programmes designed and offered independent living programs to assist children adjust to non-institutional life. This was the significant program not family reunification!

The changes

Unfortunately this is still the case in many untransformed residential facilities, but over the past decade, real efforts have been made to promote family work in the child and youth care field in South Africa.

Working with families has required child and youth care workers to develop in new ways. Family preservation services recognize that children are part of their families, however they might define them. Families, despite the crises and challenges they experience, are experts on their own lives and need to be part of all decision making that affects them. The strengths approach in family preservation work encourages us to look at families holistically – acknowledging their developmental needs as well as their strengths. This approach requires us to use strengths to meet needs. It focuses on the identification and development of potential. The family preservation approach considers the ecology of the child – the community, culture, family traditions, histories and dynamics. Visiting families and observing children in their family contexts assists child and youth care workers understand children and their families. Child and youth care workers in parenting programs assist parents and families to care and manage their children more successfully. The shift in responsibilities of the child and youth care workers to actively contribute to the engagement, involvement and development of families opens exciting new roles in the field.

Family preservation services have demonstrated the role of community child and youth care workers in preventing the removals of children when their families are in crisis. There has been work in the speedy reunification of children from residential care and foster care, as well as the reunification of more challenging young people into their families. In communities there is a growing awareness of family preservation services through effective community conferencing, and awareness-raising on the importance of families and the value of family preservation and support work. Family preservation services have been initiated in youth programs, child protection agencies, community programmes, and in residential programs.

How its done

Collaboration with families has required changes in program design in many residential facilities. It has required specialised family preservation training for all staff and a commitment to embrace a family preservation perspective, allowing it to pervade the milieu. Family involvement is evident in developmental

assessment processes. The process of reunification is planned in individual development plans. Care plans show the consideration given to preserving the family. Some residential programmes have strengthened their skills in family conferencing – demonstrating effective restorative work with families. In more subtle ways some programmes have used the procedures associated with the minimum standards for residential care to entrench family involvement. There are procedures that ensure the involvement of parents in residential care routines – bath-times, meal times, birthday celebrations, school visits, parenting programs, health care, inclusion of cultural rituals and increased home visits.

The challenges

During this International Year of the Family the challenge of the HIV/AIDS pandemic forces us to further review our definitions of family, and our understanding of childhood. Residential programs are providing services to child-headed households. In communities, trained community-based child and youth care workers are supporting teenagers who care for siblings. It is clear that the nature of child and youth care programs is changing to embrace work with families as described in the growing volume of international literature on the matter. Child and youth care workers are being trained to provide a range of services to the whole family and engage with the child in the context of his/her family unit. While we have much to do in South Africa, the family preservation movement has been embraced in the child and youth care field and promises to help prevent what happened to Sipo happening in the future ▴

UNISA

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

On 1 January 2004 Technikon South Africa, UNISA and VUDEC merged to create a new single institution known as the University of South Africa. The National Diploma and B.Tech: Child and Youth Development continues as before.

PLEASE NOTE

First Registration Cycle: 6 January – 20 March 2004.
Second Registration Cycle: 10 August – 2 October 2004.

Closing dates to apply for credits as well as first time registration for B.Tech is 27 February 2004 (1st Cycle) and 17 September (2nd Cycle)

Contact Details: Call Centre (011) 670 9000
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SOUTHERN AFRICA: Special Report

Benny Gool

New thinking needed on “AIDS Orphans”

JOHANNESBURG, 30 October (IRIN) - A review of research literature - 81 published and unpublished papers, books and reports - on the impact of HIV/AIDS on children in Africa has found significant gaps and biases that shape responses to AIDS-affected children.

Most research is based on an assumption that an epidemic of orphans is a threat to society, concludes the review. “AIDS orphanhood” is conceptualised as a disease in itself, a breeder of criminals, militia and sex workers. This idea, echoed by the media, reinforces and perpetuates the stigma and discrimination experienced by AIDS-affected children.

“So, stigma in life is replicated in research,” said author Jo Stein, principal scientific officer at the AIDS and Society Research Unit of the Centre for Social Research at the University of Cape Town (UCT). There is little empirical evidence for this assumption, the study found. Rachel Bray, a researcher with UCT, argues that these “apocalyptic predictions” are unfounded, ill considered and a self-fulfilling prophecy. Her research with street children in South Africa shows that it is not growing up without an obvious caregiver or role model that makes children prone to violent behaviour, but living in communities that exclude, abuse and abandon them. The danger is not orphanhood, explained Bray, but the way society deals with parentless children. The emphasis of responsibility should be reallocated away from the children to society and, critically, to government.

“It’s our own perception of parentless children as a problem - we as adults and communities should help those kids, because social parenting is as important as biological parenting,” added Stein. Child-headed households or other living arrangements without adult

authority threaten conventional wisdom on appropriate care and control of children, the review said. Nine studies on the psychological adjustment of children in AIDS-affected families showed that they do not exhibit more violent behaviour but more depression, anxiety, psychosomatic reactions and post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms.

The numbers presented by UN agencies and development organisations lends urgency to the crisis: 13.2 million children under the age of 15 have lost one or both parents, and 90 percent of these live in sub-Saharan Africa, according to UNAIDS. But Stein argues that these generalisations lack comparative or contextual analysis, and overlook existing non-nuclear household arrangements. Many family forms exist in Africa, and not necessarily for orphans. However, academic literature and media reports draw uncritically on “traditional” demographic models, overlooking children’s actual living arrangements. Several studies point out that, more than the loss of one or both parents to disease, it is the stigma attached to AIDS that makes life hard for orphans - a veritable “social death”. Using a variety of participatory research tools, a 2002 study by Save the Children in South Africa found that orphaned children face discrimination within their families, communities, churches and schools before and after the death of their parents.

An unpublished report from Botswana by J. Daniels argued that stigma undermines the government’s efforts to provide a safety net for orphans because families will not come forward to claim benefits. Even the term “AIDS orphan” reinforces labelling and stigmatisation. A report by the US Agency for International Development to the US congress recommended not singling out the cause of parental death in applications for assistance, thus avoiding both stigma around AIDS and discrimination

against other diseases. Research has pointed out that AIDS orphans are vulnerable to exploitation as cheap labour, through sexual abuse, and financial deprivation through property grabbing, or the siphoning off of childcare grants in countries that provide them. This provides a powerful motivation for increased funding for NGOs that work with, or do research about children, but falls short of advocating deep changes to the state welfare system, said the review.

Few authors draw attention to the failure of the state to care for South African orphans, the report said. Elsewhere in Africa, relief agencies and the media highlight the plight of orphans and the funding needs of NGOs, but the failure of governments to adequately address the issue is seldom discussed in the media or academic literature. Most studies deal with the numbers and ages of orphans and their material needs. There is little research proper, only anecdotal evidence, on quality of life, child care arrangements and psychosocial support, the review found.

Financial and material needs are usually presented as the most pressing, neglecting the emotional needs, as poignantly expressed by Apiwe, aged 13, at the National Children's Forum on HIV/AIDS in South Africa in 2001. "My sister is six years old. There are no grown-ups living with us. I need a bathroom tap and clothes and shoes. And water also, inside the house. But especially, somebody to tuck me and my sister in at night-time," she said.

The result is a focus on material needs - distributing blankets, food and clothes - and little counselling, emotional and psychosocial support. In her Botswana study, Daniels said it was hard to find workable means of dealing with emotional trauma or what she called "hidden wounds". "It is easier to give clothes than to confront the huge emotional needs," said Stein.

Notably, most literature looks at orphans after the death of parents. Yet the trauma starts way before, during illness: selling assets for medicine; role reversal when children nurse parents, and assume domestic and child care responsibilities beyond their years. In a study in South Africa in 2000, R. Smart found that the "parentification process" is associated with growing isolation. Many children constantly worry about going to school and leaving their parents to die alone.

Bereavement and grief among African children deserve more research, as do issues of disclosure of HIV status. Studies find that, generally, children who know about their parents' HIV-positive status are less stressed than those who have not been told, but perceive anyway that the parents are not well. The only African study concerning disclosure to children, conducted by T. Marcus in South Africa's KwaZulu Natal province in 1999, found that young children are excluded from discussion about the imminent or recent death of a parent because death is a topic for adults. If silence and exclusion are accepted cultural norms, this affects disclosure and communication among the family.

Other academic literature suggests that culture is frequently invoked as the reason for silence regarding death. Such taboos can be so strong that someone who openly talks about his or her impending death could be accused of witchcraft, one study found.

Professional psychological knowledge about

bereaved children has largely been developed in a Western context, so there is a gap in information on HIV-specific grief among African children.

Among other researchers, S.A. Mallman and J. Altschuler have examined how children cope with death, burial and adversity. However, most research looks at children after parental death, although interventions before bereavement are also important.

One exception is memory work, conducted in Uganda, Kenya and South Africa, geared specifically to the needs of parents and children.

The study concludes with a clinical overview of children's conception of death and dying, and its implications for interventions. However, warns Stein, psychosocial support must be grounded within a broader net of social services for vulnerable children.

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Reference list was not available at time of going to print. ▲

Days to Remember

January

SUN SAFE AWARENESS MONTH – CANSA

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | World Day of Peace |
| 10 | Birth of League of Nations (1920) |
| 12 | Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide – 1951 |
| 15 | Martin Luther King Jr Day |
| 25 | World Leprosy Day (Last Sunday in January) |
| 30 | Gandhi Assassinated |
| 31 | Slavery abolished in the USA – 1865 |

February

AFRICAN HERITAGE MONTH

SUN SAFE AWARENESS MONTH – CANSA

INTERNATIONAL BLACK HISTORY MONTH

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 2 | World Wetlands Day |
| 10-16 | National STI/CONDOM WEEK |
| 11 | Nelson Mandela Freed – 1990 |
| 14 | Inauguration of the South African Constitutional Court – 1995 |
| 15-23 | National Pregnancy Awareness Week |
| 21 | Malcolm X Assassinated in USA – 1865 |
| 21 | International Mother Tongue Day (UNESCO) |

2004 – International Year of the Family

Researched and compiled by André Viviers

Child and Youth Care Work and the South African Qualification's Authority

Sandra Oosthuizen

In the previous issue of "Child and Youth Care" the establishment of a Standards Generating Body for Child and Youth Care Work was celebrated. It was noted that the process is very complex. Many questions have been asked by child and youth care workers and managers of organizations about the process and its impact on the field. During the course of the year, "Child and Youth Care" will attempt to answer some of these questions as clearly as possible.

How can an employee and an employer ensure that a study course is approved by the child and youth care profession?

At present the SGB is in the process of generating unit standards for the field. Every unit standard will cover a particular area of knowledge in child and youth care work. Any training provider offering courses in child and youth care work will need to align the courses to the unit standards in order to ensure that the competencies achieved are relevant and of a specified standard.

Often an employer receives a CV of a potential employee listing many different courses, all from various training institutions and organizations. The interviewer, often not a child and youth care practitioner, looks at the long list of qualifications and is impressed. The child and youth care worker is employed and soon the employer discovers that the new employee's knowledge and standard of practice is not that of a professional child and youth care practitioner, as was expected. The employer struggles to understand how this is possible considering the long list of qualifications.

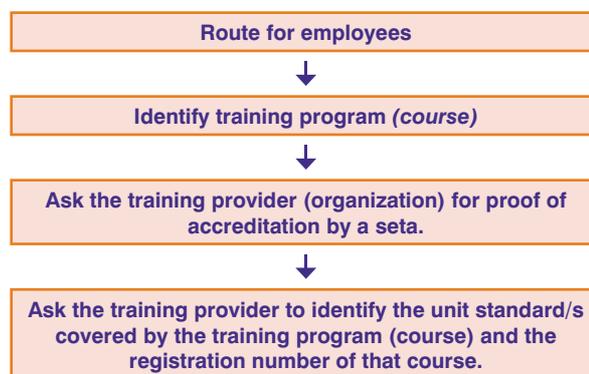
The employer did not think of investigating the credibility, relevancy and content of the courses – or the accreditation of the training institutions which issued the certificate.

The employee was informed by the training organization that the courses and its content were relevant to the field of child and youth care work and of a high standard. The employee did also not think of making further enquiry as to the credibility of the training provider. Both the employee and the employer were "taken for a ride" and did not get value for their money.

SAQA has put in place a structure which should prevent such unfortunate things from happening to both the employee and employer. Training providers will in future need to be accredited with an Education Training and Quality Assuror (ETQA). The ETQA's ensure that training providers are accredited and training programs are aligned to the standards designed by the CYCW SGB. The ETQA established Sector Education and Training Authorities in various sectors. The training providers can select a sector which they would like to be accredited with. At present there are 25 sectors identified. The NACCW sought accreditation with the

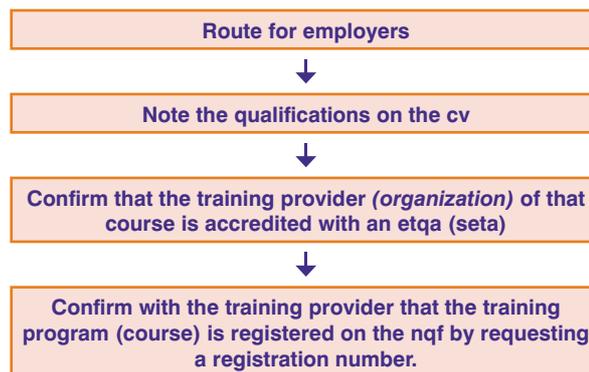
Health and Welfare SETA (HWSETA). This implies that the training programs offered (e.g. Basic Qualification in Child Care Course) would need to be approved by the HWSETA and aligned to the relevant unit standard. Only once this is done will the course be registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

In order to ensure that the course you study is accepted by an employer in the field of child and youth work you need to follow a specific route and ask some questions.



Once the training provider offered the proof to both of the above requests you can be assured that the qualification will be registered on the NQF and that the employer in the field will accept it.

In selecting new child and youth care staff, employers need to follow the route as described below:



Once you have been provided with proof from the training provider, you can be assured that the employee will have field specific competencies as stated in the unit standard covered by that course.

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

“Conferencing, Circles and other Restorative Practices”

Impressions of two South African Child and Youth Care Workers of the Fourth International Conference on “Conferencing, Circles and other Restorative Practices” Held in Veldhoven The Netherlands.

By Himla Makan and Alfred Rens

Once you are provided with the opportunity to go overseas, it immediately becomes a learning experience! All of a sudden you wake up in your facility where you comfortably carry on with your day-to-day challenges, and don't have the need to check the value of the Rand to the Euro or Dollar. Now you want to know what your Rand is worth? Where is the embassy? How much is the Visa? How long will it take for you to get one? Attending the conference was a good opportunity, from all points of view, and the knowledge and skills gained cannot be measured.

A three day 'conferencing' facilitator's course that we attended was most enriching, as we had a diverse group of ten people. A magistrate from the juvenile court in Papua New Guinea, a director from the community based corrections department, a social worker from Israel, a social worker from the Justice Ministry Thailand, and a veterinarian from Australia. The trainer was from the U.K. It was an intensive three days of training, which was very practical with role plays and case studies. The aim of the course was to enable participants to apply the principles and concepts of 'Restorative Justice' using the Conferencing Process, to situations involving inappropriate behaviour, conflict, or crime. At the end of the three days we were a close group who stayed together for the rest of the conference.

Impressive in the conference workshops (of which we each attended nine) was the whole school approach to Restorative Justice. This is a dynamic and innovative way of dealing with conflict, and behaviour management. Belinda Hopkins from the United Kingdom spoke about promoting understanding and healing, over assigning blame or dispensing punishment. Restorative processes can improve the quality of school life not only through conflict resolution but also in terms of developing active citizenship skills, good self esteem, and open minded communication. A variety of methods can be used to repair harm – healing practices, peer



mediation, conference circles. Instead of schools using harsh punishments such as expulsion and suspension, Restorative Justice creates a safer and more positive school environment, and a good relationship between students and educators. Schools in the United Kingdom, The Netherlands and the USA are using Restorative Justice practices quite successfully. Attention is given to informal restorative practices e.g. circles for pupils, and circles for teachers, and value circles. Police and teachers are facilitators. At times it takes two years through trial and error for the school climate to change. It can be used for serious offenses like violence and bullying to less serious offenses like teasing. The stories were powerful.

We came out of the conference feeling very strongly that we need Restorative Practices in our schools and our police force. We can make a difference if we use it in our work with young people, make this a culture in life space work. ▀

Care Worker for youth hostel development program

Due date for applications: 1 March 2004

We invite applications to fill the above position at the Salesian Institute Street Youth Projects (NGO), **Don Bosco Hostel**, to be a part of a team in a residential developmental program for former male street youth of 18-25 years.

Requirements:

- Experience and enthusiasm in working with youth in this field, i.e. problems of older adolescents, (at least 2 years)
- Basic Qualification in Child Care (BQCC) or similar is an advantage
- Preferably someone with knowledge of ethnic South African languages and customs
- Able to communicate in Afrikaans especially, also Xhosa and English is an advantage
- A valid driver's licence (and driving experience) essential (pref. PDRP)
- Working a flexi-time, which includes weekends and holidays – 45 +hrs/week
- Must be older than 28 years of age.

Send or fax your CV (including 3 contactable references) to:

The Co-ordinator: Mr Gregory Berry
Don Boco Hostel
2 Somerset Road
Cape Town
8001

Tel: (021) 425 1452 - Mr Gregory Berry or Ms Marion Jacobs
Fax: (021) 419 1312

SEEING PAST THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

**A TRADITIONAL FAIRY TALE IN THE CURRENT SOUTH AFRICAN CHILD
AND YOUTH CARE CONTEXT**

Jackie Winfield

The Emperor's New Clothes

In 1837, the Danish storyteller Hans Christian Anderson wrote a fairy tale entitled "The Emperor's New Clothes". In this story, the vain emperor loves fancy clothes more than anything else. He pays some tailors bags of gold to buy the finest threads and fabrics to produce the most marvellous set of clothes ever made. The tailors promise him that the clothes will not only be beautiful, but they will have the special quality of being invisible to people who are stupid. For a long time, the tailors work in a room in the emperor's palace occasionally requesting a little more gold to make the outfit even more splendid. As time goes by, the emperor sends some of his trusted advisors to check on the progress of the clothes. However, they are unable to see anything, not because they are stupid but because there is nothing to see. The tailors are cheating the emperor out of his money by producing nothing and pretending the cloths are invisible. Of course, the advisors do not admit their inability to see the clothes as this would make them appear stupid, so they "oooh" and "aaah" about the beauty of the tailors' work. At last, the tailors announce the work to be finished, instruct the emperor to remove his clothes and "dress" him in the "new suit". When the emperor looks in the mirror, all he can see is his own underwear and he is greatly concerned. However, he leads a grand procession into the streets to show off his new "outfit" and the crowds clap and cheer. After a few minutes, a young child shouts out, "But he's got nothing on!" This gives others in the crowd the courage to shout their agreement, "The emperor is wearing nothing at all!" The emperor continues his parade through the town while the villainous tailors escape with the gold.

More illusions ...

South Africa is a country in which millions of people live in poverty. The system of apartheid ensured that the wealth of the minority increased at the expense of the majority who were denied access to opportunities in education, employment, health, housing and a myriad of other facets of life. Despite the fact that we are ten-years-old as a democracy (so we still have the upheavals of puberty to contemplate!), the rich continue to get richer and most of the poor continue to get poorer. At the same time, elements of society plant and nurture the seeds of the illusion that we can earn respect and love, and somehow, be more acceptable if we wear the latest fashions, drive flashy cars and carry cell phones with personalised ring tones and a different cover for every day of the week. We think that spending our "gold" on accessories will show us to be more worthy, and of course, those who disagree or who can't see the beauty of our "new clothes" are unquestionably "stupid".

The value of money

In a capitalist society, the primary value is money and the goal is financial profit. Yet, how is such profit possible?



According to Marxist theory, profit occurs as a result of the exploitation of labour in which people become alienated from their work, from each other and from themselves. Then, what happens if child and youth care programmes are based on the generation of profits? Certainly, somebody gets richer. But who is exploited in the process? Who experiences alienation and how? Can a profession based on human dignity, equality and the ultimate value of human beings ever reconcile itself with the values of materialism? How much is a human being worth in rands and cents? Are some people worth more than others? Are adults more valuable than children? Are the attractive worth more than the ugly? Do we decide on value based on intelligence or sex or colour or compliance or beautiful clothes?

The price of a child

As child and youth care workers, we must remain ever conscious of our values and the values of our profession. When we measure our work, our success, our programmes and ourselves primarily or solely in terms of finances, we are allowing children and youth to be used as means to a monetary end. Young people and their lives become products to be bought and sold ... and someone makes money in the process. What about those products which are damaged during the long and bumpy journey from factory to warehouse? What about those products which have been sitting on the shelves too long and their expiry dates have passed? What about those which are no longer fashionable? Should we just throw them away and find others to take their place? Perhaps, we can find something more profitable to sell.

The challenge ...

How do you make decisions about your work? When it's the end of your shift, do you pack your bag and run out the door even though the child you've been comforting for the last half hour is still crying? Or does that depend on whether or not you can claim for overtime pay? As a manager or board member, is the best option always the one which costs less money or generates most profit?

Making profits through services for children and youth at risk, many of whom come from communities where poverty is rife, can never be considered ethical child and youth care practice. Such an approach undermines this profession and dehumanises the young people we have promised to serve. We must watch out for emperors claiming to wear new clothes. We must not be afraid to appear stupid to others just because we refuse to be enthused by the illusions of gold and silver. We need to listen to the voice of the child, shouting against the crowd, "But he's got nothing on!", and be prepared to add our own voices. The alternative may be that one day we look in the mirror and find that we have been "ooing" and "aahing" and walking around in our underwear. ▀

NACCW

Regional Activities

NACCW Western Cape Regional Activities

DATE	MEETING	Venue
29 January	Conference Meeting	NACCW
10 February	Regional Meeting	Cafda
9 March	Forum Meeting	St George's Home
20 April	Graduation	See March Journal
11 May	Forum Meeting	Durbanville Children's Home
8 June	Forum Meeting	St Michael's Children's Home
13 July	Forum Meeting	Boys Town Macassar
10 August	Regional Meeting	Leliebloem Children's Home
14 September	Forum Meeting	Hope Prison Ministry
12 October	Forum Meeting	Durbanville Children's Home
16 November	Forum Meeting	Beautiful Gate Crossroads
7 December	End of Year Party	To be decided

You can contact Yvette Rogers for any further information at 082 852 7740 or 021-761 2940 (w). All meetings start at 9h00

NACCW Eastern Cape Regional Activities

DATE	MEETING	VENUE	TIME
30 January	Executive Meeting	Erica Place of Safety	09h00
11 February	Regional Meeting	Protea Place of Safety	10h00
27 February	Graduation	Algoa Park ACW	09h00
12 March	Executive Meeting	SOS	09h30
27 March	Leadership Workshop	Opidani UPE	09h00
31 March	Registration BQCC	Protea & Enkuselweni	09h00
5 April	Meeting of Trainers	SANC	09h00
14-15 April	BQCC	Enkuselweni	09h00
7 May	Executive Meeting	MTR	09h30
14 May	Fundraiser	To Be Announced	
21 May	Regional Meeting	Erica Place of Safety	10h00
4 June	Child Care Workers Day & Forum	To Be Announced	
30 June	Registration BQCC	Protea & Enkuselweni	09h00
5 July	Meeting of Trainers	SANC	09h00
8-9 July	Mini Conference	To Be Announced	
23 July	Executive Meeting	Enkuselweni	09h30
4-5 August	BQCC	Enkuselweni	09h00
20 August	Regional Meeting	Liebenhause	10h30
17 September	Executive & Child Care Workers Forum	EP Children's Home	09h00
16 October	Fundraiser	To Be Announced	
20 October	BGM	Oosterland	10h00
19 November	Planning Session	To Be Announced	
26 November	Social Function	To Be Announced	

You can contact Harold Slabbert for any further information at 082 952 5828 or 041-585 8576/7 (w).

NACCW Gauteng Regional Activities

DATE	MEETING
29 January	Regional Executive Committee Meeting
12 February	Regional Executive Committee Meeting
19 February	Graduation Ceremony
6 May	Regional Executive Committee Meeting
27 May	Regional Meeting
29 July	Regional Executive Committee Meeting
19 August	Annual General Meeting
16 September	Regional Executive Committee Meeting
21 October	Regional Meeting / Social Event
9 December	Regional Executive Committee Planning Meeting

You can contact Syvion Dlamini for any further information at 082 607 1594 or 011-660 8050 (w).

NACCW Kwa Zulu Natal Regional Activities

DATE	MEETING	Venue
3 March	Regional Executive Committee Meeting	Excelsior
19 March	Practitioners Forum	
19 March	Social Work Forum	
11 March	Principals Forum	Theresa's
7 April	Regional Executive Committee Meeting	St Monica's
23 April	Regional Meeting	Ethelbert
5 May	Regional Executive Committee Meeting	Pietermarizburg
20 May	Principals Forum	Joseph Baines
2 June	Regional Executive Committee Meeting	DCH
25 June	Regional Meeting	Pietermarizburg
21 June	Practitioners Forum	
21 June	Social Work Forum	
4 August	Regional Executive Committee Meeting	Lakehaven
19 August	Principals Forum	Ethelbert
20 August	Practitioners Forum	
20 August	Social Work Forum	
1 September	Regional Executive Committee Meeting	Whyllie House
17 September	Regional Meeting	St Philomena's
6 October	Regional Executive Committee Meeting	Koningsdal
21 October	Principals Forum	OVH
22 October	Practitioners Forum	
22 October	Social Work Forum	
3 November	Regional Executive Committee Meeting	Zamani
12 November	Regional Meeting	Boys Town Tongaat
1 December	Outing	

All meetings start at 10h00. You can contact Mathilda Morolong for any further information at 031-461 5566.

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