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**TOWARDS DEVELOPING A PARENT SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR
SINGLE PARENTS WHO HAVE CHILDREN IN NEED OF CARE**

BY

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ABSTRACT

An exploratory study was conducted at a Social Services Department in Mitchell's Plain on sensitively exploring the feelings and experiences of single parents whose children were found in need of care. A qualitative approach was used, with data being gathered from focus group sessions and semi-structured interviews. Some of the major findings focussed on the needs of single parents as well as the re-integration of the child within the biological family composition. Certain perceived reasons for child removals were also highlighted by single parents. In respect of a parent support programme single parents felt a sense of solidarity within the focus group session.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The researcher is employed at the Department of Social Services in Mitchell's Plain. As part of her duties comprises supervising foster placements, as well as rendering services to the biological parents of foster children, with the aim of returning the children to their parents' care. In terms of the Foster Care Charter (1987) in Whitaker (1996: 1) "Foster Care is an important part of any Child Welfare Service Programme. It is based on the premise that a family still provides the best environment for the development of a child".

According to the researcher foster care ideally provides a safe environment for a child who is considered to be at risk of significant harm while living with his or her biological parents. Foster care is a temporary form of alternative care to children in need of protection pending improvement of their parents' circumstances. However, this approach can have its pitfalls when there is lack of change in the biological parents' living conditions. Very often the period of foster care placement has to be extended indefinitely. Simms and Bolden (1991: 688) do not promote reunification "at any cost". They state "alternatively, reunification should be delayed if the family demonstrates significant continuing dysfunctions during the course of the program. As stated previously, although reunification for each family is the goal of this program, it may not be an appropriate one for every family".

The purpose of this research study is therefore to develop a parent support program for single parents for children in need of care. By doing so, the program will sensitively explore the parents feelings and experiences, and also equip the single parents with parental skills and capacity building, in order to boost their lowered self esteems, and on the other hand cope with children's needs and other issues.

By conducting a research study on biological parents' experiences while their children are in foster care, the researcher hopes to gain more insight on how to support these parents. Hence, biological parents, specifically single parents will be the target group

of the research study, as the researcher noticed that from her own and other colleagues' caseloads, there are many single parents whose children are in foster care.

There appears to be much research data collected on children in need of care (Whitaker: 1994; Tod: 1971; Sishuta: 1996; National Foster Care Association: 1981 or 1987). However, not so much research has been done on the needs of biological parents of these children. The Provincial Administration Western Cape is a Social Service agency which deals with children in need of care, by providing alternative places of safety for these children and reconstruction services, so that re-unification may be possible.

Historically the Child Care Act 74/1983 highlighted numerous issues whereby the parent's life circumstances directly placed their children at risk of significant harm. However, in the Child Care Act 74/1983 as amended, the Act focussed on the children's needs for protection and well being, and subsequently stipulated conditions whereby children were deemed to be at risk. Consequently, children could only be removed once it was evidenced that their circumstances were not conducive to their well-being. Gauntlet (Joubert, 1987: 237) in Sishuta (1996: 42) stated the following: "...a child is not in need of care simply because domestic conditions are adverse. Furthermore, children who are found to be in need of care need not necessarily be removed from parental care. Removal must be based on evidence that serious harm will be inflicted on the child if left at home". This children will only be reunified with their biological parents if serious harm is no longer an issue and if parents are capable of caring for their children in a positive way. This study seeks to make a contribution towards positive parenting.

1.2 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

From the researcher's own experience and other colleagues' caseloads, she observed that many single parents experience difficulty being re-unified with their children. In certain instances re-unification with biological parents may not have been possible due to the whereabouts of the parents being unknown or due to the fact that their circumstances have not improved. The South African National Council for Child and

Family Welfare (1987) concedes that “the parent’s potential to resume the care of their children who were removed from them varies. Some parents are only unable to care for them for a temporary period, others need longer periods to restore their parenting capacities, some may only have the ability to function as part-time parents and there are also those who may never be able to care for their children on a long-term basis”. This study hopes to collect data through a series of focus groups with single parents. These focus groups will at the same time serve as a support program for these parents. Thus, through the parent support programme single parents will be empowered and equipped with parenting and life skills.

The authors Vallender and Fogelman (1987: 75-76) holds the following opinion: “Research shows that the first occasion when a child’s removal from home becomes necessary, it is an early indication that she or he is ‘at risk’ i.e living in an inadequate environment. Hence, immediate help is needed to support, and if possible to strengthen, the family as well as to monitor the child’s subsequent development and progress”. The parents could also provide support to one another through and after the completion of the programme. The South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare (1987: 32) stated the following: “Group work with parents is another new development within the sphere of family and child welfare services aimed at improved assistance to families who are at risk. The reason behind this development is that it has become evident that the group is a particularly helpful tool in diagnosis”.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

“Services to parents form a very important part of the total foster care programme of any child welfare society. Failure to provide, in the first instance, good services to the parents, will have a negative counter-effect on any other services which may be rendered to the children” (South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare, 1987: 26).

It is researcher’s understanding that this particular area of research has not been done in the Western Cape. However, similar research studies address different aspects of this topic (Whitaker, P: 1994 & National Foster Care Association, 1987). This is an

exploratory study. The Provincial Administration Western Cape Social Service Department has not had a research study done of this nature. Such a study could enhance service delivery, as it will draw attention to a gap in service delivery. For the first time single parents whose children had been removed from their care would participate in a support programme. It is argued by the South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare (1987: 32) "In addition, the group situation provides an excellent opportunity for the worker to understand and to overcome the resistance to casework treatment in many of the clients. It allows observation of the client's interaction with others, and an opportunity to measure the levels on which each may be functioning". Such a support programme could facilitate the reunification process.

The South African National Council maintained that "the main purpose of services to parents is to help them improve their social functioning and in particular their parenting capacities. In working with parents whose parental functions are impaired or have never developed, it is necessary to make an assessment of their existing parent's abilities, as well as to pinpoint any other potential which may be amenable to treatment". This parent support programme is a pioneering effort to test the feasibility of such a programme.

1.4 CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

According to Rubin and Babbie (1997: 132) "Conceptualisation is the process through which we specify precisely what we mean when we use particular terms".

- 'Foster Care' or 'Alternative Care' means the placement or confinement of a child outside his or her family or extended family, for some clear and agreed purposes (Child Care Act 74/1983 as amended in 1996).
- A 'biological parent' refers to the natural parent who begets a child or of whom a child is born (Child Care Act 74/1983 as amended in 1996).
- A biological 'single parent' is a person who has one or more children for whom he or she is the primary caregiver in all aspects of life. For purposes of this study the concept 'single parents' will make reference to 'coloured' single parents. The researcher wishes to state clearly that this decision to focus on coloured single women does not underpin racial or gender bias, but reflects the reality of the Western Cape

having been a “coloured preference area” in the Apartheid era.

- A ‘child’ will be considered to be any person under the age of 18 years, in accordance with the Child Care Act 74/1983 as amended in 1996.
- Parent Support Programme – According to the South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare is of the opinion “services to the parents by means of group work can range from providing preventative services aimed at helping parents function more effectively in their parental role in ordinary life situations... The service can also be adjusted to the needs of socially disadvantaged or inadequate parents”. In the context of this study it will refer to four focus groups which will center on definite themes aimed at guiding women and building parental capacity to deal with their children.

1.5 TOPIC OF RESEARCH

Towards developing a Parent Support Program for single parents who have children in need of care.

1.6 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the specific needs of single parents who are awaiting reunification of their children?
- Would the development of a Parent Support Programme benefit these parents?

1.7 MAIN RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- ◆ To ascertain the specific needs of single parents who are awaiting the reunification process of their children.
- ◆ To explore whether a Parent Support Program could benefit single parents.

1.8 MAJOR RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS

- ◆ That single parents who are awaiting the re-unification with their children have specific needs (Schatz & Bane, 1991: 670); Simms & Bolden, 1991: 688).
- ◆ That a Parent Support Program could benefit single parents (Smith, 1991: 67; Kline & Overstreet, 1972: 3).

1.9 ETHICS OF THE STUDY

The Webster's New World Dictionary defines the concept 'ethics' as "conforming to the standards of conduct of a given profession or group". Ethics is typically associated with morality issues, dealing with matters of right and wrong (Rubin and Babbie, 1997: 59). Confidentiality was upheld by not revealing their personal identities. Respondents should not suffer any harm in the research study. The author Neuman (1997: 376) is of the opinion that "A researcher learns intimate knowledge from the field that is given in confidence. He or she has a moral obligation to uphold the confidentiality of data. This includes keeping information confidential from others in the field and disguising members' names in field notes".

The researcher was conscious of the dynamics between the single parents and the researcher. The researcher was viewed as the one able to "bring their children back" and these expectations must be dealt with. Neuman (1997: 377) states "the intimate knowledge that a researcher obtains and reports creates a dilemma between the right of privacy and the right to know". He further claims, "a researcher does not publicize member secrets, violate privacy, or harm reputations. Yet, if he or she cannot publish anything that might offend or harm someone, some of what the researcher learned will remain hidden, and it may be difficult for others to believe general statements if critical details are omitted" (Neuman, 1997: 377). However, the researcher realises that if one does not provide the respondents with the general outcome of research findings, it might seem that she is withholding information to which they have a right and is excluding them from the final process of the research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The loss of family and community support systems is a matter of powerful concern in Africa, because sociability and “socially distributed nurturance” within the family unit are at the heart of important cultural values throughout the continent (Serpell, 1992: 21) in Weisner ; Bradley and Kilbride. The researcher agrees with the above-mentioned statement, especially when one considers ‘ubuntu’ which means a person is only a person in relation to other persons. It seems that this specific concept is practised to a lesser extent within our communities. Malaka (1982: 99) indicates “the black child in an urban black community in South Africa no longer depend entirely on his family for the meeting of his needs. ’He (the child) often has no relatives to turn to, in times of stress. The indigent, neglected and abused black child now has to depend on welfare agencies to alleviate problems that arose in his biological family”. From the researcher’s own work experience, family members seem reluctant to intervene or take responsibility in caring for their family members’ children without any state financial assistance.

2.2 THE IMPACT OF REMOVAL OF CHILDREN ON PARENTS

According to the National Foster Care Association (1987: 5) “The overriding emotion for most parents of children who have been taken into care is guilt. This can easily turn into anger, directed at the social worker, it is very difficult for parents to see their children looked after by someone else, and this is combined with guilt and anger”. Social workers need to render a supportive and empowering service to biological parents whose children have been removed. Mc Fadden in (Laird and Hartman, 1985: 591) in Schatz & Bane (1979: 665) stated the following, “the role of the worker is to help the parents express their feelings, to cover a sense of hope, reinforce parental competence and to join the parents in active problem-solving”. It is the researcher’s

opinion that child removals might have left parents powerless and a sense of vulnerability. This is no doubt that these parents' social-emotional and psychological well-being are being impacted upon by this children's removals.

Kline and Overstreet (1972: 3) made the following interesting statement when they stated "...the failure to provide for the care of children within the family represents a supreme failure in one's duty and usually is a devastating blow to parental self-esteem. In addition, placement of the children makes this parental failure highly visible to the other members of the nuclear family and to the extended family and community". Based on case reviews, the researcher believes that the parent's input is needed and they need to be encouraged and motivated to be part of the decision-making process with regards to the future care of their children.

2.3 ARE THE PARENTS THE BEST CARE-TAKERS OF THEIR CHILDREN ?

The authors Vallender and Fogelman (1987: 3) raised a vital question when asking whether biological parents are always better than substitute parents. A two-fold answer is provided on this question when they stated that, in "both in law and in practice, we act as if the answer were 'yes'. Yet on the one hand, we fail to provide sufficient community support to enable parents to look after their children in times of difficulty...; On the other hand, we so overvalue the child's ties with his natural family, that we allow him to remain with the patently disturbed or rejecting parents". Thus, it is very difficult to postulate a straightforward answer considering the diverse issues impacting on the given situation. Consequently, although one does want to believe that biological parents are better caregivers than substitute parents, at times it is in the child's best interest to be cared for by alternative caregivers that will be able to meet the child's socio-economic-and physical needs.

Tod (1971: 101) argues that "...the natural mother and father can all too clearly see themselves as bad parents- inadequate, unable to continue, temporarily or permanently to provide those basic attributes of good parents, a home and care for

their children". On the other hand, Kaufman and Klein (1992: 152) claims that not all parents whose children are in alternative care may feel sad or distressed when they state that "it is natural to feel sad, angry or guilt. These feelings may be varied: You could feel isolated and distressed, or an enormous sense of relief that the whole thing is over".

Fox (1982) and Mech (1983) in Maluccio et al (1986: 49) highlight two opposing views to explain the relations between parent and child. They are the 'kinship defenders' and 'society-as-parent protagonists'. The 'kinship defenders' view point is of the opinion that economic and cultural bias often labels parental behaviours as emotionally or physically abusive, and that such labeling victimises the culpable parents and threatens family integrity. The opposing view i.e. 'society-as-parent protagonists' believes that society should intervene to protect children. This view also dismisses the supremacy of the blood tie and denounces the price a child must pay in waiting for inadequate or immature parents to grow up. The middle-of-the-road approach adopted by most Family and Child Agencies is that intervention will occur should a child's life be at risk. One cannot therefore wait until parents are stabilised, because immediate intervention strategies are required to protect the child from further harm.

2.4 THE NEED TO CONNECT WITH THEIR CHILDREN

"Roots are in themselves of prime importance whether or not there is hope for the child rejoining his natural family: they keep intact the child's lifelines" (National Foster Care Association, 1981). The researcher believes that the parent forms an integral part in their child's development process and everything should be done to assert the parent towards responsible parenting. According to the South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare (1987: 26), "one of the prime responsibilities of natural parents is to care for the children they beget. A dysfunction therefore arises when parents' fail and such a situation is to the disadvantage of the child, the parent and the society at large. It is therefore essential to assist these parents to resume care of their children as quickly as possible". Very often these parents themselves have been victims of dysfunctional parenting and have had unhappy

childhoods.

Tod (1971: 101) is of the opinion that, "many parents of children in care have not themselves had satisfying experiences of care in their own childhood. They may envy the love and attention which the foster home is providing for their child". The researcher is of the opinion that birth parents does encountered an unhappy childhood, experience difficulty providing their children with the necessary love and care, due to their own unhappy childhood experiences.

The South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare (1987: 26) made an important statement when they stated that "even if the natural parent cannot resume the care of the child relatively early, and the child has to remain in foster care, the natural parent remains an important factor in his life for various reasons, such as the child's genealogical link to the natural parents. Information about his background and an understanding of his parents' circumstances is essential for his healthy identity development, especially in his adolescence and early adult years". One of the parents' comments was, "you feel as though you are coping- I mean I'm an adult and I'm a mother, how come I can't look after this child. I feel he was my responsibility and I should manage. You wonder what is wrong with you" (Kline and Overstreet, 1972: 3).

2.5 FAMILY PRESERVATION

"The family is regarded as the natural and logical place for the child to be cared for and educated. For this reason it is of primary importance that everything possible be done to improve and develop family bonds through a process of education and knowledge in order to assist the family to function effectively as a unit in a desirable manner" (The Committee of Inquiry into the Foster Care of Children 1990: 21 in Sishuta, 1996: 41). According to the South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare (1987: 29) "the preservation of family life should always be top priority in child welfare in order to save the family for the child and to promote the present functioning of the society at large, as well as prevent a second generation failure in the sphere of parental functioning". The researcher is therefore of the opinion that child welfare organisations' main priority should be to preserve the

family by focussing on preventative programmes rather than statutory proceedings channeled to remove the child from the family home. The researcher has been part of a "Project Go Workshop" which focussed on preventative work. A "The family is regarded as the natural and logical place for the child to be cared for and educated. For this reason it is of primary importance that everything possible be done to improve and develop family bonds through a process of education and knowledge in order to assist the family to function effectively as a unit in a desirable manner" (The Committee of Inquiry into the Foster Care of Children 1990: 21 in Sishuta, 1996: 41). According to the South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare (1987: 29) "the preservation of family life should always be top priority in child welfare in order to save the family for the child and to promote the present functioning of the society at large, as well as prevent a second generation failure in the sphere of parental functioning". The researcher is therefore of the opinion that welfare organisations' main priority should be to preserve the family by focussing on preventative programmes rather than statutory proceedings channeled to remove the child from the family home. The researcher also has undergone a Project Go workshop focusing on preventing the child to move deeper within the system. During the training it was highlighted that social workers should focus more on preventative work, instead of operating within the statutory arena through removing the children from their parents' care. Avoiding the statutory placement of children and preserve the family was deemed much better.

According to Sishuta (1996: 59), 'the thrust toward providing services to the biological family in order to prevent the placement has gained support not only from the increased awareness of the limitations of foster care but also from an appreciation of the meaning and importance of the family and the growing awareness of importance of continuity in the development of human beings'. Obviously in certain cases where children are "at risk" of serious harm then they should be placed in a safe context. Laird (1979: 188) in Schatz and Bane (1991: 670) seems to be of the opinion that "the most effective way to preserve natural family ties is to strengthen and preserve the family itself". Ideally one wants to preserve the family instead of removing children and would therefore introduce parenting groups in order to equip parents with the necessary skills to deal with child rearing. Schatz and Bane (1991: 670) advocated the opinion that in order to strengthen family ties and see a complete

change in the communication patterns and role differentiations one need to work on intervention strategies that will uplift institutional and community support networks. The researcher believes that by doing so, internal and external resources needs to be drawn on to support the biological family as well as external family members.

2.6 THE NEED FOR FAMILY PLANNING

The researcher fully support the following statement “it is especially important for parents who are already functioning on a marginal level also to consult and use the services of family planning clinics where they can be enlightened about the possibility of restricted reproduction and sterilization” (South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare, 1987: 33). The researcher is of the opinion that parents who live in poverty and who are struggling to make ends meet should utilise the services of family planning clinics in order to avoid unplanned babies being born in the process.

2.7 PARENTAL EMPOWERMENT

“Empowerment requires that the person seeking change be involved in understanding, assessing, analysing, choosing, planning, acting, and evaluating themselves in the process”(Shatz and Bane, 1991: 670). From the aforementioned, one realises that the person being empowered is actively involved through the whole empowerment process. Tunnard (1989) illustrates the strength of parents self-help programs as one way of promoting family and child care services that build on the strengths of families (Schatz and Bane, 1991: 688). One need to take cognisance of the fact that one finds two types of parents. On the one hand one find those dedicated and motivated parents who are willing to improve their circumstances by utilising resources such as self-help groups. However, one the otherhand one find those parents who are not prepared to utilise resources and improve their circumstances. Hence, one has to explore the reasons why parents fail to attend self-help groups. The researcher therefore holds the opinion that one can educate and inform parents about issues, but it is their decision whether they want to help themselves in the process. Maluccio, et al (1986: 171) stated that, ‘to judge a parent’s ability to manage responsible care of him/herself and the children, the worker must be sure the parent has access to those services that

facilitate coping. For this reason, the worker has the task of matching available resources with parent needs". The researcher fully agrees with the above statements, as parents cannot develop their own capacities without being linked to the most appropriate resources. Parents should however have the willingness to improve their lifestyles and be prepared to continue caring for their children by utilising the services that are made available them.

2.8 KEY CONSIDERATION FOR INTERVENTION

The South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare (1987: 29) is of the opinion that welfare organizations should direct their efforts to develop and advocate the development of those services and facilities in the community which would in general promote family life and raise the functional parenting capacity of its members, or to modify the support systems of the community in such a way that disadvantaged families are helped to use them more effectively.

Laird (1979: 205) in Maluccio et al, (1986: 7) claims that "every effort is thus made to support the family, to enhance its functioning, and to avoid separation and placement. When separation is necessary, the importance of the family continuous to be recognized through active efforts to maintain family ties, to support shared parenting by biological and foster parents, and to work, wherever possible, toward reuniting in the family" (Laird, 1979: 205) in Maluccio et al, (1986: 7). According to the South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare (1987: 39) "it is only after all efforts have failed to keep the family together, that alternative care for the children should be considered". To the researcher it would seem that child removal should be considered as a last resort as it often results in family disintegration. The researcher advocates that foster parents should also provide a supportive role to the biological parents by encouraging them to maintain contact with their children. Hence, biological- and foster parents should form partnerships, with the aim of strengthening the relationship between the child and biological parents. Social workers could play a key role in facilitating dialogue between foster parents and biological parents.

The South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare (1987: 39) warns

that "if social workers fail to grasp what receiving into care of their children can mean to parents, they are not likely to give sufficient encouragement to the natural parents to remain in contact with their children and the welfare agency. Under those circumstances they may easily fade out the life of their children, and parents and children may then easily drift apart". Thus, biological parents need the encouragement and support from their social workers after the removal of their children, so that important ties are not broken.

The South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare (1987: 39) made an interesting statement when they stated, "it may be difficult for social workers to accept very limited parents, especially when their limitations have resulted in cruelty towards their children. But acceptance is vital before a social worker can even begin to render help". Fostering a non-judgemental empathetic attitude towards these seemingly dysfunctional parents is necessary in order to facilitate growth and empowerment in these individuals.

Smith (1991: 667) further states "parents must be helped to develop their capability for a continual role in the decision-making about their children, be encouraged to sustain regular, quality contact with their children, and be linked with other resources and services that can remediate the problems that brought them to their current status". Biological parents need to play an active role in their children's child-rearing practices, even if the child is placed in alternative care. This however can be problematic, as according to the South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare (1987: 40) "the parents' experience of filial deprivation and its immediate as well as its long ranging effect on parents must be well understood by the social worker in order to plan an effective service. As this phenomenon can exercise such a strong influence on parents which can easily contribute to their disinvolvement with the child, active steps must be taken by the social worker to prevent parents and child drifting away from one another".

Kline and Overstreet (1972: 3) in Malaka (1982: 29) suggests key considerations in intervention, "the worker should aim at alleviating the parents' fear of loss whose diverse components include the following: "(1) fear of losing the child's; (2) the parents' wish and need to be rid of the stress of the child's care; (3) reactivation of

painful separation anxiety; and (4) anxiety about the unknown future equilibrium of his life without the child and his potential for re-establishing the family”.

The South African National Council for Child and Welfare (1987: 29) made a very interesting statement when they stated that one of the factors which affect the parent's capacity is based on “the kind of counseling, supportive and supplementary services provided by the social worker and the child welfare society on the one hand and the parent's capacity to use this service, is another factor”. Thus, it seems to the researcher that the social worker also has an important role in ensuring that the child and parent are reunified in the process. An accurate assessment about the level of the parents' capacities should be conducted by the social worker in determining their willingness to be re-unified with their children.

2.9 COMMUNITY SUPPORT

In terms of the family reunification processes the ecological perspective “fosters strategically designed interventions that build institutional and community support for families and family subsystems and seeks to change family communication and behaviour and role patterns from dysfunctional patterns to more functional patterns” (Schatz and Bane, 1991: 670). It was interesting to note that within the research study which the researcher conducted, one of the respondents made a statement around communication between parents within the household. Hence, the researcher believes that one of the core functions of family re-unification is communication and informing each other what their needs and concerns are if dissatisfied with certain issues. The researcher is of the opinion that a child should be returned to the parent only if the parent's circumstances had improved.

The South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare (1987: 32) claimed “in order to assist parents to continue to care for their children, or to ensure that children are returned to their care as soon as possible where initial removal is unavoidable and to prevent later relapse in the family situation, it is often necessary to provide additional services to complement and strengthen parenting capacity”. The Council therefore highly regards community work as it assists parents' in rearing their

children. They describe the services to be 'more specific and concentrated on the establishing or expanding of services from which parents can benefit directly such as day care, emergency shelters (which can give temporary accommodation to families who are destitute)' (South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare, 1987: 32). The researcher fully supports the above statement made by the council and is of the opinion that shelters within communities needs to be supported and strengthened, as all efforts are directed to family preservation. The parent and child will in the process receive the necessary support, love and care from shelters that avail their services to families at risk. However, one needs to be cautious of the fact that one deals with vulnerable families where children and parents seem to be at risk. Issues such as confidentiality need to be ensured and considered in the process.

2.10 PATRIARCHAL VS. FEMINIST ROLES

Snyder and Tadesse (1995: 9) claims "in terms of the 'welfare approach' women are solely passive recipients of the development benefits because their major roles are reproductive ones- motherhood and child rearing- whereas men's work is identified as productive". It seems that within a patriarchal system childcare roles are generally ascribed to women. Men in this context seem to play a passive role in the child-rearing process, while seeking employment. Their role as men is seen as finding employment and see to the basic needs of their family. According to Rich (1976) in Andersen (1983: 163-164) "women's roles as mothers are idealized in our culture as all- loving, kind, gentle, and selfless; however, the objective conditions of motherhood in this society fill the role with contradictions, conflicts, and pleasures. Motherhood is, in fact, a social institution- one that is controlled by the systems of patriarchy and the ecological relations in which it is embedded". Most of the women in this study came from backgrounds which are patriarchally defined and they themselves ascribe very definite gender roles to themselves.

One also needs to take cognisance of the fact that it is ineffective to empower individuals if there are little or no resources to render supportive services. The Social Support Model includes personal social support systems, family support systems, and varied groupings of community and institutional support systems (Schatz and Bane,

1991: 671). One therefore realises that parents whose children were removed from their care need the support in order to cope with stressors in life. Maluccio et al (1986: 93) holds the following opinions that, "it is essential to engage into planning intervention strategies in order to conduct an accurate assessment of parents and their situations. In particular, the worker needs to comprehend and evaluate the parents inner strengths; environmental resources; style of relating to others; grounding in reality; ability to adapt to and handle stress; most of all, capacity to promote the healthy growth and development of the child".

2.11 CHILD CARE WITHIN A SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

Contradictorily, (Russell, 1995: 14) is of the opinion that the family does play an active role in the lives of its members especially in the rural areas. "Child care in African societies in South Africa, though partly commodities in the employment of paid domestic servants and the provision of infant schools and crèches is still for the greater part seen as the direct responsibility of the child's kin. Although mother and father are both seen as central figures in this constellation of responsible kin, they are not alone". Sono (1994: 82) comments "... in the South African context, when we talk about poverty we mainly refer to an experience that affect people (the majority of whom are black) whose wages are below the poverty line or who have no source of income and those who have no opportunities or means (including state support) to improve their quality of life". It is without doubt that poverty seems to contribute greatly to child removals. It appears that parents who do not have the means to adequately care for their children resort to abandonment and neglect.

Thus, there are several factors endemic to South African societies which negatively impede on the family functioning of South African families. Sono (1994: 90) stated "anger and frustration may lead to family violence, alcoholism, family breakdown, mental illness and other stress-induced diseases. To many black families, life is a continuous crises, which induces feelings of hopelessness and helplessness about the present and future". Sono (1994: 90) further reflects "where child rearing is concerned, the materially stressful conditions may reduce the amount of affection and warmth parents could afford their children, this may lead to child neglect and abuse

and the phenomenon of street children". Child neglect, child removal is not a micro-issue, but forms part of a macro picture. Emmenes (1998: 4) is referring to the "the South African Guide (1987: 1) comments that there are a large number of children in South Africa who have been removed from parental care and are placed in foster care".

2.12 SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Fellner and Solomon (1973: 182) in Malaka (1982: 160) recommended group sessions as part of the preparatory work in helping families to regain care of their children. They state that 'group sessions allow the parents to tell each other about their specific situations and to address themselves to how each is moving towards a solution of foster care'. From the above statement the researcher senses that parents have to take ownership of their problems and find solutions in the process. Any effective intervention strategy will need to have the full co-operation or participation of the parents concerned.

Jenkins and Norman (1975: 123) after conducting a group with mothers found that "bitterness dropped sharply, and there was a decline of sadness, worry and nervousness and a rise in relief and thankfulness. The feelings that persisted most strongly over the years were guilt, anger and shame". Group work could be perceived as one way of dealing with the emotions and psychological well-beings of the parents.

Similar to the aforementioned statements, Simms and Bolden (1991) are also of the opinion that with the support of family and community members, birth parents would be able to improve the social circumstances that might ultimately lead to family reunification. They are of the opinion that families who participated in the biological parent group were felt by the agency to be good candidates for reunification. During the group sessions it became clear that the children were destined to return to precarious and fragmented structures at best, with few community or extended family support available to parents (Simms and Bolden, 1991: 668). To the researcher the above-mentioned study indicates when parents are linked to the most suitable resources, they are able to deal constructively with their feelings. One does hope that

parents regard their children's initial removal as a lesson from which they could learn and move towards effective parenting.

2.13 CONCLUSION

Parents experience a sense of loss, anxiety, and guilt when their children are placed into alternative care. However, much emphasis was placed on preserving the family and focusing on reuniting the children ultimately into the parents' care. It is recognised that this is not always possible, as placing children back with the parents can be detrimental to the child's well being as well.

Two opposing views were highlighted earlier whereby the one view focuses on the importance of family ties and the relationship between the child and the parent's needs to be strengthened instead of removing the child from the parents. Whereas the opposing view is of the opinion that society will intervene if a child's needs are not best met within the family environment, arguing that an alternative placement will ensure an safe environment for the child. Thus, an accurate and in-depth study needs to be made of the family's functioning.

It is important to take cognizance of the fact that the initial reason for the child's removal must have been resolved before the child can return home. Parental empowerment within a group context can play an important role in strengthening parents for the reunification process. It was also argued that parents need other supportive methods in order to make a success of reunification.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology was undertaken in distinct phases. The framework for discussion of this chapter is as follows: -

Overall Research design

The Sampling Strategy

Data Collection

Data Analysis

Limitations

3.1 OVERALL RESEARCH DESIGN

The researcher has researched single parents of children who were placed into foster care. According to the authors Rubin and Babbie (1997: 114) “individual human beings are perhaps the most typical units of analysis for scientific research. We tend to describe and explain social groups and interactions for example aggregating and manipulating the descriptions of the individual”.

A qualitative approach was used, as single parents’ subjective experiences were elicited. De Vos (1998: 315) describes a qualitative approach “to generate qualitative data, i.e., words, categorisations and expressions that are used by the participants themselves. These emic data are to a greater or lesser extent used together with etic data, i.e. scientific concepts used by the researcher to gain insight into the world of the group members”. The researcher chose qualitative instead of quantitative research, as she wanted to explore the specific needs of single parents who are awaiting reunification of their children. By means of open-ended questions single parents were able to share their opinions within the interview schedule and focus group session. According to Krueger (1994) in De Vos (1998: 315) “an open-ended question allows the participant to answer freely and could therefore be compared to a blank page to be filled in by the interviewee”.

The research study was explorative, as the researcher needed to explore and assess the needs of single parents after the removal of their children from their care. According to Neuman (1997: 19) “exploratory research address the ‘what’ question. It also adopted an investigative stance, and explored all sources of information”. The researcher used applied research as she is employed at a Social Services Department. She hopes to avail this document to the rest of her colleagues and other welfare agencies who render a service to biological parents whose children are in foster care. The author Neuman (1997: 22) describes applied research as “trying to solve specific policy problems or help practitioners accomplish tasks. Applied research has immediate implications or involves controversial issues, it often generates conflict”.

Overt research was conducted, informing the respondents about the nature of the study. For the researcher it was difficult to make sense of the behaviour and correct personality of the respondents being studied. Therefore, the difficulty with reactivity was that the respondents acted differently because they knew they were being studied, and were partly pretending. Thus, they put up an act. By making use of file perusals the researcher gained insight in terms of the character of the respondent and seemed to have been in a position to distinguish whether the respondents were putting up an act. However, the researcher realised that secondary sources such as files, can be biased in terms of documenting information from people’s own interpretations around the issues. According to Neuman (1997: 421) “without an analytical interpretation or theory provided by the researcher, the readers of qualitative research may use their own everyday, taken-for-granted ideas. Their commonsense framework is likely to contain implicit assumptions, biases, ethnocentrism, and ill-defined concepts from dominant cultural values”. With regards to reflexivity, the researcher reflected on what impact the interview had on the research study, evaluating her role as the researcher, as well as what issues she could improve on. The field site was the Tafelsig area within the Mitchell’s Plain community.

The Office Head was perceived as a gatekeeper, as permission needed to be obtained from him to conduct the research study. Thus, he controlled access at all levels within the office. The researcher was of the opinion that the community leaders’ permission to enter their community was not needed, as removal of children from their parent’s care was a sensitive issue, and confidentiality needed to be maintained at all times.

The researcher also needed to develop trust by the respondents. 'An attitude of strangeness' needed to be adopted by the researcher. Having the theoretical knowledge around removals and biological parents' feelings does not make you, as the researcher, the expert. The researcher was willing to learn and show empathy to the respondents. By doing so, she showed genuineness and respect to the respondents.

3.2 THE SAMPLING STRATEGY

The research study was a non-probability sample. According to De Vos (1998: 198) non-probability sampling comprises of "accidental, purposive, quota, dimensional, target, snowball and spatial sampling". De Vos (1998: 198) describes accidental sampling to be "any case which happens to cross the researcher's path and has something to do with the phenomenon, gets included in the sample until the desired number is obtained". De Vos (1998: 198) highlights purposive sampling as "elements which contain the most characteristic, representative or typical attributes of the population". Quota samples' main purpose is to "draw a sample which is as close to a replica of the population as possible and which represents the population as such". Bailey (1994: 95) in De Vos (1998: 199) describes Dimensional Sampling as a "multidimensional form of quota sampling. The idea is to specify all variables in the population which are of interest to the investigation, and then see to it that each dimension is represented by at least one case". De Vos (1998: 200) describes target sampling as a "strategy to obtain systematic information when random sampling is impossible and when accidental sampling cannot be strictly implemented in consequence of the hidden nature of the problem". According to De Vos (1998: 200) snowball sampling involves "approaching a single case who is involved in the phenomenon to be investigated to gain information on other similar persons. In turn this person is again requested to identify further people who may make up the sample". It is argued by De Vos (1998: 200) that spatial sampling "is used in cases of highly temporary populations, e.g. a sporting event or the scene of an accident".

This sample was also be classified as purposive and convenience sampling. It was purposive in that the sample group contained particular characteristics under investigation. It was an "emulative volunteer sample" in that those single parents who

were part of the clientele base of the agency, which the researcher works for, was approached. The voluntary nature related to the fact that these single parents were not coerced in any way.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION STRATEGY

With the names received from the social workers the researcher needed to peruse each of the respondents' files in order to familiarise herself with the cases. The researcher conducted home visits in order to ensure confidentiality when informing the respondents about the research study. The researcher was of the opinion that the conducting of semi-structured interviews at the homes of the respondents might have implications. For example, the issue of privacy. The single parent might share a house with another family, which results in her not having the freedom to disclose information. The parent's own children that might not have been removed from their care, or was born after the initial removal of the other children, might distract the parent's attention from the research process. However, if this occurred, the researcher would arrange an alternative venue to conduct the research, occupying the children in the next room with the availability of toys. It was important for the researcher to observe the verbal and non-verbal behaviour (body language) of each respondent, as it provided the researcher with more insight with regards to the character and personality of the respondent.

Data was collected via an interview schedule and four focus groups.

3.3.1 THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

According to the authors Rubin and Babbie (1997: 390) the interview guide approach is described as "...the use of interviews that are planned in advance and are therefore more structured than informed conversational interviews".

3.3.2 THE FOCUS GROUP

A key data collection method in this study, was the use of focus groups. De Vos

(1998: 315) describes a focus group as “a purposive discussion of a specific topic or related topics taking place between 8 to 10 individuals with a similar background and common interests” (Ferreira and Puth, 1987 in De Vos, 1998).

According to De Vos (1998: 324) one of the advantages of a focus group is “it exposes the researcher to the respondents’ world views, permit considerable probing and shed light on the nature of relationships in the field”.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

According to De Vos (1998: 344) “there is not a wrong or right way to perform data analysis. The important issue is that a researcher should be able to logically account for stages in data analysis and that the final conclusions be based on generated data”.

Data from the individual interview schedule is prescribed in a table (See page 32 of Chapter 4). The responses of participants to the group format of the parent support programme is summarised and presented briefly in the findings chapter.

Data from the focus groups are analysed according to Tesch’s stages (1990: 154-156) in De Vos (1998: 343).

The Research was undertaken in different phases:

PHASE 1

1.1 The researcher compiled a well-thought and thorough Literature Review.

1.2 The researcher developed an interview schedule, in order to gather basic information from the participants as well as to explore themes for the focus groups.

1.3 The Department of Social Services’ files for possible candidates were perused. The researcher developed and administered a questionnaire to explore how participants felt about sharing their experience in groups.

1.4 In terms of sampling, the researcher recruited from the availability of possible candidates from the Department’s files. She recruited 8 single biological parents for

the research study.

1.5 The researcher contracted with the individual single parents, and therefore focussed on issues such as confidentiality and committing themselves to be present for the four focus group sessions.

PHASE 2

2.1 The researcher prepared an outline for each focus group session.

2.2 Group session materials and reading preparation for the session was done.

2.3 Developed a focus group interview-schedule based on the assessment of the needs of the individual single parents.

2.4 She contracted with the parents and set up materials for focus group sessions.

2.5 Focus group sessions were tape-recorded and notes were taken by the researcher in order to observe the verbal and non-verbal behaviour of the individual single parents.

2.6 An appropriate video was selected.

2.7 A possible guest speaker was contracted by the researcher in order to serve as a motivational speaker to the single parents. By doing so, she hoped that the parents' self-esteem would be boosted in the process.

2.9 Terminated group process and debriefed respondents.

PHASE 3

3.1 Data was collected through tape-recorded focus group sessions. These tapes were transcribed and analysed according to measure themes that emerge.

3.2 These sessions were analysed within the context of the group processes according to Tesch's (1990) stages in De Vos (1998: 343). They are the following: -

Stage 1

The researcher has to read through all the transcriptions carefully. Some ideas as they come to mind will be jot down.

Stage 2

The researcher selects one interview and goes through it asking questions such as “what is this about?” Thoughts are written in the margin.

Stage 3

When the researcher has completed this task for several respondents, a list is made of all the topics. Similar topics are clustered together and formed into major topics, unique topics or left overs.

Stage 4

The researcher takes the list and returns to the data. Topics are abbreviated as codes and the codes written next to the appropriate segments of the text. The researcher tries out this preliminary organising scheme to see whether new categories and codes emerge.

Stage 5

The researcher finds the most descriptive wording for the topics and turns them into categories. Grouping together topics that relate to each other reduces the total list of categories.

Stage 6

The researcher makes a final decision on the abbreviation for each category.

Stage 7

The data material belonging to each category is assembled in one place and a preliminary analysis performed.

Stage 8

The researcher recodes existing data if necessary.

3.3 The questionnaires were assessed in terms of feelings and attitudes prior to and after the group process pertaining to the themes within the group.

PHASE 4

The researcher wrote up the research report.

3.5 LIMITATIONS

3.5.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.5.1.1 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Neuman (1997: 421) claims that “the form of analysis and theorizing in qualitative research sometimes make it difficult to see generalizations. Some qualitative researchers are almost entirely descriptive and avoid theoretical analysis”. The researcher felt that this type of research was less effective when macro-level studies and social structures needed to be studied. She was of the opinion that with qualitative research it was also nearly useless to recall events that occurred in the distant past. The researcher supported the argument of the author Neuman (1997: 421) when she indicated that “qualitative researchers conceptualize or form concepts as they read through and ask critical questions of data (e.g. field notes, historical documents, secondary sources)”.

3.5.1.2 SAMPLING

With regards to quota samples De Vos (1998: 199) argues “the most important deficiency of this type of sample is that the selection of persons for inclusion in the sample rests totally with the field worker and that subjectivity can consequently play a significant role”. It was the opinion of the researcher that the sample size studied consisted of 8 respondents of which 7 completed all four sessions. The sample size was small, with the result that a worldview pertaining to the topic could not be formulated. According to Bailey (1994: 95) in De Vos (1998: 199) “dimensional samples entails that only a few cases are studied in depth”. The sample predominantly consisted of unemployed women whose children were removed from their care. The sample was carefully selected from the case loads of social workers at the Department of Social Services.

3.5.1.3 FOCUS GROUPS

Neuman (1997: 325) is of the opinion that “the moderator has less control than the interviewer who conducts individual interviews. The focus group interview allows the participants to influence and interact with one another and, as a result, they are able to influence the cause of the interview”. The researcher fully agrees with the above author, as the facilitator must have control over the group, because certain respondents might dominate the group sessions. Often respondents do not trust facilitators. Neuman (1997: 325) claims “conducting focus group interviews on sensitive topics such as sexual behaviour give rise to ethical questions regarding confidentiality of information”. Hence, the researcher is of the opinion that the facilitator must also be skilled to allow the respondents to disclose information. A problem disclosing information around sensitive topics could create discomfort by group members. The researcher had limited research experience in the running of focus group sessions. She observed that the group was very supportive towards one another and would empathise when one respondent, for example, would disclose her thoughts and feelings when her child was removed from her care. It was, however, interesting to note that various group roles were performed within the focus group sessions, be it in the form of a dominant or silent group member.

3.5.1.4 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The authors Rubin and Babbie (1997: 390) claim that “the down side to the highly structured approach however is that it reduces the natural conversational nature of the interview and the interviewer’s flexibility to follow up on important unanticipated circumstances or responses”. Hence, to the researcher it seemed that the fluency of the conversation was restricted due to set questions asked during the interview. For example, when the respondents were asked whether they had previous group work experience, two of them indicated that they would feel uncomfortable sharing information within a group setting. Thus, the researcher was unable to ask follow-up questions.

3.5.2 TAPE RECORDER

The use of the tape recorder impacted on the naturalness of the conversation but this could be discussed beforehand. When a respondent wanted to provide input on a

specific topic or issue she had to wait for the tape recorder to be handed to her by another respondent before she could reply. Hence, it delayed the flow of conversation.

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CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Four focus group sessions were conducted. A semi-structured interview schedule was used to elicit the identifying details of the respondents, as well as their feelings about a Parent Support Program (See Appendix A and B). The following themes were developed:

Focus group session 1: Theme- Financial and Emotional Support

Focus group session 2: Theme- Self-esteem

Focus group session 3: Theme- Dealing with children upon return

Focus group session 4: Theme- Empowering Parents

These themes were being explored in relation to the two main research objectives. These objectives are:

1. To ascertain the specific needs of single parents who are awaiting the reunification process of their children,
2. To explore whether a Parent Support Program would benefit single parents.

4.2 RESPONDENTS IN THE STUDY

4.2.1 STRATEGIES IN RECRUITING RESPONDENTS

The researcher approached social workers individually in requesting names of possible single parents from their caseloads. During social work meetings the researcher reminded the social workers to submit the names of their clients timeously to the researcher. Prospective respondents were invited via letters to meet the researcher for the first interview. Office appointments were scheduled as the researcher was concerned about possible disturbances and lack of privacy at the homes of the respondents. During these meetings the researcher completed the

individual interview schedule and pre-test questionnaire with them (See Appendix A and Appendix B). The interview schedule served as a tool to obtain more information about the respondent's life history. From the interview schedule themes for the focus group sessions also emerged. On the other hand, the pre-test questionnaire was utilised to evaluate whether the respondents had previous group work experiences.

Home visits were conducted in order to assess the home circumstances with all prospective respondents. The researcher arranged transport to and from the venue where the group sessions were held. Respondents were also reminded telephonically about the scheduled dates for the group sessions.

4.2.2 NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS IN THE SAMPLE

Initially the researcher had recruited six respondents when she attempted to start with the parent support program. However, when two of the respondents dropped out after having found permanent employment the researcher realised that she would need to recruit more members.

Four more respondents were recruited via the social workers' caseloads. Eight respondents thus attended the focus group sessions. Seven of the eight respondents attended all four sessions. One respondent only completed three sessions because she found an opportunity to earn money through doing domestic work.

4.2.3 DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED IN RECRUITING THE SAMPLE

The researcher arranged to have focus group sessions on Saturdays in order to accommodate employed mothers. The boardroom at the researcher's workplace served as a venue for the focus group sessions. Only two respondents came for the first session, of which one was intoxicated. When the researcher contacted the other four respondents, she was informed that they had to be occupied elsewhere on that specific Saturday. To the researcher it then seems that the parent support programme was not a

priority in the lives of the respondents. Later during the week the researcher discovered that two of the respondents found permanent employment and were therefore unable to participate in the parent support program. Obviously becoming financially empowered was considered a greater priority than a parent support program.

The researcher learnt two valuable lessons from the whole process.

- (i) Respondents were not keen to attend any group sessions over weekends. Thus, these sessions should be held during the weekdays instead.
- (ii) Research is not a smooth process. The researcher has to be flexible.

Finally eight respondents were recruited and the following table presents a basic profile of each respondent.

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4.2.4 TABLE 1: PROFILE OF EACH RESPONDENT

<u>Female respondent</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Level of education</u>	<u>Present Employment</u>	<u>Support Network</u>	<u>No. of Children</u>	<u>No. of Children in care</u>	<u>Reason for Removal</u>	<u>Contact with children</u>	<u>Specific needs</u>	<u>No of sessions attended</u>
1.BM	50	Standard 2	Unemployed	None	2	1	Alcohol Abuse	Irregular	Wants Child Back	4
2.VA	52	Standard 3	Domestic work	Church Family Social worker	3	1	Behaviour problems	Regular	To obtain fixed employment	3
3.LG	31	Standard 6	Unemployed	Family	3	2	Neglect	Irregular	To obtain fixed employment	4
4.SV	40	Standard 6	Unemployed	Boyfriend	2	1	Behaviour problems	Regular	To move out of area.	4
5.IT	35	Standard 6	Casual	Foster Parents	1	1	Abandonment	Regular	Security & stability	4
6.MO	41	Illiterate	Unemployed	Boyfriend	3	2	Alcohol Abuse	Regular	Wants children back.	4
7.SP	27	Standard 7	Unemployed	Family	1	1	Abandonment	Regular	Employment	4
8.RJ	28	Standard 5	Unemployed	Boyfriend Islamic Organisation	3	3	No fixed accommodation	Irregular	Wants children back	4

N=8

(Data gained from semi-structured interview schedule, Appendix A)

The aforementioned table was gleaned from the interview schedule. See Appendix A. The interviews were conducted with the respondents in order to elicit their identifying details. In determining the level of education of each respondent the researcher discovered that the highest level of education was standard seven, and the lowest level consisted of one respondent who had no formal education. Hence, it appears that their levels of education were limited during their childhood years. It therefore seems that this subsequently resulted in them not being able to gain financial stability in life.

When the researcher enquired about what topics she need to discuss within the focus group sessions, the general comment raised from these respondents focussed on child and parental re-unification issues.

One of the general comments made by the respondents was "*hoe ek kan maak om my kinders terug te kry*" (See Appendix A).

Three of the respondents also wanted parental coping strategies to be discussed within the focus group sessions.

Another respondent said, "*hoe om te maak om my kind terug te kry*" (See Appendix A).

To the researcher, the above issues received from the respondents clearly indicated that respondents might have the need to have their children re-unified with them, and with the necessary skills they would be able to cope with the child upon return.

The pre-test questionnaire (See Appendix B) was utilised to evaluate whether the respondents had previous group work experience. The researcher discovered that the majority of the respondents never had any group experiences. Hence, when asked how

the group experience could assist them as individuals, some of the respondents indicated that they could share their problems with others.

One of the comments made by the respondents was, *“dit sal my help om te besef dat ander mense ook dieselfde experience soos ek het”* (See Appendix B); Whilst another indicated *“as `n individual luister `n mens wat die next persoon praat en jy slaan ag daarop”* (See Appendix B).

The researcher is of the opinion that a sense of solidarity is created amongst respondents when they learn that others share similar life experiences.

It was interesting to note that only four of the eight respondents were of the opinion that they will share their life experiences with the rest of the group.

One of these respondents commented, *“ek is nie `n skaam persoon nie”*(See Appendix B).

Whilst on the other hand another respondent indicated that *“ek sal okay voel, want ek wil hê ander moet weet wat ek deurgegaan het”* (See Appendix B).

The researcher discovered that two of the respondents felt uncomfortable to share their life experiences with the rest of the group. One of the respondents indicated, *“bietjie ongemaklik, want ek deel nie my persoonlike dinge met vreemdes nie”*. Whilst the other respondent indicated, *“ek weet nie, want ek het nog nie in `n groep gepraat nie”*. To the researcher it seems that these respondents have difficulty in trusting and sharing their life experiences with the rest of the group. This might be due to past experiences or individuals not being confident to share information within

a group setting.

One of them commented "*ek sal 'n bietjie ongemaklik voel want ek deel my persoonlike dinge met vreemdes*" (See Appendix B).

To the researcher it then seems that while some of the respondents share issues spontaneously with the rest of the group, others find it difficult or threatening. This might indicate that they want to create awareness about the lessons they have learnt in the past. It might also indicate that not all the group members would share information willingly to the researcher or the rest of the group members.

4.3 DISCUSSION OF MAIN FINDINGS

4.3.1 GENERAL NEEDS OF SINGLE PARENTS

4.3.1.1 INTRODUCTION

The respondents were very insightful, in that they could identify their needs (Appendix C, 1: 77-79). Many of them mentioned the need for acceptance of themselves. Other needs highlighted by the rest of the group were the following: the need for good mothering and nurturance; the need to have their child back; to raise the child independently; and to live independently.

Some of the comments highlighted were that "*ek wil net weer sy moeder wees. because toe hy weggeneem word, het ek hom baie verlang*" (Appendix C, 1: 75);

"*my verlange is ook, ek wil op my own wees, as ek my kind op my own wil hê*" (Appendix C, 1: 84).

Whilst another respondent indicated: *"ek vra elke aand vir die Here om my kinders se harte oop te maak vir my"*(Appendix C, 2: 88).

It seems the respondents want to correct their past failures. This might indicate guilt on the part of the parent. They had the need to convince the researcher about their ability to care for their own children.

The researcher found the comment of the respondent very interesting when she indicated the following during the evaluation session, *"tot ons ons kinders kry, het ons mekaar baie nodig"*(Appendix C, 2: 91).

It appears that this specific respondent highlighted the need for them as parents to support one another. Thus, it seems a sense of solidarity developed amongst the respondents.

When in one session, respondents were requested to share two of their personality traits with the group, most of them mentioned that they love their children and have the need to be with them.

Some of the general comments were: *"ek is baie lief vir my kinders..."* (Appendix C, 2: 88) or *"ek hou ook daarvan om met my kind te wees"* (Appendix C, 2: 88).

These statements by the respondents seemed to be interpreted as their need to confirm their affection and love for their children. The need to affirm their affection to their children could be related to the fact that they feel guilty and insecure about their capability to care for their children.

4.3.1.2 THE NEED FOR SUPPORT

Andrews (2000: 37) stated, the 'family has been described as a primary source of support'. The majority of the respondents claimed that their partners, extended family, and the church offered substantial emotional support.

General comments received from respondents were "*ek kry my support van my ma, suster en my broers...*" (Appendix C, 1: 82).

Whilst other respondents indicated "*my boyfriend support my baie*" (Appendix C, 1: 83).

It needs to be mentioned that religious institutions such as the church also play a significant role in supporting one specific respondent emotionally.

She commented "*ek het my hart oopgemaak met hulle. Ek het nooit gedink die kerk sal my help nie*" (Appendix C, 1: 82).

Interestingly in this regard, Serpell (1992: 21) in Weisner (1997) makes reference to the great loss of community support systems in Africa. Whether this may be generally true it differs from region to region and from town to town. Although the majority of the respondents receive emotional support from others, one particular respondent indicated a lack of emotional support received from significant others.

She commented "*daar is niemand wat my support nie*" (Appendix C, 1: 81).

One respondent indicated that she has not received any support from her family or biological father of the child.

Whilst another respondent highlighted "*ek depend nie eindelik op familie nie en ek het nou nie 'n man nie*" (Appendix C, 1: 82).

To the researcher it seems that this specific respondent might experience rejection from her family and significant others. Hence, she does not seem to have a strong support system in her life in order to deal with the emotional stresses she is faced with. Another respondent stated that, her bad behaviour at the foster carer's house resulted in the withdrawal of support she received from the foster carer and significant others (Appendix C, 1: 81). The researcher is of the opinion that the respondent's bad behaviour resulted in her not having a positive relationship with the foster parents. Hence, she receives a lack of support from the foster family that seems to negatively influence her ability to maintain regular contact with the child. Thus, it is evident that the above-mentioned respondents generally received minimal support.

It was interesting to notice that professionals such as the social workers played a significant role during the respondents' ordeal.

Some of the general comments received by the respondents were "*(Social worker) het my baie gehelp, bemoedig*" (Appendix C, 2: 90);

whilst others indicated "*ons het groot vriende kom raak en geheg kom raak aanmekaar*" (Appendix C, 2: 90).

Respondents may well be expressing the “right thing” in order to assuage the researcher. These respondents know that social workers have “power” to return their children to them. The researcher found it quite interesting that respondents developed positive relations with their social workers.

One of the comments was, “*Shanaaz Cloete het my baie gehelp. Ons het groot vriende kom raak en geheg geraak aanmekaar*”; Whilst another responded, “*Valencia is 'n baie goeie social worker en staan my baie by*”.

The National Foster Care Association (1987: 5) argues, ‘the overriding emotion for most parents of children who have been taken into care is guilt. This can easily turn into anger, directed at the social worker...’ In this study all of them agreed that their social worker played a significant role in providing support throughout the whole process’. This may have been the case in reality.

4.3.1.3 THE FOCUS GROUP AS A SUPPORT SYSTEM

Many of the respondents had difficulty trusting each other in the group environment.

Their responses clearly indicated that past experience impact on their ability to trust others. Tod (1971: 101) is of the opinion that ‘many parents of children in care have not themselves had satisfying experiences of care in their own childhood. They may envy the love and attention, which the foster home is providing for their children’. However, one respondent claimed that she had no difficulty trusting others.

The researcher found the above response interesting, as it seemed that she has the ability to trust the rest of the group with confidential information. It seems that the above respondent’s reason for trust might be due to her feeling a sense of solidarity within the group since she found herself with others in similar situations, all had their children removed from their care and placed elsewhere.

The respondents in this study felt that they could benefit from a parent support program.

One of the respondents indicated "*...met al die ondersteuning van maatskaplike werkers, van al die mummies wat hierso sit, die telefoon nommers, kan ek dit maak*" (Appendix C, 4: 101).

Whilst another respondent commented, "*ek het eers geweier in die eerste plek, toe dink ek nee ek gaan nie met 'n gebreekte hart daar sit nie. Daar is seker niks wat ek sal opdoen nie, maar in die tydjie wat ek nou hier sit het ek nou gevoel is ek nie alleen nie*" (Appendix C, 2: 91).

The above respondent's responses highlight the mix feelings she felt before she came to the focus group sessions. She was however honest to share her feelings with the researcher and rest of the group. One cannot help but think that the response from the respondent might have been one of the "unspoken thought" by some of the respondents. However, they found their participation in these group sessions very helpful and insightful.

The respondents predominantly felt empowered when the guest speaker related her life experience and advised how they could rise above their circumstances.

Some of the comments received were "*ek voel nie meer soos ek gevoel het nie*" (Appendix C, 4: 101), or "*en ek sê baie dankie vir die mummies wat hulle telefoon nommers gegee het en selfs hulle adresse gegee het sodat ek kan kontak maak met hulle*" (Appendix C, 4: 101).

The group experience gave rise to a sense of solidarity amongst the respondents.

Some of the comments received by respondents were, "*... die mense wat hier sit voel*

ampers soos hulle my familie is" (Appendix C, 4: 101), or *"dit is amper soos jy in 'n team, 'n groep is"* (Appendix C, 4: 91).

Another respondent indicated *"altyd het alles donker voor my gewees, maar nou sien ek meer lig, want ek het nou my phone number gegee en lyk gesels met mense"* (Appendix C, 4: 101).

The above responses could indicate that the respondents have the need to support one another and develop emotional strong bonds amongst each other amidst life difficulties.

4.3.1.4 THE NEED TO PROJECT A POSITIVE SELF-IMAGE

In establishing whether respondents' self-esteems were affected through their children's removal, the researcher discovered that the majority of the respondents experienced a loss of parental power.

Some of the comments were, *"dit maak my verder seer, dit breek my verder af, om te dink ek het 'n kind, maar sy is buite my bereik"* (Appendix C, 1: 76);

"as ek altyd kontak maak met hulle, dan voel dit altyd vir my ek is in hulle pad. Dan worry ek nie verder nie. Ek gaan nie eintlik meer daar nie..." (Appendix C, 1: 77).

Whilst another responded, *"my hoop is dat my kinders sal terug kom in my sorg. Vanaf my kinders weggeneem was, voel ek magteloos en alleen"* (Appendix C, 4: 100).

The researcher is of the opinion that since parents are denied access to their children and have no parental responsibility over their children a sense of powerlessness overwhelms them.

4.3.1.5 THE NEED TO PROJECT THEMSELVES AS MORE THAN ADEQUATE PARENTS

The respondents made particular reference to what they wanted to become and spoke about their circumstances, which derailed their goals. Some of the respondents wanted to follow the nursing career, while others envisioned becoming lawyers, teachers and housewives.

Of the comments highlighted by the respondents were, *"ek wou so graag 'n verpleegster geword het, omdat ek ander kan help en omsien"* (Appendix C, 4: 100), whilst another indicated *"my begeerte was ek wou graag leer vir 'n onderwyseres om met kinders te kommunikeer..."* (Appendix C, 4: 101).

The overwhelming majority of the respondents maintained that their poor home and family circumstances limited the extent to which these respondents could realise their life ambitions.

Many commented, *'... ek het nie die ondersteuning gekry van my ouers af nie'* or *'... weens omstandighede kon ek dit nie maak nie'* (Appendix C, 4: 101).

It is interesting to note that many of the respondents could not fulfill their "dreams" yet they portray a positive self-image. Given the statements in this section the researcher is more inclined to believe that their perceptions of themselves is not as positive as they portray.

Interestingly, when the respondents were requested to share with the rest of the group their collages, reflecting their perception about themselves, they reflected a confidence about themselves.

Some of the comments were "*ek lyks aantrek*" (Appendix C, 2: 87).

Whilst another indicated the following "*ek hou van om met mense te gesels en praat*" (Appendix C, 2: 87).

The researcher found the comment of one respondent interesting when she stated the following, "*ek hou daarvan om sterk te wees in tye van krisis*" (Appendix C, 2: 88).

Kline and Overstreet (1972: 3) made the following interesting statement when they indicated "... the failure to provide for the care of children within the family represents a supreme failure in one's duty, and usually is a devastating blow to parental self-esteem". The respondents in this sample however could have needed to compensate for whatever inadequacies they were feeling by being positive. On the other hand one also has to realise that these mothers may not necessarily have a low self-esteem.

When the respondents were asked about the qualities that will facilitate the parenting of their children upon the return from the foster care, many of the respondents remarked about their ability to love their children unconditionally.

Some of the comments received were, "*my sterk eienskappe wat ek in my lewe wil hê. dat ek al my liefde vir my kind wil gee soos nooit tevore nie.*" (Appendix C, 4: 99);

"my sterk eienskappe is dat ek wil 'n beter mens wees vir myself en my kinders" (Appendix C, 4: 99).

Whilst another respondent indicated *"my liefde is vir kinders"* (Appendix C, 4: 100).

The respondents generally spoke about their need to have their children returned into their care. Many of the respondents identified the need to be a good parent, giving to their children, which they missed out on in their childhood years.

Some of the comments raised by the respondents were, *"ek het probeer haar alles gee wat ek nooit gekry het nie, omdat ons so 'n groot familie van nege was"* (Appendix C, 4: 100), whilst another respondent indicated, *"die dinge wat ek nie gehad het nie, wil ek vir my kind gun"* (Appendix C, 4: 101).

These respondents have a great need to confirm their capacity to be better parents and may be unrealistic in being able to meet their children's needs.

One respondent had a positive stance regarding the removal of her child. She claimed that, despite the removal of her child she is still a good parent.

She indicated *"omdat ek nou iets oorgekom het wat gelei het tot my kind wat weggeneem was, beteken nie dat jy daai tipe 'swak' ouer is nie"* (Appendix C, 2: 87).

It seems that with the above response from the respondent she wants to inform the researcher and society that she is not a bad parent. Her response might indicate that she was labelled by others as a bad parent due to her child removal.

Another respondent commented, *'ek vra elke aand die Here om my kinders se harte oop te maak vir my'* (Appendix C, 2: 88).

It appears that there is an underlying fear of their children rejecting them. Stevenson (1977: 40) holds the opinion that, 'a foster child may have a special kind of anger, because he feels he has been let down by those who should have been reliable'. Another author Plotnik (1993: 373) argues 'parents who give poor emotional support or generate a hostile environment generally raise children who are distressed and have adjustment problems'. Thus, it is imperative that these women receive emotional support enabling them to give better support to their children.

4.3.1.6 THE NEEDS OF A SINGLE PARENT

The respondents offered different interpretations of single parenthood.

According to respondents single parents are defined as "... *'n ma wat ma en pa staan vir haar kind...*" (Appendix C, 1:80); or "*wanneer jou kind weggeneem word van jou en jy moet nou sien en klaar kom...*" (Appendix C, 1: 80).

Whilst another respondent indicated "*wanneer die persoon geen man het nie. Die man het haar verlaat en dan moet jy ma en pa staan vir daai kind...*" (Appendix C, 1: 80).

Similar to the last respondent's definition the researcher is also of the opinion that a single parent is to be regarded as someone whose spouse or partner has left her, or when someone chooses to be single. The author Stevenson (1977: 83) is of the opinion that the lone parent is where there is only one parent in the home, whether through divorce, separation, or death. There were however those respondents who valued the independence and freedom singleness offered.

Some of the comments were, "*dit is beter om single te wees, rather to be alone than unhappy. Jy kan maak wat jy wil...*" (Appendix C, 1: 81);

"... baie van ons voel om alleen op ons eie bene te staan. Ons wil op ons own wees en baie van ons wil mos nie trou nie, en sien liever kans om 'n enkel ouer te wees"(Appendix C, 1: 80).

The respondents either witnessed broken marriages, or preferred to be single. Some of their comments were "... ek het na baie mense se lewens gesien, watter lewens hulle moet deurgaan met hul mans" (Appendix C, 1: 81).

Another respondent indicated "*jy voel jy is baie gelukkig om alleen te wees met jou kind*" (Appendix C, 1: 80).

It needs to be mentioned that, although many of the respondents claimed that single parenthood was their preferred lifestyle, they nevertheless attributed their singleness as a key reason for their struggle in life.

One of these respondents indicated that it "... is nie lekker om alleen 'n kind groot te maak nie" (Appendix C, 1: 79). Whilst another respondent commented: "... ek is verseker dat as haar pa daar gewees het sou hy my kon gehelp het met haar" (Appendix C, 1: 81).

Thus, there appears to be pros and cons to being single and respondents have mixed feelings about this.

4.3.1.7 FINANCIAL NEEDS

In establishing whether the respondents are financially independent, the researcher discovered that the majority of the respondents were unemployed. They are either dependent on family or partners or the church for financial support.

Some of the general comments received were, "*my kind se pa hy ondersteun my*" (Appendix C, 1: 82); or "*my suster en my broers support my*" (Appendix C, 1: 83).

It needs to be mentioned that one respondent does not receive any financial support from family and friends, and rely solely on the kindness of people.

She commented, "*op hierdie huidige oomblik het ek geen inkomste nie*" (Appendix C, 1: 83).

Two of the respondents also receive financial support in the form of donations from religious institutions.

Comments received indicated, "*die kerk gee my so elke tweede week donasies*" (Appendix C, 1: 83).

Whilst the other respondent indicated "*daar is nog 'n plek wat my kan help, die is in Gatesville: Mustadafin. Hulle help my met klere, kos ens...*" (Appendix C, 3: 94).

Two of the respondents are in receipt of formal employment and seems to be in a position to become financially independent.

One of these respondents indicated *"op die oomblik werk ek. ... Daar is 'n inkomste wat ek darem kan aangaan mee..."* (Appendix C, 1: 83).

Once again it would appear that what respondents claim they would want to do for their children and the reality of the situation they found themselves in, may be contradictory.

4.3.1.8 SUMMARY

When one looks at this section in its entirety then a rather vulnerable picture emerges of these single parents who are the biological mothers of "children at risk". They themselves are "parents at risk" for various reasons that they might have put forward.

They have a history of unstable relationships, of poor support systems, lack of financial support, unemployed and not realistic about what they can do to sustain their children's affection. On the other hand, this section also highlights the resilience of these women, their willingness to start afresh despite the odds against them and their readiness to take their children back no matter what this cost.

4.3.2 PERCEIVED REASONS FOR CHILD REMOVAL

Respondents indicated various reasons why their children were taken away from them. Abandonment by the mother was a key reason for the removal of children. When relating the life histories mothers realised and emphasised the pressure of single parenthood.

One respondent disclosed, *"... ek het haar net gelos by die vrou waar ek gebly het ... Ek het nie teruggekom huis toe nie. En die rede hoekom ek dit gedoen het, is nie lekker om alleen 'n kind groot te maak nie"* (Appendix C, 1: 79).

Another respondent indicated *"die rede hoekom hy van my weggewees het, ek was weg met vrinne..."* (Appendix C, 1: 79).

It would appear that these mothers abandoned their children due to the difficulties of being a single parent. Once again this is a contradiction with what respondents reported about the positive aspect of being single.

A few of the respondents requested the removal of their children.

One respondent mentioned, *"ek het F self weggestuur..."* (Appendix C, 1: 89); " Whilst another reported: *"ek het C self weggestuur..."* (Appendix C, 1: 89).

The reasons for the requests were, *"ek het gedink dit sal iets goed wees, weg van die environment, weg van die verkeerde invloede"*. (Appendix C, 1: 89).

The other respondent indicated *"ek het gevoel F gaan verander toe ek haar wegstuur"* (Appendix C, 1: 89).

In such instances one could surmise that such removals were less traumatic than those involuntary removals. It seemed that the respondents were under the impression that their children would be reformed while residing in alternative care. Other respondents also informed the researcher about their reasons for their children's removal.

They indicated the following *"om rede hoekom sy van my weg is, is omdat ek nie 'n*

vastige blyplek gehad het nie" (Appendix C, 1: 78);

"die rede hoekom C weg is van my, want sy was 'n problem child" (Appendix C, 1: 77);

Whilst still another indicated *"die rede hoekom my kinders weggevat is van my is, voorheen was dit die vader en ek het nog nooit kontak gekry met hulle"* (Appendix C, 1: 78).

Hence, the lack of accommodation, lack of adequate parenting skills and unstable love relationships were mentioned as contributing factors. Sono (1994: 90) holds the following opinion that "anger and frustration may lead to family violence, alcoholism, family breakdown, mental illness and other stress-induced diseases. To many black families, life is a continuous crises, which induces feelings of hopelessness and helplessness about the present and future". Thus, the added stresses mention above only makes child rearing difficult, since parents have to cope with life difficulties on a daily basis as well as maintaining sound parenting.

Margow (1999: 4) identifies single parents who are experiencing difficulty in rising above their circumstances by resorting to emotional outbursts or drinks as a strategy to cope with problems, as the "group who sank". She further states "this group learnt to sink- that's what they saw, heard and accepted as the only means of dealing with adversity. They had little or no support system, and spent much time focusing and blaming everyone and everything else for their situation". Hence, these respondents would need assistance in dealing with their crisis issues.

4.3.2.1 CONSEQUENCES OF CHILD REMOVAL

The removal of children had both negative and positive implications. In the majority of cases, the experience was deemed a negative life experience. Two of the comments highlighted by respondents clearly illustrated the above.

They are the following, “*elke keer as ek kinders sien, dan dink ek aan my kind. Dit maak my verder seer, dit breek my verder af, om te dink ek het ’n kind, maar sy is buite my bereik*” (Appendix C, 1: 77);

The other respondent claimed “*my verlange is om haar te sien, ek mis haar en bid elke aand. Daar is nie ’n dag wat my trane nie rol vir haar nie*” (Appendix C, 1: 79).

To the researcher it seems that the child removal left a vacuum in the life of the parents since they are unable to proceed with their normal tasks without being reminded about their children. From the above comments made by the respondents one also notices that the child removal left the parents powerless and out of reach of their children. Parents’ self-esteems appeared to be affected in the process. Although the majority of the respondents perceived the removal in a negative light, one respondent deemed the removal as a positive intervention, claiming she felt empowered.

This specific respondent mentioned “*ek is heelwat ’n ander mens*” (Appendix C, 1: 78).

Margow (1999: 3) states that “many single parents share more or less similar circumstances yet some seem to come up trumps while others sink and pull the entire ship down with them”. She highlighted as one of the reasons for single parents to rise above their circumstances was the support these parents received from their friends, siblings or a group they belonged to (Margow, 1999: 4).

4.3.2.2 EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES OF CHILD REMOVAL

The respondents informed the researcher the removal of their children left emotional and psychological scars. Many stated that they have developed alcohol problems or

drank more heavily, suffered intense feelings of loss, had suicidal thoughts, and basically experienced a deep sense of pain, embedded with hurt and anger.

Some of the comments were "*toe dink ek, hooo... ek gaan nooit weer my kind terug kry nie...*"; "*... ek gaan myself doodmaak en onder die trein gooi...*"; "*... because is amper soos daar is iets wat weggevat is uit my hart uit*" (Appendix C, 2: 88).

Others responded: "*ek kon mal geraak het...*"; "*... en toe raak ek hysterical. Ek het gesê ek sign niks papier nie, en het die komberse van my afgegooi*" (Appendix C, 2: 89).

These respondents spoke about the times when they developed mental health problems since their thoughts were constantly preoccupied around the well being of their children.

Some respondents commented, "*... ek was baie disappointed en was instaat om enigiets te doen*" (Appendix C, 2: 90).

Others responded, "*... ek gaan nooit weer my kind terugkry nie*" (Appendix C, 2: 89).

One gained the impression that the above gave one an impression that their child's removal was a traumatic experience for the parent. According to Jenkins and Norman (1975: 129) "emotional supports, closeness, people who are there in time of trouble-these are the mere humanist definitions of family expressed by mothers with children in care". The researcher is of the opinion that a parent's socio-emotional- and psychological state plays a significant role in determining the readiness of returning the child to the parent's care.

4.3.2.3 SUMMARY

The above section shed some light on voluntary and involuntary removal of children. With voluntary removals the perception is held that it is less traumatic with the hope that the child's behaviour would have improved upon return into the care of his or her parent. With involuntary removals reasons such as abandonment, lack of accommodation, lack of parenting skills and unstable love relationships were obtained from respondents. Involuntary removals were perceived to be traumatic since it affects the parent's self-esteem in the process as they perceived themselves to be inadequate parents.

Although the majority of the respondents perceived the removal as negative, one respondent perceived the removal as a life learning experience. This section also focuses on the emotional and psychological scars these respondents have undergone after the removal of their children. Parents developed alcohol problems, suffered intense feelings of loss, had suicidal thoughts, and experienced a deep sense of pain, embedded with hurt and anger.

4.3.3 REINTEGRATION

4.3.3.1 INTRODUCTION

Margow (1999: 5) encourages single parents to "be confident that you will come out on the other side in one piece. Your children have the right to live in a warm and positive environment, with a parent that is at least courageous and sets a good example". The majority of the respondents saw this group as a stepping stone for the return of their children from foster care. They expect their children to return to their care.

This general expectation was encapsulated in one of the respondent's statement, whereby she stated, '*al wat ek sal lyk as my kinders terugkom na my toe...*' (Appendix

C, 3: 76).

Vallender and Fogelman (1987: 3) critically discussed the notion of whether biological parents are always a better alternative than substitute parents. They argue that we act as if the answer was 'yes'. Yet, on the other hand, we fail to provide sufficient community support to enable parents to look after their children in times of difficulty. At the same time we need to be pragmatic about whether returning the child to his or her biological parents is always in the child's best interest. In some instances it is not.

4.3.3.2 DEALING WITH THEIR CHILDREN

One of the respondents recalled her sense of helplessness when finding that the punishment of her child did not yield positive results.

She commented *"ek het geslaan. Haar baie geslaan. Ek het gepraat, en niks het gehelp nie. En die pa, as ek die pa gephone het en gevra het dat hy moet deurkom en praat met die kind, dan wil sy ook nie praat met haar pa nie. Slaan en praat het nie gehelp nie. Dus, ek was moedeloos agterna"* (Appendix C, 3: 97).

Gray (1999: 27) summarises the above respondent's statement when he indicates "certainly, many more parents who were beaten now recognise this to be an outdated practice, but really don't know what else to do. Though they don't like spanking or punishment, they don't have an alternative".

It is interesting to notice that the authors Nelsen et al, (1994: 87) have drawn the conclusion that "single parents in particular can find discipline a challenge". Hence, the disciplining of children can therefore be a difficult task for a single parent.

Mallucio et al, (1986: 94) cited in Scholtz (1988: 94) made particular reference to the fact that 'parents, whose children are in care, have often experienced inconsistent, abusive parenting as children, They have modelled on this mode of parenting and often employ it with their own children'.

The other respondents suggested that most times parents were unaware of their children's underlying problems, which at times finds expression in their difficult behaviour.

One respondent therefore reckoned, '*ons weet miskien nie wat die rede is hoekom ons kinders al die verkeerde dinge doen nie of miskien het sy 'n knak weg. Ek vat dit so van my af*' (Appendix C, 3: 96).

Thus, there was a recognition that failure to understand their children gave rise to problems. According to Gray (1999: 83) "the most important skills for minimising resistance and creating cooperation are listening and understanding. When children resist cooperating, some part of them is wanting or needing something else". The author further states "by learning new skills for improving communication, you can immediately lessen children's resistance and strengthen their willingness to cooperate".

Many of the respondents reported that the return of their children into their care would not be a stressful experience.

One of the respondents commented, '*vir my sal dit baie lekker wees om my kind vir myself te hê*' (Appendix C, 3: 94), while another said, '*ek sal 'n stukkie goud sien as ek vir F terugkry in my lewe*' (Appendix C, 3: 94).

However, a few of the respondents voiced their anxiety, stating that the return of their children will be stressful.

One of the respondents indicated *"ek sal nie C se gedrag kan hanteer nie, want sy is te ver in waar sy nou is'. Ek sal dit stresvol vind, want ek sal haar 24 uur moet dophou. En 'n mens kan nie so lewe om jou kind 24 uur moet dophou nie"* (Appendix C, 3: 95).

One particular respondent questions the extent to which the child would be satisfied with the biological parent's home circumstances when she stated, *"al moet dit vir my stresvol wees... My kind sal moet aanpas, alhoewel sy gewoon is in wat sy gekry het by daai ander mense, maar ek wil my kind terug hê"* (Appendix C, 3: 94).

The researcher is of the opinion that the nature of the parent's disciplinary style as well as their ability to create a safe environment for their children are important features for a successful re-integration. The authors Simms and Bolden (1991: 688) share the same opinion as the researcher when they stated the following, *"alternatively, reunification should be delayed if the family demonstrates significant continuing dysfunction during the course of the program"*.

The majority of respondents stressed that the external environment could be adapted some what but that the major changes came from the attitudes to caring for their children.

For example, some of the comments were, *'op die oomblik weet ek my plek is agter mekaar. Solank my plek netjies is, is ek nie geworry oor my armoedighede nie"* (Appendix C, 3: 95);

"Solank ons twee die liefde kan gee, en mekaar kan verstaan, en daar elke dag iets is om te eet. Die res kom vanself" (Appendix C, 3: 95).

Whilst another respondent claimed, *'daar sal nie meer veranderinge wees nie, solank my kind skoon sal wees en goed versorgd'*(Appendix C, 3: 95).

The above comments could be seen as naïve and unrealistic. On the other hand a real change of attitude could have a positive impact on the re-integration process. Margow (1999: 1) holds the opinion that "whatever the differences, all parents have a similar desire to be successful in raising their children".

4.3.3.3 DIFFICULT BEHAVIOURS

The respondents in this study argued that there was a close relationship between a child's disruptive behaviour and experiences of peer pressure, poor home circumstance, and single parenthood.

Some respondents commented, *'som gevalle is die probleem in die huis. Somtyds is dit probleme wat lei tot die kind om stout te wees'* (Appendix C, 3: 96).

Others indicated the following, *"somtyds as die kind alleen groot raak..."* (Appendix C, 3: 96); or *"Somtyds is dit die vriende..."*(Appendix C, 3: 96).

Some of the respondents maintained that the parents could be held responsible for the child's behaviour due to lack of communication and lack of quality time spend with the child.

One of the respondents indicated "*...somtyds is dit die ouers binne die huis. Miskien kommunikeer hulle nie reg in die huis nie*" (Appendix C, 3: 96).

Whilst another respondent mentioned "*som van ons ouers is miskien verantwoordelik vir ons kinders se gedrag. As ons kinders kom met vrae, dan moet ons nie die kinders wegwys nie. Ons moet tyd maak vir ons kinders*" (Appendix C, 3: 96).

The researcher is therefore of the opinion that the communication channels should be kept open at all times where parents and children could discuss their differences of opinions.

Many of the respondents claimed that they punitively disciplined their children because they love them and therefore want to prevent their children from landing into trouble.

Some of the general comments were, "*ek gaan my kind slaan as sy stout is. 'n Mens moet die boompie buig, want as jy nie daai kind gaan slaan nie, dan gaan s/hy net maak wat hulle wil*" (Appendix C, 3: 96).

One respondent stated, "*as jy haar tug, want jy is lief vir haar en wil nie hê sy moet uitrafel nie, soos die ander in die pad nie*" (Appendix C, 3: 96).

Whilst another respondent mentioned "*ek wil sekere dinge vir my kind gee wat ek nog nie gehad het nie. Ek verlang net die beste vir my kind*" (Appendix C, 3: 97).

The authors Nelson et al, (1994: 87) validate respondents' feelings in this regard by claiming, "and most of us have approached discipline with one subtle, basic belief: children have to suffer or they won't learn anything".

The respondents need to know that "relying on control and the power of punishment turns parents into policemen, full-time enforcers who set the rules and then watch constantly for violations" (Nelsen et al, 1994: 87). It seems that parents feel that in

order to raise a well-mannered child one has to resort to punitive disciplinary measures, instead of finding other non-punitive forms of punishment.

4.3.3.4 SUMMARY

The section focuses on respondents having a general expectation that their children will be returned to them. A lack of parenting skills was identified as one reason for controlling the difficult behaviour of children. Hence, these respondents were of the opinion that they would find it stressful should their children be returned into their care. The section also shed light on the fact that there was a close relationship between the child's disruptive behaviour and experiences of peer pressure, poor home circumstances and single parenthood. Hence, it therefore seems that other contributory factors negatively impeded on the disciplining of these children.

4.3.4 PARENT SUPPORT PROGRAM

4.3.4.1 INTRODUCTION

The researcher gathered much information from respondents' case studies and what type of supportive role was performed by significant others. As a form of empowerment the researcher shed some light and provided guidance to each respondent about what their plan of action should be in ensuring the eventual return of their children. It needs to be mentioned that although each respondent share similarities the researcher however believes that each respondent's case study is also unique. Hence, she empowered each respondent by providing specific guidance to his or her circumstances.

The researcher also affirmed their rights by stating, "*ek kan miskien myself indink hoe u voel, maar u-hulle is die mense wat experience hoe dit voel as my kind weggeneem word uit my sorg. U-hulle het regte*" (Appendix C, 3: 98).

Some of the comments were, "*R.J., jy het 'n reg om jou kind te sien. Jy het visiting rights. Jou kind hoef nie permanent in foster care te wees nie*" (Appendix C, 3: 98).

For another respondent the researcher commented, "*L, jy het regte. Jy moet sommer vir die social workers sê jy wil jou kinders besoek. Gradually moet die kinders teruggeplaas word. Beseft u kan iets doen aan die situasie. U het 'n sterk support system wat bestaan uit familie*" (Appendix C, 3: 98).

4.3.4.2 EMPOWERING PARENTS

Shatz and Bane (1991: 670) holds the opinion "empowerment requires that the person seeking change be involved in understanding, assessing, analysing, choosing, planning, acting, and evaluating themselves in the process". The researcher had invited a guest speaker to one of the sessions, focussing on empowering the single parents. She approached a single parent who is also one of the Department's emergency parents residing in the Tafelsig community to fulfil the said task. The aim of the guest speaker was to inspire the respondents and to affirm them.

Since the speaker was also an emergency parent of the Department she should also highlight the importance of the parents maintaining regular contact with their children when they are placed in temporary care. According to Smith (1991: 667) "parents must be helped to develop their capacity for a continual role in decision-making about their children, be encouraged to sustain regular, quality contact with their children, and be linked with other resources and services that can remediate the problems that brought them to their current status".

The guest speaker motivated the respondents in the following manner, "*first, jy moet*

onthou, alles wat met jou gebeur is vir 'n doel. Whether it is good or bad. It has a reason. Maybe moet die goed met ons gebeur sodat ons betere mense kan uitdraai" (Appendix C, 4: 104).

The researcher also stressed to the respondents that foster care is a temporary arrangement. Hence, regular contact should be maintained at all times between the parent and the child. Foster care also entails returning the child eventually to the parent's care. However, as parents they need to improve their home circumstances so as to facilitate the return of the child to their care.

4.3.4.3 STRENGTHS AND SUCCESSES

As a form of empowerment the researcher focussed on the strengths or successes achieved in the past by the respondents. By doing so, it will reveal their inner strengths to the rest of the group, as well as serve as a self-awareness technique for the respondents. According to Scholtz (1988: 65) "the ecological perspective on practice, although focussing on parents' weaknesses, places much emphasis on recognising and developing parental strengths to their full potential. This affords parents the hope of being able to regain custody of their children through being proactive in their environment". Few of the respondents stated that they now have the ability to maintain a calm disposition amidst life difficulties.

One respondent commented, "*ek het kom leer dat as ek hier uitgaan, dan is ek 'n sterker persoon en ek kan die wereld in die oë staar. Ek gaan hard daaraan werk om my kinders terug te kry"* (Appendix C, 2: 92).

Stevenson (1977: 2) argued that, "it may well be that some are endowed with inner strength which enable them to grow up healthily in their feelings as well as their bodies, despite experiences which stunt the growth of others". Hence, it appears that

respondents deal with the separation from their children in individual and unique ways.

The researcher is of the opinion that a supportive and an understanding environment must be created for parents to focus on their strengths.

One of the respondents indicated *"ek het nie meer stres nie, want ek het hulle bewys dat ek in my eie plek kan bly"* (Appendix C, 4: 100).

Whilst another mentioned: *"ek weet wat ek uit die lewe wil hê. Ek is 'n vegter, in hakies gesit, nie 'n mens om te baklei nie..."* (Appendix C, 4: 101).

Margow (1999: 7) argues that "the most important ingredient in being a successful single parent is self-belief. All too often feelings of rejection, bitterness, guilt, anger, sadness, fear, loneliness and doubt strip one's belief in oneself".

4.3.4.4 SUMMARY

Parents are empowered to maintain contact with their children and be actively involved into the decision-making processes regarding the care of their children. The researcher is of the opinion that the parents' dignity will be uplifted in the process and they will be in a position to make a contribution in deciding on the future care of their children.

The researcher is of the opinion that although respondents will be educated, empowered and informed about their rights, they have to make an informed decision to improve their circumstances. It is however interesting to notice that these respondents have the ability to remain positive in life despite the removal of their children.

4.3.4.5 EVALUATION

The researcher received positive feedback from the respondents when the session was evaluated. She also sensed the respondents felt empowered by the input received from the guest speaker as well as from the researcher.

Some of the comments highlighted were, "*ek voel daar is 'n uitkoms*" (Appendix C, 4: 102); "*ek kan sê daar het lig in my lewe ingekom. Ek voel om te lewe*" (Appendix C, 4: 102).

Whilst others indicated "*ek voel baie soos 'n ander mens*" (Appendix C, 4: 102); "*ek dink ek het iets geleer. Soos ek sê, ek was teneergedruk, ek sal sê ek voel baie beter. Ek weet nou wat om te maak met die kind. En ek gaan dit doen*" (Appendix C, 4: 97).

Others responded, "*ek het eintlik baie geleer*" (Appendix C, 3: 97); "*ek voel baie beter. Ek het dinge gehoor en as F terugkom weet ek hoe om haar te hanteer*" (Appendix C, 3: 97).

It therefore seemed to the researcher that the respondents were open and willing to improve their life situations by becoming proactive instead, partially due to the knowledge obtained in the session.

4.3.4.6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

One of the main research objectives was to explore whether parent support program benefits single parents, the researcher could rightfully argue based on above information that a parent support program benefits single parents. It serves as a

therapeutic and empowering tool towards single parents whose children were found in need of care.

The majority of respondents received emotional and financial support from significant others. It was interesting to note that religious institutions as well as professionals such as social workers provided support to these respondents. Although respondents received financial support from others, they however, indicated the need to become financially independent.

It appeared to the researcher that the respondents denied an impact on their self-esteem after the removal of their children. They displayed confidence in themselves and their ability to continue caring for their children. Respondents did however experience a loss of parental power after the removal of their children, which created a sense of powerlessness. During the sessions the researcher discovered that respondents seemed to have the need to affirm their love to their children.

Due to the poverty and a lack of support received from the respondents' parents during their childhood years, these respondents were unable to realise their life ambitions. Despite the fact that respondents had a certain freedom and independence through their single parenthood, they lacked support and financial stability through this situation.

Respondents expressed the importance of them supporting one another while awaiting the return of their children into their care. Hence, a sense of solidarity was quite evident within the focus group sessions.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

5.1.1 General needs of Single Parents

When one looks at this section in its entirety then a rather vulnerable picture emerges of these single parents who are the biological mothers of “children at risk”. They themselves are “parents at risk” for various reasons that they might have put forward.

They have a history of unstable relationships, of poor support systems, lack of financial support, unemployed and not realistic about what they can do to sustain their children’s affection. On the otherhand, this section also highlights the resilience of these women, their willingness to start afresh despite the odds against them and their readiness to take their children back no matter what this cost.

Due to poverty and a lack of support received from the respondents’ parents during their childhood years, these respondents were unable to realise their life ambitions. Despite the fact that respondents had a certain freedom and independence through their single parenthood, they lacked support and financial stability through this situation.

5.1.2 Perceived reasons for child removal

The above section shed some light on voluntary and involuntary child removals. With voluntary removals the perception is held that it is less traumatic with the hope that the child’s behaviour would have improved upon return into the care of his or her parent. With involuntary removals reasons such as abandonment, lack of accommodation, lack of parenting skills and unstable love relationships were obtained from respondents. Involuntary removals were perceived to be traumatic since it affects the parent's’ self-esteem in the process as they perceived themselves to be

inadequate parents. Although the majority of the respondents perceived the removal as negative, one respondent perceived the removal as a life learning experience. This section also focuses on the emotional and psychological scars these respondents undergone after the removal of their children. Parents developed alcohol problems, suffered intense feelings of loss, had suicidal thoughts, and experienced a deep sense of pain, embedded with hurt and anger.

5.1.3 Reintegration

This section focuses on respondents having a general expectation that their children will be returned to them. A lack of parenting skills was identified as one reason for controlling the difficult behaviours of children. Hence, these respondents thought it would be stressful should their children be returned into their care. Within the section it became apparent that there is a close relation between a child's disruptive behaviour and experiences of peer pressure, poor home circumstances and single parenthood. Hence, it therefore seems that other contributory factors negatively impeded on the disciplining of children.

5.1.4 Parent Support Program

One of the main research objectives was to explore whether a parent support program benefits single parents, the researcher could rightfully argue that a parent support program benefits single parents. It serves as a therapeutic and empowering tool towards single parents whose children were found in need of care.

Parents are empowered to maintain contact with their children and be actively involved into the decision-making process regarding the care of their children. The researcher is of the opinion that the parents' dignity will be uplifted in the process, and they will be in a position to make a contribution in deciding on the future care of their children. Although respondents will be educated, empowered and informed about their rights, they have to make an informed decision to improve their circumstances. It is however interesting to notice that these respondents have the ability to remain positive in life despite the removal of their children

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.2.1 General needs of Single Parents

That the agency should network and link single parents to relevant resources to meet their needs, be it with income generating projects, or another response.

5.2.2 Perceived reasons for child removal

That the agency and social workers encourage single parents to maintain regular contact with their children that is in alternative care.

That social workers monitor the single parents in order to establish whether their circumstances have improved.

5.2.3 Reintegration

That social workers of the agency should equip single parents with parenting skills in order to deal effectively with their children and their difficult behaviour upon return.

That children who engage in disruptive behaviour should be made aware in a creative manner to deal with the issues they are encountering, be it in the form of group work, or another response.

5.2.4 Parent Support Program

That the agency and social workers should invest their time and energies in a parent support program as a form of rendering reconstruction services to biological single parents.

That further research be conducted with a larger sample of single parents in order to have a broader perspective on the needs of single parents and whether a parent support program benefit single parents.

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University of Cape Town

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

SECTION A: PROFILE INFORMATION

NAME: (Give a false name)

DATE OF BIRTH:

ADDRESS:

SEX:

STATUS:

LAST STANDARD PASSED:

RELIGION:

LANGUAGE PREFERRED:

FINANCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES:

- Do you earn a regular income?
- If yes, How much? Where do you work?
- If no, what kind of financial assistance do you have? Maintenance/ Disability grant/ Other?

SUPPORT NETWORKS

- Do you live alone?
- If yes, how do you cope on your own?
- If no, who lives with you?

CHILDREN

- How many children do you have?
- What are their ages?
- Which are removed and why?

SPECIFIC NEEDS/ PROBLEMS

- What are your specific needs?

- What are the present difficulties that you are experiencing?

SECTION B: FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPATION

1. Would you be willing to be part of 4 group sessions with other single parents who are experiencing similar problems?

2. What would be the main issues that you would need help with?

From the following tick as many as you like

- 1) dealing with the separation of my children
 - 2) dealing with the possibility of them coming home again
 - 3) dealing with my own anxiety as a single parent
 - 4) knowing how to cope with my children
 - 5) worrying about my finances
 - 6) concern about support networks
3. Based on the previous question, please rate the three most important issues for you.

Thank you for your participation.

PRE-TEST QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Have you had any group experience before?
If yes, how did it benefit you?
If no, how do you think can a group experience help you functioning individually?
2. How can the group experience benefit you as a single parent?
3. Do you feel comfortable talking in a group?
If yes, why do you say so?
If no, what aspect about talking in a group makes you feel uncomfortable?
4. How would it make you feel to share your personal experiences with the rest of the group members?
5. How do you think single parents can support each other?
6. What would you like to be addressed within the group sessions?
7. The facilitator is planning to include the following in the sessions: role plays, showing a video, as well as inviting a guest speaker to the group. How do you think will you benefit from the above?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

SESSION 1: EMOTIONAL AND FINANCIAL NEEDS

Facilitator: Basies wat ek gaan doen uhm ek wil elkeen van u net baie dankie sê dat u gekom het na die sessies toe. Uhm, soos u verstaan, uhm, uhm, en soos ek met u kontak gemaak het individually ook, uhm het ons gefocus dat dit is 'n uh Parent Support Programme vir ouers wie se kinders nie meer in hul sorg geplaas is nie. Soos ek vir u-hulle gesê ook individually is in terms van uh ons se kinders is mos nou weg gevat van ons, en as social workers focus ons baie op foster parents en die foster kind. Hulle gaan altyd op outings en ons spend baie time met hulle, maar ons tend om te vergeet van die biological parent. Uhm, en darem die purpose is om uit te vind hoe u voel while die kinders nie in u sorg is nie, en uhm basies wat dit beteken dat die informasie wat ek hier gaan kry gaan ek in 'n studie gesit word uhm, en ons gaan daar uit kyk watter findings ons gaan kry. Maar dan wat ons ook gaan doen is, die groep gaan ook volgende jaar by die werk aangestel word. So wat dit ook beteken, ek gaan weer groep sessies soos dit reg deur die jaar het, based op wat u-hulle sê. Uhm, en u-hulle is mos single ouers, so u is die mense wat die knowledge het van wat aangaan eindelik. Okay, so basies wat ons gaan doen is uhm, die eerste sessie fokus op weer op die emotional en uhm, financial support wat u as ouers het, ek sal in detail meer gaan van wat dit gaan wees, en dan die tweede sessie fokus op die self-esteem en in terms van seperation. Kyk baie uhm ons, as ons kinders van ons weggevat is, dan is ons self-esteem laag. My kind bly nie meer by my nie, en wat dink my familie van my, wat dink die mense van my. Mense dink miskien ek is 'n swak ouer, ek kan nie reg na my kinders kyk nie, alles tas mens se self-esteem aan, maar u-hulle kan beter relate. Dit is basies wat ons gaan doen; en die seperation session focus op, my kind is nie meer by my nie, uhm wat gaan ek nou doen, uhm hoe gaan ek voel oor as my kind moet terugkom, en daai tipe questions. En dan die derde sessie focus op die re-unification en coping strategies. Ons se kinders is miskien nou terug by ons, en nou in die derde sessie, hoe gaan ek deal met my kind wat terug is by my. Uhm miskien is daai probleme nie opgelos daai tyd nie, in terms van toe my kinders verwyder is nie, hoe gaan ek deal as Candice terugkom, hoe gaan ek deal as Iekeraam terugkom en daai tipe van ding. Uhm, en hoe gaan ek cope; wie gaan vir my help; is my familie daar vir my, vriende, partners daar vir my, daai tipe ding; en dan net die laaste sessie focus op parental empowerment. Omdat ons self-esteem so laag is moet 'n mens vir u-hulle weer so empower, alles is okay, alles sal oraait kom. U kinders is mos nou vir meer as sewe jaar, soos u sê, die twins uit u sorg uit, en daai tipe van ding, uhm, kyk u moraal is miskien laag en u wil mos u kinders terug hê. Dit is net meer om vir u te encourage, te empower, u kan dit doen; en u kinders gaan terugkom. Want foster care, ek sê altyd vir die biologiese mammies. Foster care is nie 'n permanente ding nie. Foster care is all about returning the children eventually to the biological parents. Dit het ek al seker vir u gesê ook, toe ons individual sessies gehad het. Daarom wat ek vir u sê, as u kinders in foster care is, dit beteken nie hulle gaan vir ewig daar bly nie. Die circumstances van u moet ook improve om te ensure dat daai kind terugkom kom na u toe. Okay? Is daar enige questions wat u wil vra voor ons begin. Enige vrae? (stilte). Okay, uhm. Om net die ball aan die rol te kry, gaan ons eers 'n ice-breaker doen, ek dink nie almal ken mekaar nie. Né? U-hulle ken mos nie mekaar nie. So net om die ys te breek. Kyk, hier is 'n bietjie anxiety. Daarom gaan ons so 'n name-game speel. Die game se naam is name-game sodat ons net mekaar se name leerken. Ek weet som van u-hulle het met mekaar gesels in die combi, en u (L.G.) het nou vir haar (Marie) baie gehelp met die baby. 'n Mens waardeer sulke dinge. So uhm, as ons net die name-

game kan speel om die ys te breek. So, wat ons gaan doen, ons gaan in 'n sirkel staan, ek gaan miskien die ball gooi na Sharon toe, dan moet sy net sê haar naam is Sharon. Uhm en dan moet Sharon ook net sê uhm, watter hobbies sy het, en net wat is jou expectation van die groep. En dan pass Sharon die ball na Shamiena toe, en dan so gaan dit aan. Verstaan julle wat ek try om te sê. So kan ons nou net die circle maak. Okay, verstaan mos wat ons gaan maak. Ek gaan miskien die ball kry en sê my naam is Jaylene Davids, ek hou van swem en gym ook. My expectation in die groep is, ek sal lyk om meer te leer hoe om te deal met my kinders, hoe om my moraal op te beur:

Icebreaker:

- * **S.V.**: Ek is die ma van Candice. Ek is hier by die sessies om te leer miskien hoe om te cope met haar, want ek kan regtig nie cope met Candice nie. En sy was so in soveel Homes, by 'n reform school, maar ek kan regtig nie cope met haar nie. Want ek hoop maar om iets te leer, hoe om haar beter te handle. Ek hou van die buite lewe, braais en uitgaan, en films kyk, daai is omtrent al.
- * **I.T.**: Ek hou van stokperdjies soos uitgaan, en die kerkgroep. Ek geniet dit en ek hou van lees ook. En my verlange is dat ek graag my kind wil hê, dat ek vir haar kan wys watter moeder ek vir haar sal wees, en daardie morale sal toekom wat sy makeer in haar lewe.
- * **S.P.**: My kind se naam is Iekeraam Prinsloo. My stokperdjies is sing, dans, uitgaan. En uhm, ek is bly dat Iekeraam weer terug is na my toe. Ek wil daar wees vir hom. Ek wil net weer sy moeder wees, because daar was 'n tyd toe hy weg gewees het, het ek hom baie verlang (huil).
- * **L.G.**: Uhm, goeiemore, ek is bly dat julle almal hier is. Ek is die moeder van Rochelle en Ronel Griffiths. Ek sal baie bly wees as hulle terugkom na my toe. Ek sal hulle al die liefde gee wat ek hulle nie kan gegee het nie, en my hobbies is uitgaan, televisie kyk en lees. Uhm, dit is al wat ek kan sê.
- * **R.J.**: My baba se naam is Canfa Jacobs. My stokperdjie is modelling, ek speel met my kinders games. Al wat ek sal lyk as my kinders terugkom kom na my toe, daai is my verlange, want elke aand en elke oggend bid ek vir hulle om terug te kom. Baie dankie.
- * **V.A.**: My kind se naam is Feroza Abrahams. My verlange is dat Feroza altyd teen my sy sal staan. Sy is nooit daar as ek haar nodig het nie, maar ek kyk nog altyd vorentoe na die sessies by gaan woon. Daarom wil ek altyd 'n sterk moeder is vir Feroza.
- * **M.O.**: Ek staan van more hier. My hobbies is televisie kyk en uhm uitgaan en daai. En ek sal 'n moeder wees vir my kinders.
- * **B.M.**: Goeiemore. Ek is die moeder van Cynthia. My hobbies is, ek hou van hardloop, stap, ek hou ook van om met mense te wees. En ek sal ook hou daarvan dat my kinders ook eendag terug is in my sorg. Ek verlang hulle. Ek wil hulle so graag teen my hou, hulle druk teen my en hulle al my liefde gee wat ek nie kon gee vir hulle nie. En dat hulle so elke dag na aan my hart kon wees. Dankie.

Facilitator: Okay, ek wil vir elkeen baie dankie sê wat hulle deeltjie gedoen het. Uhm, ek hoop u-hulle kry so 'n picture van elkeen se name, hobbies en wat elkeen se verlange is in terme van hul kinders. So wat ons basies hier uitvind is dat elkeen 'n similarity het, elkeen se kinders is verwyder uit hulle sorg uit. En so gaan ons mekaar opbeur. U-hulle is die mense wat die knowledge het. Kyk, u is die mense wat die experience het. Ons kan miskien net help met die knowledge, maar u-hulle is die mense wat first-hand knowledge het wat aangaan, want u-hulle is in daai situasie. So basies wat ons gaan doen, ek hoop wat ons hier gaan leer, gaan leersaam wees. Ek sal nie alleen die praatwerk doen nie, maar ek sal lyk julle moet ook die praterij doen, en wat u-hulle dink en voel, sodat u ons kan help as social workers, om ons 'n picture te gee wat u deurgaang. Sodat ek ook soos ek in individual sessies gesê het vir julle social workers 'n report kan gee oor julle as individual persons. So ek hoop u-hulle gaan die sessies geniet. Dankie, julle kan nou maar sit.

Basies voordat ons begin gaan ons eers kyk na 'n kontrak. Soos ek vir u-hulle gesê het gaan die groepsessies strek oor vier weke. En vandag fokus ons op die topic emotional and financial support - support van die familie; asook financially - werk ek? Is ek unemployed, ontvang ek 'n child support grant. Tweede sessie fokus op ons self-esteem en ook separation. My familie dink miskien ek is 'n swak parent, en ek kan nie na my kinders gekyk het nie. Separation - hoe deal ek met my kind wat vir sewe jaar in pleegsorg is. Ek glo ek is 'n goeie parent, maar hoekom kan my kind nie terugkom nie. In terms van re-unification and coping strategies - S.V. het genoem van Candice wat dan huis toe kom en dan weer weggaan, hoe cope ek met my kind wat miskien terug gaan kom. Die laaste fokus op Parental Empowerment - om u-hulle te empower dat u nie 'n bad parent is nie. Mens kan improve op ons circumstances en mens kan dan ook mens se kind terugkry. Dit is 'n jammerte dat ons werk se videomasjien is stukkend. Daar is 'n video wat ek wou wys van biological parents van Bonteheuwel, hulle kinders is uit hulle sorg uit, hoe hulle cope. Ek wil ook as gasspreker 'n enkelouer inbring, wat u-hulle soort van empower - is okay om 'n single parent te wees; 'n mens kan dit maak in die lewe, en hoef nie getroud te wees as 'n parent om support te kry nie. As ek 'n single parent is, ek kan miskien my kind alleen deur die lewe bring. En wat ek ook wil doen, omdat u die sessies gaan bywoon voel ek net om soort van 'n appreciation te show, 'n certificate vir u te wil gee, om te bewys dat u 'n Parent Support Programme bygewoon het, sodat u social workers ook kan kennis dra dat u die sessies bygewoon het. Dit word baie benodig wanneer ons as social workers elke twee jaar Regulation 15 reports skrywe. Daai beteken verslae skrywe oor die omstandighede van die biologiese ouers. Die certificate is ook 'n bewys dat u doen iets om u situation te improve. Is daar enige questions wat u wil vrae. Enige vrae?

Facilitator: Kom ons fokus op sessie 1. Basies, sessie 1 fokus op emtional en finansiële ondersteuning.

B.M.: Ek wil iets vra...

My kind is nou weggevat uit my sorg uit vir die afgelope vier jaar. En vir die afgelope vier jaar het ek geen kontak met my kind nie. Hier binne my voel ek seer, want my kind is nou weg. Ek het die verlange om my kind in my sorg terug te hê. Elke keer as ek kinders sien, dan dink ek aan my kind. Dit maak my verder seer, dit breek my verder af, om te dink ek het 'n kind, maar sy is buite my bereik. My verlange is so groot. Nou neem ek my toevlug na drank toe, want ek gaan vergeet, dit laat my vergeet. As die maatskaplike werker en pleegma my net toelaat om een keer of twee

keer in die week my kind kan sien, kontak kan het met my kind, dan sal dit nie so erg is nie. Nou is daar geen kontak met my kind nie. Wat staan my nou te doen?

Facilitator: Okay, ons gaan die sessie leer om sulke dinge aan te pak. U sê mos nou dat vir vier jaar is u kind in pleegsorg, en praat mos nou in terme van kontak. 'n Mens moet nou kyk in terme van pleegsorg, as 'n kind in pleegsorg is, ons moedig altyd die biologiese ouers aan, gaan maak kontak met jou kind. Dit depend van die biologiese parent af of sy kontak maak, want dit gee vir jou as maatskaplike werker 'n indication: as jy nie gaan kontak maak met jou kind nie, dan dink ons watter parent is die dan, hulle stel nie eers belang in die kind nie, hoe kan hulle expect om hulle kind terug te kry. So dit is vir jou as biologiese parent om kontak te maak met jou kind. En pleegouers kan nie eintlik vir jou wegwys van jou kind nie. Dit gaan beteken dat jy geregtig is om kontak te maak met jou kind. Die kind het die reg om te weet wie is my biologiese ouer, en foster care is soos ek gesê het, all about returning the children eventually to the biological parents. Dit beteken ook dat die biological parents ook 'n effort moet maak om te gaan visit en moeite doen on hulle circumstances te improve sodat kinders eventually terug kan kom in hulle sorg in.

Dit is goed dat jy begin het B.M.. Miskien moet ons net uitvind die redes vir die kinders se verwydering. So, Marie as jy kan miskien 'n indication gee toe Ricardo en Alka uit jou sorg geneem was. Wat was die rede en hoe jy gevoel het.

M.O.: Die rede hoekom Alka en Ricardo uit my sorg uit weggevat gewees het, want ek het te veel gedrink. Elke dag gedrink, vergeet van my kinders. Toe later van tyd toe het ek en my boyfriend altwee opgestaan en gesê: Nee, ons moet nou stop, en kyk waar is ons kinders. Ek is heelwat 'n ander mens. Ek sal 'n ma wees vir hulle. Ek sal my kinders enigiets gee wat hulle vra.

L.G.: Die rede hoekom my kinders weggevat is van my is, voorheen was dit die vader en ek het nog nooit kontak gekry met hulle. As ek altyd kontak maak met hulle, dan voel dit altyd vir my ek is daar waar hulle nou in pleegsorg is, voel nou ek is in hulle pad. Hulle as pleegouers voel dat ek gaan my kinders kidnap en so, maar soos ek voel wil ek nie doen nie, because ek weet waar ek gaan sit as ek dit gaan doen. Soos nou twee maande terug het ek my skoonpa verloor, toe was hulle daar gewees. Die oudste meisiekind was bang gewees vir my. Sy was altyd die ene wat na aan my was. En, soos die begrafnis aangeloop het, het ek gesien dat die pleegouers sien nou die moeder is daar en die vader is daar, hulle gaan maar nie worry nie. Ek en my suster is die naaste aan hulle twee. Die kinders het die hele plek rond gehardloop. Toe dink ek vir myself ek is moeder, daar is pa, ek gaan hulle nader aan my hou. Toe ek huis toe gaan, toe voel die kinders hulle wil saam met my huis toe gaan, maar dit kan mos nou nie gedoen het nie. Of as ek kontak het, miskien bel, dan sê die pleegouers altyd hulle gaan hiernatoe of daarnatoe, dan is dit einlik nie die waarheid wat hulle praat nie, maar net om vir my 'n kop aan te sit. Dan worry ek ook nie verder nie. Ek gaan nie eintlik meer daar nie, tot op die pa gaan nie meer daar nie. So ek sal bly wees as ek hulle kan terug kan kry, om alles vir hulle te gee. Dit is al wat ek kan sê.

S.V.: Die rede hoekom Candice weg is van my, want sy was 'n problem child. Sy het met gangsters bymekaar geraak, want daar waar ek bly is daar baie gangsters. En sy wou nie skoolgaan nie. Sy het begin goed steel en so aan. En ek het al different social workers, School of industries in Wellington, wat ver is en ek moes elke week of

tweede weekend by haar gaan kuier. Dit het baie geld gekos, en die taxis charge vir jou as jy so ver wil ry, en daar het dit ook nie uitgewerk nie want sy wou een van die juffrouens aangerand het met 'n glas en toe het sy in die hof verskyn daarvoor, en hulle het haar toe gestuur Faure toe in die Eerste River. Daar het dinge nie uitgewerk nie. Candice wil nie regkom nie. Nou June toe sy terug moet gaan skool toe, sy wou nie teruggaan nie. Die social worker het gesê dat ons haar net moet los, die psychologist by die skool het gesê. So ek weet nie waar sy slaap nie, sy gebruik drugs en rook buttons. Nou kort toe sy by die huis was toe, toe was haar oog net so dik, toe het hulle vir haar aangerand seker in die Centre. Sy is al 'n maand weg al, ek weet nie eers waar sy is nie. Dit is 'n baie bitter pil om te sluk vir 'n ma, en sy is sestien jaar oud. Ek weet nie, daar is niemand wat my kan help nie. Soos Shanaaz het my gesê, los haar net. Sy is ver in die system soos Shanaaz sê daar is nie 'n verder plek om haar te stuur nie. En haar ouderdom, sy is al sestien jaar oud. So, ek weet nie wat om te maak met daai kind nie.

V.A.: Die rede hoekom Feroza in die plaas skool gelaat is omdat sy verkeerde vriende opgemaak het, en die rede dat ek haar toe weggestuur het, dat sy 'n beter persoon kan wees, maar sy het teruggekom. Sy het my gewys sy is 'n betere persoon. Agter drie dae toe wys sy vir my nee, ek is nog dieselfde mens, ek gaan nog waar ek wil en ek doen nog wat ek wil, en mammie gaan my nie sê nie, dan kom sy terug dan sê sy sy het nie geselskap gehou met die vrinne gehou nie. Ek het ook nie smokkel yard toe geloop nie, maar die dinge het nog aangegaan in die agterkant. Haar susters en broers het gesien sy doen nog dieselfde dinge, en ek het meer gekeer dat sy met die verkeerde geselskap in toom is, en toe agterna toe besluit sy maar by haarself sy gaan begin te weghardloop, want ons hou haar te veel dop, haar susters het haar dopgehou, ek en haar broers, toe besluit sy nee ek gaan maar die pad vat. En ek het weer ingekom en dit report, maar sy het nie kop gegee vir my nie. Sy was soos 'n kind, ag praat jy maar, ek doen wat ek wil doen en wat vir my reg is. En ek het altyd met haar gesit en gesels as haar broers en susters slaap, en vir haar gesê, but Feroza sê vir my vanaand hoekom maak jy sekere probleme, dan het sy nie 'n antwoord vir my nie. Toe sê ek vir haar ek gaan so uit my pad vir jou, maar jy is nooit daar om my hart vir my te troos nie, soos ek joune kan troos op enige hoek en draai. As jy probleem buite opgetel het dan het ek daar gewees vir jou, maar jy kan nooit daar vir my is nie. Toe het sy net besluit dat ek vir haar skool toe gestuur het om haar pad te kies weg van die huis is. Sy is nou 'n maand en twee weke weg van die huis af.

R.J.: My baba is nou drie maande oud. Om rede hoekom sy van my weg is, is omdat ek nie 'n vastige blyplek gehad het nie. Maar nou op die oomblik het ek my eie plot gekry. My verlange is dat sy moet huis toe kom, whatever. Ek kan haar nie besoek nie omdat ek bly in Heinz Park alleen, en dit is gevaarlik. Ek het 'n casual job wat ek werk vir iemand. Ek rent furniture uit en help hulle. Ek kry elke maand 'n inkomste maar ek kan tot by haar kom nie, om rede dit is gevaarlik, hulle breek deur die dag in. As ek uitgaan dan kan ek net tot by die Town Centre gaan en weer terug met die taxi huis toe. My verlange is om haar te sien, ek mis haar en bid elke aand. Daar is nie 'n dag wat my trane nie rol vir haar nie. En dan het ek nog vier kinders wat by my ma is. Ek kan nie by my ma se huis staan nie dan jaag sy my weg, om rede omdat ek fight vir my baby. Sy sê sal enigiets doen dat ek nie die baby terugkry nie, dat dit familie is van haar. Ek kan nie tot by my auntie gaan nie. My ma gaan daar en ek weet nie watter gesig ek gaan kry nie. Ek het eendag gephone vir my baby van 'n selfoon, toe sê hulle my baby is nie daar nie, amper soos hulle nie wil hê dat ek my baby moet kyk

nie. Al moet hulle haar week-ends net bring. My ander baba het verjaar die 6de Oktober. Sy het chips gekoop vir haar maar hulle het nie eens dit gegee nie. My kind het gesê: "Mommy, I love you". Toe vra sy waar ek bly. Sy het gesê dat my ma net vir haar gesê ek het weggehardloop van die huis. Toe sê ek vir haar dat ek bly op my eie plek, en mammie gaan hulle weer haal en julle gaan weer by my wees. Wanneer my ma naby is dan is die kinders bang om te praat, maar wanneer ons alleen is dan hardloop hulle na my toe. Baie dankie.

I.T.: Die rede hoekom my kind van my af weggevat is, ek het haar net gelos by die vrou waar ek gebly het en ek het net weggegaan en weggebly, en het nie teruggekom huis toe nie. En die rede hoekom dit gedoen het, is nie lekker om alleen 'n kind groot te maak nie. Die pa het nog nooit die kind onderhou nie. Toe het ek hier en daar gewerk om vir haar aan die lewe te hou, om vir haar groot te maak, op te groei. En ek toe teruggekom en vir my is dit nie meer so seer, want ek sien haar nou, en sy slaap elke aand by my. Ek kan nou met haar praat. Nou kan ek voel en vir haar daai liefde gee wat ek nie vir drie jaar vir haar gegee het nie. Nou kan ek dit vir haar gee. Sy is baie gehoorsaam vir my. Sy sal altyd luister as ek met haar praat. En ek is bly dat ek nou by haar is en vir haar sien. Ek sal glo hoe die mammies voel wat nie hulle kinders sien nie. Ek sal verstaan hoe hulle voel want ek het sommer begin drink, en dit is nie lekker so nie. Jy drink om te vergeet. Soos die mammie ook gesê het, jy moet drink om te vergeet, maar as die wyn uitgetrek het, dan kom daai hartseer, want ek mean dit is nie lekker nie. My verlange is, ek wil my kind terug hê in my eie sorg, en ek wil op my own wees saam met my kind. En ek voel dat ek sal kan werk vir haar, want ek het al die jare gewerk vir haar en ek sal kan cope. Ek probeer nou ontslae te raak van die alcohol. Ek begin nou reg te kom. Dankie.

S.P.: Ek is S.P., Iekeraam se mammie. Die rede hoekom hy van my weggewees het (stilte - mammie huil) ek was weg met vrinne en het ... (huil aanhoudend).

Observation: Nog mammies huil saam - kan relate. Een mammie het S.P. vertrous.

Facilitator: Basies wat ons nou agterkom, dit is 'n pressing situation om jou kind weg te het van jou. Elkeen van u kan identifiseer met wat aangaan. I.T., jy is nou gelukkig, want jy bly by die foster mammie in een huis. Dit is nie altyd dat foster mammies biologiese ouers sal laat bly in hul huis nie. So u het die priviledge om u kind elke dag te sien omdat u bly saam met haar. Ander mammies soos R.J. en L.G.-hulle het nie die voorreg om hulle kinders te het by hulle nou nie. En especially as jou kind 'n paar maande was toe jou kind weggevat was by jou. L.G. se kind is van 'n paar maande weg van haar en die kinders is nou nog in pleegsorg en dit is twins wat sy het wat sewe jaar oud is. So 'n mens gaan deur baie dinge. Dit is nie 'n lekker gevoel nie. Daarom dit is belangrik dat ek dit neerskrywe sodat social workers kan weet wat biologiese ouers deurgaen. Ons het nou van elkeen gehoor die rede vir u kinders se verwydering. Elkeen se situasie is unique, maar ook similar in die selfde tyd. Die verlanges wat uitkom is dat u-hulle u kinders wil terughê, en dit maak nie vir julle bad ouers nie. Dit is net dat die circumstances different is. Stelselmatig, glo ek dat dinge sal okay raak vir u-hulle.

In die eerste session wat ons gaan doen is focus ons op die emosionele en finansieële ondersteuning wat u-hulle kry, is daar support vir u-hulle, of is daar nie support vir u-hulle nie. Van elkeen het ek so agtergekom of elkeen support het. Byvoorbeeld, R.J.

kry nie nou op die oomblik support van haar ma-hulle op die oomblik nie.

Daar is sekere open questions wat ek gaan vra dan sal ek van u-hulle lyk om te weet wat is u-hulle se opinie is van dit okay?

So die eerste question wat ek vra is, omdat u-hulle enkel ouers is, u het genoem dat u u kind self grootmaak het (I.T.), wat dink u is 'n enkel ouer? Enige een?

R.J.: 'n Enkel ouer is 'n ma wat ma en pa staan vir haar kind, wat alles moet doen en sorg vir alles.

Facilitator: So 'n enkel ouer is eintlik 'n persoon wat pa en ma moet staan vir haar/hom kinders. Dit is difficult as enkel ouer, want u kan relate. Jy het begin drink I.T. omdat jy alleen jou kind begin grootmaak het, en die pa wou nie support het nie.

Facilitator: Wat dink julle veroorsaak dat 'n mens 'n enkel ouer word. Enige idees. Hoekom dink julle is sommige mense enkel ouers. Hoe raak hulle enkel ouers?

L.G.: Om 'n enkel ouer te word is, is wanneer jou kind weggeneem word van jou en jy moet nou sien en klaar kom, hoe jou kind by jou gaan uitkom ensovoorts.

B.M.: Wanneer die persoon geen man het nie. Die man het haar verlaat en dan moet jy ma en pa staan vir daai kind, want daar is geen man om te help nie.

I.T.: Om 'n enkel ouer te wees, baie van ons voel om alleen op ons eie bene te staan. Ons wil op ons own wees en baie van ons wil mos nie trou nie en sien liever kans om 'n enkel ouer te wees.

Facilitator: So u-hulle kry nou 'n idee hoe 'n mens enkel ouer word. Van julle het gesê dat jou kind word weggeneem van jou. So twee support systems is weggeneem van jou, jou man asook jou kind. Of, soos B.M. sê jou man het jou verlaat. Som mense choose om enkel te wees. Som mense voel net om nie te trou nie. Ek wil net repeat dat daar nie 'n reg of verkeerde antwoorde is nie. So u hoef nie om te vrees nie. Ons leer almal van mekaar.

Facilitator: Wat dink u-hulle is die voordele van enkel ouerskap. U verstaan mos die vraag?

B.M.: Jy voel jy is baie gelukkig om alleen te wees met jou kind. Jy voel jy en jou kind kan maak en doen wat julle wil, kan gaan en kom wanneer hulle wil, daar is niks wat julle vashou nie. Jy het meer vryheid.

R.J.: 'n Ma gee meer aandag aan haar kind. 'n Pa is nooit daar om aandag te gee nie. Hy sal miskien rondloop met sy vrinne, brag en sê die is my kind en hoe groot is sy. Maar 'n ma is die een wat moet struggle, moet sorg dat die kind eet en skoon is. Die pa is niks geworried waar die kind. As 'n persoon vir pa sê die kind iets verkeerd gedoen het dan roep die pa die kind in en slaan hulle, maar 'n ma sal 'n kind in en uit vra. As 'n ma 'n kind tug dan moet sy waarom en hoekom sy die kind tug. Dan moet sy sommer die kind hug en liefde gee, sodat die kind kan weet waarom en hoekom sy daai ding gedoen het.

Facilitator: U-hulle het mos nou gehoor die voordele, wat dink u-hulle van die freedom-storie, wat ook kies om single te bly.

I.T.: Ek verkies om single te bly, want ek het na baie mense se lewens gesien, watter lewens hulle moet deurgaans met hul mans. En dit is nie my verlanse om eendag dit deurmaak nie. Dit is my verlanse en niemand kan dit van my wegvat nie.

S.P.: Dit is beter om single te wees, rather to be alone than unhappy. Jy kan maak wat jy wil, daar is niemand wat vir jou kan sê nie sy moet nie dit of daai doen nie. Daai is al.

Facilitator: Powerful goed wat uitgekóm het.

Nadele:

S.V.: Vir my is enkel ouerskap nadelig. Met Candice is dit nadelig om 'n enkel ouer te wees, want sy is 'n baie hardkoppige kind en ek is verseker dat as haar pa daar gewees het en my kan gehelp het met haar. Hy is 'n baie streng persoon. Ek is verseker sy sou beter uitgedraai het, want ek kan nie vir haar gehandle het nie, en haar pa sou, ek is verseker, hy sal kan gehelp het dat sy nou af van die strate en drugs saam met die gangsters. Daai dinge sal hy sekerlik mee kan gehelp het en verhoed het dat sy so uitgedraai het.

M.O.: Al wat ek kan sê om 'n ma te wees is jy moet 'n klomp dinge gaan om 'n ma te wees. Jy moet sorg dat jou kind geëet het, skoon is, jy moet sorg dat alles reg is aan hom. Dit is al wat ek kan sê.

Facilitator: Baie van u-hulle se fokus was op freedom en baie van u-hulle het gepraat van die nadele van enkel ouerskap. Daar is 'n lack of support van die pa se kant, want pa's is mos streng en kinders is meer bang vir hul pa's as vir hul ma's. In u situasie, S.V., het jy mos genoem dat Candice meer different sou react het as daar 'n pa in die huis was, in plaas van hoe sy nou lewe en net maak en doen wat sy wil. Die fokus wat uitkóm is dat ma's is eindelijk, ek sal nie sê pa's is nie belangrik nie, ma's is eindelijk die belangrike persoon in die huisgesin, want sy is die een wat na die kinders moet omsien en somtye as die partners daar is, dan moet jy nog na hulle ook kyk.

Facilitator: Nou wil ek net fokus op die emotional support, is daar support wat u-hulle kry. Waar kry u u support vandaan? Vriend, familie wat u nou deurgaans op die oomblik.

B.M.: Op die huidige oomblik is my kinders nou weggeneem van my af. Ek het my toevlug geneem na drank toe. Daar is niemand wat vir my support nie. Ek het niemand wat vir my omgee nie. Menigmaal dan kry ek myself staan ek buitekant en maak 'n geraas daar waar my kinders is. Ek vloek en skel daai vrou uit waar my kinders bly. Niemand gee om vir my nie. Hulle sien nie my needs nie. Ek het 'n need om my kinders te hê. Dus, daar is geen support wat ek van niemand kry nie.

M.O.: Daar is elke dag vir hulle. Daar is wat gee en daai. My vriend of so aan. Daar is geen probleem met daai (support) nie. Dit is al wat ek kan sê.

L.G.: My support kry ek van my suster af, wat jonger is as ek. En ek sal lyk as ek my

twee kinders terugkry, weer die nodige wat sy my gegee het, weer aan haar oor te handig. Want wel, ek weet sy het 'n meisiekind wat agt word, en sy het ook daai help nodig en dan kan ek dit weer aan haar gee.

S.V.: My baby se pa, my boyfriend, support my baie. Hy is maar alleen wat my support. My suster almal, hulle het groot kinders en het ook maar hulle eie problems. Ek depend nie eindelijk op familie nie en ek het nou nie 'n ma nie. So hy support my baie.

V.A.: My support kry ek van my kerk af. Hulle ondersteun my met al my probleme wat ek het, wat ek na hulle toe gegaan het. Daarom kry ek my support van my kerk af.

R.J.: Actually help ek vir Green Furniture uit. My baby se pa, hy support my. So ek kry altwee kante geld.

L.T.: Wel, die vrou wat ek by bly waar my kind nou in pleegsorg gesit is, support my ook baie. Ons twee verstaan baie goed mekaar. Ek moet sê, almal in die huis, haar dogters ook, support my baie. Dankie.

S.P.: Dit is my ma, my suster en my broers wat my onderhou nou. Met geld en alles. Ek is bly daarvoor.

Facilitator: Okay, ek het nou gehoor van elkeen dat daar is familie wat support gee, daar is vrinne wat support gee. Baie interessant die pleegmammie wat vir u baie support gee, ook die pleeghuis waar u in bly. En dan is daar som mense wat geen support kry geheel en al nie. Dit is baie important dat parents support kry somewhere van someone, om te verhoed dat hulle terugval in drank. Ek is bly om te weet baie van u-hulle kry support, al is dit van die boyfriend, die kerk, die familie en pleegmammies. Dit is belangrik om ondersteuning te kry van iemand.

Die pa's van daai kinders, gee hulle support vir u? Kry u support?

R.J.: My kind se pa hy ondersteun my. Hy gee my geld deur die maand, en dan kry ek ook geld by Green Furniture.

Is daar enige pa's wat u-hulle support deur die tyd? Niemand nie.

Facilitator: Okay, daar was mos gefocus op die familie, kerk en neighbours wat vir u-hulle support gee. Ek is bly u kerk gee vir u support (V.A.). Kan u net uitbrei oor die kerk. Hoe het dit gekom dat u help gekry het by hulle.

V.A.: My kerk het gesien toe ek Sondaie in die kerkbanke kom, toe het my priester my dopgehou en die kerksusters het my dopgehou, en hulle het gesê: Mej. Abrahams, hoekom voel jy so treurig vanmore. Ons ken jou nie so nie. Ons ken jou altyd as iemand wat 'n smile het op jou gesig. Kan jy vir ons asseblief sê wat jou probleem is? Ons is daar om vir jou te help. Ek kon nie die eerste week my hart met hulle oopgemaak het nie, en ek het terug huis toe gegaan en gesit en huil. Die tweede week kon ek gaan en sê vir hulle wat my probleem was. Ek het my hart oopgemaak met hulle. Ek het nooit gedink die kerk sal my help nie.

Facilitator: Kan u net uitbrei hoekom u familie u nie support nie?

S.V.: Wel, my susters het almal groot kinders. Hulle kinders gee ook vir hulle probleme. So ek expect nie nog hulle om vir my te help nie, want my boyfriend support my.

Facilitator: Kan u uitbrei oor die support wat u kry van neighbours? Niemand nie?

Facilitator: Kom ons fokus op die finansiële aspek van u. Ek weet dit is 'n sensitiewe punt wat ek nou gaan aanraak, want ek weet nie baie mense voel nie comfortable om te deel met die finansiële aspect van hulle omstandighede nie. Ek weet dit is sensitief, maar dit sal ons 'n indikatie gee watter bestaan jy maak. As u kinders moet terugkom hoe gaan u sorg vir u kinders. In terme van geldige opsig, hoe survive u?

B.M.: Op hierdie huidige oomblik het ek geen inkomste nie. Ek eet maar vanaand by die een, more by daai een. Wat ek verder ook doen, soos gaan char werkies doen by mense om aan die lewe te hou. Dit is waarvan ek lewe op hierdie oomblik. Ek moet aan die lewe bly.

M.O.: Ek werk nie. My vriend gee vir my. Ek char maar altyd hier en daar. Stryk en skoonmaak werkies. Dit is maar al.

L.G.: Soos ek nou vaneffen gesê het, my suster onderhou vir my. My suster gee ook vir my vyf jaar oud seun. As ek haar vra of sy miskien vir my geld het of so nie, of sy moet miskien vir my kind iets koop of so, dan gee sy. In die loop van die tyd sal ek vir my 'n werk moet gaan soek as ek vir hulle nou by my wil hê. My seun sal ek in die crèche miskien sit. My suster sê ek moet hom nie in die crèche sit nie, sy sal al die nodige doen, na hom kyk, voel ek ook as ouer dat ek vir haar sal iets gee as sy na my kind gaan kyk. Daar is nie eintlik probleme met geld of na my kind te kyk of so nie.

S.V.: Ek werk nou vir twee jaar nie. Ek is by die huis. Candice se pa, hy werk nie. So hy onderhou nie nou nie. Ek het hom aangegee vir agterstalliges en daar is 'n lasbrief uit vir hom, want vir twee weke het hy nie hof toe gekom nie, maar my boyfriend onderhou vir my; en as sy (Candice) daar is, dan onderhou ook vir haar. Dit is al.

V.A.: Die kerk gee my so elke tweede week donasies. Die ander dae dan gaan soek ek vir myself. Dan kyk ek maar waar ek kan iets te doene kry, sodat ek ook iets kan inbring vir die kinders. Ek kyk vir char jobbies.

R.J.: Ek kry van my boyfriend support geld en so hou dit my aan die lewe.

I.T.: Op die oomblik werk ek. Maar ek is eintlik nog nie permanent nie. Ek casual maar nog. Maar daar is maar 'n inkomste wat ek darem kan aangaan. Ek en my kind en die mense in die huis.

S.P.: Ek is unemployed, maar as Iekeraam miskien iets nodig het om te eet of te drink, of enigiets wat hy vra, is my suster en my broer - hulle het ook kinders - en my ma daar om vir hom te gee wat hy graag wil hê, wat ek miskien nie vir hom kan koop nie.

Facilitator: So finansiël kry u darem geld van iemand, al is dit familie of boyfriends. Mens admire die feit dat daar sekere familieledede is wat vir u help deur. En ek glo

stellig, soos u gesê het L.G., as jy eendag weer onafhanklik is, dan sal jy wat jou suster aan jou gedoen het, terug sal doen aan haar. So, 'n mens vergeet nooit sulke mense nie.

Facilitator: B.M., jy het mos gesê jy char mos en kry nie support van die kind se pa nie. As die kind terug moet kom in u sorg sal die 'n probleem vir enige van u wees hierso, finansieel?

B.M.: Finansieel gaan dit 'n probleem wees as my kinders moet terugkom, want soos ek sê, ek het nie eens 'n plek vir myself nie. Ek slaap in die rondte in. Ek swerf in die rondte. Wie gaan dan vir my kinders sorg. Daar is geen inkomste van die staat se kant nie. As my kinders terugkom dan is daar niks grants wat vir hulle gegee kan word nie. My concern hierso, my kinders is in pleegsorg by ander mense. Die staat het vir daai kinders gesorg. Kan die staat ook nie vir my sorg en my kinders nie. Dit is my concern.

Facilitator: Die CSG is net vir kinders tot op die ouderdom van sewe jaar.

I.T.: Soos ek sê, versorg ek vir myself. Ek het niemand wat vir my sorg nie. Ek werk, want ek casual. My verlange is ook, ek wil op my own wees, as ek my kind op my own wil hê. Want ek wil my kind grootmaak met my rules, my maniere, ek wil haar leer. Dit is my verlange, ek wil op my own bly.

Facilitator: Hier is nou 'n gevallestudie. Ek gaan gou u-hulle in twee groepe verdeel. Dan wil ek net hê u moet kyk na die situasie. Help vir Mev. Jones in die situasie. U-hulle gaan dit in 'n groepie bespreek. Gee vir Mev. Jones 'n oplossing tot haar probleem wat sy nou het. Een van u-hulle sal moet feedback gee namens die groep. Een uit die een groep en nog een uit die ander groep.

Case study:-

Facilitator: Mev. Jones se man is in 'n motorongeluk dood. Hy het haar agtergelaat met ses kinders. Die ouderdomme van die kinders is 16, 14, 10, 11, 3 en 4 jaar oud. Die oudste kinders is op hoërskool, en die twee ander kinders is op primêre skool. Voor Mnr. Jones se dood, was hy ook werkloos. Mev. Jones verrig huiswerkies (sy char) drie keer 'n week en verdien R300 per maand. Mev. Jones se buurvrou het 'n drankprobleem, wat naweke die drankwinkels besoek. Mev. Jones is vervreemd van haar eie familie en haar enigste geselskap wat sy het is haar buurvrou. Sy is agterstallig met haar rent en water, en is nie in staat om na haar kinders om te sien nie. Sy het die volgende uitgawes: Lig R30; Rent R60; Skool fees R80; Kos R100. Werk 'n budget vir Mev. Jones uit. Hoe kan julle haar help om haar finansieële sake mee te help. In daai ses kinders is daar twee kinders wat u-hulle haar mee kan help. Hoe kan sy maak met die skool fees.

(Groups discussed case study)

Group 1: B.M. gave feedback.

Die Jones se inkomste is	R300 per maand.
Child Support Grant	<u>R220</u> (2 kinders onder 7 jaar)
TOTAAL	<u>R520</u> per maand.

Uitgawes van Mev. Jones R250 (rent en water)
Aftrek van groot totaal: R270 oor.

Ekstra geld moet sy R210 (extra op rent, want sy's agterstallig)
 R 10 extra op water.

Die orige geld is R240 as sy klaar daai R30 extra betaal het.

Met R240 kan sy kleurtjies koop vir haar kinders. Miskien een maand vir een kind, en ander maand vir ander een kind. So gaan sy aan. Van orige geld kan sy 'n klein besigheid begin (huiswinkel) om te survive regdeur die maand. Dit sal haar baie help.

Facilitator: Baie, baie dankie. Groep 2.

Group 2: S.P. gave feedback.

Vir die twee kinders van drie en vier jaar oud kan sy Child Support Grant kry.

En lekker en chips verkoop aan die skole vir die kinders buite die draad van die skool.

En haar char geld wat R300 'n maand is.

Plus R220 vir Child Support

Wins wat sy uitmaak vir die week R500 van skool

TOTAAL R1020

Haar uitgawes is Lig R30; Rent R60; Skoolfooie R80; Kos R100. Totaal is R270.

Ander geld kan sy vir die kinders koop wat hulle nodig het.

Facilitator: Baie dankie. Kyk hoe het julle nou vir Mrs Jones gehelp. Dit wys net 'n mens kan jou omstandighede improve. U-hulle kan budget. Resources is available. As mens kyk na die twee klein kinders, daar is 'n Child Support Grant. Daar is dus 'n grant wat ek kan kry vir my kind.

Om die sessie net af te sluit, wat het u geleer van die sessie.

S.P.: Ek het baie geleer. Dit wys vir my ook iets. As ek 'n char job kry of so, dan is daar darem iets wat ek vir Iekeraam kan koop wat hy nodig het. Ek kan selfs iets begin, soos lekkers verkoop, dan kan ek ook geld verdien.

L.T.: Ek het baie geluister na almal se probleme en ek het gedink. Ek het baie daaruit geleer. So, ek is 'n ma net soos julle ander ook 'n ma is, kan daar nogal 'n uitkoms wees soos vir my ook. Daar is 'n way uit vir almal.

R.J.: Ek het nou na almal se problems geluister en het besef ek is nie die enigste een met daai problems nie. Ek sê vir een en elkeen baie dankie.

S.V.: Ek voel 'n bietjie beter. 'n Mens dink altyd jy is alleen in die situasie. 'n Mens voel dat jy nie 'n goeie ma is vir jou kind nie. Maar soos ek nou sien, ek is nie al een nie. Ek het gevoel asof ek in 'n donker tonnel is, amper soos 'n nagmerrie. Maar nou is amper soos daar 'n bietjie lig is in daai tonnel. So voel ek, ek voel baie beter nou dat ek my probleme met ander gedeel het. Daar is mense wat in dieselfde bootjie is as ek.

L.G.: So op die oomblik vandag het ek baie geleer. Ek wil dankie sê vir almal wat gekom het. Vir Jaylene wat die sessie gereël het en ek sien nogal baie kans dat my

kinders kan huis toe kom, soos ons vir Mrs Jones gehelp het, sien ek nogal dat ek ook geld kan kry en goedjies koop en aangaan by die huis. Baie dankie.

M.O.: Ek het baie geleer vanoggend hierso. Ek wil net dankie sê vir almal wat hier gewees het.

B.M.: Eerstens wil ek dankie sê; toe ek in kom vanoggend het ek nie vir u-hulle geken nie, maar nou ken ons mekaar. Dankie vir die smiles. Ons het almal bedruk en bedroef gelyk en nou sien ek almal het smiles op hulle gesigte. Ons het onself kom vind, dink ek. Ons kan nou hier uitgaan as sterk persone. Winners. Dankie vir Jaylene.

V.A.: Eers wil ek dankie sê vir almal wat my bemoedig het, en sterk gemaak. Die sessie wat ons gedoen het het my baie geleer. My kop 'n bietjie ooggemaak. Daar is iets wat jy ook kan doen by jou huis. Soos Mrs Jones se probleem waar 'n mens goedjies bymekaar krap, soos ons haar probleem opgelos het.

Facilitator: Ek wil elkeen dankie sê vir hulle input.

University of Cape Town

SESSION 2: SELF-ESTEEM AND SEPERATION

Facilitator: Die tweede sessie focus op self-esteem en skeiding. Voor ons begin; soos ek in die vorige sessie gesê het, daar is niks reg of verkeerde antwoorde nie. Byvoorbeeld, as ek enige een van julle vra wat is jou self-esteem. Weet enige een wat is self-esteem. Hoe sien jy jousef. Jou selfbeeld, wat dink jy van jousef. Watter tipe persoon jy is.

Deur middel van prente, hoe dink jy hoe sien jy jousef. **Byvoorbeeld:** As jy 'n mooi vrou sien op 'n beach, sien jy jousef so? Dan plak jy dit op jou blaaie.. So jou self-esteem beteken wat dink jy van jousef, of hoe lyk jy. Verstaan almal? Ek gaan nou tydskrifte gee vir u-hulle. Dit gee almal 'n indication van hoe jy jousef sien.

(Group is busy with task)

Facilitator: Almal van u-hulle het mos 'n collage gedoen. Elkeen gaan 'n kans kry om sy prent te wys vir die ander, en verduidelik hoekom jy dink jy is soos daai tipe persoon. Verstaan elkeen wat hulle moet doen?

B.M.: (Showed her picture)

Ek is lief om met mense te kommunikeer. Ek hou van om met mense te gesels en praat. Ek hou van in groepe werk, in my gemeenskap werk.

V.A.: (Showed her picture)

Die rede hoekom ek dink ek lyk so, ek is lief vir stap, lief vir die water en ek is lief om alleen te sit teen 'n rots en is lief vir die see.

S.P.: (Showed her picture - 'n Popstêr wat sing)

Ek is lief om te sing, altyd my karaokes en so aan. Omdat ek nou iets oorgekom het wat gelei het tot my kind wat weggeneem was, beteken nie dat jy daai tipe "swak" ouer is nie. Ek lyk ook om uit te gaan.

I.T.: (Showed her picture)

Ek hou van avontuur. Ek hou van mooi aantrek. Ek hou van mooi dinge, miskien alleen staan en bekyk die mooi bome en so. Dit is nou hoe ek is.

R.J.: (Showed her picture - a model)

Ek lyks aantrek. Baie lief vir modelwerk. Baie lief vir kinders aantrek. Lief vir skoonheid. Ek hou van was. Te change en different soorte klere aan te trek.

L.G.: (Showed her picture)

Die foto sê nog eintlik niks nie. Dit is die manier hoe ek voel, binne is en buite is, en die manier hoe ek my aantrek ensovoorts.

M.O.: (Showed her picture)

Ek hou van die groenigheid. Vir my is dit baie mooi.

S.V.: (Showed her picture)

Ek is baie lief vir die strand, vir die buitelewe.

Facilitator: Okay, nou wil ek hê julle moet 10 dinge neerskryf wat julle lyk van julleself en skryf dit op die agterkant van die poster.

(Group was busy with the exercise)

Facilitator: Ek gaan nou vra dat u net 2 van die 10 dinge kan noem wat uitstaan en wat u kan deel met die groep.

B.M.: Ek hou van om met ander mense te kommunikeer. Ek hou ook om met ander te deel, en ek hou van kinders.

S.P.: Ek is baie lief vir my kinders. Ek is nie een wat hou van moeilikheid nie, want dit pas nie by my nie, want dit is nie my styl nie.

R.J.: Ek hou van kosmaak, musiek. Ek vra elke aand vir die Here om my kinders se harte oop te maak vir my.

I.T.: Ek hou daarvan om skoon te maak. Ek hou van mooi dinge, 'n skoon huis. Ek hou ook daarvan om met my kind te wees.

M.O.: Ek hou van netjiesheid en hou van kosmaak.

S.V.: Ek hou daarvan om sterk te wees in tye van krisisse. Ek hou daarvan om mense te help wat in need is.

L.G.: Ek hou om te kyk na myself en byvoorbeeld my kinders, hulle laat my altyd goed voel as ek by hulle is.

V.A.: Ek hou van stap en ek hou om met my kinders te wees. Ek hou om saam met hulle in kerkdienste te wees.

Facilitator: Okay, basies die dinge wat hier uitkom is rerig positive dinge ten opsigte van u selfbeeld. Baie dinge was genoem wat u-hulle lyk.

Facilitator: In terme van die skeiding sessie, wat het deur julle minds gegaan toe die kind weg uit u sorg geneem is?

S.P.: Die tyd toe ek gehoor het van Iekeraam was weg en dat die polisie na my soek en so, en daai was mos die Sondag. Die Maandag toe was ek mos hier (PAWC). Toe dink ek, hoooo.. ek gaan nooit weer my kind terugkry nie, because why, hy is my kind en ons is gewoond aan mekaar. Vir my was dit so, dat ek iets kan oorkom, because why, hy is my enigste seun. My meisiekind bly by haar pa en sy gaan daar skool, ek gaan myself doodmaak en onder die trein gooi, because amper soos daar is iets wat weggevat is uit my hart uit. Maar ek het darem my moeite gemaak om uit te vind waar hy was. Elke keer as ek geloop het van die pleegmammie se huis, dan het hy gehuil, en daai is ook die seerste wat jou maak.

M.O.: Ek kon mal geraak het toe hulle weg was van my af.

R.J.: Ek was nog in die hospitaal gelê. Toe die social workers van Mowbray

Hospitaal my roep om die papiere te sign om die kind weg te vat van my, toe is die kind net gebore en toe raak ek hysterical. Ek het gesê ek sign niks papier nie, en het die komberse van die kooie afgegooi en gesê ek gaan my nie meer sterilise nie. My ma-hulle het nooit gecare van my kinders nie, net toe sy geld kry vir hulle toe wil sy my baby ook vat. Ek voel nou nog nie reg nie.

L.G.: Ek was baie upset toe hulle my oudste kinders kom haal het. Ek was nog in die hospitaal. Die familie het klaar die jonger kind gevra vir die weekend. Toe ek by die huis kom met my (oudste) kind, toe kom haal hulle die kinders se klere. Dit het gelyk daar is iets nie reg in my kop nie. Ek het gevoel amper soos iemand wat 'n mistake gemaak het. Ek het gelyk soos iemand wat mal kan geraak het. Tot op nou hierdie uur toe, sit ek miskien doodstil en dink is dit miskien ek wat iets gedoen het of wat. Maar soos dit eintlik is, is dit mos nie ek nie, maar die pa se skuld gewees. Dis daarom dat altwee toe weggevat was van my af.

S.V.: Ek het Candice self weggestuur. Ek het gedink dit sal iets goed wees, weg van die environment, weg van die verkeerde invloede. Maar dinge was nou nie soos ek gehoop het nie.

V.A.: Ek het self Feroza weggestuur. Ek het gevoel Feroza gaan verander toe ek haar weggestuur. Ek het gedink sy sou 'n beter mens bekom, maar alles het nie reggekome nie.

L.T.: Ek was baie upset dat my kind weggevat was van my. Ek was baie disappointed en was instaat om enigiets te doen. Ek het begin baie drink, in die hospitaal beland. Die way hoe ek gedrink het, was my bloed hoog gewees. Ek het 'n alcoholic geraak, en dis hoe mense gekom het by my en kom praat het met my.

B.M.: As jou kind weggevat is van jou dan dink jy in watter huis is my kind, eet my kind, verlang my kind ook vir my. Daar gaan so baie dinge in jou mind. As jy stil en alleen is dan kom daar baie dinge.

Facilitator: In terme van wat u nou net gepraat het, watter rol het u familie gespeel? Het hulle u gesupport deur daai tyd?

L.T.: My familie het nie na my gekom nie, ek het geen besoek gekry nie. Ek het gesond geraak en uitgekom daar. Toe ek uit die hospitaal kom toe begin hulle my moed in praat. Toe begin ek beter voel, en ek sien lig.

S.V.: My suster en haar man het my altyd geneem om Candice te besoek toe sy in Wellington was. Vakansietye het van die ander familie ook vir Candice daargehou, want ek was bang sy raak deurmekaar met die verkeerde vriende.

L.G.: Toe my kinders weggevat was van my, toe het my familie die grootste rol gespeel in my en my kinders se lewe. Hulle het my bygestaan. Ek was bemoedig deur hulle om assertive te wees en my voet neer te sit, want dit is 'n verkeerde ding, want jy is hulle ma, niemand anders nie.

R.J.: My familie het my nie bygestaan nie. Was meestal vreemde mense en Christen mense wat my altyd opgebring het in gebed, wat nou nog sê hulle hou my in gebed.

S.P.: My skoonsuster het altyd met my gepraat toe Iekeraam weg was van my. My ma sorg altyd vir my taxi fare om tot by hom te gaan en luxuries te gee.

B.M.: In die gemeenskap is daar organisasies en die organisasie se leiers het my baie bemoedig.

M.O.: Ek het nie familie in die Kaap nie, maar het 'n vriend wat my support.

V.A.: Mr Ruiters (social worker) het my baie support.

Facilitator: Ek wil graag weet watter rol die social worker gespeel het deur die moeilike tye.

S.P.: Deon Ruiters en Valencia van Wyk het my geneem na Iekeraam toe, en het gesê ek kan enige tyd vir hom besoek.

B.M.: Shanaaz Cloete het my baie gehelp. Ons het groot vriende kom raak en geheg geraak aan mekaar. Maar hier is ook baie ander social workers wat my nou support gee aangesien Shanaaz weg is.

L.G.: Wel, ek kan nie sê dat 'n maatskaplike werker het my bygestaan nie. Sy het eintlik my skoonbroer-hulle se kant gevat. Die ander maatskaplike werker het my moed ingepaat, want soos sy sien, gaan my kinders terug kom na my toe.

R.J.: Ek is nie lank onder die social worker Valencia van Wyk nie, en as sy na my kom sal ek verlang om na my baby toe te gaan. Heinz Park is gevaarlik. Valencia is 'n baie goeie social worker en staan my baie by.

S.V.: Shanaaz Cloete het my gehelp en sy het probeer om Candice in different institutions te kry. Soos ek laas keer gesê, Candice wil nie gehelp wees nie. Dan is niks wat enige iemand kan doen nie, die social workers, psychologists. Sy haarself moet eers haarself help.

I.T.: Shanaaz Cloete het my ook baie gehelp, baie bemoedig, en nou het ek mos 'n ander social worker (Jaylene Davids) aangesien Shanaaz weg is.

M.O.: Ek het al twee social workers gehad, maar die derde een wat ek gekry het, het my maar altyd die beste gehelp (Jaylene Davids).

Facilitator: Dit is important dat daar 'n support system is vir jou. Jou social worker moet jou bemoedig deur hierdie tye. Wat ek wil hê is net om julle te encourage. R.J., as 'n biologiese ouer moet jy kontak maak met jou kinders. Niemand kan jou kontak wyer nie. Ultimately, foster care beteken dat kinders moet terugkom na hulle biologiese ouers toe. Die wet maak voorsiening dat biologiese ouers moet kontak maak met hulle kinders, want ultimately, daai kinders moet terugkom na u-hulle toe. Sê vir julle social workers julle wil kontak maak met julle kinders. Show an interest, dat julle belangstel in julle kinders, want daai gaan bepaal of julle kinders gaan terugkom na julle toe, maar jou omstandighede moet ook improve by die huis.

Facilitator: Net om die sessie af te sluit, het enige een iets geleer uit die sessie uit;

wat uitstaan vir jou.

B.M.: Ek het hier kom leer om myself te wees. Ek het kom leer dat as ek nou hier uitgaan, dan is ek 'n sterker persoon en ek kan die wêreld in die oë staar. Ek gaan hard daaraan werk om my kinders terug te kry.

I.T.: Ek het ook baie nou kom leer. Ek voel nie meer so swak nie. Ek sien darem nou weer lig vorentoe, en dit is lekker om saam te werk. Ons almal het geleer van mekaar se probleme.

R.J.: Ek wil weet nou van myself. Die dag toe my kind weggeneem van my sorg was, toe het die magistraat gesê ek moet 'n plek van my eie kry dan sal my kind terugkom. Nou het ek my eie plek, wat staan my nou te doen?

Facilitator: Ek sal nie einlik daarop kan antwoord nie, die magistraat bepaal dit self. Die social worker sal jou huis monitor en alles in die hofverslag sit.

L.G.: Ek het vandag baie geleer. Al die vroumense wat hier sit, ek het geluister na elkeen se probleem, en gedink dat ons mekaar baie gehelp het. Tot ons ons kinders kry, het ons mekaar baie nodig. Ek sal net bly wees as my kinders kan huis toe kom.

M.O.: Ek het baie geleer en mense kom leerken wat ek nog nooit gesien het nie.

S.V.: Toe ek hier kom toe was ek baie temeergedruk gevoel, maar ek voel 'n bietjie beter. My hart voel 'n bietjie ligter, want as 'n mens praat van jou eie probleme en luister na ander se probleme. Dis maar al.

V.A.: Ek het 'n bietjie baie swak gevoel toe ek gekom het. Ek het eers geweier in die eerste plek, toe dink ek nee ek gaan nie met 'n gebreekte hart daar sit nie. Daar is niks seker wat ek sal opdoen nie, maar in die tydjie wat ek nou hier sit het ek nou gevoel ek is nie alleen. Dit is amper soos jy in 'n team, 'n groep is. Soos in die kerk, dan is jy ook in groepe wat hulle jou in verdeel. Jy moet net sterk is.

S.P.: Ek het baie geluister wat sommige van die mammies gepraat het. Ek het altyd gedink, miskien is ek die enigste persoon wie se kind weggeneem is uit haar sorg, maar nadat ek kennis kom maak het met almal, kan ek sê ek was nie die enigste een nie wat hartseer, gehoop en geslaap het met 'n hartseer hart nie.

Facilitator: Baie dankie vir wat julle gesê het en alhoewel elkeen se omstandighede verskillend is, daar ook similarities is. Jy is nie alleen nie.

SESSION 3: COPING AND RE-UNIFICATION STRATEGIES

Facilitator: Ek wil elkeen dankie sê vir die tyd wat u gemaak het om die groep sessie by te woon. Wat ons die 2 vorige sessies gehoor het, hoop ek onthou u nog. Maar voor ons daar kom, kom ons gaan eers nog 'n icebreaker speel. Die icebreaker se naam is Musical chairs. Almal moet hulle stoele in die sirkel sit en die groep moet om die stoele loop in 'n sirkel. As die musiek stop, dan moet elkeen hom 'n stoel vind. Agter 2 probeer sla, dan word van die stoele weggehaal. (Group played icebreaker).

Facilitator: Wat het ons geleer van die game?

B.M: Ons moet die reëls follow anders sal die game nie werk nie.

R.J: Ek het die game enjoy, want nou voel ek sommer lekker.

M.O: Die feit dat 'n mens nie weet wanneer die music gaan stop nie, het my nervous gemaak.

L.G: Ons moet ons samewerking gee, anders gaan die game nie werk nie.

S.V: Die game was lekker, maar soos gesê was, 'n mens weet nie wanneer die music gaan stop nie en jy moet ook in dieselfde tyd sorg dat jou stoel nie afgeneem word nie.

IT: Ek het kom leer dat 'n mens moet jou samewerking gee om die game te laat werk.

V.A Ek het die game enjoy.

S.P: Die game was lekker, ek het dit baie geniet.

Facilitator: Die doel van die exercise was om die atmosfeer gesellig te maak voordat ons gaan begin met die sessie. Wat julle ook nou net gedeel het in die groep is baie belangrike punte. Ek lyk wat gesê was in terme van ons moet ons samewerking gee om die game te laat slaag. Die feit dat u-hulle ook bang was dat u-hulle stoele gaan weggehaal word, kan 'n mens "link" met ons eie situasies. As ons nie na ons kinders reg gaan versorg nie soos dit verwag word van u-hulle as moeders nie, dan is die moontlikheid daar dat u kind weggehaal gaan word van u sorg. Op hierdie oomblik is u kinders weggehaal uit u sorg, en ons moet ons omstandighede verbeter sodat ons kinders kan terugkeer in ons sorg.

Facilitator: Kom ons keer gou terug na ons 2 vorige sessies. Wat het u-hulle van die sessies geleer?

B.M: Ek het geleer dat my omstandighede moet improve om te sorg dat my kinders huis toe moet kom. Dit is nie lekker om nie jou kinders by jou te hê nie, maar ek gaan fight vir my kinders.

M.O: Ek het geleer dat net soos daar 'n way was vir Mev. Jones toe ons haar gehelp het om haar probleem te solve, daar ook 'n way is vir my.

L.G: Ek het kom besef dat ek nie alleen is nie, my kinders is nie al kinders wat weggeeneem is nie. Met die hulp van my familie sal ek vir my kinders kan sorg as hulle terugkom.

S.V: Ek het kom leer dat ek nie 'n bad parent is nie. Candice het gechoose om so te wees, en wil nie gehelp wees nie. Ek het kom leer dat support van ander mense belangrik is om jou te help met jou problems.

V.A: Ek het kom leer dat die support wat my kerk my gee, my baie gehelp het toe ek gesukkel het met Feroza.

R.J: Ek het kom leer dat ek moet kontak maak met my kinders, en my circumstances moet ook verbeter.

I.T: Ek kom leer dat as enkel ouer jy dit kan maak in die lewe. Ek wil net alleen gaan bly met my kind, weg van die foster home.

S.P: Ek het geleer dat 'n mens se omstandighede kan improve, maar jy moet jou dinge laat staan. Ek mis my kind, maar ek gaan nie ophou fight voor ek hom terug gaan kry nie.

Facilitator: Hanterings strategieë beteken coping strategies, hoe jy cope met jou kind as s/hy terug is in jou sorg. Laat ek eers vir u-hulle vra is die gedagtes dat die kinders teruggeplaas gaan word in u sorg stresvol of 'n okay idea? Is dit stresvol want u weet nie hoe u u kind gaan hanteer nie, of is dit okay in terme van ek is ready om my kind reg te treat?

S.P: Wanneer my kind terugkom sal dit nie stresvol wees nie, want ek sal kan kommunikeer met hom. Hy sal van vooraf my baby wees, en ek sal van vooraf 'n moeder wees vir hom.

L.G: Vir my sal dit nie 'n probleem wees as my kinders huis toe kom nie, ek sal maar my bes probeer om vir hulle verder groot te maak ensovoorts.

I.T: Vir my sal dit baie lekker wees om my kind vir myself te hê. Ek sal dit baie waardeer en sal haar die liefde gee. Ek sal my bes probeer om vir haar te gee wat haar toekom.

V.A: Vir my sal dit lekker wees om vir Ferosa terug in my sorg te hê. Ek sal 'n stukkie goud sien as ek vir Ferosa terugkry in my lewe.

B.M: Al moet dit vir my stresvol wees, sal ek werk daaraan, want net een ding sal in my mind wees, my kind is terug. My kind sal moet aanpas, alhoewel sy gewoond is in wat sy gekry het by daai ander mense, maar ek wil my kind terug hê by my.

M.O: Dit sal baie lekker wees as my kinders terugkom na my. Baie lekker.

S.V: Ek sal dit stresvol vind, want ek sal haar 24 uur moet dop hou. En 'n mens kan nie so lewe om jou kind 24 uur moet dophou nie.

Facilitator: Die vraag wat ek wil vra is, hoe sal u u kinders se gedrag hanteer?

S.V: Ek sal nie Candice se gedrag kan hanteer nie, want sy is te ver in waar sy nou is. Sy is in die drugs, en gangsters. Sy steel ook my familie se klere.

R.J: Ek sal baie bly wees as my kinders moet terugkom. Ek sal meer tyd spend met my kinders. Hulle is ook my lewe.

LT: Ek sal ook bly wees om my kind te sien, ek sal nie kan huil nie.

Facilitator: In terme van watter veranderinge dink julle moet eers plaasvind voor die kinders kan terugkom huis toe.

R.J: Op die oomblik weet ek my plek is agter mekaar. Solank my plek netjies is, is ek nie geworry oor armoedighede nie.

L.G: By my is daar nie baie veranderinge nie, soos wat ek kan sê ek het my huis vir myself nie. Daar is baie space in die huis waar hulle kan rond hardloop agter in die yard. Alles wat 'n man moet doen, doen ek self. Daar is dus nie baie veranderinge nie.

LT: Ek wil 'n wendy house opsit. Ek is nie geworried wat binne-in is nie, solank my plek skoon is. Meubels kom vanself. Wat belangrik is, ek sal my kind by my het.

B.M: Solank ons twee die liefde kan gee, en mekaar kan verstaan, en daar elke dag iets is om te eet. Die res kan vanself kom.

S.P: Daar sal nie meer veranderinge wees nie, solank my kind skoon sal wees en goed versorgd.

Facilitator: Watter mense of bronne kan u aan dink wat u kan help met die versorging van die kinders. Watter plekke en mense kan u help?

B.M: Ek dink die maatskaplike werkers van Social Services en die kerke en mosques.

R.J: Daar is nog 'n persoon wat my kan help dit is in Gatesville: Mustadafin. Hulle help my met klere, kos ensovoorts. Ek gaan 'n soup kitchen oopmaak en so my gemeenskap help.

Facilitator: Dit is belangrik om te ken hierdie plekke wat jou kan help.

B.M: Ek wonder of Candice al Family couseling gekry het?

S.V: Nog nie. Candice steel net goed vir drugs.

Facilitator: Kan u miskien sê watter redes daar is hoekom ons kinders so stout is.

S.P: Dit is 'n aanwendsel. Hulle wil nie eintlik stout wees nie. Hulle het nie 'n rede hoekom hulle dit doen nie.

B.M: Som gevalle is dat hulle het nie 'n rede om stout te wees nie. Som gevalle is die probleem in die huis. 'n Mens kan nie altyd sê daar is geen rede nie. Somtyds is daar probleme in die huis wat lei tot die kind om stout te wees.

V.A: Somtyds as die kind alleen groot raak, net met 'n ma en nie 'n pa nie. Nou vra sy die ma klomp vrae, dan beantwoord die ma die vrae, maar sy is nog nie tevrede met daai antwoorde nie, want sy wil die kant van die pa ook hoor en nie net van die ma nie.

L.G: Kyk nou my suster, wat 15 jaar oud is. Sy het haar ingemeng met 'n vriend wat se suster my vriend gewees het. Nou is sy so in 'n situasie van sy doen net verkeerde dinge. My ma, ek en my suster het al met haar gepraat maar sy hoor nie. Somtyds is dit die vriende, somtyds die ouers binne die huis. Miskien kommunikeer hulle nie reg met mekaar nie. Sy het al gesê sy gaan 'n meeting roep in die huis, briewe skryf aan die familie lede. Sy het dan gelees aan hulle wat sy geskrywe het. Sy is net vir 'n tydjie reg later dan begin sy maar net weer.

Facilitator: Dink u as ouers ons is miskien verantwoordelik vir ons kinders se gedrag?

B.M: Som van ons ouers is miskien verantwoordelik vir ons kinders se gedrag. Maar dan kry jy van daai ander wat nie verantwoordelik gehou kan word vir ons kinders se gedrag nie. As ons kinders kom met vrae, dan moet ons nie die kinders weg wys nie. Ons moet tyd maak vir ons kinders.

I.T: Ons weet miskien nie wat die rede is hoekom ons kinders al die verkeerde dinge doen nie of miskien het sy 'n knak weg. Ek vat dit so van my ook af.

Facilitator: Miskien moet ek vra wat is die doel hoekom ons ons kinders disiplineer. Hoekom slaan of praat ons met ons kinders. Wat wil ons bereik met die dissiplinerig van ons kinders.

I.T: Ek gaan my kind slaan as sy stout is. 'n Mens moet die boompie buig, want as jy nie daai kind gaan slaan nie, dan gaan s/hy net maak wat hulle wil.

R.J: Hulle sê 'n mens moet oop is met jou kind. Jou kind moet soos jou vriend en alles wees. As jou kind vir jou iets vra dan moet jy kan antwoord. As jy haar tug, want jy is lief vir haar en wil nie hê sy moet uitrafel nie, soos die ander op die pad nie. As sy 'n vriend het moet jy vir haar sê bring die vriend huis toe sodat ek kan sien wie die vriend is. Wees oop met die kind en s/hy sal oop wees met jou.

Facilitator: Hoekom dissiplineer ons ons kinders? Kan dit wees omdat ons trots wil wees op ons kinders? Ek wil darem proud wees van my kind. Ons wil mos nie hê ons kind moet deurmekaar raak met ander verkeerde vriende nie. Byvoorbeeld: Iekeraam

is my kind, ek het hom alleen so ver groot gemaak en kan trots voel op hom.

B.M: Ek wil sekere dinge vir my kind gee wat ek nog nie gehad het nie. Ek verlang net die beste vir my kind.

Facilitator: Watter metode gebruik u om u kind te dissiplineer?

L.T: 'n Kind moet jy discipline. Daar is baie maniere hoe. 'n Kind moet jy tug as hy iets verkeerd gedoen het. Of praat, daar is baie metodes. Praat met hom en vind uit wat sy of haar probleem is.

S.V: Ek het geslaan. Haar baie geslaan. Ek het gepraat, en niks het gehelp nie. En die pa, as ek die pa gephone het en gevra het dat hy moet deurmaak en praat met die kind, dan wil sy ook nie praat met haar pa nie. Ek was amper elke week by die skool. Slaan en praat het nie gehelp nie. Dus, ek was moedeloos agterna.

Facilitator: Ek voel dat jy moet eers praat met jou kind. As jy praat met hom en jy gebruik ek-boodskappe waar jy sê ek voel ongelukkig met wat jy nou gedoen het, dit is wat jy verkeerd doen. As s/hy nie wil hoor na dit nie, ek sal dan nog nie oorgaan na slaan nie, ek sal hom straf. Ek sal goed vat wat hy lyk, vat ek dan weg. Ek sal verduidelik hoekom ek daai goed wegvat totdat jy behave. Dit is ook 'n manier om 'n kind te straf. Hy sal mos ook enigiets doen om wat weggevat is, terug te kry. Hy moet ook leer in die proses hoekom daai goed van hom wegevat is. As jy hom slaan, sê vir hom hoekom jy hom slaan. Ek slaan jou want dit is die rede hoekom ek jou slaan. Kinders wonder somtye hoekom slaan my ma my. Communication moet oop is. Jou kind kan jou vriend is, maar dan moet s/hy ook respek het vir jou as ouer. Especially in single parenting is dit difficult, want as daar nie 'n pa in die huis is nie, dan vat die kind oor. Soos S.V. gesê het, sy dink nie Candice sou so opgetree het as daar 'n pa in die huis was nie. Ek weet dit is moeilik vir julle as single parents, want julle moet pa en ma speel in die huis. Enige vrae van wat ek nou gesê het? Stilte.

Facilitator: Net om af te sluit hierdie sessie. Wat het u-hulle uit hierdie sessie geleer?

B.M: Ek het geleer wat ek nie geweet het nie. Ek het geleer om terug te gaan, hoe om met my kinders te gesels, kommunikeer saam met hulle. Maar die belangrikste is praat eerste.

M.O: Ek het ook baie geleer, om mense te leerken wat ek nog nie gesien het nie.

L.G: Ek het eintlik baie geleer. Daar is baie dinge wat ons saam gedoen het.

S.V: Ek dink ek het iets geleer. Soos ek sê, ek was teneergedruk, ek sal sê ek voel baie beter. Ek weet ook nou wat om te maak met die kind. En ek gaan dit doen.

V.A: Ek wil ook maar sê ek voel baie beter. Ek het dinge gehoor en as Ferosa terugkom weet ek ook hoe om haar te hanteer.

R.J: Ek wil baie dankie sê vir een en elkeen. Ek het baie geleer van almal wat hier sit. Ek kan more oormore dieselfde dinge vertel vir ander wat ek geleer het hierso.

I.T.: Ek het ook baie kom leer. Dinge wat ek ook nie geweet het nie. Ek het ook kom leer hoe om met mense te kommunikeer, en nou kan ek dit vir my kind ook leer wat ek geleer het. Ek sê vir almal dankie.

S.P.: Ek het ook nou kom leer nie net om te tug eers nie maar om te praat. Maar as praat nie help nie, dan vat van sy goed weg.

Facilitator: Ek wil vir julle baie dankie sê vir julle tyd wat julle opgeoffer het. Ek kan miskien myself indink hoe u voel, maar u-hulle is die mense wat experience hoe dit voel as my kind weggeneem is uit my sorg. Moenie moed opgee nie. U-hulle het regte. R.J., jy het 'n reg om jou kind te sien. Jy het visiting rights. Jou kind hoef nie permanent in foster care te wees nie. L.G., jy het regte. Jy moet sommer vir die social workers sê jy wil jou kinders besoek. Gradually moet die kinders teruggeplaas word. Besef, u kan iets doen aan u situasie. U het 'n sterk support system wat bestaan uit familie. S.V., jy weet nou wat om te doen met jou situasie. Daar is 'n way uit. Sy kan forsseer word om te gaan vir behandeling by De Novo. V.A., hou moed met wat jy besig is om te doen. Wees sterk. M.O., jy het 'n sterk wilskrag. Die feit dat jy jou kinders gereeld gaan visit sê jy stel belang aan jou kinders. Niks is impossible nie. S.P., hou moed. 'n Mens leer deur elke experience. I.T., jy wat die voorreg het om jou kind daagliks te sien omdat jy in dieselfde huis as die pleeg ma bly, Gaan aan om jou eie wendy house te kry, en vorm haar soos jy haar wil hê.

SESSION 4: PARENT EMPOWERMENT

Facilitator: Eers wil ek elkeen van u-hulle baie dankie vir die tyd wat u-hulle opgeoffer het om hier te wees vir die laaste sessie. Ek sien dat V.A. nie vandag saam met die groep is nie. Toe ek vir haar gaan oplaai het vanoggend, toe was haar deur gesluit. Het jy enige idee waar sy is R.J. aangesien julle in dieselfde area woon?

R.J: Nee ek weet nie waar sy is nie. Sy het niks vir my genoem nie.

Facilitator: U-hulle weet ook dat dit die laaste sessie is. Mrs. Bam ons gas spreekster sal later 'n geleentheid kry om haarself bekend te stel aan die groep. Die rede hoekom sy hier is is om vir u-hulle 'n bietjie moed in te praat. Ek het ook belowe om u-hulle certificates te oorhandig as 'n teiken van dankbaarheid.

Voor ons gaan begin met vandag se sessie, gaan ons eers 'n icebreaker speel om 'n lekker atmosfeer te skep in die groep. Die icebreaker se naam is die wool-game. Die een persoon hou 'n klein gedeelte van die wol vas en vertel die groep wat sy in die vorige sessie geleer het. Sy moet die wol na nog 'n ander persoon gooi, terwyl sy 'n klein gedeelte van die wol vashou. U sal na 'n tyd agterkom dat 'n net gevorm word, waar die wol oorkruis. By nou al ken u-hulle almal mekaar en ek hoop nie hier is nog iemand wat skaam is vir die ander nie. Wie van u-hulle gaan begin met die icebreaker?

R.J: Ek het geleer dat as ek my kinders terug wil hê in my sorg, dan moet ek gereeld kontak maak met my kinders sodat hulle weer gewoond kan word aan my.

B.M: Ek het geleer dat 'n mens discipline 'n kind omdat jy trots wil wees van jou kind. Slaan is ook nie altyd die oplossing nie.

L.T: Ek het kom leer dat die support van ander soos my kind se pleegmammie vir my as enkel ouer baie gehelp en nog altyd baie help. My wens is net dat ek my kind kan terug in my sorg kry.

S.P: Ek het geleer dat net soos daar 'n uitweg was vir Mrs. Jones, daar vir my ook 'n uitweg is. Ek sal dit kan maak as enkel ouer, met die help van my familie.

S.V: Ek het geleer dat 'n mens discipline 'n kind omdat jy proud wil voel as ouer op jou kind.

M.O: Ek het geleer dat pleegsorg 'n temporary reëling is, en dat as ek my kinders wil terug hê, dan moet ek kontak behou met my kinders.

L.G: Ek het geleer dat met die support wat ek het van my familie, ek my kinders kan versorg en hul al die liefde gee wat hulle benodig.

Facilitator:

In die eerste sessie het ons gefokus op emotional en financial support. Ons het gekyk na ons familie wat ons emosioneel en finansieel support. Die tweede sessie het

gefokus op ons self beeld en julle het vir ons plakkaarte gewys van hoe julle lyk, en hoekom julle soos daardie persoon lyk. Die derde sessie het ons gefokus op coping and re-union strategies. As my kind moet terugkom, hoe gaan ek hom dissipleneer as hy miskien stout is. As ons hom gaan slaan, sê hoekom julle hom slaan. Dit is belangrik sodat die kind weet hoekom hy geslaan word. Die vierde sessie fokus op Parent Empowerment. Hoe om vir u-hulle te bemagtig as enkel ouers. Baie van u-hulle het genoem dat u-hulle magteloos voel as gevolg van u-hulle wat nie naby hulle kind kom nie. U verlanse is eintlik om u kinders in u sorg te kry. Die rede hoekom u u kind dissipleneer is omdat u trots voel op u kind, sodat hulle ook 'n beter kind kan wees en dinge kry wat u nooit gekry het toe u nog kinders was nie. In die vierde sessie fokus ons op parent empowerment- hoe om vir u te bemagtig as enkel ouers. Daarom het ek vir Mrs. Bam ingeroep. Sy is net hier om u meer te bemoedig. Ek het gevoel ek gaan iemand kry wat in Tafelsig bly, wat kan relate soort van met u-hulle as enkel ouers nou.

Maar, eerstens wat ek wil hê wat u-hulle moet doen, is om u suksesse wat u opgedoen het in die verlede of tot nou toe neer te skryf. Fokus ook op u sterk eienskappe. Byvoorbeeld, as ek praat van my sterk eienskappe dan kan jy sê, ek is 'n sterker persoon in krisies tye. Ek glo 'n mens het nie net weaknesses nie, maar 'n mens moet focus op die sterk punte van 'n persoon. As 'n mens iemand wil empower dan focus mens op die persoon se sterk punte, of watter suksesse plaasgevind het. Verstaan elkeen wat ek nou gesê het? Stilte. Ek gaan u vra om die sterk eienskappe of punte neer te skryf en later die groep in te lig oor jou sterk eienskappe.

Group busy with task assigned by the facilitator.

Facilitator: Okay, wat ek nou vir u gaan vra om wat julle geskryf het te deel met die res van die groep. Soos ek gesê het, daar is niks reg of verkeerde antwoorde nie.

I.T: Goeie more een en elkeen. Selfs vir ons social worker Jaylene. Ek wil my kind in my sorg hê. My sterk eienskappe wat ek in my lewe wil hê, dat ek al my liefde vir my kind wil gee soos nooit tevore nie. My verlanse is ook dat ek en my kind elke Sondag kerk toe gaan om meer te ontvang en onself gelukkig maak. Ek wil ook 'n baie sterk moeder wees vir my kind en die liewe Jesus aanneem in my lewe.

S.P: My sterk punte is, ek is baie bly dat Iekeraam terug in my sorg gaan kry. Ek wil graag vir hom die beste gee, veral wat ek as kind nie gekry het ie. My verlanse is om 'n werk te kry en vir hom in 'n crèche te sit sodat hy kan leer. Ek is baie bly dat ek nie meer daai dinge doen wat ek voorheen gedoen het ie. 'n Mens is nooit te sleg om goed te wees en goed om sleg te wees nie. 'n Mens moet net sterk wees en hou moed.

R.J: Goeie more, my naam is R.J.. My sterk eienskappe is dat ek wil 'n beter mens wees vir myself en my kinders. My verlanse is dat ek my kinders wil kyk. Ek voel aan dat ek die liefde kry hier in die groep. Ons voel soos 'n familie. Ek het nie familie nie, want hulle gee nie om vir my nie. Ek het nie meer stres nie, want ek het hulle bewys dat ek in my eie plek kan bly. Ek sorg vir myself.

S.V: Ek voel sterk want ek weet daar is help vir my kind se probleem, dit is as sy gehelp wil word. Ek het my altyd sterk gehou as die social workers my gebel het en gesê het dat Candice in die selle is. Ek het probeer om kalm te bly.

L.G:My hoop is dat my kinders sal terugkom na my toe. Vanaf my kinders weggeen was, voel ek magteloos en alleen. My verlange is dat ek alles in my vermoë doen om my kinders te kry. Soms as ek alleen voel, dan dink ek aan hulle, wat hulle nou op die oomblik doen.

M.O:Ek sal lyk my kinders moet terugkom in my sorg. Ek sal heelwat 'n ander moeder wees vir hulle.

B.M:My sterk eienskappe is ek weet wat ek uit die lewe wil hê. Ek is nie 'n persoon wat bly lê nie. Ek is 'n vegter, in hakies gesit, nie 'n mens om te baklei nie, julle moet my mooi verstaan. Ek hou van deel met my mede mens. My liefde is vir kinders. Ek hou daarvan om te kommunikeer. Ek hou ook daarvan om gedurig te bid.

Facilitator:Elkeen het mos gehoor die ander se sterk eienskappe. Is daar enige vrae? Ek hoop net die dinge wat u daar uitgehaal het, dit bly in julle gedagtes en laat daai soort van 'n motivering is vir u-hulle, om aan te gaan met julle lewe. Moenie hoop opgee nie, dinge sal regkom vir julle. As mense praat van julle bad dinge of julle is bad parents, dink aan die goeie dinge. Dit is wat jou motiveer. As julle nou net agterop kan skrywe wat u altyd wou gedoen het. Somtye dink 'n mens aan wat jy eintlik eendag gedoen het, maar dinge het in my way gekom.

Group is busy with activity

Facilitator:Die lys wat ek nou om stuur is om elkeen se kontak nommers op te skrywe, sodat julle kontak met mekaar kan het na die groep sessies klaar is. As u voel om te praat met een, dan kan jy kontak maak met daai spesifieke persoon. Dit is ook om support te verleen. Ek gaan elkeen ook 'n copy maak van die lysie, sodat elkeen net dit kan hou by hulle.

Enige volunteers wat wil begin om te praat van wat hulle eintlik wou gewees het?

B.M:Ek wou so graag 'n verpleegster geword het, omdat ek ander kan help en omsien. Om te kan troos en luister na 'n persoon se nood. Maar weens omstandighede kon ek dit nie maak nie.

R.J:Ek wou geleer het vir 'n prokureur, toe kon ek nie, because my ma se huis was te klein. Ek wou ook altyd 'n model gewees het. Ek wou ook altyd 'n soup kitchen oopmaak het. Dit was my verlange.

S.V:Ek wou altyd 'n verpleegster gewees het toe ek 'n kind was, omdat ek daarvan hou om met mense te werk. Ek wou graag 'n goeie moeder vir my kind gewees het en gehoop dat sy my nooit teleur sou stel nie, ek het altyd gehoop dat sy met 'n pa in haar lewe sou grootgeword het. Ek het probeer, haar alles gegee wat ek nooit gekry het nie, omdat ons so 'n groot familie van nege was.

L.G:Ek wou graag 'n huis vrou wees. My verlange is dat ek kan doen wat ander vrou mense kan doen met hulle lewe. Ek wou ook 'n goeie moeder en huisvrou wees as my kinders huis toe moet kom.

I.T: My begeerte was, ek wou graag leer vir 'n onderwyseres om met kinders te kommunikeer, maar ek het nie die ondersteuning gekry van my ouers af nie. Ek het baie hard probeer, wat my begeerte was. Ek wou ook trots gevoel het oor myself. Die dinge wat ek nie gehad het nie, wil ek vir my kind gun.

S.P: Ek wou graag gaan werk vir 'n huis vir my kinders. Ek wil graag hê dat my twee kinders saam moet groot raak soos broer en suster. Ek wil graag vir hulle die beste gee.

M.O: Ek wou altyd 'n huisvrou wees en ek is vandag een. Dit is lekker om agter die kospotte te staan. Dit is al wat ek kan sê.

Facilitator: Ek weet nie of u agter gekom het dat twee van u-hulle wou verpleegsters word om mense te help. En ander het genoem dat hulle hulle kinders wil gee wat hulle nooit gehad het nie. Ek wil u ook net vra of u die lewe weer in 'n positiewe lig sien en hoekom. Daar is darem lig aan die einde van die tunnel, Voel u daar is so iets in die lewe nou?

B.M: Ek voel daar is 'n uitkoms. My rede is, met al die ondersteuning van die maatskaplike werkers, van al die mummies wat hierso sit, die telefoon nommers, kan ek dit maak. As ek voel ek is bedruk met 'n probleem, dan kan ek 'n stappie vat na die naaste een toe, en ek kan gesels.

S.P: Ek kan sê daar het lig in my lewe ingekom. Ek voel om te lewe. En dan my familie saam met my staan.

I.T: Ek voel daar is lig vir my, vir almal wat ek nou kom ontmoet het hier. Ek voel nie meer so bedruk nie. Die rede hoekom ek ook lig voel is dat ek nie vir 'n tydjie gewerk het nie, en dat ek nou werk. Ek voel baie soos 'n ander mens. Altyd het alles donker voor my gewees, maar nou sien ek meer lig, want ek het nou my phone nommer gegee en lyk gesels met mense.

L.G: Daar is baie meer lig in my lewe. Ek voel nie meer soos ek gevoel het nie. En ek sê baie dankie vir die mummies wat hulle telefoonnommers gegee het en selfs hulle adresse gegee het sodat ek kan kontak maak met hulle. Ek wil baie dankie sê Jaylene vir jou. Baie dankie.

R.J: Ek voel dat ek lig voel. Ek wil baie dankie sê vir die sessie. Ek kon my hart uitpraat met julle. Soos die mense wat hier sit voel ampers soos hulle my familie is.

S.V: Ek voel daar is lig aan die einde van die tunnel, want ek dink daar is help vir my kind. Soos Jaylene vir my gesê het en ek gaan nou daaraan iets doen, om vir haar te help. En ek voel beter omdat ek nou daarvoor gepraat het met die mense. Ek sien almal het probleme, verskillende probleme. Ek voel as ek bedruk voel, dan kan ek enige een bel, en 'n mens voel beter as jy gepraat het.

M.O: Ek het ook lig in my lewe. Ek sal bly wees as my kinders terugkom. Dit is al wat ek kan sê. Baie dankie.

Facilitator: Ek gaan vir Mrs. Bam 'n kans gee om met julle te deel. Ek hoop wat sy

gaan deel ook vir u bemoedig. Ek gee nou oor aan Mrs. Bam.

Mrs. Bam: My naam is Dawn, my van is Bam. Ek het nou almal julle storie gehoor. Almal se storie het my geraak op different maniere. Ek kan relate met elkeen van u hulle. Laat ek 'n bietjie van myself vertel. Ek is van die Paarl. En soos jy sê jou kind is nie by jou nie, kan ek sê ons het by my ouma groot geword. Ons het baie swaar groot geword, dit kan ek vir julle sê. Vir ons was daar verwyte. My ma het aangegaan met haar lewe in die Kaap. My pa het 'n ander vrou gevat wat alreeds vyf kinders het. Hy kon nie vir ons sorg nie. Hy was baie buite gewees. Ek het dit endure. Ek het vir myself gesê en vir my oudste suster Joan, as ek sestien jaar oud is, dan loop ek weg uit die Paarl. Ek het weggeloop uit die Paarl nie om te verswak nie, maar om te vergoed. Ek het swaar gekry in my getroude lewe. Ek het getrou met 'n drug addict. Hy het my gelos. Ek het my kinders self groot gemaak. Die guns was by my, ek het my kinders by my gehad, daai was een van die vertroosting wat ek die Here baie dankie voor sê.

My kinders het nie by foster mense gebly nie, soos ek by ouma gebly het nie. Dit is nie noodwendig 'n vreemde persoon wat jou kind foster nie, maar jou eie ma. As jou eie ma jou kind foster dan is dit horrible, want hulle doen dit net vir die geld. My man het my gelos toe was my baby vyf maande. Hy sien die kind die eerste keer nadat hy ons gelos het, toe is sy twaalf jaar oud. My kinders ken nie hulle pa nie. Ek het ook 'n companion en hy is baie goed vir my, maar ek sal nooit trou nie. So, wat ek eintlik vir jou sê, moenie despair nie. By die einde van die dag gaan jou kinders na jou toe kom. Hulle moet na jou kom, but you have to work on yourself first and foremost. Probeer soos Jaylene gesê het probeer. Ek kom lank aan waar ek ander mense se kinders groot maak. My ouma het ook ander mense se kinders groot gemaak en gefoster. So, ek ken foster kinders. Ek moet hulle terug stuur aan die einde van die dag, alhoewel dit baie sad is.

Laat ek julle sê, julle kinders wat in pleegsorg is, hulle word goed versorg. Die lelike ouers uitgesluit. Moenie despair nie, julle het almal dan sulke mooi eienskappe. Ek wou ook 'n nurse gewees het as 'n kind. Daai was ook my grootste begeerte, maar omdat daar nooit geld was nie, nooit kos nie. Ooh jene, ek het in 'n horrible huis groot geword. My ma se broers drink en ek kon nie slaap nie. Hulle het baklei met mekaar,

maar ek het volhard. Ek het altyd vir myself gesê: "I was meant for something better", en dit I believe. I believe in it. Ek het dit nou nog achieve wat ek wou achieve het nie, but through the grace of God, my children and I achieved. Daar gaan my baby dogter, sy is bestem vir groter dinge. Eendag gaan julle my kind op die t.v. sien. Either gaan sy 'n news reader wees or she is going to be a t.v. star, that I know.

As ek terugkyk na my kinders, dan dink ek hoe swaar ek gehad het. Mense sal dit nie glo nie, want ek lyk nie so nie, en ek hou nie my so nie. So is it in you, in all of us. Dit maak nie saak nie. Ons kan miskien nie almal dieselfde wees nie, but ons het almal mooi eienskappe. En beauty, is not in the outer, but what is inside of jou. Moenie moed opgee nie. Moenie. Ek was pregnant met my baby toe slaap ek in 'n kar. Deur al my swaarkry was ek baie proud. And I am a very independent person. That's why, so if you work you dont need to depend on another person, or other people. Jy voel nou lekker né I.T., want jy verdien jou eie geld. Jy maak en doen net wat jy wil. Al is dit min geld, daai min is gebless en dit sal stretch. First, jy moet onthou, alles wat met jou gebeur is vir 'n doel. Whether it is good or bad. It has a reason. Maybe moet die goed met ons gebeur sodat ons betere mense kan uitdraai. Ek het lekker afgekoel met biere. Aan alles kom daar 'n einde. En toe my kinders groot word toe sê ek vir myself: Dawn, stop. Ons almal is in fact in dieselfde boat, maar bid aanhoudend. My kerk speel 'n groot rol in my lewe, dit gee my saligheid, peace of mind. Ek het baie uitgemis in terme van my kerk. Maar ek wil vir almal sê: R.J., I.T., S.P., L.G., M.O., B.M. en S.V., moenie moed verloor nie.

Facilitator: Baie dankie vir wat Mrs. Bam met julle gedeel het. Ek hoop julle onthou dit en dra dit saam deur u lewe. Wat uitgestaan het is, moenie moed verloor nie, ons kan dit maak deur die lewe.

Facilitator also issued each member with their certificates and a copy of the list of contact details of each group member to them.

END OF SESSION