

Resource List

National Bodies Involved In Education & Welfare

There are hundreds of bodies involved in health and welfare work for South African children. Articles in this edition give a sense of the scope of people's initiatives in working with children. To complement this, we provide short inputs on national networking or co-ordinating bodies serving the needs of children.

Childline

Childline aims to fight child abuse. It is an emergency telephone referral service, which provides:

- * immediate intervention/counselling;
- * short term follow-up; and
- * referral to a welfare agency for long term management.

Childline:

- * serves all people, children and adults;
- * operates 24 hours a day;
- * provides help to victims of child abuse;
- * provides assistance to children in danger/distress;
- * provides help to parents who experience difficulty with their children or fear that they may abuse their children;
- * aims to give concerned members of the public the opportunity to report cases of suspected child abuse; and
- * aims to act as a referral resource for professionals (eg. doctors, teachers, psychologists, social workers) who want guidance in handling the problem of child abuse.

Childline exists in Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth.

Dial 0800055555, toll free.

Life Education Centre

Life Education Centre is a community based project and each centre or mobile unit is initiated, owned and operated by its community with support from Life Education headquarters.

Life Education is not designed for rehabilitation, but for educating children, and protecting them against pressures of drug abuse, alcohol, analgesics, nicotine, unsafe sex and violence. Education also includes handling relationships. The children learn to develop a healthy respect for their bodies, themselves and others. They are given information and encouraged to make their own decisions. Life Education encourages self esteem and awareness within the child.

Dr M. F. Gerber

PO Box 8800, Edenglen · 8 Mopedi Road, Sebenze, Edenvale

Tel: (011) 809 4166

Fax: (011) 452 6163

National Interim Working Committee on Early Childhood Educare

The National Interim Working Committee (NIWC) is a response to examining and addressing the challenges facing the educare field during and after transition. This movement was borne out of a consultative workshop called by the NECC to discuss the state of the Educare field. NIWC

was set up to accomplish the following tasks:

- * to bring about a united, nationally representative early childhood educare movement based on the principles of non-racialism, non-sexism and democracy within a unitary South Africa;
- * to ensure that such an organisation has a national character, in terms of national development objectives, membership, regional representation;
- * to strive towards meeting the basic needs and rights of young children and educare workers, and the provision of good quality educare;
- * to work towards greater participation of all within the early childhood educare field through local, regional and national structures; and
- * to initiate a process for the establishment of a Declaration/Charter for Educare.

Natal Regional Office: PO Box 45221, Chatsglen, 4012

Tel: (031) 439 195

Network Against Child Labour

The Network emerged in 1991, in response to attempts by organised agriculture to entrench the legal right to employ children.

Aims include:

- * bringing together concerned organisations in a national lobby against the exploitation of child labour;
- * educating the public and mobilising public opinion against child exploitation;
- * providing information and offering policy guidelines on child labour;
- * lobbying for legislation, enforcement mechanisms and social policies aimed at eliminating child labour; and
- * actively reporting cases of abuse.

The Network may be contacted at the same address and telephone number as the NCRC (*see below*).

National Association of Child Care Workers (NACCW)

The NACCW is a specialist education, training and consultancy organisation providing adults with the skills to treat and manage children and youth at risk. The NACCW is able, through its community based members, to identify needs and priorities within communities.

The NACCW provides a range of other services to child and youth care agencies including: hosting seminars and conferences;

- * producing a monthly publication for local and overseas subscribers;
- * providing consultation services to welfare bodies and the state;
- * conducting research and development of new models of child care;
- * participating in official commissions;
- * advocating on child care legislation and subsidies; and,
- * establishing vital links between local and international child care organisations.

National office: P O Box 28323, Malvern, 4055

Tel: (031) 463 1099

Fax: (031) 441 106

Transvaal Office: Jacqui Michael · PO Box 95129, Grant Park, 2051

Tel: 011 484 2928

The National Children's Rights Committee (NCRC)

The NCRC was established after consultations between the United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF), the liberation movement in exile and various South African NGOs involved in the situation of women and children in South Africa. A consultative conference, under the auspices of UNICEF, was convened in Gaborone, Botswana in April 1990, to review the plight of children

under apartheid.

The NCRC's strategy is to influence policy and to facilitate the development of a specialist network of NGOs working in the area of children's rights and needs, locally and nationally.

The NCRC is committed to:

- * lobbying at the highest level, for recognition of the needs of the child, in particular, that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child be ratified by South Africa;
- * informing social and economic policy makers to enhance children's health and nutrition and their optimal growth and development;
- * working to strengthen the role and status of women, and providing support and respect for the family in its role of nurturing children;
- * working for programmes that reduce illiteracy and provide education opportunities for children irrespective of their background or gender and that prepare children for productive employment and life learning opportunities;
- * promoting the values of peace, understanding and dialogue in the community and in the education of children, so as to give children a peaceful and secure future; and
- * working for an economic policy that promotes economic growth, while ensuring the well-being of the most vulnerable sections of the population, especially children.

The NCRC's objectives and priorities are:

- * advocacy for children's rights by raising the awareness of local and international communities about the plight of South African children, and entrenching the rights of women and children in a non-racial, non-sexist democratic South Africa, through a Bill of Rights and Constitution;
- * to develop a comprehensive information base on the situation of children and women; and
- * to support NGOs dealing with homeless children in order to improve their capacity, to support their specific programmes, and facilitate the development of a national network of NGOs working with homeless children.

In June this year, the NCRC and UNICEF released a report, *Children and Women in South Africa: A Situational Analysis*, as well as a summarised version, *State of South Africa's Children: An Agenda for Action*, which includes the 1990 World Summit Goals for Child Survival, Development and Protection by the year 2000.

Shirley Mabusela

PO Box 30803, Braamfontein, 2017

South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare

The South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare is a guiding, co-ordinating and enabling body to 184 autonomous child welfare societies and 80 dependent 'embryo societies'. With the launch of its community development programme, the council is community based with each of over 400 groups involved in setting their own priorities.

The Council is actively involved in:

- * informal learning among adults, youth and pre-school children;
- * ensuring the highest level of educare and safety of children in day care;
- * protecting the rights of children through sound and relevant legislation;
- * developing and disseminating knowledge and skills in identified areas of practice and management to enable service providers to render an effective service; and
- * guiding the child welfare movement in terms of this sensitive area.

Mrs Venessa Partington

P O Box 30960, Braamfontein, 2017 - 6th Floor, Melhof Building, 2 Mella Street, Braamfontein

Tel: (011) 339 5741

Fax: (011) 339 8123

South African National Institute for Crime Prevention and Rehabilitation of Offenders (NICRO)

NICRO is a national, private welfare organisation whose objectives are:

- * to advocate and promote a fair and accurate criminal justice system;
- * to promote and secure the welfare, rehabilitation and reintegration/aftercare of adult offenders and their dependents;
- * to promote crime prevention, with a particular focus on youth; and
- * to support victims of crime and violence.

Dr Ester Lategan

PO Box 10005, Caledon Square, 7905

Tel: (021) 461 7253/4

Fax: (021) 461 5093

Tel: (011) 403 39771/2

Fax: (011) 403 3870

Drugs and Children: Starting the Habit of a Lifetime

Health Action International

Health Action International (HAI) is an international network which monitors and challenges the multinational pharmaceutical industry (for more information on HAI, see *Critical Health* no.43). This year, it published an information package, titled 'Problem Drugs'. The package includes a section on drugs and children.

HAI stresses that too many drugs are given to children. It is common practice to prescribe drugs for self limiting diseases such as diarrhoea, coughs and colds. Pharmaceutical companies play on parents' concerns to boost sales of appetite stimulants, despite the lack of evidence on their supposed effect. Company representatives attend schools to promote the routine use of vitamins. Many companies make unfounded claims that their products improve intellectual performance.

The inappropriate use of drugs represents a waste of resources and also leads to unnecessary adverse drug reactions. Aspirin is associated with Reye's Syndrome and the administration of some antidiarrhoeals can be life threatening. For most drugs, there is a lack of research as to their effects on children.

The HAI publication also highlights the long term effects of the promotion of excessive drug use. The drug industry creates a highly profitable market by ensuring that children develop a habit of taking unnecessary medicine. Children may believe that drugs will solve many of life's problems and can suffer psychological and social consequences.

The publication is available from:

HAI Europe, Jacob v. Lennepkade 334T, 1053 NJ Amsterdam, The Netherlands

National Education Policy Investigation

The National Education Co-ordinating Committee (NECC) was established in 1985 to co-ordinate and lead the struggles of teachers, parents and students against apartheid education. The changing political climate in the country led to the need for concrete policies on education and, in 1990, the NECC set up the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) to look at

policy options. Twelve areas of research were identified, including research into early childhood educare and special education to support children with difficulties. The research findings were published in 1992.

Early Childhood Educare

The Early Childhood Educare report assesses the shortcomings of existing pre-school provision and makes alternative suggestions. It rejects past and current privatisation strategies and asserts the need for increased state subsidisation of community based educare, from less than 1% to 5% of the education budget. Subsidies should be graded in favour of the poorest. NEPI emphasises a development approach to meet the needs of the whole child within a community development context. Health and nutrition programmes are an important component of educare. The report suggests options such as educare centres providing feeding schemes, growth monitoring and medical checks. In this context, it expresses concern at the current lack of co-operation between various sectors and state departments which impact on child development and asserts the need for central state involvement and planning to ensure redistribution and co-ordination between different departments and sectors. It is suggested that inter-sectoral co-ordination be achieved through an overarching ministry.

Support Services

Support services in education should involve prevention and cure of various difficulties experienced by students, including special learning problems, physical health problems, emotional difficulties, career education needs, lack of skills and poverty related issues. The Support Services report notes that these services have been given marginal attention and have been administered in a fragmented and racially discriminatory manner. The existing services do not include an adequate preventive component. NEPI suggests restructuring support services on five principles: accessibility to all children of school going age, equity, prioritising the greatest need, non-discrimination, unified administration of services and community participation.

A summary of all 12 reports is included in the final NEPI report, National Education Policy Investigation: The Framework Report, Cape Town, Oxford University Press/NECC, 1993. Detailed reports on each of the 12 areas have also been published.

We must be at the same school. We must work together to get more things we want. Our freedom must be as we want. We don't want that people must say that they don't want other people that they want. We must use their language. We want that South Africa to be rich as it could. We must work together as the same people. We must be concerned about what we are doing. We must not have problems about what we are doing. We must have everything that we want. We must do things we need. We must not care about people what they are doing. And our freedom must be as we want.

Dolores (13 years)

SECTION D: Topical Issues