CYC-Online

FOR THOSE WHO LIVE OR WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

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Where is our Family?

Many years ago – well, truth be known, many, many years ago – I was a 'child care worker'. But then we discovered that we were being confused with 'day care workers' – those people who look after children who are in the pre-school stage of their lives. So we changed our name to Child & Youth Care Workers in the hopes it would help other people realise the difference and recognise what we do.

I am not saying that those of us in Western Canada led this name change, just noticing what we did at the time. It did make the distinction, but did not help with the recognition.

Years later a colleague and I wrote a paper identifying all the different names by which people who do the same work were called around the world. We stopped after we had reached 50 different titles of people who worked in direct care with children and young people who were identified as being in need of care.

Recently (March 2012), I was at the CYC-Net Clan Gathering, hosted by Kibble Education & Care Centres, in Scotland with 80 people from 18 different countries – all of whom represented our field or, as I like to say, 'our family'.

People at the Gathering carried so many different names and titles: Child Care Worker, Social Pedagogue, Social Care Worker, Child & Youth Care Worker, Director, Administrator, Educator, Supervisor, psycho-educator, Justice Worker, Foster Carer, etc. But we were all focused on doing the same work.

At the CYC-Net Clan Gathering people also came from a variety of different organisations and associations – but we were all doing similar work. We were all working with our colleagues to try to better the sit-

uation of disadvantaged young people and their families, wherever they might live and whatever their situation.

It was a profound experience of 'professional family'. Many others made similar comments as they experienced the vast connectedness of our field. We truly did experience global child and youth care.

So, one might wonder, who is 'our family'? With what group do we belong? How are we connected? This worldwide Gathering of CYC practitioners helped to answer that question.

And, the answer to all such questions, I think, is that our family is composed of all of us who share a common concern with helping young people who are challenged to live a better life – one with less pain and trouble: regardless of what we are called, where we live, or the role that we occupy.

Now, before I go off and try to lead us all in a painful rendition of 'We are Family", let me just mention that another such opportunity – an opportunity to experience the global family of CYC practitioners – is just around the corner. The next CYC-Net Clan Gathering will be held in St. John's NL, just prior to the 1st ever Child and Youth Care World Conference. Save the combined dates: June 23 – 28, 2012. Visit the website below.

And the next time you are sitting around with a group of allied professionals trying to figure out how to help a particular young person, remember this: if we all have the same goal, we are all family.

Thom

www.transformaction.com

www.cycworld2013.net

THIS BE THE WORD …

Cedrick of Toxteth

When it comes to getting kiddy-poos to go beddy-byes, you can forget all that mush about 'Brahms Lullaby' and "Rock-a-Bye Baby". Now the top selling parenting book in North America has turned Wee Willy Winkie into Attila the Hun with its catchy child-centered title, "Go the Fuck to Sleep." Despite the questionable grammar, we finally have a clear and direct message that even the most manipulative bedtime malingerer can be taught to understand. So, let's hear it for Mom and Dad who can now look forward to undisrupted evenings lost in conjugal bliss or watching "Dancing With the Stars".

According to the cooing reviews, the brilliance of this literary gem is that it removes the guilt from all those repressed parents who have secretly harbored the unthinkable thought that their kids can be a pain in the ass. Now you might think this an ambitious claim for such a piddling little publication, but I believe it strikes an even deeper and more resonant chord. My own extensive research suggests that the message offers respite for all the downtrodden victims of western morality who remain convinced that parents who don't like their kids will be condemned to an eternity washing shitty diapers in the River Styx.

Admittedly, my participant-observer methodology and anecdotal data may not suit the statistical brigade, but my findings are nonetheless compelling. For example, consider the following exchange (*and my insightful interpretations*) recorded in our local bookstore. "Oh look at this filth Elmer. Isn't it disgusting?" (*Oh dear Lord, do they speaketh the truth in the language of Satan?*). "Disgraceful Eleanor. This place should be closed down for peddling obscenity." (*I'll pick up a copy tomorrow and give it to Miss Fanny after Sunday School*).

Empirical validity aside, you may be asking yourself how such a corny little picture book with its silly little verses has managed to hit the jackpot? Well, the answer is quite simple. Take out the word "fuck" and this spoof of a parenting manual becomes just another feeble attempt to insinuate a spot of levity into the miserable lives of confused, over-stressed, disillusioned and generally incompetent parents. Ah yes folks, there are many out there, but without the magic word, this piece of heresy would be left to languish on the humor shelves of struggling bookstores everywhere. Isn't it incredible how one of the most commonly used words in the English language still has the power to attract such attention, while taking yet an-

other swipe at the prattling purists and their tedious "family values"?

At this point, we can only speculate about the long-term effects of liberating parents from their repressive obligations, but you can be sure the mental health industry will be carefully monitoring the situation. Chronic depression, bi-polarity, acute stress, generalized anxiety etc., etc., may well lose their market value necessitating a frantically compiled DSM VI along a new smorgasbord of chemical products for mindless consumers. For mindful researchers, like myself, it's a fascinating prospect.

For the more sociologically minded, wouldn't it be ironic if this dramatized version of 'tough love' triggered a return to the "because I say so" style of parenting. So it's back to the good old days when kids were accountable to their parents, rather than the other way around. No more searching for underlying developmental traumas or attachment disorders. To hell with the experts and their psychological codswallop - kids need to be taught to respect and obey the voices of authority without question or complaint.

Could it be that the word that shocked Elmer and Eleanor could actually free these impoverished souls from repression and breathe new life into their revered traditional family values? Perhaps they could exercise this newfound freedom by telling their offspring to "get with the program or face the fucking consequences." Yea! Tell is like is Elmo old boy. And what if the same freedom was granted to those of you who choose to work with the really rotten kids? You know the ones I'm talking about. Wouldn't you just love to drop the manipulative claptrap and let the little shits know what you really think and how you intend to deal with their devious shenanigans.

Of course this is all fantasy. We're far too entrenched in Freudian obfuscations and humanistic twaddle to retrieve the native wisdom of yesteryear. The good news is that we can surely expect more from the creators of this notable best seller. Personally, I can't wait for the sequels – "Shut the Fuck Up", "Get the Fuck Out of Here" and "Get Your Own Fucking Breakfast". Then comes the poetic training manual for the most chronically repressed parents, "If You Can't Say Fuck, You're Out of Luck." All these delightful offerings may not change the world but at least they're good for a laugh.

So, carry on as you are shipmates – it may not be long before we hit the iceberg but, at least, can we'll all go down giggling.

Your old pal, Cedrick

PS. If you have negative feelings about this review, I recommend you read *The Children's Story* by James Clavell, published in 1981. Now that <u>really is</u> a shocker.

Cedrick was a columnist with *Relational Child & Youth Care Practice* who now works as a serial suicide bomber in a foreign land. He has no fixed abode but can be reached through his long-suffering editor Gerry Fewster (fewster@seaside.net)

Clinical Dead Ends

Kiaras Gharabaghi

Clinical work is a little bit like dispassionate sex; the mechanics of everyday intervention can be understood and even executed, but the excitement of the event is really manifested in the often exaggerated report about it afterwards. Yet I have been struck over the years by the desire of practitioners, as well as the pressures of managers, to engage in clinical work rather than to find excitement in the process and the experience of being with young people. Indeed, clinical work has everything that child and youth care ought not to have: it is planned out, discussed in detail beforehand, imposed rigidly, and evaluated thoroughly. It is also a one-way street at best, and a dead end most of the time. The one thing it is not is something that holds meaning beyond the language that encapsulates it. As a reasonably intelligent person, with much experience in working with children, youth and families and a fairly active involvement in research and program development and evaluation, I have yet to figure out exactly what is meant by clinical work, and how it adds any value to the process of being with kids as they grow, change and formulate identity and sense of belonging in this world.

With so much energy being expended by the field of child and youth care to find its identity, to earn the respect of other professionals and to validate the approach centered around relational work, life space intervention and everyday moments, I find the quest to sound and be seen as a clinically competent profession to be counterproductive and altogether misguided. Notwithstanding our increasing involvement in settings that value the term clinical above all else, such as hospitals, crisis intervention programs, health centres and community counseling clinics, I think that trying to re-articulate what we do from a clinical perspective (which essentially means throwing in some clinical-sounding language) is a dead end strategy as a way of promoting child and youth care practice, and represents, in many ways, our failure to articulate what we do based on our principles and values. It also has the effect of opening up child and youth care as a profession to fit just about any circumstance, any setting and any context in which children, youth and families can be encountered. Fundamentally, it alters how we prepare people to

enter this field, and I believe that we are doing a disservice to just about everyone involved by pursuing this strategy. Specifically, I am concerned about three dynamics, which I will briefly outline below.

First, I worry about the ever-evolving curriculum and structure of child and youth care practice in post-secondary institutions (whereby I am most familiar with those in Canada and the US, but I suspect that similar issues apply at least in Europe and Australia). It seems that we are placing ever greater emphasis on teaching psychology, pathology, developmental theory, clinical practice, psychiatric disorders, developmental spectrums and the like, as well as broad sociological theory which sometimes may also include some emphasis on anti-oppression, children's rights, social justice, etc. In addition, many programs are now incorporating entirely sector-oriented themes and topics, such as autism, child protection, child life, and others. I believe that there are at least two major problems associated with these directions in pre-service education for our field. One is that the retention of knowledge rate in all of these areas is almost zero. Very few students in child and youth care programs remember much about what they studied once the final exam has been completed. They might have some vague recollection of having heard names such as Freud, Piaget or Erikson, but beyond that, there is almost nothing. The other problem is that this approach to education places the emphasis on having studied things rather than knowing anything. Having taken clinical courses is seen as a qualification for working with young people, even if one is unable to reproduce any of the information studied. Knowing something about being with young people is seen as informal and therefore not worthy of professional designation or value. In effect, it is about what one has accomplished to get the job that is recognized, instead of what one can do on the job.

Secondly, a clinical pre-service education as well as a commitment to clinical practice, place the evaluation of the quality of child and youth care practice not within the worker-young person relationship, but instead within the worker-other professionals communication performance. It doesn't really matter how one behaves within the relationship with young people and their families; what really matters is how one articulates one's work at case conferences, team meetings, and multi-disciplinary discussions. The skills we have acquired during our pre-service education prepare us not for being with anybody in particular, but they prepare us instead for 'framing' the case. The work is not reflective but descriptive, and the role of young people is not to partner with the worker but instead to provide data for the worker to report to other professionals. Relationship-based work in this context really means good customer relations, whereby the ultimate goal is to get kids to buy as much of our clinical work as possible and to label what they don't buy as an indication of their limitations of recognizing what is good for them.

And third, the valorization of all that is clinical results in the mythical presence of

expertise about something (and usually someone) that doesn't really lend itself to an expert model. Expert models are relevant in situations where problems must get solved. If we want to connect two cliffs with a bridge, we do need an expert to design the bridge in such a way that it will not collapse. Expertise is the flow of knowledge and technical ability to make something possible. Human relationships, on the other hand, are not seeking to make anything possible, but instead are about evolving in interesting and potentially rewarding ways. The goal of human relationships is not to avoid collapse; many such relationships ought to collapse, sooner rather than later (such as abusive, violent or alienating relationships). Indeed, the ability to sabotage relationships is a strength that many young people hang on to with some desperation; the need to sabotage all relationships may well be a vulnerability, but is not likely going to get resolved by the provision of clinical services.

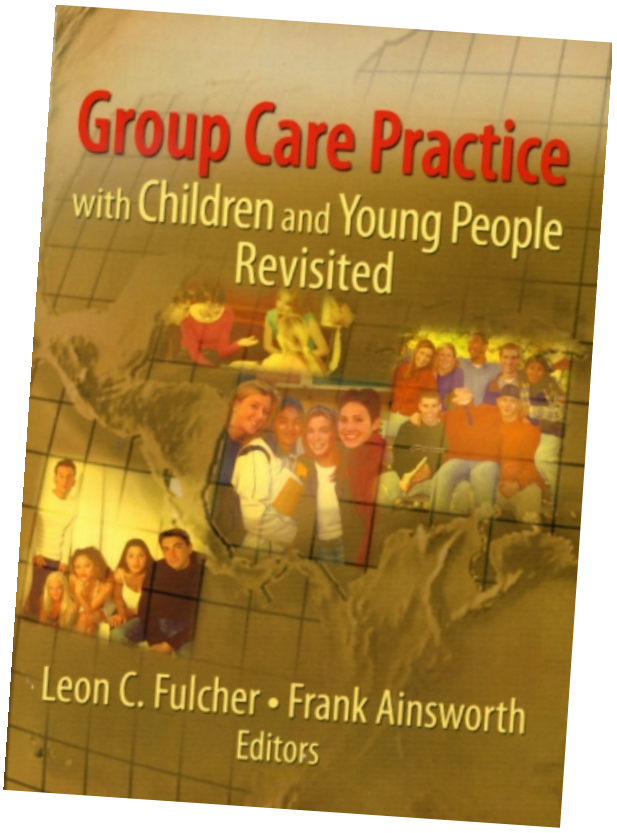
These are just three dynamics that I find concerning in how our field is moving forward these days, both in the context of education and training, and also in the context of the way in which practitioners articulate what they bring to their practice. It seems to me that we have largely abandoned our efforts to help the world understand the value of caring, engagement, becoming present, being with, becoming with, connecting and joining, reflection and self exploration. There are currently three strands of thinking that seem to inform both theory and practice in our field. There are the traditionalists who continue to work on articulating those roots and core concepts of child and youth care practice that are premised on the pioneers and early innovators of our field, such as Redl, Kovacs, Addams, Maier and of course Trieschman and colleagues. Then there are those seeking to align our field with social science orthodoxy, and thus producing much of the rhetoric related to evidence-based practice, clinical approaches and measurable outcomes (these folks have certainly captured the hearts and minds of policy-makers and funders). And finally, there are the post modernists who are challenging us to integrate into our thinking not only considerations related to being with young people, but indeed the whole of the human condition in which theory takes centre stage over praxis, which is seen as inherently embedded in political rhetoric and vested interests.

I have the greatest affinity for the traditionalists (although I consider it quite radical to self-identify as a traditionalist), but I see value and potential in postmodernist approaches and I am not yet willing to entirely dismiss the orthodoxy either (although primarily for

pragmatic reasons of getting a job and higher pay). Still, I think we are making a mistake in going along with the clinical utopia. Child and youth care, in my view, would be better served to reenergize the discussions about some of the essential elements of being with young people and families that create opportunities for change and growth, discovery of Self and possibly of as of yet undiscovered paths, as well as new concepts of empowerment, collective action and individual belongings. These are the concepts of caring, engagement and relationship, which certainly have been core factors in my life, probably yours, and we have no reason to believe that these won't be the core factors in the lives of the young people and families we encounter in our work.

I am saddened to say that I find both graduates of child and youth care programs as well as practitioners these days to be rather unprepared and also disinterested to engage these kinds of concepts. Employers don't want to hear about it, practitioners don't want to talk about it, and educators are too busy testing their students' ability to regurgitate knowledge about clinical crap. I am not suggesting that we make a U-turn and go back to where we started. I am, however, advocating for a stop-over that might afford us a moment to re-think where we want to end up. On our current course, we will forever be 'wanna-be' clinicians, tolerated because we are cheap, but ultimately marginalized in the reengineering of defective kids.

Looking back at child care and child care writing



Adrian Ward

"Seven o'clock: Wake up kitchen boy." This stark command appeared at the head of a schedule for daily life at a residential centre in South London in the late 1970s, a centre to which I was being dispatched by the employers who had funded my professional training in social work. This place operated primarily as a "remand centre" for young men awaiting trial but also as an observation and assessment centre to which young people coming into care would be admitted whilst professional reports were written on them and decisions were made about suitable further placements. None of these young people had been convicted of any offence, and some were extremely vulnerable and would have been unlikely to commit an offence, but they were all submitted to the same brutalising process. They were "pushed through" the institution with all the efficiency of a sausage machine, which was how the Principal proudly described it.

Being of a sensitive disposition, and having studied the works of Charles Dickens and William Blake as part of my undergraduate degree, I immediately recognised the message behind the opening line of this schedule and decided that I needed to know no more. I explained to

the Assistant Director of Social Services that this was not my idea of supportive group care for young people. Since there was no better option on offer, I decided there and then to break my contract (despite the promise from the boss that he would end my career in social work) and soon found employment with a far more enlightened employer. I never forgot, however, the image of the kitchen boy as a kind of unpaid house servant (probably a position of some status, in fact), or the picture which it conjured up of the regimentalised and exploitative routine for these young men.

It is astonishing to realise that the above incident must have occurred at around the time that some of the chapters in *Group Care for Children: Concept and Issues* were being written, although it feels like a remnant from a different age entirely. As several of the authors acknowledge in the reflective introductions to their chapters in this updated collection, some things have changed beyond recognition in the intervening twenty years, while others have scarcely changed at all. I will not attempt to summarise all that has happened, as the authors themselves each offer their own perceptive account of these developments, but I will nevertheless make some comments on the literature, research, and evolving practice contexts of the intervening years from my location as a British practice educator. I will begin, however, by taking the opportunity to welcome the appearance of this volume, to reflect on the influence and range of the original books, and to comment on the new collection.

The two original volumes (Ainsworth & Fulcher, 1981; Fulcher & Ainsworth, 1985) were of enormous value to students, practitioners, mana'gers, and policy makers alike, and especially to trainers and academics, because they brought together such a wealth of material from many of the leading researchers and thinkers of the day. Many of the papers that appear in this new edition were hugely influential in their time in terms of shaping our thinking about the range and potential of group care settings and practice. Several of the other papers from those volumes that have not found their way into today's collection were of equally great value. However, I would especially like to mention Henry Maier's (1981) paper on the "Essential Components in Care and Treatment Environments" and Karen VanderVen's (1985) chapter on "Activity Programming," each of which has enduring worth in attesting to the power and significance of the everyday in group care practice. This valuing of the everyday was a distinctive theme in the original volumes, appearing in many of the chapters, including Jim Whittaker's (1981) authoritative review of the major approaches to residential treatment, and it was summed up in Frank Ainsworth's (1981) eloquent argument that "group care practitioners take as the theatre for their work the actualliving situations as shared with and experienced by the child" (p. 234). I think what made this such a significant phrase was the image, perhaps not fully developed in the text, of theatre with all its rich connotations of drama, role-performance, tragedy, comedy, and sometimes even absurdity; it also, incidentally, suggested a parallel with the "operating theatre" and

associations with urgency, expertise, and the concerned care delivered by a professional team. If all the world's a stage, then certainly group care, in the Ainsworth and Fulcher formulation, represents one of the leading schools of theatre.

These volumes were not only true to the real life of everyday practice, however, they also provided the conceptual frameworks and professional contextualisation within which the whole phenomenon could be analysed, including such diverse matters as career development, research, and costing. Most of all, they established the very concept of "group care" as an inclusive term to cover both residential and day services as well as a range of related forms of provision. Until then, the concept of group care had appeared mainly in the work of Martin Wolins (1976) and one or two other writers, but these volumes proposed the case that there was enough in common between all of these activities for it to be useful and productive to consider them as aspects of the one phenomenon: "group care." As I argued some years later (Ward, 1993,2006, in press), what the term sums up are the two central features of this practice: working in and with groups and "caring" as a professional activity. From then on, and not just in the child care sector, it became possible to think, plan, and teach much more inclusively about a whole spectrum of provisions, not only in terms of the focus of the workers in all parts of the service but also in terms of the experiences of the service users and their families.

Linking forward from those earlier volumes to the present re-visited collection, the most obvious connecting threads are in the editing and writings of Leon Fulcher and Frank Ainsworth, who have each remained both true to their original commitments and utterly authentic in their position as world scholars in this field. It has been enormously to the ultimate benefit of the young people (and their families and communities) who use group care services that such sharp but also sympathetic minds have applied themselves to this arena. It is good to discover in this new edition that the writing has lost none of its edge, and the editing is as clear and focused as ever. As one who grapples at times with both of these tasks, I salute them.

Changing Contexts, Evolving Practice

Times do change, though, and however valuable the original texts, they were bound to need updating for a new publication. This volume selects nearly a dozen of the earlier papers and re-presents them for today's audience, topped and tailed by new overviews from the editors. In each chapter the authors have provided helpful commentaries on their original work and discussion on the changes of the intervening years. The new collection thus remains just as sharp, as true, and as timely as the previous two, and the depth and breadth of coverage is certainly as comprehensive. I will not discuss each chapter in turn, since Chapter I includes just such a discussion, but I will add my thoughts on the overall picture. I must emphasize, however, that the following comments are written largely from a European (and UK-based) perspective rather from than a fully global one, although I do suspect they

will find their echoes across the other continents.

In their new opening chapter Ainsworth and Fulcher helpfully identify some of the factors that have "reshaped the field of group care" (p. 8), principally in terms of six separate but linked social policy imperatives, including normalisation and de-institutionalisation. They argue convincingly that group care practice has been influenced by the interacting effect of these other factors such as the advent of the permanency planning, family preservation, and family reunification movements. To this list might be added a number of other factors which I will not have space to develop fully but which ought to be mentioned.

There is firstly the whole "marketisation of welfare" which has been intended to address supposed flaws in public welfare by exposing it to the full blast of commercial competition and private enterprise. Although implemented in differing ways throughout the Western world, this policy shift has had some unfortunate consequences. In the UK, for example, the child care field has experienced a huge expansion in the private sector, sometimes backed by investment from large venture capital funds, with all the predictable risks of the distortion of value-systems and the exploitation of the social needs of vulnerable groups for profit (Toynbee, 2005). More broadly, it is being increasingly recognised that there are considerable problems in using a market approach to welfare provision (Kendall, 2001; Le Grand, 1997), although the full impact of this approach in the child care sector has perhaps not yet been fully understood (Kirkpatrick, Kitchener, and Whipp, 200 l).

Secondly, there has been the huge decline in the use of residential facilities, not just in the UK but across the world, to the point that some administrations have tried to dispense with it altogether, although sometimes just with the effect of shifting children from one category of residential care to another (Cliffe & Berridge, 1991). This decline has been partly due to perceptions about costs (probably based on calculations simplistic, in contrast to Martin Knapp's comprehensive analysis) but also based on reaction against the perceived risks of residential care in the wake of an awful catalogue of abuse of children by care workers and others. This terrible history of abuse, to which Leon Fulcher makes powerful reference in the "Blues" section of Chapter 2, has in some cases almost destroyed the belief that residential care can ever be good for children (Corby, Doig, & Roberts, 200 l), although there nevertheless remains firm evidence that residential care is viewed by many young people as a positive and even preferred alternative (Berridge, 2002).

Thirdly, and doubtless influenced by the anxieties generated by the history of abuse, there has been the growth of a culture of regulation and inspection that has sometimes felt oppressive and restrictive for practitioners. In the UK, at least, this development has led to a situation in which many young workers are guided far more by official regulation than they are by professional education or training, to which they have extremely limited access. While there can be no doubt that the increased regulatory framework was

necessary or that it has improved some aspects of practice (Stuart & Baines, 2004), it can also be profoundly inhibiting of creativity and of the capacity for critically reflective engagement which is the hallmark of professional practice. Nevertheless good residential practice does continue to thrive and will be greatly supported by the present volume.

Fourthly and with greater optimism, I would mention the evolution of a growing spectrum of day-services for children, young people, and their families, including family centres, pre-school centres, drop-in, and other resources for young people on the street or misusing substances. While a few of these resources have emerged as direct replacements for residential units, most have evolved because of a recognition (sometimes implicit rather than explicit) of the "added value" offered by such typical group care elements as informal social interaction over shared mealtimes and peer support between those otherwise identified only as *service-users*. The enormous developing potential of what has been called "centre-based practice" has been recognised at a truly international level, with an emphasis on ecological practice (Warren-Adamson, 2001) that finds direct echoes in the present volume, and there would be much to be gained from further exchange of practice models between these various models.

I would also draw attention to the continuing growth in many countries of the "service-user movement" in which the voices of those using group care services have the opportunity not merely to make evaluative comment but in many cases also to contribute actively to the planning and redesign of both policy and practice. This is happening at both local and national levels and is often reflected in the programmes of national and international conferences in this field, for example, those hosted at the Scottish Institute for Residential Child Care (www.sircc.strath.ac.uk), which is itself worthy of mention as an international reference point for positive developments in group care for children. In parallel with the growth of the service-user movement has been the important development of the role of Children's Commissioners in several nations and the growing impact and implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

There is plenty more to be said on these and other developments in policy and practice over the last twenty years, and I do not mean to suggest that the present volume is lacking in this respect-rather that the wisdom of these collected papers remains vital for a proper analysis of these continually changing environments. In the next section I will suggest some further themes from the literature and offer the reader some signposts towards further information and discussion.

Unfolding Knowledge and Ideas

Just as practice and policy have evolved, so the group care literature has developed enormously over the last twenty years, both in terms of theory and of research. Again, it will not be appropriate here to attempt a full literature review, but it may be helpful to recognise some of the landmarks of these two de-

cades, especially in the British and European context. Those wanting fuller reviews of the research, especially on residential care and treatment, would do well to consult the work of Bullock (1993) and colleagues and the overview of a series of studies in the UK funded by the Department of Health (1998). These reviews in turn are summarised and discussed by David Berridge (2002), who is one of the leading child care researchers in the UK and whose own contribution to research in vari0us aspects of residential and foster care for children has been of great value (see, for example, Barter, Renold, Berridge, & Cawison, 2004).

Especially influential among the UK research studies have been the work of Sinclair and Gibbs (1998), who studied 48 children's homes and explored the influence on outcomes for children of a large number of factors, and of Whitaker, Archer, and Hicks (1998) who looked in depth at the work of group care practitioners in children's homes. The major development in research in this field over the last twenty years has been the growth of evidence-based practice and, in particular, the recognition of the need for outcomes studies, looking not only at short-term evaluations but also at longer-term outcomes of group care experience. This is a complex and challenging task, however, since it is very difficult to trace and prove causal connections between particular inputs and specific outcomes. One especially promising study in the field was by Brown, Bullock, Hobson, and Little (1998), who studied the structure and culture of homes and their impact on the experiences of young people.

One impact of the growth of evidence-based practice may be the closer collaboration between researchers and practice-theorists, since in order to find out "what works?" we firstly need to know "what happens?" In other words, we need more detailed description and analysis of the experience of group care from every viewpoint. A striking example of such a study may be found in the work of Jim Anglin (2002) whose study, *Pain, Normality, and the Struggle for Congruence,* draws explicit lessons for the delivery and organisation of practice from an in-depth analysis of everyday life and practice in a small number of children's homes. Overall, however, it can be argued that there remains a significant gap between the respective writings of the researchers and the practice-theorists, with insufficient cross-referencing between the two groups. Among the few who have bridged this gap are Malcolm Hill (Chakrabarti & Hill, 2000) and Frank Ainsworth in the present volume, both exploring the dynamics of family and kinship links.

Moving to the contributions to theory-for-practice in the English language literature on residential care, I would draw attention to the contributions of John Burton (1993, 1998), who writes in a highly accessible style and with courage and conviction based on his own extensive practice experience. I would also mention the work of Roger Clough (2000), who co-edited a valuable analysis on the theme of "Groups and Groupings" in both residential and day centres (Brown & Clough, 1989). Each of these writers is strong in their discussion of the value-base for prac-

tice, a theme which has often been under-developed in the practice literature, although Stanley and Reed (1999) offer a broad analysis of "principled practice in health and social care institutions," and Leon Fulcher's own contribution in the present volume builds on his work in previous papers. Other useful volumes include Frost, Mills, and Stein's (1999) analysis of residential care in terms of empowerment, Jim Rose's (2002) account of working with young people in secure accommodation, and Crimmens and Pitts (2000) on "Positive Residential Practice." There have been a number of collections on aspects of residential treatment (e.g., Hardwick & Woodhead, 1999; Ward, Kasinski, Pooley & Worthington, 2003) and family centres (McMahon & Ward, 2001), and several European volumes (e.g., Colton, Hellicks, Ghesquiere & Williams, 1995; Eriksson & Tjelflaat, 2004), although generally there remains more work on residential care *per se* than on either day care services or on group care as a whole.

There has been a gradual growth in the influence of the European model of social pedagogy, which takes a truly integrated approach to the broad task of "bringing up children" (Petrie, 2002), and offers especially valuable models of integrated professional training for staff, although the whole question of professional training for group care personnel remains a matter of great concern (Residential Forum, 1998). It is interesting to observe that, as this volume appears, the UK government is attempting radical changes towards the integration of its provision for child health, welfare, and education with the aim of taking a more holistic approach to both preventative and interventive practices. It remains to be seen whether these changes will have the intended positive impact on children's lives.

Lastly, it seems important to recognise the increasing levels of international communication and understanding on themes of group care for children and youth. Compared to the mid-eighties, there is now far greater possibility for international exchange of ideas and concerns about practice, especially through e-mail and Internet communication. The possibilities of such methods are still only emerging, but it is particularly striking that on networks such as CYC-Net (www.cyc-net.org) there are daily and ongoing exchanges between practitioners, researchers, and teachers at all levels of experience and knowledge in a way that would have been inconceivable twenty years ago. Such discussions often serve to remind us that there remain huge areas of work to be done in terms of producing accessible theory for practice and in researching current policy and practice. We still know little about the connections

between process and outcome in this field, and although the challenges are immense, even small progress proves invaluable. There are other networks that enable young people in the care system to talk with each other and compare notes about their experiences, and it is to be hoped that the influence of the service-user movement will lead to an increase in such resources.

Return to the Future

Finally, I want to close by suggesting that there has been genuine progress in practice over these twenty years. I recently visited a small local children's residential facility that caters to young children who have been seriously traumatised by abusive experiences and helps them gradually towards regaining hope and faith in themselves and in the world, ultimately restoring them either to their birth family, if appropriate, or to foster care. **In** contrast to the harsh regime with which I opened this foreword, here I learned that the day opens with the children bringing their blankets and covers through into a shared quiet room, where they sit and chat together with their carers over a warm drink, gathering informal strength and support from each other before facing whatever the new day will bring. **It** is a picture of both peace and optimism, especially knowing the ghosts and anxieties with which such children grapple every day, and it confirms to me that the best quality group care is still alive, well, and thriving in the twenty-first century. I commend this volume, *Group Care Practice with Children and Young People Revisited,* to you as a splendid companion to practice and a genuine aid to the deeper understanding which needs to underpin our thinking about all the many dimensions of group care for children.

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Work and the Family: The Impact of Job Loss on Family Well-being

Ted Dunlop

In current socio econo- mic reality, job security is rapidly becoming a rare commodity. In this article, the author takes a wide-angled look at the impact of this trend on children and families.

As child and youth care practitioners become increasingly ecological and family-centred in their efforts to build effective helping relationships, the need to become more closely attuned to events in the family life cycle that impinge on the stability of family relationships becomes quite apparent. To do this requires that we become more sensitized to many of the political, economic, and social forces that exert influence over the well-being of family relationships in contemporary Canadian society. History clearly tells us that families — however we wish to define them, and there has always been more variation than we commonly think — display considerable resilience in the face of different kinds of crises. However, history also tells us that some families are more vulnerable than others and experience much difficulty in surmounting such events. In fact, some families appear to exist in a constant state of crisis while others seem to breeze through life without experiencing too much of a threatening nature to the very fabric of their conjoined relationships.

Through our study of family systems theory, we learn about deeply ingrained patterns of dealing with life's crises that are passed on and fortified through the

generations. The work of Murray Bowen (1978), Salvador Minuchin (1974), and others has shed considerable light on the invisible and oftentimes unconscious — forces that exert a hold on the way that families cope with crises in their midst. Others like Dunst, Trivette and Deal (1988) talk about the importance of measuring social support in families as a means of mapping out effective helping strategies for family intervention. And yet, a dearth of research exists on some of the specific events like unemployment that families are left to cope with. It is the main contention of this article that helping professionals must become more keenly apprised of the forces at work when a family breadwinner loses his or her job, the coping strategies that families resort to, for better or worse, in responding to such a crisis, and the intervention strategies that practitioners might consider for those families and individual family members calling out for help.

As Janice Foord Kirk points out in her book *Surviving the Upheaval in Your Workplace,* "nothing can throw lives into a tailspin like the loss of a job. As the unemployed person spins around and around, looking for a place to land, everyone else involved — kids, parents, mate, even friends — spins around too" (1992, p. 98). For those of us steeped in the precepts of systems theory this shouldn't come as a surprise, given that one of its cardinal principles is that an event that impacts on one part of the system will invariably impact on all others. Foord Kirk adds to the chorus of those who recognize that not enough attention is given to job loss when she says that "to date little recognition has been given to the devastating effect job loss has on a family. For the individual, getting fired is a career crisis. If it isn't handled well, however, it can easily precipitate a family crisis" (1992, p. 98).

In his book *Boom, Bust & Echo,* David Foot (1996), the renowned Canadian economist and demographer, paints a sobering picture of the economic reality facing Canadians in the mid-1990s and its devastating impact on patterns of employment. Foot reveals to us that Canada is in its fourth consecutive decade of rising unemployment. The statistics he puts forward are disturbing: unemployment averaged 4.2% in the 1950s, rising to 5% in the 1960s, 6.7% in the 1970s, 9.5% in the 1980s and 11% in the early 1990s. In the mid-1990s, he goes on to say, "job-seekers of all generations find themselves marooned in what has become known as the 'jobless recovery'" (1996, p. 68). One does not have to look very far for the reasons explaining this trend. Labour-saving technology has combined with the ruthless competition inherent in the new" global economy" to provide the volatile mix that explains why such a large percentage of the Canadian workforce remains mired in job limbo. Although the study of economics is largely outside our purview as child and youth care practitioners, we do need to be better versed about political, social, and economic forces that have a direct bearing on the overall well-being of individuals and families. For, in the final analysis, this is what being ecological in our perspective really means. We need to understand the roots of the problem of unemployment and job loss and from there build practical and ef-

fective strategies for helping families cope with the psychological and emotional fallout that accompanies these events.

As mentioned earlier, little recognition has been given to date in the research literature of the impact job loss has on the family, especially in the context of the Canadian experience. One exception to this is a book first published in 1991 entitled *I've Been Fired Too! Coping With Your Husband's Job Loss*. The two authors, Jill Jukes and Ruthan Rosenberg, are career transition consultants based in Toronto. Although the focus of the book is on wives, primarily at the upper end of the income range, the authors offer many insights about the pressure that job loss in general places on all relationships within the family. Drawing on interviews with 52 women married to men who had been fired, Jukes and Rosenberg trace the emotional roller coaster ride that individual family members encounter as they struggle to make sense of the complex and often conflictual emotions that surface during a crisis. Practical strategies are put forward on how to enlist all family members in the job search process, but of particular interest from the professional helping perspective are the descriptions of the stages of adjustment that individuals and families go through and the prescriptions the authors put forward for coping with, and surmounting, the crisis associated with job loss. The focus may be on spousal relationships but the book reinforces the point that certain stages of emotional and psychological adjustment are almost universal in their application to different expressions of loss associated with personal life events — stages reflecting a plethora of emotions encompassing feelings of shock, disbelief, and betrayal, isolation, anger, bewilderment, shame and embarrassment, guilt, profound disappointment, anxiety and fear, vulnerability, loss, depression, helplessness, stress, fantasies of revenge, fantasies of magical solutions, etc. (1991, p. 8). Because each family member is likely to display a unique pattern of response to job loss experienced by a primary breadwinner, it behooves us as helping professionals, who may connect with families in different contexts, to develop the skill to pick up on the nuances of behaviour that reflect stress in the family. Because our focus is on children and youth in distress, it may take some digging about before the precipitating events become apparent when, for example, defiant or acting out behaviour escalates, or a child withdraws and school performance begins to suffer. All too often the troubling behaviour of the child or youth is simply the "tip of the iceberg" that can, for a time, divert attention from the real root of the problem. And even then, what might be construed as the real root of the problem may simply reflect a triggering event that exposes a much more complex fragility in the relationships of a given family. The message here, of course, is that we must become much more astute and cautious about ascribing simple explanations to complex problems presented by clients.

Once job loss has been identified as a key issue in working with a child, youth, or family, where do we go from there? Much depends on a whole range of variables that will influence how the individual experiencing job loss and other family

members cope with such a crisis: age of the displaced worker; whether or not the partner works (if there is a cohabiting partner); income levels and available financial resources; presence or absence of a strong social support system in the way of extended family, friends, and neighbours; age of the children; potential for re-employment; geographic location of the family base; potential for mobility; ability to maintain a positive attitude; and a high level of self confidence — to cite only a few. All of these variables, and others, will need to be addressed in order to expedite the process of recovery for the individual and family. For some time, organizations focusing on "outplacement" have used variations of what can be described as "ecomapping" (Harbnan, 1978) in order to help displaced workers begin the process of becoming re-employed. However, because such services place a clear priority on getting the *1/* candidate" a job in as short a time frame as possible, issues around family well-being generally get short shrift and only the most cursory of consideration. However, if job loss is to be rightly viewed as a family crisis, then strategies need to be developed to help all family members along the road to recovery. At present, there is an abominable lack of counselling services available to families where job loss of a primary wage earner is the central issue, except for those select few, usually in the upper income brackets, who are able to negotiate such services as part of generous severance packages. Obviously, this is an area ripe for research and one that cries out for new models of counselling practice in order to provide professional support to families that is holistic in scope. More information needs to be gathered, for example, on successful coping strategies employed by families in recovery of the sort outlined by Jukes and Rosenberg (1991, p. 164). At the same time, training programs for helping professionals along with professional development opportunities for people already in the field need to move with dispatch in giving greater attention in their curricula to the issue of job loss and its impact on the whole family. In tandem with such efforts, alliances need to be forged with unions, educational organizations, professional associations, government bodies, the community-based volunteer sector, and private sector firms specializing in providing service for displaced workers to provide an array of service options to families in need. Only through such a multidimensional approach — research, practice, and alliance building — can the full impact of job loss on families be truly understood and addressed effectively on a number of fronts.

The spectre of employment instability is going to loom large on the Canadian horizon for some time yet. Complex changes to the structure of the family in the past 30 years, in particular, make it difficult to flesh out the social costs that can be laid squarely on the doorstep of the employment crisis that has come to mark life in the 1990s. Such social costs in the form of family and marital breakdown, substance abuse, family violence, underperformance in school, vandalism and youth crime can only be hinted at. However, as David Foot points out, *1/* because of demographics, Canadian family life will be marked by continuing turmoil for the foreseeable fu-

ture" (1996, p. 188). It is time to issue the clarion call for help for families by giving more specific and practical attention to the unique challenges like unemployment that families are struggling with.

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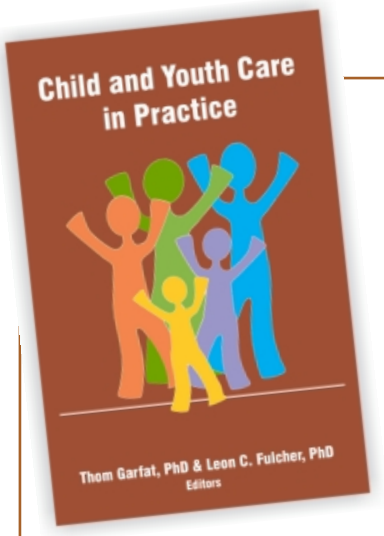

Changing the World: One Story at a Time

Anna Unkovich

It was a teacher's nightmare—five minutes left in the class period, with a rowdy group of seventh graders. As a veteran educator, I always over-planned my lessons by 15-20 minutes, but something had gone wrong that morning. It was the first day back to school following a two-week Christmas break, and none of us were back in the classroom "groove" yet.

My personal mission as a teacher was "to change the world, one student at a time." Ironically, it was in this desperate teaching moment that I found a tool that would have the greatest impact on my students' lives.

I looked at the clock, looked at my students, looked at the clock, and looked at my desk for anything that might magically fill the minutes. Sitting there was a Christmas present — Chicken Soup for the Soul. I grabbed it, randomly opened it to page 259 and began reading a true story of determination.

I finished the story moments before the dismissal bell, breathed a sigh of relief, and thought nothing more of the matter. The next day, several of my students walked into class requesting more of that "Chicken Soup thing…" By this time, I had read several of the stories, and found them all to have wonderful messages of hope, determination, kindness, laughter, love, and life. Since each story took only two or three minutes to read, I felt it was not significantly taking time away from content. Plus even my most disruptive students settled down for this story routine that ended each class period.

Thus began a classroom journey that had some very surprising side effects. In hindsight, I think it was what Jack Canfield calls "emotional literacy." Without realizing it, by reading these stories each day, I was creating a classroom environment where it was safe to access and express feelings. And, even more importantly, I was modeling this behavior for my students. If I read a sad story, I cried. At

first, my students were mortified to see a teacher crying. Later, they would sometimes request a "cry story." With other stories, we might laugh so hard we would almost pee our pants!

Without ever talking about it, we were sharing our feelings on a daily basis, much as a family would do. And, slowly, we became a family. Each of my five classes developed its own unique classroom bond.

Weeks passed, and I saw that my students were treating each other more respectfully. Within months, I noticed changes in the hallways throughout the school. Following a story about a potential suicide, I saw students help to pick up dropped books, rather than to kick them down the hallway, laughing. The mother of a learning disabled student almost ran me over in a parking lot. "What have you done to my daughter? She has never read a book in her life, and now she wants me to buy her this Chicken Soup thing… What is it?" Non-readers were becoming readers because they couldn't wait till the next day for a story.

I came to realize that my students were happiest when experiencing the full range of emotions that these stories brought forth. So, occasionally I would have them write about these feelings as classroom warm-ups. Sometimes I would choose longer stories, or make the story the focus of the lesson plan, rather than ending the class with this thought for the day. I didn't want this to become work for them, or something to dread. It was important that my students welcome these stories, and, ultimately, the messages they contained. And, the frequency was crucial in creating the behavioral changes.

Understanding the power of this daily story process planted a seed for reaching more students. I approached Jack Canfield at a book signing to suggest that we co-author a book, Chicken Soup for the Soul in the Classroom—a book of stories, lesson plans, and activities for teachers. Exactly four years later, to the day, I had my first book signing in the same store. Together, we are now "changing the world, one student at a time, and one story at a time."

Acknowledgements: Yes Magazine

Strengthening Fragile Families

Sara McLanahan, Ron Haskins, Irwin Garfinkel, Ronald B. Mincy, and Elisabeth Donahue

The Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study, a nationally representative survey of births in large cities, has shown that unwed parents have a host of characteristics that complicate getting good jobs, forming stable families, and performing successfully as parents. Within five years after the birth, a third of children born to unmarried parents see their father less than once a month, 55 percent of mothers have formed new relationships, and children are already showing problems in test performance and behavior. We recommend policies to support single parents, to prevent unwed births, to reduce the number of young men given long prison sentences, and to fund at least some federal demonstration programs that provide marriage education and services to these young couples.

The rise of fragile families—families that begin when a child is born outside of marriage—is one of the nation's most vexing social problems. In the first place, these families suffer high poverty rates and poor child outcomes. Even more problematic, the very groups of Americans who traditionally experience poverty, impaired child development, and poor school achievement have the highest rates of nonmarital parenthood—thus intensifying the disadvantages faced by these families and extending them into the next generation.

Nonmarital births have increased precipitously in the past forty years, especially among minorities and the poor, the groups of greatest concern. Today more than 70 percent of black children, 50 percent of Hispanic children, nearly 30 percent of white children, and 40 percent of all children are born outside marriage, as-

suring the persistence of poverty, wasting human potential, and raising government spending. Reducing nonmarital births and mitigating their consequences should be a top priority of the nation's social policy.

Social science aims to illuminate the choices available to policy makers both by promoting better understanding of social problems and by providing reliable information about the effects of potential solutions. And yet, until a decade ago, social scientists had accumulated little data about nonmarital childbearing and its consequences for parents, children, and communities. Recognizing the need for such data, in the late 1990s researchers at Princeton and Columbia universities organized the first large-scale study of nonmarital childbearing and its consequences. The researchers randomly sampled parents of approximately 5,000 newborns (including 3,600 nonmarital births) in twenty of the nation's largest cities. For the past decade, the research team has been following the parents and children to learn more about their capabilities and experiences. The findings of this research, known as the Fragile Families Study, have been reported in numerous academic articles, newsletters, and books. Now the most important findings have been pulled together in the new volume of the journal *The Future of Children*. Here we provide a brief overview of those findings and draw from them what we believe to be the most important policy recommendations.

The Fragile Families Study Findings

Four findings in particular stand out. The first, a big surprise when it was first published, is that a large majority of unwed parents have close and loving relationships at the time of their child's birth. A little more than half the unmarried couples were living together when their child was born, and an additional 32 percent were in dating relationships. One-night stands these were not. The couples talked readily about marriage, with 87 percent of the fathers and 72 percent of the mothers giving their relationship at least a 50/50 chance of leading to marriage.

The second, more sobering, finding is that unwed parents have a host of demographic and human capital characteristics that complicate getting good jobs, forming stable families, and performing successfully as parents. Unwed parents in the sample were much younger than the married parents—the mothers almost six years younger, and the fathers, four. Only about 4 percent of the married mothers, but 26 percent of the unwed mothers, were teenagers. And even though the unwed parents were younger than their married counterparts, about three times as many had a previous birth with another partner, leaving many of the children in these households to deal with a parent figure (the mother's new boyfriend or husband) inside their home and a biological parent outside the home, an arrangement that can be stressful for all involved.

The human capital and health differences between the two groups are equally striking. Unwed mothers were more than twice as likely to lack even a high school degree, while married mothers were nearly fifteen times more likely to have graduated from college. In part as a result of their educational advantages, married

mothers on average earned more than twice as much as unwed mothers, about $25,600 compared with $11,100. The lower earnings of unwed mothers contributed to a poverty rate that was more than three times as high (43 percent) as that of married mothers (14 percent). The differences between unwed and married fathers were similar. Unwed parents also differed in health status and behaviors detrimental to health. They were more likely to report being in poor or fair health, more likely to have a health-related limitation, and much more likely to use illegal drugs. Nearly 8 percent of unwed mothers reported heavy drinking, about four times the rate among married mothers.

A final difference in human capital between the two groups is of special concern. More than 36 percent of the unmarried fathers had a prison record, five times the share of married fathers who ever spent time in prison. Research shows that incarceration disrupts fathers' relationships with their families, requires a difficult (and thus often unsuccessful) transition back to life in the community, and greatly reduces the chance of finding employment. Even when these fathers do find employment, they work less and have lower wages. As if these disadvantages were not enough, research consistently shows that recidivism rates are high, deepening even further the disadvantages associated with having spent time in prison.

The third set of findings is equally sobering. Relatively few of the unwed couples were able to form stable relationships. At five years after the birth of their child, only about 35 percent were still together. Breakups were less likely among couples in which fathers had higher earnings, mothers had more education, attitudes about marriage were positive, and relationship quality was good.

Relationship dissolution is only the first step toward household instability. Once the couple splits, both of the unwed parents usually go on to form new relationships and often to have additional children by other partners. Over the five years of the study, over a quarter of unwed mothers lived with a new partner, and a fifth had a child with a new partner. Changes in dating partnerships were even more common. Nearly 60 percent of mothers who were single at birth experienced three or more relationship transitions over the five years.

The parental split reduces substantially the contact between the children and their fathers. By year five, only 51 percent of the fathers involved in splits saw their child even once a month. In effect, when couples break up, within five years half the children are destined to have little contact with their father. It would seem very difficult for a father who sees his child once a month or less to provide effective parenting.

Finally, and most important, these differences in demography, human capital, health, and household stability are associated with negative developmental outcomes for children born to unwed parents. Relationship instability in particular is linked with both poor test performance and behavioral problems in children, especially boys. With unstable and increasingly complex home environments, and with children's development already moving off

track by age five, it is difficult to be optimistic that most of the children of unwed parents will grow into flourishing adults.

Policies to Address the Fragile Families Findings

The Fragile Families Study has clearly fulfilled its goal of providing abundant information about couples whose children are born outside marriage and about those children. With 40 percent of the nation's children—including a disproportionate number of poor and minority youngsters—now being born to unwed parents, the Fragile Families Study should raise grave concerns among policy makers about the problems faced by these families and their children. Although the Fragile Families Study was not designed to test the effectiveness of programs to help these families, we think, based on the Fragile Families Study and other studies, that four policy initiatives are justified.

Because few social interventions produce major or immediate improvements in the problems they address, there can be little doubt that nonmarital births and their attendant problems will still be with us for several generations. Thus the nation needs to maintain and even strengthen its safety net for single parents. We doubt that the safety net will ever provide these parents and children with enough cash and in-kind benefits to maintain a decent lifestyle, so the nation should, for both custodial and noncustodial single parents, strengthen its welfare policy emphasis on work and public work supports such as cash earnings supplements and child care. The federal government and the states should also work with noncustodial parents to create child support payment levels that they could be reasonably expected to meet. We are especially concerned about the weakness in the cash benefits part of the safety net revealed by the current recession. States must find ways to balance strong work and child support requirements with cash benefits and adjustments in child support for those who cannot find work.

The second policy initiative is preventing nonmarital pregnancies. Policy simulations in the new *Future of Children* volume show that mass media campaigns that encourage men to use condoms, teen pregnancy prevention programs that discourage sexual activity and educate teens about contraception use, and Medicaid programs that subsidize contraception all reduce pregnancy rates among unmarried couples—in the process saving more than enough public dollars to cover their costs. Happily, the federal government is now at various stages of implementing policies that are responsive to two of the three findings from the policy simulations. The Obama administration's plan to expand teen pregnancy programs, now funded by Congress and being aggressively implemented, holds great promise for further reductions in teen pregnancy rates. In addition, a provision in the new health care

legislation gives states the option to cover additional women with family planning services without the need for a waiver as required under current law. This reform is consistent with the simulation's finding that additional Medicaid family planning coverage for women would be cost beneficial. With two of the three reforms recommended by the simulations already being implemented, only the third recommendation—media campaigns encouraging men to use condoms—has not already been addressed by policy makers. Given the evidence from the simulation of this policy, we think spending about $100 million a year on a social marketing campaign would be good policy and would pay for itself.

A third area needing policy reform is the U.S. prison system. The Fragile Families Study found that unwed fathers are more than five times as likely to serve prison sentences as married fathers are, with profoundly negative effects on their life after prison. So serious are the consequences for employment, integration into community life, and subsequent imprisonment that a prison sentence has come to be the modern equivalent of the scarlet "A." And yet good studies find that many long prison sentences in the United States—which has one of the highest incarceration rates in the world—are the result of victimless drug crimes and recommitment for minor parole offenses.

Rethinking sentencing policy is especially urgent because research shows how difficult it is to rehabilitate men once they have served prison terms. A key goal should be to revise mandatory sentencing laws in accord with the recommendations of the United States Sentencing Commission—in this case, to shorten the sentences of nonviolent minor drug dealers, or even to address their offenses outside of prison. The fall 2008 issue of *The Future of Children,* edited by Lawrence Steinberg, reviewed impressive evidence that community programs that worked with adolescents and their parents were not only more effective than imprisonment in preventing subsequent crimes, but also were more cost-effective. Policy makers should make every effort to modify federal and state mandatory sentencing laws to keep young offenders out of prison.

The final pressing policy issue that directly affects fragile families involves the $100 million a year federal healthy marriage grant program and the $50 million a year fatherhood grant program, both initiated during the administration of George W. Bush. The two programs are scheduled to be reauthorized in 2010, although the demands of Congressional business will likely cause the legislation to slip until 2011.

Regardless of the timing, the Obama administration has joined the issue on what is arguably the most important provision in federal law on marriage and fatherhood. The marriage grant program provides an average of $610,000 for five years to 125 community-based marriage projects. Grantees include churches, postsecondary schools, county and state governments, nonprofit and for-profit entities, and faith-based organizations. Most of the programs provide marriage education for low-income couples, but some conduct marriage education for high

school students, others provide divorce reduction programs, and still others combine educational activities with public advertising campaigns on the value of healthy marriage and the availability of services. Similarly, the fatherhood grant program funds 100 projects that promote responsible fatherhood by helping community-based organizations and others run programs that provide healthy marriage, responsible parenting, and economic stability services, including employment or skills training assistance, as well as encouraging fathers to make their child support payments.

The Obama administration would replace these networks of marriage and fatherhood programs with a "Fatherhood, Marriage, and Families Innovation Fund." Rather than making grants to community-based organizations, the federal government would allocate funds to states or coalitions of states for two types of programs: "comprehensive responsible fatherhood initiatives" and "comprehensive family self-sufficiency demonstrations [that] address the employment and self-sufficiency needs of parents." The Obama proposal would end funding for the current marriage and fatherhood programs and set in motion the new state-run programs. Thus, it appears that the emphasis on couple relationships and marriage in the Bush programs would give way to an emphasis on fatherhood and self-sufficiency, although marriage programs would be allowed. The Obama initiative also would focus much more on assessing program effectiveness than the Bush marriage and fatherhood grants, which have received virtually no evaluation.

Since the Obama administration announced its innovation fund proposal last winter, a program designed by the Bush administration as part of its marriage initiative has begun publishing results that bear directly on marriage and fatherhood programs. A random-assignment evaluation of Bush's Building Strong Families (BSF) demonstrations in eight sites was mounted to test the effects of marriage education and services on young unwed parents. More than 5,000 couples participated either in a control group that received no services or in a treatment group that received three types of services: marriage education group sessions; support from a family coordinator who encouraged participation in the group sessions and provided ongoing emotional support to the couples; and referral for services such as job search, mental health, and child care. The marriage education sessions were guided by curriculums designed specifically for low-income couples to teach skills including effective communication, showing affection, managing conflict, co-parenting, and family finances. The curriculums offered between thirty and forty-two hours of group sessions.

Interim results fifteen months after couples had applied for the program can be summarized in four points. First, averaged across all eight sites, there were no differences between control and program couples on any of the major outcomes. Second, the programs nonetheless had positive effects on black couples, who improved their ability to manage conflicts and avoid destructive behaviors, reduced infidelity and family violence, and in-

creased effective co-parenting. Third, the Oklahoma City site produced a host of positive impacts, including keeping couples together, increasing their happiness, and helping them express support and affection and use constructive rather than destructive behaviors during conflict, among others. The positive results for black couples appear to be driven primarily by the Oklahoma program. Fourth, couples in the Baltimore program experienced some negative impacts, including fewer couples maintaining their romantic involvement, lower expression of support and affection, more severe violence against women, lower quality of co-parenting, and less father involvement.

It is disappointing that the BSF program had no effects overall, and the Baltimore results are disturbing. We urge further study of the Baltimore site, but note that the couples there were the most disadvantaged of all participants, and their relationships were more tenuous, which suggests that there could be thresholds below which participation in marriage education programs is not advisable. But despite these disappointments, the finding of benefits for black couples and the positive effects found in Oklahoma imply that a program serving black couples—who have the highest rates of unwed parenting—built on the Oklahoma model could produce similar positive effects. Moreover, initial evaluations of many social programs produce findings not unlike those reported in the BSF evaluation; indeed, findings are often even more discouraging. From this perspective, the early findings showing a range of benefits for the biggest subgroup (blacks) and for the biggest individual program (Oklahoma) seem relatively encouraging. It would be premature to use the BSF results to conclude that marriage education programs for unwed couples don't work, or to abandon research and demonstration programs that attempt to promote healthy relationships between couples in fragile families.

A compromise along these lines with the Obama proposal lies readily at hand. The criticism that the Bush network of 125 marriage projects has provided virtually no evaluation evidence is entirely correct. As a result, no one has any idea whether these programs are working. We recommend that the Obama administration open a new round of marriage-promotion grants, allowing the 125 existing programs to apply if they so choose, but basing decisions about funding in the new round on the quality of the new proposals and on the reliability of the evaluation plan that would be required for every proposal. Projects should also be required to report a standard set of results that include the types of measures reported in the BSF evaluation.

The administration is proposing to spend $500 million over three years on its initiative. We would recommend spending about $50 million of the $500 million specifically on marriage education projects that attempt to replicate and expand the approach taken in the Oklahoma program. This would leave $450 million of the $500 million for the fatherhood and self-sufficiency programs favored by the administration. Projects that bring fatherhood programs and marriage programs into a close working relationship to pro-

mote child well-being would be especially welcome. The key point is to follow up on what has been learned from the BSF evaluation and evaluations of fatherhood programs in recent years.

Although the administration should consult widely to learn more about the program characteristics that may have played a role in producing the negative impacts in Baltimore and the positive impacts in Oklahoma and among black couples, we think two unique characteristics of the Oklahoma program are especially important. The two characteristics are involving married couples as well as fragile families in the marriage education groups and focusing strongly on attendance. Average attendance in the Oklahoma program was far superior to that in the other programs. About 55 percent of participants in Oklahoma received at least 60 percent of the marriage curriculum. In Indiana, where attendance was next best, 33 percent of participants reached that rather low bar. In the remaining six programs, an abysmal average of 14 percent did so. Half the participants in four of the eight programs failed to attend even a single session. A fair test of the marriage curricula requires that ways be found to boost attendance—as was in fact achieved by the Oklahoma program.

The most important conclusion from the Fragile Families Study is that these families play a central role in boosting the nation's poverty rate and that they and their children contribute disproportionately to many other serious social problems. Our policy recommendations would in all likelihood have only modest effects on poverty and other social problems, but until more disadvantaged children live in stable households with both of their biological parents sharing healthy relationships, the negative effects of unwed births will continue to trouble the nation. Meanwhile, policy makers should strengthen the safety net that provides cash and in-kind support to custodial and noncustodial parents and helps them find work; continue to aggressively implement and even expand the prevention policies that have been shown to reduce nonmarital births and save money; revise criminal sentencing laws and experiment with policies designed to help men avoid prison and integrate back into their communities when prison cannot be avoided; and refuse to give up on healthy marriage programs that have shown at least some promise in achieving the stability and positive parent relationships that could prove helpful for these couples, their children, and the nation.

This policy brief is a companion piece to *Fragile Families*, a full ten-chapter issue of *The Future of Children* which can be found and read at no charge here:
http://www.futureofchildren.org/futureofchildren/publications/journals/journal_details/index.xml?journalid=73

The Stars Incline, They Do Not Compel

John Stein

I occasionally see articles about the role of biology and genetics in mental illness, behaviour disorders, and such things. I have also had discussions with people about these things. They seem to me to be asserting that such problems are biological in origin and there is nothing that can be done about it except to find the appropriate medication. It's a 'brain disorder.'

That makes me think of my grandfather. He was an astrologer of some renown. I didn't know him well, but I have been told that his 'readings' were remarkably accurate. People came from as far away as New York to visit him in his humble home in Reading, Pennsylvania. Not all of his readings, of course, proved to be accurate. In such cases, he would simply explain that, "The stars incline, they do not compel."

And that's what I think of biology and genetics–they incline, they do not compel. It makes me think of my father. My father was a skinny kid, too light to make the high school football team. But when I knew him, he was a powerful man. One night, when I was in high school, he picked me up, threw me over his shoulder, and carried me up the stairs to bed just to prove he could still do it as he had done when I was a toddler. He had bulked up working in the local Pennsylvania and Reading Railroad shop and foundry after high school. (Remember the game Monopoly?).

Which makes me think of Sylvester Stallone. He is a magnificent specimen of muscled manhood, the envy of me and many others in the roles he portrays in his films. I remember him in "Lords of Flatbush." He portrayed a tough street kid. He was the quintessential '90-pound weakling,' like my father. A skinny, almost emaciated young man. Tough and intimidating in his role, but I think I could have swatted him away with a backhanded slap. Biologically, he was a pipsqueak. What happened? He exercised mightily and overcame his biological heritage (with the help of some medication in the form of steroids?). The exercise alone might have done it; as it did with my father. I don't think the 'medication' alone would have. Both together, the results are phenomenal.

I believe that it's much the same with behavioural and mental 'disorders.' Biol-

ogy inclines, it does not compel. Biology, in my opinion, is only the starting point. No matter what the biology is, people go up, or down, from there. Experience plays a role, and I think the role is important. Experiences have a significant role to play in development.

It is the job of child and youth care workers to provide the experiences that troubled children need. Therapists, they can be extremely important. They help people to interpret experiences and put them in perspective. They help people to plan and prepare for new experiences. I'm thinking it is only the child and youth care profession that is there at the time, helping to provide the experiences that troubled children need to maximize their potential for their development.

Medication can sometimes have a role, too. It can help children to be able and ready to participate in the experiences that child and youth care workers arrange for them, and to process the therapy that may be available. I think of people with depression. We all know that depressed people tend to avoid interaction with others and to do less and to sit by themselves or lie in bed and, well, feel depressed. When they start doing things and interacting with others, their depression improves significantly. It may even resolve. But some people are so depressed that nothing seems to be able to get them moving. We have to treat their depression some other way. When medication improves their depression to the point that they can resume engaging in activities and with others, in life, their depression improves, possibly to the point where they no longer need the medication.

It is an unique profession. We do not define people by their limitations and their diagnoses, we define them by their strengths and their potential (that's from my wife). No other profession does it better.

Keep up the great work!! Children all over the world need you. And forget the diagnoses. Keep treating children, not their diagnoses.

Al Trieschman (1931-1984) of the Walker Home near Boston, USA, was one of the authors of the book *The Other 23 Hours*, certainly one of the best-known texts for child and youth care workers. His great contribution was to translate the daily living environments of children into powerful treatment contexts — allowing child care workers to contribute materially to clinical goals. Some excerpts from his writings illustrate his gift for combining simplicity with therapeutic relevance ...

Helping children to master their sadness

Children who hate often are children who have suffered so many losses that they are "cried out," unwilling or unable to deal with any more sadness. The child's sadness and sense of loss am easily overlooked in our eagerness to "get things under control." We are inclined to help them deal with anger, when perhaps we should focus on developing their competence to deal with loss.

* * *

In our work with hyperaggressive children at the Walker School, we have been forced to think about ways we could help children learn to deal with loss and sadness, while we were coping with their acting out behavior. We find opportunities for teaching about sadness in the circumstances of daily living. Hopefully, our notions help the adults who encounter the child in the 23 hours outside therapy to be constructive agents of change in the child's life.

* * *

Some events have the clear ring of loss — the homesickness of new arrivals, the discharge of a child's close friend, the death of a pet, the leaving of a favorite staff member — these obviously significant events are rarely overlooked. But there are the 'small' losses that present worthwhile opportunities to help children develop loss-bearing, including broken or missing toys, no mail, losing a game, difficulty in mastering a skill. Teaching loss-bearing capacities at such times not only helps extend the emotional competence of children, but also helps keep behavior within reasonable limits.

To encourage a child to ventilate his

feelings of sadness directly is a useful teaching device. One might say to a child, "one of the things you can do first when you're feeling sad like this is to cry. It's all right. The tears won't last forever; you'll be able to stop." One might suggest a private place to an older child too embarrassed to cry openly in the company of peers.

An equally useful device is to help a child develop the capacity to repress or suppress sadness, to "forget about it." There are times that for the benefit of helping a child repair his life end proceed to grow, crying must stop.

If the child is to learn skills and participate in scholastic affairs, the task of "putting the sadness in the back of his mind" has to be given to the child.

The language of feelings can be used to teach and remind children of possible ways of behaving when "sad." One can teach a child that when he names feelings and can talk about them, he can know them himself and then tell others how he feels. To enhance the awareness of feelings, the techniques of role-playing, improvisation, and acting can be used.

Another teaching device is the use that staff make of their own feelings. When we feel disappointment, experience loss, and then model and share the emotional experience with children, our example may be imitated.

When we ourselves can ventilate, keep working, use a little humor, the children can use the opportunity to be observant pupils.

When we exploit small segments of reality to teach about dealing with sadness; we make use of innumerable opportunities that occur daily such as the end of a pleasant game or the loss of a favorite staff member until tomorrow. At these times, it is also possible to use the technique of encouraging partial replacements for losses, such as reattachments to a new friend, or even transitory withdrawal. The child who does not know how to use solitude has a tremendous temptation to ward off or deny sadness by being constantly in the thick of things. This youngster might need to learn to develop the capacity to be alone and find that there is a "constancy of people" who still accept him on return.

It is important to note that we have not focused on pathological depression or distortions of the mourning process. Indeed, these occur — and with frequency among disturbed children — but we emphasize that learning to master loss is a human necessity, not just a "cure" to mental illness. Our techniques help adults make an alliance with that part of the child struggling against his difficulties. This is an alliance for teaching emotional competence.

What Tough Kids Need from Us

Allen Mendler & Brian Mendler

Discipline with dignity involves specific respectful strategies to connect with youth and to guide their behavior.

Marissa was a very bright girl with a learning disability and very poor social skills and who craved constant attention. More than likely, numerous family problems contributed to the overall picture. As we worked together on a daily basis I (B. Mendler) began to form a bond with her, or so I thought. On a cold Monday in February, Marissa, unexpectedly and without any apparent provocation, punched me in the arm. Shocked, I looked at her and asked why she hit me. To my amazement, Marissa responded by laughing and punching me again. During that day, she hit me a few more times. After work I told the social worker what happened. He explained that the only form of affection Marissa ever saw was her parents hitting each other. They would first yell, then punch and kick. The social worker explained that those behaviors were actually signs of affection and said he would not be surprised if the aggression increased until she was taught a nonviolent way to show she cared.

Those who are nurtured in loving families have a hard time understanding Marissa's behavior. I certainly did. Armed with the background of her behavior, though, instead of getting mad and disciplining Marissa, I made it a goal to help her learn other, more appropriate ways of showing affection and to spend a few minutes every day just being a caring person in her life.

Despite the numerous, disparate, and often unfair demands placed upon educators to be all things to all students, they need to be prepared to teach better behavior every day. Perhaps of even greater importance is finding ways of becoming tougher in not giving up on them when they say and do things that are annoying, obnoxious, and inappropriate so that trust replaces hurt and suspicion.

Teach the desired behavior

It is really hard for adults, let alone children, to exhibit behaviors not yet learned. And for learning to become internalized, repetition is required. It takes time to get good at most skills. Improvement is the

result of practice. Even the rare few with innate talent who are better than most right away require practice to get even better.

Most students do not get real opportunities to practice improving their behavior. In fact, it is more common for them to be punished by denying the opportunities to practice. Popular school consequences like time-out, detention, loss of privileges, and suspension rarely emphasize the teaching or practicing of better behavior. How can a student show he can behave on the playground if recess time is spent inside with the teachers? Is it reasonable to expect students to learn better manners in the cafeteria by making them eat alone? A better strategy is to say something like, "Until you show me that food is for eating and not for throwing, and that talking quietly rather than yelling is expected, I guess I'll have to sit at the table and watch while you eat. I'm sure it won't take you long to remember, though. I am confident that by the end of the week you will be able to be there without me watching your every move." Responding in this way may take more work initially, but has a far better chance of leading to better long-term behavior.

Strategies and interventions based on values

Although it is always desirable and sometimes necessary to teach children to rise above their impulses, drives, and emotions, the bigger goal should be to instill within them a strong sense of right and wrong, and an understanding and belief in the essential sanctity of the human spirit. When rule violations occur, educators need a range of available consequences that can be implemented to teach students more responsible behavior. Behavior change among hardened, antisocial, and angry students cannot occur simply by offering more love, care, and opportunities for decision-making (all necessary components in developing responsibility). Conventional behavioral methods that are obedience-oriented ("do as I say and you will be rewarded or punished if you do not") are occasionally useful in the early stages for such youth and those around them to feel a sense of safety and security. However, since there is a heavy reliance upon the use of external methods of control, authorities must always be visible to enforce policy. Rewards and punishments can be useful for short-term benefit, but long- term change is fueled by methods that teach and reinforce proper values like safety, altruism, caring, respect-and most important, remorse.

Only strong values are motivation to control one's naturally aggressive nature. For example, students must know in their minds, hearts, and spirits that hurting others is wrong. There are many strategies developed by schools that emphasize values rather than obedience. Miles Watts' third grade class in Rochester, New York, uses the United States Constitution as a model for developing classroom values and rules. A middle school teacher attending one of our seminars told how her school encourages students to write down acts of kindness on colored strips of paper. The cafeteria and hallway are decorated with these strips which are linked together to form a "kindness chain." A

school district outside of Chicago encourages its students to be involved in reducing violence. The children filled their halls with anti-violence posters, put on an assembly about violence prevention, and invented a slogan to say when tensions mounted: "It's okay to walk away."

The importance of optimism

Much has been said about the importance of having an optimistic, welcoming attitude in setting the right tone with tough students. Yet, it can be difficult to want unmotivated, uncooperative, noncompliant students to show up. It is not unusual for a teacher to be in class for the first 20 minutes cruising along, beginning to hit her stride when Tyrone struts in, knocking into desks, banging tables, and doing any other annoying thing he can to try and get her attention. To say the least, the last thing on her mind is to welcome him with, "Hey Tyrone, It's good to see you!" But teaching him becomes much easier by letting Tyrone know that he is an important and integral part of the class.

Sometimes colleagues say things like, "that student doesn't belong in my class," "there is no way he or she has the academic or social skills to be successful," or "he should be in an 'alternative school.'" Although an ideal environment may not exist for all students, teachers must believe that each day is going to be "breakthrough day." Today will be the day when Billy sits in his seat longer than five minutes, Carla does her assignment, and Tyrone walks in promptly and respectfully. Without this attitude, there truly is no hope of facilitating change.

Stay personally connected to students without taking personally what they say or do

Emotionally scarred students have often learned not to trust, which in turn can lead to their hatred of authority. Because others have treated them with abuse or have been unable to nurture, such students develop a view that the world is filled with hostility. Expecting hostility, they act first and do provocative things to make others angry. Provoked adults often become angry at the student and say or do something to show who is boss. Having made yet another adult feel hostile, the student's worldview is confirmed. This "hostility cycle" continues uninterrupted until adults who regularly participate in the life of the hostile student understand this dynamic and refuse to play the game.

Only strong values are motivation to control one's naturally aggressive nature.

When understanding this cycle, teachers and administrators realize the importance of remaining as calm as possible, especially during moments of disruption and chaos. Students behave best when they are around a confident teacher not easily rattled by the ups and downs of life.

Great athletes are fantastic at this. They thrive on the road, where the crowd is hostile, the stadium is loud, and the referees do not give them the calls they want. They do not get rattled at even the most vulgar of fans. Instead, they ask for the ball. They thrive on the pressure. And over an entire season, or a long tourna-

ment, they come out on top. Great athletes spend a great deal of time preparing for the crucial moment so they can step back when chaos surrounds them, survey the situation, and execute a winning game-plan.

When a student like Jack challenges the authority by raising his middle finger, try hard to fight the desire to immediately say, "Get out!" By viewing his unacceptable behavior as a misguided way of expressing disapproval, it becomes possible to say firmly but calmly, "Jack, we both know there are better ways to voice your vote. Thanks for waiting until after class to let me know how you really feel." Later on in private, firmly let him know that his behavior was unacceptable and that behaviors that seek to embarrass the teacher in front of the class will not be tolerated. For example, "Your opinion is important to me. Do you think giving it in flip-off mode is an invitation to an argument which neither of us likes losing especially in front of everyone else? If possible in the future, I would really prefer for you to wait until after class to let me know when you disagree. You think that might be possible?" The teacher might still give a consequence. But true behavior change almost always comes with relentless teaching and explaining rather than punishment and misery.

Great teachers, like great athletes, actors, politicians, and musicians, are able to stay in control of their emotions and focused on their goals without getting sidetracked. In fact, many will pick up on what a tough student says and teach a lesson based on it.

Model desired skills

It is important for educators to remember that sometimes students need to learn the desired behaviors. When these behaviors are modeled by adults, students are much more likely to adopt them. For example, when discussing an altercation with a student, Mr. Gentry started the following conversation:

> Mr. Gentry:
> Hi Cody. I've been thinking about how we got angry with each other in class and I just want to let you know that I think I embarrassed you in front of your friends and I'm sorry for that. I should have found a better time and place to let you know that I wasn't pleased with your behavior. I will try hard not to do it again. Maybe you have some other ideas about what I could have done better, but before you share those, is there anything you think you could have done differently?

Because Mr. Gentry began the conversation with what he did wrong (even if that was a lot less than what the student did wrong), Cody is much more likely to admit his role in the incident. Together, they can then begin to figure out what is needed to prevent the problem from happening again.

It is best to respond in the same manner expected of the student when he or she is upset: "I think I could listen a lot better if you don't raise your voice and yell at me. I can see why you might be upset and I think you have a right to let me know. Do you think we can get together later and come up with a solution

that might work for both of us?"

All school personnel need to model the choices and behaviors when angry that they want their students to use. If an adult's response is to yell at students when they misbehave, why is it surprising when they yell back? If the first response and instinct is zero tolerance, or to throw kids out, it is logical that they have zero tolerance for each other and dismiss each other just as abruptly. By modeling the skills students should use when they are faced with difficult moments, educators show real ways that real people who are upset can solve problems without anybody getting hurt.

Teach students to make effective choices

Both adults and kids learn to be responsible by making choices and experiencing the positive or negative results of the choices they make. When students break rules or behave disruptively, both firm limits and real choices are needed. The limits should surround the choices given. Firm limits show a serious attitude about what will or will not be accepted. Real choices force students to make decisions as they will in the real world. It is best to express the reasons for the limits along with the limits themselves. For example, "Julia, your effort is lacking and that worries me. You have a lot of ability but even the best in the world like Tiger Woods and Serena Williams need to practice (if possible use an example outside of education to set up the limit). This is why it is unacceptable to not do any of the homework problems. I can live with your choosing any five that will best show us both that you understand the material (choice). Or better yet, feel free to do the five easiest on the page (choice). But again, I look forward to seeing those done right now. Thanks (limit)."

Be willing to work with difficult students

When students return after an incident it is important to share the preference for things to never get as bad again in the future, and then explain and teach how to handle things more appropriately in the future. For example, "Hey Beth, we got pretty upset with each other yesterday and it is too bad that you had to leave. I didn't like feeling disrespected yet somehow I feel like maybe I did something to make you angry. Do you have any ideas that will help make things better?"

Administrators often ask us how to get teachers to stop giving detentions. Although not always popular, we often suggest that teachers stay with students they detain to explore possible solutions shortly after the incident. Teachers should be willing to "own" the consequences they give. Such a procedure sends a strong message that it is okay to refer but teachers must be willing to engage. While reluctant at first, most educators who have done this report better results because they are able to deal with the issues in a concentrated manner without other students looking on.

Create and nurture community networks

No matter how talented, one teacher cannot simultaneously facilitate a problem-solving session between two upset

children, teach four reading groups, manage four students with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD), and take an autistic child for a walk. In recognition of this diversity, it is helpful to create a network of resources to meet students' needs. Parents, senior citizens, community mentors, volunteers, and even difficult older students can be called on to help make a difference. Individual volunteers, as well as civic-minded community and business organizations, can be recruited and appreciated. I am reminded of an assistant community college basketball coach who was reluctant to talk with my inner city students about hard work, effort, and dedication. I pointed out how good volunteering at a local high school would look on his resume when looking for head coaching positions. He spoke two days later and has made it an annual event.

Treat students with dignity even when they do not deserve it

Successful educators convey a basic sense of respect to their students by listening to what they think, encouraging their feedback, apologizing after acting in a hurtful way, explaining why they want things done a certain way, and asking their opinions about certain classroom affairs that affect them. They are able to respectfully insist upon decent behavior because they are unafraid of calling attention to unacceptable words or actions without put-downs, sarcasm, scolds, and threats. The message is: You are important, and so am I!

It is difficult to be dignified with students who tell adults where to go and how quickly to get there. It is especially difficult when students challenge professionalism. It is easy to become cynical in such a climate, yet nothing exacerbates aggression and hostility faster than a cynical attitude. A relatively simple test to determine the dignity of any method is to imagine being at the receiving end and think about if the method attacks one's dignity or keeps one's dignity intact. It is so important to resist viewing and responding to difficult students as "pains in the ***." Although it is difficult, it is also necessary to help less-experienced colleagues who are filled with vigor and enthusiasm by banning the "you'll see" faculty room chatter. Reacting with dignity to the very moments in which students are rendering indignities to each other and adults sends a very powerful message that shows capability and strength without brutality.

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This article is adapted from the two most recent books by the authors and Rick Curwin: *Discipline with Dignity* 3rd Edition (ASCD) and *Strategies for Successful Classroom Management* (Corwin Press). For more information on the authors or their training materials visit: www.tlc-sems.com

From: *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, 19,1. Spring 2010

2013 CYC-Net Clan Gathering before The CYC World Conference in St John's, Newfoundland

Same Place! – Start Early!

Before you do anything else, be sure and enter these dates into your diary, Blackberry, iPhone, Google Calendar, Samsung Galaxy, refrigerator door or whatever other kind of planning device you employ for 2013!

THE WEEKEND OF 22/23 JUNE THROUGH THE WEEKEND OF 29/30 JUNE, 2013

The last 8 days of June in St John's, Newfoundland!
(for the CYC World and to go Iceberg Hunting!)

Kia ora Comrades, greetings to all of you Clanspersons – brothers and sisters! I hope this finds you keeping well and enjoying Northern Hemisphere Summer Holidays and planning to be at Canmore in October!

The Board of Governors of CYC-Net met in Cape Town on 29th June and amongst other matters of business it was agreed that steps should be taken to call for a 2013 CYC-Net Clan Gathering in St John's, Newfoundland to take place before the CYC World Conference! We propose travelling in on Saturday, 22nd June and starting the Clan Gathering with Sunday Lunch, as in the West of Scotland.

That leaves us Sunday late afternoon and evening, all day Monday for Clan Gathering Business. It looks as though Clan Gathering participants might then join the Child and Youth Care Educators Day on Tuesday before the start of the CYC World!

I would welcome your thoughts about making the 2013 Clan Gathering open entry to anyone thinking of coming to the CYC World. These people can also join the CYC-Net Clan Gathering and CYC Educators' Day, so long as they come to work as well as share fun with child and youth care colleagues!

We might plan a social event on the Sunday evening (with food), then work in the large group and small groups on Monday Morning. Monday afternoon might take on a specific Action Planning focus, inviting Board Member Grant Charles to help with that session. Then a nice dinner on the Monday evening? Please share your ideas?

Some Clan Gathering participants have asked about follow up about the work carried out since March. We are preparing a ClansAction Newsletter to send out to all who took part in the March Gathering. We hope to have that with you shortly.

The Reid Kerr College students were working on the March Clan Gathering interviews and recorded presentations before the Summer Holidays Break. Once they return, Carolynne says there will be more materials ready for circulation.

Meantime, Think Crossroads and Connections in St John's, Newfoundland – 22-30 June 2013!

What might you do in the weekends before and after the CYC World Conference?

Happy People Don't Behave Like That

Selma Wastell

"I don't want to go home, my mother is an even bigger bitch than you are!" It was an eleven year old's response to a polite enquiry about the coming weekend and it reminded me of when I first heard the words in the title of this article. They were said to me by a young man when we were witness to very uncalled for, unfair rudeness. I wondered aloud why some people behave that way. "I don't know" he said, "but one thing is sure: happy people don't behave like that."

We learn that we must separate the deed from the doer, but even more than that we must keep ourselves out of the conflict and not add to the unhappy wrong-doer's misery.

This is the most difficult part. but in actual fact. by returning anger with anger, injustice with injustice, rudeness with rudeness, we are indulging in the same unhelpful activity instead of trying to improve how the other person is feeling.

"Condemning wrong behaviour, certainly includes refraining from it". This is another statement that had an impact on me recently when I felt I had been unjustly treated. My first reaction had been one of self-pity and revenge. It took a lot to try to see why the other person had done what they had, and then the "happy people don't behave like that" quote sprang to mind. This made it easier for me to see the other side and to start working on a constructive solution.

It is difficult, when a child (or anyone else for that matter) subjects us to rudeness or unkindness, to respond constructively and with love. The child who loses control and attacks is probably on the point of losing a massive inner struggle. He or she is resorting to his most primitive defences, and is at his most vulnerable. To be attacked from outside at such a time is the last thing they need.

The children we care for have been hurt in the context of society in general, or that of their families in particular. When their feelings are aroused or simply bubble up, they tend to hit back at the people who (possibly for the first time in their lives) care for them, or, more primitively, they take it out on the walls, furniture and fittings of the children's residence.

If one can remember in face of spiteful, aggressive and destructive behaviour that "happy people don't behave like that", the focus of our response can shift from the child's provocative acting out to an awareness of the unhappy child behind the act, and there we will find the real (and much more difficult) task the child care worker is expected to tackle.

From: ***The Child Care Worker,*** **Vol.5 No.5, p.5**

nils ling

Too Much of a Good Thing

I love the English language, I really do. I love to read something so elegantly expressed that it takes my breath away: a perfect description, a stunning image, a thoughtful message delivered in a way that makes me marvel at the intellect of the writer.

When I write, I love to toy with phrases, turning them this way and that, kneading the language until it has the consistency and shape I am looking for. I'm not saying the end result is always particularly clever or poetic; but it at least pleases me, and that's a start.

On the flip side, I loathe tedious writers who seem to feel that if they pile on enough adjectives, sooner or later what they meant to say will become clear just through the weight of the descriptive burden they have imposed on their readers. We have all read books where we come to a page-long description of a city street or a country meadow, read the first two or three dozen words and said to ourselves, "Got it. Let's move on." and skimmed the rest of the paragraph.

Winston Churchill – well known for being clever and succinct in conversation ("Yes, madame, I am drunk. And you are ugly. In the morning, I shall be sober."), once wrote a letter to a friend that went on for four pages. As he concluded the lengthy tome he wrote, "I am sorry this letter is so long. Had I more time, it would have been shorter."

Winston Churchill understood editing. Not everybody does.

I went out for dinner the other night. It was what I would call a medium-scale restaurant, striving to climb the ladder. So, a good place to go with

friends before a night at the theatre, but not necessarily the place you would take your partner to celebrate a milestone like a 25th anniversary or a 50th birthday. It was a nice restaurant with aspirations.

You could tell it from the menu. It came to us in a cover that was very close to being leather-like, with heavy vellum-coloured pages. And the menu was loaded with words that ... well, frankly, I think some of them were either invented, bastardized, misspelled or imported from another language. Words like "noisettes", "duxelles", "compôt" and on and on.

Let me just say this: if I would challenge the word in a game of Scrabble, I don't want to see it staring back at me from my plate.

The descriptions were hilarious; they were wordy and pretentious and almost indecipherable. I'm working from memory here, but here's what one sounded like to me: "Flame kissed, bee's honey swabbed organically raised pork medallions served with a horseradish/heirloom tomato compôt and lemon gratin something something garden leaf salad with poppy something something dressing."

Really? You couldn't say that more economically?

I understand that menus are written to attract diners to individual items, but I honestly don't think that works as well as they believe it does. I think it just makes more work for the servers, who have to translate the menu items so we will get the food we want and not inadvertently find ourselves staring at our plates at some sea creature we have never heard of and would not ingest willingly, or even at gunpoint.

Look, I don't need the provenance or ancestry of a given creature that will soon be in my belly. I don't need to know what spices the chef threw on it. Basically, all I want to know is: does it fly, walk, swim, or slither to get around? I can take it from there. Some big fancy description just makes me suspicious at what you're trying to foist on me.

I was particularly amused at one item: "Lovingly char-broiled ground Angus, nestled in a bed of lightly seasoned garden tomatoes, crisp Iceberg lettuce and tart pickled cucumber, blanketed with aged cheese and served on freshly baked Caesar roll".

Do you want fries with that cheeseburger? Or would you prefer, "Crisp, lightly seasoned potato wedges"?

I'm against tormenting or abusing servers in restaurants. I'm sure they roll their eyes at the food descriptions, too. But I am so tempted in those situations. I think it would be fun to talk like that.

I want to ask my server for a transparent cylinder of chilled, freshly drawn hydrogen dioxide from the house faucet. Perhaps point out that my hand-polished stainless steel cutting implement had a minor cosmetic imperfection in the form of specks of previously-served dining delights.

Then, with a satisfying release of gastro-intestinal air, I would take my leave. Because in the morning, I will be sober. But that menu will still be ridiculous.

Post Card from Leon Fulcher

Postcard from Pilanesberg National Park, South Africa

Hi everybody. I finished off my 3-plus weeks in South Africa with a visit to the Pilanesberg National Park, a Game Reserve just north of Sun City, that Apartheid Era Homeland Reserve built and operated in the Las Vegas Style, 3 hours drive north east of Johannesberg and Pretoria.

Pilanesberg National Park North of Sun City

We entered Pilanesberg National Park through the Southern Bakubang Gate and started seeing South African wild game almost immediately. Zebra and Blue Wildebeest roam together and are easily spotted, as are the Impala and South African Warthogs.

It was a special treat when the Zebra and Blue Wildebeest came right up to the Restaurant Dining Room Watering Hole to drink! They were that close!

Zebras at Kwa Waritane Resort Watering Hole]

You've got to see Warthogs in the wild before you can understand what personality they have amongst the animals of the

South African Warthogs have Character

Game Park. Running in patrols with tail up high is a common activity for the Warthog Patrols.

Pilanesberg National Park Mankwe Dam Grey Heron

I was struck by just how much water there was in the Pilanesberg, one of 3 alcaline volcanoes in the world and geologically, exceptionally old. Formed some 2,000 million years ago, the volcano towered to 7000 metres in height, rivalling even Africa's highest peak, Mount Kilimanjaro in grandeur!

Watching giraffe move as families in the wild is quite breath-taking. Hippos moving up out of the water to nap in the sunshine, white rhinos moving towards the river. Elephants moving through the young trees. Images of a lifetime.

At recognised picnic stops, there were families everywhere at the end of school holidays weekend. The traditional South African BBQ or Braai was buring in each picnic site, cooking up chops, wurst, steak and veggies. On all the back roads weaving in and around the Pilanesberg, were several cars, 4 X 4s, minivans, campervans

Giraffe of the Pilanesberg Valley Savannas

and buses.

At the local campsites, it was still possible to get tent spaces on this State holiday weekend, or to hire actual tents located on wooden platforms, fully stocked. I was interested to see that Mom's Taxi also goes everywhere! Mom's work is clearly never finished, but Game Tours for Japanese young people was a new one - Mom on the mike about giraffes moving to our left?

South African Elephant Eating Trees

Three Generational Braai BBQ Picnic at the Pilanesberg

During our weekend, we spotted 3 of the Big 5 Game Animals of South Africa: Lion; Elephant; Black Rhinoceros; Cape Buffalo and Leopard. Some add the Cheetah to this list. I was pleased to spot Lion, Elephant, and White Rhinoceros but not Black Rhinoceros, nor Cape Buffalo or Leopard. Next time.

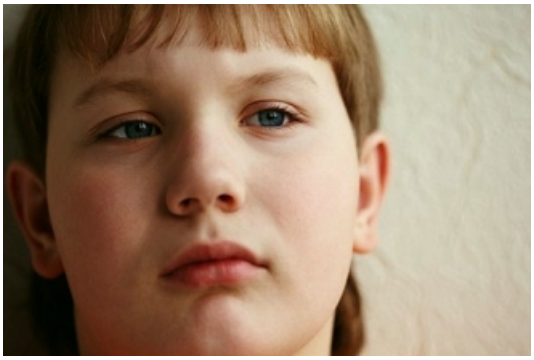
Mom's Taxi Works Everywhere!

Using strength based interventions to explore outcomes that matter

An Allambi Youth Services Conference to be held in Australia in conjunction with Reclaiming Youth International. The Ignite Conference 2012 aims to provide a unique opportunity to learn from Australian and International professionals discussing the latest research on trauma and strength based approaches to caring for people. In addition to a variety of training opportunities and workshops, those attending will have the time to share and collaborate on best practice ideas with other professionals. Please keep September 17- 21, 2012 free for an exciting week of training, speakers, panels, and workshops in the relaxed atmosphere of the NSW Hunter Valley Cypress Lakes Resort

Visit website here:
www.allambiignite.org

EndNotes



These past weeks

I've been looking back
Looking down ...
Not sure what's happened
What's happening now ...
Looking around again
What's to see here
Who to be with ...
What's to become of me
Will I be able
To be someone with you?

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Childhood is frequently a solemn business for those inside it.

— George F. Will

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"The young, free to act on their initiative, can lead their elders in the direction of the unknown... The children, the young, must ask the questions that we would never think to ask, but enough trust must be re-established so that the elders will be permitted to work with them on the answers."

— Margaret Mead

"...the anxiety children feel at constantly being tested, their fear of failure, punishment, and disgrace, severely reduces their ability both to perceive and to remember, and drives them away from the material being studied into strategies for fooling teachers into thinking they know what they really don't know."

— John Holt

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Think what a better world it would be if we all — the whole world — had cookies and milk about three o'clock every afternoon and then lay down with our blankies for a nap.

— Robert Fulghum
All I Really Need to Know
I Learned in Kindergarten,

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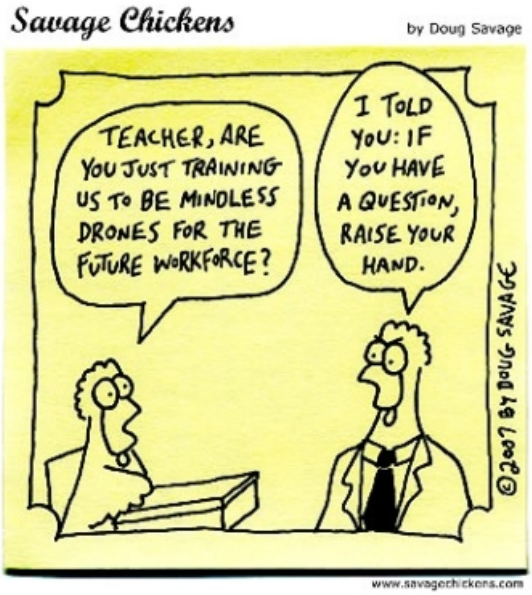
I wish I didn't know now what I didn't know then.

— Bob Seger,
"Against the Wind"



During my second year of nursing school our professor gave us a quiz. I breezed through the questions until I read the last one: What is the first name of the woman who cleans the school? Surely this was a joke. I had seen the cleaning woman several times, but how would I know her name? I handed in my paper, leaving the last question blank. Before the class ended, one student asked if the last question would count toward our grade. Absolutely, the professor said. In your careers, you will meet many people. All are significant. They deserve your attention and care, even if all you do is smile and say hello. I've never forgotten that lesson. I also learned her name was Dorothy.

— Joann C. Jones

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Learning is finding out what we already know. Doing is demonstrating that you know it. Teaching is reminding others that they know just as well as you. You are all learners, doers and teachers.

— Richard Bach

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They have taken the care and upbringing of children out of the hands of parents, where it belongs, and thrown it upon a gang of irresponsible and unintelligent quacks"

— Henry Louis Mencken

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When you finally go back to your old hometown, you find it wasn't the old home you missed but your childhood.

— Sam Ewing

Laughter and tears are both responses to frustration and exhaustion. I myself prefer to laugh, since there is less cleaning up to do afterward.

— Kurt Vonnegut

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I suggest that the only books that influence us are those for which we are ready, and which have gone a little farther down our particular path than we have yet got ourselves.

— E.M. Forster

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"In the real world, there's no such thing as Algebra!"

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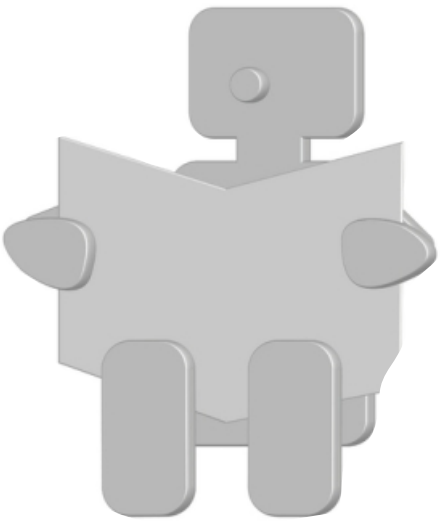

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