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Child and Youth Care

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



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Partners in Social Service Delivery?

Merle Allsopp

A number of events this month have led me to further consideration of the perennial 'stone-in-the-shoe' issue of the nature of the partnership between members of the sector and government – at both national and provincial level. Of course a partnership is, first and foremost, a relationship. And while agency - state partnerships may appear to be professional liaisons, rather than relationships as such, I wonder if we ought not to conceptualize of all such connections as relationships. Certainly partnerships are made up of sets of relationships. When those relationships are good, the partnership works well. When they are poor the partnership founders – no matter what the formal or institutionalised level of the partnership. Child and youth care agencies may consider that they have a right to the partnership because as many say “we are doing the state’s work”. But unless the partnership can be seen to be directly beneficial to the Department in its mandate to transform services to a social developmental model, it is not likely to be well received. Some agencies are doing all in their power to transform, and yet find themselves poorly treated and at times feel disrespected by ‘the Department’. Feelings in the sector are running very high right now. Media exposure on these issues must, in my opinion be judiciously used if it is to achieve the end of strengthening partnerships. One of the factors often not given serious attention is the fact that not all agencies suffer with the same poor standard of partnership as others. Analysis of this fact may be of assistance. Why is it that some agencies appear to be getting along with the state better than others? It is conceivable that a ‘divide and rule’ approach is being applied, but I would

doubt that this is a conscious strategy. Perhaps some of us are better at child and youth care skills of relationship-building. Errors of judgment frequently contribute to poor partnerships. We must know when to stay firmly standing on the ground, and when to ask “How high?” to the command “Jump!”. If we are part of a coalition (as is currently developing in the sector in resistance to the new financing policy), we are in a much more powerful position to protest. Strategic, co-operative, representative alliances place us in a position to negotiate with the state. At agency level though, we must weigh very carefully our decisions to ensure that we act wisely to build points of contact with people – often through putting ourselves out. Developing the skill to build partnerships is arguably one of the most important skills connected to leadership in a child and youth care agency. These skills are at the core of our profession. Is it not us who profess to relate to the reluctant? Is it not central to child and youth care work, to understand the context of the other from an ecological point of view? Are we not skilled in ‘hanging in’ – longer than the other? Are we not always mindful of the perceptions that we build through our behaviour? And do we not manage behaviour in the context of relatedness? Do we not recognize that the culture of the other is what we must seek to understand in the process of relationship? Are we not skilled in combating counter-aggression? Do we not understand that timing is everything? Our field is rich in skills that help us to stimulate patches of connection, nurture fragile affinities, and move into positions of influence. Let us bring these skills to bear in the context of our partnerships at agency level.

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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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**

Child and Youth Care values your opinion.

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The improbable relationship

Brian Gannon

“At the end of the day you only have each other. The staff are lovely but they’re paid to be here and there’s no getting out of that.”

Emond, R. (2002)

“Do you only do this because you get paid to do it?” is one of those challenges which “test” us in the early stages of a relationship with a young person. The incipient relationship is one which the youth doesn’t seem to want to start as much as we do. We are tempted to disclaim this mercenary motivation on our part – “Of course not ...” we consider answering. We want to protest the quality of our product, but the kid is not buying. If we say that we’re not in it for the money, we lay ourselves open to a whole Pandora’s box of equally doubtful motives; if we say we are, we stand guilty as charged. Unless we are volunteers, it is true that we can only enter into this relationship because we get paid to do it. The adult client who deliberately seeks out the services of a helping professional both wants the relationship and understands having to pay for it; the young person has not asked for the relationship and is suspicious about our being paid for it. This is just one of a number of paradoxes inherent in the child and youth worker’s attempts to “relate to the reluctant”. (Brendtro, Brokenleg & Von Bockern, 2002, 71)

“Is this relationship for real, or do you have an ulterior motive? Are you using this relationship for something?” Again we want to say “Of course not, this is for real, this is you and me ...”, but there’s no way of getting past the implausibility of the two of us getting together spontaneously or legitimately. We have little in common. Our ages, our interests and our ways of life are (literally) streets apart. And the suggestion that the relationship is instrumental is a tough one. However

much we try to make out that we are just hanging together, the fact is that we would never have met had it not been for some situation which our program was called in to work with or help with. We wish that we could disentangle ourselves from the school or the cops or the shrinks or the program, but we are hand in glove with one or more of these groupings in the plan to build or improve or change or fix something about you and/or your family. And we’re not sure as to whether to tell you this at this stage for fear of your throwing out the baby (our infant relationship) with the bathwater.

“Is this a special and personal relationship? Is this only you and me?” The quick-and-dirty answer here would be “No. You are just one of several kids and families with whom I am working right now.” We also turn to the various structural definitions of relationship in our literature and we know that our best shot is not to be in relationship with the child at all but with his or her existing relationships (Anglin, 1991), to be, in the Minuchin (1974) sense, joining the youth’s matrix of relationships rather than setting up this one-on-one thing. It gets even more complex, for in program settings this youngster will not only be sharing me with others; he or she may also have to juggle with different versions of me – me as an activities group leader, me as a senior staff person in this unit, me as father, mother or sibling in my own family ... and me as the individual and special person busy committing to this relationship. So we fiddle with the semantics so as to be able to say “Yes, this relationship is special, unique ...”

“Are we ‘even-Stevens’ in this relationship – or will you be pulling rank on me?” The power issue in this kind of relationship is a tough call. Enough that sheer size and age slots us readily into parent-child, adult-youth, teacher-student moulds. But the unlistened-to, unheard, disempowered, abused youngster has strong misgivings around power differentials. We want to promise space and time and margins for this kid, but we know that within civil, school and program boundaries – and even for his or her own protection and security – there will be limits set and no-go zones declared. And as I am promising respect and significance, I know that youngsters in loss and crisis, suffering overwhelming confusion and anger, are already in positions of such vulnerability and disadvantage as to have few bargaining chips on their side of the table.

“Are you in it for the long haul?” “Of course,” we begin ... “Can I trust your investment and commitment – or is this relationship just temporary?” These questions are getting to us. The kid is still asking, still looking

“And given all of the above, at what point do I forfeit my relationship status?” How conditional is all this bonhomie? The pattern for me so far has been that there’s an invisible line to be crossed where I suddenly find myself out in the cold again. Worst thing is not knowing from the start whether there’s a line, and if so, where it is. When there are relationships with terms and conditions it’s not so much a case of me-the-kid trusting you-the-adult; it’s me that I can’t trust because I know I’m likely to slip up — and that’s exactly when I need to know you’re still there for me!”

We stand rather deflated at the threshold of any relationship we enter into with kids and families. Some or all of their expectations may be unreasonable and unrealistic; and our assurances quixotic, extravagant, even misleading. We feel the need to resolve the ambiguities. The values and good intentions which probably brought us to this point suddenly look a little thin. The toys we brought along seem embarrassingly inappropriate. We don’t even know the language.

So, we can agonise all we want over these incongruities and paradoxes in our starting relationships, but at some point we will simply have to transpose from weighing up the odds into letting go and trusting, from thinking into doing.

for reassurance, still weighing the pros and cons of the deal ... “System” kids get to recognize the smiles and kindnesses reserved for the newcomer, the hearty welcome, the “you’ll get along fine” attitude, all of which can evaporate by breakfast-time on Day Two. “What I’ve missed in my life is people sticking by me, people who are on my side when I need them to be, next week, next month ...” Fleeting reassurances are not reassuring.

“And what do you bring to the table?” Have you anything new to add to the mix of my life so far? Somehow, back when, even my own family fell off their side of the equation and I’ve reached the point where I’m not even sure what I want any more. Ideas like ‘belonging’, ‘caring’, ‘relationship’, ‘support’ and so on don’t really cut it for me. I’m not sure what these words mean, and right now I’d settle for a half-time job, a warm coat, my mates, some glue ...” We pat our pockets and wonder what we really do have to offer ... we who are foreigners and strangers.

Until, that is, we see all this developmentally and in the context of ordinary families and children. We realise that all of the children, youth and families we work with, along with ourselves as Child and Youth Care Workers, will have a distance to travel together during the life-cycle of this relationship. As with all journeys, we set off in hope. And as we travel, we change. Our experience is transformed, just as the constructs and words we use to understand and express our experience expand. At the end of one day’s passage we know more about our world, about other people and about ourselves. In a day’s learning and growth our expectations have been rewarded and disappointed, our hopes and despairs smoothed out.

Tomorrow morning we are different people setting off upon a different day. *And the relationship is no longer new.* What makes it all different is that yesterday we set out. We are already on the journey by virtue of the fact that yesterday we started.

We worried about all of those questions and the answers we wanted to make. But the terror was not in

the words and concepts; it was in the joining, in the fact that we touched hands and started out together for who knows where. Yesterday we didn't know each other; today we do.

Yesterday's answers don't matter today, anyway. I can say to my two-year-old's questioning, "Of course I will love you for ever," not knowing how that story will pan out in another two or twenty years, but I can make (and mean) that promise. As for ulterior motives, I can have those too. Acting in a youngster's best interests is an ulterior motive, but it can also be an act of love.

As we stepped through yesterday's beginnings into the relationship as it is today, so we will eventually step through the whole relationship (however long it lasts and however it turns out) into our own respective continuing lives. However we may have answered any of those original tentative and apprehensive questions about the genuineness and committedness of our relationship,

We cannot terminate until we demonstrate that trust, which is the right of any child in even the first stages of life, is possible and available and free for the asking.

we offered only a mirage, a prototype for special and personal relationships the youngster will establish and live through with other people in the future.

Our unique relationship is an archetype of possible future relationships. And there is no simplicity in these; they have no one-word answers. They are complex, filled with promise and failure, with trust and disabuse, with love and despairing pain, with shame and forgiveness, with angry endings and partings ... but which are subsumed by constancy and limitless second-chances and last-chances. In reality, our temporary and ulterior-motivated relationship is proof of the possibility of such a real relationship in the life of a kid who had despaired of such a possibility. And our positive and potentially facile answers on Day One are only betrayals

if we then fail to go on an *do* this kind of relationship — which means fulfilling the expectations, one by one, to the point that they no longer need to be fulfilled. The fundamental and core question is "At what point do I forfeit my relationship status?" It is only when that question no longer has to be asked or answered that we are, the two of us, free to move on. We cannot terminate until we demonstrate that trust, which is the right of any child in even the first stages of life, is possible and available and free for the asking.

Waldijk (1992) offers us this brief dialogue between a youngster and Peter, the humanist careworker:

"Peter, tell me now, how do you look at me? Do you see me just as another case? Or as a dirty thief? Or again as an incomprehensible immigrant child? Or as a hopeless case? Or perhaps as an interesting example of early adolescent ego-weakness?"

Our humanist friend was really embarrassed. The boy asked his questions with a lot of distrust. And at the same time the humanist's own mind was a chaotic mixture of half a dozen unfinished different diagnoses. The only thing he said, after a long silence was:

"More than anything else, for me you are just Stephan."

I remember listening to a molecular physicist describing the problems of measurement of the vast spaces between nuclei and protons and things within a single atom. Similar, he said, to those who venture to measure in intergalactic space, how they long since ran out of metres and miles and light years and expletives ... and how sometimes it might seem just as "logical" to resort to music to capture the limitless distances in space — the way Kubrick, when reaching the technical and speculative frontiers in the movie 2001 Space Odyssey, fell back on a Strauss waltz.

So, we can agonise all we want over these incongruities and paradoxes in our starting relationships, but at some point we will simply have to transpose from weighing up the odds into letting go and trusting, from thinking into doing. To stop our questioning and philosophizing and our verbal egg-dance and just *do* the relationship. Let's go waltz. ▲

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An Abandoned Sparrow

Jeannie Karth

She put out her arms to me as I walked past her cot. Two big eyes in a shrunken bone-filled face.

How can there be a decision to make at a moment like this? I pick her up and a thin little arm snakes around my neck. We walk around while I point out things to her. She clutches a little soft animal I hold up for her. All the while not a sound from her; just big liquid eyes following my every move.

I take her back to her cot and try to put her down. She has a voice! She clearly lets me know this will not do. We continue our little walkabout.

The staff say I can feed her if I wish to help. I put her sitting on the table in front of me, and am warned that it will not be an easy task – she eats very slowly.

I put a small bit of porridge and gravy on the spoon – she barely opens her mouth and some crumbs fall down. Immediately her attention is focussed – until she has carefully picked up each

crumb and put it into her mouth she refuses a further spoonful. I ponder on this as I continue spooning a little bit at a time. The same clear focus is on each crumb that is dropped. I decide to try something new. I put the little lump of pap onto the table – immediately she grasps it and pops it into her mouth. And so we empty the plate much faster – from the spoon to the table into the mouth.

When I drive home I reflect on this process. Is it that this little dying sparrow only ever fed from the crumbs idle adults dropped carelessly? Is the spoonful of food as foreign to her as a response when she puts her arms out for love? How do we bear the suffering of these little ones?

“Then there is a loneliness that roams. No rocking can hold it down. It is alive, on its own. A dry spreading thing that makes the sound of one’s own feet going seem to come from a far-off place.” – Toni Morrison – “Beloved” ▲

Conflict must be seen as part of the total organisation, including the organisation's values, leadership styles, and the goals of the organisation and so on. There is no quick and easy way to overcome conflict in organisations. Each conflict must be handled separately. Organisations often experience conflict when they expand, because they need to introduce things like job definitions, salary and communication structures. The management of an organisation needs to understand how to deal with conflict within their organisation. There are some basic questions management and the members of

organisation. The values and dreams of the members should be taken into account when the organisation sets out its mission and vision.

Is the conflict around organizational resources? For example, money space and material?

Is the conflict about organisational resources, or is it around human needs for recognition, status, and the need for personal development? Sometimes people say that they have a problem with the resources, when in fact the problem is one of a personal need. It is important to separate personal and resource issues in order to deal with the conflict.

Are organisational policies like reward systems causing the conflict?

Are people rewarded as individuals, or are they rewarded for working together in teams, towards a common goal? It is important for there to be individual reward as well as reward for team work.

Are lines of communication accurate, clear and open?

Does the organisation have a system of regular meetings where all employees get a chance to contribute in a constructive and positive manner? Do people in the organisation actively listen to each

Conflict Resolution

The fifth management skill that we look at is conflict resolution. In the difficult and changing times that we are all faced with, many organisations and communities face conflict at some time. Change affects people's lives and it can make them uncomfortable and emotional.

Adapted from: You're not on your own, A Management Guide for Development Organisations in South Africa

staff of the organisation can ask when there is a conflict to assist in understanding and dealing with the conflict:

Who are the main parties in the conflict, and what are their real interests?

Usually the people who are involved in the conflict have some reason to keep the conflict going. It is important to try and separate personal interest from the interest of the organisation.

Does the organisation have a clear sense of where it is and where it wants to be in the future?

It is important that the organisation has a mission, values and goals that have been developed with the participation of everyone in the

What are the roots of the conflict, or what caused it?

Often conflicts in organisations are the result of a number of issues that have had an effect on each other over a long period of time. Try to determine the real cause of the conflict and not just the symptoms of the problem.

What is the main leadership style of everyone in the organisation – not just the people at the top?

What style do the leaders use in leading the organisation? Do they encourage everyone in the organisation to participate in decision-making and value the contributions of everyone? Do the leaders have a co-operative style that shows concern or individuals?

other and attempt to give constructive feedback, or are they quick to criticise? There also needs to be a balance between formal and informal communication that promotes real discussion.

Are power or status differences between individuals or groups contributing to the conflict?

It is important to make sure that all employees realise that they are valued and are working towards a common goal.

Is the conflict adding to or causing a problem in terms of the organisation's performance?

Many people see organisational conflict as something negative which must be resolved completely.

But conflict is something that every organisation will experience. In reasonable amounts organisation conflict can be useful because it can create the energy that people need to realise that they need to change or move forward. In organisations where there are too many “yes” people, where there is apathy or no new ideas, a change in structures or incentives can cause positive conflict. Conflict can be used as a source of creative tension to encourage and improve decision-making, increase levels of productivity and help the organisation to move forward.

Overcoming conflict

Working for peace requires patience with those with whom we disagree, without condoning ideas and deeds we consider unpeaceful. It means treating everyone fairly, honestly and lovingly.

Often the most difficult conflicts to deal with are those where one of the parties involved does not see that any problem exists. For example, a neighbour who plays loud music, preventing others from sleeping, or on a more serious level, someone who abuses or frightens another person, but does not see that there is anything wrong with what he/she is doing.

It is important that all people in a conflict understand fully what the disagreements are about – often parties have only a partial understanding of this, or their views are clouded by emotions. The key then, is to help people to understand how the other party sees a particular situation. There is a range of exercises which focus on this, involving listening techniques, seeing things from the other peoples points of view and communicating with those who have very strong opinions.

Creative conflict resolution

Creative conflict resolution involves parties getting together and “brainstorming” possible solutions, discussing them, and selecting one or more that will help to overcome the problems. It is a useful technique when a wider group of people is involved and everyone wants to

solve the conflict. It is particularly appropriate in situations where people have different attitudes to the same problem, because a range of possible solutions can often produce one acceptable to all, which wouldn't otherwise have been thought of.

Izintaba Community Support Programme has used the following seven point problem solving process to resolve a conflict that they have experienced regarding the use and control of resources in the organisation.

1. Each person states the problem as he/she sees it
2. Each person tells the other what he/she heard him/her say (i.e. each states the problem from the other person's point of view)
3. Participants brainstorm possible solutions to the problem
4. Select from those solutions ones which are acceptable to all
5. Write down the solutions agreed upon, and get each person to sign it
6. Agree on a time to re-evaluate
7. Affirm the other person/people

Mediation

Mediation is a process when a third party is brought in to facilitate sessions between the conflicting parties. A typical mediation process involves each side stating their case and listening to how the other side sees the conflict, then a discussion of possible solutions, an agreement to carry out some of the suggestions and, if necessary, the signing of a written contract by all parties. It is important here that the mediator is not biased towards one side, but should remain emotionally detached from the proceedings. They should also keep calm during the mediation, and not make insults.

The community of Nezo experienced conflict in their community when they became the transport centre for Nezo and the surrounding areas.

The conflict continued for six months before a mediator was called in to help resolve the conflict. Some of the lessons learnt from this conflict resolution and mediation were:

- The timing of intervention is very

important. The community has to request help.

- The mediator must include as many different parties in the resolution process as possible, for example, in Nezo, taxi drivers and associations, businessmen and traders, youth and women's groups, church and sports groups and representatives of the community centre were involved in the mediation process.
- It is important to focus on local leadership, because they are the ones who will have to work out the solutions for their area.
- It is important for the mediator to be open and honest about the reasons for getting involved.
- The different parties should be assisted in putting together their agenda and list of priorities, and highlighting common ground.
- Concentrate on the future. The past is history and nothing can change that.
- Meetings become emotional and unproductive when people blame each other.
- Progress is sometimes slow and frequent meetings may be necessary.

Negotiation

Negotiation is another way of resolving conflict, where two parties meet together and present their cases alternatively. Eventually some kind of agreement is reached – usually a compromise between the original positions of the two sides. Negotiation is used fairly widely in industrial disputes, for example, between representatives of employees and unions in a pay dispute and can also be applied to a wide range of conflicts. It does not work so well in situations where emotions are high, particularly if threats and fear are involved. It is also important that all parties involved should be represented. ▀

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Conflict Management Activities

By Edna Rooth

Introduction

Conflict is a reality of life. In itself, it can provide healthy opportunities for learning and growth. However, if we do not know how to deal with it, conflict may become counter-productive.

There are many different ways of dealing with conflict. It is important for the facilitator to ensure that participants have enough space in which to analyse their own conflict resolution styles and practise different ways of solving and managing conflict.

As conflict situations differ so markedly from one another, there is no single model for resolving all conflicts. Some conflict resolution behaviours may be more useful than others. Participants need to discover what works for them. Accordingly, this session should involve participants in as much practice and sharing as possible.

Causes Of Conflict

- Have a pile of name-tags ready, but ensure that there are not enough for everyone. Instruct the participants to put them on. Those who do not get name tags will ask for theirs. Tell them that there are none left and see what happens. Participants may react by being upset, angry, apathetic, or withdrawn. Discuss the situation and provide the missing tags.
- Discuss causes of conflict with the group. Participants may mention lack of resources, haves and have-nots, every person for themselves, unwillingness to share, lack of co-operation, power struggles, hidden agendas, misunderstandings, selfishness, greed, lack of common goals, and so on. Write down and display these ideas. Participants can add to the list as the workshop progresses.
- Ask participants to indicate which causes of conflict they want to work with in the session. (You can draw on this input for role-play situations later.)
- If you do not want to create conflict within the group by giving only some of the participants labels, use the following exercise instead. Pass the ball around. Whoever has the ball mentions a cause of conflict. Write the causes on newsprint and put them up on the wall.

Power Statues

A session on conflict resolution can become too theoretical: be aware of this throughout. Many people have attended conflict resolution workshops and have all the jargon and so-called right answers. However, in an experiential lifeskills workshop we need to relate the theme of conflict to ourselves, and look at our gut-level reactions rather than define and discuss without a personal investment. This exercise can be used to experience conflict.

- This is a non-verbal exercise. The participants work in pairs.
- Person one is a person with power over person two and has to demonstrate this through her actions and body language. Person two responds to this situation, expressing his feelings through movement and finally freezing into a position which best embodies these feelings.



- Get the participants to swap roles, so that each participant has an opportunity to be both powerful and powerless.
- Once the process has been completed, tell everyone to look around the room. Ask for volunteers to show the group their power statues and describe how they felt.
- Ensure that the entire group is listening to the feedback. Leading questions to the volunteers could include the following:
 - How did it feel to be in a position of power over another person?
 - How did it feel to be in a powerless position?
 - Which position did you prefer?
 - How did you react to both positions?
 - What emotions do we associate with power and how do they affect us?
 - Which of the two positions felt more familiar to you?
 - Can you relate any of the emotions you felt to situations in your life?
 - Did you have any specific feelings towards the other person?
- Remember that there are no right or wrong answers. Participants who enjoy being in a position of power should not be made to feel bad about this. Allow brief discussion, and then lead the group into the theme of power versus powerlessness as an important component of conflict. Point out that our attitudes to both concepts determine how we respond to conflict.

Group Lead And Follow

- This is another non-verbal exercise. Ask the participants to get into a circle and to touch palms with the people on either side of them: Their palms must face upwards.
- Now tell them to go where they want to go and where they want the group to go. (if you have a really large group, divide it into smaller groups of ten people for this exercise.)



- Make sure that the room is clear of furniture as participants may - hurt themselves.
- Participants are not allowed to let go of each other – their palms must be touching at all times,
- Observe what happens: The groups nearly always end up in heaps on the floor as people oppose each other, pull and push in many different directions
- The ensuing discussion is very important. What happened? What worked? What didn't work? Group members sometimes manage to communicate where they want to go and all move in the same direction. Other groups have stubborn individuals who refuse to go any way but their own way!
- This game is also useful for energising the group and helps bonding.

Conflict Circle

Give each participant a large sheet of paper and ask everyone to draw a large circle on their sheet. Using crayons, the participants then have to draw the people and the situations they are currently in conflict with. A symbol of the self is placed in the middle of the circle while symbols of other people and situations are drawn in relation to this central self. The most severe conflicts are shown furthest from the centre while the least severe ones are shown closest to it. The distance from the centre symbolises the alienation from the self. See the example below.

Play music in the background. The music should be slightly disturbing.

After this activity, ask participants to share their conflict circles in pairs. Questions to work on are: 'What do I want the outcome of the most serious conflict situation to be?' 'What must the other person do to change this situation?' and 'What must I do to change this situation?' Finally, the two partners give each other advice on which strategies to use.

This is an evocative exercise and participants may need some time in which to relax afterwards.

Conflict Cycles

Cut large circles from thin cardboard sheets of different colours. Have at least five circles of each colour. Mix up the circles and ask each participant to choose one. Participants with circles of the same colour then form groups.

Each of the groups has to identify an unresolved conflict pertinent to it. The essence of the conflict must be written down on one of the circles. The other circles are used to show the conflict's causes and effects. **The different circles are** then combined to form a cause-conflict-effect chain.

Display all the conflict chains and let each group provide feedback on its 'cycle of conflict'.

Have a discussion afterwards and give participants time to reflect on the outcome of this exercise. ▲

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HIV/AIDS and household food security:

Part Two - approaches to address food security

Prof. FJ Veldman

Central University of Technology – Free State

It is recognized that globally there is enough food for all, but that inequitable¹ access is the main problem. Bearing in mind the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, freedom from hunger should become a reality.

Given appreciable² worldwide improvements in life expectancy, adult literacy and nutritional status, it is unacceptable that about 780 million people in developing countries - 20 percent of their combined population - still do not have access to enough food to meet their basic daily needs for nutritional well-being (1).

The increasing ravages³ of HIV/AIDS are leading to more urgent calls to action. The health sector, which has been playing a lead role in combating⁴ this epidemic, is calling on other sectors to play a part in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Food security interventions 'support livelihoods' as well as 'save lives'. Food insecurity may be addressed by both food and non-food interventions. It is important to distinguish between the objectives of meeting immediate food needs through direct food assistance, and the wider objectives of a range of food security interventions.

Two broad strategies for fighting food security have developed (refer to part 1 of this article published in the previous issue). The first, which revolves around food aid, can be called conventional relief. The second, focuses on addressing the root causes of a food security emergency, and is designed to prevent, contain and control it with a range of economic and market interventions. This is called counter-famine⁵ assistance. A counter-famine strategy should address the causes as well as the effects of famine (2). Families that have lost their

incomes either directly or indirectly due to HIV/AIDS require alternative earnings. Thus, agencies should undertake projects designed to:

- Create alternative sources of income and promote a sustained increase in average family earnings
- Prevent a decrease in the value of family assets, especially livestock
- Rehabilitate local markets and fill them with food that is affordable to most of the poor (2).

Agencies can also promote people's investment in activities such as gardening, or milk production, which make it possible for the most vulnerable families to expand the range of foods they consume. When well planned, counter-famine measures can prevent the social and economic disintegration that accompanies mass migrations of people searching for food, and the pattern of dependency that often develops when food aid is handed out free (2).

Counter-famine actions are divided into two sets of economic interventions: income-support projects and market interventions. Income-support projects provide the poor with cash to help restore their purchasing power. Wages are paid principally in cash. Cash, in-kind grants, and, where possible, loans may also be used to inject resources into the community (2).

The counter-famine approach does not exclude the need for food aid. Some households will probably require supplementary food. Some families may need to receive free food supplements, but these should be limited to people who are most in need. The mere perception that free food is available can create expectations that can undermine other intervention strategies. Furthermore,

if food aid is not targeted properly, large portions may end up being sold on the black market and could contribute to food-price fluctuations that could have a negative impact on the community (2).

Generally food aid serves two purposes. First, it can be used as the equivalent of income for families who have lost their normal source of funds (death of an income generating family member, etc.). Second, it can be used to finance, or partly finance, relief or rehabilitation activities. Food aid should be limited so that supply does not exceed demand.

Food-selection issues may also be problematic during food aid. The following need to be taken into account when dealing with the selection of food:

- Cultural acceptability: food should be desirable and suitable. This is a real and unpleasant aspect of food aid. A report, "List of Major Foods Consumed in Selected Countries", is available from the Food and Agricultural Organization in Rome from the Food Policy and Nutrition Division.
- Mixing foods to balance diets. A lack of a balanced diet in feeding programs could be to the detriment of people living with HIV/AIDS. Food baskets should contain a grain, a source of protein, and oil. But individuals also require a good mix of vitamins and minerals. A practical way to start planning a diet for HIV/AIDS patients is to examine people's normal eating patterns and then try to build around it.
- Boredom with diets. Many people lose interest in eating when the same foods are given daily. The best solution is to vary the diet, adding a different mix of vegetables and fruits as often as possible.

- Other issues such as dependency issues could also have an effect on food aid programs. However, these issues are initially less important when treating patients with HIV/AIDS.

The targeting of HIV-infected families for assistance is complex and needs to be well understood, not only to be successful, but also to avoid unintended consequences. Also, singling out HIV-positive individuals for assistance can have negative consequences for those individuals and their families. This is especially due to the stigma attached to HIV/AIDS.

It is unrealistic to expect countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to achieve the development and implementation of national programs on their own. In order for such programs to be established, a functional and concerted effort is needed by different organizations.

Holistic nutrition support programs for people living with HIV/AIDS have been implemented in a number of settings, including

developing countries, particularly in Africa. These have developed recommendations for nutritional support under various circumstances, and advice to help people living with HIV/AIDS to cope with many of the conditions associated with HIV, and the progression to AIDS (anorexia, nausea, mouth sores, malabsorption⁶ and diarrhea) which result in weight loss. Weight loss (even as little as 5%) and especially loss of lean body mass, are associated with decreased survival in people living with HIV/AIDS. These interventions include dietary advice, counseling on healthy living and exercise, and peer support groups.

Although care programs report improvements in quality of life, including mental and physical health, there is little quantitative⁷ data available⁽³⁾. Food supplementation to people living with HIV/AIDS has been implemented in a number of ways - from food packages for asymptomatic clients to enteral⁸ formula supplements for AIDS patients (3).

In the next paper a more

practical approach to addressing food insecurity will be described. Vegetable gardening, and types of food to supplement with to meet the basic needs of patients living with HIV/AIDS, will be discussed. ▲

GLOSSARY

¹Inequitable – Unbalanced/unfair

²Appreciable – Substantial

³Ravages – Devastation

⁴Combating – Fighting

⁵Counter-famine – Against Starvation/Hunger

⁶Malabsorption – impaired intestinal absorption of nutrients

⁷Quantitative – Measurable

⁸Enteral – tube feeding

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Personality Profile

Kathy Scott

National Training
Manager

– Professional Services

I began my career in Child and Youth Care in 1982 when I started to work as a Senior Social Worker at William Clark Gardens Children's Home in Durban. I remember arriving and thinking that I had at last found what I had been looking for in my career - it was a feeling of "coming home". Since then I have worked as a senior social worker at three different children's homes, and each one taught me invaluable lessons in life. I learnt about grief and loss, the importance of "buying time", and the importance of managers of residential facilities really knowing about Child and Youth Care. In 1996 I started at James House in Cape Town as the director. Here the lessons really began! I had

to take a long hard look at my own values and beliefs, and understand the cultures, values and beliefs of others. I then learnt about management of an organisation with much help from Brian Gannon and Merle Allsopp – through remembering how Ernie Nightingale had managed Ethelbert Children's Home.

I began to become more fully involved with NACCW when I moved to Cape Town. This was at first as a trainer, and I was later surprised and humbled to be elected as Chairperson of the Western Cape Regional Executive Committee. I continued to do training and discovered a passion for this aspect of our work which has remained with me. I have been very influenced by Jeanny Karth and others as role models in my training. I also learnt at this point how to manage and hold various responsibilities at the same time, as I was also managing the Family Support Team in the Project Go program in the Western Cape and lecturing for TSA.

In 2002 I joined the Professional Services team as a professional consultant. This was done after much thought and consideration. It was indeed great to leave James House in the capable hands of two child and youth care workers from the staff – Mark Gamble and Patricia Anderson

As a professional staff member of NACCW, I am privileged to be part of a great team led by two amazing people (Merle and Zeni) who have taught me so much. I have grown in so many ways and have been "stretched" by Merle who has an amazing ability to make you believe you can do things you never thought possible!

I feel enormously privileged to be part of a profession that is growing and providing for the young people of our country. My thanks go to all the members with whom I come into contact on a daily basis - for your support and commitment to this work in which we are all involved. ▲



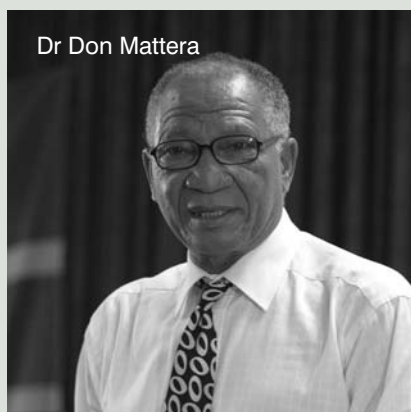
Report on the of Communit Youth Ca

Zeni Thumbadoo

A conference for community child and youth care workers was held on the 5th & 6th October in Durban. 350 representatives from rural communities met to participate for the first time in such a gathering. The conference was jointly planned by the NACCW and the Durban Regional Department of Social Welfare and Population Development, to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family – as well as the growing significance of child and youth care workers in communities. Delegates came from Enduduzweni, Nseleni, Kokstad, Ndumo, Nqutu, Mtubatuba, Emoyeni, Msinga, and Umbumbulu (KwaZulu Natal); Cala and Alicedale (Eastern Cape), Giyani (Limpopo Province), Bronkhorstpruit (Gauteng), Phuthaditjhaba and Bloemfontein (Free State), Donkerhoek (Northern Cape), Hout Bay and McGregor (Western Cape), and King William’s Town (Border Region of Eastern Cape).

The objective of the conference was to:

- Celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the International Year of The Family
- Strengthen the partnership between the Department of Social Development and the child and youth care work sector
- Showcase the work being done by



Dr Don Mattera

- community based child and youth care workers
- Contextualise community based child and youth care work in the field and in the Professional Association
 - Provide opportunities for networking across regions and provinces
 - Provide learning opportunities on specific skills relating to our work
 - Provide a forum for the articulation of specific issues facing community based child based child and youth care work
 - Provide a forum for the sharing of success stories.

The keynote speaker Dr Don Mattera delivered a passionate paper entitled “Child and Youth Care Work - A Calling and a Profession”. He explored his personal experiences



Ms Thobi Mhlongo

in the challenging journey of his life as a child from a “mixed marriage” in Apartheid South Africa. He shared stories of his life - growing up in residential care, his experiences of violence on the street and as a member of a gang. He struggled to transform his life, and in this spirit challenged child and youth care workers to be true to the ‘calling’ and the ‘profession’ of child and youth care work as they work with children at risk in communities in South Africa.

Dr Maria Mabetoa the Chief Director of Children of the National Department of Social Development, applauded the child and youth care workers in communities for the valuable work that they do. She encouraged them to continue on the path to professional child and youth care work. She further reinforced the commitment of the National

The Gathering Community Child and Care Workers



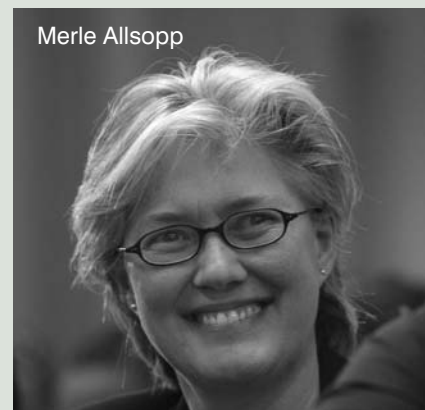
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Dr Maria Mabetoa



Dr LP Mqadi



Merle Allsopp

Department of Social Development through the Integrated Public Works Program, and other programs to support the development and future of child and youth care work in communities.

Dr LP Mqadi, Chief Director, Department of Social Welfare and Population KwaZulu Natal applauded the NACCW for the training and development of the community child care workers in the Provincial Drop-In Sites in KwaZulu Natal.

Ms Thobi Mhlongo the Chief Director of the Durban Region Department of Social Welfare and Population Development emphasised the fact that all the different social service professions should work effectively together in the best interest of families and children.

Merle Allsopp, the National Director of the Association delivered

a presentation on “Taking Child and Youth Care Work to the Community in South Africa”. She explained how child and youth care workers can make policy live for children, and she identified some of the unique features of community-based child and youth care work.

The conference program included panel presentations where child and child care workers were given the opportunity to celebrate success stories in family preservation and family reunification work. The Professional Foster Care Team demonstrated through their stories how effective child and youth care work services with troubled children and youth could be offered in the community by trained, professional foster parents.

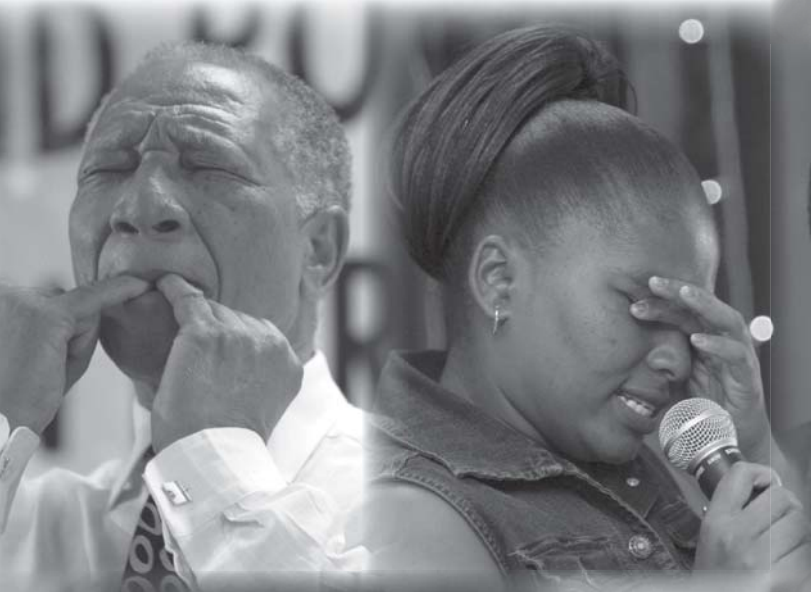
Workshop sessions offered participants access to varied

knowledge and skills in grief work, substance abuse, child protection issues, making of memory boxes, restorative work and stigma, creativity and games, child rights, professional foster care, the value of play and use of indigenous games in work with children, the characteristics of child and youth care work, building resilient children and families, and supervision in child and youth care work. These workshop sessions included presentations by child and youth care workers in the field, Durban Institute of Technology, UNICEF, Children’s Rights Committee and Childline.

The conference was interspersed with children participating in song, drama, dance items and sharing their stories on the panel presentations. The event culminated in a spirited and lively social evening. ▲



A GATHERING
of community child and youth care workers



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE
AND POPULATION DEVELOPMENT
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH UNICEF



NACCW
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHILD CARE WORKERS



International Year
of The Family



Department of
Social Development

5-6 October 2004 KwaZulu-Natal

Young People's Commitment to the

Dr. Phillis Mabuya

This article is based on a doctoral study recently conducted by Phillis Mabuya among high school students in the Eastern Cape and South Australia. Issues pondered during the study included the young people's sense of identity as citizens in their respective countries, their perceived rights and responsibilities as citizens, and the concerns they have about their countries' future. The students in the Eastern Cape were drawn from schools with a strong Afrikaner background, a strong English background and from schools situated in remote rural areas. Care was taken to include students from low, middle and upper income backgrounds. This article discusses the views expressed by students from the Eastern Cape.

The ushering in of a 'government of national unity' in 1994 brought to an end a protracted struggle against oppressive government forces. At the same time, it also brought new challenges for South Africans. Greatest among these challenges was the challenge to all South Africans to forget their divisive past and work together as responsible citizens to build the country and its peoples.

There are clear indications in the literature of the contributions made by black children and youth during the South African liberation struggle, particularly from 1976 onwards. There is also much evidence of the sacrifices made by these young people to achieve their ideal of a free and democratic South Africa for all. However, prophets of doom who have written on the involvement of young black people in South Africa's political struggles, have predicted that these young people, following their active involvement in the political struggles, are not likely to fit into society at any future stage. These young people's involvement in the liberation movement culminated in them being labelled a 'lost generation', for which many could see no future. As a 'lost generation' these young people were considered to be unprepared and unwilling to make any constructive contribution to the building of South Africa in the post-apartheid era. Thus, while the goal of democracy for all was achieved in 1994, these young people were depicted as a section of the South African population that will never be able to contribute positively to the building of the democratic South Africa.

In perusing the literature on the involvement of young people in South Africa's political struggles one was struck by two points. One was the paucity of information on the involvement of white young people in the country's political struggles, and the impact such involvement was likely to have on their futures. The second was the paucity of studies involving young people themselves. Much of the literature tended to dwell on the concerns of influential



people from various walks of life 'about the future of the young black people'. This doctoral study intended giving a voice to the many young people in South Africa directly affected by the violence and unpredictability of life during the liberation struggles. What follows is a summary of the views of the young people themselves.

Citizenship Identity

In Heater's (1990) view citizenship identity has a special relationship with *history*, *nationality* and *fraternity*. Explaining these concepts, Heater claims that history provides a society's collective memory of where the state has come from, and how it has come to be what it is at any particular point in time. Nationality, in turn, embodies a feeling of cultural togetherness that goes with a civic bond to fellow citizens in one's state as well, as the idea that one owes special loyalty to one's compatriots. Heater then describes fraternity as an emotional force that binds a group to a common identity, that implies a respect for others with whom one collaborates. Fraternity, he adds, also means that the group bound together by the feeling have a common sense of purpose and are engaged in a common activity.

Kymlicka and Norman (1994) view citizenship as not just a status defined by a set of rights and responsibilities, but rather as an identity and an expression of one's membership of a political community.

The relevance of the views expressed by the authors cited above, in determining one's sense of identity, was confirmed by the young people's statements on their sense

Democratic South Africa in Doubt?



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of identity. The students had to handle three questions: do you consider yourself a South African citizen? Why? Whom do you not consider to be a South African citizen?

In this study, South Africa's divisive history came alive as soon as the discussions began. For students in a school with a strong Afrikaner influence, the Afrikaners and the Voortrekkers were considered the true citizens of South Africa because "they are part of this country; they fought for it; they believe in South Africa; and are into the culture of the Voortrekker ... they hold onto their past, but also strive for their future". For these students, the people who are "destroying the culture and the land, and don't feel anything for the land", are *not* considered citizens of South Africa. For students from a school with a strong English influence, citizens and non-citizens were merely distinguished in terms of where one is born and how long one has been within the country. These students described citizens as "those who were born in South Africa" and "those that have been here for more than five years". Non-citizens were "those who weren't born here" and "those people that just come into the country – like for holidays, or have recently moved to South Africa".

For the black students, citizens were identified as "those contributing a lot in the development of the country and are able to correct the wrongs they see", as well as "those people who are here working hard for the country, even without gain". Non-citizens were described as "the people who are tourists in the country ... those people who come into the country as visitors". One view expressed was that "those people who come with bags to sell clothes in this

country are not citizens because they bring diseases into this country". The immigrants were not considered citizens "because those immigrants, they increase the rate of crime in South Africa". Criminals were also not considered citizens "because, seeing them what they do and how they humiliate and how they violate other people's rights meant that they were not worth citizenship". Speaking of white people in South Africa, one student responded with "I can say these are not people who belong in South Africa because many years ago white people came to this country carrying 'hole-less buttons' which they gave to black people in exchange for the black people's family homes. Those people have no rights here".

It was evident in the South African study that one is dealing with three different groups of people. On one extreme are the Afrikaners who believe they are the true citizens. On the other extreme are black people who believe white people do not belong to South Africa. In the middle ground are the English people, among whom citizens and non-citizens are merely distinguished in terms of where one is born and how long one has been living in the country. The reasons for these divisions become clear when one considers South African history which clearly shows the differences in the development of Afrikaner and Black identity. The findings of this study clearly showed that, despite the end of apartheid in 1994, the separate identities developed by these two groups were still alive at the time of the study. The cultural togetherness felt by those who identified with either of the two groups still held each group together as separate from other groups. The students from an Afrikaner background were quick to bring in 'culture' in describing who are considered citizens. The black students were also just as quick to count people from outside South Africa as non-citizens because "they do not have those cultures and traditional ways of South Africa".

It is noteworthy that in identifying citizens the black students promptly associated citizenship with "contributing a lot to the development" of one's country. This was quite contrary to the predictions of various authorities who had written on the expected future of these young people.

Violence And Citizenship Development

The following paragraphs summarise the students' views on their rights and responsibilities as citizens following their extended exposure to the violence that characterised the South African political struggles.

According to Turner (1986) a critical factor in the emergence of citizenship is violence. He has described the violence he is referring to as the "overt and conscious struggle of social groups to achieve social participation" (Turner 1986: 26). He maintains that citizenship is pushed

along by the development of social conflict, and social struggles as groups compete with each other over access to resources. Citing the French Revolution as a case in point, Turner maintains that the very violence of the social transformation that characterised the French Revolution resulted in a highly articulate conception of active citizenship. Following the revolution, the French ceased to be passive subjects of a sovereign state.

The data gathered from the Eastern Cape students during this study pointed to the development of a similar form of active citizenship among the young people, following their involvement in the violent political struggles within their country. The students were clearly not prepared to be passive citizens. That strong resolve among these young people to fight for their rights in South Africa was clearly evident. Asked, for instance, what they associated the word 'citizen' with, the prompt responses from a number of the black students mentioned the word 'fight' several times. The fight included "fighting for the woman's rights" as well as "people that fight for their rights". In describing what they considered to be their

the violence of a political revolution encourages the development of an active form of citizenship

rights or responsibilities as citizens, these were expressed in terms of a perceived responsibility to be actively involved in the government of the country, as well as in ensuring the future prosperity of the country. This kind of response was not elicited from the South African white students involved in the

study. These students largely mentioned their civil rights and responsibilities as individual citizens. These included the right to freedom of speech, association, movement and the need to obey laws, pay taxes, and help others in times of need. These responses tend to support Turner's view that the violence of a political revolution encourages the development of an active form of citizenship, where citizens organise themselves to demand an equal access to resources in their state. The political struggles in South Africa have created as it were, a revolutionary context for the realisation of citizenship rights especially for the black people who, until 1994, had the least access to the country's resources.

Citizenship Responsibilities

These young people's sense of duty to their country became more evident as they responded to three questions: Why do you consider yourself a citizen in your country? What does being a citizen in your country mean to you? What do you think is your responsibility to your country as a citizen? The responses to these questions are summarised below.

In explaining why they consider themselves citizens in South Africa, the students from the black schools consistently linked their reasons to some perceived duty

to their country. This came out in responses like: "living in this country and having rights and responsibility towards this country and community", "having a role to play when it comes to my country", "a desire to correct the wrongs one sees in one's community", "desire to promote peace among people in the country", "protection of defenceless women and children against being ill-treated", and "being treated as one and equal because we want to build the nation". South African black students had no doubt about South Africa being the place where they belong. Some of these students declared their unwillingness to leave their country to settle in more affluent countries like America. The black students saw it as their duty to help bring home information and ideas about positive developments they see in other countries.

As indicated earlier students from the English background merely linked their claim to citizenship to birth and length of stay. There was however a strong link to 'the land' in the conception of citizenship among the students from an Afrikaner background. These latter students did not mention any specific problems within the country requiring that they be involved in finding solutions. Responding to the question about what being a citizen means to them, there was much emphasis on the need for citizens to contribute something to society. These students further stressed the importance of the need for citizens to be committed enough to their country as to be willing to stick with it even in times of trouble. Thoughts about "jumping into the next plane out of the country" when problems arise, were not considered consistent with being true citizens. True citizens, the students pointed out "will stick it to the end and do whatever they can to improve their future in the land".

When students were asked to respond to the question on what they see as their responsibility to their country, the students from the Afrikaner and English backgrounds in South Africa largely expressed their responsibilities in terms of adherence to the law. Examples of responses given included, "not littering"; "not over-speeding"; "not walking down the street with liquor in your possession". The black students had more definite ideas on what they needed to do over and above obeying laws. Their responses included, "looking into matters relating to the welfare of young people – like the case of children who live on the streets", "try and contribute more to the



country economically”, “to act in cases of child abuse”. There was a clear difference between the students from a black background and those from an Afrikaner background on the way in which perceived problems within the country should be handled. Both groups raised the problem of street children. For the students from an Afrikaner background, tough government action against such children needed to be taken. Suggested solutions to the handling of the problem included: preventing such children from being born by “sterilising the parents”; “arresting them” and “brainwashing them while in prison”. Using punishment in the biblical sense where someone is caught stealing, and the hand used being chopped off was another suggestion given. As a third suggestion they called for the return of the death penalty. This group strongly felt that the country should ignore the “human rights people” in punishing offenders because the “human rights people don’t protect crime victims”.

The black students suggested that more houses needed to be built in the communities. The government, it was felt, also has to help create more job opportunities, so that

the street children were not held responsible for the situation in which they found themselves, and did not need further punishment

parents can get employment and be able to provide for their children. Thus for this group, the street children were not held responsible for the situation in which they found themselves, and did not need further

punishment. It is the community that has to try and make sure that such children have homes. The high-handed manner in which the Afrikaner government had handled black problems in particular, was clearly evident in the Afrikaner students’ suggestions on how street children should be handled.

Contrary to popular claims that the South African young black people forming the group labelled the ‘lost generation’ did not want to learn, the students repeatedly stressed the need to be educated. This is indicated in responses like: “we should attend school so we can reach greater heights in life”, “urge the government to support

students who come out of school because they don’t have the fees, and uniforms needed to continue with school”. The black students cited their inability to go beyond grade 12 because of a lack of funds to cover university fees, as a great limitation to the exercise of their rights. These views tend to lend support to the findings of a study by de Kock and Schutte (1993). Their study revealed that, contrary to popular belief, that black students dropped out of school for political reasons, the reasons for dropping out were more economic than political. These views also support a statement made by Liddell et al (1993), who have claimed that the focus on the young people’s role in political activities in South Africa directed attention away from their more general suffering under apartheid, which included malnutrition, poverty and poor educational provision.

The South African black students also indicated their concern about crime in the country, and saw themselves as having some responsibility to help reduce the crime rate in the country. One student listed ‘criminals’ as people not worth to be considered citizens in the country because of the way in which they violate the rights of other citizens. The black South African students suggested that the government should help provide more recreational activities for young people, in order to reduce the crime rate. The students also suggested the government should help to provide more job opportunities for the young people in the country, as another way of reducing the crime rate.

These responses again did not support the claims that the young people who were exposed to violence during South Africa’s political struggle would in future be prone to violence and see violence as a way of resolving problems. Rather, they tended to lend support to a report by Van Zyl Slabbert et al (1994) following extensive research on youth. According to their report, little evidence could be found to indicate that young people’s exposure to violence results in them being more likely to condone violence, either as a way of life or as a way of resolving problems. They found that young black South Africans are more negative about violence following exposure. A study by Charl Schutte (1993) on “A culture of violence and the African youth” found that the respondents generally rejected violence as a political option for resolving the country’s problems. Respondents were also opposed to forms of violent political protest and to extreme political slogans. Schutte also found that the respondents had very conservative attitudes to firearm ownership. Such attitudes were consistent with the rejection of violence as a political option.

Conclusion

The data gathered during this study on the young black people’s perceptions on their responsibilities as citizens clearly indicated that, contrary to predictions, these young people still felt a strong sense of responsibility for contributing to the building of their country and its people. The data also revealed that these young people, following their prolonged exposure to violence, had still not accepted violence as an acceptable way of achieving their goals. ▲



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Pam Jackson, Director of the innovative and successful program for girls with the street experience tells the tale of the services provided by ...

Ons plek



© Shelley Christian – Oryx Media

'Thuli was picked up by the police at Mowbray station where it was noticed that she had been sitting in one spot all day long. They brought her to Ons Plek on a hot day in December.

24-Hour Accessible Early Intervention Intake Programme

Girls are referred to Ons Plek Intake Shelter within hours or a few days of arriving in the Cape Town CBD. Usually they are running away from abuse or neglect at home. However, in the last years Ons Plek has noticed a big increase in the number of referrals of girls who are in danger of abuse from gangs in the area where they are currently living. The girls' circumstances are assessed immediately on arrival. The girl is then referred to our family preservation or family re-unification program. Statutory services are provided by our social work staff.

At Ons Plek 'Thuli maintained that she was from Kimberley; that her parents had died and her aunt then sent her to her granny in Khayelitsha.

The granny had moved and she could not find her. Our child care staff and social worker, alternated between gentle probing and patient waiting for the real story to emerge from this very quiet 10 year old girl. Progress was reviewed by social worker supervisor, and staff comparing notes in the weekly case discussion.

After a few days 'Thuli agreed to take a child care worker to her house. As the child care worker approached the house on foot she encountered several neighbours curious to see 'Thuli on her way back home. They informed the child care worker that the child had a heavy load of housework to do on a daily basis, and that she was often beaten. In the house the child care worker was met by a large woman who explained that 'Thuli was abandoned by her parents at the age of 10 months. She, Mrs Mzamo, had kindly fostered the child ever since. She was willing to take the child back although 'Thuli was a naughty child. On the subject of the identities of the child's parents she was evasive.

Family Preservation and Reunification Program

Staff hold family meetings and family building sessions with families. Early intervention in family conflict arising from different values between parents and children, as well as facilitation of discussion about negative family dynamics, frequently result in the family being preserved.

Wherever possible children should grow up in their families of origin, failing that in another family and lastly in a children's home. It is necessary to assist families to carry out their responsibilities towards their children and for children to grow up in the most empowering and least restrictive situations. This focus allows for the return of over half of the girls to their homes or extended families.

The reports from the neighbours, coupled with many old scars on her body, corroborated 'Thuli's explanations for why she had run away. The usual plan now would be to engage the parents and child in a process which would enhance their awareness of how they each

contribute to the problem. This enables them to change their behaviour if they choose to do so. Discussions and techniques on how to listen to each other and communicate their needs as well as discipline methods are covered. In this case the 'foster' mother was rigid in her denial of any abusive behaviour, and adamant that the child was a naughty child. Little progress in re-unifying the family could be made and the child could not be discharged to an abusive home.

Longer Term Care

There is a small core of girls who are with us for more than 2 years. These girls are highly unlikely to return home before they are self-supporting, due to their home circumstances. They are also hard to place in foster care due to their age and behaviour. Most of them have regular family and community contact with support from the staff with regard to difficulties they experience when visiting home.

While her home circumstances were being followed up on and a long term plan for her future drawn up, attention was given to 'Thuli's schooling. She nervously joined our informal school program where she was initially very quiet. A decision had to be made about whether to send 'Thuli for formal schooling or to our business program. Girls over 15 are candidates for the business program if schooling is not suitable. She was however finally admitted to our formal school program.

Informal Daily Education Program

On first intake the girls are usually very preoccupied with the issues which brought them to the streets, and they tend to struggle to concentrate due to the restless and often substance dependent lifestyle on the streets. When a child first comes to the shelter she may well drift away simply following her latest desire. Our Morning School provides a developmental program to prepare the children not yet ready, or able to attend school

or work, and to assess the most appropriate educational placement for each girl. In addition to the basic English literacy and numeracy lessons, classes include baking and beadwork, very basic financial skills taught through a business game as well as opportunities to sell the goods made.

Formal Education Program

Our approaches include social-educational assessment and counselling, scholastic and developmental assessment, a range of support structures such as a homework and school visiting programs, and supplementary education. Supplementary education sessions take the form of informal sessions including English reading and communication sessions, computer based learning activities and art. Holiday programs also provide supplementary education and include swimming, science, geography, art and 'roots and culture' activities.

Homework and School Program

Children who have lived on the streets or without a stable home base almost invariably struggle at school. Teachers often struggle to integrate children with different needs into their sometimes very large classes. Our school support teacher helps the children understand their school work and the social skills they need at school better, but also gives the teachers valuable insights into effective ways of working with the girls.

Business Program

For the older girls for whom school is not an option due to them being too far behind, we run a baking program. Every day the girls bake, cost materials and price items. They are trained in basic bookkeeping and customer care, hygiene and packaging. The program is geared to prepare them to participate in further baking training and to work in a small home business. We are now renowned in certain areas for our muffins.

By now 'Thuli had moved from the first stage shelter, *Ons Plek*, (*Our Place*) to *Siviwe* (*God has heard us*), our second stage home for more settled children. Child care workers there reported that she was not washing herself or her clothes and this, combined with bed wetting, was causing the children to complain. At a weekly staff meeting they decided to make a special effort to help her tidy her cupboard and check daily on her hygiene. The individual attention paid off, and within a month the file entries reflected a marked improvement and even less frequent bed wetting. This lack of cleanliness is something we often see in children who have little self esteem. Gradually counseling and our Life Skills program also help with this.

Life Skills Programme

Baby, Child and Home Care Life Skills programme

Many girls dream of having their own home and becoming mothers one day. At *Ons Plek* they learn home making, home care, baby care and parenting skills, in order to avoid the cycle of their children also running away to the streets.

Other Life Skills

The daily programme is structured to teach healthy relationship skills, and reinforce these in practice. In addition to learning a range of social skills as part of the daily household routine, girls also attend vocational preparation sessions which teach them how to use the telephone and telephone directories, prepare CV's, approach prospective employers and work in teams with others.

Counselling Programme

Emotional healing is crucial. While it is difficult to quantify emotional changes, we can identify significant changes in the emotional well being of each girl as we look at her growth over a period of time. Our counselling programme remains an ongoing process. Emotional changes are usually slow, but looking back we see girls who

found their depression, anxiety or aggression totally overwhelming when they first came, now able to cope with conflict, increased responsibilities and loss, without losing hope and direction as they work out their new dreams and plans.

Having settled down residentially and at school 'Thuli found the energy to focus on deeper problems. She wanted to belong to somebody. In the holidays she was the only Siviwe child who had no one to go to at all. 'Thuli began to hanker after her 'foster' parent, Mrs Mzamo. She forgot all about the previous abuse and built up an idealised picture of the 'foster' mother whom she thought was her real mother. An offer was made to accompany her on a home visit to see if any more details about her family would be forthcoming. This would keep 'Thuli in touch with the reality of the situation as well as give staff another chance to find more information about 'Thuli's parents.

Initially the family were happy to see 'Thuli and invited her for home visits over week-ends. A month later Mrs Mzamo had decided not to fetch 'Thuli anymore. By then her son had been stabbed and four days later her daughter was shot at. Mrs Mzamo claimed that the neighbours think that she and her children do witchcraft and also accuse her of stealing other people's children. This hostile relationship with the neighbours indicated to us that all was not well at the home although we were not sure quite what the dynamics were.

Mrs Mzamo disclosed that 'Thuli's father had died, that she did not know his name or address, but that he worked for a baker in an area known as the "Factory Corner". 'Thuli was torn between being sure this was her mother and not liking the woman for shouting at her. She cried angrily when we tried to discuss with her our fears of her going to the foster mother. We stopped "home visits" but allowed visits by the family at Siviwe.

Mrs Mzamo came up with the father's clan name which she said she had got from someone who knew him. But she claimed, all other sources of information had moved or died.

We decided to find 'Thuli a volunteer to whom she could go for week-ends. The "family" contacts were not heading anywhere. We had sent her on week-end courses and encouraged friends in the community to build up her social circle. However, she still had no where to go for week-ends. Allerease Olanrewaju neé Mentoer, (an ex Ons Plek girl who graduated at Cornerstone Bible College) who volunteers at Ons Plek committed herself to take 'Thuli home for week-ends on a regular basis. In addition to this we employed Allerease to do a life story with her. She reported that: "there is an emptiness in working with 'Thuli. When I speak to her about the family not keeping her, I end up feeling awful as if I have done something wrong. I think the empty feeling I have with her has to do with her having an empty feeling."

Volunteer Program

We make intensive use of volunteers, especially student interns who worked full time for Ons Plek for periods ranging between 3 and 10 months. They provided a range of activities, including computer skills training, reading, art, drama, education, leadership training, pottery, swimming and baking.

Life Stories

Life Stories are used as part of counselling. Children who cannot express themselves easily do so in "play therapy" or in a Life Story Book. This entails making a book of the important things in their lives. They could start off in an unthreatening activity, such as finding pictures of what they like doing, and at their pace move into taking cameras to their houses, old schools and other haunts to make a book of their lives. This gives them some sense of identity and roots, and an opportunity to

talk about their emotions, while engaged in a very practical task. On the visits they relate stories which they have forgotten. This gives us a fuller picture and sometimes some new clues to follow in our hunt for families.

Gradually 'Thuli was able to acknowledge that the Mzamo's were not her family although she still needed them because she had no one else. Her bedwetting continued to wax or wane according to her emotional state. Child care workers again discussed her progress and new strategies involving waking her up, not drinking at night and black plastic bags on the bed were tried.

Case Evaluation

The file entry reads "Three and a half years after 'Thuli's admission to Ons Plek and still no progress with regard to tracing her real family. We will not allow the child too much contact with the "foster" family because she was physically abused and exploited. The fear in which the family's neighbours have of them plus the periodic scapegoating of the family by the neighbours is a worrying sign of a deeper problem which we cannot put our finger on yet." We look for facts but we also listen to our gut feelings to assist us in finding the facts.

Mrs Mzamo's 33 year old daughter came to fetch 'Thuli for a visit. The weekly file entry records that she tells the same story as before: "that 'Thuli was abandoned by 'Thuli's mother's sister, that the father had died and that the only person who knew him went to the Eastern Cape and was never seen again. Something is missing from this story. It is impossible that they knew the father as well as they claimed to, and knew the biological mother but did not know the child's clan name and home village. Could the child have been stolen?"

Shortly after this visit a home visit was planned but on arriving it was found that the Mzamo family had moved. 'Thuli drew a happy picture of her as part of the Mzamo family for

her life story book despite the fact that they had moved without telling her. Contact with the family ceased but fortunately 'Thuli was invited to a school friend for the December holidays and continued to see Allerease and Collins regularly.

Reunification Programme or Detective Work?

In the interests of family reunification Ons Plek staff frequently become detectives. In this case staff even attended funerals where it was believed certain contacts could be made. Sometimes staff literally prowl the empty streets at night searching for missing family members.

The search for information on 'Thuli's biological family was intensified. We visited the street committee of the Mzamo's ex-neighbourhood. They told her where Mrs Mzamo had moved to. We visited her, and extracted the information that the father was killed by people and put in plastic packets. She gave his clan name as Tshawe. She had forgotten the address of where she lived at the time of the murder. However, we got the address from the son before the mother could warn the son not to give it to her. Mrs Mzamo was unusually friendly to 'Thuli, telling her she is building a house big enough for 'Thuli to move in with them.

Our homework teacher was despatched to follow up her church members' Factory Corner connections with the pieces of 'Thuli's fragile story. We got ready to search the tips for "Thuli's mother who Mrs Mzamo said was a 'coloured' woman living on the Bellville tip. We tried to trace the Grade 1 teacher of 'Thuli's first school. This contact yielded little information. We made contact with radio and press to help us with our search.

Then we finally struck gold when we traced Mrs Mzamo's old address, after extensive enquiries because the house number's had been swapped around. Here we learnt, from neighbours, that 'Thuli's

father was Mrs Mazmo's boyfriend. 'Thuli then 4 years old, was his child from a previous relationship. Mrs Mzamo killed the father by beating him to death!. 'Thuli was shocked and walked around in a daze for a few days. However, she processed the information and assured us that she wanted to continue to find out as much as possible, even if the news was bad.

We learnt where the family's home area is, and that there are 3 villages in this area, some of whose members now live in Cape Town. We now began following up leads to find relatives of the father known to be Siphon Mchunu, clan name Tshawe. She contacted the policeman who had arrested Mrs Mzamo after the murder. He willingly accompanied her to see Mrs Mzamo. He extracted information about the likely whereabouts of the Mchunus. We then went through the telephone book looking for the numbers of the Mchunu family and started telephoning. One contact led to another and soon the child and youth care worker and 'Thuli had met with several people who were Mchunu's who gave further contacts. Finally Mr Mchunu's brother met them reluctantly and confirmed he was the brother but he doubted his brother had fathered this child. He would consult his family and then telephone us.

'Thuli was on tenterhooks. Two weeks later when she was giving up hope they were called to the older sister's house. The sister said the family are not aware of their brother having had a child with anyone except his wife. However, when she saw 'Thuli she cried out that the child looks like her brother Siphon Mchunu. Other family members arrived and became very excited when they saw the family likeness.

They immediately began making plans to take her to the granny in the Eastern Cape. They also said they had not been happy that Siphon was involved with Mrs Mzamo because she had killed her previous husband. Finally the family in the Eastern Cape saw photographs of

'Thuli and agreed, despite their initial scepticism and requests for blood tests, that she is definitely a family member.

'Thuli is now preparing to visit her family in the Eastern Cape who are now planning a big party in the Eastern Cape to welcome her and will slaughter an animal in her honour. Staff are preparing her for the realities of what it could be like once the "honeymoon" period is over. She will probably go for holidays over a period of a year and if all is well go home permanently. ▲

Straat Kinders

Kinders van die straat,
Is in die donker buite gelaat,
Dit is kinders sonder huise,
Wat rond skarrel soos muise

Bedags slenter hulle soos muise rond,
Om iets te vind, vir hul magies en mond,
Voor supermarte sal jy hulle altyd vind,
Bedel vir ietsie om te verslind.

Koue sny deur hul vel en been,
Onder koerante moet hul slaap in die reen.
Kartonne gee hulle 'n bietjie warmte,
Dan smag hulle vir n huis en kalmte

Hulle moes so baie in die lewe ontbeer,
Al wat hulle kan doen is om te fantiseer
Van n groot huis en n hegte gesin
En om die swaar kry te oorwin

Ons moet hulle soek, en liefde gee,
En hul lyfies in warme klere, klee
Ons moet nie net in ons warme huise sit,
Ons moet hulle soek en vir hulle bid

Ons moet omsien na hul welsyn,
En verligting, bring aan hul lyding en pyn.
Straat kinders is in alle dorpe en stede,
Kom ons reik uit – en luister na hul gebede.

H. Opperman

Kinderversorger – Pofadder

Where Can I Find the Policy?

This is the fourth in a series of articles on the policy requirements in relation to services to children. It deals with Orphans and Vulnerable Children in the context of HIV/AIDS and education.

Education policy and legislative context

Introduction

This series was begun to answer the seemingly straightforward question "Where can I find the policy?" in relation to services for children made vulnerable by the HIV/AIDS crisis. As indicated in previous articles, the policy and legislative framework in this regard is complex and extensive, and must be thoroughly understood by prospective service providers. In order to be able to render services it is also necessary to be familiar with policy guiding the activities of related sectors. Hence the focus of this month is on policy governing the education sector. This article is adapted with permission from the publication by Sonia Giese, Helen Meintjies, Rhian Croke and Ross Chamberlain (2003) entitled "Health and Social Services to Address the Needs of Orphans and Vulnerable Children in the Context of HIV/AIDS: Research Report and Recommendations".

The education and training system in South Africa has undergone major transformation over the past 9 years. Building on the principles of the new democracy, the government applied itself to creating

a sound legislative and policy framework to address inequities in education, including allocation and distribution of resources.

The first 5 years of that period were devoted to dismantling apartheid structures and systems, creating a policy framework for a unified education system and establishing a more equitable basis for financing education institutions. The first White Paper was developed in February 1995 and formed the principal reference point for subsequent policy and legislative reform in the education system (Department of Education, 2001a). Where the first 5 years focussed on policy and legislative reform, the last few years have been devoted to incremental implementation under the banner of 'Tirisano' – a Ministerial call to co-ordinated action for operationalising a shared vision for education.

Education legislative framework

Important legislative developments relevant to this research include the National Education Policy Act (1996) and the South African Schools Act (1996).

The **National Education Policy Act** (1996) inscribes in law the

policy, legislative and monitoring responsibilities of the Minister of Education and formalises the relations between national and provincial authorities.

The **South African Schools Act** (1996) defines the right to basic education in South Africa as compulsory education for all children aged 7 to 15 years, or in Grades 1 to 9. This legislation also governs the supply of facilities, education systems, governance and school funding norms. Of particular note is that the South African Schools Act makes provision for a school fee exemption process, and stipulates that no child may be refused admission to a public school because of non-payment of school fees. However, all parents are liable to pay the fee agreed upon by the school governing body unless exempted (Roithmayr, 2002a).

Among many other laws relevant to the field of education, the Employment of Educators Act, which regulates the professional, moral and ethical responsibilities and competencies of educators, is of importance in relation to the practice in schools with regard to vulnerable children.

Other statutes relevant to education but which are managed by other Government Departments

include: The National Health Bill (Republic of South Africa, 2002b), which makes provision for School Health Services; And the Child Care Act (No. 74 of 1983) (Republic of South Africa, 1983) and draft Children's Bill (Department of Social Development, 2003), which make provision for the exemption of certain categories of children from payment of school fees and the provision of subsidised uniforms, shoes and stationery to children in court-ordered care.

Education policies, programmes and campaigns

Some important recent policy developments and education campaigns relevant to this study are described below.

"Education for All" campaign

In line with the country's vision of education for all, the goals of the Dakar Framework provide a basis for reviewing some of the strategies that have particular relevance to vulnerable children, including those experiencing orphanhood. Some of these goals are discussed briefly below.

South Africa has set a target of providing comprehensive early childhood development services through the provision of a Reception Grade for all 5-year-olds by 2010. Plans are in place to implement poverty-targeted nutrition in conjunction with the expansion of ECD services, particularly to children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS and to learners with special education needs.

While various global education movements advocate 3-6 years of primary education, in South Africa 9 years of basic education is compulsory. Given the priority in South Africa to effect redistribution of resources, free education is available to poor learners, but only through the granting of school fee exemptions. The goal is to ensure that all children have access to and are able to complete primary education that is free, compulsory and of good quality, by 2015.

In South Africa, more boys than girls are enrolled at the primary level with a reversal of this pattern in the secondary level of education, where girls outnumber boys. These dynamics and the reasons for the high drop-out rate among boys in secondary schools are being examined so as to design strategies for addressing this problem. Measures have been instituted to monitor attendance at schools with the aim of eliminating gender disparities by 2005 and achieving gender equality in schools by 2015.

Tirisano Call to Action

An important development towards the realisation of the "education for all goals" was the Ministerial 'Tirisano' Call to Action (mentioned earlier), under the auspices of which many interventions have been launched.

Priorities of Tirisano included a focus on expanding the role of schools in the community; expanding education coverage for youth and adults in response to development needs; and addressing HIV/AIDS through the education and training system (Department of Education, 2001a).

The implementation plan for Tirisano (2000-2004) is organised into 5 core programmes which will guide the activities of the Department over the next 5 years (Department of Education, 2002e).

These are:

- HIV/AIDS, the priority of which is to "deal urgently and purposefully with the HIV/AIDS emergency in and through the education and training system";
- School effectiveness and educator professionalism, the priorities of which are to ensure that schools become "centres of community life", to end conditions of physical degradation in schools, to develop the professional quality of the teaching force, and to ensure the success of active learning through outcome based education.
- Literacy, aimed at reducing illiteracy and developing a mechanism through which to co-

ordinate the development of a literacy campaign.

- Further and higher education for creating a vibrant further education system that grasps the intellectual and professional challenges facing South Africans.
- A programme directed at promoting organisational effectiveness of the national and provincial departments.

Each of these 5 programmes has a set of projects, defined priorities, targets, performance indicators and projected outcomes. The HIV/AIDS programme in particular has been divided into 3 projects:

- Awareness raising, information and advocacy: The objectives of this project are to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS among educators, learners and students.
- HIV/AIDS within the curriculum: The objective of this project is to ensure that HIV/AIDS education is integrated into the curriculum at all levels of the education and training system.
- HIV/AIDS and the education system: The objective of this project is to develop models for analysing and understanding the impact of HIV/AIDS on the education and training system.

The Department identified three important gaps within the proposed framework for implementation of 'Tirisano', namely programmes to address problems related to gender equality, early childhood development, and education for learners with special needs (Department of Education, 2002).

Whole School Evaluation Policy

Whole school evaluation is one instrument of the Tirisano plan's focus on school effectiveness and educator professionalism (Department of Education, 2002e). The Whole School Evaluation Policy (2000) (Department of Education, 2001c, 2001d) provides for school-based self-evaluation as well as external evaluation by a supervisory unit. The policy intends to develop

and maintain educational monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for tracking the performance of schools and for reporting progress against defined characteristics identified as priorities for effective schools.

Early childhood development

Education White Paper 5 addresses early child development and emphasises the development of integrated and intersectoral plans for this sector, focusing on health, nutrition, physical development, clean water supply, and sanitation.

Inclusive education (Education white paper 6)

The report of the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (1998) and the National Committee on Education Support Services put forward a set of principles and broad strategies to govern special needs education to ensure that all learners are able to participate in and benefit from the education process.

The proposed strategies included recommendations for infusing ‘special needs and support services’ throughout the system, ensuring a barrier-free physical environment and a supportive and inclusive psychosocial learning environment, developing a flexible curriculum to ensure access to all learners, fostering holistic and integrated support provision through intersectoral collaboration, developing community-based support systems and promoting the rights and responsibilities of parents, educators and learners.

Education White Paper 6 provides an overview towards establishing an inclusive education and training system. While the White Paper focuses more on special needs related to physical, mental, sensory, neurological and developmental impairments, it also makes provision for the elimination of barriers to education related to poverty, drop out, inflexible curriculum, and unsafe environments, among others (Department of Education 2001a, 2001b). Importantly it also defines

behavioural and emotional difficulties as ‘barriers to learning’.

In particular, the policy for inclusive education makes provision for the “identification, integration and support” of learners rendered vulnerable by a range of circumstances, including social and economic vulnerability, disability and ill health.

Against the backdrop of HIV/AIDS the White Paper takes into account the impact of the pandemic on education and training and, in particular, on short- and long-term funding, the enrolment and drop-out rates of learners, and the consequences for the curriculum. The White paper outlines the intention of the Ministry to gather information on this impact through commissioned research, in order to develop and implement appropriate programmes. Such programmes will include special measures for supporting orphans and other vulnerable children (including establishing systems to identify vulnerable children), establishing referral procedures for educators and developing teaching guidelines on appropriate support.

National policy on HIV/AIDS for learners, educators in public schools, and students in further education and Training

This policy was released in 1999, and is aimed at: Increasing learner knowledge of HIV/AIDS through schools and the curriculum; reducing discrimination against those affected by HIV/AIDS; and introducing universal precautions for the safety of learners and educators at education institutions.

Education-related policies within other departments

Several policies relevant to education are managed and implemented through other departments, including the Primary School Nutrition Programme, School Health Policy and Health Promoting Schools Policy which are all managed by the Department of Health.

Plans for the next decade

The Department of Education have indicated that their plans for improving quality in education between 2002 and 2015 include: strategies for curriculum reform; mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS on learners and educators; managing the quality, supply and equitable distribution of teachers; alleviating poverty by expanding coverage of nutrition support in education and ECD institutions; reducing the burden on poor households relating to uniforms, textbooks and stationery; scaling up inclusive



education to target out-of-school youth and other vulnerable children; and developing support teams for “learners in need”.

The plans include the establishment of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track trends in service delivery and policy compliance. In addition, the Department have noted their intention to strengthen teacher development and support, and

put in place management and governance interventions, in order to enable more schools to become "centres of community life", particularly in rural areas (Department of Education, 2002b).

National Conference on HIV/AIDS and the education sector

The National Conference on HIV/AIDS and the education sector was convened by the Department of Education in May 2002. The conference set out to consider, among other things, three principal concerns related to HIV/AIDS.



The first of these is the role of the education sector in preventing the further spread of HIV/AIDS. The second imperative is the role of the education sector in providing care and support to those who are infected or affected, and the third is maintaining the productivity and quality of the education sector in the context of AIDS related illness and death among learners and educators (Department of

Education, 2002a). Aiming to achieve consensus on strategies to be undertaken, participants at the conference called for the education sector to take special responsibility for the following aspects of the epidemic:

- helping to contain the spread of HIV among learners and educators;
- providing safe and secure learning environments for South Africa's young, especially those affected by HIV/AIDS;
- ensuring system support for learners infected and affected by HIV/AIDS;
- responding to the learning needs of orphans and other vulnerable children, and those at risk of infection; and
- guaranteeing the quality of the nation's education and training programmes in the circumstances of HIV/AIDS.

A plan has been made for addressing these priorities (Department of Education, 2002a) and this bodes well for school-based action with real impact on the lives of orphans and other vulnerable children in the context of HIV/AIDS.

Conclusion

Much progress has been made by the education sector since 1994, and the developments since 1999 are particularly laudable. The challenge for the education system lies in taking a comprehensive approach to the holistic management of learners who are infected or affected by HIV/AIDS and utilising the opportunities which prevailing policies provide for the role of the school in the care and support of vulnerable learners. ▀

Giese, S., H. Meintjes, R. Croke, and R. Chamberlain (2003). *Health and Social Services to address the needs of orphans and other vulnerable children in the context of HIV/AIDS in South Africa: Research Report and Recommendations. Report submitted to HIV/AIDS directorate, National Department of Health, January 2003. Children's Institute, University of Cape Town: Cape Town.*

Days to Remember

December

- 1 World Aids Day (WHO)
- 2 International for the abolition of slavery
- 3 International Day for the Disabled - UN
- 10 Adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights - 1948
- 10 International Human Rights Day - UN
- 10 Adoption of the Final Constitution of the Republic of South Africa - 1996
- 11 Annual Launch of the STATE OF THE WORLD'S CHILDREN by UNICEF (and UNICEF'S Birthday)
- 12 International Children's Day of Broadcasting (ICDB) - UNICEF
- 15 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women ratified by South Africa - 1995
- 15 SA ratified the OAU Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa - 1995
- 16 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees - 1966
- 16 Day of Reconciliation - South Africa
- 18 International Migrants Day
- 26 Day of Goodwill - South Africa
- 29 International Day for Biological Diversity

Children's Home McGregor, Western Cape

Senior Childcare Worker Required

Residential home registered for 11 children seeks experienced live-in Senior Childcare Worker

Minimum essential requirements:

- Basic childcare qualifications
- Valid driver's licence
- Bilingual (English /Afrikaans)

Successful applicant will assume work on 1 July 2005.

Closing date for applications is 15 December 2004

Written applications with full CV to:
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Email pondoki@intekom.co.za

For enquiries phone
Taya Cundill at 023-6251-802 or
Roger Verrall at 023-6251-976

Skills levy - What is it and how do we access the funds?

Sandra Oosthuizen

In this year's April issue of *Child and Youth Care*, Skills Development and Workplace Skills Plans were discussed. You can refer to that article if you are not clear on what skills levy is about.

In short, the Skills Development Levy Act 1998 requires that employers pay 1% per month of their total remuneration package for the development of skills in the country. This money can be accessed for training through the Department of Labour via the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) and the Labour Centres throughout the country. This article will attempt to give you the steps to take in order to access the route for resources for training.

The Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority advertised in the Sunday Times on 19 September (see below) that they offer free assistance with the completion of the Workplace Skills Plan, Training Reports and Learnership Applications to all organisations which are registered with them.

If your organisation is not registered with a SETA and you work in the welfare sector, the steps below can be followed to seek registration with HWSETA.

- Step 1**
- Ensure that your organisation is registered with SARS in terms of the Skills Development Levy Act 1998, with SETA 11 (HWSETA).
 - SARS will issue an SDL103 form indicating the name of the organisation and the SETA number which you are registered with as well as the SDL reference number for your organisation.
 - This reference number is required on all the correspondence with the SETA. **(Contact your local SARS office.)**

- Step 2**
- If you are a non-profit organisation you are entitled (according to the Skills Development Levy Act 1998) to be exempt from paying the levy.
 - You need to apply to SARS for exemption.
 - They will provide you with a letter which states your status in terms of exemption from taxes and duties. **(Contact The Head: Tax Exemption Unit at Tel: 012-422 8821 and Fax: 012-422 8830)**

- Step 3**
- Once you receive the SDL103 form and letter from SARS stating exemption from skills levy, you need to complete the Workplace Skills Plan (WSP) as required by each SETA.
 - The advert below indicates that the HWSETA will assist any organisation registered with them, free of charge to complete the WSP.
 - Ensure that you have the following documentation ready as it needs to be submitted with the WSP: A copy of the SDL103 form, the skills levy exemption letter from SARS and a cancelled cheque clearly indicating the bank details of the organisation.



PROUDLY
SOUTH AFRICAN

Notice to all employers in the Health and Social Development Sector

The HWSETA has trained and engaged the services of 60 Skills Development Facilitators (SDFs) in all nine provinces to assist employers with the completion of their Workplace Skills Plans (WSPs), Annual Training Reports (ATRs) and Learnership Applications at no cost to the employer. Whilst incurring no expense whatsoever, the employer will benefit to the extent of having up to 60% of the Skills Development Levy contribution refunded as a result of completing and submitting the WSP and ATR returns. The employer will also be kept abreast of Learnerships being offered and be guided in the processes to be followed to facilitate employees entering into learnership.

All employers registered with the HWSETA who would like to make use of this FREE service are encouraged to contact

Ms Heidi Forbes,

tel. (011) 607-6900,

e-mail: heidif@hwseta.org.za

"BRIDGING THE SKILLS GAP"



In the workplace skills plan you will be required to list the various training the organisation requires in order to close the skills gap within that specific organisation. The discretionary grant funding needs to be accessed for organisations which are exempt from paying skills levy. The funding is not immediately disbursed. There is a waiting period which differs with every SETA. The sooner organisations get the process going the sooner the funding will become available. This is a cumbersome process, but start and take one step at a time. ▲

Please continue to forward questions to The Director, NACCW, PO Box 36407, Glosderry, 7702, fax 021-762 5352 or e-mail headoffice@naccw.org.za.

Getting to Know Some Child and Youth Development Students

By Anashree Chetty, Thulisile (Sr Assumpta) Hadebe, Philiswa Keswa, Bajabulile Machi, Dumisani Mthethwa, Lindiwe Mvubu, Mfanawethu Ndlangisa, Succeed Sibiyi, Tholakele Zulu and Carol Zuma

As fourth year child and youth development students at D.I.T (Durban Institute of Technology), we decided to write an article so that readers would know something about our experiences. We got together as a group, compiled a few questions and answered them, honestly and truthfully. The questions and answers are listed below to help the readers understand our feelings about child and youth development.

Motivation: why we chose this course

We want to work for our communities, as child and youth care workers and youth workers, because children and youth are at risk and many are involved in drugs and crime. Some of us were not fortunate enough to be in communities where there were child and youth care workers, so we felt the need to study child and youth care and make a difference. However, in some of our communities, there were child and youth care workers. We want to continue what they started.

What we have learned

During the years we have spent at Technikon, we have learned skills such as self-awareness, counselling, restorative justice and first aid. We have also learned about values, beliefs, diversity, conflict management and problem solving. We have wanted to know and learned to appreciate what other people do for us and for young people. We are able to relate to others differently by not labeling anymore. As students of this course, we focus on the positives, not the negatives.

Being with other students in the same class and sharing ideas is often the first achievement. We have had to learn about teamwork.

Challenges: past, present and future

From first year until now, we have been doing practical/experiential training at different placements. We take our work seriously, even though some people think this is an easy job. In reality, it's a challenging career. Sometimes, the supervisors at the placements have expected us to know more than we do know. We may have theory, but it is not easy to put that theory into practice, so we need the supervisors to assist us. We appreciate it when we are acknowledged for our efforts in trying to put that theory into practice.

People in the public think we belong only in residential programs. We want the public to see that we can work in different settings, and would appreciate supervisors and other staff in the field helping us with this. We believe that as child and youth care workers and youth workers, we can make a difference if we work hard.

Recommendations

1. We would like to encourage supervisors and staff in our field to go out and further their education with diplomas and degrees. It has helped us with knowledge and skills and can help you too.
2. Workshops can be run to share with others in the field the experiences of child and youth development students.
3. We suggest that journals such as "Child & Youth Care" be distributed to schools, public libraries and other organisations to make people outside of this field aware of what our job entails.
4. We would like other professions to take us seriously and respect our profession like we do theirs. ▲

Social Worker

A full-time position is available for a qualified, energetic and dynamic Zulu-speaking female Social Worker to join the team at Wylie House Child and Youth Care Centre.

The ideal applicant should have:

- A recognized B.A. Degree / Diploma in Social Work
- Registration with the S.A. Council for Social Service Professions.
- An understanding of the transformation of the Child and Youth Care System.
- Ability to work with a diverse team.
- An openness to growing and developing according to the needs of the children, the facility and the Child and Youth Care field.
- Capacity to maintain statutory requirements as per the Child Care Act.
- An unendorsed driver's license.

The successful applicant will be expected to report and be accountable to the Principal.

It would be helpful to note contactable references on your CV.

Please forward applications and CV to:

The Principal
P.O. Box 30650
MAYVILLE
4058

Fax number: 031 202 6007
Email: wyliekids@idhweb.co.za

Closing date: 30th November 2004

As Social Service Professionals ...

We need to find ourselves.

We need to define ourselves.

**Irrespective of which specific profession we represent,
we serve the same constituency – children, youth and
families at risk.**

We need to network and partner with each other.

We need to practice ethically,

**And we need to be part of the solution for the children of
our country.**



**Ms Thobi Mhlongo - Chief Director of the Durban Region
of the Department of Social Welfare and Population
Development, speaking at a Gathering of
Community Child and Youth Care Workers**