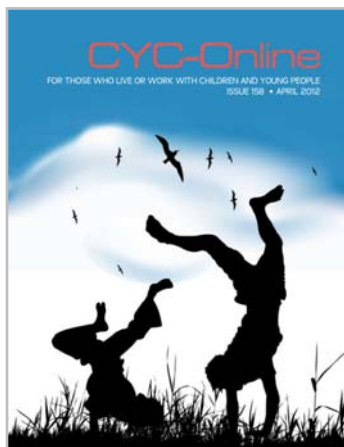


# CYC-Online

FOR THOSE WHO LIVE OR WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE  
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# Gathering at the Gathering



As regular followers of CYC-Net know, from March 18-21, a group of people from around the world gathered in Paisley Scotland for the first ever CYC-Net Clan Gathering. Entitled 'The Road Ahead', the Clan Gathering was inspired by Graham Bell (CEO of Kibble Education and Care Centres and a CYC-Net Board Member) and was hosted by Kibble itself.

Before the Gathering, about 30 of us were together in Ireland for a training for trainers in the Therapeutic Use of Daily Life Events organised by John Digney of TransformAction International. While the spirit there was high, and the connections wonderful, little did we know we were in for an even more inspiring event in Scotland.

The CYC-Net Clan Gathering was, for those of us who have been involved in CYC-Net for what seems like forever, an exciting and confirming event. So often, in our field, we work on projects, or write, or do whatever we can to support the field without ever really knowing if our contributions are valued, or even useful. That so many people, from such diverse countries and cultures would give of themselves (and their resources) to travel to Scotland to help us evolve the future of CYC-Net was a humbling experience. On the first day as I looked at the full room, I was overcome with gratitude for this

wonderful field of which we are a part and the many people who make it what it is today – and will be in the future.

So, first, a huge thank you to all of those responsible for making this 1<sup>st</sup> Gathering a special moment for Child and Youth Care and for CYC-Net. I say 1<sup>st</sup> because so many people are now talking about 'when next' or 'where next' signalling a desire to continue the connections and commitment which was so evident – so do stay tuned because there will be another sometime next year, we suspect.

The meeting also confirmed for me that CYC is an international experience. While we may call ourselves by different names — CYC, Social Pedagogue, Social Care Worker, Psycho-educateur or whatever — we are all 'cut from the same cloth'. We are all members, as Leon Fulcher so rightly named this Clan Gathering, members of the *Clan of Child and Youth Care* which for us, is an overarching term inclusive of all of us, no matter how we are called.

Others in this issue, and on the discussion list, may speak of some of their experiences – and I encourage comments on the discussion list about it. But for me, the main thing was the amazing sense of connecting with people with a common cause – to help somehow to make the

lives of so many young people and families just a little bit better than it might have been. It is an experience I have had often throughout my career in CYC and every time I experience it, I am grateful to be a part of it.

This is a valuable profession. It is a profession of dignity, commitment and inspiration. But CYC has also grown to be more than 'a profession'. It has grown to be a 'place' where, however you are the same as or different from the others in our field, if you are committed to the common cause, you are welcome as a member of the Clan. It is, indeed, a place of belonging.

One of the goals of the Gathering was to 'spread the word' if, in fact, people saw CYC-Net of value. And so might I also encourage you to do so. New, on the front page, is a twitter link – please go there and follow CYC-Net and share it with your friends. Perhaps this is the most

valuable thing we can do right now to continue to build this growing international network of commonly concerned colleagues.

Together we can make a difference in the world of young people and their families.

Thank you to everyone who was at the Gathering – and especially, thank you to all of you who are committed and connected through this work, however you may be called, and wherever you may work.

For those of you interested in some of what the Gathering included, Garth Goodwin has agreed to create a photo history for us – you can see the beginnings of it [here](#).



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# Say “No” to Drugging Your Kids

Gerry Fewster, Ph.D.

Have you ever thought that your child might have a mental health problem? Well, according to the latest statistics put out by the medical authorities, over 800,000 Canadian children are suffering from some form of untreated mental health malady. Such figures should be enough to alarm any parent who is concerned about a child’s moodiness, impulsivity, inattention, aggression, disobedience, hyper-activity, apathy, or depression — all of which are considered to be symptoms of disorders listed in the psychiatric diagnostic manuals.

Faced with this kind of stunning information, you may find yourself taking another look at your child and wondering if those bouts of unacceptable behavior, bizarre thoughts and offensive attitudes are the products of a dysfunctional brain. Well, before you rush off to your family physician or local Mental Health Clinic for a diagnosis, please consider the following:

There’s no doubt that increasing numbers of kids are in trouble. Having been the Director of a large treatment center for emotionally disturbed children and their families for over twenty years, I also support the contention that their troubles are becoming increasingly severe. But I am not prepared to accept that a significant proportion of these kids are suffering from biochemical disturbances that require medical intervention. Confused or angry they

may be, but they are not “sick” and treating them as “patients” is not the answer.

It’s time for us to realize that our troubled children are living in a very troubled and unpredictable world. Given our environmental, economic and political woes, it’s hardly surprising that, by the age of eleven, over sixty percent of children are pessimistic about their own futures. Families that once stood together through difficult times have become transient arrangements. All too often they are dissolved in acrimony at the time when children are most in need of close relationships that offer both love and security. Yet, without these critical foundations, many kids are pushed to perform, to become successful in our competitive achievement-oriented world. If they fail to live up to such expectations, wilt under the pressure or rebel against authority, we turn to the experts for explanations and solutions.

When we identify the problem as mental, and the solution as medical, everybody is conveniently off the hook. Parents don’t have to feel guilty, teachers don’t have to feel incompetent and the kids don’t have to be responsible for their feelings, thoughts or behavior. Then comes the ‘treatment.’ While words like ‘counseling’ and ‘therapy’ are often bandied about, the reality is that psychotropic drugs have become the mainstay of the mental health industry. We live a society

in which taking drugs has become part of everyday life and the massive pharmaceutical industry stands as testimony to our dedication. So a couple of pills before school is hardly a big deal. We all know that the right pill at the right time can fix almost any problem. We also know that, at some point, there will be a price to be paid – and not only at the Drug Store. Whatever the experts may tell you, they have no idea what the long-term effects psychotropic drugs might have on the developing brain of a child. The price may well be catastrophic.

But drugs may be only the tip of the iceberg. Perhaps the more serious damage occurs when a child becomes convinced that he or she is the victim of some form of illness that can only be cured by others. Tagged and classified for their various ‘disorders,’ rather than being known for their unique traits and potentials, such children are drawn into a system that views them as treatable objects. And, for whatever reason, that system is always on the lookout for more clients. Over the past couple of decades, the number of new disorders and syndromes listed in the psychiatric diagnostic manuals has been steadily increasing. These highly questionable classifications encompass an ever-increasing proportion of the population, so if your child is not yet included, you may only have to wait until the new manual to come out in 2012. Could it be that this is one of real reasons why we have 800,000 children now judged to be in need of mental health services? As things stand, we already have infants diagnosed with depression and attachment disorders and subjected to

medical intervention. I wonder where it will all end?

So what are the alternatives? If so many Canadian kids are in trouble, is there another way to address the problem? Yes, of course, but it won't be as easy as a getting a quick diagnosis and waiting for the Pill Fairy. Problem kids still need what all children have always needed – relationships with caring, loving and responsible adults who are more concerned with who children are, than what they do. Beyond all the physical and emotional needs, all children need to be seen and heard for who they really are – to be recognized as unique human beings who have the innate potential to create their own lives in their own way. Children who receive this message early in life do not lose their concentration, sneer in resentment, sink into despair or kick back in anger. They know that, whatever is happening around them, their strength is on the inside and eventually the decisions they make will be their own. These kids do not end up in prison or on the psych ward. As free and self-responsible beings, they are our only hope for a more compassionate, rational and responsible world.

The good news is that it's never too late. Even the most troubled and seemingly unresponsive teenagers are still looking to be seen and heard by a caring adult they can trust. With the possible exception of child and youth care workers, few professionals have the mandate, the time or the inclination to create such relationships. So it seems like parents are still the best bet. But if you still believe that medication is the answer, first ask to see the evidence with studies that are not sponsored by the pharmaceutical industry.



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# CYC-Net Clan Gathering

Paisley, March 2012







# Mitigating Power

Kiaras Gharabaghi

I just came back from the CYC-Net Clan Gathering in Scotland, a one-of-a-kind event for which child and youth care folks from all over the world came together to reflect on the role of CYC-Net in our field, as well as to think about strengthening this incredible enterprise with the aim of rendering it sustainable. The event was sponsored by an organization that provides residential care and myriad other services to young people in Scotland. On one of the days of the gathering, we were offered a tour of their facilities, and I gladly accepted the invitation.

One of the programs operated by the sponsoring agency is a locked youth custody facility, designed for young people in trouble with the law. Most of the young people there are impacted by multiple challenges in their lives, typically culminating in some sort of criminal activity resulting in a closed custody disposition. Scotland has somewhat of a history of locking young people up and thus there are several such facilities in the country. This particular facility was built fairly recently, opening its doors sometime in 2007.

I must admit at the outset that I am not a fan of locked facilities at the best of times. Indeed, I much more favour a youth justice system that seeks to engage young people where they live, and that through restorative practices seeks to provide opportunities for healing rather than imposing punishment. Nevertheless, I understand that systems are what they are, and sometimes young people get locked up. This then still provides us with the task of thinking about what we might offer these young people while they are locked up. As I walked through the facility, I was struck by the agency's efforts to render this place as aesthetically pleasing as is possible. In spite of the very institutional appearance of the facility, the place was spotless, featured quite a bit of very good art (produced by youth while there), and furnishings as well as recreational equipment of considerable quality. Indeed, there were times during my tour that I thought this would not be such a bad place to take a break from the everyday stresses of life. The place seemed calm, peaceful and pleasant, albeit perhaps just a little threatening.

Of course, there are limits to the de-

gree that we can mitigate the obvious power dynamics in such a facility. With every door we walked through, we were reminded that this is indeed a jail, with magnetic locks and security procedures that were flawlessly executed. Cameras were installed everywhere, and these were monitored in a central office located near the entrance to the facility. The level of supervision is very high, and I saw no young person who was not being watched by a staff member. As our 'tour guide' explained the program, we were told of the emergency procedures if a young person becomes violent (basically a team of staff come and physically secure the situation), and we were shown the intake room, a completely empty room where young people must undress, complete forms and listen to the rules. There is very little room for deviation from what has been set out in terms of policies and procedures, and life for the young people is highly regulated, supervised and prescribed.

Custodial care, if there is such a thing, is difficult to get a handle on. On the one hand, I understand the need for safety, security and clarity in process and

procedure. On the other hand, I worry about the use of power as the arbiter of human ambiguity, the nuances of conflict and the tensions inevitably present when young people and staff interact. Somehow I can't help but think that there will inevitably be a lasting, and perhaps traumatizing impact on the young people, even if they seemingly manage themselves (or are managed by the staff) well. The level of conformity and compliance required to make it through the day is significant, perhaps disturbing. But I was pleased to note the effort made by this particular agency to at least impose its power in ways that acknowledge the humanity of the young people. Keeping the place clean, with some nice aesthetic touches reflecting the self expression of young people through their art, and allowing for abundant things to do recreationally in order to get through the day are helpful initiatives. In the end, I don't wish for any youth to spend much time in places like this. But if they have to, this place won't do too much harm.

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# Children and Communities

**URIE BRONFENBRENNER**, in his 1970 book *Two Worlds of Childhood*, shares his ecological vision for a community's children, linking the various ecosystems which share the work of bringing up children.

**C**learly the institution which stands at the core of the process in our own culture is the family. And it is the withdrawal of the family from its child-rearing functions that we have identified as a major factor threatening the breakdown of the socialization process in America. Yet, it is not with the family that we propose to begin our discussion of how the needs of children can be most effectively served. Instead we consider first innovations in our educational institutions—specifically classrooms and schools.

The reason for this reversal springs from our social psychological perspective and the picture it reveals of the sources of

resistance and change in a social system. In particular, our analysis points to a paradoxical situation. Even though the lack of parental involvement lies at the heart of our present malaise, parents by themselves can do little to bring about the needed change. For, as we have seen, it is not primarily the family, but other institutions in our society that determine how and with whom children spend their time, and it is these institutions that have created and perpetuate the age-segregated, and thereby often amoral or antisocial, world in which our children live and grow. Central among the institutions which, by their structure and limited concern, have

encouraged these socially disruptive developments have been our schools. Accordingly, it is with these that we begin our exploration of possibilities for innovation.

In all, we shall consider changes in five major contexts affecting the lives of children: the Classroom, the School, the Family, the Neighborhood, and the Larger Community.

### **The Classroom**

In terms of human potential, the classroom contains two major sources for influencing behavior and development: the teacher, and the children themselves.

#### *Potentialities In The Teacher's Role*

In keeping with the traditional emphasis of American schools on conveying subject matter, the teacher has been perceived and has functioned primarily in the role of resource person and giver of information. It is this emphasis which is reflected in Western research on teaching, as documented by N. L. Gage. Only recently has the work of Rosenthal (see page 138) called attention to the powerful impact of the teacher as a reinforcer (often unrecognized by herself), whereas her potency as a model is yet to be examined through systematic research.

But social processes do not wait in the wings for their appearance to be ratified by the data of behavioral science. They function notwithstanding, and their unintended consequences can often be counterproductive. A case in point is provided by the vicious circle set in motion by a teacher's labeling of a child as "disadvantaged" or her tendency to give problem

pupils individualized attention-that is, reinforcement -primarily when they display disruptive behavior.

The greatest promise for constructive change, however, lies not with errors of commission but of omission-the failure to provide and reinforce models of desired behavior. We have in mind here not so much the failure of the teacher to set a good example (although, as we shall indicate, much more can be accomplished along these lines), but rather the absence in the classroom and its activities of other models besides the teacher and the children themselves. We view the introduction of such models as desirable, feasible, and central to the teacher's task.

In other words, our discussion implies a broadened conception of the teacher's role. Not only must she herself function as a motivating model, but *it becomes her responsibility to seek out, organize, develop, and coordinate the activities of other appropriate models and reinforcing agents both within the classroom and outside.* How this might be done will become apparent as we proceed.

For the teacher herself to function as an effective model and reinforcer, she must possess the characteristics which we have identified as enhancing inductive power; that is, she must be perceived by the pupils as a person of status who has control over resources. In our view, it is to the advantage of the educational process, and thus to the entire society, to insure that this is, in fact, the case. Teachers who are poorly paid, treated as subordinates, and given little freedom and autonomy by the school administration

cannot help but reflect their true position and reduce their influence in the pupil's eyes. A person must have a measure of self-respect and status before he can expect others to admire these traits in him. The occasional teacher who would exploit such power is less of a risk than the devastating loss of good teachers whose functioning is impaired due to the constraints in the present system. When teachers have a true stake in the development of the children under their care, when they have the responsibility and autonomy so often admired and seldom granted, then they themselves can be expected to bring social pressure on the occasional deviant colleague who might abuse this freedom, or, more importantly, on those who fail to use their freedom to act as the agents of society in the forming of the next generation. Moreover, in that task, the teacher must reflect not the preferences and prejudices of a particular class, but the interests of all segments of the Society in their quest for a better world.

Finally, if the above considerations are accepted as valid, they call for radical changes in our current practices of teacher selection and -training. Specifically, they argue for the recruitment of persons on other than purely academic qualifications, with at least as much emphasis placed on social as on intellectual qualities and skills. For example, the research evidence indicates that learning is facilitated when the teacher is similar to the child in cultural background, race, and, especially in the case of boys, sex. Such findings argue for the recruitment of many more persons from disadvantaged and minority

groups especially males - into the teaching profession and other occupations involving work with young children. But it is in the realm of teacher-training that the most far-reaching innovations are required. In addition to knowing his subject, the teacher of tomorrow must acquire both understanding and skill in the use of modeling, social reinforcement, and group processes in work with children. But beyond that, he must know how to discover, recruit, and utilize individuals and groups from outside the school as major adjuncts to the educational process. This implies a far better acquaintance and articulation with the local community-its people, problems, and resources-than has ever been required or expected of teachers in the past.

But before we examine the extension of the teaching process outside the school, we need to consider further potentials for innovation within the classroom itself.

#### *Potentialities of The Classroom Group*

This is one of the most promising and least exploited areas for effecting behavioral change. Although modifications of classroom composition in terms of social class and race can have salutary effects, they by no means represent the most powerful resources at our disposal. Indeed, their potential is realized only to the extent that they facilitate development of the motivating processes (modeling, reinforcement, group commitment, involvement in superordinate goals, etc.) we have outlined. Such development need not be left to chance. It can be directly fostered through setting up within the classroom the kinds of social and situa-

tional structures in which these processes thrive. This includes such devices as teams, cooperative group competition, organized patterns of mutual help, etc., including the incorporation into such social units of different mixes of race, social class, sex, achievement level, and the like. In short, we must learn to make more effective use of group forces in fostering human development. As we have seen, the power of the group, including the children's group, in motivating goal-directed activity in its members is well established in American social science, but the practical implications of this knowledge for education have thus far remained unexploited in this country. Where practical applications have been made on a broad scale, as in the Soviet Union, the programs have not yet been subjected to systematic empirical analysis and evaluation. It remains for American educators and social scientists to apply the findings of research in the design of educational experiments susceptible to rigorous test and to the improvements which such evaluation makes possible. For example, one might start by examining the effectiveness of two-pupil teams composed of children of heterogeneous ability designated as partners or playmates, and compare their progress with unpaired individuals or members of homogeneous pairs. Another possibility draws on the potency of group reinforcement by introducing such "customs" as group applause for correct answers, selection and honoring by classmates of members showing greatest individual progress, etc. *But, surely, the most needed innovation in the American classroom is the involvement of pupils in responsible tasks on*

*behalf of others within the classroom, the school, the neighborhood, and the community.* The full potential of the motivational processes here discussed will remain unplumbed and seriously underestimated so long as the social setting in which these processes can take place is limited to the conventional classroom with its homogeneous grouping, by age, and, often, by ability and social class as well. To realize these possibilities requires moving beyond the classroom into the larger contexts of school and neighborhood.

### **The School**

Perhaps the most promising possibility which the total school offers in furthering the development of the child is the active involvement of older and, subsequently, younger children in the process. For the preschooler or primary-grader, an older child, particularly of the same sex, can be a very influential figure, especially if he is willing to spend time with his younger companion. Except for the occasional anachronism of a one-room school, this potential resource remains almost entirely unexploited in American education and,



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for that matter, in the process of socialization generally as it takes place in our country. Opportunities for experimentation are therefore legion. One might begin with an Americanized adaptation of the Soviet system of "shevstvo" in which a pre-school or primary class is "adopted" by an older class, with each younger child having an older "brother" or "sister" from the more advanced class. It becomes the responsibility of the older pupil to get to know his younger "sib" and his family, to escort him to and from school, play with him and his friends, teach him games, and, last but not least, become acquainted with his progress and problems in school, reading with and to him, helping and encouraging him to learn. In the meantime the parent class as a whole organizes activities for their "ward class," including trips to athletic events, nature walks, camp-outs, museum visits, etc.

The foregoing examples illustrate how an enduring social situation can be created that simultaneously exploits all of the motivating processes and social structures outlined earlier, for here the effects of modeling and reinforcement are enhanced in the context of intensive relationships, group membership, and common commitment to a superordinate goal.

An extension of this same principle points to a potential contribution of the school as a whole to the development of the individual child. Within the formal educational context, the school is the social unit with which the child, and those concerned for his welfare, can most readily identify. If the school as a total community becomes visibly involved in activities focused on the child and his needs, if older

children, school organizations, other teachers, school administrators, PTA's-if all these persons and groups in some way participate in the program and publicly support those most actively engaged in the effort, the reinforcing effect increases by geometric proportions. Conversely, if a special program is confined to an isolated classroom, it is not only deprived of powerful reinforcing influences but also risks the danger that the rest of the school, especially children in other classes, will perceive the "special class" in invidious terms (e.g., "dummies, queers") and treat its members accordingly. When this occurs, the powerful influences of modeling, negative reinforcement, and group pressure serve only to undermine the already unfavorable self-image of a "problem child."

But it is not primarily the needs of problem children or the disadvantaged that call for change in American schools. If the radical innovations that are required are not introduced, it will be *all* children who will be culturally deprived-not of cognitive stimulation, but of their humanity. For their own full development, the young need to be exposed not only to factual knowledge but also to the standards and modes of behavior requisite for living in a cooperative society. As we have seen, in Communist schools, a deliberate effort is made-through appropriate models, reinforcements, and group experiences-to teach the child the values and *behaviors* consistent with Communist ideals. In American schools, training for action consistent with social responsibility and human dignity is at best an extracurricular activity. The belated recognition of our full



educational obligations to the nation's children - the so-called advantaged no less than the deprived-offers us a chance to redress this weakness and to make democratic education not only a principle but a practice.

### **The Family**

Just as a chain breaks first in its weakest link, so the problems of a society become most pressing and visible in the social strata that are under greatest stress. Thus, it is not surprising that we should first recognize the disruption of the process of socialization in American society among the families of the poor. And it is in this same context that we have begun the attempt to develop countermeasures, ways to revitalize the socialization process through the establishment of institutions like Head Start, which re-involve parents and other community members in the lives of their children in a setting that points the way to more constructive patterns of activity and interaction.

Accordingly, in discussing new patterns of family involvement, we draw heavily on the experience of the author as a member of the committee that originally designed and gave professional direction to the Head Start program. Although most of our examples refer to the disadvantaged family, they are readily translatable into the middle-class world, as evidenced by the increasing demand for-and inception of-Head Start-type programs in well-to-do neighborhoods.

Today's Head Start programs typically profess strong commitment to the principle of family involvement, but in practice implementation is limited to two rather

restricted forms: the first is the inclusion of some parents on the program's advisory board; the second involves meetings for parents at which staff members make presentations about some aspect of the program. Both of these measures have the effect of bypassing the most important aspect of family involvement-engaging parents and older children in new and more mutually rewarding patterns of interaction with the young.

An essential first step in bringing about such changed patterns of interaction is exposure of the parents and other family members to them. This can be done at one of two places, at a preschool or neighborhood center, or in the home. The basic approach is one of demonstration: showing the family the kinds of things that are done in a preschool program, which also happen to be things that family members can themselves do with the child; e.g., games to play, books to read, pictures to look at and talk about. Particularly valuable in this connection are activities that involve and require more than one person in patterns of interaction with the child; that is, not just the teacher and/or the mother, but also other adults and older children (i.e., father, grandma, brother, sister, next-door neighbor). A useful technique is to ask the visiting or visited family members to help in carrying out particular activities with the child. It is important that the process not be seen as a lesson in which the child must learn something and deserves punishment for failure, but instead simply as an engaging activity in which learning is incidental to a total gratifying experience.

To facilitate the involvement of parents in such non-schoollike educational activities, it is desirable to provide a library consisting not only of books but also of toys and games which require the verbal participation of adults and older children, and which can be borrowed for extended periods of time for home use.

The involvement of family members in the educational program of course poses a difficult dilemma to professional staff. On the one hand, there is the need to expose parents and other family members to new or different ways of dealing with their children. On the other hand, this must be done in such a way as to enhance, rather than lower, the power and prestige of these persons in the eyes of the child. The second requirement arises from the evidence that the inductive and reinforcing capacity of a model varies directly with the model's status, command over resources, and control of the social environment. An ingenious demonstration of how this dilemma can be resolved was observed at an all-Negro Head Start program in the rural South. Since the local, white-dominated school administration had refused to have anything to do with the program, it was organized by Negro church groups under the leadership of an eighty-six-year-old minister. Several days before classes were to begin, this man invited all the parents and teenagers to an orientation meeting, a pass-the-dish picnic in a nearby forest area (a forest which he himself had planted years ago with seeds obtained free from the United States Department of Agriculture). After the picnic, the minister offered to take the whole group on a tour of the forest. During the

walk he would ask adults and teenagers to show him interesting plant and animal life which they observed, give names of flowers, trees, and birds, explain how plants grow, what animals feed on, etc. While drawing out much information from the group, he also added considerable material from his own experience. At the end of the walk, he turned to the group with a request: "On Saturday we start our Head Start program. In the afternoon the children need some recreation and the teachers need a rest. Could you folks bring the children here and tell them all the things *you know* that *they don't know* about the forest?"

The turnout on Saturday was impressive, and so was the performance of the "instant experts."

### **The Neighborhood**

The foregoing example illustrates also the reinforcing potential of the other people with whom the child frequently associates and identifies—his neighbors. These persons, particularly the adults and older children who are looked up to and admired by the young, probably stand second only to parents in terms of their power to influence the child's behavior. For this reason it would be important for educational programs to try to exploit this potential in a systematic way. The most direct approach would be to discover from the families and neighborhoods themselves who are the popular and admired individuals and groups, and then to involve them as aides in the program. It may often be the case that the activities in which such individuals or groups normally engage, indeed, the activities for which they

are popular, are not those which one would want children to learn or adopt. This fact should receive consideration, but it should hardly be the determining factor, since the behaviors that matter are those that the model exhibits in the presence of the child. It follows that the activities in which such persons engage as aides, volunteers, and the like must be constructive in nature and reinforce other aspects of the program. They may take a variety of forms: supervising and playing games, exhibiting or teaching a hobby or skill (whittling, playing a musical instrument, magic tricks). The significant factor is that the activity be seen by the child as part of and supporting all of the things the child is doing "in school."

A second important use of neighborhood resources involves exposing the child to successful models in his own locality - persons coming from his own background who are productive members of society: skilled or semiskilled workers, teachers, or government employees. Providing opportunities for such persons to associate with the children (e.g., as escorts, recreation supervisors, part-time aides, or tutors), tell something about their work, and perhaps have the children visit the person at work can help provide a repertoire of possible occupational goals unknown to many children of poverty today. In view of the frequency of father absence among disadvantaged families and the predominance of female personnel in educational programs generally, the involvement of male adults and teenagers is highly desirable, especially for boys.

If people from the neighborhood are to be drawn into the program, it is obvious

that many desirable activities cannot be carried out effectively if they are to be conducted only during school hours or solely in a school classroom. To begin with, if the program is to have enduring impact, it must influence the child's behavior outside of school as much as in school. Second, a school classroom does not lend itself to many of the kinds of informal activities involving parents, other adults, and older children which have been described above.

Accordingly, some kind of *neighborhood center* becomes a highly desirable feature of any comprehensive educational program. Such a center would have to be open after school, on weekends, and during vacations and have some staff members on duty at all times. The center should be represented to the community not merely as a place where children go but rather where all members of the community go in the joint interest of themselves and their children. The neighborhood center might be housed in a school building, but, if so, facilities available should include other than traditional classrooms with fixed seats.

### **The Larger Community**

The contribution of the total community to educational programs is analogous to that of the neighborhood but now with representatives and resources drawn from the larger context. Use can be made both of older children and adults from middle-class backgrounds provided they are not the only "competent" models on the scene, for without the example and support of "his own people" the child's receptivity to what may then be seen as an alien influence is much reduced. It fol-

lows that activities by persons or in settings from outside the child's subculture must be heavily interlaced with representatives from his own world who manifestly cooperate in the total effect. This in turn implies close working relationships of mutual respect between workers from within and outside the child's own milieu. Mutual respect is essential in these relationships, not merely for the purpose of maintaining a viable learning atmosphere, but, more importantly, to further the constructive development of the child's own sense of identity and worth as a person and as a member of society.

However, it is not only what the community does for the child that contributes to his development. Of equal if not greater importance is what he does for that community—quite modestly at first, but gradually at increasing levels of responsibility. As we have noted, it is in part the enforced inutility of children in our society that works to produce feelings of alienation, indifference, and antagonism. Learning early in life the skills and rewards of service to one's community brings with it the benefits of a more stable and gratifying self-identity. Indeed, in the last analysis, the child—so long as he remains a child—must receive more from the community than he can give.

From this point of view, the greatest significance of the total community, especially for the disadvantaged child, lies in the fact that many of the problems he faces, and the possibilities for their solution, are rooted in the community as a whole and are therefore beyond the reach of segmental efforts at the level of the

neighborhood, the school, or the home. We have in mind such problems as housing, welfare services, medical care, community recreation programs, sanitation, police services, and television programming.

Given this state of affairs, it is a sobering fact that, neither in our communities nor in the nation as a whole, is there a single agency that is charged with the responsibility of assessing and improving the situation of the child in his total environment. As it stands, the needs of children are parcelled out among a hopeless confusion of agencies with diverse objectives, conflicting jurisdictions, and imperfect channels of communication. The school, the health department, the churches, welfare services, youth organizations, the medical profession, libraries, the police, recreation programs—all of these see the children of the community at one time or another, but no one of them is concerned with the total pattern of life for children in the community: where, how, and with whom they spend their waking hours and what may be the impact of these experiences on the development of the child as an individual and as a member of society. An inquiry of this nature would, we believe, reveal some troubling facts which in themselves could generate concerted action. Accordingly, an important aspect of any program at the level of the total community would be the establishment of a "Commission on Children," which would have as its initial charge finding out how, where, and with whom the children of all ages in the community spend their time. The Commission would include among its members repre-

representatives of the major institutions in the community that deal with children, but should also draw in businessmen, parents from all social-class levels, as well as the young themselves, teenagers from diverse segments of the community who can speak from recent experience. The Commission would be expected to report its findings and recommendations to appropriate executive bodies and to the public at large.

Any report of such a Commission is likely to underscore the inescapable fact that many of the problems which beset the lives of children, and the courses of action necessary to combat these problems, lie beyond the power of the local community to control. The design of housing developments, the determination of working hours for industry, the programming policies of television networks, the training of teachers and the new types

of personnel needed to work with the young, and, above all, the priorities of state and federal spending - all of these factors which, in the last analysis, determine how a society treats its children, are superimposed on the community from without and require understanding and action at higher levels.

Yet, our emphasis here is on *local initiative and concern*.

We believe this is the place to start, for that is where the children are. For only a hard look at the world in which they live - a world we adults have created for them in large part by default - can convince us of the urgency of their plight and the consequences of our inaction. Then perhaps it will come to pass that, in the words of Isaiah, "A little child shall lead them."

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DANIELA SPYROPOLOU

# Weighing the Evidence: from Chaos to Consilience

Larry Brendtro and Martin Mitchell

*So quick bright things come to confusion.* – William Shakespeare

## Drowning in Data

More research does not necessarily lead to more truth. In 1800, there were but 1,000 persons in the world who might be considered scientists. Two centuries later, millions are churning out mountains of research reports. Most are wrong, but even technically accurate studies seldom apply to realworld problems (Lloyd, 2007). We are drowning in data. Running a Google search on the term *evidence-based* as a descriptor of education, treatment, and corrections gives a quarter of a billion internet hits.

Much rhetoric about evidence-based approaches is Simplistic and even deceptive, driven by politics or profits. Slick science sells drugs as the solution to problems in living (Kirsch, 2010). Program promoters produce glowing reports of mundane methods. Cost-cutting officials seek evidence to ration care, not raise its quality. Blue ribbon lists of approved programs become a passport to funding.

Some argue that the “gold standard”

for “evidencebased” interventions is the random blind trial as used in the drug industry. But even if a treatment has statistical significance, the amount of change may be insignificant. And, interventions often have unintended side effects. Thus, narrow studies to prove a methods-superior status lose sight of the big picture of what is needed to transform troubled young lives.

For over twenty years, Bessel van der Kolk has been on the forefront of researching effective interventions with persons in conflict. He strongly opposes anointing certain methods as “evidence-based” merely because they prevail in narrow comparative studies. Van der Kolk contends that passing out seals of approval as “treatments of choice” violates the spirit of science:

*This concern is particularly relevant as long as the findings of neuroscience, attachment, and cross-cultural research remain isolated from an increasingly prescriptive approach to intervention and treatment.* (van der Kolk, McFarlane, & Weisaeth, 2007, p. xi)

This article identifies key principles underlying positive learning and growth with

challenging children and youth. A much higher standard for truth than is common in narrow measures of statistical significance will be invoked. Consilience integrates a broad range of research from diverse disciplines with wisdom from practical experience and core values.

### Consilience: The Test for Truth

The new gold standard for evidence is that an idea from one field fits with ideas drawn from other realms of experience. The concept of consilience comes from William Whewell, a nineteenth century English wordsmith who also invented better known terms like scientist and physicist (Whewell, 1847). Triple trained in architecture, theology, and science, Whewell was intrigued to discover connections between such dissimilar disciplines. Well before his time, it was a maxim in the earliest universities that all

knowledge is related. But as scholars specialized in increasingly narrow fields of study, consilience was forgotten.

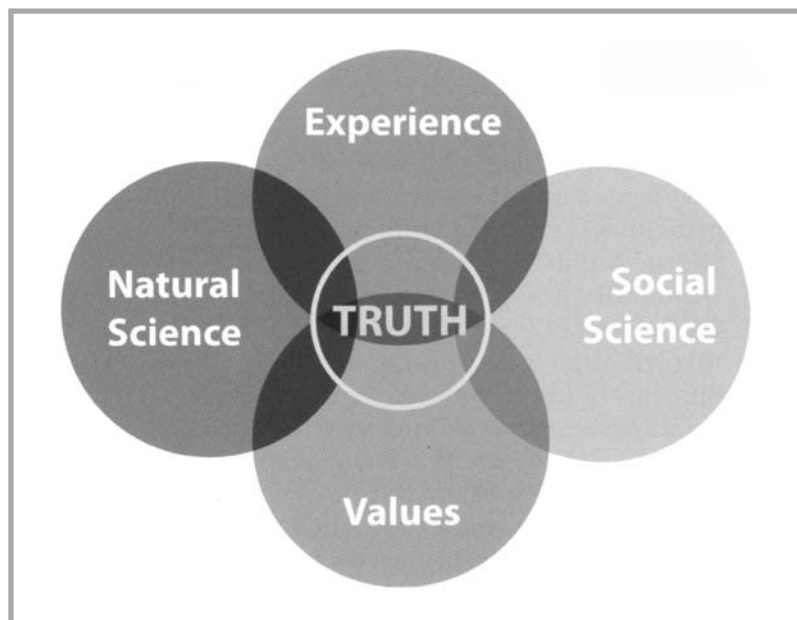
The call for consilience was renewed by Harvard biologist Edward O. Wilson, who claimed that modern science is captive to its own complexity. Universities chop up knowledge into “a flurry of minor disciplines and specialized courses” and lose sight of the big truths (Wilson, 1998, p. 13). Consilience links findings from separate fields to discover simpler universal principles. Simple does not mean Simplistic, since basic truths can be profound. As Einstein once said, “If you can’t explain your theory to a six year old, you probably do not understand it yourself.”

Consilience requires that truth be tested against multiple perspectives of science, experience, and universal human values. The Venn diagram in Figure 1 shows how consilience is achieved. We are most

likely to solve challenging real-world problems by tapping ideas that overlap at the center of the circle. See Figure 1.

Natural sciences provide knowledge about the brain and biosystem. Nicholas Hobbs, a pioneer in work with troubled children, called the body “the armature of the self” (Hobbs, 1982, p. 22). More recently, advances in brain science enable us to cross-check our theories and practices against this new knowledge.

Figure 1



Social sciences explore the person and ecosystem. Human relationships have been studied for a century in psychology, sociology, anthropology, and related fields. As researchers became trained in more narrow sub-specialties, this rich body of knowledge has seldom been used to inform practice.

Experience includes not only practice expertise but also the often ignored first-hand knowledge from youth and families. John Dewey (1887/1967) noted that scientific knowledge and common knowledge complement each other. Effective policies and programs tap “practice wisdom” (Chu & Tsui, 2008) and treat youth and families as the ultimate experts on their own lives.

Values rooted in brain programs and cultural learning are expressed in universal principles of caring and justice. All children deserve to be treated with dignity and respect and to be given the opportunity to fully develop their potential (Seita, Mitchell, & Tobin, 1996). In cultures that respect children, elders teach these core values to the young (Bolin, 2006; Vilakazi, 1993).

Creative solutions to problems often connect separate, simpler ideas. Discovery comes as these isolated ideas jump together, to use Whewell’s words. When everything clicks and falls in place, we are one step closer to the truth.

## Flawed Theories

*Nothing is as practical as a good theory.*  
– Kurt Lewin

Transposing Lewin’s truism, nothing is as useless as a flawed theory. In their book

on the neuroscience of love, psychiatrists Lewis, Amini, and Lannon (2000) describe how narrow theories have presented distorted images of human behavior:

*Psychoanalysis got sidetracked studying sexual urges, and “efficacy was not among the model’s advantage.” (p. 9)*

*Behaviorism brandished empiricism but was discredited by its ignorance of “such staples of human life as thought or desire.” (p. 10)*

*Cognitive psychology bristled with boxes and arrows but left out “the unthinking center of self that people most cherish.” (p. 10)*

*Drugs, prescribed or otherwise, fail to heal human “isolation, sorrow, bitterness, anxiety, loneliness, and despair.” (p. 212)*

*Evolutionary psychology dismissed “kindness, religion, art, music, and poetry” as illusions without survival value. (p. 10)*

In similar manner, schools mutated into giant test prep centers with a sterile curriculum that failed to engage learners (Carlsson-Paige & Lantieri, 2005). Zero tolerance discipline polices excluded or expelled students with emotional and behavioral problems (APA Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008; Skiba & Knesting, 2002). Youth who ran afoul of the law were often discarded in coercive correctional systems (Krisberg, 2005).

Many popular approaches to education,



treatment, and juvenile justice are devoid of any scientific rationale but still have enthusiastic proponents.

Hundreds of “violence prevention” and “character education” schemes promise panaceas to scary problems. For-profit boot camps spirit away troubled teens from families who are desperate for solutions. People may strongly cling to such approaches, even in the absence of any solid evidence.

When formal theories do not fit real world problems, humans revert to naive psychology and follow folk theories of behavior (Heider, 1958). A major study of public school programs for troubled children by our mentor, William Morse, found that educators without a clear theory used “green thumb” or “primitive” approaches (Morse, Cutler, & Fink, 1964). A prominent child psychiatrist suggested that his profession also lacks a unifying theory, so many practitioners revert to “whatever works” (McDermott, 2004, p. 657).

Missing from most current theories are the voices of youth. James Anglin of the University of Victoria conducted research with troubled youth and their staff in ten Canadian group care facilities (Anglin, 2002). He was surprised to find that the four-letter word that young people most often used to describe their experience was PAIN. All spoke of deep emotional distress in their lives. Yet descriptions by staff used labels like “disruptive” or “behaviorally disordered.” Anglin suggests a more accurate description would be pain-based behavior.

Even when programs claim to be evidence-based, this may mean little, since a Google™ search for those buzz words

turns up ten million hits. Some argue that the “gold standard” for evaluating effectiveness requires random clinical trials as used by the drug industry—as if this inspires much credibility. What we really need are scientific methods matched to the practical challenges of changing young lives (Kazdin & Weisz, 2003).

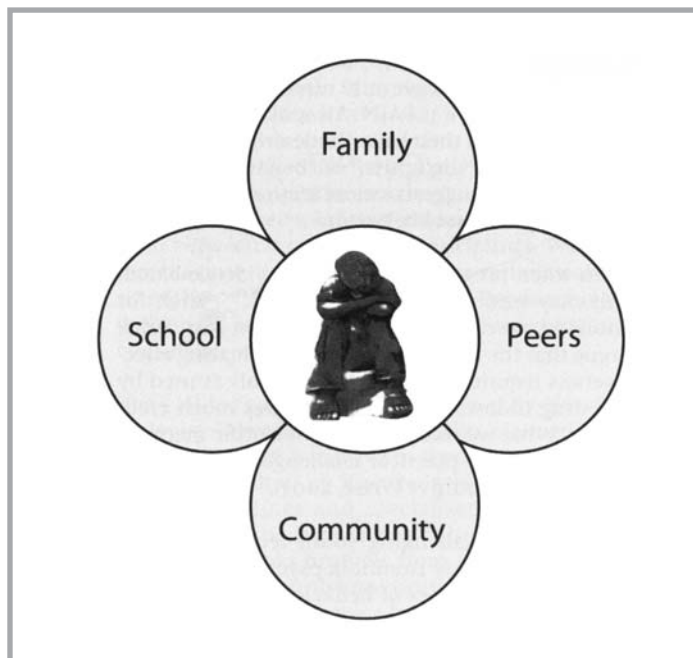
Success with challenging youth requires that we break free not only from folk psychology but also from narrow theories of behavior. Only then can we respond to the needs of youth instead of react to their problems (Anglin, 2002). A consilience approach links together research, practice, and deep values of mutual respect.

### **A Bio-Ecological Perspective**

An exemplar of consilience in programs for children and youth is the bioecological model developed across six decades by Urie Bronfenbrenner of Cornell University (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). He described traditional psychological research as the study of “the strange behavior of children in strange situations with strange adults for the briefest possible periods of time” (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, p. 513). He scoffed at the notion that solid research meant random assignment to controlled situations or other narrow methods. The bioecological model is the most extensively researched approach to understanding child and youth development.

Bronfenbrenner’s most basic belief was that trusting bonds with children are the most powerful force in building healthy brains and behavior. He translated this principle in simple but powerful terms:

Figure 2



Every child needs at least one adult who is irrationally crazy about him or her (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). Young people thrive in ecologies with caring families, concerned teachers, positive peers, and a supportive community. But children reared in unhealthy ecologies experience a host of emotional, behavioral, and learning problems. Instead of diagnosing these as pathology or disease in the person, Bronfenbrenner focused on *dis-ease* in the ecology.

The key circles of influence in the child's life space are shown in Figure 2 (Phelan, 2004). The most powerful circles make up the immediate life space of family, school, peer group, and community connections like work, church, and youth organizations. Enmeshed in this ecology, a child with a unique biological and psychological makeup interacts with significant

others. Surrounding this immediate life space are broader circles of influence including cultural, economic, and political forces.

A child's immediate life space wields more clout than the broad ecology. The most powerful forces come from the micro ecology, namely, what happens under the roof of one's own home, peer group, school, and neighborhood. A disrupted community ecology can be offset by strong parental influence. Contrary to stereotypes, many low-income urban families have strengths to offset risk and are skilled in meeting their children's needs (Furstenberg, Cook, Eccles, Elder, & Sameroff, 1999).

But when families are vulnerable, supports from other areas of the ecology are critically important. Past and current problems need not predict future fate (Lewis, 1997).

Ideally, the family, school, peers, and community all work in harmony. This provides a solid foundation of positive support and pro-social solid values. But when the ecology sends contradictory messages, children are in conflict. This is seen when teachers undermine family values, parents undercut teachers, or peers sabotage influence of the family. To understand a child, we identify strains and supports in the ecology.

Bronfenbrenner saw the "nature versus nurture" debates as meaningless since both biology and culture affect the brain and behavior. He called for detailed studies of children as biological beings living in the natural ecology of childhood—the fam-

ily, school, peer group, and community (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). Bronfenbrenner also abandoned the “deficit” model of psychology in favor of focusing on strength and resilience. As children’s bodies and brains mature, they continually face new challenges, thus the need for a developmental perspective.

While personal traits are important, behavior is not a solo performance but an ecological transaction. A parent influences a child, but the child also influences the parent. The teacher impacts the student, but the student also has an effect on teacher behavior. Children select their peers and in turn are influenced by them. We live in reciprocity, joining together in a hymn of harmony or in a dance of disturbance.

Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological model has strongly influenced world-wide policy and practice in every profession dealing with human development. He was closely tied to Nicholas Hobbs who pioneered ecological models for troubled and troubling children (Bronfenbrenner, 1984; Hobbs, 1982). The bioecological approach is breaking down barriers among the natural and social sciences and is building bridges between the stakeholders who must team together for positive youth development.

## Deep Brain Learning

*“Habitudes” which lie below the level of reflection are just those which have been formed in the constant give and take of relationships with others.*

– John Dewey (1916, p. 22)

*Education is what survives when what has been learned has been forgotten.*  
– B. F. Skinner (1964, p. 484)

How do we help young people wrestle with the big questions in their lives? The psychiatrists who authored *A General Theory of Love* offer this list of fundamental questions which merit our attention:

*What are feelings and why do we have them? What are relationships and why do they exist? What causes emotional pain and how can it be mended? How should we configure our society to further emotional health? How should we raise our children and what should we teach them?* (Lewis, Amini, & Lannon, 2000, p. 13)

Many youth today are concerned with looking good rather than doing good in the world. Our schools cannot challenge students to pursue learning goals to master life’s challenges when we are obsessed with performance goals to raise test scores (Dweck, 2006). Behavior management systems that merely manipulate the surface behavior of youth will never build deep values and controls from within (Kirsch, 2010; VanderVen, 2009). Deep brain learning is a quest for lasting positive change and growth.

Difficult problems are best solved by a consilience of perspectives. Thus, our discussion will be informed by fields as diverse as psychology, neuroscience, social biology, anthropology, sociology, psychiatry, pedagogy, and a rich tradition of values and practice expertise. One does not need to be an expert in any of these fields

to tap the truths they offer. Using the lens of consilience, we are able to draw together important findings on building healthy brains and positive interpersonal cultures so that young persons can successfully navigate pathways to resilience and responsibility.

After years of debate between narrow theories of behavior and learning, a consensus among strength-based ecological models is emerging. Approaches that build their evidence base on the principles of consilience have much more in common than those tethered to narrow views. The core principles which run through many of these programs are discussed at greater length, both in this journal issue and in the book *Deep Brain Learning* (Brendtro, Mitchell, & McCall, 2009).

Following is a list of twenty principles which we believe meet the standard of consilience. They are sorted into categories related to the Circle of Courage principles of Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity (Brendtro, Brokenleg, & Van Bockern, 2002):

### **Belonging**

1. Children thrive with supportive bonds in the ecology of family, school, peer group, and community.
2. Many children with troubled behavior have experienced developmental trauma in their early relationships.
3. When a troubled young person shows pain-based behavior, administering more pain only deepens distress and distrust.
4. Families have strengths and can restore bonds of respect.
5. Positive peer helping can replace negative peer influence.

6. School connectedness is a powerful force in building resilience.

### **Mastery**

7. Problems offer potent learning opportunities.
8. Task motivation develops talents and fosters deep learning. EgOistic motivation leads to superficial performance.
9. Powerful learning and change focuses on factors that have the most clout in producing lasting learning and positive development.
10. Successful mentoring of challenging youth requires disengaging from adversarial encounters and building respectful alliances.
11. Hope is the antidote to discouragement, building spiritual strength and fostering motivation to learn, grow, and change.
12. Teaching and treatment techniques may have value but should never interfere with meeting growth needs.

### **Independence**

13. Children gain strength and resilience to meet challenges through opportunity for Attachment, Achievement, Autonomy, and Altruism.
14. Secure attachments to responsive caregivers provide the foundation of building autonomy and self-control.
15. School achievement and bonds to teachers predict positive life outcomes, even if a youth has problems in other areas of life.
16. Autonomy involves opportunities for one to develop responsibility rather

than act as a helpless victim or use one's power to hurt others.

17. Young persons and families are the ultimate experts in identifying their own needs, problems, potentials, and future goals.

### Generosity

18. Pro social values, thinking, and behavior involve building internal strengths in youth and providing positive supports in the environment.
19. Children have an inborn capacity for empathy and altruism which flourishes in environments of caring and respect.
20. Humans gain proof of their own value by contributing to others.

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ANDRES RODRIGUES

# With “Zest and Joy and Deep Fulfillment.”

**Jim Natural**

A core Re-ED principle is to bring joy into young lives that have known much pain. This is a sample of activities and antics designed to build a joyful community.

At the inaugural conference of the American Re-ED Association in Nashville nearly thirty years ago—where this author had the first opportunity to interface with teacher-counselors from across the country—two very powerful notions became clear. One was that the participants all possessed Vitality and love of fun, a quality Nicholas Hobbs called “antic.” The other was that all the Re-ED programs had rich activities and traditions to generate joy. While serving very troubled children, each day was an opportunity to celebrate the present, using “program” as the first step toward building community and engaging young people in the process of learning. It did not take long for the conversation to lock onto topics like “Do you do a talent show?” or “What kinds of places do you take your kids on trips?” “A Chili cook-off! That sounds like a lot of fun. Tell me how that one works.” The ideas fostered in Nashville those many years ago are deeply rooted in this author’s belief system. Following is a sample of the “silly” activities

and “antics” that various Re-ED programs have used to forge joyful relationships and a sense of shared community.

*To everything there is a season...  
– Ecclesiastes 3:1*

The calendar at the Pressley Ridge Ohiopyle program, a year-round residential treatment program for troubled boys in the woods of western Pennsylvania, was divided into sessions. These were blocks of time that were lived out between regularly scheduled home visits. For example, home visits in early July and then in September bracketed an extended summer session. This was prime time for groups to plan extended canoe trips on the Potomac or Shenandoah Rivers. Groups also had time to design and build new shelters and cut ample supplies of firewood to insure their comfort in the coming winter. Every boy had daily opportunities to experience healthy summertime activity. They would swim, fish, catch newts and crayfish, eat watermelon, or make homemade ice cream. As a capstone to the session, before the boys would depart for time at home, the six groups in the camp community would

gather for an event called The Summer Olympics followed by a hearty barbecue.

Every season brought new excitement. October at Ohiopyle featured the annual Lumberjack Day celebration. The events were structured with a balance of individual and group challenges. The crosscut sawing contest, for example, would showcase the two best saw handlers in the group. The uphill logrolling event involved all group members, kids and staff alike. Events were designed to balance actual competencies with frivolous skills, like pie eating. Lumberjack Day also had its share of silliness. For example, all participants wore plaid flannel shirts and suspenders and smudged fake beards and mustaches on their faces. One group crafted a costume out of a blue tarp with horns as two kids posed as Babe, Paul Bunyan's big blue ox. Lumberjack Day ended with a dinner of flapjacks, sausage, fried potatoes, and apple sauce. As group composition changed over time, new youth looked forward to the ritual celebrations marking every season. Pictures and videotapes from previous years' activities built positive expectations about the future.

*When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe. — John Muir*

What Re-ED principles are lived out in these activities? Is it "time is an ally" or "life is to be lived now?" Is it "the group is very important" or "a child should know some measure of joy in each day?" "Communities are important?" "Competence makes a difference?" Of course, no single principle applies. It is impossible to disen-

tangle one from the others as they overlap and complement one another.

Yet when a list of maxims is presented to define a belief system or a school of thought, the risk could be called "misinterpretation by extraction." This is the author's phrase for the tendency of people to view individual principles as separate, isolated, and somehow unrelated to other principles on the same list. The power of a collected set of principles is in the synergy these can create. Thus, in re-education, the focus on giving joy to youth is balanced by expectations for responsibility and service to others.

*But the only magic I have known, I've had to make myself – Shel Silverstein*

Young people need to learn how to create their own enjoyment. Another popular formula enlists a group or classroom in constructing or creating something to bring to a planned event where they join with others having done the same. If the activity has a competitive flavor, this must be carefully managed to insure that the goal of building community spirit is not stifled by unhealthy ranking. The Pressley Ridge Dayschool in Pittsburgh holds an annual chili cook-off where individual classrooms bring a pot of their best to a panel of judges. It is tricky business to declare a definitive winner while at the same time insuring that all who participated have a good time.

At the Ohiopyle wilderness program, an 'Anything that Floats' contest fit this formula. Each group has two weeks to build and test a boat-like craft for the great race at the swimming hole during



the Summer Olympics festivities.

At the Pressley Ridge White Oak residential program in West Virginia, staff and students take advantage of a paved slope of road on the property to hold the annual Soap Box Derby. Each group constructs a car and brings the creation to a grand event where groups compete in a gravity-powered race with the vehicles designed and built.

One of the most unusual manifestations of this formula was the Pressley Ridge Ohiopyle Program's Medieval Days contest where each group was charged with the task of designing and building a catapult. The winning entry was the device that could toss a water balloon the greatest distance.

*... all agreed that Jim had acted very well, and was deserving to have some notice took of it, and reward.*

– Mark Twain

Another common formula is the enthusiastic recognition of a group's accomplishments or special achievement. This is not the "reinforcement" of behavior modification, but a celebration of competence. Often there is some sort of funny token awarded to a group or individual—a Bookworm Award granted to the student who completes the most book reports in one semester or a Good Citizenship Award bestowed on the classroom that logs the most hours of community service.

Gino DeSalvatore provided an excellent example of how Wallace Academy, an educational program operated by Centerstone, applied this formula cere-

moniously. Wallace Academy used the students' homeroom assignments to facilitate group process. Each homeroom met for evaluation and celebration at the end of each week. In an effort to make tangible the groups' progress on behavioral and academic goals, staff and students decided to publicly recognize the best functioning group — "the group that kicked butt"—each week. They named this prize The Kick Booty Award. Kids sprayed an old Army surplus boot with silver paint, mounted it to a wooden stand, and gave this Kick Booty Award to the homeroom that achieved the most during that week as decided by a school-wide vote. The silver boot was kept in the chosen homeroom until the following Friday when another homeroom, after a stellar week, was presented the coveted prize.

Sometimes a Re-ED program will use a kid-friendly recognition device to be a symbol of the program's goals. Joanne Dobrzanski is director of Family Connections, an agency that operates Brooke Place, a residential treatment program for girls in West Virginia. Dobrzanski recently shared a unique *Wizard of Oz* theme the program uses to help the girls understand that their time in the program is a progression through palpable stages. Kids refer to their time in the program as "a journey down the yellow brick road" with the goal being to move through these stages and return home ("there's no place like home"). The stages are: **Tornado** (to represent the whirlwind of feelings experienced upon entering the placement); **Scarecrow** (to represent gaining cognitive skills to use one's brain to make better choices); **Heart** (to symbolize learning to

relate to others, gain compassion, and practice kindness and respect in relationships); and finally *Lion* (to signify when one has the nerve to assert oneself, engage challenges, and be strong). The progression through these stages is a common goal for all, but each girl must move through them at her own pace. In a ceremony rich in meaning, each girl at a Brooke Place graduation receives many gifts, including a necklace at the end of which dangles a pair of ruby slippers. Following are some journal entries written by girls from Brooke Place. One young lady even titled her piece “My Journey down the Yellow Brick Road.”

*When I first got here I was on the tornado. I had worked my way to the scarecrow because I made better decisions for myself that will have positive consequences for my future. Then I made my way to the heart by learning to show my compassion to others and myself. Finally, I worked my way to the lion by not being afraid of challenges. In fact, I eat ‘em for breakfast! – J.T.*

*I started out on the tornado just like everyone else. After I started to work the program, I used my head and worked past the scarecrow. I eventually revealed my heart and worked past the heart stage. I now show my courage. I am ready to clap my heels and go home. – S.C.*

*We noticed smallest things – things overlooked before... – Emily Dickinson*

The final formula is the kind of spontaneous fun that happens when a group of people works deliberately to make joy for

someone else. The Pressley Ridge White Oak residential program provides an excellent example of this approach. Halloween festivities are the gift of all staff to all of the kids, even kids from other nearby Pressley Ridge programs. The Haunted Trail, a course laid out in a natural setting but adorned with scary props and populated by scary creatures (staff in costume), takes weeks of preparation and leaves a life-long impression. Managing kids’ emotions during this event is an important staff responsibility and requires as much sensitivity and skill as handling the competitive feelings encountered at the chili contest. There are three buildings spaced out along the trail that the kids must walk through. The special effects are amplified by the enclosed space. Latisha, a wary and streetwise 17-year-old, recounted her experience on the Haunted Trail last October:

*Before that day, people kept talking about it like it was such a big deal. I thought, this is going to be silly. I had this attitude that it would be corny or bogus and couldn’t scare me. But I was wrong. The costumes were so real and the lights and dummies made it seem like a movie and I was in it. I couldn’t believe that so many staff came in from their days off to put on costumes and do that. All us kids tried to figure out which staff were wearing what costumes, but none of the staff would tell the next day when we asked them.*

Often this sort of fun includes an element of surprise. Mary Lynn Cantrell shared the following anecdote from her experience as a teacher-counselor with

the Pathfinders group at the Cumberland House program in Nashville when the “glorious effort” (Hobbs, 1982) was new:

*One morning, the Pathfinders’ fun was on me. I wondered why everyone was finishing their independent work so quickly when they weren’t working in small groups or with me. I looked at an individual student’s assigned work folder and found it all complete, then another student’s, and another’s. Everyone’s folder for that day had their independent work already completed. I gave them the “OK, what’s up?” look and they laughed, confessing they’d all sneaked out of the unit during the night and climbed through the classroom window undetected. They did the work I had left for the next day, and returned so quietly the night aide and other staff never heard a thing. I laughed with them, and then we talked about why they probably shouldn’t do that again. It was probably sheer luck they never repeated it.*

This is an excellent point of closure because in so many ways it returns to the source — a teacher-counselor with her group of mischievous kids. These kids would break the rules to surprise this beloved adult with what they knew was a significant gift, their willingness and their ability to do schoolwork. This short little tale tells of something much greater. If one would use the story to reflect on the twelve principles, one will find a dash of each one sprinkled into this morsel. It condenses into a few sentences what countless programs have done over this half century. We must continue to put kids and adults together on the path to “zest and joy and deep fulfillment” (Hobbs, 1974, p. 165).

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CATHLEEN CLAPPER

*The illusions of childhood  
are necessary experiences.  
A child should not be denied  
a balloon because sooner or  
later it will burst. (Cox)*

# Reflections on Role Modelling

Laura Steckley

One of the more enjoyable parts of my job is supervising students' dissertations. This year, one of my students is exploring young people's views about role models – whether they have role models, whether they think role models are important, and which qualities they think are important in a good role model.

Of course, it gets me thinking. I can remember feeling, in my early days of working in a residential treatment center, a bit under the microscope. A minor change in my appearance – changing my eye-liner from black to dark brown, for instance – was observed and commented on. I tacitly understood that these girls were closely watching me and considering whether or not I was someone to emulate. I found this daunting.

I also remember one evening, being outside with Rachel while she struggled with being at the center. I followed her around the grounds, feeling completely lost. Nothing I said or did seemed to help. I was clearly the enemy. And then something happened that came as a surprise to both of us. I told her that I wanted to be a lawyer. I think I said something along the lines of "I'm not going to be in this shitty

place forever, either. I want to go to law school in a year or two. But we're both here right now, blah blah blah." Something significant happened. I didn't know what it was, and I'm still trying to figure it out now. Rachel's whole demeanour transformed. She expressed surprise and began to ask questions about my future plans. She felt like a completely different person from the inaccessible teenager I had encountered since her admission. Our relationship markedly changed from that point onwards.

Looking back, I think I went from being just another staff in Rachel's eyes, to a person – a young woman, to be more precise, who had aspirations. I recognise now that Rachel needed to be around people who could model a desire and ability to reach, to develop, to be something worthy of respect. We later came to find out that she had been exposed to extreme forms of disrespect, and had witnessed many actions that were clearly unworthy of respect. For Rachel, being a lawyer represented something worthy of respect. Evidently, being someone who worked with 'troubled youth' did not.

I certainly didn't tell Rachel this in order to model an achievement orienta-

tion. On the contrary, I had the vague feeling I was doing something inappropriate; it was irrelevant and too personal. This probably had to do with a general ambivalence about self-disclosure in our unit. We weren't very clear about when, why and how to share parts of ourselves.

So I've been thinking about what's involved in doing good role modelling. I'm looking forward to hearing about what my student finds out. In the mean time, I'm wondering, is it something one *does*? On the one hand, it seems to me that we need to be aware of, and sometimes even deliberate about, the way we try to be good role models. But there's also something arrogant about that, and possibly counterproductive. Who am I to think that anyone should model themselves after me? My way isn't even always the best way for me, let alone someone else who has a completely different history. And if I'm too self-conscious in the role, then I lose authenticity. What's the use of an inauthentic role model? So does that mean only people who've got it completely sorted should work with (and be role models for) young people? They could just *be* their nearly perfect selves. This would surely rule me out.

I'm pretty sure kids are just as interested in how we cope when we're not at our best as when we're on form. This doesn't mean that everything should be up for display (though popular culture seems to be heading this way). What it does mean, I think, is that being a good role model is about allowing kids to observe not only how we do things well, but how we struggle. How do we respond when we feel threatened, vulnerable or uncer-

tain? Can we be authentic in these moments and not be destructive? Or do we just pretend? How well do we clean up our interpersonal messes? Or how much do we displace, project, deny or avoid?

Working in the life space certainly triggers feelings of threat, vulnerability and uncertainty. I suspect that a key element in being a good role model means continually learning how to respond to difficulties usefully, and at the same time authentically. Funny, this could be seen as one of the core things we try to help kids do as well.

And of course, within a CYC context, good role modelling doesn't happen in a vacuum. It happens within relationship. While kids will want to know about aspects of ourselves and our lives, the most important modelling is how we model being in relationship with them – each one, individually.

So what does all of this tell me about that moment with Rachel? I've been wondering about this for a long time. Looking back, I know that I was floundering. I suspect that I let my guard down and allowed a more authentic, albeit frustrated, engagement to happen between ourselves. I also acknowledged my own difficulty, both in that moment and with the place we found ourselves. And while it wasn't conscious, my way of coping was to reach for something better (or, to be fair, what I thought was better at that time). Fortunately and through no conscious effort on my part, I think she experienced it as an invitation to reach for something better too.

# “Too Old For Crafts?”

Leanne Rose

I have since thought about the “therapeutic” care of children and youth within my chosen profession.

I will have to put semblance to my thoughts through an experience I recently had with a fellow child and youth care worker. We were discussing a good time for me to come and do an observation within the residential child and youth care setting that she worked. I mentioned that any time was fine with me but if she preferred that I come at a structured time, such as crafts, then that would be fine. She answered me by stating that the youth (ages 15-17) with whom she works do not do crafts. It struck me as odd at the time but I just passed it off as another avoidance technique to her commitment on my observing.

As the week has worn on I have come back to that statement in my mind a few times. I have wondered whether she meant that youth no longer need or want to express themselves through art? Whether creativity is no longer valued in front-line child and youth care? Is art not seen as part of the therapeutic process?

It was on formulating this last question that I began to think about the word therapeutic and about the “therapeutic care giving” that I profess to identify myself with.

What do I really mean when I use this term? My first reaction is to gurgle out some textbook definition that talks about planned intervention, good case planning, activity program planning, creating an environment which enhances the child’s self awareness and self growth, etc. But as I think of these definitions I have to confront myself with the fact that my daily work with children is just not that contrived. Maybe it should be, and for some I’m sure it is. For me, I could not exist in such a sterile manner. So does that mean that I am not really a “therapeutic caregiver”? Maybe this is all leading to my overwhelming discovery that sometimes we, as human beings, need just to exist. That we just need to *be* in the now, for the now, not working towards future goals. This is not to say that we should give up striving for change, goodness, etc. Rather it points to the fact that our existence on this earth is very limited and sometimes we should just *be* for the sake of *being*.

Let me go back and look at art in this light. More specifically engaging in an activity, such as art, with children just to engage in the activity. Just to enjoy the beauty of being in the now. Some of my best times with youth, aged 15-18 years, was during crafts. When we created to-

gether yet separately. When creating wasn't a plan, a vehicle for assessing the child in any way, it was just a pure sense of being in the now.

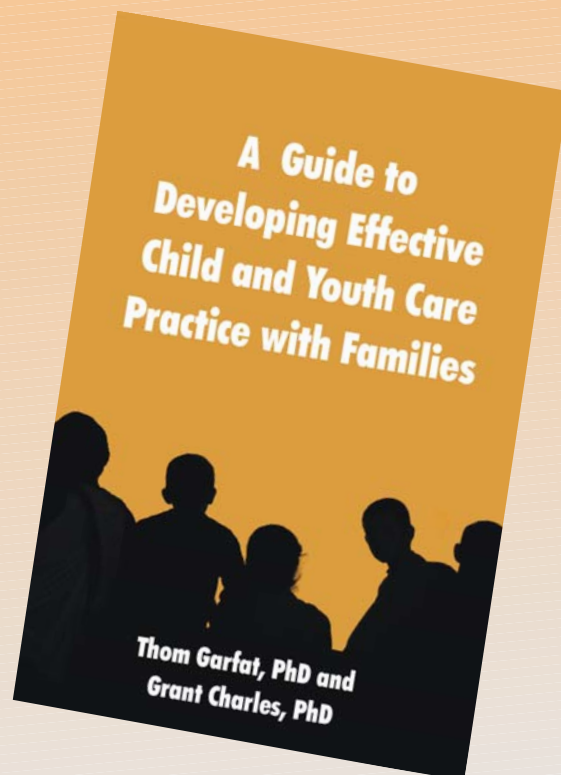
My best "craft experience" with troubled youth occurred in a residential assessment home where I worked. I was responsible for the group that night, and did not have the equipment that I needed for the "planned" activity. So I just put paints on the table with very few pieces of paper. The youth in the home at that time were very volatile and had had a week filled with crisis, i.e., restraints, A.W.O.L.'s, etc., and their patience level was low. About five minutes into the "paint what you want" activity, I noticed that they had all defiantly splotted paint on the paper and said they were done. Now, normally I would have used the rules and said that they had to be there for another 20 minutes before smoke break and hand them another piece of paper.

Instead, I put my hands in the paint and placed my hand on one of the girls' faces. All fun broke loose and we had the best paint fight I have ever been involved in.

Now I ask myself, was that therapeutic? According to the textbooks, no.

According to me, it sure felt good. According to the youth, it changed the entire atmosphere of the home to a much more positive light.

So maybe a part of being a "therapeutic caregiver" for me is living for the now. Allowing children to just *be* sometimes, to experience the beauty of living, the beauty of the moment. The aesthetics of life.



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# The Science involved in CYC Practice

Jack Phelan

The conversation about working with people as being either an art or a science has been going on for many years. There is great pressure to be more scientific, usually framed as evidence – based methods and measurable outcome data, which seems very reasonable to funders and government departments, and is regularly resisted at the treatment delivery level as being just too linear and simple a measurement strategy for the complexity of effective treatment.

I would like to side step this version of scientific process and focus on the science knowledge that may indeed be helpful in our work. Neurophysiology has uncovered many useful facts about the brain that are both scientifically sound and applicable to our work. Paul Baker and Meredith White-McMahon have published *The Hopeful Brain* (2011) which builds on the work of Bruce Perry in Calgary and others who have studied the neural path-

ways of abused and neglected youths. They conclude that the youth we serve typically have brains that are hard-wired to block any thinking that will make them vulnerable to adult influence. Basically the earlier life experiences of these youths have trained their brains and created organic shifts in their neural pathways that do not allow them to trust others, especially adults. To try to influence these youth through the usual cognitive strategies of verbal counselling is not possible, because their brains are blocking any thinking that involves trust in adult helpers.

There is also well documented research on trauma victims which indicates that any unwanted external control attempts create fear, anger and further trauma effects. All this is science that we in CYC practice need to use in our treatment work.

Basically, if we want to influence these



youth and families, we need to stop use logical arguments and cognitive reasoning, based on our understanding of the world, which is all aimed at influencing the way they think, because nothing is getting past the neural blocking of all these “helpful” messages.

So what are the next steps?

- If you believe that this science is valid, then stop trying to change how these youth think by appealing to their logical brains. Their brains work to resist all of your messages, and the more you assail them with cognitive data, the more they resist.
- Appeal to their hearts and senses by creating experiences in the life space that contradict what their brain believes. When a youth feels cared for and valued, their brain gets confused, this is not a logical thought, so little by little new neural pathways get created.
- Use relational approaches which individualize each youth and require helpers to be really present so that the experience of trust changes the thinking about trust. Baker describes a relational retraining process in his book.

- Only use external control to create safety, then shift to relational and experiential approaches. Effective CYC practitioners are actually “experience arrangers” who create sensory messages of caring and competence for youth. The use of life space work to speak to people physically and by-pass the brain is the most useful way to work with abused, neglected and traumatized people.
- Immediately stop all behavioural strategies that attempt to change youth. Behavioural approaches can be used to create safety, but this is not treatment except in a minimal sense.
- Effective CYC practice is developmental and relational, and occurs in the active, dynamic events and processes of living together and relating safely and positively.
- Existing science is pretty clear and definite about what does not help, we need to listen and learn. The knowledge we already have about relational work can enhance the work of the neuroscientists.

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# What Do Children Think of Themselves?

John Stein

**D**o you ever wonder why good kids do good things and bad kids do bad things? Do you ever wonder why good kids tend to hang with other good kids and bad kids with other bad kids. Are you offended that I'm talking about 'bad' kids? I hope so. Like Father Flanagan, I believe that "There's no such thing as a bad boy<sup>1</sup>", and I hope you do, too.

Part of the problem, as I see it, is that some people do tend to think of some children as 'good' and other children as 'bad.' This affects how adults treat children and how they respond to them and their behaviour. The other part of the problem, again as I see it, is that some children think of themselves as 'good' while other children do not think of themselves as 'good.' Sadly, I think there may be children who think of themselves as 'bad.'

I believe that children like to learn, that they are learning machines. They may not

always want to learn what adults want them to learn, perhaps things such as arithmetic and reading and algebra and grammar, perhaps history or geography. But they do learn and want to learn how to navigate and thrive in their social environment. However, they learn only the things people are willing to teach them or things they otherwise have opportunities to learn. Some children have many opportunities to learn good things; other children may not have so many opportunities. Sadly, a few children learn things that are not good.

Children, I think, tend to see themselves through the eyes of others. How others see them plays a large part in (the formation of) their identity and their self image, in how they think of themselves. Children get a pretty good idea of what other people think of them from how other people respond to them and their behaviour, especially their misbehaviour. When children think of themselves as

<sup>1</sup> While often attributed to Father Flanagan, the founder of Boys Town in Nebraska in the 1917, the phrase originated with Floyd Starr, the founder of the Starr Commonwealth in Michigan in 1913, a treatment program for boys. Father Flanagan did hold the belief, however. Both programs have grown and expanded and continue today as respected social service agencies that serve boys and girls and their families.

good people, they tend to do good things. If through accident, mistake, or ignorance, they do something wrong, they tend to correct it. Just my opinion, but that's what I believe, based on my experience from working with children and from being a child who thought of himself as a good kid, because that's the way people thought of me and treated me – my mother, my father, my teachers, other adults, and my peers. But sadly, I have known kids who did not think of themselves as good kids, and may even have thought of themselves as bad, or worse, as worthless. Somehow, these children tend to do fewer good things and more 'bad' things.

All of which brings me to punishment and discipline. I prefer to differentiate between punishment and discipline, to use them to refer to two different concepts. Punishment, in popular usage, has to do with imposing unpleasant consequences on people who misbehave in some way, either by doing something wrong or by failing to do something that is required. Discipline is often used as a synonym for punishment, but I much prefer to use it for a different concept, one that has to do with teaching self-control. The origin of the word is from the Latin *disciplina*, which means teaching.

Now for some examples.

First, let us look at disciplining children from the point of teaching them self-control, of 'correcting' them, as my mother was fond of saying. When children misbehave, adults who use this approach to discipline take children aside to teach them. First, they help children understand what was wrong with their behaviour.

Then, they help children to figure out what behaviour is expected, teach them how to do the behaviour, to acquire the skills as it were, and help them to practice. Finally, they help children to understand why the expected behaviour is important. Adults can do this with the ever-popular lecture, simply telling children in terms they can understand and modeling the behaviour. Or adults can do this using the Socratic method, asking children questions and helping children figure it out for themselves. Or adults can use a combination of the two.

"It makes me angry when you treat me like that. I would prefer it if you...Now try that." Or, "Did you see Mary's face when you did that? What do you think she was feeling? How would you feel if she had done that to you? What did you hope to accomplish? What did you accomplish? What could you have done differently?"

My mother used this approach often with me and with other children. Teaching children is respectful. Teaching children implies confidence in their competence, that they can learn, and that they will do the right thing once they understand. My experience tells me that when children recognize and understand the real life, **natural consequences** of their behaviour, both positive and negative, they are likely to change their future behaviour accordingly.

On the other hand, punishment is such a part of our culture. The belief that people who do wrong must be punished is powerful. But when we punish children, who most often are doing the best they know how, the effects can be cumulatively

devastating. Sometimes, when punishment is rare, as in perhaps once a year, children can understand that they are being punished because they have done something that has really upset someone. In such cases, I think they are likely to take some time to themselves to think about what they did that was so terrible that adults were concerned enough to try to hurt them. In these rare cases, children know it's about what they did. When there is too much punishment, I'm inclined to think that children begin to feel that the punishment is more about them than what they did. Or perhaps more about the adults who keep trying to hurt them as if they deserve it. They begin to wonder why adults don't simply 'correct' them, don't just teach them what they should have done. My experience tells me that punishment by itself is not an effective way to get children to change their behaviour in the desired direction. Rather, any changes are likely to be undesirable (e.g., lying, sneaking, deceit, blaming others, disrespecting authority figures, *et. al.*).

Punishment implies that children will not behave unless adults punish them. It also implies that children deserve to be punished. Why else would parents who love their children, or people who care about children, do something to hurt them? To make them suffer. I think children are likely to think that adults believe that they are too selfish, too lazy, too stupid, or too irresponsible to do the right thing. Or perhaps too bad or too evil. After all, good people do not deserve to be punished, only bad people deserve punishment. And if that's what children sense that that is how adults think of

them, what then do children think of themselves?

The only other logical thought that occurs to me is that the world is cruel and unjust, in which case, why even bother trying to understand it and play by the rules?

Let's think for a moment about the ever-popular spanking. (Is it perchance becoming less popular? Perhaps in some circles it is, but recent articles in the local New Orleans news have reported that a renowned local Catholic high school for boys was criticized by the Archdiocese for paddling students. Parents and former students rallied to the defense of the school.) When children are spanked by their parents on rare occasions, they are likely to go to their rooms to 'lick their wounds' as it were, and to think about what they have done to make their parents so upset that they were willing to hurt them. Then, after a time, they return, perhaps with their 'tail between their legs,' to see whether their parents are still mad at them, trying to 'suck in,' to do something good to make up for their misdeed and get back into their parents' good graces. More often than not, I'm thinking their parents welcome them back to the fold, perhaps feeling some remorse for having hurt them. And children can get back to doing good and feeling good pretty quickly. It's the ever-popular closure. But I think this scenario is possible only when spanking happens rarely, as in less than once a year.

When spanking happens more routinely, I think things are different. At some point, children I think begin to question their worth as respectable human beings,

to wonder what is wrong with them, or what is wrong with their parents who are so willing to hurt them. They stop going back, trying to get into their parents' good graces, to get back into the fold. They begin to plot, to think of ways to avoid getting caught and punished. Or they may begin to think about getting even, of retaliating in some way. And they begin to withdraw from the fold, to avoid their parents.

Now let's think about the increasingly popular restriction. "That's it!! You're grounded!!!" I think that grounding can be even more harmful than the occasional spanking. First, I think grounding tends to be used too frequently. After all, it's not hurting children like a spanking does. But I think grounding or restrictions, can in some ways be even more harmful than spanking.

Instead of being over and done with, grounding is for a period of time. If children go back, trying to 'suck in' as it were, to see whether their parents are still upset with them, they are likely to test, to see whether their parents still think they deserve to be punished. Parents who believe they must be consistent with 'discipline' cannot back down. They have to enforce the punishment. No matter how well their children behave after the restriction is imposed, parents have to remind them that they are still punished. Children end up feeling punished for a much longer period of time than with a spanking, which for all its brutality and harm, is at least over and done with soon after it happens. Consequently, children have to feel like bad kids for the duration of their punishment, and parents occasion-

ally have to remind them that they are still being punished. Restrictions make it more difficult for children to return to the fold until they have finished serving their punishment. It is really hard for them to do good things while serving their punishment, and easier for them to think about doing more bad things.

I am not a fan of spanking. It's just that I think some of the things we do instead can be even more harmful than an occasional smack. Both are humiliating and denigrating. One, the restriction, lasts longer and is likely to be used more frequently out of the mistaken belief that it is not harmful. It is harmful. It may not teach children to be physically aggressive, but it still teaches children that misbehaviour must be punished in some way, leading children to conclude that they should find ways to punish people who mistreat them in some way. More, it is difficult for some adults to provide reinforcement for any good behaviour that may occur whilst children are serving a punishment. Children may end up spending a lot of time while serving their punishment thinking of themselves as less than good kids, perhaps even as bad.

Spanking is, of course, prohibited in residential settings. Nevertheless, some people still feel the need quite strongly to punish children for misbehaviour. Restriction is the option. One day, one week, two weeks?. Restriction from selected activities? Restriction from all activities? From school? From therapy? Room restriction, e.g., restriction even from the living group? What do children think of during their restriction? I doubt very much that it is ever good or productive.

I remember a time in residential treatment when I met with a boy who had done something wrong (I don't remember what it was, but for me to meet with him, it had to be something serious.) I began to discuss his behaviour with him. He interrupted me and said, "Just tell me what my punishment is and get it over with." I replied that I was not going to punish him. His expression was priceless. He was shocked. I had finally gotten his attention. Then he listened and joined with me in a discussion. He decided he would do better next time.

When people treat children with respect and dignity, children tend to see themselves as worthy of respect. When people treat children as competent, children tend to think of themselves as competent, to have confidence in their abilities. When people expect good things of children, children begin to expect good things of themselves. It's a virtuous circle. The better children are treated, the better they think of themselves, the better they behave, resulting in people treating them even better. More, children tend to have friends who are much like themselves. Consequently, children who think of themselves as good tend to have friends who also think of themselves as good. These children tend to expect good things of each other. Part of the circle.

And the other kids? When children are treated with less respect and dignity, they are less likely to think of themselves as worthy of respect. When children are treated as if they are incompetent, they are less likely to think of themselves as competent. When people do not expect good things of children, children are less likely to

expect good things of themselves. It can become a vicious circle. The worse children are treated, the less likely they are to behave well, resulting in people treating them even worse, resulting in more poor behaviour and more bad treatment. More, children who do not think well of themselves are less likely to be accepted by kids who tend to behave better. The only kids with whom they can have relationships are other troubled kids like themselves.

### **When teaching is not enough**

It would be rather naive to think that adults never have to provide consequences for children, that simply talking with them will always be enough. There are times when children's misbehaviour can lead to natural, real life consequences that are serious, such as getting hit by a car or getting hurt. Adults handle these things with small children all the time without punishing them. Adults do not let small children play with knives, then spank them or ground them when they cut themselves. Rather, they keep knives out of reach or supervise children closely when knives are within reach.



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Other times, the natural real life consequences of children's misbehaviour may not be enough to change their behaviour, no matter how much adults try to teach children. For example, when teenagers fail to come home on time for weekday curfews, requiring worried parents to sit up late on a work night. In such cases, all parents have to do is restrict children from the privilege they are cannot yet handle responsibly, *i.e.*, from going out on weekdays for a few days before letting them try again. (There can be no learning if children do not get to try again in a reasonable amount of time.) There's no need to take away things that children can handle responsibly, such as going out to play after school, using the telephone, having friends over, or watching television, no need to confine them to their rooms. These are **logical consequences**, consequences that are related to the misbehaviour and designed to prevent it or make it more difficult, rather than to punish children. These consequences are respectful. Logical consequences have more to do with the behaviour than with simply making children suffer. Children can understand them without feeling punished.

Another approach that has received

considerable attention is **restorative justice**. It involves having people who misbehave meet with the victims of their behaviour and representatives of the community in the presence of a trained mediator. This approach lends itself readily to the residential setting, as well as to schools, where victims, the community, and trained staff are readily available. It has been used successfully in criminal justice, as well. It exposes people to the real life consequences of their behaviour and leads to negotiations about how those who misbehave can 'repair the harm.' It teaches children (and others) so much more than some arbitrary punishment imposed by someone in authority.

Punishing children in any form is rarely necessary nor a good way to teach them. Many argue that smacking or spanking children is bad, and I agree. I wish I had never smacked my son. Unfortunately, I think the 'consequences' they recommend in its place are also bad, and may be worse. My mother, who never went beyond the eighth grade, knew so instinctively. So did so many of my teachers. We should do better in the twenty-first century.

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# Communication impairments in children in residential care: an overlooked aspect of their education and well-being?

**Dr Susan McCool**

## **Introduction**

It is the aim of this paper to explore an often-overlooked aspect of the education and well-being of children in residential care: the claim that there is a high rate of undetected communication impairment among children in 'public care' (Cross, 2004). Unmet communication need has serious effects on a child's education (Audet and Tankersley, 1999). The impact extends beyond academic attainment to encompass important educational and developmental aspects such as emotions and relationships, behaviour and self-regulation and, more broadly, participation and inclusion.

This paper outlines the nature of communication impairment, and examines the evidence for unidentified need among children in residential care. It then explores what happens when needs remain unmet. The paper concludes with consideration of why services may fail both to recognise and respond to these needs, and offers examples of how some services have tried to respond to these issues.

## **What is communication impairment?**

Communication is something that we all do, in many different ways, every day; so most of us think we have a reasonably good understanding of what is involved. In a professional context, however, the terms used have particular meanings that are worthy of a little thought (Wintgens, 2001). One of the best explanations uses the metaphor of children's puzzles (MacKay and Anderson, 2000). Lots of us think of communication as being like a puzzle where several individual pieces fit into a wooden inset board, representing aspects such as speech sounds, meaningful words, and grammar. All the pieces are related but they each have their own place in the whole. In reality, it is more complicated than that. Not only does each of these aspects have two sides to it (understanding and use) but they all affect each other and are affected by outside influences such as the communication context. That is why Mackay and Anderson (2000) suggest that we should instead be thinking about a 'Rubik' cube, where all the aspects of communication within an individual are inter-related, as well as varying in re-



sponse to interaction with others' thoughts, deeds and communication. In development, difficulties can occur at any level, and with any of the individual 'blocks' of the communication 'puzzle'. That is true for all children and, it will be argued, is all the more likely for looked-after children. It is also suggested that this group are at higher risk of impairment in the interpersonal aspects of two-way communication, often referred to as pragmatics. Difficulties of this kind may appear subtle, or they may be masked by the more evident behaviours that can arise when they are not detected.

### **Are there high levels of undetected communication impairment among children in residential care?**

Children in care are at least as likely as their peers to experience communication impairment. Difficulties with speech, language and communication are among the most common developmental problems in children (Law, 1992). Such difficulties have been reported at rates of up to 55% of pre-school children in areas of socioeconomic deprivation (Locke, Ginsborg and Peers, 2002). It is accepted that in the general population, 10% of school-aged children will have difficulties with speech, language or communication that are likely to have a detrimental effect on their education (Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists [RCSLT], 2006) and that levels are likely to be higher among vulnerable groups, including those living in areas of socioeconomic disadvantage or amongst looked-after children.

Even typically-occurring levels of need are less likely to have been picked up in

this group. For a substantial number of children in residential care, it is likely that prior access to speech and language therapy (SLT) services may have been denied them owing to the circumstances leading to them being there, including parental abuse or neglect (Cross, 2004). Further, it is widely accepted that once in the system, looked-after and accommodated children face tremendous barriers in accessing universal and specialist health services (Dunnett, White, Butterfield and Callowhill, 2006) within which most SLT services are located. Importantly, there is reason to suggest that rates of communication difficulty may actually be higher in children who are 'looked after'. Regrettably, there is no published research available specifically in this area. This is in itself an indicator of the neglect that has blighted this important area to date. It is possible, however, to draw together findings from research in related areas, and make some reasonable assumptions.

There is evidence, for instance, that children who experience impoverishment in their early language environment (Law, 1992) and inadequacies in their early caregiver relationships (Madigan et al., 2007) show delays and disruption in the acquisition of key skills related to communication, emotions and behaviour. These aspects are likely to be present in many looked-after children. Psychological distress and emotional behavioural problems have been found to exist almost universally amongst children and young people in residential care (Residential Care Health Project, 2004). There are now clearly established associations between particular types of speech/language

difficulty and particular kinds of behaviour problems (van Daal, Verhoeven and van Balkom, 2007). Children whose language problems persist beyond the age of five years have been shown to have poorer psychosocial outcomes into adolescence (Snowling et al., 2006) and adulthood (Clegg et al., 2005). Ground-breaking research by Gilmour et al. (2004) found signs of communicative problems in a substantial proportion of children whose disruptive behaviour, rather than language, had been causing concern. The difficulties experienced by the children were similar in type and magnitude to those found in autism spectrum conditions. Bamford and Wolkind (1988, cited in Cross, 2004) found that young people in the care system were at higher risk of psychiatric disorder than any other easily identifiable group. Worryingly, a high proportion of the problems had gone undetected. Furthermore, while estimates vary, it is said that between 50 and 90% of youngsters with psychiatric disorders also have communication disorders (Cohen, 1996).

Another possible reason for children being in residential care is the presence of disability (Pinney, 2005). Many disabling conditions are associated with speech, language or communication impairments: these include developmental delay, learning disability, physical disability, hearing impairment and autism spectrum conditions (RCSLT, 2006).

To summarize, then, research has shown associations between communication impairment on the one hand and negative early experiences, behaviour problems, mental health issues and disability on the other. All of the features in the

latter category are accepted as occurring to a greater degree among children who are looked after and accommodated; indeed, it is reasonable to assume that a cluster of such features may lead to the decision to accommodate a child in residential care rather than in other contexts. Combined, this makes it more likely that communication problems will be more common amongst this group. The fact that no elevated incidence of this kind has been reported leads naturally to the possible conclusion that many of these problems go undetected.

### **Implications**

For children in residential care who have unmet communication needs, there is a likelihood that they will struggle to attain the academic, personal and social outcomes desired in today's education system. This is explored below.

#### *Academic attainment*

Despite long-held concerns that children and young people in public care do not realise their academic potential, there is compelling evidence that this unacceptable situation persists (Connelly and Chakrabarti, 2007). Recent figures presented by those authors show that a substantial majority of care leavers do not gain any qualifications. Furthermore, it is for children among those looked after away from home that the highest level of educational difficulty and the lowest level of educational achievement are reported.

From the communication difficulties perspective, there are similarly longstanding concerns around the academic underachievement of children with

speech, language and communication difficulties. A plethora of studies reviewed by Schachter (1996) reflected the consensus that persisting difficulties of this kind lead to underachievement in every conceivable domain of academic attainment. Again, these observations are supported by very recent findings in a literature review commissioned by the Scottish Executive on the needs and experiences of people with communication support needs (Law et al., 2007), which presented the evidence that children in this group often under-perform in the highly verbal and communicatively complex environment of schools.

What barriers must be faced, then, by the children hampered not only by the fact of their placement in residential care, but additionally by the presence of unmet communication needs? Although the precise mechanism by which these factors interact is not known, the adverse effects are likely to be complex and compound, producing an effect larger than the sum of its parts.

#### *Broader educational aspirations*

Academic outcome, whilst undoubtedly important, is not the only aspiration in contemporary education. In Scotland, for example, A Curriculum for Excellence (Curriculum Review Group, 2004) emphasises learning, understanding and achievement that is broader than examinations and relevant to modern life. It promotes four key capacities in Scotland's children and young people in order that they become: successful learners; confident individuals; responsible citizens and effective contributors.

Evidently, these outcomes are closely

tied to the individual's emotional, social and behavioural development, and there is every reason to suggest that these areas may prove just as challenging as academic achievement for the group considered in this paper. It is suggested (Cross, 2004) that emotional and behavioural problems may be the most prevalent issue affecting children in public care. Additionally, it has been demonstrated that risks combine in a cumulative manner with regard to child behaviour outcomes (Appleyard et al., 2005), indicating that children in residential care who also have communication needs are particularly vulnerable.

Family risk factors are among the strongest predictors of adverse mental health outcomes in early and middle childhood. Research cited by Dwyer, Nicholson and Battistuta (2003) suggests that poor parenting practices, marital conflict and parental mental ill-health constitute some of the highest risk factors. Such circumstances may well have been encountered previously by a high proportion of children in residential care. Combined with the possibility of changes and disruptions while living away from home, it seems reasonable to suggest that children in public care face greater barriers than others with regard to emotional well-being as a foundation for educational aspirations such as the development of 'confident individuals'.

Equally, there is a convincing knowledge base (Donahue, Hartas and Cole, 1999) indicating that the social and emotional development of children with language impairment is vulnerable to such a degree that close and ongoing monitoring is warranted. Children whose language

impairment persists into the school years are at a higher risk of psychiatric disorder in adolescence (Snowling et al., 2006). Long-term follow-up shows that individuals with developmental language disorders show poor psychosocial outcomes well into adulthood, with deleterious effects on relationships, employment, capacity to live independently and mental health (Clegg et al., 2005).

Less well established, but showing promising outcomes, is a strand of research investigating the presence of undetected communication deficits in children whose behaviour had been causing concern. In one study, over two-thirds of pupils who had been excluded from schools in Hackney were found to have social communication impairments similar in nature and degree to children on the autism spectrum (Gilmour et al., 2004).

Alarming rates of exclusion from school are reported for children who are looked after (Connelly and Chakrabarti, 2007). In Scotland, the figures show a six times higher rate of school exclusion for children who are looked after, compared to those who are not. If it is accepted that exclusion from school is one indicator of problem behaviour, then this statistic indicates something of the magnitude of the issue. Exclusions at this rate seem rather at odds with stated educational aims of fostering 'effective contributors' and 'responsible citizens', far less 'successful learners' especially in the light of the suggestion above that proportion of those excluded may have undetected and unmet communication support needs.

### **Reasons for undetected and unmet communication need**

Understandably, a key priority for a child in the care system is establishing secure living arrangements. This is closely followed by the need to ensure the physical care of the child. 'Unseen' issues such as communication impairments can assume lesser immediate importance in such pressing circumstances (Cross, 2004). Moreover, in a system that is stretched and necessarily reactive, overt manifestations of communication difficulties in the form of disruptive behaviour can invoke a response targeting the behaviour, rather than exploring underlying causes.

It can be difficult to identify problems with communication. Some impairments in this area can be relatively subtle, and may only be apparent to people whose awareness has been raised through training. Examples of these include receptive language impairments and pragmatic disorders. Difficulties may be apparent only in certain contexts, and may easily be missed in busy, fast-moving everyday interactions. What is more, the way they present in individual children can change over time, meaning that a deep understanding of a child gained over a long period may be necessary before suspicions of a possible difficulty are raised. This opportunity may not arise in circumstances involving frequent changes of placement or high turnover of staff. Research indicates that problems of placement disruption and high staff turnover can frequently affect the lives of looked-after children (Berridge and Brodie, 1998; Colton and Roberts, 2007).

Cross (2004) adds that the statutory di-

mensions of assessment laid down for looked-after children neglect the whole area of communication skills. She attributes to this the 'startling number' of young people in public care she and her colleagues have come across with previously unrecognised communication difficulties. One recent example from the Scottish context is the important publication *Looked-after children and young people: We can and must do better* (Scottish Executive, 2007). Based on widespread consultation, and with a wide and holistic scope, it nonetheless makes no mention of children's communication skills.

Other practitioners have focused their criticisms on system issues, based primarily on frequent and unplanned moves of children. Work by speech and language therapists in Lambeth (Conway and Stokes, 2005) reported that frequent placement disruptions resulted in services being discontinued or prematurely duplicated, children facing long waits for assessments following transfer between services, and undergoing repeated assessment rather than receiving intervention.

Lack of co-ordination between services has been blamed for the failure to address any communication needs that are identified. Problems result from differences in boundaries between local authority areas and health areas, which can influence matters such as remits and budgets. Cross (2004) argues that communication is a particularly special case in this regard, falling as it does between the interests of both health and education agencies, yet being accepted as the full responsibility of neither.

### **How can services respond?**

There have been calls for the development of advocacy services for this vulnerable group of children (Priestley, 2001) to minimise disadvantage and increase equity of access to services. One speech and language therapy service has reported favourably on a pilot project for pre-school children that aimed to establish an advocacy role, as well as to trial a prioritisation service for initial assessment and to follow closely the movements of these children (Conway and Stokes, 2005). The success of the pilot led to the planned expansion of this work to school-aged children (by far the larger number). It was also proposed to extend the remit of the 'link therapist', to include training and outreach to speech and language therapists responsible for these children in school settings. Follow-up work by McKinson (2007) revealed that while partial progress had been made towards these goals, several developments had been postponed pending additional funding. In the intervening period, the context had changed markedly, with the move towards integrated children's services. Therapists, supported by the publication of the profession's position paper (Gasgoine, 2006) were working to ensure that developments arising from the pilot would become integral in the new ways of working.

Inter-agency working is required if the communication support needs of children in residential care are to be recognised and addressed. There is motivation to improve the situation from within the speech and language therapy profession. It is hoped that, with corresponding drive

from the other relevant agencies, much can be done to improve the educational outlook for this vulnerable group of children.

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# Everything Old Is Not Necessarily New Again

Back when I was growing up, if you got out an encyclopedia and looked in Volume 6, EAS - ELK, you would find my Dad's picture under the entry for "Easy Mark". I swear encyclopedia salesmen had painted an X on the sidewalk outside our house, because every year or so, one would come around, spend an hour with my Dad, and leave with a wad of cash.

Dad believed his kids should have ready access to all the knowledge in the world, and over the years he probably bought eight or nine different sets of encyclopedias. Britannica, Americana, Grolier's, the Book of Knowledge ... the list was seemingly endless.

But he made sure he got full value for his money. In our house, we knew if we asked even the simplest question, one we were sure Dad could tell us the answer to right off the top of his head, he would refuse.

"Look it up," he would say. To him, there were no shortcuts. He wanted us to roll up our sleeves and do the work of learning.

You'll be shocked to hear that my kids have also heard the words, "Look it up." They, too, were brought up to dive into dictionaries and encyclopedias.

My youngest now is the librarian at a

middle school – a perfect place for a kid who grew up loving books. Last week she came to me with a dilemma.

"We're doing an end-of school-year cleaning," she said. "Out with anything old and musty. It's a health and safety thing. And I have decided to throw out two sets of encyclopedias."

My jaw dropped. "You can't do that!" I gasped. In our family, we don't throw out books. That's for starters. And we certainly don't throw out entire sets of books containing the collected knowledge of mankind.

She was firm. "No way around it," she said. "Dad, they're encyclopedias from the year 1990."

Still, 1990. That wasn't all that long ago. I remember being in high school and using a set of the Book of Knowledge my Dad had bought before I was born. Things don't change that much.

"Oh, really?" said my daughter. "Let's look at Volume 3, BAZ - BYL. Here we have a long entry about that awful Berlin Wall that separates East and West Berlin and is a focal point for tension in the Cold War between the US and the Soviet Union ..."

"Well, that's just one thing," I said.

"But it's wrong," said my daughter. "But okay, good point, it's just one thing. They can get the proper information if they check



the Internet. But oh, wait! They can't, because according to this encyclopedia, no such thing exists. Computers are giant machines owned by big businesses who can afford to store them in a climate-controlled environment, useful only for doing complex accounting problems."

And the more we looked at it the more I realized she was right. Those encyclopedias were a key to understanding the world. Problem is, it was a very different world. Nobody had heard of "cell phones". There were no entries for "Bill Gates" or "Microsoft". There were entries for "Blackberry" and "Apple", but both included pie recipes and neither mentioned bandwidth or web surfing capabilities.

In fact, the only entry under "surfing" dealt with waves and boards and Annette Funicello and Frankie Avalon. "Text" was a noun, not a verb. The entire underpinning of our popular culture hadn't even been dreamed of. You would no more find "Facebook" in the encyclopedia than you would "Elbowradio".

Politically, there were signs the Cold War was ending. The Soviet Union was the world's villain, but it still existed at that point. It hadn't blown apart into dozens of tiny states so poor they couldn't even afford vowels for their names.

Of course, there were signs that was about to happen. The Russkies were close to economic and political collapse, thanks to pouring trillions of rubles into an excruciatingly futile effort to bring some sort of semblance of order to this place called "Afghanistan". (Oh, how we chuckled at their woes! Did they not remember Vietnam?)

"Still," I said. "Throwing out encyclo-

pedias feels wrong. Can't you give them away to a school that doesn't have enough?"

"So those kids can have access to all sorts of wrong information?" she countered. "So they can write essays about our ally, Saddam Hussein, and how important the cod is to the Newfoundland fishery, and how the Concorde is proving that supersonic flight is the wave of the future?"

So this past week, she and a couple of student helpers loaded two full sets of encyclopedias into a dumpster. The collected knowledge of our species, discarded as trash.

Because sometimes, everything old is just old again.



ANATOLY TIPLYASHIN

# 21 Memos from your Child

1. **Don't spoil me.** I know quite well that I ought not to have all that I ask for. I'm only testing you.
2. **Don't be afraid to be firm with me.** I prefer it, it makes me feel more secure.
3. **Don't let me form bad habits.** I have to rely on you to detect them in the early stages.
4. **Don't make me feel smaller than I am.** It only makes me behave stupidly "big."
5. **Don't correct me in front of people if you can help it.** I'll take much more notice if you talk quietly with me in public.
6. **Don't make me feel my mistakes are sins.** It upsets my sense of values.
7. **Don't protect me from consequences.** I need to learn the painful way, sometimes.
8. **Don't be too upset when I say "I hate you".** It is not you I hate but your power to thwart me.
9. **Don't take too much notice of my small ailments.** Sometimes they get me the attention I need.
10. **Don't nag.** If you do, I shall have to protect myself by appearing deaf.
11. **Don't forget that I cannot explain myself as well as I should like.** This is why I'm not always very accurate.
12. **Don't make rash promises.** Remember that I feel badly let down when promises are broken.
13. **Don't tax my honesty too much.** I am easily frightened into telling lies.
14. **Don't be inconsistent.** That completely confuses me and makes me lose faith in you.
15. **Don't tell me my fears are silly.** They are terribly real and you can do much to reassure me if you try to understand.
16. **Don't put me off when I ask questions.** If you do, you will find that I stop asking and seek my information elsewhere.
17. **Don't ever suggest that you are perfect or infallible.** It gives me too great a shock when I discover that you are neither.
18. **Don't ever think it is beneath your dignity to apologise to me.** An honest apology makes me feel surprisingly warm towards you.
19. **Don't forget how quickly I am growing up.** It must be very difficult to keep pace with me, but please do try.
20. **Don't forget I love experimenting.** I couldn't get on without it, so please put up with it.
21. **Don't forget that I can't thrive without lots of UNDERSTANDING and LOVE, but I don't need to tell you that, do I?**



# Post Card from Leon Fulcher



## CYC-Net Clan Gathering in the West of Scotland

**H**i Comrades! There can be little doubt that Child and Youth Care Workers, Managers, Educators and Researchers added a heap load of miles onto their frequent flyer accounts during the past few weeks! Folk travelled from 18 different countries to join the **CYC-Net Clan Gathering** in the West of Scotland, and what a Clan Gathering it was! Warm thanks to all of you who attended.



Paisley Town Hall near the Glynhill Hotel Clan Gathering Venue

Through the generous support of **Kibble Education and Care Centre** and **CELCIS (Centre of Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland)**, folk from both Northern and Southern Hemispheres charted journeys to arrive at

Glasgow International Airport for this event. OK, we didn't warn people about the motorway being closed but the diversion offered a 'tour' on the back road through Paisley to the Glynhill Hotel, our home for the week.



Pre-Gathering in Ireland about Therapeutic Use of Daily Life Events

About 30 participants took the opportunity to visit Ireland for a pre-Gathering event for trainers in the Therapeutic Use of Daily Life Events in Child and Youth Care offered by TransformAction International. Most of these folk stayed on for the Dublin St Patrick's Day celebrations. Let it be recorded that all found their ways for the start of the Clan Gathering proper.

It came as a surprise to many of these stalwart CYC-Net supporters to discover features of interest at the site about which they were unfamiliar! The Google Analyt-



**Clan Gathering Participants outside the Glynhill Hotel**

ics and SmarterStats profiles for 2011 showed how more than a million visitors came and spent time at CYC-Net. Somebody visited from all but a dozen or so countries in the world, and seemingly told others about it. What a brilliant demonstration of networking as CYC-Net continues to grow!



**Heather Modlin spoke of Foster Care Challenges at the Innovations & Inspirations in Child and**

At a time when world economic challenges threaten education and training opportunities for child and youth care workers, it was immediately apparent that our field needs to adopt a more 'blended approach' to education and training. This means starting off with face-to-face learning opportunities but using these more costly and increasingly rare opportunities to form connections with 'learning buddies' with whom one can enter a cyber classroom to engage in continuing professional development learning options. It isn't a matter of either-or. We have to embrace 'both-and' strategies, for reading materials but also for active learning as found via The Learning Zone.



**Clan Chieftain Terrence (Mac)Toon of STARR Commonwealth Ohio!**

Special acknowledgement is given to the father of Terrence (Mac)Toon (meaning Son of Toon) who worried about his son going off to Scotland to join a Clan Gathering! Thanks Father Toon for letting Terrence join us! He will confirm that this was quite a different Clan than the one about which you were so rightfully concerned! Loch Lomond will now hold special meaning, I'm sure!

During our time together exploring how a new generation of child and youth care leaders might drive the CYC-Net and the profession forward, be sure to ask yourself the question: What can I do personally to help make a difference?



The Way Ahead for a New Generation of CYC Workers Internationally

*Leon*



## EndNotes



### A moment

**A moment, however spontaneous, to which at some time in the future, perhaps when the going gets rougher, we can return — knowing we have it, it is ours.**

Getting down on all fours and imitating a rhinoceros stops babies from crying. (Put an empty cigarette pack on your nose for a horn and make loud “snort” noises.) I don't know why parents don't do this more often. Usually it makes the kid laugh. Sometimes it sends him into shock. Either way it quiets him down. If you're a parent, acting like a rhino has another advantage. Keep it up until the kid is a teenager and he definitely won't have his friends hanging around your house all the time.

— P.J. O'Rourke

As parents, we guide by our unspoken example. It is only when we're talking to them that our kids aren't listening.

— Robert Brault

David Wills understood that the lads who came to the camp were profoundly dissatisfied with themselves; they were failures who hated themselves. Their protection was hating the world about them. On discovering that they were given freedom, not discipline, they had to begin to discipline themselves.... In him the boys sought the loving parent they had not had and with great skill and understanding he lived through the 'corrective emotional experience 'they sought. They attached themselves to him and to his wife. Time and time again the lads would test his capacity to go on loving in the face of delinquency and bad behaviour.

— Malcolm Pines



*“Keeping a friendship in constant repair cuts both ways, you know.”*



“The third-rate mind is only happy when it is thinking with the majority. The second-rate mind is only happy when it is thinking with the minority. The first-rate mind is only happy when it is thinking.”

— A. A. Milne

If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just one. — Mother Teresa

How true Daddy's words were when he said: all children must look after their own upbringing. Parents can only give good advice or put them on the right paths, but the final forming of a person's character lies in their own hands.

— Anne Frank

Knowledge has outstripped character development, and the young today are given an education rather than an upbringing.

— Ilya Ehrenburg

Always forgive your enemies – nothing annoys them so much.

— Oscar Wilde

We assume that life is more healing than we are, and that our intervention is an emergency measure, that our goal is not the complete remaking of a child. What we try to do is to get the child, the family, the school, and the community just enough above the threshold of the requirements of each from the other, so that the whole system has a just-significant margin of probable success over probable failure ... It is possible for a system to work without the necessity of any intrapsychic change in the child at all.

— Nicholas Hobbs



## information

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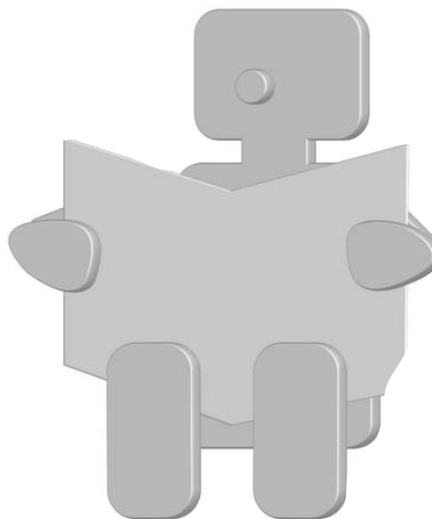
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