



The Social Work Practitioner-Researcher

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Previous Issues

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Editorial (pages 1-3)

Leila Patel and Tessa Hochfeldt

Permanent kinship care via court-ordered foster care: Is this system justified? (pages 4-22)

Priscilla Gerrand and Eleanor Ross

In 2008 the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund commissioned the Department of Social Work at the University of the Witwatersrand to undertake a national research study on foster care in South Africa. Findings of the study indicated that the vast majority of the parent participants had related, orphaned children in their care via court-ordered foster care or were trying to have these placements legalised in order to benefit from the foster child grant. Social workers were experiencing difficulty rendering quality foster care services as a result of the acute national paucity of human resources and enormous statutory caseloads. The need for psycho-social support in fulfilling parental responsibilities, as well as skills development and poverty alleviation projects in order to reduce families' dependence on the foster child grant became apparent. An important question addressed in light of the findings was whether or not permanent kinship care, via court-ordered foster care, was justified in the South African context.

Children's perspectives on child well-being (pages 23-40)

Rose September and Shazly Savahl

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) through its reporting framework for nation states has prompted increasing interest on the measuring and monitoring of child well-being. The domains and indicators included in the repertoire of country measures of child well-being have mostly been constructed and monitored by adults, usually social scientists and government officials. This study explored children's own understandings of children's well-being. Sixteen focus groups were conducted with 200 children between the ages of 9 and 16 years. The study identified protection and safety, basic needs, community resources and psychosocial issues as the key domains of well-being. The study further highlighted the importance of perceiving well-being as an integrated whole consisting of closely interacting components rather than as a discrete multidimensional phenomenon.

Die ervaring van kindersorgwerkers se opvoedingsrol in 'n plek-van-veiligheid (pages 41-56)

Freda Spang en Heila Prinsloo

The research aimed to explore and describe the experiences of child care workers in their role as educators at a place of safety, in order to gain a better understanding of what they see as their educational task and the difficulties they experience in executing this task. This qualitative case study was approached from the interpretative paradigm. Five child care workers were engaged in individual interviews and 5 others in a focus group discussion. According to the research results it seems that child care workers have a basic understanding of what education entails and show understanding for the needs of the children in their care. Nonetheless, some aspects were identified in which they need training and support. It also became clear that the way the institution was managed, left child care workers dissatisfied, which led to feelings of passivity, negativity, demotivation and a vengeful attitude.

A personality profile of aggressive victims of bullying within special education (pages 57-77)

Rika du Preez and Herman Grobler

This article is based on qualitative, applied research of an explorative and descriptive nature that was conducted on the personality profile of aggressive victims of bullying in a school focusing on

special education. Interview schedules for four semi-structured interviews were based on the Five-Factor Model of Personality. From the interviews with aggressive victims of bullying, their parents/guardians, as well as their class teachers, information was gained indicating that the aggressive victims of bullying in this school have a specific personality profile. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder was present with all respondents, as well as a lack of awareness of the effect of their behaviour on others and a low self-esteem. The findings may assist parents and professionals regarding understanding the behaviour of these children. Conclusions made from this study can be used for further research in order to develop an intervention programme with aggressive victims of bullying.

Occupational stress and coping among shift workers at a motor manufacturing plant (pages 78-97)

Nadine Burnhams and Blanche Pretorius

This article explores occupational stressors experienced by shift workers working in a motor manufacturing plant and discusses ways of coping with these stressors. Similar to previous studies conducted on shift work, impacts on the family, social, psychological and physical life of the shift worker were noted. Common coping mechanisms employed by shift workers include both adaptive and maladaptive methods of coping. To enhance coping with shift work, consideration is given to effecting change at an individual, organisational and environmental level. This paper contributes to the existing body of knowledge on shift work by describing the intrinsic and extrinsic experiences of shift workers within the South African motor industry, providing guidelines for the promotion of health and well-being amongst shift workers.

“Too close for comfort”: Perceptions and experiences of people affected by day labourers at three hiring sites in Tshwane, South Africa (pages 98-112)

Rinie Schenck and Dehlia Nell

This article explores the perceptions and experiences of people affected by day labourers in Tshwane. All the existing research on day labourers focuses on the day labourers themselves, not on the people with whom they share the public spaces and who are affected by them. The aim of this article is to share the experiences, perceptions and suggestions of residents, business owners, police and employers who are directly affected by day labourers. An exploratory and descriptive methodology was used in this research and the results indicate a mixture of experiences: intimidation, invasion of private space and powerlessness, but also compassion for the labourers. They also show the urgency for further research on day labourers and the people affected by them in order to find some direction in this complex matter.

Screening South African clients for inclusion in a therapeutic complicated grief intervention programme (pages 113-130)

Cornelia Drenth, Herman Strydom, Alida Herbst and Karel Botha

The normality of grief is questioned when the grief experience prohibits the individual from regaining a state of social functioning as close as possible to the pre-loss state. Complicated grief is regarded by many as a specific condition in need of specific intervention. The efficacy of bereavement intervention in the case of “normal grief” is questioned and it seems that individuals who experience complicated grief benefit more from bereavement intervention. The authors of this article therefore, emphasise the necessity of screening clients prior to including them in a complicated grief intervention programme by discussing the utilisation of the Inventory for Traumatic Grief as developed by Prigerson and colleagues. The authors furthermore introduce the Grief Assessment Guide (GASsG) as an assessment tool during the screening process. The article argues that when dealing with complicated grief, it is crucial to thoroughly screen clients prior to intervention, using these or other tools.

Notes from Practice (pages 131-139)

loveLife groundBREAKERS and *mpintshis*: young people engaged for change

Lauren Graham

Book Review (pages 140-141)

Hassim, S., Kupe, T. and Worby, E. (2008). *Go home or die here: Violence, xenophobia and the reinvention of difference in South Africa*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

Ingrid Palmary

