child & Youth Care Work

Tribute to Nelson Mandela



Nicholas Hobbs and Schools of Jov By Dee Newman

A Dialogue in Reclaiming Troubled Youth By August Aichhorn & Fritz Redl



With freedom comes responsibility

Merle Allsopp

I have been looking forward for some years now to the time when I will be able to write this editorial and say "the statutory regulation of child and youth care workers is definitely going to take place"... and it seems that this is now that moment!

The proposed regulations which will allow for, and determine how the field of child and youth care work will be regulated were published in the government gazette in May, and the public was provided with the opportunity to give comments on these regulations for the month of June. This was the second opportunity that was provided for the field to engage with the way the Professional Board had thought to structure the regulation process, the first being when the regulations were made available on the SACSSP website and comments were invited from the field late last year.

So ... I think we are now able to say with certainty and not simply in faith that the statutory regulation of child and youth care workers is immanent...just around the corner!

And this brings a few matters to mind along the theme of "with freedom comes responsibility".

Firstly, I anticipate that many of us may not have read the regulations as invited to over this extended period of openness to public comment. Now when we come to register we may be surprised about what is required of us in the registration process. However, once the regulations are passed by the Minister of Social Development, these become a binding law. We are required to follow them as they are. So just a reminder to all that there has been an extended opportunity to make input into the way these regulations look, so if you think twice about them when it comes to submitting your application - remember the opportunity to provide your opinion was there...

Secondly, now that we are about to get what we have struggled to attain for so long (remember the Social Services Professions Act was changed in 1998, and we have been working towards this since then) we need to respond to this opportunity in a prompt and enthusiastic way. So we need to show up to be regulated in our numbers. We need to fill in the forms (which many of us hate to do); we need to gather our relevant documents (which many of us have not kept track of); we need to gather the required funds (which many of us may have neglected to budget for) and we need to follow the submission process with enthusiasm and speed. In that way we will demonstrate to the Minister and to the field of social services that we are earnest and responsible in our collective quest for regulation and recognition.

Thirdly - in line with the national concentration on service delivery - we need to be sure that in our work we are indeed living up to the expectations of professionalism and ethical child and youth care practice to which, in the act of being regulated, we commit ourselves. We see and hear daily child and youth care workers who are not implementing what they have been taught to do. We hear about child and youth care workers responding to children in a way that could be expected from a lay person – someone who has never trained in child and youth care work. With the advent of regulation, the days of us being able to be less than professional are over, and it is important for us all to make commitments to ourselves to deliver effective services as we enter this

In short, the new era that we are entering asks of us to recognise our responsibilities as professionals and as a profession. In being regulated we have been freed from being overlooked and undervalued. As we move to being valued and considered, we need to play our part and carry out professional responsibilities — with pride, with dignity and with dedication to our profession of child and youth care work.

Child & Youth Care Work



"It always seems impossible until it's done."

Nelson Mandela

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