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**THE REINTEGRATION OF DETAINED YOUTH
IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW INTO THEIR
FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES**

JULIE WILLIAMS

TTSJUL002

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN FULLFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF**

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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

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DECLARATION

I declare that this work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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Abstract

Although much emphasis has been placed on removing young people who are in trouble with the law from correctional facilities and places of safety, little has been done to ensure the successful re-integration of such youth once they are released into society. The study focuses on young offenders who have gone through the developmental programme at Horizon Youth Centre, a detention centre for trial-awaiting youth in Cape Town.

The aims of this study are to identify the factors that protect young people against further offending and, conversely, to establish what factors contribute to young people re-offending. Furthermore, the researcher aimed at ascertaining the role that the Youth Centre should be playing in facilitating the reintegration of discharged offenders, and at identifying the factors that are conducive to reintegration and those that inhibit it.

The phenomenological design was chosen, as the study was qualitative in nature. Data was gathered from case records and face-to-face interviews with young people and their parents/caregivers. For the purpose of this study both probability and non-probability sampling methods were employed to ensure that each young person had an equal chance to be selected and to ensure representivity.

The study found that many young people are released without the transitioning process being managed properly. As a result, a number of children without family support return to their old ways of making a living through crime. It also found that there is a 'gap' between the institution and the community. The study emphasised the important role of families/caregivers and communities in assisting in the reintegration process, as well as the importance of effective aftercare programmes that integrate with and continue to build on the foundation that was laid at institutional level. It is recommended that the role of the Youth Centre and places of safety should be revisited in order to make provision for a more holistic approach and, specifically, to provide more effective aftercare services to young people once they have been released from detention.

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CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will cover the following areas:

- The background to the study;
- The specific aims and objectives of the study;
- The motivation for undertaking the study;
- The potential value of the study; and
- An outline of the structure of the dissertation.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

South Africa has one of the highest recorded crime rates in the world. Children and the youth are recognised as being a particularly vulnerable group, both as victims and perpetrators of crime. It is estimated by Steyn (2005: 6) that roughly 15% of all criminal offences in South Africa are committed by children under the age of 18. Increasing numbers of young people in this country are getting into conflict with the law. Steyn (2005: 6) further estimates that, by 2008, six out of every ten prisoners will be aged 25 or younger. Although these estimates place huge demands on reintegration services, nothing concrete has been put in place to facilitate the reintegration of young people who are in conflict with the law.

On 31 May 2004, a total of 3 593 children under the age of 18 were in prison; of these, 1 868 were awaiting trial, and 1 725 were serving sentences (Sloth-Nielsen, 2004:3).

The past decade has seen major reforms in all spheres of social, economic and political life in South Africa. Many changes have also occurred in terms of

the legislation, and specifically in the treatment of young people in detention. This will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter. Much emphasis has been placed on removing young people who are in trouble with the law from correctional facilities and places of safety, but little has been done to ensure the successful re-integration of such youth into their families and communities. As a result, they have been released without any follow-up services. This has resulted in most of them re-offending within a week of their release (IMC, Nov.1996: 8).

Although the laws related to young people in conflict with the law have changed, the practical situation in prisons and places of safety has remained more or less the same. These are, mainly the, Correctional Services Amendment Act (No. 17 of 1994) and the Probation Services Amendment Act (No. 35 of 2003). This was indicated by reporter Aziz Hartley of the *Cape Times* during a visit to Pollsmoor Prison by the Correctional Services Portfolio Committee on 13 June 2006. Hartley reported that the Committee was shocked by the high number of young people awaiting trial. The report states that awaiting-trial juveniles make up a fifth of Pollsmoor Prison's inmates:

1 069 of the 5 968 inmates are awaiting-trial juveniles. Dennis Bloem, chairperson of the Committee, said that the situation was serious: "*We are deeply concerned about the number of juveniles in prison, we are talking of a figure of 20 000 countrywide*". This is an indication of how the problem has escalated, with no real solutions in sight.

The Committee was accompanied by the acting inspecting judge of prisons, Justice Nathan Erasmus, who commented: "*A proactive approach is needed from all role-players.... ultimately we will pick up those who fall through the cracks.*" He made a commitment to address the plight of the young people who are awaiting trial: "*I have indicated to my staff that for the next few months, one of my primary objectives will be to look at awaiting-trial prisoners and focus on children.*" (*Cape Times: Aziz Hartley, June 14, 2006*). These are all good and noble intentions however, very few thoughts are given to the

reintegration process of these young offenders. This clearly emphasises the importance of this research in exploring ways of intervening effectively in the lives of young people at risk, of breaking the cycle of crime and re-offending, and of assisting them to reintegrate successfully back into their families and communities.

During 1997, whilst working at the Department of Social Services, I was part of a task team to assess young people awaiting trial in state-run places of safety and at Pollsmoor Prison. The aim of this task team was to ensure that children were correctly placed and to move young people out of the system. At that stage, I realised that we were dealing with young people in isolation, and that parents or guardians were playing a secondary role, if any. It also emerged that the communities were in fact thankful that these “criminals” had been removed, and that they were not being prepared for the return of these individuals into their communities. Another obstacle that was identified was that, when young people were ready to move out of places of safety and correctional facilities, suitable placements or supportive adults were often not available.

Although there has been significant progress in the field of juvenile justice in South Africa, recidivism amongst young people is, firstly, a major concern for communities in general, because of the high crime rate and its impact on their own safety. Secondly, for all the professionals working with young people in residential facilities, recidivism challenges the effectiveness of the intervention programmes currently available to young people who are in trouble with the law.

Each year, thousands of young people in trouble with the law enter places of safety. It is the experience of the researcher that behavioural improvements from institutionalisation are rarely sustained when these young people return to their communities. Although the various residential programmes are able to equip them with coping strategies and much needed skills, it is the

difference in the lives of many young people. However, when they leave the facilities, very little, if anything, is in place to enhance their progress and to support these young people in putting into practice what they have learned.

The motivation behind the research is to identify and recommend measures to put in place to manage the transition from detention to community. It is the researcher's experience that many young people are released without this process being managed properly. As a result, a number of children without family support either return to the Horizon Youth Centre after their release, or they return to the streets and to their old ways of making a living through crime. It is, therefore, important to examine what should be done to ensure the successful return of young offenders to the community. This research is a result of the researcher's own passion for young people at risk and of her years of experience within the child and youth care field.

Having worked in the field of child and youth care for almost 14 years, it is my experience that all young people do have some good within them. From my experience of working at two different places of safety for awaiting-trial youth, it is clear that very little attention is paid to offender reintegration. Once young people are released back into the community, very few if any follow-up services are available. This has resulted in an increased rate of recidivism. It is the opinion of the researcher that, in the long term, recidivism and a reduction in criminal activities can be achieved once it is ensured that young people are reintegrated successfully into the community. An integrated approach is needed to ensure and implement effective reintegration programmes. Facilitating the reintegration of young people into their community is crucial in preventing re-offending.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The outcome of the study will allow service providers to understand the dynamics involved in the process of re-integration, which will allow them to provide appropriate support and services to address the needs of young people in conflict with the law holistically. It is envisaged that those working in secure care facilities and places of safety will use the findings and implement the recommendations to facilitate and ensure the successful reintegration of such youth. The information gathered will be shared with the Department of Social Services, as they are not only responsible for awaiting-trial youth, but are also in a position to influence and develop policy to the benefit of young people at risk and their families. The aim of the research has been to evaluate and introduce changes to the overall programme at the Horizon Youth Centre, to facilitate the successful reintegration of young people who have been in conflict with the law. This will, it is hoped, ultimately reduce the recidivism rate and thus reduce the crime rate in this country.

1.5 OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

The research will start with an overview of the policy frameworks that exist with regard to offender reintegration. It will review the Horizon Youth Centre's programme to rehabilitate young people and prepare them for successful reintegration. The study will explore the challenges involved in creating and sustaining support structures for youth who have been released from residential facilities. It will also examine the attributes that young people will need to succeed as contributing adults in our society.

The study comprises six chapters:

- **Chapter One** introduces the topic and describes the background, aim and objectives of the study.
- **Chapter Two** covers the literature review on the transformation of the Youth Justice System in South Africa, as well as giving an overview of the legislation affecting young people in trouble with the law. It looks at the roles of families and communities with regard to the reintegration of these young people. It also reviews international and local research on aftercare programmes, and gives an overview of existing reintegration programmes.
- **Chapter Three** provides the reader with an outlay of the vision of Horizon Youth Centre and its programmes. The research was conducted at the Youth Centre and it is thus important to establish whether the services provided are effective in ensuring successful reintegration.
- **Chapter Four** provides an extensive discussion of the qualitative research design and methodology employed by this study, methods used to gather information, the sampling process, analysis of data and the limitations of the study.
- **Chapter Five** presents the findings, based on the themes that have emerged during the research.
- **Chapter Six** provides the conclusions and recommendations, based on the findings of the study, and on suggestions made by the participants during the study.

CHAPTER TWO

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The past decade has seen major social, economic and political changes in South Africa. Since the introduction of the first democratic government in 1994, our new political leaders have been faced with many challenges to redress the imbalances caused by the apartheid regime. The country's legal and criminal justice system is in a process of transformation to ensure the humane treatment of youth in conflict with the law.

Various initiatives have been undertaken by the National Department of Social Development and other non-governmental organisation in moving towards a transformed child and youth care system. This will be discussed in more detail later in the report. Much emphasis has been placed on the removal of young people in trouble with the law from correctional facilities, *but little has been done to ensure the successful re-integration of youth into their families and communities.*

Whereas residential care for young people in trouble with the law could lay a strong foundation for behavioural change, years of experience have proved that behavioural improvements are rarely sustained when young people return to their communities. This literature review will emphasise the important role of families/caregivers and communities to assist in the reintegration process, as well as the importance of effective aftercare programmes that integrate with and continue to build on the foundation that was laid at institutional level.

2.2 THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE YOUTH JUSTICE SYSTEM IN SOUTH AFRICA

At present there is no specific legislation which governs the handling of young people in trouble with the law. Professionals working with young people have to go through a number of acts to find the few sections dealing with young people in conflict with the law. These acts are the Criminal Procedure Act no. 51 of 1977, the Probation Services Act no. 116 of 1991, the Child Care Act no. 74 of 1983 and the Correctional Services Act no. 8 of 1959 (Juvenile Justice for S.A, 1994: 1).

South Africa ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) on 16 June 1995 which outlines the universal rights of children. Article 40(1) of the Convention requires that juvenile justice legislation promotes the dignity and sense of self worth of children in conflict with the law, fostering young people's respect for human rights and reintegrates young people into society. None of these goals are achieved by the existing criminal justice system, which is predominantly based on retributive punishment. This old approach has failed to protect the community, to prevent crime or to rehabilitate offenders. As a result there is an urgent need for the transformation of the criminal justice system as far as young people are concerned.

South Africa is also a signatory to the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children. This agreement was ratified on 18 November 1999. The African Charter places a greater emphasis on the child's family and community and the responsibility the child owes to society. However, just a minority of young people in conflict with the law do get the opportunity to take responsibility for their actions through restorative justice practices. Young people at places of safety are more often than not excluded from restorative justice practices such as family group conferencing, because of various

reasons. These include factors such as the seriousness of the crime and accessibility of parents and significant others. In many cases parents do not wish to take responsibility for their children and have in fact requested their removal as an alternative to home placement. In cases such as these family re-unification work needs to take place before attempting restorative practices. The South African Constitution further entrenches the rights of children. Included under section 28 are various rights pertaining to children in conflict with the law. Provisions of international instruments are included into our Constitution. However, these rights are not adequately protected by the existing legislation (Juvenile Justice for SA, 1997: 1).

From the early 1990's there have been a number of developments in the field of youth justice, aimed at finding ways of dealing effectively with youth in conflict with the law. Diversion programmes have been implemented to divert young people away from going deeper into the criminal justice system. Secure care centres have been established specifically for young offenders who need to be kept in custody. However, many young people still end up in prison because of the fact that there are no vacancies available at places of safety or that magistrates still have a punitive mindset and do not accept the recommendation of probation officers. On the other side this might also be as a result of the increasing number of young people involved in criminal offences or as a result of the high recidivism rate amongst young people because of the lack of effective reintegration programmes.

Following the ratification of the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1995, the South African Law Commission was requested to undertake an investigation into juvenile justice and to make recommendations to the Minister of Justice for the reform of this particular area of the law. A project committee was set up which commenced its work in 1997 and a discussion paper with the draft Child Justice Bill was published in 1998. A final report was released in August 2000. The Child Justice Bill 49 of 2002 first tabled in Parliament in August 2002, aims to protect the rights of children

in the criminal justice system while at the same time providing a legal framework for appropriate programmes to help reintegrate them into society and prevent them from relapsing into crime. Although this Child Justice Bill has not been enacted, South Africa is obliged to undertake all appropriate measures to implement the rights contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

2.3 THE CHILD JUSTICE BILL (C.J.B) – BILL 49 OF 2002

The Child Justice Bill (C.J.B.) came out of a need to work differently with young people in trouble with the law. Currently there are a number of pieces of legislation relating to young people in trouble with the law from different aspects. These are, mainly, the Criminal Procedure Act no. 51 of 1977 and the Probation Services Act no. 116 of 1991. The C.J.B. provides a comprehensive strategy for managing young people's progress through the criminal justice system.

The objectives of the Bill are to:

>promote 'ubuntu' in the child justice system through:

- fostering of children's sense of dignity and worth;
- reinforcing children's respect for human rights and the fundamental freedoms of others by holding children accountable for their actions and safe-guarding the interests of victims and the community;
- supporting reconciliation by means of a restorative justice response; and
- involving parents, families, victims and communities in child justice processes in order to encourage the re-integration of children who are subject to the provisions of this bill; and

>promote co-operation between all government departments and other organisations involved in the child justice system (SALC, 2000:222).

The practical implementation of this Bill will positively affect the reintegration process of young people in conflict with the law, if only enforced by the state. The Bill calls for the active participation of families and communities, which is essential for effective reintegration.

In this study the researcher chose to examine two aspects of the Child Justice Bill in detail, namely: assessment and restorative justice. These are integral to the process of family re-integration.

2.3.1 Restorative Justice

Restorative justice forms the philosophical basis for the Child Justice Bill. The philosophy of restorative justice is based on three beliefs:

- Crime results in harm to victims, offenders and communities.
- Not only government, but also victims, offenders and communities should be actively involved in the criminal justice process.
- In promoting justice, the government should be responsible for preserving law and order, and the community for establishing peace (SALC, 1997: 6).

Restorative justice thus focuses on reconciliation, restitution and responsibility through the involvement of a young person, his parent, family members, victims and communities. Restorative justice promotes community involvement which is ultimately essential for the reintegration of young people in conflict with the law. Currently restorative practices are only considered in the cases of first offenders and if it happens to be a petty crime, thus excluding many young people in conflict with the law (SALC, 1997: 4).

For the first time in South Africa a teenager arrested for the murder of her parents, on 14 January 2006, has become one of the country's first high-

profile offenders to avoid a prison sentence through a restorative justice process. As part of an agreement with the state, the young person had to attend a family conference with her aunts, uncles, cousins and granny and take them step by step through the murder process, to determine what her sentence should be. This was reported by Nashira Davids of the Sunday Times (August 05, 2006).

The report further states that “it is the first time in the country that such a meeting was used as part of a plea and sentence agreement”. One of the uncles of the accused mentioned, “the healing process started when we heard her explain”. Although family members were shocked and need time to come to terms with the murder, the meeting allowed them to forgive the girl and they agreed that she should not go to jail. Their request was granted when Judge Hennie Liebenberg gave her a five year suspended sentence plus three years of correctional supervision. Some of the conditions are that the young person receives counseling, does community service at the SPCA and is forbidden to use drugs or alcohol.

According to the reporter, the young person responded as follows: “I expressed my overwhelming sense of remorse to them, for what happened and for my role in it. Those present indicated to me that they have forgiven me or are in the process of forgiving me”. Before she left the court Judge Liebenberg told her: “All that is in the past now, but you can still achieve your dreams”. (Sunday Times: August 06, 2006).

The researcher is of the opinion that all young people in conflict with the law should be given the opportunity to restore the harmony, to take responsibility for their actions and to understand how victims feel. A pre-requisite for restorative justice is that the offender must accept responsibility for his actions. From experience the researcher is aware that many young people tend to admit guilt and I believe that if they are exposed to the trauma that they had caused victims it could help to change their mindsets with regards to

re-offending. According to Brendtro & du Toit (2005: 10) "*hurt people, hurt people*". Young people at risk, because of their own hurtful backgrounds, tend to have no concern about other people and need to be conscientised about the needs of victims in order to create empathy. They argue that humans are born with the ability to feel empathy with persons in pain, and question the fact that they would get satisfaction by causing harm. This emphasises the statement that negative thoughts and feelings block empathy. Thus, hearing and seeing the effects of their actions on the victim might create empathy.

This process will at the same time ensure community involvement and hopefully rekindle the spirit of 'ubuntu'. Restorative justice aims to restore human dignity, relationships, communities and peace, thus including all the building blocks to successful reintegration.

Consedine (1999: 178) make mention that restorative practices are alive among the indigenous African populations of South Africa. He describes many practices that are still in use, like the street committees and community courts and stress the positive influence of restorative justice on community building. The community relies on all members to keep the peace and to find solutions when it has been disturbed.

2.3.2 Assessment

The Child Justice Bill makes provision for the compulsory assessment of each child by a probation officer within 48 hours of arrest. Assessment implies the process of identifying the developmental needs of the young person and family from a strengths based perspective, planning with the young person and referring him to the appropriate programmes (Bill 49 of 2002).

Assessment should be an ongoing process that involves the young person and, where appropriate, the young person's parents/caregivers. An assessment should identify the risk factors that contribute to a young person's

offending behaviour and also the positive/protective factors that may help the young person avoid re-offending. It should also include an assessment of the risk of re-offending. This implies that information should be gathered from a range of sources and should be verified wherever possible.

The probation officer is entrusted with a reasonable amount of power and duties related to reception and assessment of youth in conflict with the law, as outlined in the Child Justice Bill (C.J.B. of 2002, sections 19, 22, 23 and 24). Therefore, as pointed out by Graser (2003: 4), social workers who will function within the criminal justice system as probation officer need to possess certain core competencies and knowledge to be able to execute their responsibilities.

The researcher fully agrees with the above as it is unacceptable to see that some probation officers, because of a lack of knowledge, still allow the court to act in the “interest of justice”, in contrast with the “best interest of the child principle” that our Constitution seeks to promote. The Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) emphasised that, since probation officers should play an essential role in the assessment and the management of young people in conflict with the law, it is imperative that they receive specialised training to equip them with the much needed skills and knowledge to execute their duties (IMC, Nov. 1996:38).

Although probation officers are placed permanently at certain courts, this is still an ideal as far as magistrates’ courts generally are concerned. As a result, many young people are referred to places of safety without having been assessed or, in some cases, information is just gathered from the young person without involving parents/caregivers. The increasing crime rates and the demands that the Child Justice Bill has placed on probation officers with regards to diversion, compulsory assessment of young people, etc. has led to the amendment of the Probation Services Act no. 116 of 1991.

2.4 THE PROBATION SERVICES AMENDMENT ACT - (No.35 of 2003)

The objectives of these amendments are the following:

- To insert definitions relevant to the child and youth care system;
- Inserting the definition of “family finder” whose function will be to trace parents or caregivers of a young person in conflict with the law as to assist the child in court;
- Providing for the establishment of crime prevention programmes;
- Providing for the establishment of restorative justice programmes; and
- Providing for the duties of assistant probation officers.

Although the above has been implemented by the Department of Social Development, young people in conflict with the law at places of safety have not really reaped the benefits of these changes, as these programmes exist in the community. There is a need to extend restorative justice programmes to young people in places of safety as well as ensuring continuity between community based programmes and places of safety. The challenge in implementation remains a lack of resources, both financial as well as personnel.

2.5 THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH CARE SYSTEM

The Child and youth care system regulates the care and protection of young people at risk. In essence the child and youth care system involves the care of young people at risk in out-of-home placements. This is related to and integrated with the child justice system, where young people in trouble with the law are seen as “at risk” and often need out-of-home placements. However, the child justice system relates more to the process of moving young people appropriately through, and if possible out of the criminal justice

system, rather than their ongoing care and protection, which is the responsibility of the child and youth care system.

In 1994 one of the priority of the new government was to draft legislation to prevent awaiting trial children to be kept in prison or police cells. The government amended Section 29 of the Correctional Services Amendment Act (No. 17 of 1994) so that children under 14 awaiting trial could not be held in prison for longer than 24 hours, and those between 14 and 18 years of age should not be kept in prison for longer than 48 hours. The purpose of the legislation was to ensure that young people should be released to the care of their parents or guardians, or be referred to places of safety. However this was only possible if places of safety were managed properly, which proved not to be the case. This led to the setting up of the Inter Ministerial Committee on Young People at Risk (IMC, 1996: 8).

2.5.1 The Inter- Ministerial Committee On Young People At Risk (IMC)

As a result of the poor management of residential facilities and places of safety, in May 1995 the South African cabinet, supporting the former State President, Nelson Mandela, established the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Young People at Risk, to manage the transformation of the child and youth care system. The IMC, consisting of the Ministries of Welfare, Justice, Safety and Security, and national non-governmental organisations, undertook research with regards to residential child and youth care (IMC, 1996:8). It highlighted the *“lack of contact with family and limited reintegration work”*. At some institutions there were no social workers and at others the ratio of social workers versus children made reintegration programmes impossible. They identified the lack of communication between the facility social worker and community social workers who should be rendering reconstruction services to families (IMC, Nov.1996: 12).

The outcome of this enquiry highlighted the need for the urgent transformation of the child and youth care system. Minimum standards and developmental quality assurance policies were established to ensure that the rights of young people at risk and their families are protected and that they receive quality and efficient social services from various service providers.

The IMC emphasised that the transformed child and youth care system should make provision for:

- full participation by the young person, his family and his community;
- the reclaiming of the spirit of 'ubuntu', and
- effective reintegration and after care services (IMC, Nov. 1996: 14).

Although the above mentioned recommendations were already made in 1996, the reality is that the practical implementation of this rarely occurred and was never enforced by the state. Effective reintegration programmes, which call for the active involvement of families and communities, are still a huge challenge for places of safety. Public reluctance to become involved as well as limited human capacity and huge case loads on the side of probation officers hamper the practical implementation of the recommendations made by the IMC.

Another major change with regards to the transformation of the child and youth care system was the entrustment of awaiting trial children to the Department of Social Services. The Department's aim was to establish secure care facilities and places of safety in each province, which were to be established and maintained according to national regulations, minimum standards and practice guidelines based on international instruments. This is a move away from just providing alternative places of safety for children, but to ensure that a child's developmental needs are met. It is also a move away from a medical model which focuses on problems and stigmatising young

people, towards a developmental perspective which aims to empower not only young people but also their families and communities (IMC, 1996: 17).

As a result of the work of the IMC, a developmental, strength-based approach to young people at risk is now at the heart of the new child and youth care policy in South Africa as also expressed in the Child Justice Bill. Assessment of young people, a corner stone of the new approach, is now based on the conceptual framework of the 'circle of courage' paradigm.

2.5.2 The 'Circle Of Courage' Approach In The Assessment And Treatment Of Young Offenders.

The 'Circle of Courage' approach, based on the indigenous model of the Native American people and the First Nations people of Canada, was suggested for use in the Child and Youth Care system, as it was believed that this model was the closest to African traditions. The idea of the circle was taken from the tradition of the medicine wheel, based on Native American/Canadian spirituality. In their work with young people Brendtro & Brokenleg called this the "Circle of Courage" (Brendtro, Brokenleg & Van Bockern, 1990: 35)

Although this is not a South African model the authors argue that the 'Circle of Courage' is universal; for it is grounded in what Maslow called 'growth needs'. When these needs are not being met children do not develop to their full potential, and display forms of anti-social behaviour (Brendtro & Du Toit, 2005: 15).

The circle focuses on four developmental areas, namely belonging, mastery, generosity and independence.

- **Belonging** is found in the acceptance, attention and affection of others. To lack this is to be rejected and not to belong. The authors highlight that many young people have broken circles and the problem usually starts with damaged relationships. "Having no bonds with significant adults, young people feel rejected and neither respects themselves or others and as a result they get involved in crime without any remorse" (Brendtro et al., 1990: 37). They emphasised the fact that, in the absence of belonging young people will find alternatives which will give them a sense of belonging, most often through gangs. On the other hand children who are treated with dignity come to believe they are persons of value.
- **Mastery** develops as one masters the environment and experiences feelings of competency and success. "Frustrated in their attempts to achieve, children may seek to prove their competence in distorted ways, such as skill in delinquent activity" (Brendtro, et al., 1990: 48). This need can be addressed by creating opportunities for young people to achieve.
- **Independence** is shown in the ability to control one's behaviour and gain the respect of others. Young people need opportunities to make their own choices and to accept responsibility for their actions. This emphasises the need for restorative justice approaches, which in turn will ensure community involvement and hopefully start the process of reintegration of young people at risk (Brendtro, et al., 1990: 49).
- **Generosity** is taught by creating opportunities for children to share generously without holding back. "Things are less important than people" (Brendtro et al., 1990: 44). Without the opportunity to give and receive kindness, young people remain self-centered and lack empathy. The root

of the word “kindness” is “kin” and refers to treating others as if they were related. The authors argue that the most dangerous persons are those who are deprived of kindness and love. All children need to belong, to master, to become independent, and to contribute to others in a spirit of generosity. (Brendtro et al., 1990: 50) found in their work with young people at risk that if you attempt to restore balance or to mend the circle, it should always start with belonging. Without a sense of belonging, which is created through relationships with others it is difficult to work on the other three. This just confirms the fact that involving parents or significant others in the rehabilitation process appears to be the most essential part in trying to mend the circle of courage for young people.

2.6 THE ROLE OF FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES IN THE REINTEGRATION OF YOUTH AT RISK

Nelson Mandela (as cited in Brendtro & du Toit, 2005:87) urged the nation, *“to build communities and families in which our youth, especially those who are most troubled, can belong. To build a country in which our children and youth can learn to care for and respect others so that one day they, too will build a family, a community, and a country which is well and strong”*. He is of the opinion that *“there can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way it treats its children”*. This calls for a transformation within communities, to change their mindsets with regards to young people at risk and become actively involved in the lives of those children.

Family as it is understood in the African context includes extended family and community members. Even the law makes provision for “guardians” which include any significant adult to represent a young person at court. The word family automatically makes us think of children and the conditions under which they grow up. The family is described as the most important unit of society, to see to the needs of young people. However, many young people

come from seriously disadvantaged families, which are unable to provide adequately, if at all for the needs of their children. With the erosion of traditional values of community support as well as widespread poverty, these families find themselves increasingly alienated from the wider community. "The notion of 'ubuntu' is being impacted upon negatively by unhealthy relationships and individuals taking care of their own families" (Family Preservation Model in S.A, 1996: 8).

It is easy to proclaim parents "primary" position as carers of children. However, it is more difficult to enable them to fulfill this obligation if they experience financial difficulties. The Convention on the Rights of the Child requires from governments to assist parents in their task, although this is also subject to economic realities. Article 27(3) requires from the government, in accordance with national conditions and within their means, to provide material assistance and support programmes. Poor countries will, therefore, fall short of what should ideally be done for children and their parents or caregivers. South Africa is one of those countries that do not provide the resources to fulfill this obligation.

Jenson & Whittaker (in Schwartz & AuClaire, 1995: 66) remind us how essential it is that families receive services during the placement of young people in order for successful reintegration to occur. The reality is that this is an area that needs strengthening. They argue that, in the past too much emphasis was placed on providing services to individuals, thereby neglecting the family. Parental involvement during the placement of young people requires a shift in focus, from child-centered to family-centered services, meaning that the entire family becomes the unit of attention.

Rutter (as cited in Steyn, 2005: 8) describes involvement in deviant peer groups as one of the biggest contributors to anti-social behaviour, particularly during adolescence. He noted that the criteria for entry into such groups often

include experimenting with illegal substances and criminal activities. He argues that in urban communities, poverty, broken homes and drugs can lead to the gang becoming a substitute home for at-risk youth. The author highlights the fact that the lack of pro-social ties and commitment to deviant peer groups has repeatedly been associated with failure at school, which increases the likelihood of future unemployment and continued involvement in anti-social activities.

Drawing from his research findings, Steyn (2005: 9) identifies hostile parenting styles, punitive and inconsistent parental discipline, and poor supervision of young people's activities as causes of negative behaviour in early childhood. Anti-social parents and substance abuse have all been indicated as particularly strong predictors of future anti-social behaviour. A large family, an adolescent parent, a broken home, abuse and neglect are additional risk factors for developing anti-social behaviour (Steyn, 2005: 9). This then emphasises the fact that the family should be an integral part of the rehabilitation programme and cannot be excluded from this services, which really question the efficiency of services currently provided at places of safety.

2.6.1 Reconstructive Services And Transitional Support

The aims of the services to families of young people in places of safety are to maintain contact between family members or significant others, improve relationships, enhance parental skills, and maintain the child's behavioural gains. However, there appears to be considerable evidence supporting the argument that behavioural improvements from institutionalisation are rarely sustained when young people return to their communities. In a study done by Schwartz and AuClaire, they found that most young people who return to their communities, without comprehensive aftercare and re-integration programmes tend to revert to their old patterns of criminal behaviour (Schwartz & AuClaire, 1995: 135 & 157).

According to Spencer and Jones-Walker (2004:88) well designed programmes can reduce criminal behaviour but relatively little research has closely examined the process of re-integration or the range of effects it can have. Although Martinson (as cited in Spencer & Jones-Walker, 2004:88) made popular the belief that “nothing works”, the researcher tends to agree with Gearrett (as cited by the same editor) who performed a meta-analysis and found that delinquent youth responded positively to many interventions. However, it is difficult to maintain the changes they made without the support of significant others. The authors highlight the fact that young people who are transitioning back to their communities after detention need specific support to successfully re-integrate into society. From experience the researcher knows that very little, if any, assistance is provided during the re-entry process.

Spencer and Jones-Walker point out that other factors, such as poverty and a lack of support systems also affect crime. They suggest that effective programmes are those that include a holistic approach to intervening with young offenders, including not only young people but also their family and community, to which they have to return (Spencer & Jones-Walker, 2004: 89).

A review of studies done by Spencer & Jones-Walker (2004: 89–91) indicates that there are common elements of programmes for youth during the period of detention that can lead to improvements in the outcomes for young people. They recommend that youth need to have appropriate supervision and supportive contact with adults if they are to become contributing citizens. The re-integration process should start when a young person enters a place of safety. They highlight the importance of intensive transitional supports including housing and job placement, counseling, drug treatment, availability of adult mentors and access to supportive social networks. These supports are critical because in many instances the environments and poor relationship contributed to the young person’s involvement in criminal behaviour in the first

place. They suggest that alternative living arrangements may be needed when parents/caregivers are involved in crime (Spencer & Jones-Walker, 2004: 91).

In a 5-year study of resiliency of young people transitioning from correctional institutions back into their communities, Todis (as cited in Spencer & Jones-Walker, 2004:91) defined resilient/successful individuals as those who were:

- employed or school going or both,
- not rearrested since leaving the facility,
- not institutionalized for substance abuse, and
- reportedly satisfied with their current situation.

These will be used as indicators for successful re-integration during this study.

Research done by David Quinton and Michael Rutter (in Golombok, 2000: 99 -102) of children raised in institutions demonstrate that if a child's circumstances improve, the course of his life may also changes for the better. They found that some mothers whose children were being raised in institutions had themselves been reared under similar circumstances. When the chain of events leading to institutional care was examined in detail, it was found that the mothers had been placed in an institution as children because of their parent's inability to care for them. On leaving the institution in adolescence they either had no family to return to, or went back to the same dysfunctional family that they had previously left. These studies are important because they demonstrate that improvements in a child's family circumstances will enhance the progress that was made at institutional level. On the other hand it also confirms that young people who return to the same unchanged family have very little hope on successful reintegration.

Most residential programmes tend to emphasise the stabilisation of the young person's life circumstances, therapy and the teaching of skills. However, as

pointed out by Brendtro, et al., (1990: 35), services to young people should start with working on their sense of belonging and their relationships with families or caregivers. After studying aggressive children for half a century, Redl (as cited in Brendtro & du Toit, 2005:11) mentioned that he had never met a child who was truly a psychopath. However, children not bonded to adults have delays in conscience development; they show little concern for others and can act in cruel ways. Redl emphasised that the pathway to violence usually starts with mistreatment or trauma in the early life of the child. Once they become comfortable hurting others, change is more difficult. He concluded that without positive relationships, young people continue to be a danger to others.

For positive development, young people must have their physical, emotional, and growth needs met by caring adults. The authors argue that, when growth needs are met, young people can turn risk into resilience. Young people need people in their lives who help them gain the courage to face difficulties without becoming overwhelmed and discouraged (Brendtro & du Toit, 2005:12). Alan Paton, an educator and author, who managed to transform a reformatory for black children in Diepkloof, focuses his approach on building relationships, responsibility and respect. His programme became known world-wide as a model of enlightened child and youth care practice (Brendtro & du Toit, 2005:39).

According to Brendtro and du Toit (2005: 40) studies following high risk children into adulthood found that 60 percent eventually made positive adjustments. Even children exposed to severe trauma can turn their lives around if they can find supportive adults or mentors. It is thus important that within places of safety, young people are given the opportunity to form positive relationships with caring adults within a therapeutic milieu, while at the same time re-building existing relationships with family and significant others. Where families are severely dysfunctional, mentors within the community can be sought to give support to the young person.

A research study on adolescent's health, interviewed 180,000 youth in order to determine what factors predicted 'staying out of trouble'. It was noted that emotionally healthy kids answered 'yes' to the two questions: "*Do you feel connected at home?*" and "*Do you feel connected at school?*" Psychiatrist Robert Hallowell contends that most problems of childhood and youth represent the "diagnoses of disconnection". Dr John Seita, a former troubled youth who is now a resilience expert, explains that "*relationships change people, not programmes*". Seita's own case file was full of diagnoses of professionals who were unable to build trust with him (Brendtro & du Toit, 2005:54).

2.7 REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES

Offender reintegration is a process where the ex-offender is accepted back into his/her community. Solomon (2002: 38) defines reintegration as "a concept of a return to normality, an opportunity to rebuild normal relations" with family and community members. Steyn (2005: 243) defines reintegration as "the structured transformation of offenders into law-abiding citizens through intervention and support, a process which includes transition and aftercare". The Readers Digest dictionary describes reintegration as a process of "reparation of damage, a process to restore relationships and to redress grievances" (Readers Digest, 1987:201). All authors acknowledge the importance of family and community involvement within the reintegration process.

Steyn further describes reintegration as a broad process which includes various interventions aimed at supporting the young person to become a responsible and contributing member of his community. He estimates that 60% of all young people released from institutions return to a life of crime. However, he argues that "the reintegration process, if implemented properly,

is a crucial crime prevention tool”, which needs the support and participation of government and society (Steyn, 2005: 244).

Reintegration programmes need to be planned in detail to facilitate successful transitioning, because “what has been learnt during detention could prove difficult to implement and sustain in daily community life” (Steyn, 2005: 244).

2.7.1 The Value Of Reintegration Programmes

It is generally accepted that punitive responses to youth offending which largely focus on retribution and deterrence failed to help change offending behaviour. Effective reintegration is critical in reducing or preventing recidivism and in the process building safer communities. At the same time, reintegration promotes restorative justice through its focus on preserving the family and involving the community in preventing crime.

According to Muntingh (2001: 73) any plan to reduce crime must include some initiatives that aim to assist offenders to reintegrate into society so that they can become productive citizens. Appropriate and effective reintegration programmes can serve as a legitimate crime reduction strategy and are ultimately in the interest of the community.

2.7.2 Challenges Of Reintegration Programmes

Factors which can undermine the intentions and progress of institution-based reintegration programmes, according to Steyn, include the following:

- The spin-off effects of overcrowding and gangsterism;
- The non-availability of professional staff;
- Inadequate aftercare and the absence of market-related training;

- Financial implications - effective reintegration is costly, and the required structures need to facilitate aftercare programmes and support may not be present. For reintegration programmes to be successful, adequate aftercare programmes need to be in place to facilitate young people's transition back to their communities;
- To put these programmes into practice requires a change in community attitudes toward working with offenders and their reintegration, because negative perceptions often hamper successful re-integration; and
- The public is generally reluctant to welcome ex-offenders into their community and accessing schools and jobs might be difficult (Steyn, 2005: 245).

2.8 REINTEGRATION/AFTERCARE SERVICES IN ENGLAND

Reintegration services start from the day of conviction, following the person through the institution, finding him employment and guiding him for some years after his discharge. According to McAllister, Bottomley and Liebling (1992:20), aftercare is the means by which the probation service can most effectively contribute to the resettlement of the client in the community following detention.

2.8.1 The History Of Reintegration Or Aftercare Services

Detention of young people has a long history however, the notion that those released from detention should receive some form of support is a relatively new one. In the past offenders have been humiliated and locked away. But as attitudes changed from the beginning of the nineteenth century it became less acceptable to expose people to such inhumane and terrible conditions within detention facilities.

The origins of this humane attitude, and a belief that people should be offered help on release, lay primarily at the Protestant ethic that people were rational beings, able to exercise free will and make their own decisions. The probation service has its origins in the Church of England. Initially the missionary's role was to meet men at the gates of prison on the day of release, "buy them breakfast and invite them to sign the pledge to abstain from drinking" (McAllister et al., 1992: 3).

McAllister et al., points out that already in 1963 the British Home Office released a report and *some general principles essential to the success of aftercare*:

- Aftercare must be planned to meet the needs both of society and of the individual offender.
- The nature and quality of the aftercare service provided should be fundamentally the same and available for all offenders.
- Aftercare is a form of social work which requires in those rendering the service special qualities, training and experience.
- Aftercare, to be fully effective must be a continuation of the services of the youth centre (McAllister et al., 1992: 9).

Although these principles were considered essential, their practical implementation was rather poor and the following corrective measures were put in place:

- social workers were employed specifically for aftercare work both in institutions and in the community;
- communication lines between the institution social worker and his colleagues in the community were strengthened;
- a greatly increased understanding of the part to be played by members of the community in the rehabilitation of offenders; and
- aftercare hostels and halfway houses were established (McAllister et al., 1992: 9).

2.8.2 Aims Of The Aftercare Hostels And Halfway Houses

Lodge (1971:44) describes the ultimate aim of aftercare as the reduction of re-offending. This implies that the client, the community and the probation officers hope that aftercare will make a contribution to the clients capacity to become self-supporting, or if this is temporarily or permanently impossible, to be adequately cared for so that there is no further need for him to re-offend.

Lodge describes the purpose of aftercare hostels as follows:

- To provide for the immediate accommodation of homeless people on discharge from detention, that is “crisis accommodation”;
- Provision of short-term support while the person gets on his feet;
- Therapy aimed at changes in attitudes of young people, which will continue on their leaving the aftercare hostel; and
- To ease a persons passage into the community by providing a base to which clients may return when they are in need of support (Lodge, 1971: 91).

Needless to say, that the above emphasised a need that has not been addressed in terms of our South African situation. Once the criminal cases of young people has been finalised, our youth are basically on their own with sometimes not even a decent place to stay and with very little choice but to return to the same conditions that put them at risk in the first place.

2.8.3 Challenges Of Aftercare Services

- Probation officers had little pre-release contact with clients, thus making it difficult for them to establish an early relationship.
- The lack of pre-release contact with clients was accompanied by insufficient liaison with social workers working in places of safety that had an opportunity to become acquainted with young people’s problems and to build a relationship with them (Lodge, 1971:45).

- Aftercare had to concern itself so much with client's material needs that probation officers found themselves bargaining with clients about the allocation of material resources instead of being able to establish casework relationships with them and assist them with their personal difficulties (Lodge, 1971:44).
- The lack of resources meant that however well a probation officer diagnosed a client's needs, he might still have little to offer him.
- In terms of employment the greatest challenge was not finding a person a job but keeping him in it (Lodge, 1971: 90).

These challenges have been identified by many authors and are also relevant within our South African situation and need to be addressed on a higher level.

2.9 REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES IN URUGUAY

Virginia Varela Dubra, as part of an entrepreneur's social innovation, started a pilot project, in a youth detention centre in Uruguay. Based on her years of working inside youth detention centres providing counseling, training, and job skills to young people she designed a comprehensive strategy to break the cycle of recidivism for young people.

Most young people arrested in Uruguay fit a similar profile. They come from poor, dysfunctional and/or abusive families. Furthermore, they lack practical skills as a result of having dropped out of school. For many, their criminal behaviour is often linked to survival strategies.

Dubra (2003:1) discovered that young people leave prison without any aftercare services, in many cases resuming the pattern of criminal behaviour that landed them in trouble in the first place. She introduced low-cost services that help young people get back on their feet after their release. Her work starts in the prison, where she provides counseling, private tutoring in selected subjects, and vocational training. Most importantly, she makes sure

that these young people have a place to go and an opportunity to start a new life after their release. She has convinced businesses to employ ex-offenders and arrange three-month mentorships to provide ongoing support and encouragement during the critical adjustment period.

Her involvement begins in prison. The young person attends government training courses where he learns skills such as ironwork, carpentry, or pastry making, and at the same time socially interacts with young people who are not in prison. To ensure a smoother transition from prison to the outside world, the young person then joins a tutoring programme. After making a formal agreement with his tutor, the two design a nine-month training programme that is convenient for the teenager and that leads directly into placing him in a job after his release.

To secure the resources to run the project, Dubra (2003: 2) is continuously working on strategic partnerships with different sectors of society. Currently, the National Youth Institute (INAME) pays the salary of six teachers and three tutors. Government centres provide high quality, outside training for inmates. She has also attracted support from companies, who employ former inmates. As she realises that resources alone will not guarantee her model's sustainability if the attitudes of professionals in the criminal justice system are focused on punishment rather than rehabilitation, she is working to introduce her new vision to key actors like the prison staff, the judicial authorities, and the police.

Dubra's methodology has proven highly effective in her pilot project in Montevideo's largest juvenile detention centre. While keeping an inmate in detention costs Uruguay \$1,000 per month, Dubra's cost per inmate is 57.5 percent of that, and her programme significantly reduces the recidivism among those who participate (www.ashoka.org/global/economic.cfm).

This initiative emphasise the importance of aftercare programmes in order to ensure successful reintegration. It further shows the significant role that societies should play during the reintegration process of young offenders.

2.10 INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH ON AFTERCARE

Shaw (in McAllister et al., 1992:14) conducted a study to examine the practical problems associated with on-going casework in the prison setting, and to see whether more extended contact with social workers had any effect on the behaviour and attitudes of the offender's concerned. The progress in prison and after release of an experimental group of men chosen at random and offered a series of weekly interviews with social workers for the final six months of their sentence, was compared with that of a control group who, while not denied access to social workers, were not offered on-going interviews or pre-release programmes. Both the control and experimental groups were interviewed immediately before release on a number of topics including their views on the social services and the prison generally.

Briefly, Shaw found that the experimental group was more appreciative of the social work services. The use of the social work services by controls was related to the extent of obtaining social support and contact from families and friends outside prison. Experimentals felt that they had made some progress in dealing with personal difficulties and this was confirmed by the social workers.

The most encouraging aspect of the study was that after a two year follow-up period after release, fewer "experimentals" than "controls" had been convicted of further offences. The results reported by Shaw appeared very encouraging and stress the importance of pre-release and aftercare programmes to ensure successful reintegration.

Holborn (as cited in McAllister et al., 1992: 16) conducted a study in a prison to examine the following:

- Prisoners' perceptions and their problems. This included both the problems that worried them during their sentence, and also their perception of their criminal behaviour.
- The kind of help prisoners wanted from prison welfare officers in prison and from probation officers outside; also to find out whether or not the men were satisfied with the help they had received from prison welfare departments.
- The way in which the working of the prison welfare departments was affected by prisoners' attitudes.
- The implications the findings have for casework in prisons.

Looking briefly at Holborn's findings, it was noted that those prisoners who had contact with their home probation officer while inside, were more likely to opt for voluntary aftercare. In addition to this, Holborn points to the fact that "contact with the probation officer responsible for aftercare is vital if the service is to be used effectively and work done by prison welfare officers may be wasted if prisoners do not have the support of a probation officer when they test out their good resolutions" (McAllister et al., 1992: 16). Holborn argues that if the institution wishes to create an environment conducive to successful treatment and reintegration, probation officers must be involved.

Both studies, that of Shaw as well as that of Holborn stressed the importance of pre-release interviews and programmes and underlined the critical nature of the liaison between the community based probation officer and the institution social worker. The reports further stressed the importance of the three relationships between the probation officer, internal social worker and the offender including his family (McAllister et al., 1992: 18).

Research conducted by the Youth Justice Board in England (2005) identifies the following as critical to ensure successful reintegration of young people:

- **Assessment**

Assessment should be an on-going process that involves the young person and, where appropriate, the young person's parents/carers. It should provide a picture of a young person within their particular environment that will support the identification of needs, an understanding of the patterns of their offending behaviour and the planning of effective interventions. An assessment should identify the risk factors that contribute to a young person's offending behaviour.

- **Mentors**

Potential mentors should be screened to identify those that have the greatest understanding of the role, and the interpersonal skills and commitment to put it into practice.

Mentors should:

- >have active listening skills;
- >be able to establish and maintain a shared agenda;
- >have time to develop trusting relationships;
- >be able to sustain a high level of contact with the young person and
- >encourage positive behaviour.

- **Service Delivery**

Offending behaviour programmes are more likely to be effective if they focus on certain aspects of a young person's life that have been shown to be risk factors for criminal activity. These factors are called 'dynamic' risks because, following intervention, aspects of these risks may change and consequently may bring about changes in the rates of re-offending. Certain methods of delivery are also noted as more effective than others. The most effective

methods actively engage young people in learning new skills or changing thinking patterns or attitudes associated with offending.

The most effective methods include:

- interpersonal skills training, helping young people to interact effectively with others;
- behavioural interventions such as modeling, graduated practice and role playing;
- cognitive skills training to address thoughts and behaviours that lead to a young person committing crime;
- mentoring linked to individual counseling, with young people being matched to suitable mentors; and
- structured individual counseling.

Developing the skills of parents/carers to deal with the difficult and challenging behaviour of their children are described by the Youth Justice Board (2005: 1 - 7) as vital in restoring family relationships and providing the structure and support that a young person needs to change their behaviour and stop offending. Parenting is one of the key risk and protective factors in young people's offending or antisocial behaviour that have been identified through research by the Youth Justice Board. In other words, harsh or erratic discipline, poor supervision and conflict at home are risk factors increasing the likelihood of offending or antisocial behaviour, whilst positive and consistent discipline, constructive supervision and warm and supportive parent child relationships reduce it (www.youth-justice-board.gov.uk).

2.11 EXISTING REINTEGRATION PROGRAMMES IN SOUTH AFRICA

The following programmes are most often use as diversion programmes. However, the IMC recommended that all community programmes should

“effectively serve as integration and aftercare programmes for young people who require further support to reintegrate into their family and community, and/or sustain their development” (IMC, 1996: 29). Many programmes have been called reintegration programmes, but few can truly claim success in reintegrating offenders. However, there are creative and successful programmes to assist offenders in becoming part of society again. I have chosen to discuss four programmes which could be used as potential reintegration programmes for young people transitioning from places of safety.

2.11.1 Family Group Conferencing

In South Africa, family, community and victim-focused diversion programmes largely take the form of family group conferences (FGCs) and community service. In general, the aim of FGCs is to provide a platform for the victim and the offender to discuss the events surrounding the offence, and its consequences, so as to develop a mutually beneficial strategy to remedy it.

The main aim of the FGC is to transform fear and anger into forgiveness and remorse. The FGC works as follows:

- The young person acknowledges the offence and is referred to the programme by the court.
- Information is gathered about the offence from all stakeholders – the offender, his or her family, and the victim.
- Assessments are made to decide whether an FGC will benefit the child and relevant stakeholders.
- All parties concerned are prepared for the FGC by having the procedures explained to them.
- The FGC is undertaken. First, the facts and feelings related to the offence are discussed and then a realistic plan for restitution is drafted and signed.

- Follow-up procedures are put in place to ensure that the youth carries out the planned restitution.

It is important that both the offender and the victim voluntarily agree to the intervention. If victims are forced to participate, they could be re-victimised by the experience. Besides the offender and the victim, persons entitled to attend FGC's include the youth's parents or guardian, the investigating officer and a suitable number of family and friends of both the victim and offender (Steyn, 2005:27).

When a crime has been committed, the entire family is affected. In the spirit of 'ubuntu', the community is also tasked with participating in children's development, especially when they are at risk. Crime affects the community and emphasises its role in managing it (Steyn, 2005: 28).

Steyn is of the opinion that FGC's can be implemented in a variety of settings where interpersonal relationships have been damaged by the offence and where scope exists for the young person to make amends for his wrongdoing. If implemented correctly FGC's can play a valuable role as part of the programme to rehabilitate and reintegrate young people at places of safety back into their families and communities. As mentioned before, young people should be held accountable for their actions. Hearing and seeing the effects of their actions on victims and communities might create empathy and prevent re-offending. It will also start the process of community involvement and hopefully rekindle the spirit of 'ubuntu'.

2.11.2 Mentoring Programmes

Mentoring programmes recruit and train adults to provide at-risk children with guidance and a positive outlook on life over a specific period of time. In South Africa, structured mentoring is a relatively new concept. The mid-1990's saw

the formalisation of the country's first mentoring programme when Inanda residents expressed the need to have older youth mentoring and guiding troubled children in the gang-ridden township.

Crowley & McIntyre (as cited in Steyn, 2005: 219) describe the aims of mentoring programmes as follows:

- “To foster stable, trusting and ongoing friendships between adults and at-risk children.
- Help young people to cope more effectively with the challenges they face.
- Develop young people's potential at home, at school and in the community.
- Enable them to explore constructive social and recreational opportunities.
- Increase self-awareness and self-value through meaningful interaction.
- Facilitate responsible and effective behaviour to prevent re-offending”

Mentors are adult volunteers who agree to act as mentors and friends to at-risk children. Although many are employed, students also volunteer for mentoring. Some initiatives welcome ex-offenders to act as mentors, since they are seen to have valuable experience and understanding of these young people's circumstances and the challenges they face. It is critical that the mentor displays a high level of success in his or her work and personal life. Volunteers are screened for their suitability to serve as mentors, and some form of training is given prior to the matching of mentoring relationships. It is generally accepted that the mentoring relationship should last for a minimum of six and a maximum of twelve months.

2.11.3 Big Brothers Big Sisters Movement In South Africa

Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Africa (BBBSSA) is a non-profit-organisation that, through fostering long-term mentoring relationships, helps children and at-risk youth to realize their full potential. Big Brothers and Big Sisters were two organizations founded in the USA in 1904 and 1905 respectively. In 1977, the two merged to establish BBBSSA of America. Since then, the initiative has been rolled out to 36 countries globally. In March 2001 BBBSA started its mentoring activities in Cape Town (Steyn, 2005:223). The mission of the organisation is to promote the establishment of consistent, caring and goal-directed one-to-one relationships between an adult volunteer and a youth in need so as to provide a role model, mentor and friend who will inspire the young person to a positive lifestyle.

The aim of the programme is to ensure successful reintegration and to sustain the impact and effect of the institutional programme. After detention youths often return to poverty, violence and peer pressure that may have contributed to their offending in the first place. It is therefore critical that they be provided with support to help them maintain responsible behaviour patterns and to choose positive alternatives to crime (Steyn, 2005: 225).

The BBBSSA approach can complement the programmes of places of safety by matching a young person with a concerned caring adult who will provide appropriate support and care to sustain the behavioural improvements. The matching of a volunteer to a young person is largely based on the development of a profile of interests that are common to both parties. The interaction between the mentor and the child has to take place for at least one hour per week over the one-year period. After a one-year mentoring period, volunteers can decide whether they would like to continue or terminate their relationships with the children they have been mentoring (Steyn, 2005:229).

2.11.3 National Institute For Crime Prevention And The Reintegration Of Offenders (NICRO)

NICRO is a non-governmental organisation established in 1910 and has offices in all nine provinces. The organisation provides services to both victims of crime and offenders.

In 1996, after realising how challenging it is for former offenders to find employment, NICRO changed their focus from a job placement service for released prisoners to an entrepreneurial development services. They develop and assist former offenders to a point where they can sustain themselves and do not have to return to crime for survival. The organisation also formed its own micro-financing company, NICRO Enterprise Finance (NEF), a registered Section 21 company to financially support released offenders to start their own businesses. According to Muntingh (2001:56 – 62) it appears that former offenders are utilising these services and benefiting from it.

It is general knowledge that many released offenders experienced problems in obtaining employment. Linking up young people to organisations like NICRO that can assist them to start their own business will assist the reintegration process.

2.11.4 Prison Fellowship International (PFI)

The PFI is an international Christian NGO established in 1977. The PFI currently has representation in 83 countries across the world. The organisation provides services primarily in Gauteng and the Eastern Cape with the help of more than 200 volunteers. They provide individual counseling, group sessions and address both spiritual and physical needs of offenders and ex-offenders.

Significant is their care services to the people affected by the crime, like the families of offenders, and victims. Through restorative justice practices they organise a meeting between the released offender and the victim so that the offender would be able to comprehend the full impact of the crime. This programme aims to strengthen the relationships between the offender, his family and the community. Aftercare services are aimed at economic self-sustainability and are provided through the PFI's Global Economic Outreach Trust (GEO) as mentioned by Muntingh, (2001: 69).

This study revealed the fact that churches and religious organisations do not really play a significant role with regards to the reintegration of young people in conflict with the law. These are the type of services that religious organisations could and should provide. Awareness campaigns and meetings with church leaders should be organised to ensure that religious organisations play a more prominent role with regard to the reintegration of young offenders.

2.12 CONCLUDING REMARKS

With the ongoing transformation of the child and youth care system in this country, there have been major changes to child and youth care policies and practices. A strong emphasis has been placed on working from a developmental perspective, prioritising family re-unification and facilitating the return of young people to the community.

This has been evident in the youth justice system, with a greater emphasis being placed on diverting children and youth from the criminal justice system through alternative placements such as house arrest and involvement in a variety of community based programmes. However an effective re-integration and after-care service to youth in residential facilities remains a challenge.

The literature review has outlined the importance of caregivers' support and aftercare programmes in maintaining any positive gains from residential placement. Although the problems experienced by young offenders and their families seem to be multi-dimensional, our goal is to help youth and families acquire new competencies and skills in dealing with their environment. There tends to be general agreement with the concept that the family is central to the positive development of the young person and that positive relationships contribute to and/or maintains positive change in young people discharged from places of safety.

For reintegration programmes to be successful, accepted and supported by the general public, it is essential for public awareness campaigns to be carried out. The researcher is of the opinion that awareness campaigns at schools and churches regarding the needs of young people at risk and the role that families and communities should play to prevent re-offending and ultimately successful reintegration should be the way forward. Young people at risk definitely need the support of their communities to ensure their successful reintegration and this call for a complete change in mindsets.

The reality of youth offending in South Africa poses a number of challenges to everyone involved in child and youth care. The government cannot face these challenges alone but relies on the innovation and commitment of civil society organisations. This is a huge challenge as society is still not taking responsibility for their youth at risk and seems to believe that harsher sentencing options will solve the problems of re-offending. The idea that aftercare should begin as early in the sentence as possible was long recognised. However, the practical implementation of it never occurred. The challenges involved in dealing with aftercare cases have been identified and although probation officers have an important role to play, it has been recognised that aftercare programmes would be put low on their list of priorities. Places of safety are increasingly being encouraged to provide formal pre-release and aftercare services.

CHAPTER THREE

3. BOSASA HORIZON YOUTH CENTRE (HYC)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Horizon Youth Centre (HYC) is a place of safety for awaiting trial youth. Bosasa Youth Centres (Pty) Ltd is a private South African company that manages the facility in partnership with and on behalf of the Department of Social Development in the Western Cape. Bosasa is a Tswana word which means 'the future'. Horizon is one of five places of safety under the management of Bosasa Youth Development Centres, and as such subjected to and supportive of all the policies and procedures in terms of its operating company.

Youth in conflict with the law are detained at Horizon Youth Centre for offences ranging from minor crimes like shoplifting to more serious ones like rape, robbery and murder. The Centre accommodates 185 males aged from 14 – 17 years, who have allegedly committed crimes in the Western Cape.

Horizon was established as part of the recommendation of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Young People at Risk that there should be a Secure Care Facility in each province. The Centre was initially built to accommodate 60 young people. However, because of the large number of young people in prison and the terrible conditions of these, the number was extended to 160 within 2 months of opening and later on to 185.

The research was conducted at Horizon Youth Centre and it is thus important to discuss the vision and the programmes available at the Centre. This is necessary to establish whether the services provided are effective and what changes should be introduced to ensure the successful reintegration of youth into the community.

The reader should note that young people admitted to HYC the information on the profiles and family backgrounds of young people as described in this chapter was mainly drawn from the personal files of participants at the centre.

3.2 THE VISION OF BOSASA IN TERMS OF YOUTH

DEVELOPMENT

- To lay a proper foundation for youth in conflict with the law;
- To develop young persons with skills and education;
- To equip them to face life's challenges, and
- To reintegrate them back into society as responsible members of the community (Bosasa Policy Document, 2002: 5).

The vision of the company is in line with the standards set by the relevant United Nations instruments as well as the South African Constitution. However, the challenge remains to successfully reintegrate young people into their families and communities.

3.3 THE CLIENT SYSTEM AT HORIZON YOUTH CENTRE

Young people are placed at the Centre on a detention warrant, 'J 7', issued by the magistrate after consideration of all risk factors such as the seriousness of the crime, and the need to protect the young person or the community. Although the young person has not been found guilty of a criminal act, he has been assessed to a degree, where parents or significant others are not able to exert sufficient control over him in the community. According to the court's views the young people are either a danger to themselves or to the community. Whether the young person is found guilty or not, they will have to re-enter the same community when the case has been finalised. Therefore, they were included in the study. Most young people, due to court procedures, stay at the facility between 3 – 6 months.

3.3.1 The Profile Of Young People At Horizon Youth Centre

Most young people at Horizon Youth Centre fit a similar profile. They are children who have been charged with an offence and are awaiting trial, or who have been convicted of an offence but are awaiting sentence. They are between the ages of 14 and 17 years and have been charged with a range of offences which fall into the following five general categories; economic, violent, sexual, narcotic and others. Violent offences would include robbery, assault, murder, culpable homicide, and others. Significantly the majority of young people are charged with economic offences, which can be linked to survival strategies.

Most of the young people are no longer attending formal schooling and have low levels of functional literacy. As a result of having dropped out of school at an early stage, they generally lack life- and/or practical skills.

The Western Cape, particularly the socio-economically deprived areas such as the townships on the Cape Flats, has a high level of fetal alcohol syndrome. Fetal alcohol syndrome results in young people being disadvantaged even before birth. Effects of fetal alcohol syndrome include barriers to learning, low IQ and attention deficit disorder. Young people who suffer from this syndrome find it difficult to perform academically. They presented with low levels of frustration tolerance and poor concepts of right and wrong. It would appear that significant numbers of young people admitted to HYC are affected by this syndrome, which might point to a correlation between fetal alcohol syndrome and involvement in juvenile crime. However, this is an area which requires further research.

Due to these issues reintegration of young people, affected by fetal alcohol syndrome, presents huge challenges and specialist intervention to ensure successful reintegration.

3.3.2 Family Backgrounds Of Young People

An analysis of young people's files indicates that their economic and social backgrounds are diverse. Some come from relatively stable social and economic family backgrounds, but the majority proved to be severely deprived in every respect, materially, socially and educationally. Their family backgrounds can be generally described as follows:

- A small minority come from stable family backgrounds and has been living with their parents. These are normally the ones that receive regular visits and support from family members.
- Many have been raised by single parent mothers, with absent father figures.
- Some of the children are raised by extended families.
- In other cases children have left their homes to live on the street. They left their families for different reasons such as poverty, lack of parental care and supervision, excessive punishment, degeneration of family life caused by one or both parents, excessive drinking, death of parents, peer pressure and drugs. Normally this last group is the one which receives very little, if any, contact and support from family or significant others (Documented records at Horizon Youth Centre).

The family background of most of the young people does have implications for successful reintegration. It appears that young people without a stable and nurturing home base are more likely to re-offend than those with more stable and caring home circumstances. Young people coming out of dysfunctional circumstances, without close relationships with significant adults lack a stable environment when released and seem to find it harder to integrate into community programmes, school and work without adequate adult support and a stable residential environment. Drawing from his research

findings, Steyn (2005: 9) identifies hostile parenting styles, punitive and inconsistent parental discipline, and poor supervision of young people's activities as causes of negative behaviour in early childhood. Anti-social parents and substance abuse have all been indicated as particularly strong predictors of future anti-social behaviour. A large family, an adolescent parent, a broken home, abuse and neglect are additional risk factors for developing anti-social behaviour (Steyn, 2005: 10). Considering the backgrounds of the majority of young people emphasises the fact that the family should be an integral part of the rehabilitation programme.

3.4 Factors Contributing To Young People Getting Involved In Criminal Behaviour

Evident from the files of young people the following factors have been identified as contributing to them becoming involved in crime:

- **Gangsterism within the Western Cape plays a major role in young people becoming involved in crime. Gangs have a long history on the poverty stricken Cape Flats. Merton from the Mail & Guardian (August 2002) reports that gangs have largely replaced council authority and compensate for the lack of jobs, social services and recreation facilities. She claims that the gang provides for everything, money for school uniform, taxi fair to school or hospital, rent money and soccer tournaments. She highlights the fact that being part of the gang also gives young people a sense of belonging and power. Brendtro et al. (1990: 47), agree that young people who feel rejected will join gangs to give them a sense of belonging.**

According to young people at the Centre most gangs have as part of the initiation process the pre-requisite that you have to commit a crime. This is in line with what Merton reports. She mentions that children, as young as

11, complete initiation rites that require entry into the 'Kring' ('Circle') to be sealed in blood. She reports further that young people are used by gangs to participate in serious crimes including "hitmen killings" because, when caught, they are unlikely to go to jail. In addition to this young people at the Centre state the following as their reasons for joining the gang: 'nice time', for protection, availability of drugs and peer pressure. This might be the symptoms of the real problem which links to feelings of rejection.

The implications on the reintegration process are that it is difficult for young people who have joined gangs to leave those gangs. There are few alternatives for them and their circumstances more often than not drive them back.

- Peer pressure is also a significant contributory factor to youth becoming involved in crime, because they lack life-skills that can help them cope effectively with peer demands. Their ability to make informed decisions and choices is limited, as they are always under pressure to gain their friends' approval and follow their example. According to Brendtro, et al. (1990: 49), those young people who believe they are too weak to manage their own lives will become pawns of others. The authors describe this as a lack of independence or autonomy.
- Drug abuse is another factor that leads some young people to engage in criminal behaviour to obtain a constant supply of drugs for their own use. As a result of this many young people, even those coming from stable backgrounds, get involved in crime. The increasing use of crystal meth or "tik" amongst young people is a strong contributing factor here. According to the Cape Town Drug Counseling Centre, in 2003 "tik" had been the drug of choice of 4% of recovering drug addicts. They have subsequently found that in 2006, it is the drug of choice of 54% of recovering addicts. This highly addictive and relatively cheap drug has grown in popularity

- amongst young people in the Western Cape and has increased the user base, especially amongst poor communities. The drug trade in the Western Cape provides a lucrative income for organised crime, which is mainly responsible for the distribution and sale of drugs (Annual Report, Cape Town Drug Counseling Centre: 2005). At Horizon Youth Centre, only drug awareness groups are available while most young people need to be referred for in-patient treatment, which includes detoxification and intensive therapy. A lack of effective rehabilitation will ultimately leave young people vulnerable to recidivism.
- Poverty, often caused by unemployment of family members, can lead to crime, as the children assume the responsibility of breadwinner in order to ease their families' financial problems. That is, if there is no legal source of income, the young persons may turn to crime for a livelihood. Poverty is a factor that definitely has huge implications for the reintegration process. (Personal case files of residents at the Horizon Youth Centre).

The challenges facing the Western Cape, such as a high crime rate, availability of drugs, drug abuse, unacceptable levels of violence, gang activity, high unemployment, poverty and social deprivation presents a huge challenge for reintegration of young people into their communities.

3.5 SERVICES AND THERAPEUTIC PROGRAMMES OFFERED AT HORIZON YOUTH CENTRE

The programme at Horizon Youth Centre aims to provide a potentially life-changing experience for young people. Opportunities are provided for them to develop resilience and acquire much needed life skills which can assist them to make behavioural and attitude changes. The Youth Centre offers both life skills and practical skills training. Practical skills training is offered in order to provide future competencies and to boost the young person's sense of

mastery. The emphasis is on giving young people who are academically disadvantaged an opportunity to achieve in a practical field. This is important as many of the young people who are admitted to the Centre have dropped out of formal schooling.

When a young person is admitted to the Centre the receptionist takes his fingerprints. His photo and his personal information is stored in the computer system. She then informs the care workers who conduct an admission interview with the youth, contact his family and supply him with clothing, bedding and toiletries. The youth is then escorted to the dining hall where he receives his first meal. Further orientation then takes place with regard to the Youth Centre, rules and expectations and the young person gets introduced to the staff and his roommates.

For the first two weeks the young person stays in an orientation dormitory where he is involved in a two week life skills and orientation programme. During this period the social worker as well as the occupational therapist will conduct an individual assessment with the youth. After two weeks the young person is placed in a bigger dormitory. The social worker of that specific dormitory conducts a holistic assessment and makes contact with his family. The multi-disciplinary team (including the social worker, occupational therapist, educator and the child and youth care worker), together with the young person, develops an Individual Development Plan (IDP) for the young person. According to the Inter Ministerial Committee report, all young people are expected to come into the Youth Centre with the Care Plan, completed by their probation officers during the initial assessment at the court. However, this does not always happen because of time constraints and just after an assessment report. It is for this reason that Horizon has to conduct a thorough developmental assessment, and compiles the Care Plan for each young person admitted to the Centre.

The IDP outlines a specific treatment plan and goals based on assessment and social diagnosis of the individual young person. On completion of an introductory life skills and orientation programme, a young person is assessed by the occupational therapist and enrolled in a technical workshop, depending on his choice and abilities. The workshops provide an opportunity to boost the young person's sense of mastery and self-worth and teach him skills that will enable him to continue with his studies or get a job within the community.

Many young people released from the facility indicated that they experienced difficulties in finding employment. They either lack the motivation and /or the skills to find a job, or businesses or companies are not eager to employ them. Young people definitely need assistance on release, either to return to school, finding employment and sometimes finding a place to stay. This has been identified as an area that the Youth Centre needs to strengthen in terms of aftercare services, together with suitable vocational guidance. Young people can also be linked to opportunities to enter the economy through entrepreneurial training.

The social work department is responsible for individual sessions (casework) with young people. They also facilitate different therapeutic groups, i.e. the Leadership Programme, Drug Awareness, the SAYSTOP Programme, Behaviour Management and Anger Management Programmes, depending on the developmental needs of young people. The essence of the programme is to address criminal behaviour and provide insight into their present situation.

All young people have the opportunity to attend the programming at the Centre. However, those young people who do not participate or participate reluctantly in these programmes will gain less, with client participation being central to the success of programmes. Another factor is that young people arrive at the Centre with so much 'baggage' (personal problems) that they find it difficult to give their full attention in order to fully benefit from the

programmes available. Another reality is that young people are more concerned with the progress of their court cases and find it difficult to concentrate or even to visualise their future beyond the Youth Centre.

3.5.1 The Leadership Programme

This is a skills-based programme for young people presenting with behavioural problems. The programme aims to develop the capacity of individuals to enable them to take responsibility for their lives and to become contributing members of their communities. The programme addresses the challenges that young people had to face in the past, and will face at present and in the future. It aims to provide young people with opportunities to change the way in which they see themselves, to express themselves and to accept themselves (Fine, 1996: 1 – 9).

3.5.2 Substance Abuse Programme

The aim of this programme is to equip young people with the knowledge of the different types of drugs commonly used in South Africa, the effects of those drugs on the central nervous system and the dangers of drug abuse. The programme consists of eight modules, where young people get the opportunity to explore and understand what drug abuse means, how one becomes dependent and the nature of dependency being - physical and/or psychological. Through role-plays, self-assessment and peer-assessment they get to identify and understand the choices they made and the consequences of their choices. The programme emphasises the consequences of peer-pressure and young people become aware of the negative or positive influence that the peer group could have on the decisions they made. They also identify social pressures that might have played a role in them getting involved in drugs. This programme aims to teach young people about decision-making skills and through practical illustrations and role-plays teach them assertiveness skills.

Horizon Youth Centre does not have facilities for detoxification and intensive rehabilitation of drug abusers. Young people have to be referred to an outside facility run by the Department of Social Services. Vacancies are seldom available in these residential programmes and young people are, therefore, not able to access the level of rehabilitation needed. Although inpatient treatment is available in the private sector, costs are prohibitive for those without resources or access to medical aid. A lack of effective rehabilitation might well affect the young person's participation in programmes. In-patient rehabilitation services are urgently needed for young people in the Western Cape and the programme at Horizon Youth Centre might benefit from the addition of this.

3.5.3 The SAYSTOP Programme

The programme addresses unacceptable sexual behaviour, and prevents the child from developing a lifetime pattern of sexual offences. The objective of the programme is to build self-esteem, self knowledge, crime awareness and above all to understand the feelings of others. In other words, to create empathy for victims (Elhers & Van Der Sandt, 2001: 3 - 5).

3.5.4 Personal Development Programme (PDP)

The PDP consists of personal growth and self-awareness lessons presented three times a week, on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings. The programme is presented by the room elders, that is, staff members who are assigned responsibility for a specific room. Room elders spend 45 minutes every morning with the young people in their room and listen to and address all problems and concerns that they might have. The room elder (staff member) works with the room leader (young person). Together with the social worker responsible for that dormitory, the room elder ensures that all the problems and concerns that have been reported by the boys are adequately addressed. Room leaders are young people who have been elected by the

other boys to represent them.

3.5.5 The Life Skills Programme

This is a compulsory two-week programme that each young person attends immediately after admission. Learning life skills involves taking responsibility for one's own well-being. Training in life skills aims to develop self-knowledge as a basis for confidence and decision-making, instill abilities to communicate with others, maintain healthy personal relationships and manage conflict in a constructive manner.

On completion of the programme, the young person has a variety of choices that he can make regarding general classes and technical workshops. Taking into account his interest and personal potential and the assessment by the occupational therapist, he will be offered a place in one of the technical skills training workshops. Because of the importance of computer literacy all young people get the opportunity to go through the computer programme. In the afternoon they get the opportunity to participate in a structured recreational programme, which includes various sport and cultural activities. Bible study and spiritual guidance are also available in the afternoon and although it is voluntary, young people are encouraged to participate.

A challenge for the Youth Centre is that the programmes primarily addresses the developmental needs of young people without intensive service delivery to the family to which the young person have to return to. Brendtro et al., (1990: 11), highlight the importance of a comprehensive and holistic approach when intervening in the lives of young people at risk. This includes services to families and communities. They argue that crime is caused indirectly by dysfunctional families and a lack of parental support, and that the family should form an integral part of the intervention programme. Brendtro et al. (1990: 46), further state that most children have broken circles and the

problem usually starts with damaged relationships. See the 'Circle of Courage' paradigm, described by Brendtro et al. (1990: 34), in the literature review on page 22. In other words it implies that trying to mend the circle of courage for young people should involve re-establishing broken relationships with family and significant others that will provide stability in the future.

The inclusion of structured services to families of young offenders would strengthen the impact of the programme at the Youth Centre. The literature review in Chapter 2 also highlights the need for a continuation of services from the youth centre to the community, to facilitate successful reintegration. This is an area that indeed needs strengthening.

3.6 EDUCATION FACILITIES

Horizon Youth Centre is equipped with a library, computer centre, classrooms and six technical workshops. The education programme is outcomes-based, and aims to integrate school curriculum subjects, life skills programmes and technical trade courses. In addition to the practical subjects, provision is also made for young people to continue with schooling or to attend adult basic education and training courses. The education department was granted provisional accreditation from Umalusi, the quality assurance body for education, which ensures compatibility to education and training in the wider community. Currently Horizon is working towards full accreditation to ensure that the training provided to young people is recognised.

The education and technical training programme helps to ensure that the youths have access to various opportunities offered by self-employment, the job market, apprenticeships or higher education. However, this is only possible if they have the necessary support structure or if effective aftercare services are in place to assist young people with job hunting and continuous

support and guidance. This is a significant shortcoming with regard to the programme offered at Horizon Youth Centre.

3.6.1 General And Personal Development Classes Available At Horizon

3.6.1.1 The Learner Support Programme

The learner support programmes covers the following:

HIV & AIDS – this programme creates awareness with regards to HIV & AIDS. It assist young people in understanding the dynamics of people living with AIDS and how to prevent the spreading of HIV/AIDS.

Bereavement counseling - helps young people to come to terms with death, experiences of loss, and the cycle of mourning.

Me and my emotions - assists young people to understand, identify and manage their emotions. It specifically focuses on teaching young people skills to manage their anger.

Transforming Sexual Behaviour - covers issues with regards to sexuality and myths, understanding my sexual orientation, having empathy with victims and crime awareness.

Alternatives to Violence – creates awareness with regard to violent behaviour, power and authority, conflict management, intra-personal relationship skills, social pressures and resistance skills and how to deal with negative emotions.

Substance Abuse Prevention includes drug knowledge and drug classification, drug information and understanding drug dynamics, drug use, choices and consequences.

3.6.1.2 Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) class

Most young people admitted to Horizon Youth Centre dropped out of school

committed, and consistent adults around them, if they are to reach their full potential. The authors suggest that staff working with troubled young people must become their extended family. "They may not be parents by blood, but are the child's parent by love, caring and dedication" (Brendtro & du Toit, 2005: ix). Effective staffing of a centre such as Horizon is key to the successful care of young people. Committed and well trained adults are needed to develop positive and meaningful relationships with young people and to give them a sense of belonging. At present the Centre has a high percentage of these individuals who make a difference in the day to day lives of young people. In order to maintain an effective therapeutic milieu, the recruitment process needs to be comprehensive and have the necessary checks and balances built in. The environment is by definition a stressful one .and on-going support for staff is important. This needs constant development to ensure that the needs of the staff are met.

Persons working with young people need to be equipped with the necessary skills to work effectively within their life-space. At the Youth Centre training of staff is a priority, to ensure highly skilled and motivated staff. All staff working within the life space of young people is trained on an ongoing basis on the 'Response Ability Pathway'. This training specifically teaches them how to respond and connect with troubled youth in the most effective way. The strength based developmental assessment training as prescribed by the IMC report, as well as restorative justice training equip them for their task to understand young people at risk, to do developmental assessments and to use restorative justice methods within their daily intervention with young people.

According to the IMC report (1996: 19), secure care facilities or places of safety should be encouraged to establish multi-purpose child and youth care centres which can provide for a range of community needs with regard to youth at risk. The IMC also recommended that human and financial resources

be re-prioritised to make provision for services within the communities which could be used as re-integration and aftercare services for young people disengaging from places of safety (IMC, 1996: 20).

3.8 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The extent of poverty within the Western Cape means that a significant number of children and youth are placed at risk. Gangsterism, drug abuse and the presence of deviant peer groups are further indicators that place young people at risk. The Youth Centre seeks to promote wholeness through the enhancement of the youth's sense of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity. A major challenge is that of preparing the young person for reintegration into his family as well as the wider community from which he originates. In order to prepare a young person for his or her reintegration into society, practical- and life skills training are crucial. However, the literature review emphasises the essential role of formal aftercare and pre-release services.

It emerged from the literature review that the most effective programmes for reducing crime are likely to be those that target not only criminal behaviour but the entire individual, including their families and communities to which they return. However, this is generally an area that needs strengthening, with the aim of working holistically with young people in conflict with the law. It is imperative that more funds are set aside for the development of effective aftercare programmes that can sustain improvement in young persons' development and behaviour. It is the opinion of the researcher that greater effort should be made on the part of government as well as private initiatives to support parents and families of young persons detained in institutions.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

There is an urgent need to manage the transition from detention to community as it is the researcher's experience that many young people are released without this process being managed properly. A number of children without family support return to Horizon Youth Centre (HYC) after their release or return to the streets and back to their old ways of making a living through crime. This research is, therefore, important in determining what should be put in place to ensure the successful return of young people to the community from HYC, as well as from other similar institutions. This research is a result of the researcher's own passion for young people at risk and years of experience within the child and youth care field.

This chapter presents the qualitative research design employed by this study, methods used to gather information, the sampling process, analysis of data and outlining the limitations of the study.

4.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The nature of the research is exploratory and inductive. The aim of the study is to:

- Explore and identify risk- and protective factors with regards to young people transitioning from Horizon Youth Centre back to their families and communities.

- Explore the views of young people and their parents with regards to the programme at Horizon Youth Centre and its effectiveness with regards to reintegration
- Established what would enhance the Youth Centre's programme by recognising the input from young people and their parents or caregivers,
- Explore what aftercare and support services would ensure a smoother transition from detention to the community,

The study ultimately aims to develop a more holistic approach to serving young people and families and to ensure that results are sustainable.

4.3 RESEARCH METHOD

The phenomenological research design was used during this study. This approach aim to understand and interpret the meaning that subjects give to their lives. This is mainly done by means of naturalistic methods of study by analysing the conversation and interaction that researchers have with participants. Researchers using this strategy of interpretive enquiry will mainly utilise participant observation and interviewing as a method of data collection” (De Vos and Fouché as cited in De Vos, 1998: 80). The phrase qualitative methodology in the broadest sense refers to research that produces descriptive data, people’s own spoken words and observable behaviour.

The researcher attempts to obtain a first-hand holistic understanding of a phenomenon and for this reasons a qualitative data collecting technique was used. This approach makes provision for more accurate and reliable information through verification. Life experiences and attitudes are different and in order to gain a deeper understanding and insight into the needs and life-experiences of young people at risk, a qualitative research design was more appropriate. When we study qualitatively, we get to understand what

participants experience in their daily struggles in society, we are able to learn about the inner life of the person. The qualitative method is humanistic; it allows the researcher to build rapport. Because the participants are young people at risk who do not trust or open up easily, this appears to be the most appropriate approach.

Qualitative research may contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex factors which enable or interfere with the successful re-integration of young people into their families and communities. This is an applied social research, searching for some guidelines to improve services to youth at risk that will ultimately contribute to and ensure the successful re-integration of young people into their families and communities.

Data was gathered from case records and in-depth interviews with young people and their parents or caregivers. The duration of each interview was approximately two hours.

4.4 THE SAMPLING PROCESS

According to Strydom and De Vos (as cited in De Vos, 1998: 191), a sample is "the element of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study". In other words, a small representation of the whole. The sample for this study comprised of twenty young people and their parents or caregivers. Ten children who re-offended and are currently awaiting trial at Horizon Youth Centre and ten who were previously awaiting trial at the Centre and who reintegrated successfully back into their families and communities as well as their parents or caregivers comprised the sample.

There are two kinds of sampling procedures available to researchers namely, non-probability sampling and probability sampling. According to Seaberg (as cited in De Vos, 1998: 195), "probability sampling is one in which each person of the population has the same known probability of being selected". Seaberg

furthermore argues that a non-probability sample depends on the availability of subjects who are interested, available and prepared to commit themselves to be involved. For the purpose of this study both sampling methods were employed to ensure that each young person has an equal chance to be selected and to ensure representivity. The type of probability sampling utilized was stratified random sampling. The physical and computer files of Horizon Youth Centre were used to select the names of young people who were readmitted to the Youth Centre and are currently awaiting trial. Their names were placed into a bowl and ten names were drawn from there. Depending on their willingness to participate, their parents were telephonically as well as physically contacted to establish their willingness to participate in the research and to set up appointments. The random selection of participants ensures that everyone had an equal opportunity to be selected.

In terms of young people who successfully reintegrated, the researcher initially selected every twentieth young person who had previously been awaiting trial at the facility and who was released into the care of his parents or caregiver. Their names were placed into a bowl and ten names were randomly selected from there. This was a lengthy procedure, as some young people could not be traced, others were in Pollsmoor Prison and therefore new ones had to be selected. During this process the researcher realised that not all young people released into the care of their parents necessarily reintegrated successfully. As mentioned in the literature review (see page 71) the following were used as indicators for successful reintegration during this study:

- employed or school going, or both;
- not rearrested since leaving the facility;
- not institutionalized for substance abuse; and
- reportedly satisfied with their current situation.

To accommodate the above mentioned indicators for successful reintegration the non-probability sampling method was chosen, using the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling according to Singleton, as quoted in De Vos (1998:198), "is based entirely on the judgment of the researcher, in that a sample is composed of elements which contain the most characteristic, representative, or typical attributes of the population". The above indicators were used as criteria for inclusion in the research.

Although rich data may be gathered from the subjects, and patterns or similarities may emerge, the main disadvantage is that one cannot generalise the findings as the sample is not representative of the wider population. However, it is hoped that this research will provide important insight into the shortcomings of the programme of HYC aimed to prepare young people for reintegration, as well as the role that families, communities and government should play to make successful reintegration possible.

4.5 DATA-COLLECTION METHOD

The main method for obtaining data for this study was through in-depth face-to-face interviews with the aid of a semi structured interview schedule. According to De Vos and Fouché (as cited in De Vos, 1998:90, 299) the use of interviews to gather data is "inherent in the behavioural sciences and in particular in the caring profession". In face-to-face interviews a schedule provides guidelines for the interview. It contains questions and themes that are essential to the research. An advantage of this method is that it provides for relatively systematic collection of data and ensures that important data are not forgotten.

The semi-structured interview schedule with open-ended questions ensured that the respondents understood the questions, that all questions were answered, and it allowed the researcher to obtain comprehensive answers and additional information when needed.

A pre-test of the interview schedule was undertaken by interviewing two young people at the Youth Centre who did not form part of the core sample. The main reason for pre-testing the interview was to ascertain whether the young people would have any difficulty in understanding the questions and to establish the time it will take to complete the interview. This led to subsequent alterations to certain questions as well as the decision to give young people a break halfway through the interview process.

The advantages of the interview schedule identified during the interview process were as follows:

- The interview was flexible and allowed the researcher to probe, which is an essential part of qualitative interviewing;
- A relationship with the respondents was easily established; and
- Questions and answers could be clarified immediately to illuminate misinterpretations.

Due to the researcher's prior relationship with young people and their parents, and the purpose of the research being explained, sensitive information was obtained. Interviews with young people who re-offended were conducted at Horizon Youth Centre. All other interviews were conducted at the homes of parents/caregivers. The interview skills and knowledge gained by the researcher over the years as well as the fact that the researcher was known by the respondents allowed for the development of rapport, which greatly encouraged young people and their parents/carers to speak openly about their life experiences.

Throughout the research it was essential that the researcher remained neutral during the interview process, so as not to influence the responses of the participants. I also managed to maintain a sound relationship of trust by being honest about the envisaged benefits of the research, not to create false expectations in terms of the implementation of aftercare and support services.

4.6 ANALYSIS OF DATA

Data analysis was done by searching for patterns, themes and trends, which were identified from the information gathered. Key variables were located. Their connection and how they influenced each other was determined.

Data was analysed according to the approach of Tesch (1990: 154 -156) which are as follows:

1. "Reading all transcriptions carefully.
2. Thinking and writing about the underlying meaning of the information.
3. Making a list of all topics, arranged into major topics, unique topics and leftovers.
4. Coding the topics and writing them next to the text. Trying out preliminary organising scheme (new categories and codes emerge).
5. Finding the most descriptive wording for the topics, reducing the categories and drawing lines between the categories to show interrelationships.
6. Final decision on the abbreviation for each category, alphabetising the codes.
7. Data material belonging to each category is assembled in one place and a preliminary analysis performed.
8. Re-coding existing data when necessary".

Analysis of data was double-checked by a colleague to ensure internal validity. The findings are based on the experiences and perceptions of the participants interviewed.

4.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher acknowledges that this research has some limitations:

As the researcher occupies a senior managerial position at HYC, the respondents could be biased when responding in terms of what they think she wants to hear. For this reason the researcher informed participants, before commencement of the interview, of the purpose and the envisaged value of the research results. Although the researcher's position of authority in relation to the children might have posed a problem, neither the children nor parents appeared to feel threatened by it.

Some of the youth had missed out on formal education and their levels of understanding varied from one child to the other. As a result, the administration of the interview schedule was time-consuming, as it had to be done according to each individual child's attention span. For these reasons the interviews were conducted in the first language of all the participants. The researcher made use of an interpreter to accommodate the Xhosa speaking boys. The lengthy nature of the interview schedule appeared to tire specifically parents of young people, which could have had an influence on their responses towards the end of the questionnaire. Due to time constraints interviews with parents were finalised without any breaks. However, with the young people breaks were arranged.

4.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

'Ethics' is defined by Strydom (as cited in De Vos, 1998:24) as, "a set of moral principles, which is suggested by an individual or a group, is subsequently widely accepted, and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards respondents". Basic ethical principles were maintained throughout the research process.

Young people and their parents participated in the study voluntarily, which includes the option of choosing to be involved in the research or whether to provide any information. They were also aware of the option that they could withdraw at any given time. The purpose and the envisaged benefits of the study for young people at risk and their families were adequately explained to ensure informed consent.

Furthermore, Strydom (as cited in De Vos, 1998: 34), the research process must always be a learning experience for both participants and researcher. This was indeed the experience of the researcher and to complete these learning experiences, participants were informed that they will receive a summary of the research findings and recommendations. Participants were assured of confidentiality, so they could participate more freely. All participants approached expressed an eagerness to participate in the study.

Mouton (2001: 245) alerts researchers to one of the most important research ethical principles, namely the legal and ethical constraints on access to certain populations such as children and minors. In this study this ethical principle was effectively dealt with by telephonically informing the parents or caregivers about the aims and benefits of the study and obtaining their consent to interview their children as well as themselves.

4.9 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The research employed a qualitative design according to the phenomenological approach in order to understand and interpret the meaning subjects gave to their own life experiences. The main method for obtaining data was through in-depth face-to-face interviews with the aid of a semi structured interview schedule. A total of 20 young people and their parents were interviewed. The next chapter will present, analyse and discuss the findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is concerned with the presentation and analysis of the information collected in this study. The study focuses on the reintegration of young people in conflict with the law into their families and communities. The sample for this study comprised of 20 young people and their parents or caregivers. Ten who re-offended and are currently awaiting trial at Horizon Youth Centre and ten who were previously awaiting trial at the Centre and who reintegrated successfully back into their families and communities. A comparison will be drawn with the aim of identifying the protective factors as well as those factors that make young people vulnerable and at risk of re-offending.

Data has been presented in text form as well as figures and tables. In order to give depth to some of the qualitative data, direct quotes of the respondents are included. It is envisaged that the outcome of the study will allow service providers to understand the dynamics involved in the process of re-integration. This will, hopefully, assist them in providing appropriate support and services to address the holistic needs of young people in conflict with the law.

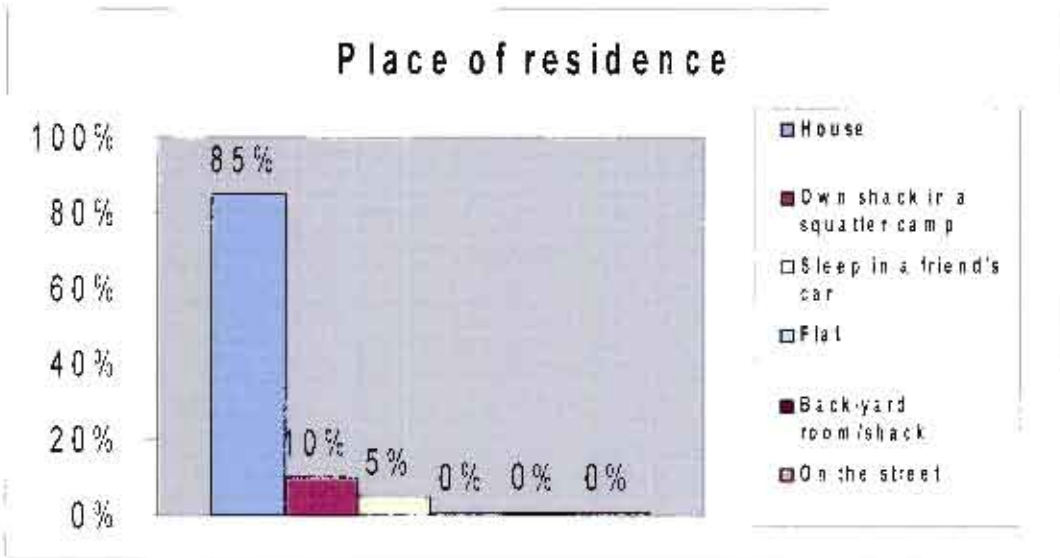
The research was conducted at Bosasa Horizon Youth Centre where the challenge with regards to the reintegration of young people in conflict with the law into their families and communities was identified. All the respondents were reminded continuously that only through their honest responses will we

be able to improve services to them and their families. They were assured that there will be no discrimination against them because of their answers with regards to the services at the Youth Centre.

5.2 PSYCHOLOGICAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND FAMILY BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

5.2.1 Place Of Residence

Figure 1



The figure above indicates that a high proportion of the respondents, (85%), had a stable place to stay. A small percentage, (10%), indicates that they live in a shack, while one, (5%) sleeps in a car of a friend. There appears not to be a real difference with regards to the type of accommodation between the two groups and, therefore, it appears that the place of residence does not necessarily have a significant impact on their criminal involvement. However, it would appear that strong links exist with regards to who they live with, the

relationships amongst family members or caregivers and continuous involvement in criminal activities, as illustrated in the following table.

5.2.2 People With Whom Respondents Are Residing And Relationships Within The Family

Table 1

People respondents reside with	Reintegrated respondents			Re-offender Respondents		
	Relationships	No	%	Relationships	No	%
Biological parents	Good	8	80%	Good	1	10%
Mother & stepfather		0	0%	Poor	3	30%
Extended family		0	0%	Satisfactory	2	20%
Foster parents	Good	1	10%			
Caregivers		0	0%	Poor	3	20%
Friends		0	0%	Poor	1	10%
Independently	Good	1	10%		0	0%
Total		10	100%		10	100%

With regards to the group who successfully reintegrated, the study revealed that 80 percent of the respondents live with their biological parents. Another one lives with his foster parents and one respondent reside at a centre for the destitute, to complete his schooling. All these respondents noted that they enjoy positive relationships with their family members and appear to experience a good sense of belonging. A high proportion, 90%, are convinced that their whole family care about them while only one respondent felt that his eldest brother is actually the one that really cares about him. This is the same young person who made the choice to stay at the centre for the destitute to complete his schooling.

Contrary to the reintegrated group, in the group who re-offended only 1 reported to live with both his parents and describes their relationships as relatively good. Thirty percent live with their biological mother and a stepfather and they complain about strict stepfathers and poor relationships in general. Twenty percent live with grandparents and describe their relationships as satisfactory while the other 30% live with caregivers. As one respondent's parents had passed away and the other respondent's mother moved without informing the young person about her whereabouts. They describe their relationship as poor. One respondent lives independently and sleeps in a friend's car.

The findings indicate a strong link between positive relationships and a good support system at home on the one hand, and lower criminality on the other hand. In contrast the lack of positive relationships and of a support system left young people vulnerable to re-offend. The findings also revealed that most young people who re-offended came from broken family homes, and after their release had to return to the same dysfunctional family.

The data presented seem to support research done on adolescents by Hallowell (as cited in Brendtro & du Toit, 2005: 53) to determine what factors predicted 'staying out of trouble'. It was found that emotionally healthy children felt connected at home and those involved in trouble are characterised by poor relationships with parents or significant others. It was also found that young people who reintegrated well were those who had a supportive family to return to, which appears to be the situation in the cases of those young people released from Horizon Youth Centre who reintegrated successfully.

5.2.3 Respondent's Sources Of Maintenance

Table 2

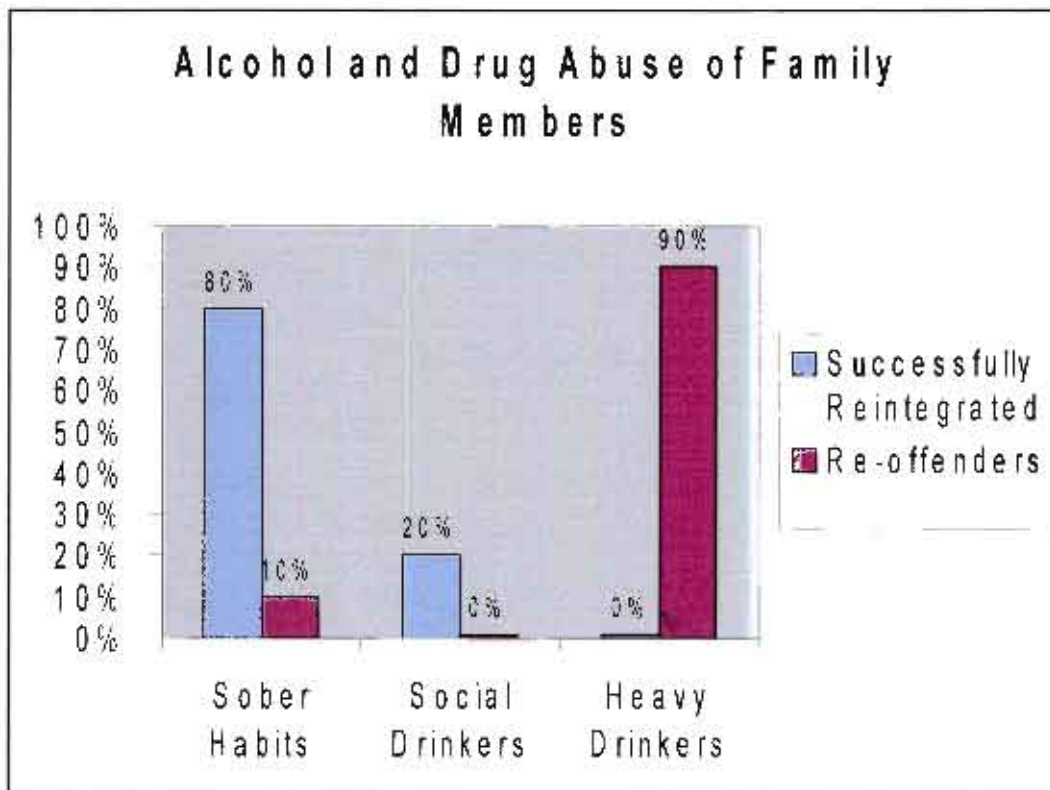
Source of income and financial maintenance	Reintegrated respondents		Re-offender Respondents	
	No	%	No	%
Mother – Domestic worker	2	20%	2	20%
Mother – Welfare grant	1	10%	1	10%
Self-employed – Casual worker at Pro-Mail	1	10%	0	0%
Self-employed – Work at Kentucky Fried Chicken	1	10%	0	0%
Self-employed – Work at Liquor Store	1	10%	0	0%
Both parents employed – Domestic worker & labourer	3	30%	0	0%
Caregiver – Depend on donations at centre for destitute	1	10%	0	0%
Mother/Caregiver – Work as a cleaner at a restaurant	0	0%	4	40%
No Income	0	0%	2	20%
Siblings – occupation unknown	0	0%	1	10%
Total	10	100%	10	100%

In terms of maintenance, the study revealed that most young people who participated come from economically disadvantaged families. Parents or caregivers are either employed as domestic workers, cleaners, general labourers, or are receiving a welfare grant. This is true of all 20 respondents and their parents who participated in the study. Respondents who re-integrated successfully confessed to being well looked after by their family members, indicating that their needs were prioritised, even though income levels were low. Three of those who successfully re-integrated were able to care for themselves and contribute to family income by obtaining employment, whilst one received economic support from the centre where he lived.

As indicated in table 2, twenty percent of the group who re-offended have no income at all, which might have contributed to their continuous involvement in crime. The young people who re-offended, indicated that they were not well looked after by their caregivers, describing either insufficient funds or poor application of family income. Financial security appears to be an essential protective factor to prevent recidivism, and the lack thereof leaves young people vulnerable to find distorted ways to meet their basic needs for food and clothing.

5.2.4 Alcohol Or Drug Abuse Within The Families Of Respondents

Figure 2



In terms of alcohol and drug abuse of family members, the findings revealed

that 80% of those who reintegrated successfully claim that their immediate family or caregivers maintain sober habits. Twenty percent mentioned that their parents are social drinkers, but that this does not affect them in any way. Contrary to this, the group of re-offenders noted that all of their parents or immediate family members or caregivers, except one, abuse alcohol or drugs.

Most respondents claim not to be affected by it. However, there seems to be a strong relationship between alcohol and drug abuse of family members and the re-offending of young people. The alcohol and drug abuse of family members might be directly linked to the fact that respondents' needs are not prioritised, which resulted in their continued re-offending. This might also be the reason for the breakdown in relationships and the support system at home, as described earlier in the findings. The reason why they feel not affected by this might be because they used to it and do not realise the effect of this on their own lives.

5.2.5 Criminal Records Of Family Members

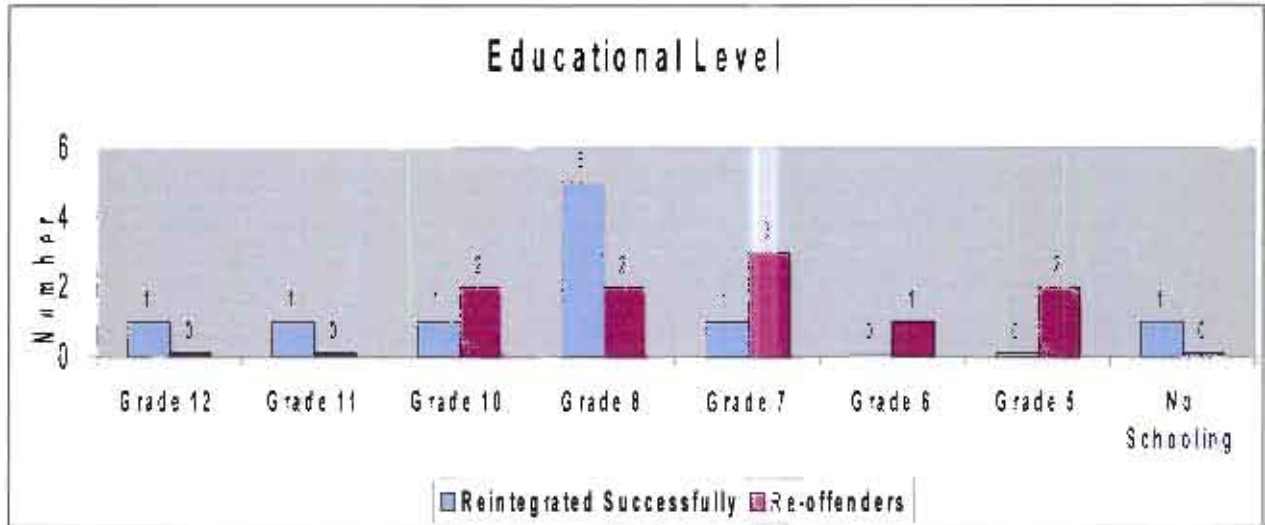
With regard to the criminal records of family members, 90 percent of the group that successfully reintegrated stated that none of their immediate family members have a criminal record. Only one mentioned that his brother has a criminal record.

The findings revealed that 40 percent of the group that re-offended noted that someone within their immediate family has a criminal record. The other 60% indicated that none of their family members have a criminal record.

Although a significant proportion of the families of young people who re-offended showed criminal involvement, it would appear that the influence of a non-supportive and dysfunctional family unit had a significant influence on the young person's re-offending.

5.2.6 Education And Training Of Young People

Figure 3



The results indicate that all of the respondents have a degree of formal education. All young people had attended formal school. Grades completed range between 6 and 12. The findings reveal that the majority of young people who re-offended had left school before entering high school. The young people who had successfully re-integrated had, in the main, finished junior school and entered high school. The majority, (80%), completed some high school, with one having finished high school and one having attained Grade 11. Half, (50%), had completed Grade 8 before leaving school. While 8 young persons (80%) from the reintegrated group had completed grade 8 or higher, only 2 of the re-offenders (20%) had achieved grade 8 or more. It was clear from the findings that the group that had successfully reintegrated generally had achieved a higher level of education than the recidivist group.

All the respondents had left school before their first admission at Horizon Youth Centre. This concurs with the findings of McAllister et al., (1992: 14),

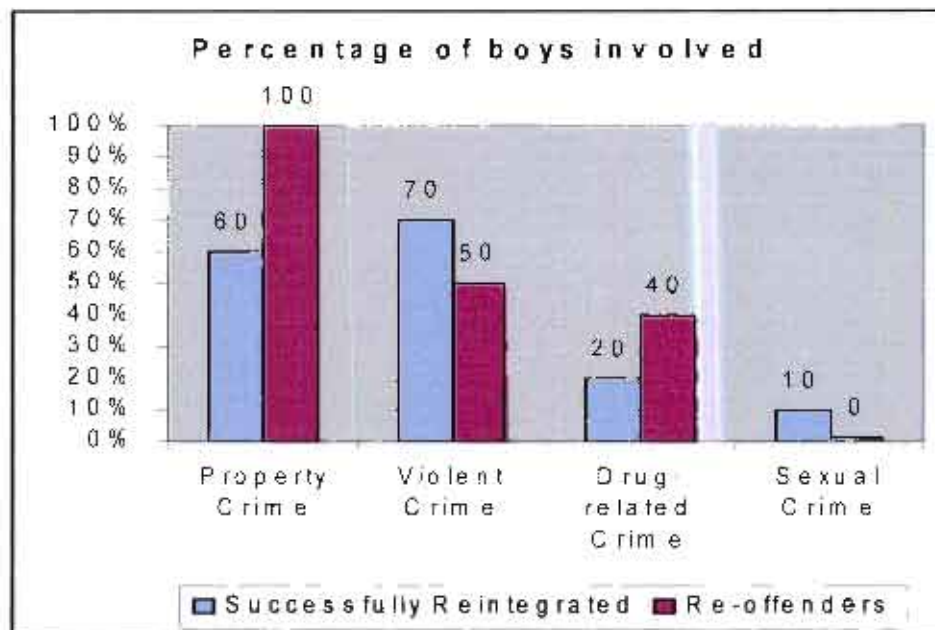
namely that there is a close relationship between early school 'drop-outs' and involvement in criminal activities.

None of the respondents had any additional training and the only vocational skills that they have are the ones that they were taught at the Youth Centre. With regard to skills training, there is no real difference between the two groups. Although most of the respondents had some form of vocational skills training, they experienced difficulties in finding employment. Those who are employed are doing something different from the skills they acquired at the Youth Centre. It would appear, therefore, that this is an area that needs strengthening in terms of teaching young people skills that will enable them to secure a job in the community.

The skills training at the Youth Centre however, serves a valuable purpose in that it teaches young people a sense of mastery and, so doing, builds self-confidence and positive self-esteem so necessary for obtaining employment and re-integrating into the community. This could be combined with work preparation in the future in order to increase the young person's employability.

5.2.7 Criminal Records Of Respondents

Figure 4



The above graph indicates that all respondents who re-offended were involved in property crime, in contrast with the 60% of those who re-integrated successfully. It is also clear that more young people who re-offended, (40%), were involved in drug related crimes, as compared to the 20% of those who reintegrated successfully. Only one respondent from the group that reintegrated well was involved in a sexual offence.

The criminal records of respondents who re-offended revealed a general trend of commencing with petty crimes and progressing to more serious offences. Young people who re-offended were typically multiple offenders, with a high proportion (70%) involved in four to nine cases. The young people who did not re-offend were typically involved in fewer cases. However, the findings showed that these young people were involved in more violent crimes. This concurs with an evaluation study of the Canberra Reintegrative Shaming Experiments in Australia, which found a decrease in offending rates

by violent offenders. But the programme failed to reduce repeat offending by young property offenders and shoplifters (Steyn, 2005: 29). This may be because those young people who are involved in property crimes do so as a survival strategy. However, it may also be that those young people involved in violent crimes may just have a low frustration tolerance but do have some integrity. Through programmes such as anger management, alternatives to violence and 'me and my emotions' young people are taught to identify their feelings and control their anger. On the other hand, it appears to be more challenging to teach young people integrity, than anger management.

5.2.8 Reasons For Respondents Committing Crime

Table 3

Reasons for committing crime	Reintegrated respondents		Re-offenders Respondents	
	No	%	No	%
Being under the influence of drugs	8	80%	5	50%
Peer pressure	4	40%	3	30%
To maintain drug habits	7	70%	8	80%
To wear same stylish clothes as friends	3	30%	2	20%
To assist family financially	1	10%	2	20%
Because nobody cares	0	0%	2	20%
*Total	10	100%	10	100%

**The percentages are greater than the total number of respondents, as some young people gave more than one reason for getting involved in crime.*

Reintegrated respondents

A high proportion, (80%), admitted that they committed crime because they

were under the influence of drugs. In the words of one respondent; *"Drugs gave me power; I became aggressive, it made me strong and able to do crime, it gave me a sense of no fear"*. Most of the respondents stated that drugs made them feel aggressive.

A significant number, (40%), had committed crimes under the influence of their friends or the gang, with peer pressure playing a strong role: *"I did not want to be left out; did not want to be seen as a 'spoilsport'*. A high percentage, (70%), noted that they had committed crime to maintain their drug habit. Non re-offending was linked to a halt in drug usage. About a third (30%) noted the desire to wear name brands and stylish clothes as a motivation to commit crime, while one respondent noted that he steals to help his family make ends meet. The majority of respondents were motivated to commit crime by factors related to peer pressure and drugs. Thus it is external influences, as opposed to 'internal' factors, such as character disorder that leave young people vulnerable to re-offend.

Re-offender respondents

A high percentage, (80%), admitted that they got involved and continue with crime to maintain their drug habits. Fifty percent admitted to offend because they had been under the influence of drugs. A significant number of respondents, (50%), re-offended as a result of peer pressure, which included wanting to wear the same stylish clothes as other younger people or wanting to gain the approval of their friends. Only 20% noted that they committed crimes because they felt that nobody cares about them. Two persons (20%) were motivated by factors associated with financial need, that is, to help their family with food. A significant factor in re-offending appears to be that of drug usage, with the majority of young people who re-offended, still using drugs in

contrast with the majority of young people who had not re-offended reported that they had, in the main, stopped using drugs.

5.2.9 Respondents Involvement In Gangsterism

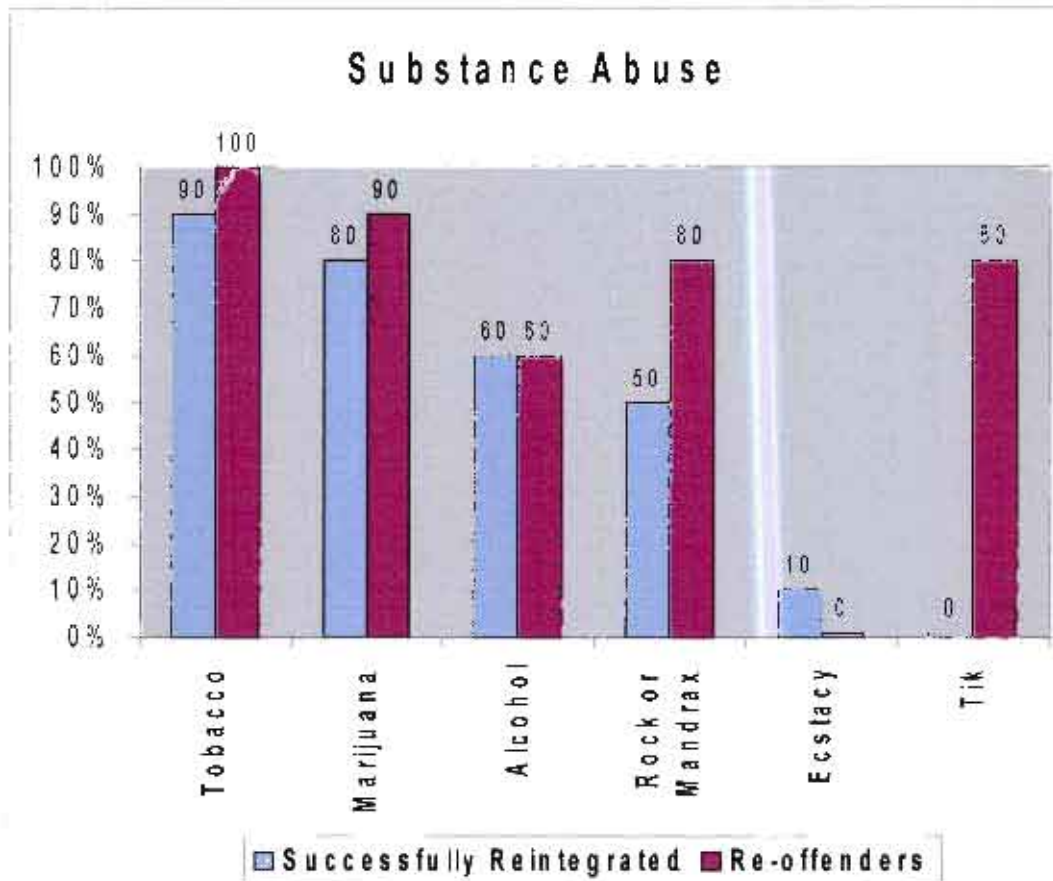
Active gang membership appears to be a factor in re-offending with 60% of re-offenders still being actively involved in gangsterism. Only 40% of those who reintegrated successfully had been gang members and all claimed that they had not returned to the gang since their release from H.Y.C, agreeing with the one who stated; "I changed my lifestyle".

Sixty percent of the recidivists were members of gangs and returned to gang related activities on their release. The activities of these gangs are strongly related to the use of drugs as well as involvement in criminal activities. In terms of this it is significant that drug abuse was cited as a key factor in recidivism. Gangs also provide an alternative source of income/resources through their criminal activities. They provide supportive relationships for young people, while at the same time condoning criminal activity. It provides acceptance as well as a distorted sense of belonging. This appeals greatly to those with dysfunctional or no family support. Brendtro et al. (1990: 47), agree that young people who feel rejected will join gangs to give them a sense of belonging.

It is difficult for young people who have joined gangs to leave those gangs. There are few alternatives for them and their circumstances more often than not drive them back. In order to combat the influences of gangs, alternatives are needed within communities.

5.2.10 Use Of Drugs Or Alcohol

Figure 5



Those young people who had successfully re-integrated had previously used a variety of substances as outlined in the above table. Ninety percent of them smoked tobacco, starting as young as six years old and smoking heavily on a daily basis. Sixty percent admitted the use of alcohol since as young as 11 years old, mainly over weekends. Eighty percent of this group noted that they had smoked marijuana on a daily basis - some from as young as six years old. Half, (50%), admit to use hard drugs like crack cocaine and mandrax. Only 1 respondent admitted to experimenting with ecstasy.

Those young people who re-offended presented as multi-substance abusers. Young people admitted to start smoking cigarettes as young as ten years. All of them appear to be heavy smokers that smoke on a daily basis as much as they can get. More than half of the respondents, (60%), admitted to using alcohol mostly over weekends. They had started at a very young age; according to one respondent, as young as four years old.

A high proportion, (90%), admitted to smoking marijuana on a daily basis, between five to twenty 'stoppe' per day, from as young as eight years old. Eighty percent admitted to use crystal meth ("tik") on a daily basis, as much as they can get. Eighty percent also admitted to the use of 'hard' drugs like crack cocaine and mandrax on a daily basis. This group appears to have continued using substances as before and show little sign of having changed their habits. It is evident that the recidivist group tended to use "harder" drugs, while those in the reintegrated group were more inclined to use the less 'damaging' substances, such as alcohol and marijuana. This might be one of the reasons why it is more difficult for them to stop this habit. Another factor is that most of the re-offenders appear to have a poor sense of belonging, with no support system. The young people confirmed that using drugs helps them to cope with their domestic problems and it enhances their performance and increase their confidence.

In terms of how it impacts on their lifestyle the various responses from both groups were as follows: *"when using drugs I don't think of my problems"; "after using drugs I used to rob people"; "it makes me feel in a motion"; "it makes me feel good"; "it messed up my life totally"; "it changed my personality and makes me aggressive and strong", "it changed me into a monster"*. All the respondents from both group admitted that their alcohol and or drug abuse had a negative impact on their lifestyle.

There appears to be a strong correlation between drug/substance usage and re-offending. Young people either resort to crime in order to obtain substances or commit crime whilst under the influence of substances. The influence of crystal meth ("tik") appears to be very strong, with 80% of the young people using this drug on a day to day basis.

Implications for successful reintegration are that young people need to be referred for inpatient treatment, which is currently not available at Horizon Youth Centre.

5.3 YOUNG PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCES OF THEIR DETENTION AT HORIZON YOUTH CENTRE

5.3.1 Respondents' Contact With Family/Caregivers

All respondents (40), both young people and their parents or caregivers confirmed that there had been some contact initiated by the Youth Centre to inform family members about the whereabouts of their children.

In terms of the group that reintegrated successfully, a significant proportion (80%) of the respondents reported that they had weekly telephonic contact with their family members, as this is part of the afternoon programme at the Youth Centre. Only 20% reported not to have had any telephonic contact because they do not have telephone numbers. However, they had received regular visits.

With regards to the group that re-offended, a significant number (60%) had had regular telephonic contact with their family members, initiated by the Youth Centre. The other 40% reported not to have had any contact numbers

of parents or caregivers and as a result of this they could not telephonically contact their family members.

5.3.2 Support Received During Detention

Table 4

	Reintegrated respondents		Re-offender respondents	
	No.	%	No.	%
Mother	7	70%	3	30%
Siblings	5	50%	3	30%
Father	4	40%	2	20%
Caregivers	2	20%	1	10%
None	0	0%	6	60%

**The total number is higher than the number of respondents since some of the respondents were supported by more than one person.*

A high percentage, (80 %), of the group that reintegrated well received weekly visits from their family members. Only 20% did not received regular visits. However, they confirmed to have had weekly telephonic contact with their parents and also confirmed that parents had attended court hearings on a regular basis.

In terms of how they experienced the visits by family members, young people responded as follows: *"happy and sometimes sad, because I had to stay behind"; "looking forward to see family"; "felt cared for and accepted"; "family loves me"; "sorry about the things I did".* In terms of the support that the family provided the respondents noted emotional support; *"it helped me*

through the difficult times", luxuries, motivation and positive advice. This group in general appears to be satisfied with the support they received.

In contrast with this, a high proportion of the group that re-offended (60%) reported not to have received any visits from family members. The 40% who received visits experienced the same feelings of happiness as the other group. In terms of the support that they received they mentioned emotional support and the fact that parents attended court hearings. One reported that his mother promised him that she will stop drinking and *"I thought that things will be better at home"*. However, he was very disappointed when everything was still the same.

Reasons for the lack of support as cited by young people are reflected in the following direct quotations: *"financial reasons"*; *"because of my involvement with gangsterism and drugs"*; *"because I did not listen and to punish me"*.

What emerged repeatedly is that the group who re-offended received very little support, if any, from family members or caregivers. These findings concur with a research follow-up study of young offenders done by Maxwell & Morris (as cited in Steyn, 2005: 29) where it was found that, after six years, three-fifths of young people in the sample re-offended, and it noted that they reported not having, or having very few people who cared about them or who supported them.

It is evident from the findings that mostly mothers supported their children while in detention. This might be because of single-parent families that young people derived from, or as a result of the "absent" father figure home as described in chapter 3 on page 52, under the heading: 'Family backgrounds of young people'.

5.3.3 Social Services Received While In Detention

Table 5

Type of Service	Reintegrated respondents		Re-offender respondents	
	No.	%	No.	%
Counseling Services	10	100%	7	70%
Life Skills	10	100%	7	70%
Completion of Care Plan	10	100%	6	60%
Religious Services	10	100%	6	60%
Therapeutic Group work	10	100%	1	10%
Pre- Release Groups or Preparation	1	10%	2	20%
Personal Development Programmes	10	100%	0	0

With regards to the youth that reintegrated successfully, all respondents reported regular and meaningful individual counseling sessions with the social worker. They all completed the Life Skills Programme and found it helpful. They all confirmed to have had a care plan completed for them. All respondents reported that they had been exposed to pastoral care and religious services on a weekly basis. They rated it highly, as they felt that they really needed spiritual guidance, as their lives had been in a crisis. They also commented positively about the Sports Programme and the Community Outreach Programmes at the Youth Centre, as it kept them in touch with the community.

All respondents who reintegrated successfully commented on the Personal Development Programme as they felt that it prepared them to face life's challenges on a daily basis. Generally most of the services were rated

positively by this group. Most of the respondents indicated that the programmes in general had met their needs. However, only one respondent could recall a formal pre-release session with him and his parents. He had turned 18 years and the internal social worker, after preparing him and his family during several counseling sessions, advocated on his behalf for free bail.

It is evident that only 30% reported to have received some sort of pre-release services, which points to a lack of thorough preparation for their return to the community. This might be a contributing factor in so many young people returning to a life of crime. This is an area that will be discussed in more detail under the next heading.

In terms of the group that re-offended, 70% indicated that they had received social work services as well as that they attended the Life Skills Programme. However, more than a quarter (30%) claimed that they did not receive any individual counseling. They indicated that the social worker had had individual sessions with them but that they were just not satisfied with the services in that they felt that these did not satisfy their needs. A high proportion (60%) commented positively on the religious services, and how they appreciated the fact that the religious leader at the Centre had prayed with them before they went to court. The other 20% indicated that they did not receive any services or that the services did not help them at all.

The findings revealed that those most in need of services actually received the least services. This, however, appears to be in line with what Corden et al., and Stone, cited in McAllister (1992: 39) found, that "those in greatest need tend to receive least assistance". This might be, as described in Brendtro et al. (1990: 8), because most young people who experience extreme difficulties during their childhood become relationship resistant. They don't trust adults and always question their intentions because of previous

disappointments. As a result of this they probably are not keen to open up or accept help from adults. This anomaly between the two groups will be explained in more detail in the next heading.

5.3.4 Respondents' Views With Regard To The Effectiveness Of The Services Provided By Horizon Youth Centre

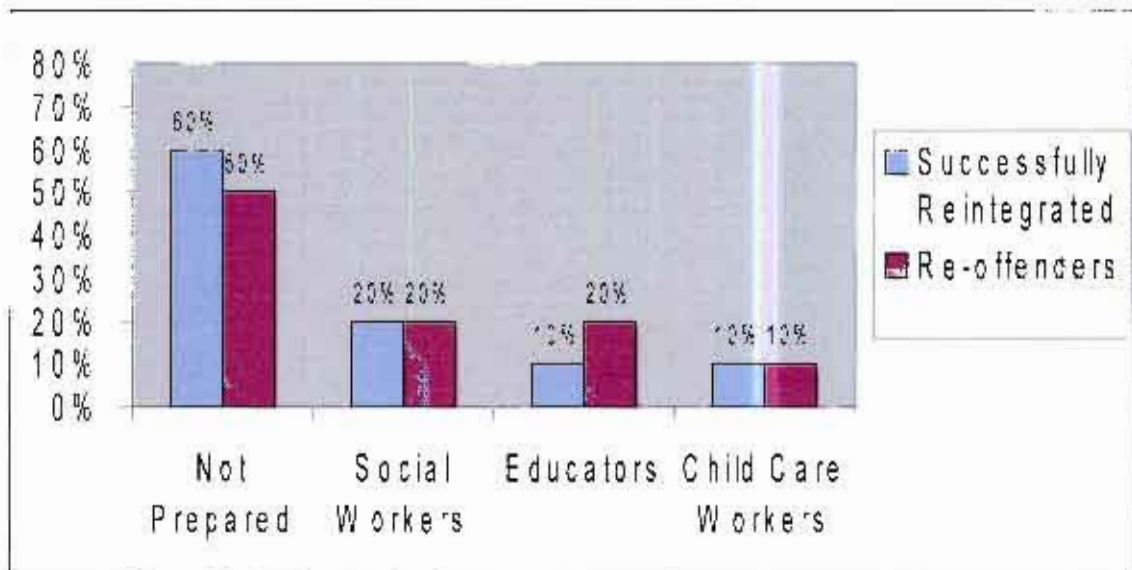
When young people were asked how they benefited from the services, all those who reintegrated responded positively to this question, and in their own words cited the following: *"It helped me making the right choices and decisions"; "It motivated me to change my life"; "Strengthened me spiritually; I learned to think before I do something"; "It helped me to get rid of gangsterism" and "Taught me discipline and to listen to and respect people".*

In contrast, a high proportion (80%) of the recidivist group reported that they did not benefit from the services. Some of them responded as follows: *"drugs still control me"; "It did not help me because within a week I was involved in crime again"; "I did not listen to the staff at the Youth Centre, my mind was always on the outside".* A small percentage (20%) noted that the services helped them in many ways.

There might be many explanations for the different responses. However, the time spent within the facility appears to be the most obvious reason why the reintegrated group who spent six months and longer in the Centre could benefit more from the programmes. Another variable might be the fact that the group that reintegrated well received more support and encouragement from family members, which positively influenced their adaptation and participation in general.

5.3.5 Pre-Release Services At Horizon Youth Centre

Figure 6



Only twenty percent of the group who reintegrated well reported that they had received individual counseling from the social worker. They also noted that child and youth care workers and educators always talk to them about doing the right things when leaving the facility. In terms of effectiveness it had helped them because they managed to stay crime free and to turn their backs on gangsterism.

A high percentage of 60% claimed that they were never prepared for their release. A third reported that the social worker did not arrange anything to assist them with their reintegration process. However, most of them (90%) stated that the social worker ensured that they have a place to return to and that the parents were prepared to take responsibility for them. This process took place after they were found guilty, and a recommendation was required by the court in terms of sentencing options. This is the procedure when a young person is found guilty. However, the Youth Centre will have to make

provision to prepare young people who might leave the Centre unexpectedly and this can only be done if the reintegration process forms a structured part of the Youth Centre's programme.

In contrast with this, half of the group that re-offended (50%) as indicated in figure 7, reported not to have been prepared for release. They went to court and were released into the care of their parents. Only one respondent (10 %) claimed that the educator prepared him during the presentation of the special programmes. Twenty percent indicated that the social worker prepared them during an individual session. One was prepared by child care workers through writing their life stories, their hopes and dreams, and to consider and discuss their options in life.

About one third (30%) of those who re-offended stated that the social worker ensured that they had a place to live. One of the respondents also mentioned that an educator assisted him in finding employment. Another recalled that the social worker had motivated him to return to school. However, she never contacted the school or made arrangements for his return. Nevertheless, a high proportion (70%) claimed that the social worker had not made any arrangements for their release.

The findings revealed that most of the respondents were released without notification from the court to the Youth Centre and had spent relatively very little time at the Centre. The core function of the Centre is that of containing young people awaiting trial within a restrictive, but empowering environment. Due to the nature of the movement of young people within the juvenile justice system, the release date of the young person is often not planned. This is due to young people being released at any given time or cases being withdrawn.

The findings highlighted the need to prepare young people for their release. Places of safety should work out creative ways of preparing young people for

their release starting from the day they enter the facilities. With regard to pre-release services it appears as if there are young people who were prepared randomly and not as part of a structured programme.

In light of the above, the crucial role of family reintegration services emerges. From the results obtained it became evident that young people who enjoyed positive and supportive relationships with families / significant others, had a lesser chance of re-offending than those who did not. Family reintegration services focus on strengthening and rebuilding bonds with family and significant others as well as individual therapeutic work with the young person, with a view to re-entering the community. Social work services are integral to this process.

In terms of the effectiveness of the services young people reported as follows: 30% reported positively with comments like, *"it made me think and consider my options"*. However, a high proportion (70%) felt that the services were not effective; *"a week after my release I got involved in crime again"*.

There was considerable indication that the young persons would like to have more contact with the social worker, which is an indication that they realised that they need assistance in achieving a positive reintegration in the community. It is also an indication of a positive attitude in that they realised the importance of social work services.

5.3.6 Workshops And Classes Attended

Table 6

Class or Workshop	Reintegrated respondents		Re-offender respondents	
	No.	%	No.	%
Life Skills	10	100%	10	100%
Woodwork	6	60%	2	20%
Arts & Crafts	5	50%	2	20%
Sewing	0	0	2	20%
Upholstery	3	30%		
Special Programmes	10	100%	2	20%
Leadership Programme	3	30%	0	0
Abet I and II	4	40%	5	50%
Bible Studies	9	90%	2	20%
Computer Training	4	40%	2	20%

**The table adds up to more than 20 young people, which means that some young people attended more than one workshop.*

The above table indicates that all young people who reintegrated well attended the Life Skills Programme, 50% Arts & Crafts, 60% Woodwork, 90% Bible Studies, 40% Abet I and II, 30% Upholstery, 40% Computer, 30% Leadership Programme and 100% Special Programmes.

All respondents who re-offended attended the Life Skills class., 20% attend the Arts & Craft Workshop, 20% Woodwork, 20% Sewing, 20% Computer, Leadership Programme, 20 %Special Programmes, 30% Abet 1, 20% Abet II

and 20% Bible Studies. What stood out in this category is that, although all the young people had an opportunity to attend special programmes, only 20% of this group mentioned that they recall attending it. The special programmes are actually the programmes preparing young people to face life's challenges. The fact that 80% could not recall the programme showed either a lack of interest or awareness, or that they did not benefit from the programme and that, therefore, this need further evaluation to ensure that the programme meets the needs of all young people.

5.3.6.1 Young People's Views On What They Had Learnt At The Workshops

The young people who successfully reintegrated were generally positive and optimistic about the workshops they had attended and more specifically the skills they had acquired. Some cited that it made a huge impact and difference in their lives with comments such as; *"In woodwork I learnt skills that I can use to fix things in and around our house"*; *"I can work as an entrepreneur if only I can get a jigsaw and a sander"*. Some young people indicated that they learnt a great deal. However, it would have been more useful if they could complete all their modules in a specific workshop. In the words of one boy; *"I would like to become fully computer literate"*. Some young people also indicated that, although they learnt some useful skills, they found it difficult to obtain employment. One indicated that, *"I learnt a lot but no one is giving me a chance to implement my skills"*. This is an area that needs urgent attention. Young people should be given the opportunity to complete their modules if they wish to do so. They should also be assisted within communities to put into practice what they learnt, so as to ensure their reintegration into society.

With regard to the re-offenders, the responses appear to be similar, although most of them mentioned that they did not spend much time in the workshops

during their first admission. Most responses about the workshops were positive, indicating that young people enjoy learning practical skills. The findings indicated that a high proportion of young people had acquired some useful knowledge and skills. Although most of them expressed appreciation, as they learn to master a skill, they identified the lack of opportunities within the communities to put into practice what they have learnt. An outstanding fact was also that many mentioned that they had only discovered how talented they really were while in detention.

About 80% of those who reintegrated well noted that they had acquired skills to manage their anger and to identify their feelings, which enabled them to think about their actions and to make informed decisions. It appears that, generally, the respondents were satisfied with the services that had been provided to them.

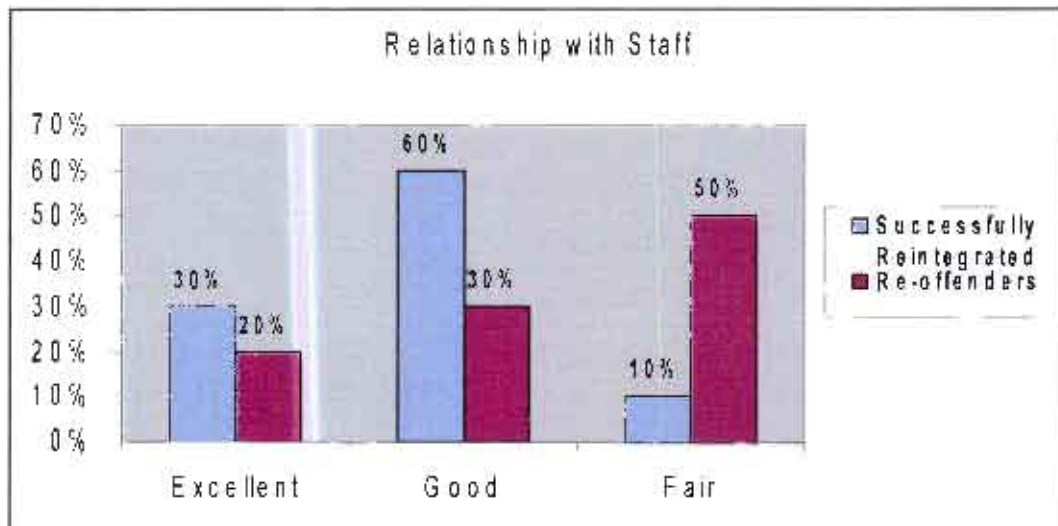
5.3.6.2 Young People's Views On Religious Activities At The Youth Centre

Bosasa's philosophy is one of religious freedom. However, spirituality is high on the priority list as it is part of a balanced programme to see to the spiritual needs of young people. The Centre allows different denominations to hold services on a weekly basis in an effort to uphold the principle of freedom of religion. This forms part of the week-end programme. As part of the recreational programme, in the afternoon, young people get the opportunity to voluntarily attend bible classes. Spiritual training and education is also provided for Muslim children. Muslim staff is encouraged to pray with them on Friday's and the Youth Centre makes provision for fasting during the month of Ramadaan. It appears that young people realised the importance of religion and the role it plays in their lives and how it can impact positively in one's actions towards other human beings. Following are some of their responses:

"It made me realised that God is good"; "to trust God"; "To fast during the month of Ramadaan and to pray"; "It taught me how to pray".

5.3.7 Relationships Between The Young Detainees And Staff

Figure 7



Young people who reintegrated well, rated their relationships with staff members positively, with 60% describing it as good, 30% experienced excellent relationships and only one respondent (10%) describes it as fair. Young people generally felt listened to and understood.

In comparison with this, of the young people who re-offended, only 30% indicated experiencing good relationships with staff members. Half of the respondents described their relationship with staff members as fair, while only one respondent (10%) described it as excellent. It is significant that none of the young people indicated experiencing poor relationships with staff members. However, there is a significant difference in terms of how the two groups experienced their encounter with staff members. Half of the respondents described their relationships with staff members as 'fair' which

falls short of 'good'. There might be a reluctance on the part of young people to admit to relationship problems. This might be one of the reasons why these young people re-offended. John Seita, a former troubled youth who is now a resilience expert explains that "*relationships change people, not programmes*". Seita's own case file was full of diagnoses of professionals who were unable to build trust with him (Brendtro & du Toit, 2005: 54).

It might be that young people who are relationship reluctant find it harder to interact positively with staff members. This could lead to them falling through the cracks. It could indicate a need for more focused and intensive work with these young people, in order to promote less re-offending and more successful reintegration into the community.

5.3.7.1 Most Caring Relationships Experienced By Respondents

Figure 8

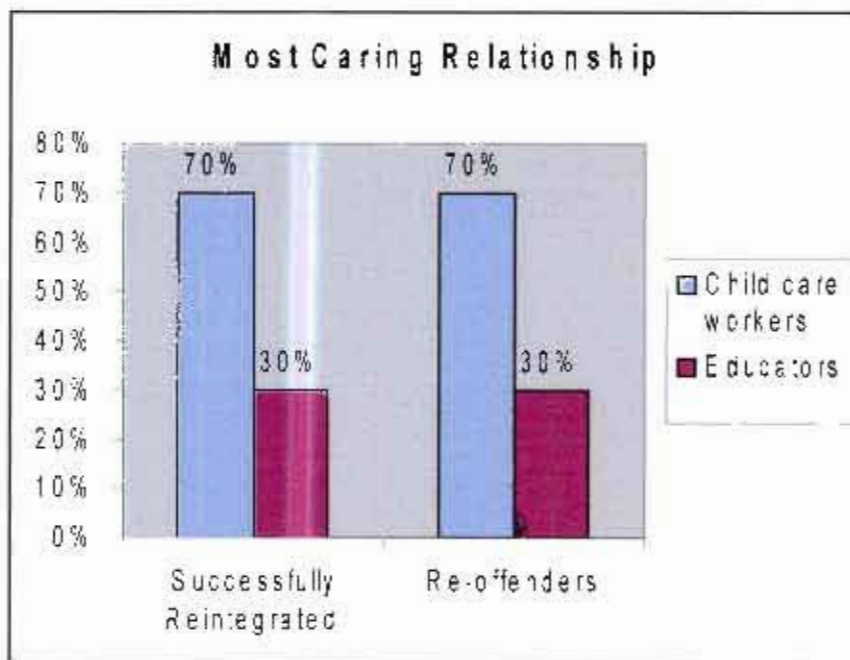


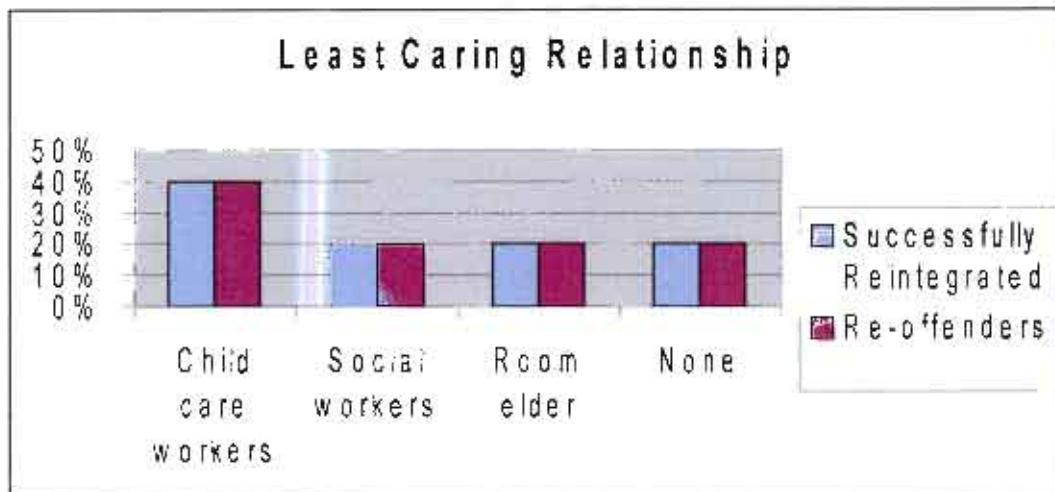
Figure 8 shows that a high proportion of the respondents (70%) identified

child and youth care workers as the ones that they share the most caring relationship with. In the words of a young person; *“they are always there to help and listen to us”*. A third (30%) identified their workshop instructors as the most caring person, with responses such as; *“if I ask the workshop instructor, they always do things for me they don’t favour”*. It appears from the findings that they regarded those staff as their caregivers who ensure their safety and see to their basic needs”. It is significant that there is no difference between the responses of the two groups, which may be related to the fact that child care workers and educators are consistent with their treatment of young people. The fact that they do not mentioned social workers may be as a result of their greater time spent with childcare workers and educators. On the other hand this might be an indication that social workers need to spend more time with young people in order to build rapport.

According to Brendtro and du Toit (2005: 40) studies following high risk children into adulthood found that 60% eventually made positive adjustments. Even children exposed to severe trauma can turn their lives around **if they can find supportive adults or mentors**. This highlights the significance of positive relationships with young people in ensuring successful reintegration.

5.3.7.2 Least Caring Relationships

Figure 9



Forty percent of both categories of respondents identified child care workers as the ones that they experienced the least caring relationship with. The main reasons given were as follows: *"hulle kyk gesig"*, which means that they have favourites; *"all of them are not the same"*; *"sometimes they are not taking us serious"*. Twenty percent identified social workers and they mentioned that they *"only saw the social worker once; she never spend time with me"*. Twenty percent identified room elders, with reasons like *"I just don't like her"*; *"he is too strict"*. Twenty percent indicated that they maintained good relationships with all the staff. The outcomes were similar for both groups, as the young people rated their relationships with staff based on their individual experiences at the Youth Centre.

Amongst all staff members, most of the young people experienced the most caring relationship with child and youth care workers. However, they also identified child and youth care workers as the ones they experienced the least caring relationship with. This might be because of the important role that the

child and youth care workers play in the lives of young people as well as the fact that they spend 24 hours with each other. The fact that the responses are similar might be because the research was done at the same Youth Centre.

5.3.7.3 Respondents' Descriptions Of Staff Members

A significantly high percentage (80%) of all young people described staff in their own words as; *"good", "helpful", "okay", "caring", and the "best"* A small minority (20%) responded negatively with comments such as, *"hulle kyk gesig"*, which means that they have favourites and *"some are racist"*. It is evident from the above statements that young people in general regard staff as positive role models, which contributes to the success of the Youth Centre's programme. This reiterates with what Alan Paton, an educator and author, who managed to transform a reformatory for black children in Diepkloof, found that relationships changed people. He focused his approach on building relationships, responsibility and respect. His programme became known world-wide as a model of enlightened child and youth care practice. (Brendtro & du Toit, 2005: 39).

5.3.7.4 Young People's Perceptions Of The Attitude Of Staff Towards Them

Almost a third (30%) of those who reintegrated well responded negatively with comments such as, *"staff thinks I am rude"; "a gangster and naughty"*. However, the majority, 70%, responded positively with comments such as, *"staff thinks I am good"; "obedient"; "a role model to other youth"; and "capable of changing"*. In comparison with them the group that re-offended responded as follows; 30% indicated that they are not sure what staff think of them, 20% were positive with comments such as *"staff thinks that I am well mannered"; "a good boy and obedient"*. Half of the respondents indicated that; *"staff thinks I am naughty"; "older than 18"; "belong in prison" and "a*

gangster". Their responses might be attributed to the fact that some young people judge themselves negatively and may be under the impression that they think others perceive them in a negative light. The differences between the two groups were also apparent with regard to those who reintegrated successfully. A significant number (70%) perceived themselves more positively, while half of those who re-offended perceived themselves in a more negative light.

5.3.8 Respondents' Relationships With Other Young People

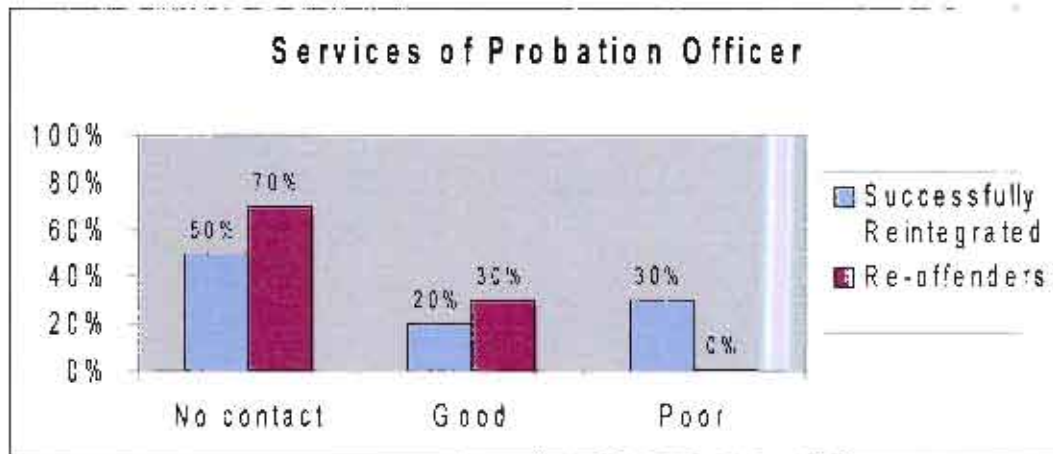
Thirty percent of the reintegrated young people described it as 'in-between'; sometimes good and sometimes not so good. However, a large number of respondents (70%) described their relationship with other young people as 'fairly good'. In terms of the group that re-offended 80% described their relationship with other young people as good while 20% mentioned that they remained on their own and did not really mixed with other young people. The negative responses with regards to the relationships with peers were found to be surprisingly few. What stood out in this category is that most of the young people from both groups in general experienced positive relationships with their peers. This may be because they experienced themselves to be 'in the same boat'.

5.3.9 Interaction Of Respondents With Probation Officers

Probation Officers assess and refer young people in conflict with the law to suitable places or programmes. They are also responsible to render a pre-sentence report when the young person has been found guilty. Probation officers are indeed important role-players who could play a vital role with

regard to the reintegration of young people to the community.

Figure 10



Half of the respondents who integrated successfully could not rate the services of the probation officers as they had had no contact or received no services from probation officers. Twenty percent rated the services as good as they explained that the probation officer had visited them at the Youth Centre and consulted with staff with regard to their sentencing options. This in itself prepares them for their release into the community. They also confirmed that their parents were part of this process. Twenty percent rated the services as poor. However, they could not give reasons since they never had any contact with probation officers, although they are entitled to such services.

A high proportion (70%) of the re-offended could not rate the services of the probation officers as they had never had any contact with them. A third rated the services as good as they mentioned that the probation officer expressed concern about their well being at the Youth Centre. Some cited as follow: *"the probation officer came to consult with the team at the Youth Centre with*

regard to sentencing options and this process made me realise that what I did was wrong”; “I felt like I was given another chance”.

The findings revealed that, as described in the literatures many young people are referred to places of safety without having been assessed. Most young people confirmed not to have had any contact with probation officers.

Based on the responses recorded in this study it is evident that probation officers have little or no contact with young people awaiting trial at places of safety. This has huge implications for the administration of juvenile justice. Prior to sentencing a probation officer’s report needs to be received by the court. The result of this study implies that probation officers are not consulting adequately with young people and their families prior to presenting these reports at court. This in turn can result in sentencing without knowing the true circumstances of the case and leading to inappropriate sentences, which can contribute to re-offending as opposed to being linked with appropriate therapeutic programmes.

5.4 LIFE SINCE RELEASE FROM HORIZON YOUTH CENTRE

5.4.1 Nature Of Respondents Release

Both groups reported that half of them had been released on conditions while the other 50% had been released unconditionally.

The release conditions for the group that reintegrated successfully were as follows:

- One respondent had to sign in on a daily basis at Bishop Lavis police station for a period of 6 months.
- Another respondent had to perform community service. He had to perform cleaning services at Khayelitsha Day Hospital for a period of 6 months.

- One received free bail on condition that he attends court hearings from home.
- One respondent was released on condition that he should adhere to the rules of his family.
- One respondent received a suspended sentence for 2 years on condition that he does not commit the same crime.

The recidivist group had been released on the following conditions:

- One respondent had to wash cars at the detective's office. However, he never adhered to it and his mother never enforced it. This is a clear example of a lack of support and the effect thereof on the reintegration process.
- Twenty percent were placed under 24 hour house arrest. They noted that although their parents supported them, they could not honour the conditions and left the house and became involved in crime again. They were placed under the supervision of a correctional officer. However, both the respondents noted that his role was just to check up on them with no support or counseling involved. Correctional officers could actually play a more prominent role in the reintegration of young offenders. However, it appears as if they only fulfill a policing function.
- Two respondents were sentenced respectively to De Novo Youth Centre and Faure Youth Centre, but they absconded shortly after they were admitted.

There does not seem to be a significant difference with regard to the nature of release amongst the two groups. However, it appears that release conditions in general were quite strict and that young people without a support structure would find it extremely challenging to adhere to those conditions. It is evident that the parents of the reintegrated group supported their children to the extent that they could adhere to their release conditions.

3.4.2 Respondents Support System

Table 7

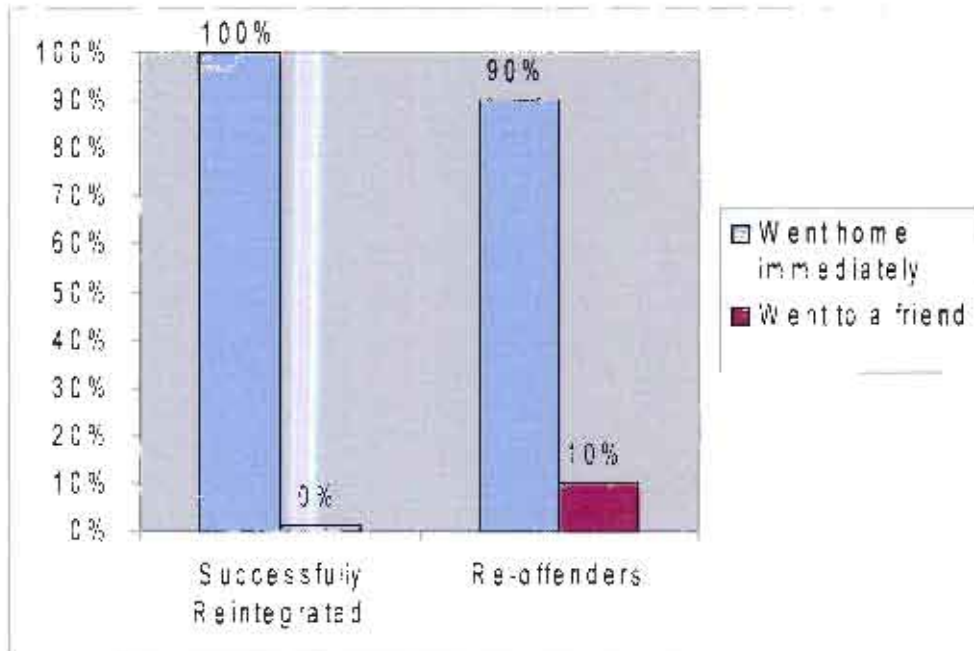
	Reintegrated respondents		Re-offender Respondents	
	No.	%	No.	%
Mother	5	50%	7	70%
Father	2	20%	0	0%
Both parents	1	10%	0	0%
Grandmother	0	0%	1	10%
Siblings	0	0%	1	10%
Foster Mother/Caregivers	1	10%	0	0%
No one	1	10%	1	10%
TOTAL	10	100%	10	100%

It is evident that the mothers in both groups are in general the ones who supported the young people. This might be because of their background, namely, single parent families or absent father figures, as described in chapter 3 under the heading 'family backgrounds of young people'. However, the fact that the court warns parents to attend court hearings actually resulted in that most of the young people, even those who re-offended, are assisted by their families during court hearings. Only one respondent out of both groups mentioned that he were not supported by family members or significant others.

5.4.3 Respondents' Activities Upon Release

5.4.3.1 Immediate Activities

Figure 11



The above figure reflects that all the respondents of the reintegrated group went home immediately, even the one respondent who was not supported by his parents at court, went home on his own. They all mentioned that the first thing they did was to enjoy their parent's homemade food. One reported that his family took him to the beach. Some of them noted that they had a family meeting to discuss the family rules and the way forward. Another reported that he was welcomed by his siblings, while another mentioned that they went to church that evening. All the reintegrated youth described their coming home as special, even the one who was not fetched at court by his parents.

With regard to the recidivist group, 90% mentioned that they went home immediately. However, only one respondent recalled that his parents made a special effort, in his own words: "we went to buy clothes for me and went to

eat at Kentucky". A significant number, 40% recalled that the first thing they did, when they got home, was to look for their friends. One respondent recalled that his mother and sister fetched him at court and informed him outside the court building that he was not welcome at home. Initially he wanted to return to Bosasa, but then decided to go and stay with a friend.

A clear picture emanating from the responses is the huge difference in terms of how the two groups were received at home. It is significant that 40% of the members of the recidivist group tended to make immediate contact with their peers, with many becoming involved in crime, some, as early within one week of their release from the Youth Centre. This points to a strong influence of the peer group on deviant behaviour. It concurs with a study done by Rutter (as cited in Steyn, 2005:9) where he described the involvement in deviant peer groups as the biggest contributors to anti-social behaviour, particularly during adolescence.

5.4.3.2 Activities During The First Week Of Release

Table 8

Activities	Reintegrated respondents		Re-offender respondents	
	No.	%	No.	%
Stay at home	7	70%	5	50%
Looking for a job	1	10%	0	0
Return to school	1	10%	0	0
Stayed with a friend	0	0	2	20%
Abusing drugs	0	0	2	20%
Involved in crime	0	0	1	10%
Total	10	100%	10	100%

A high percentage (70%) of the group that reintegrated well, stayed at home

and assisted with fixing things in and around the house, as one noted, *"I wanted to prove to my mother that I had changed"*. One respondent went back to school within the first week, while another started to look for employment. An exception in this group is the one who considered returning to the Youth Centre for help, but then decided to start with a car wash business at a garage.

In contrast with this, half of the recidivist group reported that they stayed at home, with no intentions of returning to school or looking for a job. Twenty percent admitted to return to their old habits within the first week. As one of them recalled, *"My friends arranged for a welcome-back party with alcohol and mandrax"*. One respondent stayed with his friend while another went to stay with a family member, as he could not get along with his family. One respondent got himself involved in crime during the first week.

A clear picture emerged from the activities of young people during their first week of released with regard to their intentions to change their lifestyles. It appears that the recidivist group did not really have a vision or a goal in their lives. This could be as a result of the fact that they were not prepared for their reintegration or because there was no clear expectations from family members. This might also be because of the fact that no internal change took place and the group that re-offended had no intention to change their lifestyle.

Table 9

Activities	Reintegrated respondents		Re-offender respondents	
	No.	%	No.	%
Stay at home	1	10%	5	50%
Looking for a job	5	50%	0	0
Return to school	2	20%	0	0
Start working	2	20%	0	0
Job hunting	0	0	1	10%
Abusing drugs	0	0	7	70%
Involved in crime	0	0	2	20%
Total	10	100%	10	100%

Fifty percent of the respondents who reintegrated well stated that they started job hunting within the first month; 20% started working while the other 20% attended school. One of the respondents left home to stay with other family members, in order to get away from the gangsters. In general, these young people managed to make informed decisions and they all reported positively about the support of their immediate families.

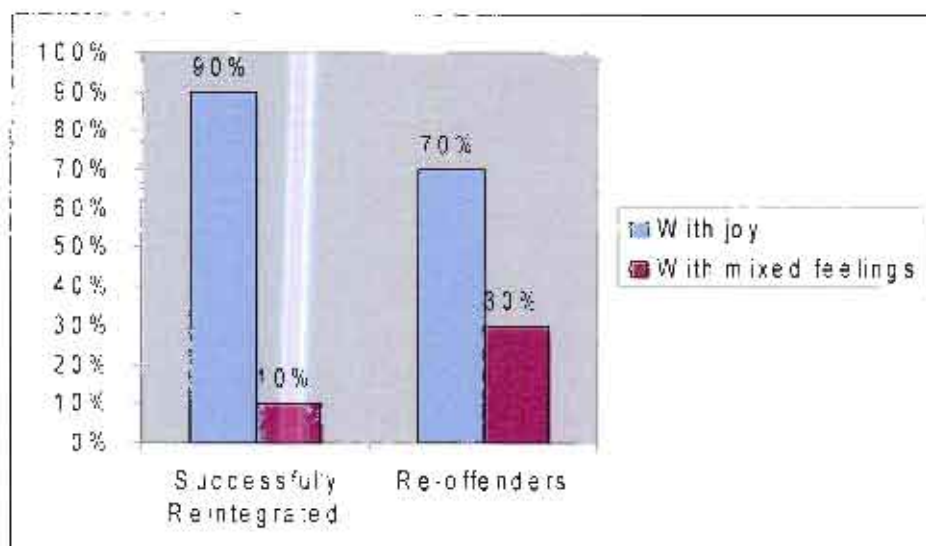
In comparison with the above, a significant number (70%) of the recidivist group reported that, within the first month they were back with their old friends, their old habits, drugs and crime. Twenty percent were back at the Youth Centre within one month, while only one respondent indicated that he was looking for employment. It appears that young people who did not change their socialisation and behavioural patterns, were most at risk in respect of re-offending. It seems that the groups or friends that the young people socialise with, and are members of, set the tone for their behavioural patterns. Those young people who had a high level of contact with peers who

were also involved in deviant behaviour had a high level of recidivism. Sixty percent of the recidivists were members of gangs and returned to gang related activities on their release. The activities of these gangs are strongly related to the use of drugs as well as involvement in criminal activities. In terms of this it is significant that drug abuse was cited as a key factor in recidivism (either the use thereof and/or involvement in criminal activities to obtain money for drugs).

Although 40% of those who had successfully re-integrated had ties with gangs, it would appear that they sought to avoid this contact on their release. They rather sought employment and/or returned to school. It would appear that family support plays a major role in this regard. Young people who were successfully re-integrated had a high level of support from family and significant others, which is a factor in preventing a return to gangsterism.

5.4.4 Family Responses When Young People Returned Home

Figure 14



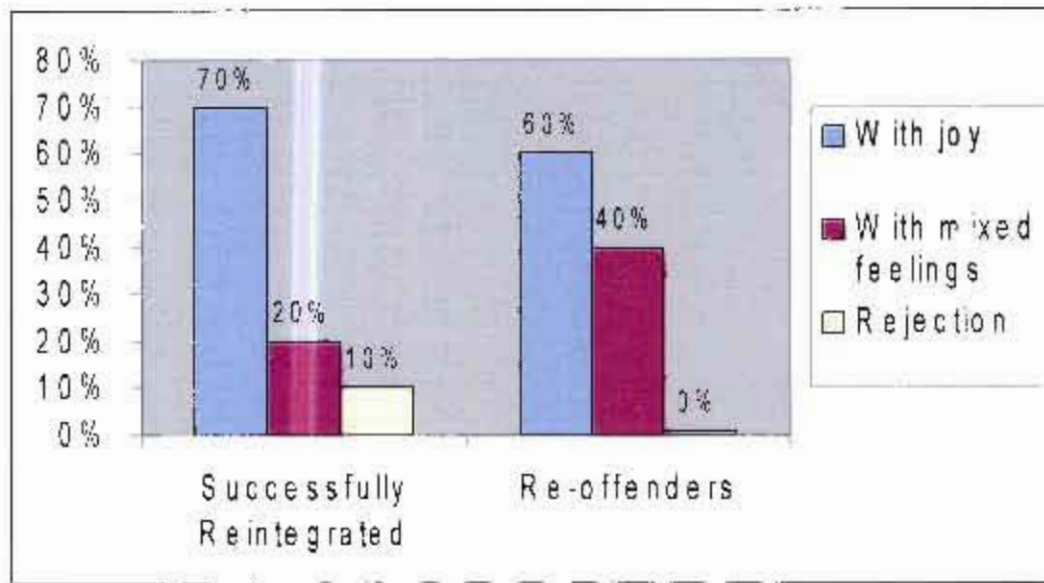
A high percentage (90%) of the group that reintegrated well explained that

their family received them with joy, with responses such as; *“they showed that they care for me”*; *“they were very happy to see me”*; *“they missed me”*; *“they welcome me back and made me feel really special”*. Only one respondent noted that his family received him back with mixed feelings, not convinced that he had changed, stating that; *“They still labeled me as a criminal”*.

A large number of the recidivist group (70%) also reported that their families received them with joy. In their own words; *“everyone was happy for me”*; *“they missed me”*. Thirty percent indicated that their parents received them with mixed feelings. Their reasons were as follows; *“because they did not expect me home and were not prepared”*; *“they were initially glad, but upset when they saw I am getting into my old habits”*. A lack of preparation for release of the recidivist group emerged. This would appear to be a significant factor in failing to ensure successful reintegration. It also appears that the young people who did not re-offend had closer ties with the family, which could make reintegration easier.

5.4.5 Community Responses When Young People Returned Home

Figure 15



Seventy percent of the young people who reintegrated well indicated that the community received them with joy. They cited the following reasons, "I never did anything to the community"; "the neighbours missed me"; "I was never a danger to the community"; "they could see I changed my manners"; "because they knew that I was not guilty". However, twenty percent felt that the community received them with mixed feelings, stating that; "they were not sure what to expect from me". One respondent mentioned that the community rejected him. However, this young person stated that, "I understood why they rejected me. I took it upon myself to attend a community meeting and apologised for my actions".

A fairly high percentage (60%) of the recidivist group felt that the community received them with joy. Their explanations were as follows; "the community did not see me for a long time, they were all happy"; "I don't steal in my community". Forty percent mentioned that they were received with mixed

feelings, stating that, *“the community did not know what to expect”; “only my friends were happy to have me back”*.

Comparing the two groups it is evident that young people who reintegrated successfully show insight and take responsibility for their actions. In contrast with this, some young people who re-offended had an attitude that *“it is okay to steal as long as it is not from your own community”*. However, in order to re-integrate into the community, there needs to be active linking of young people with structures within the community. Social workers at the Youth Centre need to be aware of existing organisations and what they can offer. They need to act as facilitators in linking young people with these organisations and following-up their progress. Community organisations can also act as support structures for young people where good family support structures do not exist.

5.4.6 Respondents’ Feelings About Themselves Since Their Released

Table 10

Respondent feelings about themselves since release	Reintegrated respondents		Re-offender respondents	
	No.	%	No.	%
Positive about themselves	8	80%	3	30%
Mixed feelings	2	20%	6	60%
Highly unwanted	0	0%	1	10%
Total	10	100%	10	100%

A high proportion of the respondents who reintegrated well (80%) indicated that, in general, they felt positive about themselves, with responses such as; *“I am proud of myself because I could make the right decisions”; “I managed*

to secure a job for myself”; “I am back at school”; “I am convinced that I can achieve my dreams”; “I liked the new me”; “I changed my lifestyle, no more drugs or gangs”. Only twenty percent experienced mixed feelings, and cited reasons such as; “I am uncertain about my future” and “I am scared that gangsters would want to kill me because I did not return to the gang”.

In contrast, 30% of the recidivist group noted that they felt positive about themselves. In their own words, *“because I was free”; “I was with my family”; “I thought I would get a job” and “I thought I could make a success of my life”.* A fairly large number, (60%) reported that they experienced mixed feelings, as explained by them; *“happy to be at home but concerned about the house arrest”; “because I knew that I am not finish with crime”; “I just couldn’t trust people”; “happy but not sure about going home”.*

The differences in attitude and concerns between the two groups are apparent. The group that reintegrated well shows a lot of insight and reflects an inner change, while some respondents in the other group made it clear that they had no intentions to stop their criminal activities. The majority of the recidivist group experienced mixed feelings, which are an indication that they might have felt positive about themselves. However, they are not sure about the support and acceptance from their family.

There appears to be a significant difference as to how the young people felt about themselves. The recidivists appear to have a poorer level of self-esteem than the group who successfully re-integrated. This might be related to family support and acceptance. The length of time spent in the Centre and participation in the therapeutic programme of the Centre might also have an influence on this. It is important to involve young people actively in the therapeutic programme of the facility prior to release.

5.4.7 Challenges Experienced By Respondents Upon Release

Table 11

Challenges Identified	Reintegrated		Re-offenders	
	No.	%	No.	%
Rejection by parents or caregivers	0	0	4	40%
Rejection by previous friends	1	10%	0	0
Lack of a stable source of income	7	70%	8	80%
Denied re-admission at previous school	0	0%	1	10%
Addressing alcohol/drug addiction	1	10%	7	70%
Getting out of the gang	1	10%	0	0%
Rejection by the community	1	10%	0	0%
*Total	10	100%	10	100%

**The total scores are higher than the total number of respondents, as some young people identified more than one challenge experienced upon release.*

In both groups the majority of respondents, 70% and 80% respectively, reported that the biggest challenge was a lack of a stable source of income: *"I just could not find a job"; "I really wanted to help my family financially"*. However, as reflected earlier, the majority of the young people who reintegrated well were eventually either employed or back at school, or they were looking for a job within their first month of release.

Although the recidivist group also reported a lack of a stable income as their biggest challenge, their actions proved the opposite. Half of the respondents noted that they had returned to their old habits within the first month, while 20% were back at the Youth Centre because of their criminal involvement. Only one of the respondents reported that he was looking for employment.

As reflected in the table above only one person in the reintegrated group indicated that he had experienced problems in addressing his drug addiction. In contrast with this, a high percentage (70%) of the recidivist group indicated that they found it extremely challenging to address their drug addiction, reporting that: *"I wanted to stop smoking but could not help myself"; "...it was too difficult to get clean from drugs"*.

Forty percent of the recidivist group indicated that they experienced rejection by their parents or caregivers because of various reasons. Only one respondent mentioned rejection by the community, while another one reported rejection by his friends because; *"I changed my old habits, and I did not want to return to the gang"*.

The most common problems include a lack of a stable income, addressing their drug addiction, and relationship problems. Similarly, among the most common problems on release from custody identified by McAllister et al.,(1992) were those of unemployment, lack of finance and poor relationships. However, in this study the majority of the recidivist group identified drug abuse as the second major challenge upon release.

Those young people who were not gainfully employed and had a high level of contact with peers, who were also involved with deviant behaviour, had a high level of recidivism. Sixty percent of the recidivists were members of gangs and returned to gang related activities on their release. The activities of these gangs are strongly related to the use of drugs as well as involvement in criminal activities. In terms of this it is significant that drug abuse was cited as a key factor in recidivism. Gangs also provide an alternative source of income/resources through their criminal activities. They provide "supportive relationships" for young people and addressed almost all challenges experienced by young people in a distorted manner.

5.4.7.1 Respondents' Actions Regarding The Challenges They Faced

The respondents who reintegrated well reported that they persevered and never gave up, as some recalled; *"I struggle to get a job but I prayed and continue searching for a job"; "I stopped using drugs, although it was difficult and my family supported me"; "I went to a community meeting and apologised to them about my actions"; "I relied on the support of my family"; "I left the gang and just stayed at home and assist my mother in and around the house"*.

In contrast, the group that re-offended noted that they choose the easy way out to address the challenges they faced. In their own words; *"I choose the easy way out and continue with my old habits", "I continue with crime to ease my financial needs"; "I keep on stealing to maintain my drug habits"*. However, with very little or no support from families or communities, it appears to be unrealistic to expect from these young people to overcome their obstacles.

To summarise the picture that emerged from the study is that none of the respondents were seeking the assistance of a social worker or the community to assist them in dealing with the challenges they faced upon release. Some of the respondents who reintegrated well identified the same challenges as the other group. However, with the support of their immediate family they managed to deal with them.

5.5 SUPPORT NETWORK AND ADJUSTMENT IN THE COMMUNITY

5.5.1 Type Of Support Received

Table 12

	Reintegrated respondents		Re-offender respondents	
	No.	%	No.	%
Mother	10	100%	6	60%
Father	4	40%	3	30%
Siblings	3	30%	0	0%
Caregiver	0	0%	2	20%
Grandmother	0	0%	2	20%
Social Worker	0	0%	0	0%
Friends	0	0%	3	30%
Imam/church leaders	0	0%	0	0%
Neighbours or community leaders	0	0%	0	0%
*Total	10	100%	10	100%

**The total scores are higher than the total number of respondents, as some young people mentioned more than one person who supported them.*

The above table reflects that in most instances mothers serve as the major support structure for young people upon their release, while support received from fathers and siblings serve as the second most common support.

All the members of the group who reintegrated successfully stated that they had received financial and emotional support from their parents or caregivers. Their immediate families were the only people who supported them. None of

this group received any support from friends or the community, as one respondent noted; *"when days are dark friends are few"*. It is clear that the role of the family is vital in ensuring the successful reintegration of young offenders.

A significant number (60%) of the recidivist group indicated that their parents or caregivers saw to their basic needs. Almost a third, (30%) of this group stated that friends supported them by giving them 'nice clothes' and provided them with drugs and 'nice times'. Twenty percent noted support from caregivers and extended family.

The fact that none of the respondents identified support from the community, which include, neighbours, religious leaders, schools or community leaders is disappointing. This is in line with the findings of Steyn (2005: 245), who stated that the public is generally reluctant to welcome ex-offenders into their community, which hampers the reintegration process. Effective reintegration has been described in the literature as playing an effective role in reducing crime. As such it cannot be the responsibility of the Youth Centre or the family only. These young people come from communities that should assist in the reintegration process, as young people eventually have to return to their communities.

5.5.2 Adults Who Respondents Felt They Could Turn To In A Crisis

A high proportion (80%) of the group that had reintegrated successfully identified staff at the Youth Centre, neighbours, church people and caregivers at a centre for the destitute as persons they could turn to in a crisis. Only two (20%) indicated that they do not know any adults they could turn to, except for their immediate family.

Eighty percent of the group that re-offended identified friends, a taxi owner and extended family as persons they could turn to in a crisis. The other 20% indicated that they do not trust adults. It is felt that the peer group and taxi owners with whom the young people associate are often not good role models, and that this might be the reason why these young people get involved in crime again. There clearly is a need for proper support structures within the communities; adults or mentors that can assist and support young people to put their good intentions into practice.

5.5.3 Organisations Identified By Respondents That Assisted Them Or Could Have Been Of Assistance Upon Release

Seventy percent of the group that reintegrated well could not identify any community organisations, while 20% indicated that the church could have assisted them. One respondent mentioned that the Ark, a centre for the destitute, assisted him with accommodation and the opportunity to continue with his schooling.

A high number of the group that re-offended (80%) could not identify any community organisation that could have been of assistance to them. Twenty percent of the respondents reported that NICRO or New World Foundation could have assisted them, if they knew about their challenges. Most of these young people did not receive any support from community organisations. Some of them identified certain organisations that could have been of assistance to them. However, they were not linked up with these organisations. This identified a lack in the integration of services and linking up young people with support structures within the communities.

5.5.4 The Role Of Religious Organisations In The Reintegration Of Young Offenders

A high percentage of both groups reintegrated, (90%) and recidivist, (60%) admitted to belong to a specific religious affiliation. Some of the denominations mentioned were the Full Gospel Church, the New Apostolic Church, the Methodist Church, the Roman Catholic Church, The Anglican Church, and the Muslim Association.

Only one respondent (10%) and four respondents (40%) respectively reported that they do not belong to a particular religious denomination. However, it is surprising that none of the different church denominations are mentioned once as having assisted with the reintegration of young people. In the past it was reported that missionaries were actually responsible for aftercare services for offenders. However, it appears that religious organisations do not play a dominant role, if any, in the reintegration process of young offenders. This is a matter that needs serious attention, as religious organisations could play a much more prominent role in the reintegration process of young offenders.

As discussed in Chapter 3 the programme at the Horizon Youth Centre makes provision to accommodate the different religious organisations to conduct services at the Centre. The Centre could probably play a more active role in encouraging religious organisations to assist children in achieving a positive reintegration in the community. Religious organisations exist in all communities and generally have a degree of structure and resources. There is scope to make more use of these organisations at community level to assist with the re-integration process, especially in the field of family support. Families can be linked with organisations of their own denomination to provide on-going moral and practical support.

5.5.5 Respondents' Participation In Sports And Cultural Activities

Seventy percent of the group that reintegrated indicated that they had participated in a variety of community activities since their release, such as, the Cape Malay-Coons, hip-hop-dancing, soccer, table tennis, drama, rugby, cricket, pool, and singing in a choir. They reported that, to associate with other people had helped them to stay out of trouble. As one reported; *"it makes me calm and peaceful"*. A third of the respondents reported not to have participated in any sports or cultural activities.

In contrast with the reintegrated respondents, none of the re-offenders had participated in any sports or cultural activities, which might be an indication of poor social integration in the community. Participation in sports and cultural activities could probably be seen as playing a vital role in preventing future crime.

5.5.6 Respondents' Work History Since Their Release

Table 13

Reintegrated respondents			Re-offender respondents		
Period of employment	Period of unemployment	Reason for leaving	Period of employment	Period of unemployment	Reason for leaving
3 months	8 months	New management	3 months	Work on a casual basis	Got arrested
3 months	9 months	Still employed	1 month	3 month	Fired
2 years	1 month	Looking for better job	1 months	4 months	Got stabbed
6 months	5 months	Looking for a better job	3 months	2 months	Got arrested
6 months	6 months	Still employed	5 months	2 months	Got arrested
6 months	6 months	Still employed			
3 months	6 months	Still employed			
12 months	6 months	Looking for a better job			

From the group that reintegrated successfully, eight (80%) confirmed that they managed to find a job. A high proportion of this group confirmed that they had experienced periods of unemployment, as it was difficult to find permanent employment however. Half of this group was still employed at the time of the interview, with 20% attending school on a regular basis. The 20%, who continued with their schooling, had never worked. Most of the respondents saw keeping employment as the biggest challenge.

Half of the recidivist group reported to experience challenges in obtaining work, but they had been less successful than the integrated group in retaining

employment when they obtained it. The other 50% did not look for a job or were arrested within the first month of their release.

The above findings highlight the importance of adequately preparing young people for job-seeking prior to their release. A planned release programme could include job seeking skills (including setting up a CV) as well as life-skills that would assist the young persons in functioning within the work environment and retaining employment.

5.5.7 Reintegrated Children’s Views On The Factors That Influenced Them To Stop Offending

Table 14

Reasons for remaining crime free	No.	%
Because of the care provided by staff at the Youth Centre	5	50%
Fear of being locked up	7	70%
Realising that crime does not pay	2	20%
Returning to school	2	20%
Fear of disappointing family	8	80%
Skills acquired in the Leadership and Life Skills Programme	4	40%
A change of attitude (transformation)	1	10%
Obtaining employment	4	40%
Support of family/caregivers	9	100%
Total	10	100

The total scores are higher than the total number of respondents, as some Young people mentioned more than one factor that contributed to their re-offending.

It should be noted that none of the recidivist group responded to this question

as all of them had again been involved in crime. It is evident from the responses of young people that a wide variety of factors and interventions prevented young people from re-offending. These ranges from the support of family members, the programme at the Youth Centre, to returning to school or finding a job. Most of the reasons include family members as well as an internal change of attitude. The above table reflects that the role of the family appears to be crucial in assisting young people in staying crime free.

5.5.8 Factors That Had Contributed To The Re- Offending Of The Young People Who Recidivated

Table 15

Reasons for re-offending	No	%
Maintaining the drug habit	8	80%
Peer pressure	7	70%
Being under the influence of drugs	4	40%
Providing the family with food	1	10%
Due to mother's boyfriend's continued verbal abuse	1	10%
Lack of support from family	4	40%
Due to the environment/neighbourhood	4	40%
Total	10	100%

**The total scores are higher than the total number of respondents, as some young people mentioned more than one factor that contributed to their re-offending.*

As can be seen, the influence of drugs on re-offending is enormous and there appears to be a definite link between substance abuse and recidivism. Eighty percent of the young people re-offended to maintain their drug habit, with

40% of offences occurring with the young person being under the influence of drugs. The influence of the peer group was also significant, with 70% citing the influence of their peer group as being a factor in the committing of the offence. Forty percent claimed that the lack of family support caused them to re-offend. Another 40% blamed neighbourhood influences for contributed to their continued involvement in crime.

It would appear that most young people in trouble with the law (80%) are drug users and abusers. When drug dependence is identified, young offenders need to be referred for in-patient treatment. There is at present a great shortage of facilities for in-patient treatment in the Western Cape. This needs to be urgently addressed by creating more facilities for those who are unable to afford the high costs of rehabilitation in the private sector.

5.5.9 Motivation To Stop Offending

Forty percent of the young people who had reintegrated well mentioned that it was never their intention to commit crime. A significant number (60%) reported that they had stopped offending long ago and that they are positive that they will live a crime free life.

All young people in the recidivist group indicated that they would like to stop committing crime, giving reasons such as:

- *"I don't want to be in prison all the time";*
- *'I am getting older and I don't want a huge criminal record";*
- *"I would like a permanent job to help my family financially";*
- *"It is not right I give my family a bad name";*
- *"I want a wife and a family of my own and crime does not pay".*

Their reasons are an indication that, inherently, they would like to change. However, they need the support of their family, social workers and the

community to make this possible. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu said of young offenders: *“Even when they are really troublesome, there is some good in them, for, after all, they were created by God and we should find creative ways to draw out of our children the good that is there in each of them”*. (Brendtro & Du Toit, 2005: 42).

5.5.10 Respondents’ Views Regarding What Should Be Done To Prevent Re-Offending

Employment

All respondents from both groups emphasised the need for assistance with employment. Although most of the respondents had received some form of vocational skills training at Horizon Youth Centre, they experienced difficulties in finding employment upon release. Those who were employed, were actually doing something different from the skills they had acquired at the Youth Centre. It was also difficult for them to keep this employment due to a lack of work ethic and previous work experience. It would appear, therefore, that this is an area that needs strengthening in terms of teaching young people skills, which will enable them to secure a job in the community and to keep that job. Employment plays a crucial role in enabling young people to meet their basic needs and assist in the reintegration process.

Drug Rehabilitation

A high proportion of both groups indicated that they committed crime either because they were under the influence of drugs, or in order to maintain their drug habits. Not re-offending was, furthermore, linked to a halt in drug usage. A significant factor in re-offending appears to be that of drug usage, with the majority of young people who re-offended still using drugs. Most of the respondents identified the need for drug rehabilitation. When drug

dependence is identified whilst the young person is awaiting trial, he should be referred for inpatient treatment at that stage. There is a great shortage of facilities for inpatient treatment. This needs to be urgently addressed by creating more facilities for those who are unable to afford the high costs of rehabilitation in the private sector.

Gangsterism

Most young people from both groups suggested that alternative living arrangements should be made for young people who are involved in gangsterism. Active gang membership appears to be a significant factor in re-offending. The activities of these gangs are strongly related to the use of drugs, as well as to involvement in criminal activities. Gangs provide an alternative source of income and resources through their criminal activities. They also provide a sense of belonging and supportive relationships for young people. Programmes such as "Big Brother Big Sister" provide an opportunity for young people to find positive role models within the community as an alternative to gang membership. It is necessary to expand this programme within communities to expose young males to positive male role models. All too often, the so-called male role models within communities are gangsters who impress young people with their life-style and give them a distorted sense of belonging.

Ongoing support and counseling

Both groups noted that ongoing support and counseling should be offered to young people upon release into the community. It is obvious that only the recidivist group reported the need for family support, as the lack of this appears to be a definite contributing factor to their re-offending. Therefore, it appears to be essential, in order to reduce re-offending, to include parents and caregivers in the reintegration programme. This should start when the

young person is admitted to the Youth Centre.

5.5.12 Respondents' Future Plans

During the study it became apparent that the reintegrated group had aspirations and goals. They prioritised furthering their education and finding suitable employment. In their own words: *"To become computer literate"; "To finish school"; "Have my own family"; "Start my own entrepreneur business"; "To play in 2010 World Cup"; "I want to work at Bosasa"; "To be permanently employed"*.

The recidivist group indicated that they too have future plans. They prioritised employment, stating *"I would like to get a permanent job"; "I want to start my own business, a fruit stall, and become a broker"; "Become a qualified upholsterer"; "I want to become a good rugby player in the community, find myself a decent job, get married and have a nice house"*.

Family life also appear to be important to them, with statements such as; *"I want to find myself a good girlfriend"; "I want to get married and have my own children"*.

The above is an indication that all young people have their own dreams and aspirations and, with the right support and motivation, they might be able to achieve their dreams.

5.6 THE VIEWS OF PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

The views of parents/caregivers are important because they play, or should play a crucial role in the reintegration process of young offenders. Consequently, all parents/caregivers of young people involved in the study were interviewed.

5.6.1 Family Background Of Parents/Caregivers

5.6.1.1 Parents/Caregivers With Whom The Young People Reside

The table below reflects, the family background of the two groups of respondents, showing whether they live with their biological parents, their foster parents, extended families or their caregivers.

Table 16

	Parents/Caregivers of Reintegrated Young People		Parents/Caregivers of Re-offender Young People	
	Number	%	Number	%
Biological parents	8	80%	5	50%
Foster parents	1	10%	0	0%
Caregivers	1	10%	1	10%
Extended family	0	0%	4	40%
Total	10	100%	10	100%

The above table indicates that the majority of the reintegrated youth reside with their immediate family. This clearly shows the comparison between successfully reintegrated youth and youth that have re-offended, and how this is associated with their respective support systems. The reader will note that there is a difference between the information given by parents of the recidivist group and those of their children as recorded in Table 1.

The interviews were conducted with the biological parents or caregivers with whom these young people are supposed to stay. However, some young people noted that they preferred to stay with friends for various reasons, mostly because of poor relationships amongst family members. As a result, they reported staying at another place of residence. Consequently, the response of the young person and the parent/caregiver varies. This, in itself, may be indicative of poor family relationships.

Healthy family relationships appear to be a significant factor in preventing crime, as it is evident from the findings that 80% of the young people who reintegrated successfully into society, in fact stayed with their biological families. One respondent stayed with his legal guardian and one stayed at a centre for the destitute to complete his schooling, but his parents were aware and party to these arrangements.

In contrast, the parents of the recidivist group reported that 50% of their children live with their biological mothers, another 40% live with their extended families, and only one respondent lived with a caregiver. According to the young people interviewed, however, 40% of them lived with their caregivers or friends and not as reported by the parents. Poor family relationships appear to be one of the most important factors that leave young people vulnerable to re-offend.

In view of these findings, it appears to be essential to extend services to the family, to assist parents to change their attitudes towards young people and to restore relationships within the family, in order to ensure successful reintegration of their children. In other words, families, like their children, need to receive the appropriate services while the young person is at the facility, as well as when he leaves this facility. Both parties need to be supported to put into practice what they intend to achieve and what they have learnt at the Youth Centre.

5.6.1.2 Marital Status Of Parents/Caregivers

Table 17

Marital Status	Parents/Caregivers of reintegrated respondents		Parents/Caregivers of re-offender respondents	
	Number	%	Number	%
Married	5	50%	5	50%
Single parents	3	30%	4	40%
Widow	1	10%	1	10%
Living together	1	10%	0	0%
Total	10	100%	10	100%

The above table does not really show any difference between the two groups of respondents with regard to the marital status of respondents. The significance of this table, though, is that it proved what had been described in the literature review with regard to the background of the young people studied herein. A significant number, 30% and 40% respectively, came from single parent families or from homes where the father figure was “absent”. Another variable is that, although 50% of the parents of children who re-offended indicated that they were married, only one of these respondents was in fact married to the biological father of her child, and all the other young people described poor relationships with their stepfathers.

Sheridan J (2006) reported on his website www.marriagedoneright.com that in a recent study done by the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, involving over 12,000 people in America, it is stated that: “Men’s involvement with their family is of vital importance. Families where the father is absent make up 63% of all youth suicide; 71% of all high school drop-outs; 75% of all adolescent substance abuse patients; 70% of juveniles in state-operated institutions; 85% of children exhibiting behaviour disorder; and 90% of all homeless and runaway children.” Given these findings, it is almost inevitable

that 90% of young people who re-offended find themselves in 'absent father' or dysfunctional family situations.

The fact that a large number of the recidivist group come from family units where the father figure is missing furthermore indicates that young people in trouble with the law need mentoring. Programmes such as "Big Brother Big Sister" provide an opportunity for young people to find positive role models within the community. It is necessary to expand this programme within communities to expose young males to positive male role models. All too often, the so-called male role models within communities are gangsters who impress young people with their life-style and give them a distorted sense of belonging.

5.6.1.3 Parents'/Caregivers' Relationships With Young People

Table 18

	Parents/Caregivers of reintegrated respondents			Parents/Caregivers of re-offender respondents		
	Relationships	No	%	Relationships	No	%
Biological parents	Good	8	80%	Good	1	10%
Mother & stepfather	None	0	0%	Poor	4	30%
Extended family	None	0	0%	Good	4	20%
Foster parents	Good	1	10%	None	0	0%
Caregivers	Good	1	10%	Poor	1	10%
Total		10	100%		10	100%

Parents or caregivers of the group that reintegrated successfully described their relationships as good, with effective communication between them and their offspring. In contrast with this, only half (50%) of the parents of the recidivist group described their relationships as good, while the other half noted tense relationships between them and their children with many conflicts

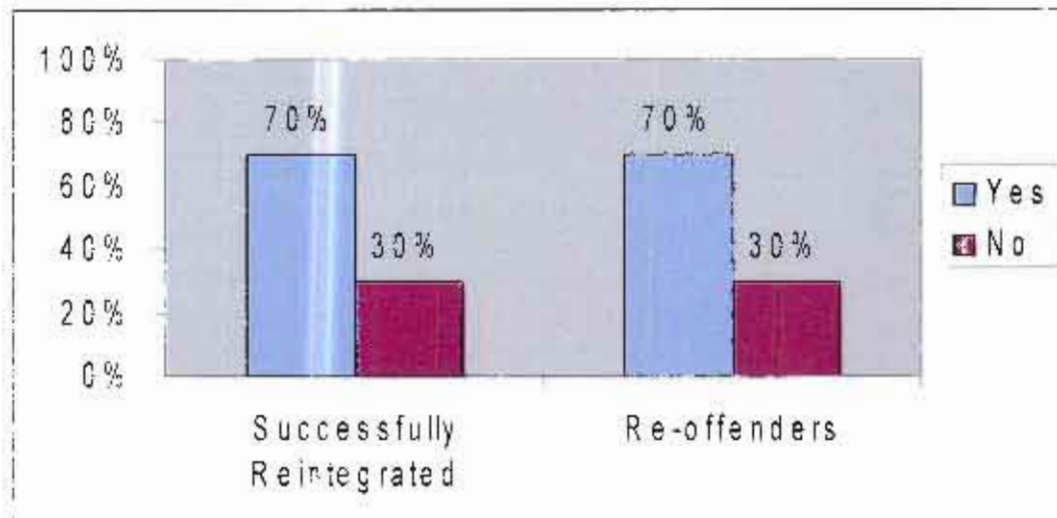
on a daily basis. Black, in McAllister et al., (1992: 111) noted that young people's problems are very much contingent upon their reintegration into the family.

Relationships may already have been strained before admission to the Youth Centre, and often the youth returns to his family after receiving therapy or counselling in the Centre simply because he has nowhere else to go. This is in line with the findings in this study, where most young people and their families indicated that they had experienced relationship problems before, during and after release from the Youth Centre. Generally, therefore, work with the families of young people should be an integral part of the reintegration process.

Jenson & Whittaker (in Schwartz & AuClaire, 1995: 66) remind us how essential it is that families also receive counselling during the placement of young people in order for successful reintegration to occur. They argue that, in the past, too much emphasis was placed on providing services to individuals, thereby neglecting the family. As far as places of safety are concerned, this is indeed an area that needs to be strengthened. Parental involvement during the placement of young people requires a shift in focus, from child-centered to family-centered services, meaning that the entire family becomes the unit of attention.

5.6.1.4 Parents'/Caregivers' Working History During The Formative Years Of Their Children

Figure 17



The above graph seems to indicate that there is no difference between the two groups when taking into account that their parents were working while they were growing up. However, the difference between the two groups did emerge when looking at who actually took care of these children while their parents were working. Nevertheless, it is evident from the findings that in both groups there might have been a lack of parental supervision and a failure to provide the child with the kind of discipline required in order to prevent anti-social behaviour. All the young people who participated in the study had dropped out of school before having been admitted to the Youth Centre.

This concurs with Cortes and Gatti (in Lewis 1981: 265), who found that "delinquents received less disciplinary control, supervision and less emotional support from their parents". Similarly, Steyn (2005: 9) identifies inconsistent parental discipline and poor supervision of young people's activities as

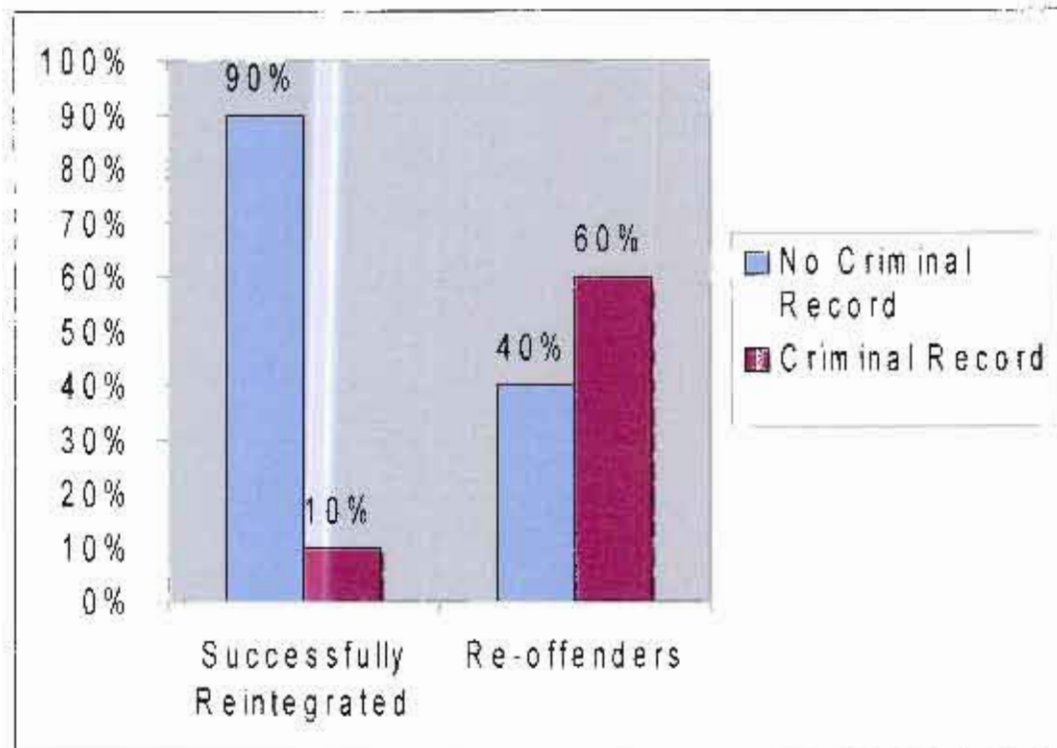
causes of negative behaviour in early childhood. Not only is there a need for mentorship of young people in trouble with the law, but there also appears to be a need for mentorship of troubled family units.

5.6.1.5 Parents'/Caregivers' Types Of Employment

The types of employment of the respondents have already been analysed in Table 2 (see page 75). In this section, I will discuss how their jobs affected their parenting role. Most of the respondents (60%) of both groups indicated that they could not spend enough time with their children, which resulted in a lack of supervision. They acknowledged that they were spending most of their time and energy on surviving financially, although they were, nonetheless, concerned about the well-being of their children. In contrast, a significant proportion (40%) claimed that it did not affect their parental role, as extended family members assisted to supervise and see to the needs of their children in their absence.

5.6.1.6 Criminal Records Of Respondents' Family Members

Figure 18



The criminal records of the family members of respondents have already been discussed during the interviews with the youth, but the information received from parents shows a significant difference and it is thus important to analyse it again. The difference in information might be attributed to the fact that the young people are not necessarily informed about the criminal records of their family members. The graph indicates that only one respondent among the parents whose children reintegrated well, has a criminal record. In contrast with this, a high proportion (60%) of the parents/caregivers of the recidivist group indicated that they or a member of their immediate family have a criminal record.

Many studies seeking explanations for the criminal or anti-social behaviour of young people attribute this to alcoholic or "downright criminal parents" (West & Farrington, as cited in Lewis, 1981: 266). The above authors highlighted the fact that "since delinquent children were viewed as 'different', so their parents, too, must be viewed as different" (Lewis, 1981: 267). This appears to be in line with the findings of this study. This once again emphasises my point that the family should be an integral part of the rehabilitation programme and that it cannot be excluded from its services, which seriously questions the efficiency of services currently provided at places of safety. These are focussed mainly on the primary client, and do not function holistically.

5.6.1.7 Alcohol Or Drug Abuse Among Parents/Caregivers

With regard to the effect of alcohol abuse on their parenting role, both groups of caregivers indicated that it does not affect their role at all. In terms of the parents of young people who reintegrated well, a high percentage (80%) reported that they maintained sober habits, while 20% said that they used alcohol in moderation. In contrast, it is alarming that 90% of the parents of the recidivist group appear to be heavy drinkers, as indicated by themselves as well as by their children. Nonetheless, these parents claimed that their alcohol abuse did not affect their role as parents. This could be due to ignorance or just because they are not prepared to take responsibility for what happened to their children. Implications for successful family re-integration are that it is necessary to have intervention on alcohol and drug abuse within family units.

It is common knowledge that parental behaviour and attitude influence the behaviour of children. Sayings such as "like father, like son" and the "apple falls not far from the tree" emphasise the importance of the example that parents set for their children. In line with the findings of this study, Steyn (2005: 9) identifies anti-social parents and substance abuse as particularly strong predictors of anti-social behaviour among their children. This is

ultimately an indication that very little, if any success will be achieved if parents/caregivers are excluded from rehabilitation services.

5.6.1.8 Financial Status Of Parents/Caregivers

Table 19

	Parents/Caregivers of reintegrated respondents		Parents/Caregivers of Re-offenders	
	No	%	No	%
Stable income	8	80%	7	70%
Unstable income	1	10%	1	10%
No income	1	10%	2	20%
Total	10	100%	10	100%

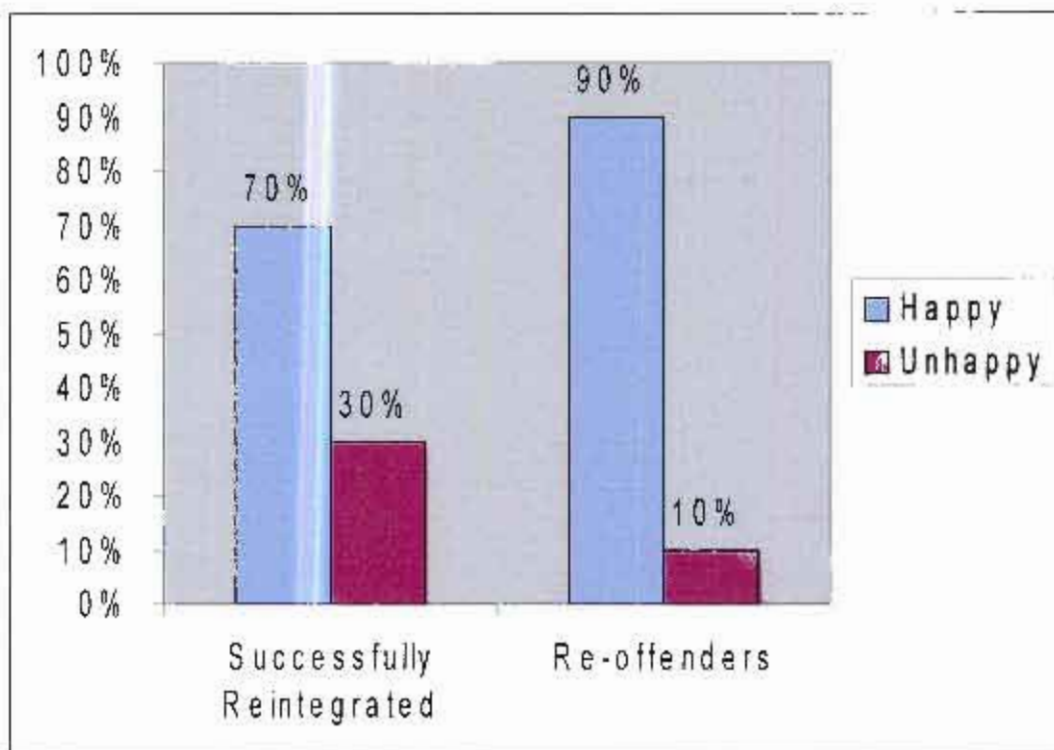
A significant number (80%), of the group of parents/caregivers whose children reintegrated well, indicated that they have a stable income, while 10% are supported by the Centre for the Destitute and 10% claimed not to earn any income. With regard to the parents of the recidivist group, 70% reported that they had a stable income, while 20% said that they were receiving no income and 10% were receiving an unstable income. Both sets of parents reported, however, that their money is not sufficient to meet the basic needs of their family. From this it is possible to speculate that poverty could have been a factor contributing to the involvement of young people in criminal activities. How the money is spent and how parents prioritised spending appears to be an important factor here. Money management and/or budgeting skills training might thus be an area that needs attention.

As discussed in the review of the literature, it seems to be easy to proclaim that parents' "primary" position is one of caregivers to their children. However, it is more difficult to enable or expect them to fulfill this obligation if they

5.6.2 Social Circumstances Of Parents/Caregivers

5.6.2.1 The Views Of Parents/Caregivers With Regard To The Area In Which They Stay

Figure 19



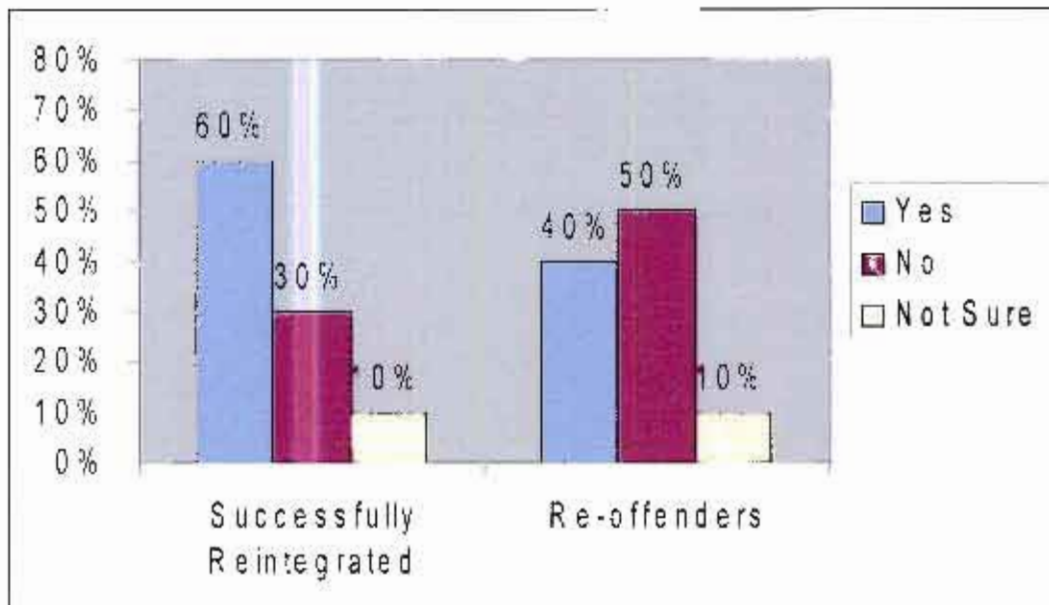
As reflected in the graph, a high proportion of the respondents, 70% and 90% respectively, reported that they were happy where they were staying. The remaining 30% of the parents of children who had been reintegrated and only 10% of the parents of children who had re-offended reported not to be satisfied with the area. They cited reasons such as: *"It is not a decent home"*; *"The house is too small"*; *"Too much crime in this area"*; and *"The availability of drugs and drug abuse in the area is a concern"*.

Although the researcher anticipated that more of the respondents would have been unhappy with their neighbourhood, only a relatively small percentage raised their concerns in this regard. However, their concerns are relevant and in line with what Fine (1996: 8) reported, which is that most young people who are at risk come from communities that are struggling with the same challenges, i.e. high crime rates, availability of drugs, unacceptable levels of violence, gang activity, high unemployment and poverty. This also coincides with the information on the profiles and family backgrounds of young people, which had been taken mainly from the personal files of these young people.

The fact that such a high proportion of respondents claimed that they were in fact happy with their neighbourhood may be because they accept that they cannot change it or because they never had it 'better'. However, from personal experience, the researcher is aware that the characteristics of the neighbourhood are a strong factor contributing to young people becoming involved in crime or continuing to re-offend. In this study it was also reported by one of the parents of the reintegrated group that, as a crime prevention method, parents could have arranged for their children to stay somewhere else to prevent them from re-offending. This is an indication that these parents had realised the negative effects that the environment might have on their children, which is an issue that is described in the next section.

5.6.2.2 Views Of Parents/Caregivers With Regard To The Effect Of The Neighbourhood On The Child's Behaviour

Figure 20



It is clear from the above figure that a high proportion (60%) of the parents of the young people who re-integrated well expressed the belief that the neighbourhood has a definite effect on children's criminal behaviour. In contrast with this, only 20% of the parents of the recidivist group placed the blame on the neighbourhood. Both groups cited the following reasons: "Gangsters control our neighbourhood"; "Our children join the gangs for protection"; "Negative peer pressure"; "Too many 'shebeens and merchants' " (drug lords) and "Most of the children in this neighbourhood use drugs".

Forty percent of the reintegrated group's parents and half of the recidivist group's parents indicated that the neighbourhood has no effect on their children's criminal behaviour, or that they were not sure of the effect. As explained in their own words: "It is very quiet here"; "He associates with

friends from other neighbourhoods”; *“He left home and went to stay with friends*”; *“I don’t see anything wrong with this area”* and *“My other children grew up here and they did not become involved in crime”*. These responses may be as a result of denial or just because they don’t know better.

These findings reveal that most of the young people in this study came from very dysfunctional communities. This puts them at serious risk and makes them vulnerable to re-offend despite all their positive resolutions. In order to stay crime-free, they definitely need the support of parents/caregivers or mentors, who can help them to overcome these obstacles. If young people are allowed to return to their families and communities without structured aftercare or reintegration programmes, the possibility that they will return to crime is almost guaranteed.

5.6.2.3 Parents’/Caregivers’ Participation In Community Activities

Table 20

	Parents/Caregivers of reintegrated respondents		Parents/Caregivers of re-offender respondents	
	No.	%	No.	%
Community worker	1	10%	0	0
Drug awareness programme at church	1	10%	0	0
Church Activities	6	60%	1	10%
No Activities	2	20%	5	50%
Muslim Society	0	0	1	10%
Sports Club	0	0	2	20%
Member of the Street Committee	0	0	1	10%
Total	10	100%	10	100%

A high percentage of the parents (80%) of the group that reintegrated successfully participate in community activities, with most of them referring to

church activities. The 20% that responded negatively, reported that they were too busy, or that they suffered from ill health, or that they preferred to spend time with their family. In contrast with this, half of the parents of the recidivist group reported that they did not participate in any community activities, while only 20% of them participated in religious activities. Another 20% stated that they preferred sport activities and one respondent was a member of the street committee. The significance of this is that most of the parents of those young people who had successfully reintegrated have a support system in the form of the church or other community-related activities, whereas the other group does not appear to have a support system within the community.

The fact that half of the parents of the recidivist group do not participate in any community activities furthermore shows a sense of social isolation. In order for effective re-integration to take place, these parents need to be encouraged to participate in community activities.

5.6.2.4 Support Structures Of Parents/Caregivers

Table 21

Support Structures	Type of Support	Parents/Caregivers of reintegrated respondents		Parents/Caregivers of re-offenders	
		No	%	No	%
Family members	Financial and emotional	5	50%	5	50%
Friends	Financially and emotional	2	20%	5	50%
Neighbours	Food or financial support	1	10%	3	30%
Religious Organisations	Mosque and church assist with food parcels and emotional support	4	40%	3	30%
Community Organisations	Street Committee- emotional support	4	40%	1	10%
Social Worker	Emotional support	0	0%	1	10%

It is evident from the above table, that all the participants have a range of support structures, ranging from family members and friends to street committees. The table also shows that most respondents noted that they were receiving financial as well as emotional support. Generally, there appears to be a sense of camaraderie amongst poorer communities. This is a protective factor, which can be use to facilitate the successful reintegration of young people. However, communities need support and guidance as well as

the assistance of government to reintroduce the real spirit of 'ubuntu', (community sentiment).

It is a concern that only one respondent mentioned the support of a social worker, which may be indicative of how the welfare structure has failed these young people. Although the support of family members and the community is vital, young people also indicated that it is, in fact, relationship problems within the family and drug abuse, for both of which they need professional help, that led to them re-offending. This clearly needs to be improved. Parents/Caregivers specifically indicated that ongoing counselling and support are some of the factors that may prevent them from re-offending.

More active family re-integration work needs to be done with these families. As soon as a young person is referred to a place of safety, reconstruction services should start or continue with the family. Officially and theoretically, this is the function of the external social worker. However, in practice, this is not happening, and there appear to be no services to families of young people awaiting trial. Although this has been proved by the findings in this study, the researcher realises that the sample of this study might be too small to allow one to make such generalisations. It should nonetheless be mentioned that the researcher is aware from personal experience that reconstruction services are very low on the priority list of field social workers.

Already in 1996, as discussed in the literature review in Chapter 2, the Inter-Ministerial-Committee on Young People at Risk had identified the lack of communication between the facility social worker and the community social workers, who should be rendering reconstruction services to the families. It is therefore important that places of safety should facilitate the process of linking up families to appropriate services within the communities. However, it needs to be considered that awaiting trial youth might not have received any support

or rehabilitative services before their admission to places of safety, which suggests that there might not be an external social worker involved. The internal social worker working with the young person is in an ideal position to facilitate the family re-integration process by linking the various role-players. As soon as a young person is admitted to the facility, their family should be linked up with resources within the community to strengthen and support the family. Participation here should be of an active nature in order to drive the process and to empower families.

5.6.3 Emotional Status

5.6.3.1 The Feelings Of Parents/Caregivers About Their Children

All of the parents of the young people who reintegrated successfully, indicated that they loved their children and that they were generally pleased with the improvements they had observed. Forty percent of the group that re-offended shared the same feeling. However, a significant number (60%) noted that they felt disappointed in their children and that they found it difficult to express their love towards them. This seems to be one of the factors that led to non-visitation or the absence of support while the child was in detention. These reactions then lead to the young person to experiencing feelings of rejection, which results in a vicious cycle. This observation echoes a study done by Offord (as cited in Lewis, 1981: 266) of factors associated with delinquency. He emphasized that, "compassion has not characterised the studies or descriptions of family members of delinquents".

5.6.3.2 Parents/Caregivers Views On Who Should Support Their Children After Release

Table 22

	Parents/Caregivers of reintegrated respondents		Parents/Caregivers of re-offender respondents	
	No	%	No	%
Family	1	10%	4	40%
The Youth Centre	8	80%	4	40%
The Community	0	0	1	10%
Department of Social Services	1	10%	1	10%
Total	10	100%	10	100%

A significant number (80% and 40% respectively) indicated that they expected the Youth Centre to support their children emotionally after their release. It is important to note that the core function of the Youth Centre or of places of safety is to detain young people and to render holistic services to young people while in detention. The role of the Youth Centre and places of safety needs to be revisited in order to make provision for a more holistic approach and specifically, to provide more effective aftercare services to young people once they have been released from detention.

It is surprising to note that only one respondent from each group expected support from the Department of Social Services. This might be because the other respondents were not aware of any services or support that could be received from the Department of Social Services, or because they were not satisfied with the services received from them.

5.6.3.3 Parents'/Caregivers' Views On The Challenges Facing Their Children

Table 23

Challenges	Parents/Caregivers of reintegrated respondents		Parents/Caregivers of re-offender respondents	
	Number	%	Number	%
Finding employment	8	80%	7	70%
Need for ongoing counselling	7	70%	5	50%
To be accepted by the community	1	10%	0	0%
Drug addiction	6	60%	7	70%
Getting out of gangsterism	4	40%	5	50%
Completing schooling	2	20%	0	0%

It is clear from the above table that young people are faced with extremely difficult challenges. Firstly, a high percentage of parents/caregivers, 80% and 70% respectively indicated that young people need employment opportunities. Secondly, 70% and 50% respectively agreed that ongoing counselling might assist young people to overcome the challenges they face.

Thirdly, it appears that drug rehabilitation is a concern for 60% and 70% of the respondents respectively, while gangsterism is a concern of 40% and 60% respectively. Only two respondents indicated that it would be a challenge for the children to complete their schooling. The two major challenges that emerged from this table are firstly, obtaining gainful employment and secondly overcoming drug addiction. The majority of the parents of the

reintegrated group indicated that the young people needed to receive counselling, indicating some insight into their children's behaviour. The parents of the other group also saw this as important, with 50% identifying it as a need.

It seems from the above that the parents are generally aware of the difficult challenges facing their children and that they have identified the need for professional help to assist their children to overcome their obstacles.

5.6.3.4 Parents'/Caregivers' Views On What They Could Or Should Have Contributed To Prevent Their Child From Offending Or Re-Offending

The parents of the group that reintegrated successfully reported the following: *"I placed him at Bosasa for his own safety"; "I worked hard to make sure that he doesn't have to steal"; "I should have enrolled him in a model C school in Cape Town;" "I should have involved him in religious activities"; and "I should have given him more attention".*

The parents of the recidivist group commented as follows: *"I should have been more strict and kept him off the streets"; "I could have assisted him to find employment"; "I could have assisted him to address his drug addiction"; and "If I was employed he would have been out of trouble".*

It is evident from the findings that most parents do have some insight into their role to ensure the successful reintegration of their children. Only one respondent felt that she did what she could, the others all said that they could have done more. Their responses are also an indication that they are aware of the challenges faced by these young people.

5.6.4 The Role Of Horizon Youth Centre

5.6.4.1 Parents/Caregivers Views About The Services At Horizon Youth Centre

All parents of the group that reintegrated well rated the services at the Youth Centre as excellent. They were satisfied and observed a difference with regard to the attitude and behaviour of their children after receiving counselling at the Centre. In their own words, *“Staff were always prepared to listen”*; *“One of our family members died and the staff accompanied my son to the funeral”*; *“I could observe that this child changed his attitude when he was released”*; *“Today my child is a role model to other young people”*; and *“It changed his life completely”*.

Only one parent of a young person who reintegrated noted that travelling was a bit difficult. A high proportion of the parents (60%) of the recidivist group remarked that they could not comment on this issue, as they had never visited the young person at the Centre. Although they did not mention it explicitly, it might be that they felt that their children had not really changed or benefited from the services. Nonetheless, their responses are an indication of the support and interest (or rather, the lack thereof) shown by the parents of the recidivist group. Given the challenges that these young people have to face and the low level of support that they received, it is not difficult to understand why they recidivated. This, once again, emphasised the importance of including family members or caregivers in the reintegration process.

5.6.4.2 Parents'/Caregivers' Views With Regard To The Skills And Knowledge Gained By The Young People At The Youth Centre

All respondents responded positively to this question, and explained that the young people had gained the following skills: carpentry, upholstery, welding, leadership and life skills. It is significant that most of the parents (80%) of the young people who were successfully reintegrated, could mention specific skills that their children had acquired. In contrast with this, only one parent of the recidivist group noted that she saw his certificates of achievements. The other 90% could not really explain what type of skills their children had acquired. This is a clear indication of the low level of interest shown by the parents/caregivers of the recidivist group.

5.6.4.3 Parents'/Caregivers' Opinions With Regard To Attitude Changes Of Young People

All the parents of the group that was reintegrated successfully, as well as 20% of the other group, responded positively to this question. They cited the following changes: *"He was more disciplined"*; *"A more positive attitude"*; *"His manners changed"*; *"He learned to listen to me"*; *"Doesn't mix with gangsters anymore"*; *"Very matured"*; *"He has changed completely for the better"*; *"He doesn't sleep out anymore"*; and *"He is obedient"*.

In comparison with this, 80% of the parents of the recidivist group indicated that they could not really observe any difference. This may be because the young people in this group did not have the opportunity and the support to put into practice what they had learnt. Change is something that happens from within and one needs ongoing motivation and encouragement to sustain the changes that one has made. It is difficult to maintain such changes without the support of significant others. Spencer and Jones-Walker (2004: 91) highlight the fact that young people who are transitioning back to their

communities after detention need specific support to successfully re-integrate into society. The findings of this study revealed that very little assistance is provided during the re-entry process.

5.6.4.4 Parents'/Caregivers' Views With Regard To Whether The Spiritual Needs Of Young People Have Been Considered

All parents or caregivers of the young people who reintegrated well, as well as 60% of the other group, answered this question positively. When asked how it had specifically affected their children, they gave the following explanations: *"...Made him a better person"; "He chose religion above gangsterism"; "He knows about the goodness of God"; "His faith increased"; "He learned how to pray"; "He attends church services now with me"; "He is singing in the church choir now"; "He cares about his neighbours"*. The other 40% indicated that they were not sure.

Nonetheless, the explanations given by the parents do paint a somewhat idealistic picture of how religion can assist young people to change their mindsets, and as such appears to be an important tool in reducing their involvement in crime. This emphasised the significant role that religion could play in the lives of young offenders.

5.6.4.5 Involvement Of Parents/Caregivers In Counselling Sessions At Horizon Youth Centre

All the parents/caregivers in both groups mentioned having had telephonic conversations with social workers or child and youth care workers at the Centre. However, less than a third (30%) of the group that reintegrated successfully and only 10% (i.e. one respondent) of the parents/caregivers of the recidivist group recalled being formally involved in counselling sessions at the Youth Centre. Those who were involved rated the experience as positive,

making comments such as: *"It made me realize that I am part of this process"; "It prepared me for the way forward"; "I came to realized how I failed this child"; and "I realized that I need to change"*.

These comments are an indication that it is very important to extend the services to family members or caregivers. After all, 70% and 90% respectively reported that they had not been involved in any counselling sessions at the Youth Centre. Research done by Quinton and Rutter (as cited in Golombok, 2000: 102) of children raised in institutions demonstrates that if a child's circumstances improve, the course of his life may also change for the better. When the recidivist group left the Centre, they either had no family to return to, or went back to the same dysfunctional family that they had previously left. These studies demonstrate that improvements in a child's family circumstances will enhance the progress that was made at institutional level. Conversely, it also confirms that young people who return to the same unchanged dysfunctional family, have very little hope of successful reintegration. As noted in the literature review, most of the young people in this study come from dysfunctional families and thus, if their families are not involved in counselling and other services, young people will be returning to the same dysfunctional families and the same challenging environment.

5.6.4.6 Participation Of Parents/Caregivers In Pre-Release Services At The Youth Centre

None of the parents could recall any structured pre-release groups or sessions. Most of them were surprised when their child was released unexpectedly. Some of them responded as follow: *"Only at court the magistrate enquired whether I will take responsibility for this child"; "I was surprised when the case was withdrawn"; and "He got bail and we paid the money"*. In a study done by Schwartz and AuClaire (1995: 66 - 68), they found that most young people who return to their communities without comprehensive aftercare and re-integration programmes, tend to revert to

their old patterns of criminal behaviour. This appears to be the case in this study too, where young people returned home without any structured reintegration and aftercare services. As a result, those without the necessary support system tend to return to their old habits.

5.6.4.7 Recommendations Of Parents/Caregivers With Regard To Support Services That The Youth Centre Should Offer To Facilitate Successful Reintegration

Parents/caregivers made the following specific recommendations:

- To conduct formal pre-release groups with parents and children;
- To provide ongoing counselling and support;
- To assist in getting young people back to school;
- To help young people to complete their skills training;
- To link the family up with social workers in the community;
- To assist with job hunting;
- For staff at the Youth Centre to address communities at community meetings to facilitate community involvement;
- To liaise with churches and other role players in the community; and
- To provide continued drug counselling.

The above recommendations were made by parents/caregiver of both groups, which proves that parents are keen to be part of the services at the Youth Centre and that they realise the importance of aftercare services in ensuring the successful reintegration of their children.

5.6.4.8 Experiences Of Parents/Caregivers With Regard To Visitation At The Centre

Parents showed a high degree of agreement in their responses to this question, i.e. that their experiences of visitation were always positive. Most

parents indicated that it was nice to see their children, but not nice to leave them behind. They also mentioned that they realized that the detention was in the best interests of their children and that they could observe the changes in their children. In their own words; *"It was good to see that he was well looked after"; "I always enjoyed visitation"; and "I realized that I am not the only parent that is going through this"*.

5.6.5 Support Services Required After Release

5.6.5.1 Parents'/Caregivers' Views Of The Factors That Led To Re-Offending Of Children

Only the parents of the recidivist group responded to this question, as it was not applicable to the other group. In their own words, parents cited the following factors as important: *"Peer pressure"; "Lack of supervision"; "Financial difficulties"; "Drug addiction"; and "The crime rate in the area/community"*.

The situation of our young people and their families and the factors that leave them vulnerable to crime appear to be similar to those presented in the findings of Rutter (cited in Steyn, 2005: 9). Rutter finds that involvement in deviant peer groups is one of the biggest contributors to anti-social behaviour, particularly during adolescence. He noted that the criteria for entry into such groups often include experimenting with illegal substances and criminal activities. He argued that in urban communities, poverty, broken homes and drugs can lead to the gang becoming a substitute home for youth at risk. The author highlights the fact that the lack of pro-social ties and commitment to deviant peer groups has repeatedly been associated with failure at school, which increases the likelihood of future unemployment and continued involvement in anti-social activities. This highlighted the importance of intensive transitional support, including housing and job placement,

counselling, drug treatment, availability of adult mentors and access to supportive social networks.

5.6.5.2 Parents'/Caregivers' Views Of The Factors That Prevent Young People Re-Offending

The parents of the group that reintegrated successfully responded as follows; *"He knows that his family loves him"*; *"He changed his attitude and his mindset"*; *"The support of his family"*; *"He found employment"*; *"He returned to school"*; and *"He left the gang and stopped using drugs"*. The support of the family, relationships within the family, employment and an internal change within young people are mentioned by most of the young people and their families as factors protecting them against re-offending. It is also evident that these are the factors missing in the lives of the recidivist group.

5.6.5.3 Changes Introduced By Caregivers To Support The Reintegration Of Their Children

The parents of the group that reintegrated successfully responded as follows: *"Nothing, we just accept him as part of the family"*; *"Spent more time with him, accompany him to a soccer match"*; *"Welcoming party, we made him feel special"*; *"We set clear rules and expectations"*; and *"We bought a television set to keep him at home"*. These parents really went out of their way to make their children feel special. This is an indication of their positive attitude towards their children.

In contrast, the parents of the other group reported that they had not done anything special to welcome their child back home; only one respondent recalled taking her child to Kentucky Fried Chicken to celebrate with him. The other 90% reported that they had not done anything special. This might be

because they were not prepared for the release of their children or it might be an indication of the uncaring mindset of this group of parents.

5.6.5.4 Support Services Within The Community That Assist Or Could Have Assisted With The Reintegration Process

Parents reported that they were aware of the following community organisations that could have assisted them with the reintegration process of their children: Sanca, community or church leaders, Nicro, Shawco, and the Street Committee. When they were asked whether any of them had received assistance, all parents responded negatively. Although a high percentage of the parents of the reintegrated group were involved in religious activities they did not received support from these structures. The data suggests that reintegration services are neglected and urgently needed. Spencer and Jones-Walker (2004: 90) suggest that effective programmes are those that include a holistic approach to intervening with young offenders, including not only young people but also their family and their community, to which they have to return (Spencer & Jones-Walker, 2004: 91).

CHAPTER SIX

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

6.1.1 Introduction

The reality of youth offending in South Africa poses a number of challenges for everyone involved in child and youth care. This is a huge challenge, as society is still not taking responsibility for their youth at risk and seems to believe that harsher sentencing options will solve the problems of re-offending.

The ultimate aim of this research was to identify and understand the protective factors that contribute to the successful reintegration of young people and the factors that leave them vulnerable and at risk of re-offending. The study set out to recommend what should be done to facilitate and ensure their successful reintegration. More specifically, it set out to ascertain the role that the Horizon Youth Centre is currently playing in reintegration and to make recommendations with regard to the role it should be playing to facilitate the reintegration of discharged young people. This may ultimately reduce the risk of re-offending.

The study revealed that reintegration is a process and that the involvement of parents and significant others is an essential factor in this process. An important finding is that the reintegration process can be a useful tool to prevent recidivism and, in the long term, to reduce the crime rate in this country. Secondly, the study has provided valuable information about the

family background of young people in conflict with the law. Much emphasis has been placed on the relationships and support structures within their families. It has identified the challenges experienced by young people and their families, which could have contributed to their involvement in criminal activities in the first place and which continue to put them at risk of re-offending. It has also provided valuable insight with regard to the experiences of the young people at Horizon Youth Centre, the support they have received from their families and significant others and what impact this has had on the reintegration process. Furthermore, it has provided insight into how young people have benefited from the services at the Youth Centre and what changes should be introduced to facilitate their successful reintegration.

The study has revealed that, instead of there being only one single factor that has contributed to recidivism, it is, instead, a combination of multiple factors that leave young people vulnerable to re-offending.

The results reported in this study are based on a relatively small sample of young people in conflict with the law. Nevertheless, there are a number of important conclusions and recommendations that do emerge from this study. It is envisaged that the recommendations will lead to more effective policies and intervention strategies with regard to services to young people at risk and their families.

6.1.2 The Respondents' Social, Economic And Family Background

6.1.2.1 Relationships Between Young People And Their Parents And/Or Caregivers

The study showed a strong link between positive relationships and a good support system at home and that the lack thereof leaves young people

vulnerable to re-offending. There tends to be general agreement with the concept that the family is central to the positive development of the young person and that positive relationships contribute to and/or maintain positive change in young people who have been discharged from places of safety.

Furthermore, it revealed that more active family reconstruction work needs to be done with these families. As soon as a young person is referred to a place of safety, reconstruction services should start or continue with the family. Officially and theoretically, this is the function of the external social worker. However, in practice, this is not happening, and there appears to be a lack of services to families of young people awaiting trial which impact negatively on the reintegration process.

6.1.2.2 Financial Status Of Family And/Or Caregivers

In terms of the financial status of parents and/or caregivers, the study revealed that most of these come from economically disadvantaged families. This is true of all the participants in the study. However, young people who reintegrated successfully indicating that their needs were prioritised, even though income levels were low. The study certainly confirmed that financial security appears to be an essential protective factor that prevented recidivism, and that the lack thereof leaves young people vulnerable to finding distorted and criminal ways to meet their basic needs. From this it is possible to speculate that poverty could have been a factor contributing to the involvement of young people in criminal activities.

6.1.2.3 Alcohol And Drug Abuse Of Parents And/Or Caregivers

There appears to be a strong relationship between alcohol and drug abuse by family members and the re-offending of young people. This may be directly linked to the fact that young people's needs are not prioritised, which results in their continued re-offending. Apart from that, it also contributed to the

breakdown in relationships with family members and to the breakdown of the support system at home. Implications for successful family re-integration are that it is necessary to have intervention on alcohol and drug abuse within family units. It can be concluded that very little, if any success will be achieved if parents/caregivers are excluded from rehabilitation services.

6.1.2.4 Criminal Records Of Family Members And/Or Caregivers

The study revealed a strong correlation between the criminal or anti-social behaviour of young people and the criminal involvements of their parents. In the group that re-offended it was found that they came from broken family homes and that they had to return to the same dysfunctional family after their release. The conclusions one can reach after considering all the responses of young people and their families are that young people who reintegrated well were indeed those who could return to a supportive family. This once again emphasises the point that the family should be an integral part of the rehabilitation programme.

6.1.3 Education And Training Of Young People

There appears to be a close relationship between early school 'drop-outs' and involvement in criminal activities. It was clear from the findings that the group that had successfully reintegrated had generally achieved a higher level of education than the recidivist group. The study indicates that most of the respondents had received some form of vocational skills training however, finding employment seems to be a challenge. Furthermore, it was found that those who are employed are doing something different from the skills they acquired at the Youth Centre. It would appear, therefore, that this is an area that needs strengthening in terms of teaching young people's skills, which will enable them to secure a job in the community.

6.1.4 Criminal Records Of Young People

It is evident that all young people who re-offended were generally involved in property crime and appears to be typically multiple offenders. Contrary to this the young people who successfully reintegrated were involved in fewer cases however, more violent crimes. From this it is possible to speculate that those involved in property crimes do so as a survival strategy. In conclusion it can also be linked to the fact that it appears to be more challenging to teach young people integrity than teaching young people anger management skills.

6.1.5 Reasons For Committing Crime

An important finding of this study was that the reasons for committing crime were mainly external factors, like peer pressure and drug addiction, rather than internal factors, such as personality disorders. This is an indication that change is possible, depending on the intervention and the support structures available to young people.

6.1.6 Involvement In Gangsterism

Active gang membership appears to be a significant factor in re-offending. The majority of the recidivists were members of gangs and had returned to gang related activities on their release. The activities of these gangs are strongly related to the use of drugs, as well as to involvement in criminal activities. Consequently, it is significant that drug abuse was cited as a key factor in recidivism. Gangs also provide an alternative source of income and resources through their criminal activities. They provide supportive relationships for young people, while at the same time condoning criminal activity.

6.1.7 Use Of Drugs Or Alcohol By Young People

There appears to be a strong correlation between drug or substance usage and re-offending. Young people either resort to crime in order to obtain substances or commit crime whilst under the influence of substances. Those young people who re-offended have continued using substances after their release from the Youth Centre. It is evident that this group tended to use 'harder' drugs, while the group that reintegrated was more inclined to use less 'damaging' substances, such as alcohol and marijuana. Therefore, it appears to be more difficult for the group that uses 'harder' and more addictive substances to stop this habit.

6.1.8 Support Received During Detention

What emerged repeatedly is that the group who re-offended had received very little support, if any, from their family members or caregivers. Therefore, it can be concluded that parental involvement and support are crucial to ensure successful reintegration.

6.1.9 Pre-Release Services At Horizon Youth Centre

The findings highlighted the need to prepare awaiting trial youth for their release. Most of the parents indicated that they had never been part of any pre-release sessions.

The core function of the Centre is that of containing young people awaiting trial within a restrictive, but empowering environment. Due to the nature of the movement of young people within the juvenile justice system, the release date of the young person is often not planned. This has resulted in young people being released without prior notification or cases being withdrawn, which complicated the rendering of pre-release services. Therefore, it seems to be imperative that places of safety should work out creative ways of

preparing young people for their release, starting from the day they enter the facilities.

6.1.10 Interaction Of Respondents With Probation Officers

Based on the responses recorded in this study, it is evident that probation officers have little or no contact with young people awaiting trial at places of safety. In turn, this can result in sentencing without knowing the true circumstances of the case, which can lead to inappropriate sentencing. This can contribute to re-offending, as opposed to being linked with appropriate therapeutic programmes.

6.1.11 Life Since Release From Horizon Youth Centre

6.1.11.1 Activities Upon Release

It is significant that most of the recidivist group tended to make immediate contact with their peers, with many becoming involved in crime; for some, this happened within one week of their release from the Youth Centre. This indicates that the peer group has a strong influence on deviant behaviour. It appears that young people, who did not change their socialisation and behavioural patterns, were most at risk of re-offending.

Although some of the re-integrated young people had ties to gangs, they apparently sought to avoid this contact on their release. Family support seems to play an important role here. Young people who were successfully re-integrated had received a high level of support from family and significant others, which seems to have prevented their return to gangsterism.

6.1.11.2 Community Involvement

There appears to be a 'gap' between the institutions and the community. The conditions from which the children come are in most cases not conducive to their positive reintegration. Therefore, in order to re-integrate young offenders into the community, there needs to be active linking of young people with structures within the community. Community organisations can also act as support structures for young people when good family support structures do not exist.

6.1.11.3 Challenges Experienced By Respondents Upon Release

The most common problems include the lack of a stable income, drug addiction, and poor relationship. It appears that those young people who were not gainfully employed and had a high level of contact with peers who were also involved with deviant behaviour had a high level of recidivism.

6.1.12 Support Network And Adjustment In The Community

It is clear from the findings of this study that the role of the community is vital in ensuring the successful reintegration of young offenders. However, it is disappointing that none of the respondents indicated support from the community, which would include neighbours, religious leaders, schools or community leaders. Effective reintegration has been described throughout the study as an effective tool in reducing crime. As such, it cannot be the responsibility of the Youth Centre or the family only. Young people come from communities that should assist in the reintegration process, as young people eventually have to return to their communities. Therefore, in order to re-integrate young offenders into the community, there needs to be active linking of young people with structures within the community.

6.1.13 Young People's Work History Since Their Release

The study revealed that most young people who reintegrated successfully confirmed that they had managed to find a job. In contrast to this, half of the recidivist group reported that they had experienced challenges in obtaining work. Significant is that most of the respondents of both groups saw keeping employment as their biggest challenge. Therefore it is important that young people are adequately prepared for job-seeking as well as life-skills that would assist in functioning within the work environment and in retaining employment.

6.1.14 Respondents' Views Regarding What Should Be Done To Prevent Re-Offending

It was found that most respondents indicated that they needed assistance in finding employment. Employment appears to play a crucial role in enabling young people to meet their basic needs. Most of them admitted that they committed crime either to maintain their drug habits, or while they were under the influence of drugs. Therefore the need for drug rehabilitation appears to be essential in order to ensure successful reintegration.

Significant is that both groups noted ongoing support and counseling upon their release into the community. It is obvious that only the recidivist group reported that they needed more family support, as the lack of this appears to have been a definite contributing factor in their re-offending. Therefore, it appears to be essential, in order to reduce re-offending, to include parents and caregivers in the reintegration programme.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research findings it is recommended that the following key aspects be considered to facilitate the reintegration of detained youth in conflict with the law into their families and communities.

6.2.1 Family Reconstruction Services

- The family should be approached immediately after the young person has been admitted in order to begin the process of family re-unification. If there is no case worker in the community, the social worker at the facility should facilitate the process, whilst at the same time linking the family to appropriate support mechanisms within the community.
- A comprehensive assessment process is followed on admission to the Youth Centre but this focuses on the child. Parents and/or significant others should be involved in the process from the beginning to ensure that the family unit as a whole is involved, which will maximize the possibility of successful re-integration.

6.2.2 Reintegration And Aftercare Services

- Reintegration programmes should build on the foundation laid at places of safety and should start as soon as a young person is admitted to the facility, and continue after their release.
- It is crucial that families, which do not have the necessary resources, are assisted to obtain these before the young person is placed back into their care. The internal social worker working with the young person is in an ideal position to facilitate the family re-integration process by linking the various role-players.

- Programmes such as “Big Brother Big Sister” provide an ideal opportunity for young people to find positive role models within the community. This programme should be expanded to expose young males to positive male role models.

- At present restorative justice is underutilised in the juvenile justice sector. Restorative justice should be applied at an early stage in the process, with family group conferencing ensuring that the young person takes responsibility for his or her actions. This should be done in the controlled environment of the residential facility and should be facilitated by the internal social worker.

- Placement back into the community should only occur in cases where a team decision has been taken together with the family and the court as to the placement. Too often young people are placed back into the community before the necessary preparatory work has been done to ensure a successful placement.

- In the case of young people whose family situation is not conducive, there is a need for residential aftercare or half-way houses and to link up young people with existing facilities.

6.2.3 The Role Of Horizon Youth Centre

- The role of Horizon Youth Centre and places of safety should be revisited in order to make provision for a more holistic approach and specifically, to provide more effective aftercare services to young people once they have been released from detention

- Places of safety should prepare young people for their release, starting from the day they enter the facilities. Formal pre-release groups should be introduced.
- The communication lines between the institution social worker and his/her colleagues in the community should be strengthened.
- The Individual Development Plan that was developed and implemented needs to be reviewed upon release from the facility to assist in determining the further developmental needs. If this is implemented, the young person could be referred appropriately.
- It is strongly recommended that the Youth Centre starts its own mentorship programme. As they exist in all communities, religious organisations could play a valuable role in identifying volunteers to be trained for this purpose. This will encourage community involvement and may change the perception of the communities about young people in conflict with the law.
- The internal social worker should link young people with existing reintegration programmes within the communities.
- Young people should learn practical skills as well as generic work skills to prepare them adequately for employment upon release. The current skills training should be combined with work preparation to increase the young person's employability.
- Formal ties should be made between the Youth Centre and the Department of Labour to link young people with the facilities offered by the latter. There is a definite need for linking skills obtained within the Youth Centre to further training opportunities outside of the Centre. The Department of Labour has the resources to do this, and to find

learnerships that will enable young people to more easily obtain gainful employment and practical experience in the world of work. This should also be made a condition of release, which emphasises that more integrated services need to be created between the Youth Centre, the Department of Justice and the Probation Services.

6.2.4 Drug Abuse

- When drug dependence is identified whilst the young person is awaiting trial, he should be referred for inpatient treatment, which includes detoxification and intensive therapy.
- There is at present a great shortage of facilities for inpatient treatment for drug abuse for young people in the public sector in the Western Cape. This needs to be urgently addressed by creating more facilities for those who are unable to afford the high costs of rehabilitation in the private sector.
- At Horizon Youth Centre, only drug awareness groups are available. Inpatient facilities should be added to existing facilities, and it is possible that additional facilities should be built (possibly on the same campus in order to save running costs) to provide facilities for awaiting trial youth.
- After-care and follow-up are also important for maintaining positive changes when young people have gone through the rehabilitation process. Organisations such as Narcotics Anonymous, Narcanon and The Cape Town Drug Counselling Centre should be utilised as support and care facilities within communities. Families should be involved and supported in the process.

- Conditions of release should be linked to regular attendance at support groups.

6.2.5 Gangsterism

- In order to combat the influence of gangs, alternatives are needed. It is very difficult for young people who have joined gangs to leave those gangs. There are few alternatives for them and their circumstances more often than not drive them back. Existing youth and community structures should be used to overcome this problem, and where these do not exist, youth groups, sports clubs and established church groupings should be used.
- Again, release to the community should be linked to membership of such groupings, as well as to some form of community activity or service.
- The role of early intervention is essential in combating the influence of gangs. This should begin as early as primary school and should target young people who have been identified as being at risk. The Probation Services Act (No.116 of 1991) focuses particularly on the role of the assistant probation officer in providing programmes of this nature.

6.2.6 Community Involvement

- Community involvement needs to be strengthened to revive the spirit of '*ubuntu*': This term refers to the notion that it takes a whole village to raise a child, and it expresses a spirit of humanity that encompasses a principle of people caring for each other's well-being with an attitude of mutual support.

- Communities should be re-educated regarding the need for their involvement.
- For reintegration programmes to be successful, accepted and supported by the general public, it is essential for public awareness campaigns to be carried out.
- Awareness campaigns at schools and churches regarding the needs of young people at risk and the role that families and communities should play to prevent re-offending and ultimately successful reintegration should be the way forward.

6.2.7 The role of the Department of Social Development And Poverty Alleviation

Young people awaiting trial under the age of 18 remain the responsibility of the Department of Social Development and Poverty Alleviation. It is imperative to note that when these young people leave places of safety, the Department should still play a vital role.

- Although Social Development is structured into different units, strengthened internal collaboration between these units is necessary to deal with young people at risk. An example of this is where the poverty relief unit can assist in allocating funds for reintegration and aftercare services to young people who are released from the facility. Food parcels and clothing should be provided for a period to give this young person an opportunity to become self sustainable.
- Young people will usually leave the facility with extensive skills but opportunities are not created for them to be able to implement them. Liaison with relevant state Departments and NGO's upon the release

of young people is thus vital. Social Development needs to forge stronger links with the Department of Labour for further skills development of these young people and with the Department of Public Works, whereby young people can be enrolled in the Extended Public Works Programme. This will empower young people to implement some of the skills learnt, to upgrade their current skills and to receive an income and become self sustaining.

- In the same way that the Department of Social Development has provided funds for prevention services by non-governmental organisations, the same should apply to young people who need to be reintegrated into the community.
- The Department should appoint mentors in the community to assist young people to cope more effectively with the challenges they face. They should be trained and assigned to young people and their families to give support and guidance after the young person's release.
- Halfway houses should be established to provide short-term support while the young person gets on his feet, and to provide a base to which young people can return when they are in need of support.
- As mentioned previously, drugs remain a major contributor to recidivism. Funds need to be set aside by the Department of Social Development for the establishment of more functional rehabilitation facilities where adequate services can be obtained.

6.3 Future Research Opportunities

Research with regard to the impact of existing reintegration programmes should be conducted in order to develop best practice models.

Further research is needed to ascertain the effects of fetal alcohol syndrome on the criminal involvement of young people, as the prevalence of fetal alcohol syndrome in the Western Cape is high.

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University of C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR YOUTH AT RISK

(Information will be treated confidentially)

1 PSYCHOLOGICAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND FAMILY BACKGROUND

1.1 Your current place of residence/your place of residence prior to your current arrest.

(Tick one only)

1 House	2 Flat	3 Back-yard room/ shack	4 Own shack in a squatter camp	5 On the street
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6 Other, specify:

1.2 Describe your family/caregivers and its members. (State all generations under one roof, members closeness in terms of relationships, who is important to who, who supports who; respect, and safety within the home).

1.3 With whom do you live at present?

1.4 Who maintains you financially and what is his/her source of income?

**1.5 Who in your family do you think loves you and cares about you, if any?
Please explain:**

1.6 Who are the most significant persons in your life and how do they influence you?

1.7 Does any member of your immediate family or caregivers have a criminal record? (State who, e.g. father and older brother, and give details).

**1.8 Do any of your family members/caregivers abuse alcohol or drugs?
State their relation to you and explain how it affects your family life.**

2 EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2.1 When did you last attend school and what is your level of education?

2.2 Did you complete any additional training?

Yes/No: _____

Please list your vocational skills.

3 CRIMINAL HISTORY

3.1 List all your previous offences and arrests in chronological order.
State their outcomes:

Nr.	Offence	Arrests/ Outcome
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

3.2 What used to trigger your offending?

(Tick all that applies and explain)

Because it is exciting		
To get money to make a living for you.		
Influence of friends (Peer pressure)		
Helping to bring food home		
Because you were under the influence of alcohol/drugs		
To maintain your drug/alcohol habit		
Wanting to wear the same stylish clothes as your friends		
Because nobody cares		
Other, Specify:		

3.3 Did you belong to a gang prior to your admission at Horizon Youth Centre, and what did it mean to you

Yes/No: _____

If "yes" give details

3.4(a) Did you return to the gang since your release?

Yes/No: _____

If "yes", why?

(b) To what extent were/are you involved in gang activities?

3.5 Use of drugs or alcohol

(Tick all that applies)

	Age at first use	Recently used	Ever Used	Amount	Frequency
Tobacco					
Alcohol					
Solvents					
Ecstasy					
Cocaine					
Heroin					
Tik					
Marijuana/ "Dagga"					
Rock					
Mandrax					
Other, specify:					

3.6 How does using drugs impact on your lifestyle?

4 YOUNG PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCES OF THEIR DETENTION AT HORIZON YOUTH CENTRE (H.Y.C.)

4.1 Date of admission: _____

4.2 Date of release: _____

4.3 (a) While in detention was contact made with your family?

Yes/No: _____

What kind of contact	Frequency of contact
Telephonic	
Home visits	
Other	

(b) How did you experience these contacts?

4.4 (a) During your detention which family member(s) or caregiver(s) visited you and how often did these visits take place?

Relationship	Weekly	Monthly	Six Monthly	Annually	No Visits	Other
Mother						
Father						
Caregivers						
Siblings						
Friends						
Other						

(b) What kind of support did they provide and how did it help you?

4.5 If you received no support from your family/caregiver(s) why do you think this is so?

4.6 If you received no visits or support from your family/caregivers what, if anything, did your social worker do to encourage regular visits and contact with your family?

4.7 (a) While in detention did you participate in or receive social services to assist you in your rehabilitation process?

Yes/No: _____

(If your answer is 'Yes', please tick all that applies and explain.)

Type of Service	Tick	Nature of Service
Counseling		
Life Skills		
Completion of Care Plan		
Religious Service		
Career Guidance		
Pre- Release Groups		
Other		

(b) Please describe how these services assisted you?

4.8(a) How were you prepared for release from the Youth Centre? Describe the process.

(b) Who took part in this process?

(c) Do you think this was effective?

Yes/No: _____

Please explain your answer.

4.9 Were any of the following arranged by your social worker to assist with your reintegration, and what was the outcome?

(Tick all that applies and explain)

Continuous Schooling/ Further training	
Employment	
A place to live if needed	
Ongoing Counseling/Support	
Other, specify:	

4.10 Which of the following workshops and general classes did you attend?

1 Life Skills	4 Arts & Crafts	7 Upholstery	10 ABET I
2 Arc Welding	5 Computer	8 Career Guidance	11 ABET II
3 Woodwork	6 Sewing	9 Special Programmes	12 Leadership Programme

4.11 Complete the following sentences:

(a) From the workshops I attended, I learnt _____

(b) From the workshops I attended, I wish I had learnt _____

(c) Additional comments

**4.12 Did you partake in any religious activities at the Youth Centre?
If "yes" how did it affect you, if at all?**

**4.13 Which skills and knowledge have you gained from the Youth Centre, if any, did
you find most useful in the community?**

Please specify: _____

4.14 Relationship with the staff at Horizon Youth Centre.

- a) Which of the following describes the kind of relationship you had with most of the staff members?

(Tick one only)

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor

Please elaborate.

- b) Which of the following staff members did you have the most caring relationship with?

(Tick one only)

Room Elder	Workshop Instructor	Social Worker	Childcare Worker	Other

Please elaborate.

- c) Which of the following staff members did you have the least caring relationship with?

(Tick one only)

Room Elder	Workshop Instructor	Social Worker	Childcare Worker	Other

Please elaborate.

4.15 Complete the sentences:

I think the staff at Horizon Youth Centre are _____

I think the staff at Horizon Youth Centre think I am _____

4.16 Describe your relationship with other young people at Horizon Youth Centre.

4.17 Interaction with social workers known as probation officers:

a) How would you generally rate the services of the probation officers at court, if you had received any?

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor

b) Did your probation officer contact you at Horizon Youth Centre?

Yes/No: _____

Please explain _____

c) If any contact, what was the nature of the contact?

d) How did it help you, if at all?

5 LIFE SINCE RELEASE FROM HORIZON YOUTH CENTRE

5.1 What was the nature of your release?

Unconditional	
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Conditional	
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If you were released conditionally, what was the nature of supervision and support you received?

5.2 Who fetched you at court?

5.3 Please explain what happened upon release?

Immediately _____

During the first week _____

During the first month _____

5.4 How did your family receive you?

(Tick one only)

With joy (Positive)	With mixed feelings	With rejection (Negative)	Other, please specify:
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Please explain _____

5.5 How did the community receive you? (Neighbours, friends, etc?)

(Tick one only)

With joy (Positive)	With mixed feelings	With rejection (Negative)	Other, please specify:
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Please explain _____

5.6 Which of the following describes the manner you generally felt since you were released /while you were outside?

(Tick all that apply)

Positive about yourself	Mixed feelings	Highly unwanted	Other, specify:
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Please explain _____

6 SUPPORT NETWORK AND ADJUSTMENT IN THE COMMUNITY

6.1 Who supported you and what type of support did you receive?

Person	Tick	Nature of Support
Mother		
Father		
Caregiver		
Friend(s)		
Social Worker		
Assistant Probation Officer		
Probation Officer		
Priest / Imam		
Other		

6.2 Apart from your parents and close family, is there any other adult you could turn to in a crisis?

Yes/No: _____

Explain: _____

6.3 Are there any organisations in your community that assisted you or that could have been of assistance to you and how?

6.4 Do you belong to a particular religious group?

Yes/No: _____

If "yes", specify the kind of activities you participate in and what it means/t to you?

6.5 Do/Did you participate in any sports, cultural or youth activities?

Yes/No: _____

If "yes", specify what kind of activities, the role you play, and what it means/t to you?

6.6 (a) Do/Did you work? Yes/No: _____

(b) Describe your work history since you left the Centre.

Employment	Period of Employment	Reason for leaving

6.7 Did you have any periods of unemployment? Explain reasons.

6.8 Have any other important things happened to you since you were released?

6.9 Did you have any involvement with police or courts since your release from Horizon Youth Centre?

Yes/No: _____

If any, what happened? _____

6.10 Looking back on the past what has led you to stop offending?
(Complete if applicable)

6.11 Looking back on the past what has led you to keep on offending?
(Complete if applicable)

6.12 Do you want to stop offending?

Yes/No: _____

Give reasons for your answer _____

6.13 In your view, what should be done to prevent discharged young people from relapsing into crime?

6.14 Based on your experience, what advice will you give to young people about avoiding re-offending?

6.15 What are your future plans?

6.16 Any other comments?

"Thank you for your co-operation and participation in the research."

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

(Information will be treated confidentially)

1. QUESTIONS ABOUT YOURSELF

1.1 (a) Are you the biological parent of this child?

Y	N
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(b) If not, what is your relationship with this child?

(c) If not, briefly describe how you came to be the child's caregiver and since what age do you take care of him?

1.2 What is your marital status?

Married	Single	Divorced	Living together	Widow/er
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1.3 (a) Were you working while this child was growing up?

Y	N
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(b) If "yes" what type of work did you do?

(c) How did it affect your parenting role?

Please elaborate: _____

1.4 Who, if anyone, supervised this child while you were working?

Please explain: _____

2. FAMILY LIFE AND RELATIONSHIPS

2.1 Describe your family and its members in terms of relationships and the atmosphere at home.

2.2 Does any other member of your immediate family have a criminal record?

Y	N
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If "yes", state who, e.g. husband and eldest son, and give details:

2.3 (a) Do you or any of your family members abuse alcohol or drugs?

Y	N
---	---

(b) If "yes", what type and how often?

(c) How does it affect your parenting duties or your family life?

3. FINANCIAL SITUATION

3.1 How many people in your household are employed and how much do they contribute to the household?

3.2 How many people in your household are unemployed?

3.3 Is the income of the household sufficient for the basic needs of the family, e.g. food, school fees, clothes, leisure time, pocket money, etc.?

3.4 If not how do you and the family survive?

4. SOCIAL NEEDS

4.1 Are you happy where you are staying now?

Y	N
---	---

Please explain: _____

4.2 Do you think the neighbourhood has/had any effect on this child's criminal involvement?

Y	N
---	---

Please explain: _____

4.3 Do you participate in any social/ religious/ sporting / community activities?

Y	N
---	---

If "yes", please specify, and explain what it means to you, your family and the child concerned.

If "no", why not?

4.4 Who, if anyone, supports you when you need help?

Please tick and explain the nature of support and what it means to you?

Family	
Neighbours	
Friends	
Community Organizations	
Religious structures	
No one	
Other, specify	

5. EMOTIONAL NEEDS

5.1 How do you feel about this child?

5.2 How do you express love and care for this child?

5.3 Do you think this child knows that you love and care for him?

Y	N
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Why do you think so?

5.4 How would you describe your relationship with this child?

Very good	Good	Okay	Poor	Very Poor
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Please elaborate: _____

5.5 (a) Does this child have a history of behavioural problems?

Y	N
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If "yes", please explain:

(b) How did/do you handle it?

5.6 Has this child's behaviour been very different from that of your other children?

Y	N
---	---

Please elaborate: _____

5.7 Do you treat him differently from the others?

Y	N
---	---

If "yes", why?

5.8 Do you talk to this child about his problems?

Y	N
---	---

Please elaborate: _____

5.9 What kind of support does this child need?

Please explain: _____

5.10 Who do you think should provide this support?

5.11 What do you think are the needs of this child?

5.12 In your view what are the main challenges facing this child?

5.13 What did you/ do you do for this child?

5.14 What, do you think you should have/ could have done for this child to keep him out of trouble?

5.15 Did you attend the court hearings?

Please tick one only

At all times	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never	Other, specify

Please elaborate and give reasons for your answer:

6. ROLE OF THE YOUTH CENTRE:

6.1 How do you find Horizon Youth Centre in terms of services and accessibility?

6.2 Has this child gained any knowledge or skills since being admitted to Horizon Youth Centre?

Y	N
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Please explain: _____

6.3 Have you noticed any changes in this child's attitude?

Y	N
---	---

Please explain: _____

6.4 Do you feel that this child's spiritual needs were being provided for?

Y	N
---	---

If "yes", how did it affect him, if at all?

6.5 Are there adults that your child can trust and talk to at Horizon Youth Centre?

Y	N
---	---

Please explain: _____

6.6 Did this child receive counseling for any problems at Horizon Youth Centre?

Y	N
---	---

If, "yes" please explain what it means to him, if anything?

6.7 Were you ever involved in counseling sessions at Horizon Youth Centre?

Y	N
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If "yes", what did it mean to you, if anything?

6.8 Did you participate in or receive any services to prepare you and your family for the release of this child?

Please explain: _____

6.9 Any recommendations with regards to services or support that you think Horizon Youth Centre should offer to assist young offenders in their reintegration into the community?

7. CONTACT WHILE IN DETENTION

7.1 (a) Did you visit this child?

Y	N
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(b) If "yes", how often and how did you experience the visits?

7.2 (a) Did you support this child?

Y	N
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(b) What kind of support did you provide?

8. SUPPORT SERVICES REQUIRED AFTER RELEASE

8.1 Please explain what happened upon the release of this child?

Immediately _____

During the first week _____

During the first month _____

8.2 Looking back on everything we have discussed:

(a) What do you think led your child to re-offend?

(b) In your view what, if anything, has happened, since this child's release to prevent him from re-offending?

8.3 What could have helped your child to stop offending?

8.4 What changes did you bring about to support the reintegration of your child into the family, if anything?

8.5 Are you aware of any support services available within your community that assist or could have assisted with the reintegration process?

Y	N
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Please explain:

8.6 What services were actually provided to assist with the reintegration process, if any?

Please explain _____

8.7 Do you have any additional views regarding this child's offending/re-offending/reintegration into the community?

Thank you for your co-operation and participation in the research