

Child & Youth Care

**A JOURNAL FOR ALL WHO WORK WITH
TROUBLED CHILDREN AND YOUTH AT RISK**

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**FOSTERING
RESILIENCY
IN CHILDREN**

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Editorial

A time to be informed, a time to be skilled, a time to be committed

More than at any other time in this country, child and youth care is at a time of new beginnings.

We have before us a new White Paper on Welfare, and we have before us a draft *Discussion Document for the Transformation of the Child and Youth Care System* from the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Young People at Risk.

In a few places these two documents contradict each other, but for the most part they embody between them an excellent set of principles under which we will all find ourselves working in the coming years.

Broad principles

Everyone will identify with the principles of the White Paper: basic welfare rights, equity, non-discrimination, democracy, human rights, sustainability, quality services, transparency and accountability, accessibility, appropriateness and ubuntu.

Similarly, principles of the IMC's "new paradigm" for child and youth care will gain full acceptance: accountability, empowerment, participation, family-centred, continuum of care, integration, continuity of care, normalisation, effective and efficient, child-centred, rights of young people, restorative justice, appropriateness, family preservation and permanency planning.

Wider context, wider tasks

Both documents acknowledge the continuing role of residential child care programmes. The White Paper aims at a balance "between rehabilitative, protective, preventive and developmental interventions" but within an overarching develop-

mental approach. The IMC document broadens the focus of child and youth care programmes beyond their formerly purely residential format, to include preventive work, early intervention and reintegration and after care.

In this issue we have included basic material for our readers to sketch these varying contexts for our future practice. There is an article by Mel Gray of the University of Natal introducing the idea of developmental social work practice; there is a review of Chapter Two of the IMC document which focuses on what it calls Residential and Community Care, Education and Treatment.

Partnerships

Perhaps most encouraging as we enter this new age is the calibre of those who will work together to put these sound principles into practice. In the Department of Welfare we have a Director-General who personally led and participated throughout the consultation and negotiation process which culminated in the White Paper on Welfare. We are particularly pleased to welcome as the new Minister of Welfare Ms Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi who, while Deputy Minister, personally chaired the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Young People at Risk. None of us will be able to say that "they don't know what they're talking about"! On the practice side we must be clear about what is expected of us: we must be clear as to what we are good at and what we have to offer; and we must be prepared to develop and extend our skills and our programmes into new tasks which promote the health and develop-

ment of children and youth, families and communities.

More than this, as in any partnership, we each have to listen to and support one another. Ministry, state department and practice will all have their own perspectives on the field. When the one expresses a legitimate viewpoint or need, the others must hear, in order to see how they can help.

The Association

The NACCW itself moves into a new era with the departure in July of our Director Lesley du Toit. At all levels, both in the Professional Services wing and the regional and membership wing, we will be positioning ourselves to continue with our work of professional development, training, publishing and advocacy in such a way that we, also, will continue to contribute to this wider child and youth care team. For individuals working in the field, new challenges and opportunities are emerging. We have mentioned the added tasks of prevention, early intervention and reintegration which will become part of child and youth care work. On page 9 of this month's issue you can read of the new practice area of secure care which will require highly trained and devoted staff. All of this demands continuing personal growth and training, as well as generous commitment from child and youth care workers. The coming year or two will see how well we meet all of these challenges — together.

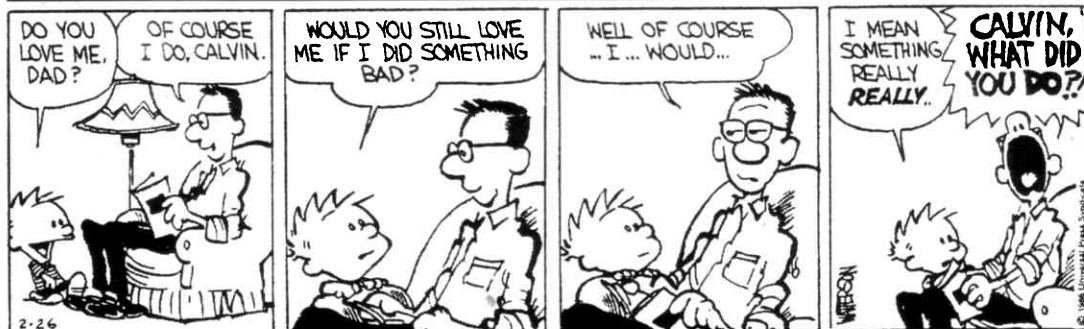
Basil Arendse

At the time of going to press we have heard of the tragic death of Basil Arendse, 43. Principal of the Heatherdale Children's Home in Cape Town for the past six years. "Big" Basil was an enthusiastic child care worker, a dedicated team leader and a willing NACCW member, always playing a helpful role on the Western Cape Regional Executive.

Our sincere condolences to his wife Dorothy, and to the staff and children of Heatherdale Children's Home. ■

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Watterson



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People



Merle Allsopp

Merle is the NACCW's National Training Manager — no small task when it is remembered that the NACCW offers more than a dozen different courses (some lasting two days, others two years) to literally thousands of students each year. She also serves on the Editorial Board of this journal.

Merle originally trained as a teacher (in 1980 she had completed her BA and HDE at the University of Cape Town) but instead was attracted to child care work and she began voluntary work in a children's home in that year.

During 1981/2 she completed the National Higher Certificate in Residential Child Care at the Cape Technikon while working as an Assistant Housemother at St Michael's Home in Cape Town.

By 1984 she was a senior child care worker, and in that year she enjoyed the unique experience of being selected for an exchange scholarship with ILEX, the International Learning Exchange in Professional Youthwork. This afforded her the opportunity of a year's full-time work at Edgefield Lodge, a residential treatment centre in Portland, Oregon, in the USA. On her return she was appointed Unit Manager at St Michael's, then Vice-Principal, and in 1989 she became Principal of that Children's Home, a

post she held until 1994.

In 1994 Merle joined the staff of the NACCW charged with research and the management of Project CHANCE, a programme related to children affected by HIV and AIDS. When Jacqui Michael left the staff, Merle took over the national training responsibility.

The past year has seen her heavily involved in the work of the Inter-Ministerial Committee into Young People at Risk. She served on the Human Resources task group which looked into the training of staff in the child and youth care service, and also the development of the Personnel Administration Standard (PAS) which regulates the profession in the public service. She continued with the smaller IMC workgroup responsible for child and youth care training. At the same time she managed Project Upgrade when the NACCW was tasked by the state to train personnel in its various institutions for children and youth.

More recently she has been involved in the research and planning for secure care for young people in trouble with the law, and in June this year will leave for a two-month study period with Larry Brendtro in South Dakota gathering material and experience in this specialised area. All of this work is undertaken alongside Merle's continuing responsibility for NACCW training! She is committed to the ideal that appropriate training be made available to all those who work with young people, especially to those who have not previously had access to training — in state and private agencies. The reward lies in the obvious enthusiasm and appreciation of her many students.