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**FOSTER CARE AND SOCIAL WORK SERVICES
FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE FOSTER CHILD**

By

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**A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the award of the**

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Department of Social Development

University of Cape Town

2003

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FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE FOSTER CHILD**

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for 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.

Signature:

Signed by candidate

Date:

2024/05/24

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ABSTRACT

An exploratory ethnographic study was conducted to explore and describe how foster children experience being in foster care as well as how they perceive the role of the social worker. In addition the study explores the impact of and differences between the integrated Sable House Model of services and the casework method. The researcher adopted a qualitative approach in this study. An interview schedule was used to gather data from ten foster children during individual interviews. The participants further completed a questionnaire to measure self-esteem. An availability sample comprising of ten foster children, who were born between 1982 and 1986 and who live in the Lotus River/Ottery and Hanover Park area was used. The study allowed foster children to voice their views on social work services and to express their needs regarding future social work services.

The conclusions drawn from the study are that foster children who received foster care services according to the integrated, Sable House Model were more able to express their thoughts and emotions than those foster children who received casework services only. Furthermore it is concluded that the integrated model is an effective way for social workers to reach more foster children on a regular basis. Issues of identity formation, separation and loss, grief, a sense of belonging, a wish for knowledge and information on the foster child's background, poverty, and gangsterism were identified by participants as impacting significantly on their lives.

Recommendations are made for future work with foster children and that the group work approach be implemented to address foster children's needs as identified in the study as well as to accommodate large numbers of foster children who require services. The most important conclusion drawn from this study is that special attention should be given to assist foster children to verbalize their emotions and experiences and that social workers should encourage and invite foster children to do so. Social workers should equip themselves with the required knowledge in areas such as child development, loss, grief, separation and trauma.

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University of Cape Town

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Foster care has, for many years, been accepted as an appropriate alternative form of care for children who cannot remain in the care of their parents. It offers the child the opportunity to grow up in a family and to develop valuable social and relationship skills while remaining in the community. The process of placing a child in foster care and helping that child to adjust socially is an extremely complex task. There are many different factors that affect the placement of a child in foster care. If the foster child is to be afforded an opportunity to develop into an independent, happy and responsible adult, it is imperative that these factors be recognized and addressed by all the relevant role players including the biological and foster parents, the social worker and the foster child. The social worker who renders services to the foster child, foster family and biological family plays an integral part in this process. The researcher's experience as a foster care practitioner over a period of 10 years alerted her to the importance of social worker's role in foster care as well as to the need for practitioners to recognize and understand the subjective views and experiences of the child in foster care. In addition, the researcher was fortunate to have experienced two different modes of service delivery in her experience as a foster care practitioner. These are the casework method and an integrated method of service delivery – known as the Sable House Model (SHM) - a model developed at Child Welfare Society, Cape Town between 1992 and 2003. In this study four subjects experienced services according to casework model while six subjects experienced services according to the integrated service model.

This study addresses three aspects of the topic under discussion. Firstly, the researcher seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of foster care from the subjective view-point of the foster children interviewed. Secondly, the researcher seeks to compare the experiences and responses of the two sample cohorts in order to ascertain how the children who received services rendered according to the casework and integrated models of service delivery

differ and whether or not the integrated SHM offers improved services and benefits to foster children. The third and final aspect explored in this study is that of how foster children understand and view social work services.

To date, South African studies Fourie (1999), Swanepoel (1998), and Scholtz (1988) have focused on various aspects of foster care. However, there is little information regarding how foster children experience being in foster care and how they view the role of the social worker. The foster child appears to have remained a passive participant in the legal, social and psychological processes which constitute foster care and which are aimed at ensuring the child's safety and best interests. From this it would seem that the foster child is both disempowered and afforded little opportunity to contribute meaningfully to his / her own present and future existence. This study aims to address this apparent breach in foster care services and, in so doing, it seeks to provide the foster children interviewed in this study with a "voice" that will enable them to play a significant role in shaping their own lives as well to inform future social work practice and consequently improving social work services to children in foster care.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

This study has five main objectives.

- To explore and understand the subjective experiences and views of children in foster care.
- To explore and understand how foster children view the role of the social worker.
- To explore and describe the two different models of service delivery to foster children viz. the casework model and the integrated Sable House Model.
- To provide social work practitioners with an improved understanding of the foster child's experience of being in foster care, and
- To provide information for improving social work services to foster children.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How do foster children perceive and describe the role of the social worker in foster care?
- How do foster children experience and view being in foster care?
- Do foster children benefit by social work services?
- Are there any significant differences between foster children who received social work services according to the casework model as opposed to the integrated Sable House Model of service delivery? and, following on from this,
 - What are these differences?

1.4 THE RESEARCHER'S ASSUMPTIONS

From the researcher's experience as a social work practitioner, and more particularly from her knowledge of the two different models of service delivery discussed in this study, she approached this study with a number of assumptions.

- Social work services to foster children do not adequately make provision for or take into account the experiences and views of the foster child.
- By considering the foster child's views and experiences, social work services to foster children could be improved.
- By providing foster children with the opportunity to voice their experiences and views, this research could be seen to empower those children as well as to provide valuable insights into the world of the foster child.
- The integrated model of service delivery, namely the Sable House Model, provides foster children with benefits not available in the casework approach.

1.5 AN OVERVIEW OF FOSTER CARE SERVICES

The Child Care Act (No 74 of 1983, as amended) makes provision for foster placements and that such placements be supervised by an approved social work agency or a relevant state department. This entails supervising the foster placement, dealing with matters arising either from the reasons for or emanating from the placement and guiding and counseling the foster child, foster parents and the biological family.

In theory a contract must be drawn up with all the relevant parties to assist everybody, to make clear plans for the duration of the placement and to spell out what needs to be done for the child to return to his/her natural parents. Despite such guidelines it is difficult to apply them in practice as social workers have to deal with high caseloads, crises emanating from caseloads, staff burn-out and high staff turnover. Contracts are therefore often not implemented – a consequence that leads to a phenomenon known as foster care drift – that is placements fail and children are moved from placement to placement

To assist foster children and all the parties involved, purposeful social work activity is required, hence the development of a model of integrated practice also known as the Sable House Model. In this model social work services are rendered to the foster child by including the child in groupwork to address the general problems which foster children experience. The foster child is also counseled individually when she/he requires assistance to address personal problems. Foster parents are trained, supported and assisted through attending monthly meetings. Services are rendered to biological parents who attend monthly meetings aimed at assisting them to address their concerns. Foster parents, biological parents and, where appropriate, foster children are seen individually and jointly to discuss the placement contracts and plans for the foster child's future.

1.6 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The motivation for this study emerged from the researcher's experience as a social work practitioner who has specialized in the field of foster care services at Child Welfare Society, Cape Town for a period of 10 years. During this time, the researcher became aware of the fact that the foster child is often a silent and neglected partner in the foster care equation.

In addition the researcher has had experience of two different models of foster care service delivery. This provided the motivation to examine and explore how the foster children served by each of these different models have developed and whether there are any significant differences in the children who received services according to the integrated model as opposed to the traditional casework model.

A further motivation stems from the fact that, in the view of the researcher, foster children remain passive and unheard, and have been afforded little opportunity to contribute to, or shape the services which they receive. It would seem that the first step in addressing this situation would be to explore and understand the experiences and views of the foster children themselves. Thus this research is motivated largely by the desire to empower the foster child and to acknowledge their experiences.

Finally, it hoped that this study will enable practitioners to develop a deeper understanding of the needs of foster children and thus to address and improve services accordingly.

1.7 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY OF THIS STUDY

A qualitative research design and methodology has been used to examine and understand the experiences of children in foster care. The qualitative methodology used in this research constitutes an ethnographic, empirical study

that is exploratory and descriptive in nature. The emphasis will be on exploring how foster children experience and view social work services and on illuminating their subjective experiences of being in foster care. The aim of the research is to provide an in-depth, "insider perspective" of foster care from the stance of the foster child and not to provide hard figures and cold facts (De Vos, 2000; Mouton, 2001).

During the study the researcher completed individual interviews with the 10 participants. These interviews followed an unstructured format which was aimed at ensuring that the subjective, personal experiences and views of the participants were reflected and recorded. In addition, two further research instruments were used. An interview schedule was introduced after the individual interviews had been completed. This served to ensure that each participant provided a pool of basic, common information on a series of topics identified by the researcher. Finally, each participant was requested to complete a questionnaire which served to provide a reflection of the participants self-image and self-esteem. It was hoped that this would assist the researcher to assess whether there are any notable differences between children who received services according to the different models of intervention.

The wider population from which the study sample was drawn is constituted of foster care clients in the Hanover Park and Lotus River/Ottery areas served by Child Welfare Society, Cape Town. A further parameter of the sample was that the participants were drawn from foster children born between 1982 and 1986. The researcher presents data collected in the course of this study in the form of direct quotes, tables and charts. It is hoped that this will set the data in a wider context and make it easily understandable to the reader. Data analysis will follow the method outlined by Tesch (in De Vos: 2000:343-344).

There are a number of limitations which must be considered in this study. The limited size of the sample and the difficulty in reaching the population and to obtain a suitable sample are significant limitations which may have impacted on the outcome of this study. In addition the researcher is a social work

practitioner and this holds the possibility for researcher bias. The researcher addressed this limitation by ensuring that she employed reflexivity on an ongoing basis while conducting the research. The researcher's supervisor further ensured that she was continually aware of the need for objectivity.

1.8 DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

The following definitions/concepts are central to this study.

Foster Care. “Statutory, substitute care within the family circle for children who cannot be cared for by their parents in the short, medium or long term, while services are continued to the parents in order to return the children to their care within a specific period “ (Department of Social Welfare, 1997).

Foster Child. A child who, in accordance with legislation, is placed in the care of a foster parent (Department of Social Welfare, 1997).

Foster parent/s. A person or couple, other than a parent or guardian, in whose care a child is placed under the Child Care Act, No 74 of 1983 as amended (Department of Social Welfare, 1997).

Social casework. The orientation, value system, and type of practice used by professional social workers to help individuals and families solve intrapsychic, interpersonal, socioeconomic, and environmental problems through direct face-to-face relationships. (Barker, 1996).

Social groupwork. an orientation and method of social work intervention in which small numbers of people who share similar interests or common problems convene regularly and engage in activities designed to achieve certain objectives. In contrast to group psychotherapy, the goals of groupwork are not necessarily the treatment of emotional problems. (Barker, 1996).

Sable House Model. A developmental model of practice, providing the foster child, the foster family and biological parents with social work intervention by using a groupwork approach to assist, support and educate all parties so that the child can develop into an independent, responsible and happy adult.

1.9 CHAPTER LAYOUT

Chapter one provides an introduction to this study. In chapter two the researcher will discuss the history of foster care and how it developed over time internationally and in South Africa with an emphasis on the provisions of the Child Care Act (No. 74 of 1983 as amended) currently used by social workers in child and family welfare agencies and children's courts. The development of foster care services provided by Child Welfare Society, Cape Town will also be discussed. The researcher will give a brief overview of current policies and practices regarding foster care in South Africa and will focus on the Sable House Model as developed and implemented by the foster care department of Child Welfare Society, Cape Town.

Chapter three will look at different aspects of foster care and how the child is affected by being placed in foster care. The focus will be on how the foster child experiences foster care, how he/she responds to contact with his/her biological parents, his/her schooling and the foster child's perceptions of social work services.

Chapter four presents the research paradigm and methodology used in conducting the research while in chapter five the researcher presents research results and discusses the findings. In chapter six the researcher sets out the conclusions drawn from the findings made in the study and presents a number of recommendations for future practice.

CHAPTER TWO : FOSTER CARE: FROM HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES TO THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS AND PRACTICE INSIGHTS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Foster care has evolved over time from an act of goodwill and charity to a placement which although still viewed as charitable, also has a statutory base. One of the earlier writers, Slingerland says that: "Under ancient Jewish laws and customs, children lacking parental care became members of the household of other relatives if such there were, who reared them for adult life" (Slingerland, 1919: 27 quoted by Kadushin, 1980). Initially there were no laws governing the process of informal care (whereby children were either living with relatives or members of the community).

2.2 A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF FOSTER CARE

The practice of foster care goes back many centuries. During the time that feudalism was practised in the United Kingdom and Europe, slavery was practised in the United States of America. Both of these practices made provision for children who were orphaned, abused, neglected or abandoned to be placed with relatives or other members of community (Thurston, 1931). Religious groups in the community also offered care to needy children. Triseliotis, Sellick & Short (1995) acknowledge the aforementioned practice when they say "Evidence of informal fostering goes back to antiquity and possibly beyond. Formal, legally sanctioned fostering, though, is of a more recent origin".

The State, for the first time, became involved in providing alternative care to needy children when the forty-third Act of Elizabeth I was passed in 1601. This Act made provision for revenue collected from the public, be used by the government to care for the poor. The law acknowledged that parents are responsible for their children and, that when they are unable to care for them, the onus is on the grandparents and other relatives to care for the children. If all

these avenues were explored and no suitable person was available to care for the child, the state had to provide alternative care.

In the 1600s, indenture was already in practice. This was a system whereby children who were old enough to work, were apprenticed to be taught a craft or trade or housework, The children received food, clothes and accommodation in exchange for work until they were grown up (Thurston, 1931).

During the 1800s almshouses and poor houses were established in the United Kingdom to provide care for all the poor in communities. At the same time Orphan Asylums were established in the United States of America when it was realised that children needed to be cared for separately from adults (Thurston, 1931, George, 1970).

Free foster homes were accepted as a system of substitute care for destitute children by the middle of the 1850's when Charles Bryce founded the New York Children's Aid Society. Through this system families living in rural areas were approached to provide care for destitute children from the cities. No screening of carers or supervision of placements took place and no monitoring of the quality of care that the children received was done. Often children were placed far from New York City and consequently they lost contact with their relatives (Thurston, 1931).

At the same time in the United Kingdom, a boarding-out system for destitute children was started. The Reverend Armistead was a leader in advocating for this new system of childcare. According to the boarding-out system children from the workhouse were placed with selected foster parents and the placements were supervised. A boarding-out allowance was paid to the foster parents (George, 1970).

In comparing Armistead and Bryce's work it is noticeable that Armistead wanted children to receive an education while in care and that he was concerned about their emotional and social needs. Foster parents were recruited, screened and were paid an allowance to care for the children. As

early as 1869 inspectors were employed by the Poor Law Board to investigate the new boarding out system. All Bryce was concerned about was finding homes for children in rural communities. No screening of foster parents took place, the placements were not supervised and only 10% of the foster parents received some form of payment (Thurston, 1931; George, 1970).

Gradually knowledge was acquired about child development - i.e. physically, psychologically, sexually and socially. This was exchanged between people who were involved with the care, education and protection of children. In 1938 the League of Nations held a special inquiry into the work done in the area of family care. Twenty-six countries from around the world participated in this inquiry. The purpose of the inquiry was to determine how vulnerable children were being cared for and the philosophical arguments and physical arrangements for care (George, 1970).

In time the emphasis shifted away from the immediate care arrangements to consider the needs of destitute or needy children in a longer-term context. In 1947 Dyson, a psychiatric social worker and organiser of the London County Council's Children's Care Development wrote in this regard: "The re-integration into society of its homeless and unwanted children is as important for the community as for the children." This concern is as true in our present situation as it was then, and all practitioners involved with children in care should acknowledge this (Dyson, 1947).

The initial models of substitute care founded in the United Kingdom and the United States of America were emulated in many different countries and gradually, most countries have adapted practices and models to suit their particular needs. Increasingly the practice has been to place destitute or needy children in the care of families, rather than in children's homes.

Fostering has become a specialised service aimed at providing an holistic approach to caring for children whose parents are themselves unable to do so.

2.3 AN OVERVIEW OF FOSTER CARE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Legislation in the four colonies, which comprised the South Africa prior to date, reflected social attitudes regarding the protection of children. In 1856 the Cape Parliament accepted the first legislation for the protection of children in South Africa. One of the issues addressed by this legislation was the conditions' of service for "indentured" children in South Africa. The Act made provision that a destitute or neglected child could be placed with a family member or a competent person (Bosman-Swanepoel, Wessels and Scherman, 1995). Indenture was a system used in the western world, to care for children before the establishment of foster care, as we now know it today.

In 1901 the Child Protection Act 38 (Natal Act) was promulgated. This was a more comprehensive child care act; it attempted to define the so-called 'destitute child' and provided for such a child to be placed in safe care. The provision made in this Act is similar to the provisions of the present Child Care Act (No 74 of 1983 as amended) which will be discussed in chapter three of this study (Bosman-Swanepoel, Wessels, Sherman, 1995).

The Infant Life Protection Act 4 of 1907 (Cape Act) is described by Bosman-Swanepoel, Wessels and Scherman, (1995) as an Act that deals with the activities of persons who take young children into their care for financial reward. The Act made allowance for a magistrate to appoint an inspector who was to ensure proper maintenance and care of legally referred children. At this time no trained social workers were available in South Africa.

During 1908 the Society for the Protection of Child Life, Cape Town was established. (In 1978 the name of the agency was changed to Child Welfare Society, Cape Town.) This is one of many organisations established in South Africa to care for children and support their families. At the same time churches and other sectors of the community were also establishing non-government organisations to provide welfare services to the communities. Foster care and the work done in this area by Child Welfare Society, Cape Town is discussed in this research - hence the focus being on how foster care within this

organisation developed over the years along with legislation in this regard. It is interesting to note that in many instances the services of Child Welfare Society, Cape Town often preceded the initiatives and directives of the state.

The mission of the Society for the Protection of Child Life, Cape Town was:

- (a) To prevent cruelty to children,
- (b) To see that the Act for better protection of infants is duly carried out,
- (c) To encourage legislation in the direction of the provision of Juvenile Courts and Reformatories for children,
- (d) To take measures for the instruction of mothers in the care of infants and children by visits and in other ways, and
- (e) To take any steps which would have as its' objective the improvement of the child mentally, morally and physically (First Annual Report of the Society of Protection of Child Life, Cape Town, 1909).

By 1909 the Society for the Protection of Child Life, Cape Town had established a register of foster mothers so that a resource list of foster mothers were available to social workers. The Society also kept records of successful placements. (Annual Report , Society for the Protection Of Child Life, 1910.)

In 1913 the Child Protection Act (No 25 of 1913) was promulgated. This Act made provision for parents to be prosecuted if their children were not adequately cared for. No provision was made in this Act for children to be supervised when placed in alternative care. The Society for the Protection of Child Life, Cape Town was actively involved in the promulgation of the Child Protection Act. (Bosman-Swanepoel, Wessels,Scherman,1995: Annual Report, Society for the Protection of Child Life, 1914) .

Recommendations were made in 1916 whereby children could be financially supported in foster care or in institutions. To ensure that financial assistance was appropriately expended in the child's interest, volunteers were asked to do surprise visits to monitor such placements (Annual Report, Society for the Protection of Child Life, Cape Town, 1916).

In 1924 the Society for the Protection of Child Life, Cape Town advocated the establishment of training for social workers and negotiated with the University of Cape Town to start a diploma course in Social Science. Social workers, mainly trained abroad, were employed by the Society to provide services to all children, including foster children. This enabled the Society to employ trained staff and deliver more effective services to their clients (Annual Report, Society for the Protection of Child Life, Cape Town, 1924).

In 1937 a new Children's Act (No 31 of 1937) was approved by the Union Parliament. Intervention with families and an emphasis on the prevention of the removal of children from their parents were advocated. During the Parliamentary discussion of Act 31 of 1937, a certain Mrs. L.A.B. Reitz referred to work done in the Netherlands. She suggested that foster care be considered as alternative form of care for children who could not live in the care of their biological families and that this was preferable to institutional care. This Act, in part, also supported the establishment of the Department of Social Welfare in October 1937. The function of the department was to regulate educational and welfare services (Bosman-Swanepoel, Wessels & Scherman, 1995).

In 1960 the Child Care Act, No 33 of 1960, replaced the Children's Act of 1937. This Act made provision for children to be found in need of care, inter alia, on the grounds of physical and spiritual neglect. The Act further instituted the requirement that children placed in alternative care must be supervised by a probation officer or by organisations that worked towards the care and protection of children. The Society for the Protection of Child Life, Cape Town was one such organisation. (Bosman-Swanepoel, Wessels, Scherman, 1995).

In 1961 a foster care committee was appointed at the Society for the Protection of Child Life. In the annual report of 1964 it is reported that two social workers rendered services to 671 foster children and their families in the white and coloured communities. Supervision to foster children and their families became a specialised area of work at the Society the primary method of practice was casework (Annual Report, Society for the Protection of Child Life, Cape Town, 1964).

Twenty-three years later the Children's Act, No 33 of 1960, was repealed and replaced with the Child Care Act, Act 74 of 1983. This Act was implemented on 1 September 1987. It has been amended several times since being implemented and a new Child Care Act is currently being circulated for comments.

2.4 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF FOSTER CARE

Foster care involves a foster child, a foster family, biological parents and a social worker in a social, emotional and legal configuration since children in South Africa are legally placed in foster care in accordance with the Child Care Act (No 74 of 1983 as amended).

Foster care provides a temporary home to a child with a family in the community, while the biological parents' work towards the return of the child into their care. A social worker is appointed to monitor/supervise such foster placements as well as to provide support, guidance and counselling to all the parties involved.

There are many dynamics that develop between the child, the foster family, the biological parents, the social worker, and the agency that cannot be predicted at the time of the placement. These variables often make it difficult to ensure clear, long term planning for the child in foster care. If one role player is affected by one set of factors, all the parties in the placement are affected. Despite the complexity and unpredictability of these factors planning is essential as foster care provides one of the forms of alternative care available for children when their biological parents are unable or unwilling to care for them. Although foster care may be regarded as an excellent alternative for children in need of care, we have to bear in mind that "even good foster care is stigmatising because children feel they are different from their peers" (Pike, 1976, quoted by Lewandowski and Pearse, 2002:206).

The type of foster care, which a child requires, should be carefully considered. Triseliotis, Sellick and Short (1995) discuss several arrangements for children in need of care, namely:

Relief care. This offers parents and children a break or period of relief from continued care with the aim of providing parents who have children with special needs some respite. This form of relief could successfully be used with single parents who are under pressure and need assistance. Relief care is not extensively offered in South Africa and hardly ever through the children's court.

Emergency foster care. This is a service where foster carers are available to care for children for brief periods, thus allowing social workers to set in place permanent arrangements. At Child Welfare Society, Cape Town this form of care is used for abandoned and abused children as well as babies awaiting adoption.

Short-term foster care. This refers to arrangements with care-takers who provide interim care pending the availability of suitable foster parents or alternatively until the crisis abates at the child's family home.

Long term or permanent fostering. This form of fostering lasts for periods of up to two years at a time and can be extended until the child reaches the age of 18 years. Long term placement acquires a degree of "substitute parenting" and children become an entrenched part of the foster family. It is not uncommon to find that children remain with the foster parents after they turned 18 years.

Triseliotis, Sellick and Short (1995) also describe intermediate or medium term fostering where children are placed in care for a period of less than two years to give the biological parents time to improve their home circumstances. These children need to have a contained environment where they are able to develop age appropriately. They do not require "substitute parents". It is important that they maintain regular contact with their biological parents and with the family home so that they remain emotionally involved with their biological parents. Research by Emlen, Lahti, Down, McKay & Downs in (Lewandowski & Pierce

2002) indicate that foster children are most likely to return to their biological parents if their circumstances change within the first few months after placement and if the parents co-operate with the welfare agency. The longer the child remains in foster care, the more unlikely the return of the child to the biological parents becomes.

2.4.1 FACTORS INFLUENCING THE OUTCOMES OF FOSTER CARE

Various factors have been identified as influencing the experience and outcome of foster placements. The study of Strijker, Zandberg & van der Meulen (2002) identified the following factors are deciding and critical in terms of the outcome of foster placements:

- the age of the foster child;
- the foster child's behavioural problem before or during placement;
- the age of the foster mother and her motivation; and
- the co-operation between the social worker and the foster family.

The foster children's age's at the time of placement has also been identified as an important factor. Kadushin (1980), Dinnage and Pringle (1966) and Fahlberg (1994) are but a few of the authors who stress the importance of the age of the child at the time of placement. Younger children are more readily able to adapt and adjust (to the foster placement) as they are likely to have had fewer negative life experiences.

Van Niekerk (1998: 98-99) asserts that the most important criteria when placing a child in foster care is to determine whether the placement is in the child's best interest. He lists the following criteria that should be considered:

- The early care history of the child,
- The age of the child. The younger the child the greater the prognosis for a successful placement,

- The death of the child's mother shortly before the placement of the child is often associated with the breakdown of the foster placement,
- Foster children with behavioural problems present an exceptional challenge; the more serious the problem, the greater the chance that the placement may break down.
- The family history, experience, age of the foster parents are also factors affecting the success of the placement.

Kadushin (1980) regards foster care as inappropriate when any of the following features are present:

- The child displays behaviour that will not be accepted in the community;
- The child's behaviour would not be accepted by the foster family;
- The child has special needs that the foster parents cannot provide for;
- The natural parents do not accept the foster placement of their child and will sabotage the placement;
- A large group of siblings need to be placed together; and
- A child is too loyal to his/her parents to accept a foster family.

From the characteristics indicated above, it is clear that not all destitute children are suitable candidates for foster care. The placement of children in foster care should be based on informed decisions by the social worker. The breakdown of a foster placement is detrimental to a child and should be prevented as far as possible. Children who are repeatedly moved from one foster placement to another have to deal repeatedly with feelings of rejection and experiences of disruption.

In view of the above it is important to explore the factors that affect the foster placement. When placing a child in alternative care, the child should be given the best possible services. Consideration should be given to the special needs of the child. According to the Draft Document of the Department of Welfare (1997) the following are important factors requiring consideration when placing a child:

- A full assessment of the child and his/her biological parents should be made before a child is placed in foster care;
- The strengths, needs, issues, available resources, the child's behaviour, educational needs, parental resources, and the social and cultural context of the child's biological parents must be assessed;
- Social workers who do the assessment of the family's circumstances should be sensitive to culture, language, traditions and beliefs of the child and family;
- The child and family should receive ongoing services from a welfare organisation in order to assist them in dealing with the trauma which accompanies removal and placement;
- Where possible, the child must be placed geographically as close to the home of the biological parents as possible, in order to maintain family ties and ensure continuity;
- Where possible, the child should be placed with a relative with whom he/she is familiar with. This will enable the child to have contact with the biological parents; and
- A child with special needs must be placed in a home and family that is able to understand and meet these needs.

The biological parents and the child, (if of an appropriate age), should be included in the decision making process where ever possible. This entails that:

- All the parties need to be prepared for the placement of the child in the foster home. The report prepared for the children's court inquiry must be discussed with the biological parents and child if he/she is old enough to understand before the court hearing; and
- A contract must be drawn up with the parents, foster parents, the child (if over 8 years of age) and the social worker to make arrangements concerning access, contact times, and who needs to do what and by when. All arrangements, tasks and expectations must be clear to everyone concerned in order to avoid conflict. If it is anticipated that the

child will return to the parents, conditions for return must be clearly set out as well as an expected time frame stating by when these conditions must be achieved (Draft Document of the Department of Welfare, 1997).

It is difficult to make generalisations that are clear and simple to apply to foster care. It is important to match the foster child to the foster family as best as possible. According to Dinnage & Pringle (1966) children, under the age of 7 years, have a better chance to adapt in a foster home. Another major factor which bears consideration is the extent of the child's internalized and externalized problems, since all foster children experience trauma before, during and after foster placement.

When considering the aforementioned, it is necessary to examine these factors within a theoretical paradigm since it is best understood within such a context. The researcher will therefore examine the foundations of the attachment theory of John Bowlby and the object relations theory of Melanie Klein in discussing the needs of foster children.

2.4.2 ATTACHMENT THEORY

- John Bowlby developed the foundations of attachment theory. He believed that early losses affect a child's behaviour, emotions, and mental health. Bowlby also asserts that not only the separation, but also the quality and nature of the interaction between the child and the primary caregiver influence the child's behaviour and mental health. How the caregiver observes and responds to a child's needs will determine to what extent a child develops a sense of basic trust, security and feelings of worth. This, in turn influences the child's ability to bond with the caregiver.

Schultz (2002) defines attachment as "...the strong, loving bond between parent and child that contains emotional involvement. It is a psychological relationship that forms when the primary caregiver consistently, from day to day, observes the needs of the child correctly and provides for it appropriately. It not only consists of physical care, but loving, attentive, physical contact and a

positive social interaction, a personal emotional involvement". From the first bonding experience with the mother, the child learns to interact with the mother and later with other members of the family. This helps the child to develop an internalised concept of himself, others and the relationships between himself and others. Schultz (2002) and Bowlby (1984:81-84) used the phrases "inner working models" and "internal representation" to explain such internalised self-concepts and his/her relationships. The "internal working model" of those children who receive emotional, available care giving, develop a healthy sense of self and see themselves as competent and worthy of attention and affection. They are more readily able to develop positive, intimate relationships and resilience. Those children who do not receive emotionally available care giving develop a poor self-concept as well as negative expectations of relationships with others. They are more prone to developing mental health problems than children who have available emotional caregivers. Bowlby believed that a person's internal working model, once established, in early childhood, tends to affect all his/her close relationships. These internal models become integrated into the personality and operate on an unconscious level. As it is difficult for individuals to change the internal working model, individuals' ability to form healthy relationships once negative expectations have been internalized is limited.

Bowlby describes four phases in the development of attachment:

1. The pre-attachment phase occurs between birth and two months. During this stage the baby responds indiscriminately.
2. The attachment in-the-making phase extends from three to six months. During this period the baby is able to recognise the caregiver and responds in a socially selective manner.
3. During the clear-cut attachment from seven months to three years, the baby starts to initiate contact, is aware of strangers, and is able to seek out and maintain contact with his/her primary caregiver; and
4. Goal-connected attachment occurs from three years onwards. The child begins to understand the caregivers' point of view, feelings and behaviour and is able to have a more complex relationship with the caregiver.

It is clear, from Bowlby's research, that attachment formation is vital in a child's life and that inadequate, early care has a life long effect on the individual. It is important that these factors are taken in account when a child is placed in foster care. When a child is removed from an inadequate caregiver the child needs to be placed in alternative care as soon as possible. This needs to be done to prevent unnecessary emotionally and physically harm to the child. In addition the child needs the opportunity to develop a healthy attachment as soon as possible to prevent further harm to his/her emotional well-being. When a child needs to be placed in foster care because the main caregiver is unable to care for the child because of death or illness, the child must be helped to mourn the loss.

As early as 1947 Bowlby stated that the foster home should provide the child with affection, personal interest in the child, understanding and stability in order to make the best of his abilities and aptitudes. Bowlby further asserted that the foster home should provide the child with a homely atmosphere.

2.4.3 KLEIN'S OBJECT RELATIONS THEORY

Klein focuses on the intra-psychoic world of young children. According to Klein the quality of our first relationships with our parents or primary care-giver will affect the way in which we view and interact in the world, with others and ourselves. Klein worked backwards to capture the experiences of early childhood, and much of her work was done through play therapy, as the children she worked with were often unable to express verbally their thoughts and feelings. She analysed their play as a means of assessing their internal sub-conscious world. Through her observations she developed the theory of object relations

Hook, Watts and Cockcroft (2002, 96) consider objects as the concept used by Freud and object relations theorists to convey the idea that the infant, while relating to people in an external reality, is internally not yet capable of relating to real people. Instead the infant relates to a fantasy construction, which is the

object of the person. The authors explain part objects as being the state in which the infant is unable cognitively to comprehend whole objects. Objects can only be experienced in terms of their functions such as the breast instead of the mother. The child's early physiological experiences and fantasy relations form the foundation of the individual's psychic life. Klein explained this process as occurring through introjection and projection. Hook, Watts and Cockcroft (2002: 97) give the following explanations of introjection and projection respectively:

Introjection. "The taking in of experiences. In psychoanalytic terms it refers to the internalization of the parental figures and their values";

Projection. "A mental mechanism by which the infant expels unwanted or terrifying aspects of his/her internal world. In Kleinian theory, projection is initially a developmentally normal mechanism that assists in the safekeeping of the good object. With development, its use comes to be associated with a defence mechanism whereby one's own traits and emotions are attributed to someone else".

Whereas Erikson (1983) writes of stages of development, Klein postulated the concept of positions to describe a process that continues throughout life. The positions refer to a particular arrangement of object relations patterns to which one returns depending on the level of development of the individual. She named the two positions the paranoid-schizoid position and the depressive position. The paranoid-schizoid position is the earlier stage of development, where experiences are split into either good or bad. Splitting acts as a defence mechanism and is part of the normal developmental process. In the depressive stage the ability to accept loss is integrated into the personality. According to Klein this process is never complete and a person may move between these two positions depending on the context of the person's life. Klein described psychopathology as a failure to attain the ability to make reparation and the defence mechanisms as a retreat to infantile internal object relations.

It is imperative that foster children are treated as individuals and that as much of the child's history as possible be obtained in order to understand the child's life story. Foster children are usually orphaned, abandoned, abused or neglected and these early experiences will affect the child's later relationships and adjustment. Early object relational experiences will without doubt impact on the child's adjustment within the foster placement.

2.4.4 THE FOSTER CHILD

Foster care is specifically aimed at providing the foster child with a substitute family in the community and to help the child recover from traumatic experiences. A child who is placed in foster care has to go through a process of separation from his biological parents, a period of transition and then finally incorporation into the foster family. The foster child may experience feelings of rejection, guilt, hostility/anger, fear of being abandoned, and fear of the unknown. It is within this context that Fahlberg (1994, 26) asserts that work with the foster child entails:

- gaining an understanding of the child's perception of his/her life,
- disengagement work,
- explaining plans for the future,
- addressing current areas of concern,
- enhancing attachment in current family,
- facilitating identity formation,
- increasing the child's knowledge of self,
- reintegration of early life' events, and
- focusing on life-long events.

The child must mourn the lost objects i.e. the parents. A study done by Bowlby (1988) indicates that the child will have formed attachments with his/her previous caregivers. The child's early experience will affect his/her ability to build relationships and to develop a healthy ego-structure. Often foster parents are able to contribute to and facilitate repair of the damage that occurred in the

early stages of the child's development by providing a positive role model (Fahlberg, 1994).

Rutter (1985) examined the individual differences that contribute to children's resilience. He states that protective factors and interactive processes which the individual experiences contributes towards combating negative experiences. The quality of foster care that the child receives will be of vital importance in combating the earlier negative experiences of abuse and neglect. The effect on a child of parental loss at an early age may result in depression in adulthood. The child thus needs to get enough emotional nurturing in the foster family to counter-act the loss of the biological parent.

Mahler's theory (1972) of separation-individuation offers a valuable framework within which to understand the traumatic impact which removal from the biological parents and placement in foster care must have upon a child. Despite neglect and abuse the child forms a bond with the natural parent. The negative patterns that the child learnt in the relationship with his/her biological parents will impact on the relationship he/she develops with the foster family. Fahlberg (1994) believes that it is important that the foster parents be provided with a history of earlier events in the foster child's life as this will assist in facilitating the child's adjustment in the foster family.

According to Kline and Overstreet (1972) the loss of family and the extended environment, the introduction of the agency services, the new environment, post placement reactions and the social worker's relationship with the child are changes with which the foster child must contend. How the child experiences and adjusts to these changes will affect the success of the placement. The child's experience of neglect, abuse and/or abandonment affects his behaviour, his self-esteem and his sense of self-worth. Foster children often experience developmental delays due to neglect, abuse and trauma experienced before being placed in foster care. In order to assist the child in adjusting to the foster placement, the social worker and foster parents require a sound understanding of the developmental stages of the child. The foster child requires positive guidance and opportunities to negotiate developmental stages appropriately.

2.4.5 FOSTER CHILDREN'S NEEDS

The draft document on guidelines for foster care, issued by the Department of Welfare (1998) states that foster children need protection, nurturance in the foster home, support, encouragement, skills to build relationships, opportunities to develop into young adults who can function independently and be able to live responsibly and to establish healthy relationships. For this to occur, attention must be given to development of self-esteem, problem solving abilities and decision-making.

Each child will deal with the placement in his/her own unique way. Some degree of regression should be expected while the child is adjusting to the new placement. Kline and Overstreet (1972) state "The areas of regression depend to some extent on the age-related developmental stage of the child." The degree of regression may vary in extent and recovery might be difficult to achieve. More recent literature addresses these issues, as they are to foster care. According to Triseliotis, Sellick and Short (1995) "A child's world can still be populated with apprehensions. To a child what happened before, can happen again. Each child experiences their situation differently. Separation, anxiety, sadness, guilt, fear or mistrust can impair their capacity to relate or attach to the foster family. Even children who are relieved when moved from abusive environments are not affected any less by the experience of separation".

Table 1

Factors applicable to a foster child's life

<u>PAST EXPERIENCE</u>	<u>NEEDS</u>
Abandoned/neglected, Abused/family violence, alcohol/drug abuse, instability	Sense of belonging, love, nurturance, security/stability, guidance, encouragement, discipline. Protection opportunity to develop physically, emotionally, socially.
▲	▼
<u>FOSTER CHILD</u>	
<u>BEHAVIOUR</u>	<u>FEELINGS</u>
Acting out Withdrawn Hyperactive Testing out behaviour e.g. lies and stealing Lack of concentration Aggressive Associates with wrong friends Runs away from home Bedwetting Nightmares Depression Post traumatic stress Sexually inappropriate behaviour	Frightened Scarred Anxious Guilty Pain Worthless, negative Low self-esteem Distrustful Angry rejected Uncertain/vulnerable

Foster children have the same needs as any other children, as stated in the above table, designed by the researcher. With reference to the attachment theory, as explained by Bowlby, the past experiences of foster children affect their feelings, impact on their behaviour and their development. The foster child who did not experience sufficient emotionally available care is at risk to develop a poor self-concept and is more susceptible to develop mental health problems. Once the child's "inner working model" is established it will affect all subsequent relationships. The age and stage of development needs to be taken into

taken into consideration, when the child is placed, bearing in mind the four stages of devolvement that Bowlby described (see page 9). It is essential that the child's history be explained to the foster parents so that they can understand and help the child. Where it becomes obvious, through the child's behaviour, that he/she is projecting earlier unwanted aspects of him/herself (as explained by the object relations theory developed by Klein) this could be used to try to understand the child's behaviour. If the foster child is finding it difficult to adjust to the foster placement the social worker should assist the foster child and foster parents to understand and meet the special needs of the child.

Although the above table does not give a complete understanding of all the factors that influences the foster child, many of the factors might impact on the child's perception of him/herself. The biological parents, social worker and especially the foster parents need to help the foster child make sense of his/her world. The foster child needs guidance to establish an identity, develop self-esteem, experience stability and security. It would appear to the researcher that foster parents play the most important role in the foster child's life as they have 24 hour contact with the child and his service systems e.g. social worker, school, health care, etc. The welfare agency and social worker need to assist and support the foster parent in providing the care the child requires. The child will not be able to express all of his/her feelings of anxiety, pain, anger, fear, guilt and worthlessness, but will display / act out the feelings in their behaviour. Children will try to gain control over the situation, gain attention or cause problems in the new placement to test the foster parents' and to see if they accept him/her.

2.4.6 FOSTER CHILDREN: SCHOOL PROGRESS

According to Gunston (1992) researchers identified many reasons for the lack of progress of foster children at school. Rice and Mc Fadden (1988) found that foster children experience problems due to repeated changes of schools. The researchers also found that foster children viewed themselves as "second class citizens and as worthless" and often felt that they needed "someone who would

listen, who will understand, and someone who will do something about what they hear”.

Research undertaken by Blome (1997) explored foster children's educational experiences. According to Blome, foster children are often “fragile infants” who later experienced abuse or neglect. The early experiences of these children and the trauma of being removed from the care of their biological parents', may result in developmental delays. These factors impact significantly on the foster child's development. Disrupted education further aggravates the foster child's lack of progress. According to Blome, two-thirds of the foster children in his study repeated one or more school grades during their school career. Few of the children spent time on homework and it appears that they studied significantly less than other children did. Outcome of the research further showed that foster children did not receive enough encouragement, and that this led to a high drop out rate in high school in addition the research indicates that foster children are less likely to complete their schooling.

Beth and Berry (1994) conducted a follow-up study of foster children in New Orleans. The outcome of the study showed that half of the foster children left school before their 11th grade. Adults who were previously in foster care, often suffered educational and employment set backs that may have resulted by factors identified by Blome in his study.

Foster children who took part in a research study by Aldgate, Maluccio and Reeves (1989) stated that changes in schools disrupted their education. They felt that decision-makers did not view their education as a priority. This concurs with a study by Kahan (1979) which was undertaken a decade earlier namely that they were educationally disadvantaged because of disruption in their schooling when they were placed in foster care.

From the aforementioned studies it is evident that children in foster care are vulnerable and that the many interruptions to their schooling could contribute to their educational underachievement.

2.4.7 FOSTER PARENTS

A person becomes a foster parent when the court places a child in his/her care in terms of the provisions of section 14(4) of the Child Care Act after the child's parents were declared unfit or unable to care for the child. (See chapter 3.)

The Child Care Act requires that foster parents should:

- be screened,
- attend training programmes to prepare them for the placement and acquire knowledge of how to deal with the child and the biological parents,
- co-operate with social workers, and
- have knowledge of the basic requirements that are essential for the safety, health and general well-being of all children.

Triseliotis, Sellick & Short (1995) state that foster parents must be prepared before children are placed in their care and that special attention should be given to the biological or own children of foster parents where applicable so that they are prepared for the changes in their home. Placements often break down when the foster parents' own children cannot accept the foster child. The authors highlight the following specific expectations of foster carers:

- The provision of a parenting relationship to the child that is nurturing and caring. This relationship is needed to model socially acceptable behaviour and for the child to develop positive relationship skills;
- Both parents should be involved in providing physical care to the child, this includes health, dental, eye care and protection;
- Foster children often have special educational needs because they have been neglected and/or abused; and foster parents must ensure that these needs are attended to.
- Foster parents need to accommodate contact between the child and the biological parents as this influences the development of his/her identity.

Foster parents' motives for fostering should be ascertained when the foster parents are screened. In some instances foster parents view the foster child as a means of providing their biological child with a friend or playmate. Yet others may attempt to replace a child they have lost by fostering. Fostering based on motives such as these is unacceptable and will impact negatively on the foster child.

Under South African law foster parents become the custodial parents of the foster child. Foster parents make the daily decisions about the child's life, thus co-operation between the social worker and foster parents is important. Their relationship with the social worker should be viewed as a partnership aimed at meeting the child's needs. It is helpful to all parties if the biological parents are in agreement with the way their child is being cared for by the foster parents' as this will facilitate the child feeling contained in the placement.

Ongoing support groups and parent training should be available to foster parents. During such meetings, foster parents are able to share their experiences and assist one another in finding solutions for problems they experience. This provides them with the opportunity to learn from one another and to discuss new developments in child care.

Foster parents are special people who take a child into their home and care for him/her as if a child of their own, knowing that the child could return to its biological parents. In practice it would appear that few children return to their biological parents, as the placement extends for a period longer than two years.

2.4.8 BIOLOGICAL PARENTS

The biological parents remain the child's legal guardians of a foster child in terms of South African law.

Steenkamp (1988) states that biological parents are often viewed as “difficult” people. Biological parents may be unpredictable, irresponsible, and may have psychiatric problems or be unstable. The Child Care Act, No 74 of 1983, as amended by section 5 of Act 86 of 1991 section 14(4) describes the conditions when a child can be removed from his/her parents.

Biological parents often feel that they have been a failure and because of their own pain they avoid contact with the child and social work agencies. It is important to support the parent during and after the removal of their child and to help them cope with their own feelings of anger and disappointment. Their co-operation in the early stages of the placement assists the child to adjust and improves the likelihood of returning the child to the parents care. Despite the biological parents' problems, it is in the interest of the child to maintain contact with the biological parent, provided that they pose no threat to the child. Supervised access, arranged by a social worker, should be considered where access poses the possibility of disruption of any kind. Access should be denied only where it poses a severe threat to the child.

According to Fahlberg (1994: 230) even if it appears that it is unlikely that a foster child will be returned to the custody of the birth parents, the birth parents should be actively involved in order to facilitate permanency within a foster placement. Stein, Gambrill & Wiltse (1978), Shapiro (1976), George (1970), Palmer (1990), Johnson, Yoken & Voss (1995), Klee, Kronstadt & Ziotnick (1997), Sanchirico & Jablonka (2000), Aldgate, Maluccio & Reeves (1989) and David Howe (1996) are some of the authors that strongly support the idea of contact between biological parents and children in foster care.

Access between the foster child and their biological parents' facilitates identity formation in foster children and enhances the foster placement. The foster children get to know their birth parents and will be able to understand why they are in foster care, as they grow older.

2.4.9 CONCLUSION

Foster care has developed into a specialised field and all the role-players involved in foster care should strive to ensure the best interest of the child. The increased knowledge of child development and foster care should be purposefully applied to make each foster placement a positive, empowering experience for the child, in order to contribute to the child's healthy development and adjustment to society. The following chapter provides an overview of the legal framework and current practice of foster care in South Africa.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER THREE: FOSTER CARE: A PRACTICE PERSPECTIVE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa is not the only country that has to deal with a growing number of foster children. It is estimated that the United States of America had 450 000 children in foster care in 1997 and that the projected number of foster children for the year 2 000 would be a million (Klee, Kronstadt and Ziotnick, 1997).

The number of children requiring alternative care increases daily. According to the South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare, parents abandoned 3076 children in the period January 1992 to January 1993. According to the statistics cited in the White Paper for Social Welfare (1996), 29 000 children were in residential care and 39 000 children in foster care during 1992-1993. These figures do not include the number of children who were adopted during this time. Family disintegration, unemployment, alcohol and drug abuse, imprisonment of breadwinners, HIV/AIDS, and urbanisation are some of the factors that add to circumstances which contribute to child neglect, abuse and abandonment. Parents abandon children whom they cannot care for and alternative care must be found for these children.

Child Welfare Society, Cape Town, supervised the placement of 690 foster children in 2000 and it was estimated that the number of foster children would increase to 1025 by the end of 2001. In the communities served by this organisation, poverty and AIDS are contributing significantly to the rising number of abandoned and neglected children. At the same time 639 foster homes and 190 biological parents would also require services from the same practitioners who supervise the 1025 foster children. (Cape Town Child Welfare, Service Plan 2000/2001 Foster care Department).

The budget of the Department for Social Development, generally, and at Child Welfare Society, Cape Town in particular, is inadequate and cannot provide sufficient resources to care for these children. Social workers will have higher caseloads and the work will become more stressful as the numbers of foster

children increase. They will have to develop new ways of delivering appropriate services to foster children. Foster children have special needs and some exhibit behaviours that require specialised treatment and attention. These problems will become more difficult to manage as caseloads increase.

Foster care has developed into a specialised service to children across the “modern” world. The child is now recognised as an individual in his/her own right, with special needs that must be addressed and managed in a holistic manner by the caregiver. It is further recognised that foster parents need support and assistance to cope with the special needs of foster children who have to work through experiences of loss, abandonment, abuse and neglect (refer to Bowlby’s attachment theory and Klein’s object relations theory set out in chapter two). History has also taught us that foster placements require some form of supervision or monitoring to ensure that the foster child’s needs are met and foster parents receive support. From past experience it should be clear that foster care should be regarded as an acceptable alternative to care by the biological family, but only as a last resort when intervention and preventive work has not been successful.

3.2 A LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR PRACTICE

In South Africa foster care is governed by legislation - primarily the Child Care Act, (Act 74 of 1983) as amended by the Child Care Amendment Act (No 86 of 1991), the Child Care Amendment Act (No 96 of 1996), Welfare Laws Amendment Act (No 106 of 1997) and Adoption Matters Amendment Act (No 56 of 1998). In addition the Special Courts for Blacks Abolition Act (34 of 1986); the Abolition of Restrictions on the Jurisdiction of Courts Act (No 88 of 1996) and some others all ensure that the rights of the children are protected.

The Child Care Act (No 74 of 1983) makes provision for:

- the appointment of commissioners of child welfare,
- the protection and welfare of certain children,

- the adoption of children,
- the establishment of certain institutions for the reception of children,
- the treatment of children after such reception,
- The contribution of maintenance towards certain children by certain persons, and to provide for other incidental matters.

Before a child is placed in foster care and becomes a ward of the state, the Child Care Act (No74 of 1983) as amended by Act No 96 of 1996 states that a Children's Court Inquiry will be held in terms of section 13 of the main Act in order to determine whether a child is such as described in section 14(4) (a), (aA), or (b) namely:

(a) If a child has no parent or guardian; or

(aA) the child has a parent or a guardian who cannot be traced; or:

(b) The child

- (i) Has been abandoned or is without visible means of support;
- (ii) Displays behaviour, which cannot be controlled by his or her parents or the person in whose custody he or she is;
- (iii) Lives in circumstances likely to cause or induce his or her seduction, abduction or sexual exploitation;
- (iv) Lives or is exposed to circumstances which may seriously harm the physical, mental or social well-being of the child;
- (v) Is in a state of physical or mental neglect;
- (vi) Has been physically, emotionally or sexually abused or ill-treated by his or her parents or guardian or the person in whose custody he or she is;
or
- (vii) Is being maintained in contravention of section 10.

(Section 10 is concerned with the maintenance of certain children apart from the biological parents).

In summary, the sections of the Act provides for foster children as follows: in terms of section 15(b) of the Act the court can, after holding an inquiry in terms of section 13 order that the child be placed in the custody of a suitable foster parent/s designated by the court under the supervision of a social worker.

The Act furthermore requires that the social worker who is appointed to monitor the placement must:

- (1) ensure that the child is well cared for;
- (2) assist the biological parents to remain in contact with the child and to work towards the return of the child to the parents care, if this possible; and
- (3) the foster parents receive support/training to care for the child.

Section 16 of the Child Care Act states that:

- the duration of a court order issued in terms of section 15 will lapse after the expiration of a period of two years;
- or will continue until the date that the order was made;
- or after a shorter period;
- as the children's court may have determined, at the time of issuing the order. The minister may extend the validity of an order for a further 2 years at a time provided that an order may not be extended beyond a date on which the child attains the age of 18 years.
- Section 33 of the Act makes provision for the extension of an order so that a foster child may be granted consent to receive a foster grant in order to complete his or her schooling after the age of 18 years.

Section 16 of the Act is there to ensure that the foster child does not end up in foster care drift.

Section 34 of the main Act makes provision for the foster child to be transferred to other care with the Ministers permission. A child can be discharged from the provisions of the Act if the conditions stated in section 37 of the Act are complied with. This section of the Act is used in cases where the foster

placement is unsuccessful and the child must therefore be moved into an alternative placement. This might be another foster home or to residential care.

In terms of section 35 of the main Act a child may be placed on leave of absence with his parents or in alternative care. Should the placement not be successful the leave of absence may be cancelled and the child may be returned to the foster parent.

Section 36 of the Child Care Act makes provision for the urgent removal of a foster child from their foster home. The court may order that a child be moved without delay. In such instance, a report will be furnished to the Minister regarding the child concerned and the child will either be transferred to a suitable placement or be discharged from the provisions of the Act.

A child may be discharged from the provisions of the Child Care Act in terms of section 37 if it is desirable and in the interest of the child. The Minister has to issue the order for the discharge in writing. When a child reaches the age of 18 years they are automatically discharged from the Child Care Act, unless application is made for the Child to remain in foster care in order to complete his/her schooling.

In the case of medical treatment of foster children, permission from the Minister or hospital superintendent in case of an emergency, must be obtained when they need to undergo an operation and their own parents are not available to give consent. This is done to protect the child and foster parents. Section 39 of the Child Care Act requires that this be done.

Section 52 of the Act applies if a foster child wants to leave the country. The Act states that any person, who removes a foster child from the Republic without the consent of the minister, shall be guilty of an offence. This law protects the foster children and their biological parents.

At present the Child Care Act (No 74 of 1983 as amended) is under review by the Law Commission. Its task is to incorporate terms of the United Nations

Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child into the proposed new Child Care Act.

3.3 FOSTER CARE: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A POLICY FRAMEWORK

In 1990 a Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Foster Care of Children was submitted to the then Department of Health Services and Welfare of the tri-cameral parliament. The Committee was appointed in 1987. The chairperson was Professor M. de Bruyn, the then Head of the Department of Social Work at the University of South Africa. The reason for the appointment of the committee was that it became clear that there were serious deficiencies in the foster care system. The most important problems were those concerned with the legal aspects of the system as it was embodied in the Child Care Act of 1983, the interpretation of parental rights in respect of children in foster care and the services rendered by social workers to all the parties involved in the care process. The committee looked at these concerns only as it pertained to white foster children.

The terms of reference of the Committee were to investigate, report on and make recommendations regarding

- (i) the philosophy of foster care;
- (ii) the effectiveness of existing foster care practice;
- (iii) the implications of the Child Care Act, 1983(Act 74 of 1983), for foster care;
- (iv) the structuring of an effective foster care service, including the financing of such service; and
- (v) the setting of foster care service.”

The Committee of Inquiry identified a number of important concerns and recommendations. Firstly, that in the present foster care system, children are removed into foster care without appropriate consideration as to the purpose for removal and without adequate planning regarding the duration of removal, or

reconstruction services required to facilitate the child's return to the biological family. Secondly, concern was expressed regarding the impact of foster care drift upon children, biological and foster parents. Thirdly the seemingly endless and aimless moving around of children without a clear plan or strategy of action was of concern.

The Committee recognised the importance of the natural bond between parent and child. It made recommendations that a further proviso to section 16(2) of the Child Care Act (main act, as amended) be included. The Committee recommended that the order may not be extended for a further two years without proof that the return of the child to the parent will lead to serious harm to the physical, emotional or moral well-being of the child.

The Committee further stressed that if there was no clarity regarding the purpose of the placement, there can be no justification for removing a child from the custody of the biological parents and placing the child in foster care. It is an 'enormous' intervention filled with suffering and stress for the child and his/her parents.

It was recommended that a contract should be drawn up at the time of the placement. The contract should be drawn up together with the biological parents, the child (if he/she is old enough to understand) and the social work agency. The expected duration of the placement, the role and nature of contact with the social workers, the extent and nature of contact with the natural parents should be specified. A review panel should review the placement regularly and formally according to conditions laid down in the contract. All parties should be aware of their rights and responsibilities and should have the right to attend the review panel.

The purpose of the review committee is described as follows:

- “ (a) to keep track of all children in substitute care;
- (b) to monitor standards of foster care and to ensure uniformity;
- (c) to monitor the decision making and planning of agencies ;
- (d) to provide an opportunity and a formal forum for participation in planning and decision making by all parties (in so far as possible); and
- (e) to ensure that the rights of all parties are protected.”

A further recommendation was that the State should assume responsibility for a child if and when its legislative power is used to intervene and interrupt or sever the natural bonds between parent and child even if it is on a temporary basis. When doing so the State assumes responsibility for such intervention and for

- “(a) the well-being of the child during the period of separation from his/her parents;
- (b) provision of services aimed at the elimination, if possible and within a period consistent with the well being of the child, of the causes or conditions giving rise to the severance of the natural bonds;
- (c) the restoration of the child to his biological parents' custody as soon as it is safe to do so; and
- (d) the provision of suitable and permanent substitute care for the child where such restoration is not possible within a period consistent with the welfare of the child.”

The Committee proposed that, in order for agencies to apply all the recommendations it had made, a uniform foster care policy applied by the state and all organisations rendering foster care services must be set in place. Concern was expressed regarding a lack of co-ordination and this has a serious effect on the efficient rendering of services to foster children and all parties involved. The continual turnover of social workers that work with foster children impacts negatively on service practice. Poor salaries, poor conditions of service and high caseloads are factors that greatly affect service delivery. Parker (1980), Kline and Overstreet (1972) and Klee, Kornstadt and Ziotnick

(1997) corroborate these findings. Foster care services are hampered by an inadequate funds and lack of specialised training in childcare, including foster care. A further recommendation was that subsidised adoptions be considered when foster care becomes a long-term placement as many suitable foster parents depend on the foster grant to care for the child. The Committee's main recommendation was that the principles of permanency planning, as described in the report, become the norm according to which all foster care services will be planned by organisations and staff involved with foster care.

Subsequent to this the Draft Strategy on Child Protection in South Africa, drawn up by the Department of Social Development in 2000 proposed the following action in its mission statement, namely

“to protect children against all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation through accessible, integrated and co-ordinated services, focusing on primary, secondary and tertiary prevention, intervention and rehabilitation based on a multi-disciplinary and inter -sectoral approach”.

Of special significance to foster children are the rights of the child mentioned in the strategic points of departure as stated in the proposed draft document (2000). It states that:

“The child has the right to protective intervention when the family cannot or will not meet his/her basic needs to protect him or her from harm”. The document further states that children (including foster children) should have the opportunity to grow up in a family environment where the child will receive nurturance, security and opportunities to develop. Protection should also be available in the schools and neighbourhoods.

Before these developments Child Welfare Society, Cape Town noted a similar sentiment in its Annual Report (1998 – 1999) when it stated: “It is our firm belief that communities must take responsibility for their problems and, together with the Society work towards positive change”.

While the Department of Social Development worked on the White Paper for Social Welfare, the Law Commission appointed a Project committee to review the Child Care Act (No 74 of 1983, as amended). It became apparent to the project committee appointed by the Law Commission, that the present resources for the caring of children of South Africa are grossly inadequate. The South African Law Commission (Executive Summary, 2002) states that social welfare, and other services for children "will need massive injections of resources in the foreseeable future in order to fulfil the basic needs the most vulnerable members of society".

The projects committee of the Law Commission recommended that provision be made for various forms of substitute family care, which should include short-term and long-term care by relatives and non-relatives". The Commission proposes that foster care by relatives be seen as a separate form of foster care from that of children in unrelated placements.

Poverty, unemployment, violence in homes and neighbourhoods, gangsterism, alcohol and drug abuse is factors that contribute to abuse, neglect and abandonment of children. The authors September, Beerwinkel and Jacobson (2000) argue that policies and legislation cannot protect the children. Communities and neighbourhoods should take responsibility for the safety and development of children in communities.

3.4 FOSTER CARE IN PERSPECTIVE: CURRENT PRACTICES

Social workers are involved with children before, during and after placement. The Committee of Inquiry into Foster Care of Children asserted in their report of 1990 that preventative work is essential and that community work should be in order to prevent poverty, and moral and ethical decay. This opinion is in line with the philosophy of the White Paper for Social Welfare published in 1997 which states that job opportunities and healthy recreational facilities should be provided within communities and that more time should be dedicated to

preventative work with families in order to assist them in caring for their children. Only after preventative work has proved unsuccessful and after the court finds the parents unable or unfit to care for their children, should alternative care be considered. The Committee further stated that removal of a child and placement in alternative care is a radical form of intervention which impacts on and affects a child significantly. For this reason such intervention should be undertaken only when it is clearly in the child's best interest to do so. When a decision is made to place a child in foster care, it is imperative that the child and the biological family are appropriately and adequately prepared and assessed by the social worker. The report prepared for the court needs to be fully discussed with all parties involved before the placement. The social worker needs to draw up contracts with all parties involved, including the child, if he/she is old enough to understand. A decision must be made if short term or long term foster care is required. The preparation and introduction of the child to the foster parents will affect the placement, and the outcome of it, and it is important that this is done by the social worker. The court report must be discussed with all the parties concerned. After placing the child, the social worker must ensure that the contracts with the various parties are implemented and adhered to. The social worker should have instituted regular contact with all the parties and should provide support to all of them. Foster care bodies or review panels have been set in place to help social workers make decisions (Draft Discussion Document on Foster Care, 1997; Stein, Gambrill and Wiltse, 1978).

Triseliotis, Sellick and Short (1995) describe social workers as "the unifying link" between foster carers, birth parents and the child. According to these authors, social worker's primary task is to ensure that the child is provided with a structured environment, as this helps the child to feel safe and contained. In order to achieve this the social worker must secure a network of significant relationships. This requires that social workers visit the foster home regularly and maintain contact with the foster parents and child –both jointly and separately. The social worker should also maintain contact with the biological parents and should act as a link between the biological parents and the child. These authors are in agreement with Stein, Gambrill & Wiltse(1978) who state

that it is helpful to have contracts in place with all parties involved as the placement may be threatened through failure to clarify roles and expectations. Regular feedback and reviews help to make the contract and placement a success. In addition the contract facilitates the social workers task as it prevents misconceptions and ambiguities between all the parties concerned.

Dinnage and Pringle (1966), Parker (1980), Kline and Overstreet (1972) and Klee, Kornstadt and Ziotnick (1997) are concerned that welfare agencies lack adequate resources and that social workers involved in foster care, have high caseloads which result in “burnout “ and a high staff turn over. In practice social workers spend more time on administrative duties rather than with foster children and their foster families. This leads to frustration of all the parties' involved, as expectations are not being met. It is interesting to note that these problems, although identified decades ago, remains unresolved and is still a contentious issue among social workers,

Social workers supervising foster placements require knowledge and skills to do their work effectively as they have to deal with complex interpersonal - relationship problems. Knowledge such as the stages of human development (Erickson, 1983); the “attachment theory” of John Bowlby (1988) and the “grief and loss” theory of Elizabeth-Kübler-Ross (1985) and legal aspects of foster care are but a few of the areas social workers need to be familiar with.

Foster care social workers must have a sound understanding of children. Foster children view social workers as important because of their belief that the social workers have contact with the biological parents and can thus assist in facilitating contact. Sanchirico and Jabonka (2000); Klee, Kronstadt and Ziotnick (1997); Aldgate, Maluccio and Reeves (1989) support this assumption. Rice and Mc Fadden's research (1998) indicates that foster children's view of the social worker's role is to assist them with problems and helping them to maintain contact with their biological parents. Foster children also want social workers to know more about their feelings (Palmer 1990). According to Triseliotis, Sellick and Short (1995) and the Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Foster Care of Children, the Department of Health Services and

Welfare (1990) this can be done by helping the children, among other things to prepare a life story book.

3.4.1 SOCIAL WORKERS RELATIONSHIP WITH FOSTERS PARENTS

The social worker's relationship with the foster parent is fraught with contradictions. On the one hand the relationship is viewed as a partnership aimed at serving the best interest of the child. On the other hand the social worker is legally required to monitor the foster placement. It is often difficult, for both social worker and foster parents to accept and come to terms with this dual role. An additional difficulty/ complication is that while foster parents are in the main mature, responsible adults the social workers are often much younger and have far less child rearing experience.

Triseliotis, Sellick and Short (1995) suggest that it is necessary to have clear contracts that spell out the expectations and roles to make this relationship a professional and working relationship. Social workers have to acknowledge the wishes of the foster parents when placing a child if they want to make the placement a success e.g. if the foster parents want a young child this wish should be respected and they should not be persuaded to take an older child. The authors also emphasise the fact that the social worker should at all times act professionally, with courtesy, kindness and an appreciation of, and respond to the foster carers need for recognition, acceptance and status.

3.4.2 SOCIAL WORKERS RELATIONSHIP WITH BIOLOGICAL PARENTS

The biological parents need social work services to assist them with practical and psychological issues regarding the placement of their child in foster care. The birth parents often view themselves as failures. Guilt, shame, anger and sadness make it difficult for them to face practical issues such as finding employment, rehabilitation of their drug or alcohol problem and keeping contact with their children in foster care.

Social workers are expected to render services to the biological parents' that are appropriate and in agreement with the initial contracts that were drawn up at the time of placement. According to the Report of the committee of Inquiry into Foster Care of Children (1990) who recommended "That a purposeful programme of treatment, linked to a time schedule based on the prognosis for the family, should be drawn up and attached to the children's court report. Where the prognosis is positive, restoration becomes the objective, while permanency in care of the child is the objective when the prognosis is poor".

Sanchirico and Jablonka (2000) state that: " The primary goal of the foster care system is to reunite foster children with their biological parents " Social workers are required to promote contact between foster children and biological parents as this increases the child's feelings of well-being while in care.

3.5 THE CASEWORK MODEL OF SERVICE DELIVERY: TRADITIONAL PRACTICE

Traditionally placements were "supervised" through home visits, which, more often than not, meant nothing more than talking to the foster mother. Such visits served to monitor the placement. However, sadly little if any time, was devoted to direct interaction with the child himself/herself.

Casework, when it was done served to assist the child with understanding and coming to terms with the reasons for the foster placement and the consequences of the separation from the biological parents. According to Kadushin (1980:401)

" Casework with the child is directed towards helping him to make the physical and emotional separation from his own home and the transition to the foster home ".

Triseliotis, Sellick and Short (1995) similarly highlight the following aspects of the work to be done with foster children:

- The social worker should assist the child to deal with his feelings of abandonment, rejection, and hostility towards his own parents and his anxiety over acceptance by the foster parents.
- It is necessary for the social worker to become familiar with the child and his/her world before and/or after placement – depending on the time factor involved in the placement.
- Social workers should acquaint themselves with the children's interests, abilities, fears and problems.
- A relationship of trust between the social worker and child has to be established in order for the social worker to become a central figure in the child's life. The frequent changes of social workers that occur in practice, due to high staff turnover, further make it difficult for the child to trust adults.
- As stated before the social worker should be the link between the child and his/her biological parents.

Considering the insights which Bowlby's attachment theory offers regarding children's mental health, development and the trauma that foster children experience, it is important that they be provided with supportive, therapeutic intervention which will assist them in coping before, during and after removal from their parents. Fahlberg (1994:326) states that casework "is used to understand significant events in the past, confront the feelings that are secondary to these events, and to become more fully involved in the future planning of their (foster children's) lives".

3.6 GROUPWORK

Groupwork offers an effective, alternative method of assisting foster children. The use of groupwork is beneficial to foster children as it helps to develop interactional/interpersonal skills, social skills, and it promotes psychological and social development. The individual's need for recognition and affirmation can be met with the help of groupwork and this facilitates development of a positive self-concept in the foster child. Groupwork fosters universality and in addition minimises feelings of isolation commonly experienced by foster children. It is also the author's experience that group members encourage and support one another and help each other to see his/her situation in a new context.

According to Rice and Mc Fadden (1988) foster children who took part in groups responded positively and discussed more easily issues concerning their foster homes, biological parents and the role of the social worker. Foster children in these groups shared that they feel sad when teased about their foster status, that they missed their families and especially their mothers. Adolescent foster children saw the role of the social worker as that of helping children with problems and keeping contact with their biological families. Some adolescents described social workers as being "nosy".

Palmer's (1990) experience of groupwork with foster children concurs with the work of Rice and McFadden's. Palmer experienced that younger foster children benefit from groupwork by realising that foster care is a universal concept and that other foster children have similar experiences. Groupwork assists children to deal with the inner/emotional conflicts caused by separation from their parents and, furthermore assists foster children in developing a healthy self-concept. Palmer (1990) found that: "Most workers reported that the group experience made them more sensitive to foster children and their needs, particularly in relation to moves from one home to another. Many workers noted that children talked more openly in groups, than they did in individual sessions with their workers". This concurs with experience of social workers at Child

Welfare Society, Cape Town who felt that the then existing casework model of practice was inadequate. It was this sentiment which resulted in the development of a new and unique model of approach to foster care, the Sable House Model.

3.7 FOSTER CARE AT CHILD WELFARE SOCIETY, CAPE TOWN

In 1992, the foster care team of Child Welfare Society, Cape Town and situated at Sable House in Hanover Park, became concerned about the delivery of foster care services to foster children in its area of operation. They were keen to improve their services. The team manager, Mr Tom Gunston, envisioned to develop an alternative model of foster care supervision to children and at the same time help them to recover from the damaging effects of pre-placement experiences in their biological environment. This model aimed at providing more effective services; the team evaluated their practice, statistics, services and resources. The outcome of this evaluatory process indicated that the casework method of intervention made very little impact in helping the foster children. The team realised that on average they had between 9 and 14 contacts with each foster family during that year and the contact was not necessarily with the foster child, but with a member of the foster family, a teacher, a biological parent or other person involved with the foster child. Since the Sable House team wished to make a greater impact in the life of the foster child, they accepted that more direct contact is needed with foster children. The Sable House team realised that in order to render more effective foster care services, it was necessary to alter and improve their methods of intervention and service delivery. The Sable House team designed services to fulfil statutory requirements, as well as strengthen family life and to increase healthy ego development in foster children. The aim of the Sable House Model is to address the same concerns as those which were later on articulated in the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997). These concerns included addressing the lack of services and amenities in disadvantaged communities which impact on the quality of social services and facilities.

One of the most significant outcomes of Sable House Model resulted from the teams undertaking to engage to do groupwork with the foster children in order

to facilitate increased contact with the foster children. Palmer (1990) and Rice and McFadden (1988) found that foster children were assisted in developing a healthy self-concept when involved in groupwork. Groupwork also assists the child to talk more openly with social workers (Palmer, 1990).

In designing the service model and to ensure efficacy and appropriateness of the service for the target group, the Sable House team under the leadership of Mr Gunston evaluated its client population in order to develop a profile of foster children aged 7 - 12 years in Hanover Park. Specific aspects paid attention to were the following:

- the child's concept and understanding of his/her foster status,
- the child's self-esteem,
- the child's understanding of the role of the social worker in foster placements,
- the child's contact with the biological parents, and
- the child's school performance.

- **Understanding of the foster status**

The Sable House research team assessed the foster child's conception of his/her placement status. The outcome of this research indicates that the children did not have a clear understanding of why they were in foster care.

The importance of the child's concept of their foster care status is underlined by Weinstein (1960:66) who says that: "Without an adequate conception of who he is, where he is and why he is there, it is difficult to see how the foster child could develop well in a situation as complex and problematic as placement". Weinstein (1960:21) further says that: "The behaviour of any party in the relationship is a function of his conception of his role in the situation, which in turn is a function of the way he defines the situation".

- **Assessment of the child's self esteem**

The team compiled an appropriate self-administered assessment test to measure children's self esteem as related to health, schooling, friends, family life and self. (A copy of the test is included in the appendix). (Children were required to rate themselves on a scale according to the categories always, usually, seldom or never.) The test findings showed that the children required assistance in a variety of areas including assistance to develop relationship, assertiveness and problem- solving skills. Skills in dealing with peer pressure, grooming skills, skills to making changes in their behaviour are skills that also needed to be developed. Children also had to learn to deal with issues of loss and grief.

- **The child's understanding of role of the social worker in foster placements**

Generally the research indicated that the foster children's knowledge of the social worker's role in the foster placement experience was vague and inaccurate. Many children viewed the social worker as someone who would take them away from the foster home if they did not behave. This was obviously reinforced by foster parents' threats. The social worker's limited contact with the foster child made it difficult for foster children to build up a relationship with their social worker.

The Sable House programme is run over a period of five weeks. During the programme foster children are able to become acquainted with their social worker and to build up a meaningful relationship with them. This becomes possible as foster children are assisted in understanding the role of the social worker, and thus also in developing a feeling of trust in him/her.

- **Contact with the biological parents**

The research assessed the foster children's contact with their biological parents as this influences the placement. A large percentage of the foster children in the survey had no contact with their biological parents. One of the aims of the

Sable House model was to assist foster children in coping with having little or no contact with their biological parents. The foster children experienced feelings of separation and loss from the fact that they have little or no contact with their biological parents.

In addition the research indicated that the foster carers often lacked insight into the needs of the foster children and that they displayed a negative attitude towards the biological parents (Gunston,1992:24). Groupwork methods facilitated foster children in identifying and sharing feelings about their biological parents.

- **School profile of the foster child**

The Sable House team assessed the scholastic performance of the foster children served by the agency. The results of the research showed that children who experienced trauma often present with learning and emotional problems. Only 15% of the children were in school standards appropriate for their age, 55% were one year behind for their age, 15% were 2 years behind and 10% were 3 years behind for their age, the remaining 5% of foster children were 4 years behind for their age.

When placed in foster care, children are frequently required to change schools. Research done by Kahan (1979) and Aldgate, Malauccio and Reeves (1989) found that changes in schools lead to disruption of the child's education. Recent research (Blome, 1997) indicates that negative early life experience together with the trauma of removal from the biological parents is likely to result in developmental delay. This results from the premature interruption of a child's lifeline. According to Blome's research, two-thirds of the foster children in the study, repeated one or more grades.

3.8 THE SABLE HOUSE MODEL

The Sable House team developed a group work model for practice that was empowering and which engaged all the role players in a constructive manner. The model involved investigation, assessment, and analysis of foster children's needs, and called for purposeful social activity aimed at treating the children's needs. Selection criteria for group inclusion are that children with similar problems and of similar ages who live in the same area attend groups.

The aim of the programme is to help foster children to gain a clear and accurate view of their foster situation. This is facilitated through the use of games and activities. The programme extends over 6 weekly sessions. The six weeks programme includes the following:

Week one: A group contract is drawn up and expectations of the group discussed and clarified. A questionnaire is completed by group members at the first and last session. This enables practitioners to evaluate and assess the impact of effectiveness of the group. (A copy of the questionnaire is included in the appendix).

Week two: Each child makes life story books. This activity facilitates the development of self knowledge in the children, and is particularly effective with younger children. During the creation of the life story, the child is assisted in identifying and including in their book, positive experiences and memories. Through these activities children are helped to boost their self- esteem. (This activity constitutes a narrative approach, and has been shown, to be an effective technique for adults and children.)

Week three: The third session focuses on assisting children to identify important people in their lives. This activity is aimed at helping the child to learn more about itself.

Week four: During this session the groups focuses on the role of the social worker. Children are assisted in identifying and understanding the role of the

social worker in the removal of the child from his/her biological parents, The use of eco-maps, videos and other age appropriate material facilitates the children in exploring their feelings towards the social worker. (This might be seen as a form of trauma debriefing.)

Week five: Participants explore and discuss their experience of being in foster care. One of the techniques that is used is the drawing of faces to help them illustrate their feelings This session concludes with a summary which focuses on the future which explores and addresses the possibility that the foster child may not be able to return to the biological parents.

Week six: The aim of the final session is twofold. Firstly to evaluate whether the goal of the group was achieved and secondly to terminate with the children. A planned activity is used to assist children in terminating with and saying farewell to the group.

In 1995 the team evaluated the work done since the implementation of the model. The evaluation indicated that foster children received more than three times the amount of time since the implementation of the model. The implementation of the Sable House Model proved that service delivery to foster children can be improved in a meaningful way and that groupwork is an effective and appropriate intervention method for working with foster children.

In 1999 the impact of the group work programme was again evaluated. The outcome showed that the children who attended the programme showed remarkable insight compared with those who did not attend the programme. Ten children who attended group work programs according to the Sable House Model were compared with ten children who did not participate in the Sable House Model at Child Welfare Society, Cape Town. The outcome of this evaluation indicates that the children who attended the activities were:

- More independent and confident.
- Able to admit to problems and ask for help.

- These children had an improved understanding of foster care and the reasons why they had been placed in foster care.
- They also understood the role of the social worker better than the children who did not take part in these activities did.
- They have a more positive attitude towards the social worker.
- These children seemed to know more about their biological parents and seemed to be more understanding and positive towards their parents.
- The children who took part in the group activities were more content with their circumstances.

Having piloted and evaluated the Sable House programme, the social work team proposed the following recommendations to further improve the model:

1. Planned group work should replace casework as the primary method of intervention and practice. (Casework would still be used to meet crisis situations and special needs).
2. Children's groups to be conducted as a team effort so that children would have contact with more than one social worker. This would ensure continuity with agency personnel.
3. Two or more social workers should work together in conducting children's outings, birthday celebrations, camps, etc.
4. Special needs of children to be met through using appropriate game, videos and invited speakers.
5. The team should work on community projects for children. One such project was the "Homework Help" project that was aimed at improving scholastic performances of foster children.

6. Each team member to be responsible for a group or project for biological parents.
7. Each team member was to offer a monthly training programme to the foster parents for whom they are responsible.
8. Each team member should be responsible for an informal support meeting for the foster parents with special needs.
9. Team members should all work together on community projects for the foster parents.
10. Children with behavioral and emotional problems would benefit from the group work method if appropriately chosen and matched with the group activities.

3.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher has presented an overview of the legal framework for practice, the development of a policy framework in foster care, and an overview of current foster care practices in South Africa. The casework model and the Sable House Model of service delivery were discussed in order to provide background to the present research study.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The researcher undertook this study in order to allow foster children in the sample to express and describe their lived experiences. The researcher wished to facilitate this so that all the role players in the foster children's lives, especially social workers, become aware of and have a better understanding of what foster children perceive their needs to be as well as to be able to assist them to meet these needs. The experiences of the foster children are highlighted, explored during in-depth interviews and described.

This study adopted a qualitative research design since it intended to explore the experiences and perceptions of children in foster care in two communities of the Western Cape, namely Hanover Park and Lotus River/Ottery. Children in the two communities' studies had received services according to two different models of social work practice, for example: those who received casework services and those who received services according to the Sable House Model of intervention. The latter is an integrated service model which provides mainly group work for foster children, the biological parents and foster families, with casework being used as an additional service i.e. it is only used if and when the need for such intervention is indicated. Denzin & Lincoln (1994: 2) quoted by De Vos (1998: 240) state that: "qualitative research is defined as a multiperspective approach (utilising different qualitative techniques and data collection methods) to social interaction, aimed at describing, making sense of, interpreting or reconstructing this interaction, in terms of the meanings that subjects attach to it". The researcher chose the qualitative method of research and design for the following reasons, as stated by De Vos (1998):

- In order to understand the meaning which participants attach to their situations.

- The data collected, through interaction, could be placed and understood in the particular context and setting of the participants, thus enhancing the understanding of the data.
- The data obtained would be analyzed by identifying themes and by placing the data in a particular context and setting so as to understand the meaning of the data.
- The understanding and interpretation of observations through the qualitative method, focuses on the topic of research and allows for flexibility and creativity.

4.2 NATURE OF THE STUDY

This research study constitutes an ethnographic, empirical study that is exploratory and descriptive in nature. The methods used in this research study are used to investigate the foster children's world of observations and experiences and this is regarded as the only legitimate source of scientific data for this research study. This research is flexible and open to discovery. This research further constitutes an ethnographic study consisting of case studies. It is aimed at providing an in-depth study describing and understanding the participants in the communities in which they live as this impacts on their quality of life and their experience of foster care. This approach captures and portrays an experience rather than providing a clinical collection of data of a quantitative nature.

4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The qualitative approach adopted in this study enabled the researcher to explore and describe how foster children experienced foster care and social work services, as well as what their expectations of social workers are. A further aspect of the study compares how foster children experience two different methods of service delivery for example, casework services and services rendered according to the Sable House method of intervention. The researcher did not expect to find clear, definite answers but hoped to gain an

understanding of what foster children need and expect from social work services. According to Mouton (2001:150) "In some cases certain "general ideas" or "expectations" act to guide the empirical research" In this research study the researcher focussed on:

- the foster child's view of foster care;
- how he/she understood foster care;
- the foster children's views of the foster parents, biological parents and social workers; and
- the foster children's school progress.

By giving foster children a "voice" and learning from their insights, they are provided with an opportunity to contribute to finding solutions for their problems and to identify topics that require further research in the future.

The researcher used an empirical research strategy to compare the Sable House Model to the traditional casework method of practice in order to ascertain how foster children perceive social work services. The research strategy used in this study employed a three pronged approach. Firstly participants were requested to tell their story in their own words and with as little direction as possible from the researcher. In the second phase of this approach, the unstructured interview was followed by an interview using a schedule which enabled the researcher to obtain a pool of information common to all the participants. Finally, in the third phase, participants were requested to complete a self-administered questionnaire which provided information on how the respondents perceive themselves. (See appendix C.) According to De Vos (1998) qualitative research entails interpretation or construction of lived experiences of subjects. Within this study the qualitative research approach enables the researcher, through the use of in-depth interviews, to describe groups and individuals within their communities. In addition, the study makes use of secondary sources of information namely official records. The secondary source employed by the researcher comprised social work case files of the participants.

According to De Vos (1998:280) “human behaviour is influenced in many ways by the milieu or setting in which it occurs”. The author further states that the researcher should spend time in the participants’ natural environment where they can obtain first hand knowledge of the participants’ living circumstances. Having lived and worked in the communities studied the researcher was able to enter the field to provide the foster children with an opportunity to express their views and feelings.

Mouton (2001: 194 & 195) adds to the view expressed by De Vos (1998) when he states that the strength of a qualitative research paradigm is that it studies people and gives an “insider perspective”. It also focuses on the experiences of the individuals, as they experience their situation and how they perceive their relationships in the situation. This is relevant for the foster child who must sustain relationships with his biological family, a foster family and the social worker. All these relationships will affect his/her ability to relate in future relationships, understand his/her situation and respond to it.

4.4 SELECTION CRITERIA AND SAMPLING

For the purpose of this study the following inclusion criteria were applied: respondents must

- a) be resident in either the community of Hanover Park or Lotus River/Ottery;
- b) have been placed in official foster care in terms of the provisions of the Child Care Act (No 74 of 1983 as amended);
- c) have been exposed to casework or the Sable House Model of practice; and
- d) be adolescents born between 1982 and 1986 and thus of an age that they are able to articulate their responses and to cope with the impact of discussing their experiences of foster care.

The communities of Hanover Park and Lotus River/Ottery were chosen as they have a similar demographic profile and experience similar socio-economic problems e.g. poverty, unemployment, family violence, substance abuse, gangsterism, and crime. By choosing adolescents from similar communities it was hoped that the variables of the communities would be comparable whereas comparing adolescents placed in foster care in more affluent communities could distort the variables immeasurably.

According to Neuman (2000: 196) qualitative researchers focus on the purpose of the research when collecting a sample. This ensures that specific cases, which meet identified criteria, are included in the study. Foster children constitute a "hidden" and "difficult to reach" population (Mouton, 2001:195). This makes it difficult to employ random or representative sampling in this study. In view of this the researcher used the method of purposive and availability sampling. Purposive sampling is a form of non-random sampling in which researchers use a wide range of methods of a highly specific and difficult to reach population. (Neuman, 2000). Purposive sampling enabled the researcher to obtain a pool of cases which reveal specific features upon which this research is focussed. It furthermore allowed the researcher to make use of her knowledge and expertise as an expert in the field of foster care. As the population from which the sample was drawn proved difficult to reach, it necessitated the use of availability sampling. The researcher sent twenty-four letters to 28 adolescents who are between the ages of 16 and 20 years. Only two of these foster children responded to the invitation to participate in the study. The researcher followed up those who did not respond with telephonic contact. After the purpose of the study was carefully explained to them and confidentiality assured, eight of the respondents agreed to participate in the study - hence the sample comprising an availability sample.

4.5 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT AND DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001) a variety of collection methods and techniques are used in qualitative research - a view also expressed by Denzin

and Lincoln (1994). According to these authors qualitative research focuses on process rather than outcome. In qualitative research the researcher is the main tool in the research. In the context of this study the researcher actively participated in the interviews, using an interview schedule interpreting the data collected as it was collected during interviews. This schedule focussed on drawing out and exploring the foster child's perceptions of foster care and social work services. In order to minimize the possibility of bias, the schedule was used after participants had completed the unstructured interview.

Collection of data proceeded with the researcher reading the files of the participants in order to obtain a background history to the foster placement. This included details of what necessitated the removal of the child and his/her placement in foster care, information regarding the biological family of the foster child as well as of contact between the child and his family of origin. In addition the files provided information regarding the age at which the child was placed in foster care, contacts with the social worker, screening and personal details of the foster parents, and social work services rendered in respect of the placement. As suggested by De Vos (2000) and Mouton (2001), interpretation of data began at the outset of the study, and contributed to shaping the research as it progressed.

The following step in data collection was the initiation of in-depth, face to face interviews with the participants. Of the 10 participants, 7 were interviewed in their respective homes while 3 were interviewed in a restaurant at the Ottery Hypermarket; this was necessitated by the fact that their homes did not provide adequately for privacy and confidentiality during interviews. All the interviews followed an unstructured format and were conducted according to the following procedure:

- The researcher introduced herself and explained the reasons for the research study.
- Participants were thanked for agreeing to participate in the research study and were assured of confidentiality.

- Participants were invited to “tell their story’ in their own words and time. It was explained that the researcher was keen to obtain and understand the participant’s experiences of foster care and of the social worker’s role in foster care.
- Participants were invited to use their language of choice as well as being informed that the researcher would follow the interview with questions.
- The researcher requested permission from each participant to make use of a tape recorder during the interview, explaining why this was necessary.
- Participants were invited to ask questions or make comments before the interview proceeded, and these were appropriately responded to by the researcher.
- The researcher attended to the verbal details and non-verbal cues of the participant during the session, but did not make notes while the interview was in progress. Once the interview was complete, participants were requested to respond to an interview schedule. This interview schedule comprised of open-ended questions designed to augment information obtained in the unstructured interviews. This schedule focused on the foster child’s perspective of self, schooling, the foster placement, the biological parents, the foster care worker, social work services and the foster parents. The interview schedule served the purpose of ensuring uniformity, validity and reliability of measurement.
- Following this, participants were requested to complete a self-administered questionnaire. The participants completed the questionnaire without assistance from the researcher. In some instances the participants completed the questionnaire immediately. In other cases questionnaires had to be collected at a later stage. The use of this questionnaire added a further dimension to the study as it assisted the researcher in developing a deeper understanding of the foster child and his/her experiences. This questionnaire was adapted from a questionnaire used by the Sable House Team before the Sable House Model was implemented.

- The session was brought to an end by thanking the participants once again. Each individual was offered the opportunity to avail themselves of a further session with the researcher should they wish to do so. Participants were also informed that the outcome of the research would be conveyed to them if they wished the researcher to do so.
- Once the session had ended, the researcher made detailed notes regarding the interview, and noting particularly any non-verbal cues which would not be noted in the tape recordings.

4.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF DATA

As the study is based on a sample of limited size, it is important to note that the findings cannot be generalized to the wider population. According to Mouton (2001), Neuman (2000), and De Vos (1998) a limited sample size is acceptable in qualitative research as such studies provide a detailed and in-depth investigation of a small number of participants. In view of the sample size, the study provides only an indication of how the respondents perceive foster care and how the Sable House Model vs. the casework model assists foster children.

In order to obtain an objective view of the foster child's inner world the interview schedule employed in this study was used only once the unstructured interviews had been completed.

All the participants agreed that the interviews could be tape recorded and as the interview progressed appeared to forget about the tape recorder. The participants were allowed to share their perspectives of their placements and the interviewer at all times attempted to remain objective throughout the process by employing reflexivity.

In order to address the limitations of this study the researcher employed triangulation of data. This included comparing data in the present study with

past research done on foster care by Fourie (1999), Swanepoel (1998) and Scholtz (1988). The use of secondary sources in the form of case files provided a further form of triangulation.

4.7 RESEARCHER BIAS

The researcher was involved with foster care services as a social worker for a period of 8 years, as well as having experienced the provision of services according to both the casework and the Sable House Model of intervention. While this holds potential for researcher bias, it also provides an important advantage, as she is thus familiar with the fundamental principals of foster care. In addition, the researcher has a sound knowledge and understanding of the areas in which the participants live, as she herself resided in an adjacent neighbourhood for a lengthy period of time, and was thus a participant observer. According to De Vos (1998: 278) "Participation observation is generally regarded as the principal data-gathering strategy of qualitative research". In the context of this study it assisted the researcher to understand the language, customs and value systems. The potential for researcher bias was addressed through consistent attention to reflexivity as described by De Vos (1998) where there was close interaction with the participants but the researcher did not become a member of the group. The researcher's extensive experience in the field of foster care alerted her to the complexity of foster care, the services required in respect of foster care, and the impact of both casework and the Sable House Model of intervention.

As the researcher was employed at Child Welfare Society, Cape Town, she was able to obtain access to a "difficult to reach" population. This made it possible to obtain permission to undertake the research, scrutinize existing records, and to enter the field. While doing the research the researcher had to constantly reflect on what the adolescents said about their foster placements and the preconceived ideas the researcher had of their foster care experiences.

4.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

“Since human beings are the objects of study in the social sciences, this brings its own unique ethical problems to the fore . . . ” (De Vos, 1998: 22). In the context of this study this is indeed true as the participants are young adolescents who have already experienced numerous traumas. With this in mind, the researcher addressed the following ethical issues during this research study. Although De Vos (1998) considers a number of ethical issues, these are not claimed to be comprehensive.

a) Harm to experimental subjects, informed consent and confidentiality was addressed in the following manner:

The nature and purpose of this study was discussed with the participants and foster parents before the individual interviews in order to get their co-operation. This was done to minimize the risk of harm to the participants and they were assured of confidentiality. In some instances this meant that the interviews had to be conducted outside of the foster home. During the individual interviews the researcher made every effort to avoid emotional discomfort to the participants.

b) Actions and competence of the researcher

The practitioner-researcher approached this research study, by showing respect for the cultural circumstances of the participants. The researcher used her skills and competence attained through years of social work in the identified communities. In order to assure that the research is based on scientific principals the researcher strived to ensure objectivity through using reflexivity to avoid making value judgements while conducting the research.

c) Co-operation with collaborators

The Chief Executive Officer of Child Welfare Society, Cape Town, gave written permission for the project, after being approached via a letter to request permission to involve clients of the Society in the research project. The files of many of the adolescents approached for this study were transferred to the Department of Social Services of Wynberg and Athlone when they reached the

age of thirteen years. The directors of these departments were contacted telephonically and in writing to request permission to include their clients in this project (See Appendix B). The clients targeted were identified in the correspondence to these departments. Both directors gave the researcher verbal consent during telephonic discussions for the inclusion of their clients in the study. This was done so as to obtain a clear contract and to avoid any confusion regarding service delivery.

d) Restoration of participants

During the individual interviews the researcher offered a follow-up interview to the participants should they wish to discuss issues that made them emotionally uncomfortable.

4.9 DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of data is an ongoing process and starts with the first interview. From the outset of this study themes emerged and evolved. According to Wickham, Cooper and Bailey (1997) the data collected by the researcher should be analyzed from pre-theories, raw data, organized data, and finally analyzed data, using qualitative techniques. These techniques include:

- reading the data
- identifying points of interest
- coding information
- developing categories
- linking categories to identify themes
- developing potential categories
- identifying absences in information in the data, and
- suggestions or explanations for the findings.

According to Mouton (2000:198) data analysis begins while the interview is still underway. This preliminary analysis tells you how to redesign your questions as you continue interviewing. In line with this approach the researcher undertook a

detailed analysis of the interviews, schedules and questionnaires once the research began.

For the purpose of this research study, analysis of data began with the first interview. The schedule for the interview employed in this study had to be adjusted as the study proceeded and the researcher became aware of the effect of poverty and gangsterism on the participants. The first interview in Hanover Park and the first interview in Lotus River/Ottery served as a pilot study. The pilot study provided information on which changes were based. As qualitative research is flexible, these pilot interviews could be included in the research. According to Tesch's (in De Vos 1998: 342) the researcher must remember that in qualitative research the stage of data analysis is interwoven with the writing and reporting stage.

In this study the researcher compared information gathered from the participants, who received social work services according two methods mentioned earlier/before. De Vos (1998, 338) quotes the method Lincoln and Guba (1985) adapted to process data. "The constant comparative method is a continuous developing process that takes place in four stages: comparing units applicable to each category, integrating categories and their properties, determining the theory and writing the theory."

The interviewer identified words which respondents used consistently as well as phrases that were repeated in the different interviews. The information obtained from foster children in Hanover Park was analyzed and coded separately from the interviews done in the Lotus River/Ottery area.

Once the analysis of each of the two areas interviewed was completed they were compared. This enabled the researcher to see whether any significant differences exist between the foster children who received social work services primarily through groupwork and those who received foster casework services.

The findings were documented as accurately and objectively as possible. As the researcher was aware that her own views on foster care could have had an

impact on objectivity she was careful to reflect on her feelings while doing the interviews and analyzing the data.

4.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As mentioned in chapter one, this study is of limited scope and the sample used is small. The findings of the study are not applicable to the wider population as it is essentially of an exploratory nature. The following factors resulted in further limitations:

- Firstly, gathering of data was greatly affected by limited responses received to the invitation to foster children to participate in the study;
- A second limitation is that the views portrayed in this study are those of a small number of foster children living in communities described as “unhealthy, unsafe and disadvantaged” in the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997). The views contained in this study are not representative of all foster children;
- A third limitation was brought about by external events, for example: gang violence in areas where some of the foster children live. This, at least in part, explains the poor response rate to the invitation.

4.11 CONCLUSIONS

Chapter four provided an outline of the nature of the study, the research design, sampling, data collection procedures and research instruments, reliability, researcher bias, data analysis and limitations of this study. The analysis of data will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher presents the data collected during the interviews with respondents. In analyzing the data the researcher used the qualitative data analysis structure developed by Tesch, which provides researchers with a data flow diagram. This aids the novice researcher to make relevant choices about which data to use. Babbie and Mouton (2001:491-502) discuss Tesch's model in detail. As a novice researcher this model enabled the researcher to analyze data by identifying communication patterns as well as cultural factors. The model further assisted the researcher to discover categories, patterns and themes. De Vos (2000) states that, in the context of qualitative research, data are usually in the form of "... textual, narrative, transcribed interviews, written descriptions of observations (field notes) and ideas." The researcher set out to "get a sense of the whole" (De Vos, 2000:343) in order to obtain an overview of the content of all the interviews. This task assisted the researcher to become familiar with data collected. Morse (in De Vos, 2000: 340) states that "...creative and solid data analysis requires from the researcher a relentless search for answers, active observation and accurate recall" of the data received. While engaged in the analysis, the researcher continuously employed reflexivity. From the outset of the interviews, the researcher was sensitive to and guarded against the possibility of her own subjectivity. In addition, the researcher made every attempt to ensure that all participants were afforded the same opportunities to tell their story. The researcher attempted to ensure credibility, dependability and conformability while analyzing the data in an attempt to avoid bias. Although the researcher made use of an interview schedule to address certain specific themes, she continually reflected on the responses so as to be open for other themes that might emerge as the study progressed.

As stated in chapter four qualitative data analysis starts with the first interview and is an ongoing process. The researcher analyzed the data by:

- Listening to the recorded interviews,
- Transcribing the tape recordings,
- Reading each individual interview,
- Identifying the major themes and underlying meaning of the interviews,
- Making further notes from the data,
- Coding data according to categories and themes,
- Labeling the information,
- Checking for missing values,
- Sorting data according to the areas where the foster children live and the social work services they received,
- Comparing the data from the two areas, and
- Identifying differences and similarities of experiences and perceptions of the foster children.

The researcher identified data regarding language and culture and attempted to give a background of the identified communities according to Tesch's framework.

One participant referred to the interviewer as a "white lady", highlighting the fact that the interviewer/social worker is immediately noticed in a so-called "coloured" community. This would seem to indicate that despite the process of transformation taking place in South Africa, interaction of different races in certain communities is still limited. This fact might affect some of the responses of the participants. It is also important to note that six of the participants' home language is Afrikaans. The remaining four participants preferred to converse in English. The researcher worked in the areas concerned for approximately 8 years and is therefore acquainted with the manner of speaking in the communities of Hanover Park and Lotus River/Ottery. The communities use a mixture of English and Afrikaans in their communication as well as a number of

unique expressions. It was necessary for the interviewer to mirror the use of the participants' language in order to set them at ease. In addition her understanding of the expressions used in the community, enabled her to interpret the participants reactions appropriately.

5.2 THEMES AND CATEGORIES IDENTIFIED FROM THE UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

5.2.1 IDENTITY

The theme of identity was strongly evident through out the interviews. Identity formation is an important task of adolescence, more particularly since this research focused on *adolescent* foster children. A healthy identity is built on successfully passing through earlier developmental stages. (Erikson, as quoted in Kaplan & Sadock, 1998:236). In this study the theme of identity is noted in comments such as: "I do not have the same surname as my foster family" or "I feel different because I am in foster care" or "other children have a real mother and I do not". Linked to the topic of identity is the foster child's need for knowledge about the biological background and family of origin. This emerged when contact with the biological family was discussed.

5.2.2 BELONGING

A sense of belonging emerged as an unspoken need and seemed to be related to the foster child's sense of identity. Consciously or unconsciously, human beings seek safety and belonging in relationships with others (Louw & Edwards, 2000). Belonging is a developmental need and can be described as a sense of relationship or attachment. The attachment consists of social interaction, and a personal involvement with significant others, as described by Schultz (2002). According to Louw & Edwards (2000), attachment refers to the strong emotional bond between two individuals and its aspects of emotional and social development. One participant said that he felt sad when he watches television and a family is portrayed. This seems to indicate a longing to be part of a

biological family. Three of the participants who live in Hanover Park complained that their foster parents have no insight into their situation. Although two of the three indicated that they are not happy, they consider the foster placement as “good enough” for them. This seems to imply that their need for attachment is not adequately met in the foster placement and that they might not feel adequately understood by their foster parents.

5.2.3 GRIEF AND LOSS

Grief and loss was expressed in various ways by the participants. According to Worden (in Moselhy and El-Dosoky,1997) “The term grief, encompasses a broad range of feelings and behaviors that are common after loss”. It is clear from the responses of the participants of this study that grief and loss are part of their experiences. Four of the participants’ mothers are deceased, four of the participants were six to ten years old at the time of their placement and three of the participants do not know the identity of their biological fathers. When looking at grief and loss, attachment theory is relevant as the loss of the attachment is what is mourned. According to Bowlby (1988) attachments to early carers provide security and safety and when the attachment is broken these bonds of attachment are lost. The loss is manifested in grief which affects the individuals’ feelings, physical sensations, thought, and behaviours. Sadness, anger, guilt, anxiety, loneliness, fatigue, shock, and helplessness are some of the feelings the individual experiences. Sleep and eating patterns are affected, the individual might become socially withdrawn, and might cry as they deal with the loss. One participant, in particular, who lost her mother nine years ago at the age of ten years, was very sad during the interview. She cried and found it difficult to speak about her mother. She often thinks of her mother but does not want to share her thoughts and feelings with her foster family and has not been afforded the opportunity to mourn her mother’s death.

5.2.4 EMOTIONS

According to Louw & Edwards (2000:424), emotions can be defined as “ a range of feeling states. Some examples are excitement, fear, anger, and disappointment. These states of emotion shape our experience.”

Although emotions, such as sadness and anger, were expressed by participants during this study, the researcher identified that the participants did not do so with ease. The inability to articulate their emotions would seem to indicate an inability in the foster children to express themselves and their needs. This could cause resentment and feelings of being misunderstood, and may in turn lead to loss of self-esteem. Only one participant was able to express the fact that his foster mother loved him. This has serious implications for foster care as a general assumption might be that all foster children should feel loved in their foster families. The question should be posed in future research studies whether foster children are not loved or whether they are unable to express feelings of being loved.

5.2.5 POVERTY

According to May (2000:5) poverty is defined as “...generally characterised by the inability of individuals, households or entire communities to command sufficient resources to satisfy a socially acceptable minimum standard of living.” Poverty and the financial status of the foster family emerged as a dominant theme during five of the interviews. One participant was particularly conscious of money, particularly a lack of money: his foster mother sometimes borrows money to buy food. The foster families do not own cars and cannot afford public transport. Only two respondents travel by public transport to attend school or a Technikon outside of their residential areas. Most of the respondents spend their time in their communities and are seldom exposed to the broader Cape Town area due to the financial circumstances of their foster placements. All of

the participants expressed the wish to be able” to go out” more often. One said he felt “captured” (trapped) in the foster home.

Linked to the theme of poverty is the fact that a matriarchal family structure is prevalent in all three of the communities and was apparent when analyzing the circumstances of the participants. Only three of the seven foster mothers have husbands, two of these husbands are disabled. This family structure impacts significantly on the role which the foster mothers play in the family as well on as the role modeling available to the foster children. All the foster parents of the participants are over the age of 60 years.

5.2.6 RESTRICTION OF LIFESTYLE AND OVER PROTECTION BY FOSTER PARENTS

The foster mothers in this study are portrayed as protective and hence would not allow the participants to spend too much time outside of the foster home. As adolescents, the foster children have the need to associate with their peers and find it frustrating that they are not able to be safe in their communities. The adolescent participants’ could not walk home after dark, due to the dangers in the environment, and need to arrange transport, when possible. It is unsafe for participants to go out in the evenings and over weekends or to attend youth group meetings and the participants’ indicated that they resent this. This is related to the next theme, namely gangsterism.

5.2.7 GANG RELATED INCIDENCES

One participant said; “it looks as though the man who has to govern the area cannot look after the place properly”. Gangsterism curtails freedom of movement in the Hanover Park, Ottery and Lotus River communities. The gangs in the areas have all marked off and protect their territories. If community members want to go to church (or elsewhere), they might have to go into or through another gang’s territory. At the time this study was conducted, gang violence was rife in Hanover Park and Lotus River. Shootings, “drive-by

shootings” as this is known in the communities, is a daily occurrence. During an interview on 30.05.2002 with a South African Police Captain from Philippi Police Station, who works in Hanover Park, it was explained that the “American” gang in Hanover Park controls the Central Business District in the area. The taxi rank, bus terminus, library, municipal offices, food markets and post office are all situated in this area. Shootings occur in the mornings and residents are under the impression that the gangs want to create chaos in order to prevent people from going to work or to school. Gangsterism also affects the provision of social work services’ as social workers have to take into account the gang territories when arranging group activities in these areas.

5.3 CATEGORIES ADDRESSED IN THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The participants were encouraged to describe and articulate their feelings and if the following issues were not raised during the interviews, by the participants, the researcher would obtain information by using the interview schedule.

5.3.1 WHAT IS FOSTER CARE?

According to Barker (1995), foster care is “The provision of physical care and family environments for children who are unable to live with their natural parents or legal guardians”. As discussed in chapters 2 and 3 Children's Courts use specific criteria to declare parents unfit or unable to care for their children and find the child in need of care. However, due to a variety of reasons not all children are able to appreciate the reason/s for their being in foster care. This question was posed to determine the respondents' understanding of what foster care is.

The participants' responses indicate that their understanding of foster care is limited. All participants knew that foster care means that the child does not live in the care of their biological parents. (See Appendix C). This would seem to imply a lack of knowledge regarding the underlying causes which have led to them being in foster care. Furthermore this would seem to be disempowering to

them as well as disregarding their human rights and needs to knowledge about oneself and ones "roots". (Department of Health Services and Welfare, 1990). This also relates to Bowlby (1965) and Erikson's (1968) theories about identity and attachment.

5.3.1.1 Comparison of answers from the two areas.

Out of the ten participants 80% knew what foster care is. All ten of the foster children who participated were in first time placements that are regarded as permanent placements. It was clear that foster children from both areas projected their circumstances into their answers when responding to this question.

One of the participants from Lotus River/Ottery and one participant from Hanover Park (20%) did not know what foster care is. Both these participants lived with relatives who cared for them from a very early age and they never experienced being separated from their main caregivers.

In view of the statement made by Weinstein (1960:66) as quoted in Chapter 3, it is of concern that two children did not understand what foster care is as this could affect their development, behaviour, relationships, the conception of his/her role in the situation and the way he understands his situation which together could affect his/her self esteem and concept of self.

5.3.2 WHY ARE YOU IN FOSTER CARE?

All ten participants (100%) understood the reason for their placement in foster care and answered that their parents experienced problems or are deceased. All the participants were able to articulate and understand why they are in foster care.

Foster children from Lotus River/ Ottery: Jackie's mother is deceased, Anthony, Joseph and Annele's mothers were declared unfit parents because of their unstable lifestyles and all four fathers were declared unfit parents.

Foster Children from Hanover Park: Three of the six participants' (Bonita, Calvin and Charlene) mothers are deceased. Bonita and Calvin's mother was found to be an unfit parent before her death. Adrian and Clint's mother is a schizophrenic, and Keenan's mother suffers from epilepsy. Calvin, Keenan and Clint's fathers are unknown to them and there are no records of who their father's are; Bonita, Charlene and Adrian's fathers were declared unfit parents. Keenan, Calvin and Clint have difficulty in dealing with the fact that they do not know the identity of their fathers and it is hampering their identity formation. Clint expressed his thoughts as follows:

"It's always like the fact that you don't know who your real father is. One day when you grow up what will you say to your children. I didn't know who my father is! You don't know whether he is bald or whether he has hair, whether he is tall or whether he is short. My mother said my father was killed when I was small and that he had a wife and children. I just want to find out who he was".

5.3.3 HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE A FOSTER CHILD?

5.3.3.1 Responses from participants from Lotus River /Ottery

Joseph: Other children do not know that he is in foster care. Only his teacher knows. (Joseph appears not to accept his foster care status).

Jackie, who grew up with her maternal grandmother, said she was not made aware of being different to other children. (This is the participant who it appears was placed in foster care for financial reasons).

Annele said: "I feel that I am an ordinary child just like any teenager. I don't actually feel bad about being a foster child because I know why I am in foster care".

5.3.3.2 Responses from participants from Hanover Park:

Charlene, 19 years old, who is still a scholar said that she gets cross but does not show it. She is upset because her foster mother does not allow her any freedom to go into the community. She realizes that this is to protect her and she is glad that she is not rude or as confused as are some of the other teenagers in Hanover Park. She stated that she does not discuss her feelings. (This participant was mentioned when issues of loss and grief were discussed).

Bonita said that she feels sad about being a foster child. But she tries to be courageous. According to her the Lord knew what would happen to her and her brother and that they would not have had a future if they were not in foster care.

According to Calvin: "Other children have real mothers and I don't. It is very different because they get stuff that I don't have and I get stuff they don't have. But it is equal because they have real parents, who don't listen to them". His foster mother often listens to him and they talk about matters. It would appear as though Calvin and his foster mother were able to form a healthy attachment after his placement when he was two years old and that he is able to form an attachment with her. He is confident and appears to have a good self image.

Adrian stated "The letters to the school (statutory forms) single you out from the rest of the class. We always had to prevent that other children see it". He wanted to appear as though he comes from a "normal home". He did not want others to know that he is in foster care.

The six participants from Hanover Park expressed feelings ranging from anger, resentment, sadness, and envy, to discomfort. Three of the participants from Lotus River and Ottery responded in more practical terms for example: other

children don't know that I am a foster child. One of the four participants from Lotus River/Ottery answered the question by describing her feelings. The others were less able to articulate their feelings.

5.3.4 ATTITUDE TOWARDS FOSTER PLACEMENT

5.3.4.1 Responses from Lotus River/Ottery participants

Three of the participants (75%) from Lotus River/Ottery displayed positive attitudes to their foster placement and one (25%) felt ashamed.

Annele said that her foster mother has cared for her since she was very young. She feels that her foster mother understands her and she can discuss anything with her foster mother.

Jackie: This participant stated that she and her foster mother understand each other.

It would appear as though Jackie was able to form secure attachments with her maternal grandparents, who were her care givers from an early age. She was not separated from them but was officially placed in their care after her mother's death. During the interview she displayed a positive self-image and confidence. She was assertive and clear about her positive views of the placement and although her mother died when she was the same age as Charlene (participant who lives in Hanover Park) she appeared to mourn her loss in a healthy way compared to Charlene. The reason could be that Jackie had strong attachments with her now foster parents whereas Charlene had strong attachments with her deceased mother. Annele, who formed strong attachments with her paternal grandmother from a young age and was placed in foster care officially when she was older is also confident and has a positive self image.

Anthony said that he is satisfied to be in foster care and added that he does not feel comfortable enough to discuss problems with his foster mother.

Joseph shared that he is ashamed to be in foster care.

5.3.4.2 Responses from Hanover Park participants

Four of the six participants (66.6%) from Hanover Park displayed positive attitudes to their foster placements and two (33.3%) felt that their foster parents do not understand them.

Bonita feels that foster care provides her with opportunities in life and she respects her foster mother. Bonita and her brother Calvin was placed in foster care when she was six years old. She suffered neglect at an early age as her parents both abused alcohol and were not consistently available to care for her. Bonita was able to form an attachment with her foster mother after placement but scares of her early childhood remain.

Calvin said: "I'm just happy that I found a mother like her. She always listens to what I say". He was the only participant who spoke of love when we spoke about the foster parents.

Keenan felt that his aunt understands him. He resents the fact that his foster family is poor. It was interesting to note that he stated that he would have liked to be in the foster home where his 24-year-old half brother grew up as that family was more affluent. (His foster mother occasionally borrows money to buy food).

Charlene feels that her foster mother does not understand her. She resents the fact that the family is poor. She understands why her foster mother is protective but at the same time she resents it.

Adrian stated that he is always aware that he has another family and says, “we grew up without a real family”.

Clint avoided answering the question. He stated: “Our foster parents are not with it. They don't understand”. He impressed as an extremely unhappy person during the interviews. He is very intense and the researcher felt concerned about including him in the project but did not want to leave him out once the project had started.

5.3.4.3 Comparison of the responses of the two groups

Seven (70%) of the participants viewed their foster placements in a positive light, (namely that they feel satisfied with their placement). Three participants from Lotus River/Ottery (75%) expressed a positive attitude towards their foster placements and one is ashamed of being in alternative care. Four of the six participants (66.6%) in Hanover Park had a positive attitude to their foster placements. The remaining two participants said that they felt that they lack freedom, their foster mothers do not understand them and they cannot communicate freely with their foster mothers.

In his theory of attachment, Bowlby (1965), refers to the quality and nature of the interaction between the child and the primary caregiver. Considering this approach it would appear as though the foster children who voice satisfaction with their placements are receiving adequate care from their foster parents to meet their needs. In order for children to develop they need consistent appropriate day to day care, positive social interaction and personal involvement. It would appear as though these participants' and their carers are successfully able to sustain their relationships.

Joseph and his brother Anthony were placed in foster care with their paternal grandmother after their mother physically abused Joseph. They were ten and twelve years of age at the time of placement. Joseph projected feelings of rejection when asked why children are placed in foster care. Joseph displays typical insecure, anxious and disorganized attachment behaviour symptoms of

an abused child. He displays traits of a rejecting personality and tries to be emotionally independent. He does not discuss his feelings with others and is emotionally withdrawn. It could be concluded that his early mother –child experiences have affected his ability to bond and that this might influence his present relationship with his foster mother. One can further argue that according to Klein's object relations theory that this last participant, Joseph is so traumatized by his earlier experiences that he has not developed trust or the ability to verbalize his feelings adequately. This in turn, might have made it difficult for the participant to express himself during the interview.

The participants Clint and Charlene who are not happy in their foster placements complained that they feel misunderstood which could be because of poor interaction between the participants and carers. They appear to feel isolated in their foster families. This could be based on experiencing their foster parents as unavailable or inconsistently responsive to their emotional needs which in turn leads to the participants feeling insecure. According to attachment theory this leads to the individual being caught up in negative emotion and personal distress. Unless these issues of insecure attachments are appropriately addressed these participants are at risk of developing psychopathology in adulthood. Children who have experienced early separation or loss of a parent have been linked to be at greater risk of suffering of depression and anxiety in adulthood. According to Hook, Watts and Cockcroft (2002) there is a growing body of empirical research that suggests a link between personality disorders and attachment problems. Practitioners working with foster children should be aware of the effects of attachment problems and assist the foster children in addressing problems in this area of their development.

The work of Fahlberg as discussed in chapter two would help foster children in dealing with their experiences and feelings regarding foster care. Fahlberg (1994:26) asserts that foster children should be helped to gain insight and understanding in their situation. Similarly, the participants interviewed in this study should be helped to address issues of concern to them and they should

be assisted with the task of identity formation. Where the foster parents are not assisting the foster children with these tasks social workers should identify the children who need assistance and actively assist the foster children with these tasks. Kline and Overstreet (1972) state in their research studies that foster children require positive guidance and opportunities to negotiate developmental stages and this is imperative for the child's development of sense of self-worth and self esteem.

5.3.5 THE FOSTER CHILD'S VIEW ON THE ROLE OF THE SOCIAL WORKER, IN THEIR FOSTER PLACEMENT

In chapter one it was mentioned that one of the main objectives of this research study is to give foster children an opportunity to give their perceptions of social work services and to explore how they view the role of the social worker. In this section the researcher will present how participants' view the role of the social worker.

5.3.5.1 The role of the social worker. Lotus River/Ottery

Table 2: Lotus River/Ottery How foster children view the role of the social worker

Age	Age at time of placement.	Related vs. unrelated placement	Foster child's view
Anthony	10 years	Related. Paternal grandmother	Does not know what the role of the social worker is.
Annele	Under age 2	Related. Paternal grandmother	She was afraid that social worker will remove her when she was younger.
Joseph	12 years	Related. Paternal grandmother	Felt that he does not need a social worker.
Jackie	Lived with maternal grandmother before placement	Related. Maternal grandmother	She feels some placements need social work supervision to see that foster children are well cared for.

Joseph (who was physically abused by his mother) stated that he does not see the need for a social worker. His brother Anthony stated that he does not know what the role of the social worker is. Both of these participants had limited contact with social workers as interviews were held with the foster mother and not with the foster children, during home visits by the caseworker.

Jackie responded by saying that she feels some children need a social worker because there are foster mothers who do not care. She stated that she knew some children who were in a foster home where they were not cared for and where they were abused. The respondent further stated that social workers should make appointments before they visit. Sometimes the home is overcrowded and the children make it difficult to keep the home tidy. It would then appear as though the home does not get cleaned. This seemed to reflect what is happening in her home. The foster family live in a shack and it is overcrowded. Jackie never went on any outings with a social worker and had very limited contact with social workers as most of the interviews during home visits were with the foster mother.

Annele said she was initially scared that the social worker would take her away from her foster mother who is also her paternal grandmother. She states "As die social worker wil weet hoe die kind voel moet hulle vra". (If the social worker wants to know how the child is they must ask the child). She informed that she is happy in her foster home. The researcher observed that she has an outgoing, friendly and positive nature. It would appear that Annele understands the role of the social worker.

5.3.5.2 The role of the social worker: Hanover Park.

Table 3: How foster children view the role of the social worker in Hanover Park

Age	Age at time of placement	Related vs. unrelated placement	Foster children's views
Keenan	Under 2 years	Related. Maternal aunt	Enjoyed social work contact, in groups and on outings.
Calvin	Under 2 years	Unrelated	Social workers must help children.
Clint	Under 2 years	Unrelated	Social workers should do home visits early in the morning/unexpectedly.
Adrian	Under 2 years	Related. Paternal grandmother	Social workers should have regular contact and do proper screening of foster parents.
Charlene	10 years old	Related. Paternal grandmother	Social workers must ask children how they feel.
Bonita	6 years old	Unrelated	Social worker spoke to her about what foster care is and helped her express her feelings.

Keenan states that he attended groups at Sable House. He remembers playing games and taking part in role-plays. He also remembers that they worked on a life storybook but cannot remember what they did with this. He stated ".I took it seriously". His view on the role of the social worker was indicated when he said that social workers must see to it that the child is well cared for.

Charlene went on outings with the social worker but did not attend groups. She feels that social workers must **ask** children how they feel and how the foster family "treats" them. According to her, social workers should not be afraid to ask the children how they feel and children should tell social workers how they feel. Of importance is the fact that she states: "I did not feel that I could speak to the social worker". She said that she would have spoken to the social worker if she asked her, but not of her own accord. From this it would seem that foster children need to be invited and offered the opportunity to talk about their situation.

Bonita said that it was fun for her to meet other foster children. She remembers attending groups, in the community where they spoke about their foster parents and about their bodies in sex education. She said: "The social worker must inform the child about his parents. I first thought the social worker is just checking up. I was afraid that the social worker would take me away again".

Calvin, Bonita's brother, feels that all children have the right to live in a home with parents who really love them. He remembers that he went on outings and attended groups. He completed a life storybook and they spoke about their feelings. "That time I could not express myself". He enjoyed the outings. "I went to places that I have never been to and all the people in my group enjoyed it". From this comment it would appear that Calvin is now more able to express himself. He was very talkative during the interview.

Adrian stated that it is useful to have a social worker. He found it embarrassing when he had to take statutory forms to school. "It singled you out from the class He suggests that the social worker should take the statutory letters to school instead of the foster children". (Some of the interviewees stated that their foster mother took the letter to school). He remembers going to Sable House when he was young. He saw it as "you must do this unusual thing that no one else has to do". He could not remember what they had to do at group sessions but he recalls that he had to go every week for a few weeks. He also mentions that he found it embarrassing when he and his brother were fetched for outings in the Venture by the "white lady". Other children in the street wanted to know why they were fetched. Adrian also said that social workers should screen foster parents more carefully. He suggested that social workers ask the neighbours of prospective foster parents for information. Adrian added that social workers should not make appointments before doing a home visit as he and his brother has to clean the house "spick and span". He further suggested that social workers should observe the behaviour of foster children and that foster children should attend activities on a weekly basis as he had to do. Social workers will be able to get to **know** the children and will be able to

identify problems in the foster home through any acting out behaviour on the part of the foster children.

Clint, brother of Adrian, aged 17, said that social worker should visit early in the morning before the foster child goes to school. He also suggested that prospective foster parents' own children should be asked how they experienced their parents as children will talk if afforded the opportunity. He said that his foster mother scolds them.

5.3.5.3 Comparison: Role of the social worker

In chapter one it was stated that one of the objectives of this research study is to compare the Sable House Model of service delivery with the casework model. Table four provides an overview of the view of foster children on the role of the social worker.

Table 4: Comparison: The foster children's view on the role of the social worker

Foster children's views on the role of the social worker	Hanover Park Sable House Model	Lotus River/Ottery Traditional model
Knew the role of the social worker	6	3
Do not know the role of the social worker	-	1
Able to express their feeling towards the social workers	6	2
Social worker should be involved in their lives	6	2

The participant from Lotus River/Ottery who did not understand the role of the social worker was raised in her maternal grandparents' home and was placed in their foster care when her mother died. She was never told that she is a foster child and that a social worker will inquire about her care. Her lifestyle

remained the same. The motive for placing the participant in foster care would possibly be for financial reasons.

Two of the participants from Hanover Park said that they felt embarrassed at having a social worker. They resented the fact that the social worker would do home visits' as other children would ask them who the visitor was.

Foster children from Hanover Park and Lotus River/Ottery were asked to make suggestions as to how social workers can improve their services to foster children.

Only two foster children from the Lotus River sample made suggestions when discussing the role of the social worker. It is the researcher's opinion that the two brothers, Joseph and Anthony, who made no suggestions could be denying the fact that they are in foster care (as a coping mechanism) and they do not wish to be reminded of this fact by the researcher.

5.3.6 SUGGESTIONS FROM FOSTER CHILDREN TO SOCIAL WORKERS

During this research study the participants expressed the following needs and suggestions to social workers. These experiences and wishes are the perceptions' of foster children and provide useful insights to practitioners working with foster children.

Keenan said that social workers must ensure that foster children are well cared for.

Bonita would have wanted social workers to tell her about her parents. She was scared that the social worker is "checking up" and would remove her from the foster home. These statements made by Bonita holds true to the research done by Triseliotis, Sellick, and Short (1995) where they refer to children who experienced a separation before as being in a world that is populated with apprehensions as they fear that what happened before can happen again. (Chapter 2). The same authors describe social workers as "the unifying link"

between biological parents and foster children and from Bonita's answer it would appear that she wanted social workers to give her information regarding her biological parents.

Charlene said social workers must **ask** the foster children how they feel about their foster parents and how they are being looked after. Social workers should not be afraid to ask the children these questions. She felt uncomfortable to speak to social workers and would have felt more at ease if she were asked direct questions.

Adrian felt strongly that social workers should take responsibility for ensuring that schools complete the required statutory forms that need to be completed every two years. It is "embarrassing" for the foster child to take the letter to the teacher. (Many of the foster mothers' took the letters to school to avoid embarrassment to the foster child.)

Clint stated that social workers should do visits out of office hours in order to see what the true home circumstances are like. "You must catch them off guard." Adrian felt strongly that more thorough screening of foster parents is required and that neighbours and foster parents' own children should be consulted during the screening process. The present Child Care act No 74 of 1983, as amended makes provision for and states that proper screening is necessary. Adrian also said that the social workers should have regular contact i.e. on a weekly basis at a regular meeting and they have to observe whether there are any changes in the child's behaviour.

Two foster children from the Lotus River sample made the following suggestions to social workers.

Annele said that social workers must **ask** foster children how they feel if they want to know. (This answer corresponds with Charlene's of Hanover Park's response).

It would appear that Annele wants social workers to take the initiative and responsibility to ask foster children for information.

Jackie stated that social workers should make appointments before visits so that the family has time to tidy up. (Jackie is positive about her placement). This contradicts Clint's statement that social workers should make surprise visits to the foster home (Clint is the participant who stated that foster parents are supposed to look after foster children). This would appear to the researcher that foster children projected their own needs in articulating these suggestions.

5.4 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON SELF-CONCEPT

Eight of the ten participants (80%) agreed to complete the questionnaire. The participants' responses to the questionnaire reflected how they conducted themselves during the interview. The one participant who did not complete the questionnaire appears to have foetal alcohol syndrome facial features. The researcher is unsure of his reading and writing ability which could have made it difficult for him to complete the task. Six of the eight participants expressed satisfaction with themselves and their circumstances. Two were unhappy and unsure of themselves and this was reflected in the answers they gave to the questions regarding how they see themselves. Both these participants' answers to question 11 of section B of the questionnaire is seen as a reflection of their self concept. The one answered I hate myself and on question 8 said I am a nobody. The other participant left the answer to the questions of I like myself/I hate myself unanswered as well as questions about the family and about her looks. Both these participants live in Hanover Park.

The researcher views the questionnaire as a useful tool which social workers could use to obtain knowledge of the foster child but will not attempt to analyze the answers the participants gave as part of this study. The same questionnaire could be one of the tools used before the start of a groupwork programme and at the end of a programme to ascertain to what extent the groupwork

programme assisted the foster child. The respondents, who completed the questionnaire, did not discuss their answers with the researcher.

5.5 COMPARING FOSTER CHILDREN WHO LIVE IN HANOVER PARK TO FOSTER CHILDREN WHO LIVE IN LOTUS RIVER/OTTERY

When comparing the foster children from Hanover Park, who received social work services according to the Sable House Model, with the foster children from Lotus River/ Ottery, who received casework social work services, very little differences were found except that it would appear as though the foster children who received social work services according to the Sable House Model were more able to express their thoughts and feelings than those who received casework services.

A factor that will affect the outcome of this study is the fact that the researcher felt unsafe to go into certain areas of communities because of gang related violence. Those adolescents interviewed all reside in the safer parts of the communities and on the perimeters of the less safe areas.

When comparing the two groups of foster children, and bearing in mind that we are comparing six adolescents with four adolescents, very few differences were noted. The difference that became apparent to the researcher, was that the Hanover Park participants could express their feelings more clearly and understood the role of social worker better than the respondents from Lotus River/ Ottery. This could be ascribed to the fact that they attended group work programs where they discussed their foster care situation and were thought to identify their feelings. Of the group of six adolescents from Hanover Park, four stated that they are happy while two showed signs of unhappiness. Although these two participants were unhappy they could identify and discuss their feelings. All four adolescents from Lotus River/Ottery stated that they were happy although one of these adolescents was very defensive and it is not clear whether he is happy in his foster placement as he could not express his feelings.

In this respect it is useful to remember the words of Pike (1976) as quoted by Lewandowski and Pearce (2002:206):

“Even good foster care is stigmatizing because children feel they are different from their peers”.

5.6 CONCLUSIONS

This study yields no significant findings in terms of the two models of service delivery, namely casework compared to the Sable House Model. Other variables could result in a different outcome for example the ages of the attending social worker, their styles of practice, their experience, and so on.

This study does however indicate that social workers should spend time with the foster child, ask more direct questions and should assist the child to deal with problems. It would be helpful to talk about the child's past pre-placement experiences, the reasons for the placement and to assist the foster child to understand what is happening in their lives. Children's behaviour should be observed and non-verbal cues should be confronted and addressed. Social workers should inquire and assess the foster children's ability to attach and form meaningful relationships. Foster children require skills to establish new and meaningful relationships with significant people in their lives. If it appears as though the children had damaging early childhood experiences attempts should be made and facilities provided to address these past hurts. The hurt they experienced in the earlier years of their lives needs to be healed. Social work services should aim to contribute meaningfully in this respect.

The questionnaire on the self-concept of foster children proved to be useful in this research study and should be applied where possible by social workers so as to get to know the foster child. The foster child is able to communicate in a non-verbal way when completing the questionnaire and the social worker could use the questionnaire as a tool to communicate in a direct manner with the foster child.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher presents the conclusions drawn from the data collected in the study. In addition, a number of recommendations are made grounded on the information gathered through the literature study and the interviews with the foster children. The recommendations focus on two aspects. Firstly, how social work services to foster children could be altered and improved. Secondly, recommendations are made for future research and social work practice in the field of foster care.

The complexity and the effects of foster care upon the foster child have been highlighted in this study. Although foster care is accepted as one of the best forms of alternative care for children whose biological parents are unable to care for them, its effects upon the foster child's emotional development must nevertheless be acknowledged. The quality of foster care does not necessarily provide protection from the effects which removal from the biological family and placement in alternative care may have upon the foster child's emotional development.

The data obtained during the individual interviews provided valuable insights into the social, emotional and practical impact of foster care upon the foster child. It furthermore offers important information for future social work practice in the field of foster care as well as for possible future research in this field.

In telling their stories, the foster children have had an opportunity to talk through their experiences and emotions regarding foster care and social work services. This would seem to be useful in that it provided participants with the opportunity to be heard as well as serving the purpose of allowing them to articulate and begin to deal with the impact of the trauma and loss, which would seem to be an unavoidable aspect of foster care.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS

From the outcome of this study, it would appear that foster children who received integrated services according to the Sable House Model had a clearer understanding of what foster care entails than did foster children who received only casework services. The participants who received integrated services were also more able to articulate and express their thoughts and emotions. This could be due to the fact that children who received integrated services were provided with additional opportunities for direct contact with the social workers and that they were afforded opportunities to learn about and come to terms with their placement in foster care. It would seem that the integrated model of service offers improved service delivery to the foster child. Furthermore it would seem that practitioners could use this model of intervention and service delivery to provide foster children with the opportunity to learn about foster care, to come to terms with their own personal histories and experiences, and to address the issues of identity, loss, and belonging which this study indicates are of significant importance to foster children.

In addition, it would seem that the integrated model of service delivery could offer a valuable means of addressing the hitherto unvoiced needs and concerns of the foster child who has largely remained a silent partner in the foster care scenario. This could serve to empower the foster child as well as to provide a means of addressing the trauma, grief and loss which the foster child experiences.

The foster children interviewed in the study indicated a desire for information regarding their families of origin. The provision of additional, integrated services, particularly in the form of group work and the creation of life stories, might have served the function of providing some of the information which these children require. One of the applicants, Clint, referred to this during the interviews. It would seem that practitioners could explore the possibility of

using the integrated model to address this particular need in foster children more effectively.

The literature study, as well as the responses of the participants, indicate that foster children face special challenges in their formation of an identity. It would appear that the children in this study have struggled with the concept of being a member of a biological as well as a foster family. It would thus seem that the concept of a dual identity poses a challenge to the identity formation of the foster child. It would also seem that foster children might, at times, feel a divided sense of loyalty as a result of this dual sense of identity and belonging. An example of this is noted in the participant who indicated that she is unable to share or discuss her sadness about the death of her mother with her foster family (p74). The possibility that the foster child may develop an anxious attachment pattern with the foster parents as a result of the previous loss of the primary caregiver (biological parents) would seem to suggest that the child might feel that any display of emotion, attachment, belonging or loyalty towards the biological parents may create the risk of losing the foster parent.

Foster children appear to experience difficulties in developing a sense of belonging, as well as in attachment and trust. This might result from the fact that past, and particularly early attachments were not sustained and trust in the primary caregiver could not be established due to neglect or abuse which occurred in the period birth to one year. It might be helpful to foster children for social workers to attend to these issues through the medium of life skills, life story books and therapeutic group work. In addition it would seem that in order to address this issue, social workers should educate and prepare foster parents to understand and cope appropriately with the difficulties which foster children might face in this respect. This could prove to assist and facilitate healthy development in the foster child.

It would appear that the provision of knowledge and information regarding the child's biological background and early life experience might assist the foster child in developing a healthy sense of belonging and identity. Having a sense

of continuity from pre-placement to foster placement identity may serve to lessen the foster child's difficulties in coming to terms with and integrating the two aspects of the foster child's dual identity

From the literature it is clear that previous experiences of separation and negative experiences such as neglect and abuse will have left foster children at risk of emotional regression. According to Kline & Overstreet, (1972;77) foster children generally experience ego regression at the time of placement. It could be helpful to provide the foster child with opportunities and assistance in recognizing and expressing the emotions related to these experiences. Once again the integrated model of service delivery, through the medium of support, therapy and information, could provide the opportunity to do so.

Similarly, issues of loss and grief are inherent in foster care, and should be addressed by the social worker in order to assist the foster child in coming to terms with his life story and in adjusting to accepting his circumstances and experiences. Once again this could be effectively addressed through the medium of group work made possible in the integrated model of service, as embodied in the Sable House Model instituted at Child Welfare Society, Cape Town.

The effects of poverty, gangsterism and over-protection by foster parents would seem to be closely related to the kind of person who is accepted and used as a foster parent. In some instances the foster parent might be a relative of the child and this poses a double bind situation in that the positive value of maintaining close ties with the biological family are countered by the impact of the family's financial status and the accompanying difficulties. It is an unfortunate fact that many foster parents may be motivated by the financial reward offered by fostering a child or children. This is so even in the case of related foster placements. Placing a child in an economically deprived family poses numerous difficulties, including the possibility that the family may live in an area dominated by gang-related activities. This in turn leads to the

possibility of foster parents feeling the need to restrict the activities and movements of the foster child in order to ensure their safety and protection. The impact of the financial and social status of the foster family would thus seem to have a significant impact upon the foster child.

6.3 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based upon the above conclusions a number of recommendations are made:

Firstly, that social workers should explore and make use of the integrated service model as a means of addressing the identified needs of foster children. More specifically the use of group work could be effective in meeting the foster child's need for information, support and therapeutic intervention. The use of group work could also address the difficulty of providing services to the large numbers of foster children requiring intervention of this nature. Ensuring that the foster child becomes an active voice in the foster care scenario should, furthermore, receive serious attention.

Secondly, that social workers should realize the importance of acknowledging and facilitating the expression of the foster child's emotions and experiences. The foster child should be provided with opportunities to verbalize their thoughts and feelings. Indeed, as stated by one of the participants, it is important that social workers encourage and invite the foster child to do so.

Following on from this, it is imperative that social workers recognize and equip themselves to deal effectively with the effects and impact which the trauma, loss and separation experiences inherent in foster care might have upon the child. Social workers should also address these issues in their selection, preparation and support of foster parents as it could assist them in ameliorating the difficulties faced by the foster child.

Finally, it is recommended that future research could explore and investigate the selection, screening and training of foster parents in light of the needs expressed by foster children. A further possible topic for future research is that of the foster parent's financial and social status and how this impacts on the foster placement.

University of Cape Town

APPENDIX A

Transcripts

University of Cape Town

HANOVER PARK

Keenan interview on 02.05.02

wat dink jy is foster care

vir my voel dit lekker

waarom gaan kinders in foster care

hoekom dink ek so want hulle ma's kan nie lekker agter hulle kyk nie
miskien is hulle ma's dood

jou ma

my ma lewe my ma kom so nou en dan daar ek is bly om haar te sien sy gee my geld dan
kan ek games speel of duiwe koop

hou jy van duiwe

ja

jy is nou 16 jaar oud

kan jy onthou het jy 'n social worker gehad en het jy groepe toe gegaan

ja ek was so 10/11 jaar oud

wat het julle gedoen

hulle het ons laat doen 'n play dan moet ons nou sê wat hulle doen

het julle 'n life story boek gedoen

ja ek kan nie meer onthou nie hulle het vir ons 'n boek gegee dan moet ons skryf hoe dit
gegaan het met ons

hoe het jy daarvoor gevoel

ek het dit ernstig opgevat

sien jy nog van die kinders wat in die groep was

ja 4 kinders

wat is anders om 'n foster kind te wees

dit is lekker som kinders voel nie lekker by die mense wat hulle bly nie ja som kinders wat
sê nou maar hulle ma's is dood hulle voel kwaad hulle het nie ma's en pa's nie nou sien
hulle hoe voel daai kind hulle het geld ma en pa het geld geld wat hulle nie het nie

voel jy partykeer kwaad

my vriende maak my soms kwaad hulle vloek my ma dan is ek kwaad

en dan baklei jy met hulle

ja ek slaan hulle

miskien moet jy sê ag man ek steur my nie

ek baklei nie nou meer saam met hulle nie ek ignore hulle net

as jy in die moeilikheid is met wie praat jy dan

praat met my auntie sy verstaan my baie sy sê wat kan ek maak dan praat sy oor sulke dinge

jou eie pa sien jy hom

ek het hom nog nooit gesien nie

pla dit jou

my ma sê ek het hom gesien toe ek nog 'n baby gewees het my ma het gesê my ma gaan my 'n photo bring van hom

wat is die werk van die social worker wat moet hulle doen

dit is nodig hulle moet kyk as die kind oraait is

sal jy sê as dit nie oraait is nie sal jou auntie kwaad geword het

my auntie en my ma sê ek is 'n baie straightforward kind

het jy baie maats by die skool

ek het 'n klomp vriende

kan jy met hulle praat

ek kan met my een vriend praat want het hy's amper soos 'n broer vir my ek kan met hom praat oor hoe ek voel of hy praat oor hoe hy voel

sê maar som kinders baklei met my dan kan ek hom sê ons is al twee die selfde size dan haal ons ons ander vriende

sê maar ons kan hulle nie seermaak nie dan sê ons die prinsipaal dan sort hy ons almal uit dan kry ons 'n briefie om vir ons ma te sê dat ons moet skool toe kom

en as die gangs wil hê jy moet by hulle aansluit

nee ek wil nie by die gangs wees nie hulle is 'n waste of time

wat wil jy met jou lewe maak

ek wil werk vir my ma en my auntie ek wil meeste vir my auntie doen sy het my groot gemaak

hoe oud was jy toe jy by jou auntie kom

my auntie sê ek was drie maande oud

vertel my van jou duiwe

hulle is besig om te paar ek koop hulle vir r10 som kinders 'n mens kan bargain baie met duiwe sê maar 'n kind wil dit koop dan sê ek gee my r30 dan koop hulle dit

doen jy sport by die skool

nee

ek hou van sokker maar daar is te veel jongetjies

vertel my drie goed waarvan jy baie hou

familie eet diere

daarom het jy duiwe

ons het eers hande gehad maar die mense in onse view is vuil hulle gee die honde gif as hulle sien jou honde lyk mooi

waarvan hou jy nie

niks slange onbeskofte vriende nie gangster nie hulle skiet te veel

hoe raak dit jou lewe

ek speel net in onse sirkel die gangsters worry nie om daar te kom nie hulle sit net in die court die veld wat ons nou net verby gery het hulle skiet net so oorkant mekaar

en as jy skool toe loop

dan loop ek agterom by die winkel
die boere doen ook nie hulle werk nie hulle smokkel saam met die gangsters

hoe bly jy uit die moeilikheid weg van hulle af

ek speel liewerste by die games

verduidelik hoekom ons alleen praat

anders gaan my auntie dink ek gaan miskien van haar praat, sy het agter my gekyk somtyds dan voel ek somaar so hartseer as ek die stuk gekyk het dan dink ek hoekom kan ek nie maar 'n pa gehad het nie

die oom wat by die huis woon is hy 'n bietjie van 'n pa vir jou of kan hy nie eintlik 'n pa wees nie (hy is fisies en verstandelik gestrem)

hy is somtyds vriendelik saam met my dan sê hy vir my ek moenie daar speel nie want daar is dit gevaarlik

wat het met hom gebeur

die oom het baklei hulle was dronk nog 'n persoon het my uncle van die balcony van die boonste balcony gegooi
ek gaan werk my auntie het gephone ek het my auntie gesê ek wil gaan werk toe sê my auntie sy sal die owner bel Madeira slaghuis

allie is ook olraait

die mense wil nie daar koop nie hulle kyk nie reg agter die plek nie die agterste plek stink na vleis

jy wil nie daar werk nie

nee ne maar sê die kinders miskien hy werk by 'n vuil plek ek wil myself nie in die oë sit nie
ek weet wat om te doen maar som van die name van die vleis ken ek nie
ek begin vrydag dan gaan ek uitvinne

hoekom gaan jy nou al werk

anne vrinne as ek vir hulle sê kom ons gaan werk se hulle wil nie nou werk nie hulle wil wag tot hulle groot is

jy moet nog altyd jou huiswerk doen watter vakke neem jy

geskiedenis aardrykskunde engels afrikaans bedryfseksonomie aan die begin was dit maklik nou raak dit moeilik

ek het eenkeer baie gedink aan 'n restaurant 'n groter een

ek het al een keer kos gemaak al toe is my auntie nie daar nie my uncle sê dit proe baie lekker toe maak ek kerrie kos

help jy in die huis

nie te veel nie as ek van die skool af kom dan sê my auntie ek moet die huis uitvee somtyds dan voel ek nie so nie dan sê ek hoekom moet ek dit nou doen dan sê my auntie o jy is nie nou meer gehoorsaam nie is jy dan ongehoorsaam (smile)

jy kan vir haar sê jy het nie lus om dit te doen nie dan sal my auntie verstaan dan sal my auntie ook maar ander kinders werk nie vir hul ma nie dan sien sy my in

het sy haar eie kinders

ja sy het 6 groot kinders hulle dink my auntie spoil vir my maar dan is dit nie so nie dit gaan nie lekker in die huis nie

het jy al weggehardloop

nee nog nooit nie is nie die moeite werd om weg te hardloop nie dan kom jy net weer terug

was jy ooit op outings met die social worker

ja in die waterfront daar was 'n treasure hunt op 'n skip en ons het movies gekyk

gaan jy en jou tannie uit

daar is geld om uit te gaan maar nou het my auntie 'n klomp skuld

ek gaan vir seker maak daarvan as ek gaan werk dat ek geld weg sit ek wil my familie 'n lekker tyd gee

ek het nog 'n broer hy is by ander foster parents hy kry 'n klomp geld hy werk by 'n restaurant somtyds wonder ek hoekom kan ek nie soos hy lewe nie

as jy eendag kinders het

ek gaan hulle grootmaak my auntie sê vir my dit is 'n groot responsibility sê nou maar jy is getroud en julle het nog nie kinders nie jy werk nie en die vrou werk ook nie sê maar jy bly in jou ma se agteryard sê nou daar is 'n stryery nou hardloop hy na sy ma toe en sy na haar ma toe dan moet hy net wegloop

wat doen jy goed

ek het eenkeer die tv reggemaak iets was fout met die tape toe maak ek die tape reg toe werk die tv

as ek sien daar is iets stukkend dan maak ek dit daar reg sê nou maar daar hang 'n draad dan maak ek dit vas

hoe oud is jy en in watter st is jy

ek is 16 jaar oud en is in st 8

kan jy uitgaan laat jou tannie jou uitgaan

na 'n dans toe nee my auntie is baie bang ek wil gaan maar ek weet al die antwoord is nee

hoe het jy by jou auntie in foster care gekom

my auntie wou my gehad het somtyds dan dink ek hoekom kan ek nie so 'n lewe soos my broer gehad het nie want hy lewe baie lekker
 uit sy eie my ma kan nie so 'n lewe vat soos ons nou lewe nie want somtyds as my auntie nie geld het nie dan leen sy geld nou net dat ons kon eet in die aarde as sy geld kry dan betaal sy dit nou my ma kan nie so lewe nie my ma wil geld in my ma se hand hê
 my ma stryk eintlik vir die mense my ma kry eintlik geld want sy het 'n kop probleem
 as my ma stress dan word my ma se bloed hoog dan doen sy iets dan weet my ma nie wat sy sy nou gedoen het nie

hoekom wil jy gaan werk

ek kan nie altyd depend op my auntie nie sê nou maar ek wil geld hê dan kan ek nie kry nie

hoe gaan jy van die slaghuis huis toe kom

my uncles werk ook by die slaghuis bly nie ver van ons nie ek sal saam met hulle huis toe kom
 ek wil my eie klere koop ek hou van tekkies

as jy ouer is en jou auntie hou jou nog so vas

dan gaan ek met haar praat
 mens kan nie daar rondloop nie hulle sny die mense op net so agter ons dorp het hulle 'n man in die drom gegooi hulle het die ouens gekry wat dit gedoen het
 sê maar hulle lol met my familie gaan ek na een van my vrinne toe gaan haal ek 'n gun dan skiet ek hulle my vrind se broer het 'n lisence vir die gun en hy sê as enigiemand saam met ons lol sal hy help

sal jy eendag op 'n ander plek wil bly

ja maar nie ver van my familie nie

K lives with his foster mother, a maternal aunt, her disabled husband and a granddaughter of foster mother in a two bedroomed flat in Hanover Park. The flat faces an open circle where children can play safely.

The family appear to live on K's foster grant and foster father's disability grant. K was the only one who said that his foster mother has to borrow money to buy food.

I did not know this family before I started the research project.

On 25.04.02 I had an appointment to explain what the research was about and to request their permission for K to participate.

Foster father was quiet during the interview and sat in a corner looking out of the window.

Foster mother sat opposite me and K sat next to me.

The living room is adequately furnished. Crochet doilies were on the tables.

Foster mother seems to be the head of the household. She was co-operative and talkative. She is very fond of using religious phrases.

K has an open friendly face.

The family agreed that I may speak to K.

Foster mother must have misunderstood me, after I had carefully explained everything she thought that I was going to speak to her on 02.05.02.

Lack of privacy in the foster home led to me requesting taking K to the Ottery Hypermarket Cafeteria.

Initially he was uncomfortable during the interview and only answered questions.

Halfway through the interview I again explained that the information is confidential.

I am unsure if this and or the fact that I ordered a plate of chips and a milkshake made him relax but he opened up much more.

I felt uncomfortable during the first half of the interview when K only answered questions.

On the way back to the foster home K trusted me enough to tell me that his biological mother also lives in the foster home.

From past experience I know that no one in the family will volunteer this information for fear of losing the foster grant.

Calvin interviewed on 02.05.2002 at home

What do you think foster care is?

Foster care is a child that was been abducted (abandoned) by his parents that like the mother cannot look after the child or maybe the child is on the street

Why are you in foster care?

Because my mother could not care of more she could not give me the love I think that is the reason why I am in foster care

How do you feel about your foster parents?

I really must say from I am here I really felt safe and close to the people I live with now

I know your mother is deceased but when you were smaller did you sometimes with you could see her, or can't you remember?

I always thought how does my mother look and what would she do if she sees me and how would she react on it

What should a social worker do

I think a social worker should do they should have a home for children I think all children have the right to live in a home with parents that really love them

How do you see your foster mother?

She is very positive she is always listening to what I am saying and I think she does the best I must say that I am just happy that I found a mother like this

What did you do when you were teased because you are a foster child?

I was really sad if people talk about my mother I would cry I could cope with that because my mother my foster mother she told me even if people talk about my mother she would tell me don't worry about what people say you just find someone My mommy gave me words to say that I get through it

Such as

She would say that I know it is not better for you to hear that your mother is ... but you have to cope with it my foster mother would always tell me don't worry I am here for you don't listen to what other children say just listen to what I am saying she is really loving

and you don't mind listening to her advice

sometimes I when my mommy give me advice I just take it like but what is my mommy talking about but at the end of the day it is very true because I hear other people talking about and I think that the advice she gives me is something I can look up and listen and take advice so as I grow up I can always remember

what is different when you are a foster child

other children have their real mother and I don't have it it is different because they get stuff that I don't have and I get stuff they don't have but it is equal I think of my foster mother as my real mother

Do you sometimes think of running away

Yes sometimes I feel for my mommy talks about things I don't like I get really angry and upset I just want to get away of people and last time my sister told my mommy and I got angry after that my mommy talked about it and shouted at me and she did not take note I started to cry and my mommy said you must not do that and I slammed the door and I ran to Lansport and I thought she was right and I was wrong I should not have done that where am I going what am I going to do my mommy phoned my brother and he fetched me from my friend he talked to me and I apologised she was very worried about me I can really put my feet in her shoes I can see the way she feels I can see it

What standard are you in

Std. 9 failed sub a and std. 6

What do you like about yourself

I like speaking to people
My attitude
My way of communicating to people

What don't you like

I don't like my behaviour children make fund of me they hit me and stuff I don't know why

If you have a problem who do you speak to

I speak to my friends and my foster mother because I know that friends listen to me they can really help me even my foster mother she would listen to me this is the advice I can give you this is right

What do you want to do when you are finished with school

I want to start a music school that takes all children from the streets I want it to take place in Hanover Park Hanover Park is getting worse by the day I think that by getting I can make a difference

Maybe I will start playing guitar in Cape Town to fund raise I play guitar gospel music

What subjects do you have at school

Economics home economics english afrikaans geography and history

Do you know your father

No I never met him I think what he looks like

How do you get on with you sister who is with you in foster care

We do argue and get angry at each other but not for long

I was 2 years old when I was placed in foster care I would have liked to hear my own mothers side of the story I know she tried her best for me

What contact did you have with the social worker

We went to places that I have never been and all the people in my group they enjoy it we did a lifestory book we spoke about how you feel that time I could not express myself things have changed for me I have changed a lot I am happy I have learnt a lot about drugs from t.v.

Bonita sister of Calvin interviewed at foster home

What is foster care

Wanner kinders se ouers wat baie drink of nie na hulle kan kyk nie hulle opgee vir adoption en dan gaan bly hulle by mense wat kinders wil hê en dan maak hulle hulle groot as hulle eie kinders

Hoekom dink jy jy is in foster care

Omdat my ouers nie na my kan kyk nie

Kan jy not iets daarvan onthou

6 jaar oud ek het net gehoor my pa sê vir my ek moet my goetes pak want hier hom mense wat my na 'n ander huis gaan neem ek kan nie verstaan wat aangaan nie toe ek nou na hierdie foster mother kom het ek alles gekyk wat aangaan geluister waaroor hulle praat en ek was

het jy gevoel jy het iets verkeerd gedoen - niemand het vir jou verduidelik nie

nee dit het swaar gegaan ons moes van die plek na daai plek gaan bly en daar was nie altyd kos nie en ons moes brood en water en pap en suiker oor gooi daar was baie kere wat daar niks kos in die huis was nie

en jou pa en ma het baie baklei

hulle het baie baklei

kan jy dit nogaltyd onthou

altyd 'n bakleierij tussen hulle gewees

en het jy na hom gekyk

soos ek verstaan het het ek hom groet gemaak

wat kan jy onthou toe julle hier kom bly het

hierdie vrou he gesê dat ek vir haar moet sê mammie en toe het ek net 'n ma ek het vir 'n hele tyd gesukkel om te sê mammie want ek het gesê auntie en toe later het se begin sê mammie en ek het toe haar begin wat as my eie ma.

En jou eie ma het hier kom kuier

Ja dit was hartseer as sy kom kuier daar wat tye wat ek saam met haar wou gaan en dan het sy vir my gesê ek moet hier bly want dit is my nuwe huis nou ek het gehuil agter haar aan

Hoe oud was jy toe jou ma oorlede is kan jy onthou

Ek dink ek was 14/15 gewees

En jou eie pa het hy kom kuier

Wel seker twee keer wat hulle hier gekom het daar was 'n tyd wat hulle verby die huis geloop het wat hulle nie gerycognise waar nie ons het in die pad gespeel

Het jy ook 'n social worker gehad wat julle in groepe gehou het

Ja was dit nie vir joy embarrassing as die social worker julle uitwat nie
Nee dit was vir my pret gewees om ander ken wat in foster care is

Dink jy die het jou gehelp

Ja het oor daardie dinge gepraat van die kinders het na Maryland gegaan daar bymekaar gekom en gepraat oor ons liggaam en gepraat van foster ouers

Waarom dink jy moet 'n foster kind 'n social worker hê

Om hom of haar in te lig van sy ouers

Was jy bang dat die social worker jou weer weg vat

Ek was bang want my foster ma het altyd gevra want sy he gehoor my pa het gesê as hy in die huis het en 'n goeie werk het gaan hy my kom haal toe vra sy as ek sal gaan to sê ek nee ek sal nie gaan nie want hy het ons weg gegee hy het nie meer tyd vir ons nie want hy kom nie hy skryf nie hy bel nie hy weet waarom ons te kry ek sal nie weer terug gaan nie

Op skool hoe he jy gedoen

Ek het probleme gehad met my skoolwerk ek kon nie konsentreer nie

Hoekom dink jy dat jy nie kan konsentreer nie

Ek het 'n probleem gehad my mammië het gesê dis om my ma baie gedink het terwyl sy ver wag het en gerook en dit het 'n efrek op my brain gehet

Kan jy onthou of jy mishandel was toe jy klein was

Ek was pak gegee toe ek klein was as ek my vuil maak

Kan jy dit nog onthou

Daar was tye my pa het my laat wakker gemaak vir skool en dan het ek miskeim nie geëet nie kom ek by die skool dan word ek geslaan me 'n sweep omdat ek laat is ek het sub a en St 9 gedruip ek was so toe ek St 10 klaar gemaak het ek is baie bly dat ek St 10 gemaak het

Nou sukkel jy om werk te kry

By Tygerberg Hospitaal Groote Schuur Hospitaal en Mowbray ek wil verpleeg

Hoe gaan jy eendag joy kinders grootmaak

Ek wil hulle alles gee wat ek nie gekry het nie wat my ouers nie vir my kon gee nie ek wil hulle dissiplineer ook maar nie met geweld nie en vir hulle skool toe stuur en sorg dat as hulle klaar is hulle 'n goeie werk kon kry

Noem vir my 3 dinge waarvan jy hou

Van uitgaan socialise met my vriende meer in die community involve te raak en 1st aid ek geniet dit bair ontmoet ander mense en leer om met mense te werk.

Sê maar jy wil in die aand uitgaan

Meestal met die jeug van die kerk en met die first aid klass saam met hulle uit in die aand

Hoe kom jy by die jeug en noodhulp

Ek loop soontie hulle bring my terug

Waarvan hou jy rerig nie

Mense wat nie respek het teenoor my nie gerookery en gedansery

Wat dink jy kan jy baie goed doen

Om raad te gee by mammie geleer my vriendinne kom na my

Het jy vriende met wie jy kan praat as jy 'n probleem het

Meestal met grootmense as dit iets is wat ek nie met my ma kan praat nie sal ek met die jeugleiers praat ek trust hulle

Hoe voel jy nou oor jou broer C

Partykeer is hy nerve wrecking partykeer maak hy ;n mens kwaad partykeer gaan ek somaar aan die heul as hy my kwaadmaak

Sal jy by jou ma mou bly of in pleegsorg wou wees

Dit is 'n moeiliker vraag ek dink ek nou net dat die Here het geweet wat sou gebeur as ons sou gebly het en daar was nie 'n future vir ons nie en Hy het 'n beter uitweg gekies vir ons

Ek het meeste van die tyd actually na my ma gekyk as sy dronk is en daar was 'n tyd dat my ma sou dronk gewees het dat ek uit die pram moes klim en vir haar in die pram gesit het en dat ek vir haar huistoe gestoot het dan het die mense omtrent gelag

B vertel van die bende geweld in Hanover Park en dat daar die oggend 'n man doodgeskiet is

Contact this family on 10.04.2002 to make an appointment to explain the purpose of the research and request their co-operation. Made an appointment for 24.04.2002.

Met foster mother B and C for the first time on 25.04.2002. the family live in a two bedroomed council house close to Crystal High School in the east side of Hanover Park. We went in the lounge that was extended so that it was big enough to house a diningroom table and chairs.

B and C sat together on the couch and foster mother sat on a chair. B and C sat opposite me. Most of the time was spent on explaining the purpose of the research. Foster mother is very active in the community and will not mind that social worker speak to B and C in the house.

I phoned a week later and made an appointment to speak to Calvin after school on 02.05.2002. Bonita wsa outside and foster mother was out while C and I spoke. C was talking a lot. He admitted to being nervous. C has the features of a person suffering form Feotal Alcohol syndrome. I was surprised that he was in Std. 9 at Crystal High School. C was not comfortable to complete a short questionnaire and although I was disappointed I did not want to pressurise him. C insisted on speaking English.

On 08.05.2002 an interview was arranged with C's sister. B who was 6 years old when she was placed in foster care. I was amazed at what she could remember of her early childhood.

Both B and C have a friendly disposition. They are both able to express their feelings very well and appear to have a good relationship with the foster mother. It would appear as though C has a closer relationship with the foster mother with whom he was placed when he was 2 years old.

University of Cape Town

Joint interview with Adrian and Clint on 01.05.2002

They have the same birth mother and are in foster care with A's paternal grandmother. Their birthmother suffers from schizophrenia.

The two half brothers chose to have a joint interview.

What do you think is foster care

A to be placed in someone else's care instead of your parents because of circumstances

C I think it is when something when somebody places you somewhere and the person is supposed to take care of you

Do you think it is useful to have a social worker – what can a social worker do

It is useful very useful

Embarassing?

A very much so, and that letters that we had to take to school it singled you out from the rest of the class

We always tried to avoid other children to see it

What do other children say

A I don't think they still know we at ways tried to like it looked as though we come from a normal house the way we dressed the way we came to school

You did not want them to know

A and C No

How did you keep it quiet the letters

A I always used to tell him (C) to take it to my teacher

How do you see ... why are you in foster care

A it goes back to my mother was an unfit parent that time and she neglected us

C because my mother was unstable she was not able to rear children was not a proper environment for children that's why

Do you visit your mother

C I don't go such a lot just now and then she will phone here and she asked me to come down and I go she lives very quiet now

And you don't go to her

A we do talk when I by accident pick up the phone and I did go with him

What do you do when you are there

A we watch T V

C I just watch TV and relax there

Don't you feel sorry for her and want to look after her

A who

C no – a person can feel sorry for her because she is alone there no family the house is against the road

Do you feel it is to your advantage or disadvantage to be placed in another home

A its been ok

C it can be to an advantage or disadvantage on the one hand we grew up with out our real family but on the other hand we've got the other family

So one can feel a bit sad

C it is always going to be like that the fact you don't know who your real father is it is always ... one day when you have your own children they are going to ask you who their grandfather is what are you going to say you don't know especially me I don't know who my father was

I was thinking of that and trying to avoid that we have got a name on the file I can look it up for you but is that the real person – I cant tell you if you want to I can get the name for you

To A do you feel sorry for him because you know who your dad is and he does not know who his dad is

A Ja it is probably the same because I don't see my father ja he does come one in a while

But you don't see him as a father he does not behave like a father towards you

A no he is a father but you want more since you know both your parents and your father is a part of this family but he is not here all the time and you want to be with him

That is hard!

A maybe if your parents were married and that but I sometimes think my surname is K and his surname is M its just that I wont say confusion but just the feeling you not sure where you lie your fathers surname is M and you want to be M but your surname is K because of your mothers name

What are your feelings C You don't know your real father

C you don't know if he was bold or what tall or small at least he can see his father my mother said my father was killed when I was still young but Im not sure he was knocked down by a train or something he had a wife which makes I have step brothers and sisters I just want to find out who he was

You are brothers and you you are half brothers Does it make a difference

A no we are brothers we don't look at each other as half brothers from the time we've been here we know

Sibling rivalry do you stand together

A we do have fights but it is not like putting his confidence or self esteem down I smack him or tease him we just done think about it we never use it as a weapon

If he is in trouble will you help him

A obviously

How old are you

A I'm 19 on Sunday

C I'm 16

If you have problems who do you speak to

C I keep it to myself

You don't speak to A about it

Not always just maybe sometime I confide in him about my father and stuff like that I do speak to my auntie once over the phone she sounded kind of o.k.

At school you are both doing well!

C because you see how can I say I want to better my life I come from this broken home I like to keep in my mind I want to further my education that is why I go to school every day

Subjects

Maths english accounting geography economics

I do good if I study somethin I get close to full marks if I did not study for something I don't get such good marks but the sir said if I work hard in all my subjects I will get the same marks as for accounting

How much did you get for accounting

C I got about 70% the last three times in std 6 I got a diploma so the sir keeps his eye on me

And you what is your best subject

A I do a public management course Personnel managements public management local government governing bodies

Public policy is a new subject

I am in my second year at Tech

Would you like a family of your own one day

A obviously yes I really want a family everything that did not happen in your life

C (sad)

Its quite sad but both of you seem to be positive about the future

C it's the only thing you can do if you look back you go nowhere you cant dwell on the past I don't want to look back its got to get better

Where did you get this wisdom from

C from the teacher I listen to everybody that can tell me something that is important

How do you stay out of trouble in Hanover Park

C we stay inside

Friends come here now and then but we stay inside and play on the computer

and you A inaudible

don't you want to be outside

A no I play with them if you don't want to mix with them

C then they think youre stuck up

Everybody down the road knows me I don't like walking with them all the time I'm just at home I have my goals

And how do you get on with your foster mother

A for me I don't know its almost like you may put us in foster care but I consider my foster parents as old

C they are not with it

A not at all

C they don't understand and it is no use speaking about it it only makes matters worse

At C we just want to be with friends of our own age group that is lekker

Have you ever felt like running away

C ja

Have you thought of living with your own mother

C if I must live there it wont be a benefit it wont be good if I go there I have too much freedom and I will go away from my goals.

So for now this is the best option!

A I don't see myself go to my mom for the same reason

Have you spoken about this

A we talk about it a lot if we end up maybe one day one ends up well off ja he can live with me I mean its just to make you think no I'm here don't worry

C is very upset I am concerned about him so I move away from the topic

Tell me 3 things you like

C computers speakers loud sounds and clothing

A girls clothes music

3 things you don't like

C I don't like people being overprotective especially to show other people say not I want to do something they say no you cant do it just to that person but he don't know other wise I don't like being watched all the time I feel captured

A I don't like phrases hallow yes huh I've been through that for a couple of years I don't like it it works on my nerves

Do you have friends

C I have a friend who tells me his problems

A I don't have a lot of friends now in school time I had a lot of friends

A and C mention that the foster family say they stick together like glue

How do you see the role of the social worker did you enjoy outings

C it is not necessary it makes you feel out

A when I was young I had to go to Sable House it is almost as though you do this out of the ordinary thing and you must now go and do it – like nobody else I remember I used to

go but I don't remember what we used to do we had to go every week for a few weeks we did something about books and stuff and we had to bring something to cut out

C I did not to that

A the other stuff was ok onetime Mrs E took us to Zeekoevlei and there was a lot of people my age

C it was not necessary and some people saw ...

A especially that venture and they are thinking why is the white lady coming here and so and the others ask en wie was daai that makes it awkward and we want to be normal like in a normal family

C social workers should come early in the morning before they go to school before 8 ja you must catch them off guard

A you used to tell then when you come and we had to like clean the house like it had to be spick and span

A it is compulsory to clean the house

C social workers must check before they place children say now you ask her children how was their experience they will talk

A ask the neighbours

C they skel

A you must watch the children you must pick up changes in the child you only see the child once a month or every two months

....they must like have structure like where they must go every Tuesday

This foster home is situated in Hanover Park. It is a two bedroomed council house. The home is very neat and tidy. I have worked this family four years ago and know the foster mother and A and C.

During an interview on 17.04.2002 I explained the purpose of the research to foster mother, A and C. It was interesting to see the seating arrangement A sat next to foster mother and C sat on the opposite side with me.

Foster mother allowed us to have the interview in her bedroom on 01.05.2002. The room was very neat and tidy. A T.V. was on during the interview to ensure confidentiality. It was hoped that the sound of the T. V. would make it impossible for foster mother and her visitor to hear what was being said in the room next door.

Foster mother has a daughter, A's age. She started working for Pick 'n Pay. Foster mother looks after two young children of working mothers. Foster father is in receipt of a disability grant. It appeared as though finances was managed well.

Foster mother always appeared very friendly and co operative. The interview with A and C made me feel quite uncomfortable because they made references that indicated that foster mother was not genuine. They were of the few adolescents interviewed that criticized their foster parents.

C definitely needs help with the identity of his father. We need to give him the knowledge that is on the file. This will have to be done in co-operation with his foster mother. I was quite concerned about his emotional state when I left. Because of the confidential information they shared with me I asked A to keep a close watch and to help him. I

arranged to see C again. This interview left me with a moral dilemma. C needs help and we have to bear in mind that his mother suffers from schizophrenia which could be hereditary.

C has an extra problem. A is a blood relative of foster mother. He is only a foster child and not related to foster mother.

A and C have a very enmeshed relationship. It must be difficult for any family if two family members form such a close, separate relationship. Foster mother has never mentioned her feelings around this.

Charlene interview on 30.04.2002

hoe voel pleegkinders

dit is partykeer as hulle van hulle ma praat dan is dit different jy voel out of place

help dit nie as jy praat van jou ouma of van jou aunties nie

dit lyk asof hulle het ma's en 'n ouma dan lyk dit so asof

vat jy een van jou tannies as 'n ma

dié ene ja

jy kan nog jou eie ma onthou

ja baie goed

vertel jy jou jonger broer van jou ma sy was baie siek gewees

asthma attack ek het nooit gedink dat ma sal kan doodgaan van asma nie.

het jy kontak met jou ma se mense

ja met my ma se een suster ons gaan Desember vakansies na haar sy woon in koffiefontein naby Kimberley

hoe gaan dit by die skool

ek is 19 jaar oud in graad 11

ek is baie bly om nog skool toe te gaan

my familie kry nie meer 'n pleegouer toelaag vir my nie

wat wil jy na skool doen

ek sal graag wil gaan vir photography of my eie business as 'n hairdresser

miskien kan jy in 'n haarsalon werk saterdagoggende

ek sal nooit uit die huis kan gaan nie dit voel erg mens kan amper nêrens heen gaan nie mens is te skaam om hulle te vra om iewers heen te gaan saam met vriende

het jy vriende

ek het een beste vriend as sy miskien vra dat ons iewers heen kan gaan dan sal ek sê sy moet eerste my ouma bel en vra dan sal my ouma my laat gaan want my ouma ken vir haar ook

hoor julle ooit van julle eie pa

ja hy bel nou en dan en miskien sal hy vir ouma geld stuur hy sal ook nie meer as r200 stuur nie

het hy 'n ander vrou en kinders

ek weet nie

mis julle julle pa

ons mis hom baie ons sien hom as ons koffiefontein toe gaan dan sal hy vir ons uitvat ons bly by my ma se suster in koffiefontein

sal jy daar wil gaan woon

dit is beter om in die kaap te bly my ouma het vir my pa gesê sy wil actually hê ons moet hier bly want die aunties is hier om te help kyk toe sê my pa ok ek skryf nie vir hom nie ek het nie actually geld vir stamps op die oomblik nie

jou ouma is baie goed vir julle is sy baie streng

daar is tye dat ek soms kwaad raak maar ek wys dit nie eintlik nie ek sal miskien vir my suster sê ek lyks nie daai nie maar nie vir hulle nie

was jou ouma kwaad toe jy nie graad 11 deur gekom het nie

baie kwaad

vind jy skoolwerk moeilik of het jy nie hard gewerk nie

altwee ek sal nou miskien iets study en as ek by die skool kom ken ek die hele werk nou dan slip alles weg

wat is jou beste vak

op die oomblik geskiedenis

en jou swakste vak

bio die klomp goed wat jy moet ken is tough vir jou

help jou ouma jou om onafhanklik te word of hou hulle jou baie terug

somtyds dink ek hulle hou my baie terug somtyds dink ek hulle hou baie terug maar in 'n way dink ek ook dit is ook maar reg dat hulle my so treat want as ek in 'n ander way getreat gewees het was ek soos die kinders in hanover park so onbeskof en deurmekaar en gangsterig en so

behoort jy aan die kerk jeug

daar is niemand om ons te vat nie dit is in die ander pad en my ouma trust nie dat ons so in die pad loop nie

voel jy partykeer hartseer jou gesig lyk nou anders

ja my hart is baie seer praat oor ma en pa en familie

voel jy partykeer kwaad dat jou ma dood is

baie

het jy ooit oor jou ma gepraat

nooit

praat oor gevoelens na die verlies van 'n dierbare verduidelik die stadiums wat 'n mens deur gaan wanneer 'n mens treur
ek droom nog van my ma

het jy al ooit gedink om weg te hardloop

nooit nie te bang as ek weggehardloop het sal my ouma my dood geslaat het

praat oor die generasie gaping

sy is anders hoe kan ek sê sy verstaan maar in 'n way verstaan sy nie

as jy gelukkig is oor iets met wie praat jy

ek sal nie actually praat nie hoe sal ek sê oor gevoelens nie nie met my auntie of my ouma praat nie

ek sal met my vriend praat maar nooit met hulle nie somtyds sê ek ek wil weg uit hanover park kom

seuns as jy 'n boyfriend het wat sal jou ouma doen

o ek wietie ek wiet nie van daar af nie

ek is seker daar is baie wat van jou hou

baie ek is nie actually geworry oor hulle nou nie my skoolwerk is belangrik
ek praat saam met hulle is saam met hulle ek het hulle vertel van my ouma
my ouma sal my saterdag laat uit gaan

iemand groot moet saam gaan en vir haar bel en sê ek moet saam gaan

ek slaap nie actually uit nie miskien by my beste vriend se familie maar nie by iemand anders nie

as jy oor iets moet besluit met wie sal jy dan praat

met my auntie vir my voel dit ek moet met my auntie praat sy sal met my ouma praat

noem drie dinge wat vir jou belangrik is

niks

drie dinge waarvan jy nie hou nie

ek het nog nooit daarvoor gedink nie

sal jy eendag wil kinders hê

miskien want die way wat dit nou is vir my voel dit so dat ek op my eie voete gaan staan vir die goed wat nou so duur is sal ek skaars vir my kan sorg wat nog van kinders ek weet nie

hoe sien jy die rol van die social worker

hoe het jy gevoel vir die outings

vir my was dit ok om uit te gaan omdat ons nie baie uitgaan nie

sal jy met jou social worker gepraat het

as hulle gevra het so ek gepraat het

was jy ooit in 'n groep met ander pleegkinders

nee..ek is bang ek stel ouma teleur ons is nie onbeskof by die huis nie sal nie vloek nie sal miskien hard praat en skel maar nie vloek nie

wat dink jy kan social workers vir pleegkinders doen

ek dink hulle moet vir die kind vra hoe voel hulle oor julle pleegmense en soe en hulle vra hoe treat die mense julle en hulle moenie bang wees om te vra nie en die kinders moenie bang wees om te sê nie

sommige kinders is bang om te sê hulle word gedreig of so dat hulle nie reguit sal praat nie

my ouma is nie so nie sy sal nie vir ons sê wat om te sê nie sy sal sê praat die waarheid en as julle nie reg voel oor 'n ding nie sê vir hulle

I knew this foster family before I undertook the research study. I worked with them for ± a year, two years ago.

The foster family live on the border of Hanover Park, in a two bedroomed council house the house is close to Lansdowne Road.

Foster mother is the children's paternal grandmother. She is old. Her three daughters assist her in caring for her 3 grandchildren.

Contacted the family and made an appointment to discuss the reasons for the research and request co-operation on 15.04.02. Foster mother did most of the talking. We sat in a triangle form.

Phoned and made an appointment on 30.04.02 to speak to C. The house was very full and the family wanted to watch television.

Went to nearby church premises and conducted the interview outside in the sun.

I felt concerned for C who spoke about the loss of her mother and cried because of her unhappiness.

She is grateful for what her family are doing for her. She is 19 years old and does not have the opportunity to mix with her peers except at school and a few occasions when her best friend invites her out.

I also respect and understand the foster mother's position. C is a very attractive young girl and cannot walk around in Hanover Park on her own because of the gangster element. Foster mother does not have the financial means to give the children more.

I was glad to hear that C has contact with her father because foster mother on numerous occasions said she does not know where he is. This was done because of her dependence on the foster grant.

LOTUS RIVER/OTTERY

Annele interview on 1-05-2002

how old are you

I will be 17 on 23.11.02
in what Standard are you
Grade 10

jy sê jy wil in sielkundige word

ek wil mense help soos die social worker mense help vir my is toe ek klein was wou ek al 'n psychologist wees

jy het al 'n psychologist gesien tevore

nie eintlik nie ek het net altyd tv gekyk en gesien hoe help die psychologist die mense dit het my geïnterest

as jy kyk na social worker en foster care hoe dink jy kan social worker gesien

baie keer al ek kan hulle sê ek is gelukkig

as die social worker jou ouma kom sien raak jy skaam

nie ek was bang hulle vat my weg van my ouma

het jy ooit die gedagte gekry dat hulle jou wil weg vat

ek was bang hulle kom haal vir my en dan gaan ek nooit weer my ouma sien nie

hoe voel jy daaroor jy 'n ma het maar hou ouma kyk na jou en gee meer om vir jou

ek weet nie

jy kan dit seker nie verstaan nie

ek kan nie verstaan nie

en as jy jou ma sien hoe is sy met jou

sy is olraait – sy gee vir my R5,00

hoe dikwels sien jy haar kom sy na julle weet sy waar julle nou bly

(onlangs getrek)

ek dink nie sy weet waar ons nou bly nie

het jy al ooit na haar plek gegaan

nee

het jy ooit jou ouma en oupa van haar kant van dië familie gesien haar mense

ja ek het al haar ma hulle gesien hulle bly in delft

hoe is hulle teenoor jou

hulle is alraait

sal hulle jou help as jy hulle vra

ek het hulle lank nie geisen nie weet nie hoe hulle lyk nou nie my ouma het ons gevat sy het gesê sy kan ons nie weghou nie sy het gesê julle moet hulle gaan kuier en wys julle is daar

iou ouma is baie life vir julle

sy het ons groot gemaak van toe ons klein was

en jou pa, as hy kom kuier

hy is alraait ons groet hom dan gee hy ons 'n pakkie chips hy gee my ouma geld my pa werk en hy bring altyd groceries
my ma is 'n drinker maar sy is nugter as sy kom as sy dronk is sal ek nie nog met haar praat nie ek sal either weghardloop

hou jy nie van drank nie

ek hou nie van daai nie

hou jy nie van drank nie

ek hou nie van daai nie

is jy skaam as sy kom kuier

ek is nie skaam nie

is jy partykeer kwaad vir haar

so 'n bietjie maar dan overcome ek dit
soms sal ek dink hoe dit sal wees om met 'n ma en pa te bly ek kan nie dinge verander wat gebeur nie as dit gebeur dan gebeur dit
ek voel hartseer maar ek laat dit nie vir my onderkry nie

met wie praat jy daarvoor as jy so upset voel

ek praat met my ouma dit voel net so 'n bietjie seer binne in

jou ouma voel nie upset as julle daarvoor praat nie

sy voel nie upset nie – dis reg as julle praat ek het die reg om te weet hoe julle voel

jy kan oor enigiets meet haar praat

ek kan oor enigiets met haar praat

en as jy voel jy word baie wvsgehou en jy wil 'n bietjie uitgaan hoe sal sy dan wees

ek sê vir my ouma ek wil gaan en sy vra my hoe laat gaan ek terug kom en sy sê moenie laat terug kom nie want jy weet enigiets kan gebeur dan change ek my mind en staan voor by die deur

en jou vriende het jy vriende met wie jy kan praat of net met jou ouma

ek praat met my vriende by die skool en by die huis ek het baie vriende – meestal jongetjie vriende

o en wat sê jou ouma daarvan

my ouma sê vir my dis niks nie dis net somtyds wat sy my sien met 'n klomp jongetjies en ek is die enigste meisie dan sê sy vir my jy moenie met so 'n klomp jongetjies staan nie dan sê ek ok fine dan staan ek miskien daar onder meisie kinders like moeilikheid maak jongetjie vriende verstaan vir jou jy kan lekker praat

hoe maak die meisies moeilikheid

as jy miskien met 'n jongetjie staan dan dink hulle so maar jy gaan uit met hom dan wil hulle jou so maar slaat vir onnodig

hoe voel jy partykeer anders omdat jy in foster care is as ander kinders

ek dink ek is 'n gewone kind soos elke teenager ek voel nie actually sleg om 'n foster kind te wees nie want ek weet hoekom dit is

was jy ooit bang dat jy na 'n home moet gaan

somtyds ja as ek miskien laat in die aand huistoe kom dan sê my ouma vir my jy gaan nie weer uit nie en dan sê my ouma vir my jy gaan nie weer uit nie en dan voel ek somtyds bang

het jou ouma miskien gesê sy gaan die social worker bel

(lag) glo nie my ouma sal dit doen nie

en jou tannie wat by julle bly kan jy met haar praat

ek praat met haar ook maar ek voel beter as ek met jou ouma praat my ouma verstaan

hoe kry jou ouma dit reg om so mooi te verstaan party ander ouma's wil niks verstaan nie

ek sê vir my ouma sy moenie vir my so vashou en ek nie kan doen wat ek wil doen nie. ek moet daarom die buitewêreld ken

en by die skool outings met die social worker

ek het op 'n kamp gegaan en ek het 2 keer na die ice rink gegaan en na ratanga junction

het jy daardie goed onthou wat het jy gedink as die social worker julle soon toe vat

net ons uit te vat – sy wil gaan dit en ons uitneem

jou ouma se seun waar bly hy nou

ook in grassy park bring hy ook vir haar groceries

as julle iets wil hê en sy kan dit rêrig nie vir julle gee nie word julle kwaad

ons verstaan as sy het sal sy miskien dubbel koop

as jy nie dieselfde klere kan dra soos al die ander nie

ek verstaan ek weet my ouma kan nie bekostig nie ek dra die klere wat sy nou kan koop

wanneer dit te klein is sit ek dit weg en dan gee my ouma dit vir die moslem community center

as jy en iemand gestry het, wat doen jy dan

ek praat dit uit ek sal 'n bietjie kwaad wees – ek sal weer mooi praat

as jy eendag kinders het hoe gaan jy maak

ek sal my kinders self grootmaak as my man nie goed genoeg kyk nie sal ek probeer om te doen wat my ouers nie kan gedoen het nie ek gaan hulle spoil en leer dat hulle nie onbeskof is nie

dink jy jou ouma het julle mooi manier geleer

sy sê dat julle nie onbeskof moet wees nie ons glo nie in doctors nie as ons siek is sy maak dit self gesond sy is altyd daar wanneer ons haar nodig het en as ons siek is

as jou broer en suster iets nie kan kry nie voel jy upset

ek voel nie upset nie – ek sê vir hulle hulle sal net moet wag later kry hulle dubbel

jou pa gaan jy na sy plek het hy 'n nuwe gesin

hy het 'n meisie ja ek sal vir 'n vakansie gaan maar nie om te bely nie kan nie weg van my ouma af gaan nie ek sal mal raak in my kop as my ouma iets oorkom

hoe voel dit om 'n foster kind te wees

ek ken nie eintlik ander foster kinders nie ek sê nie vir die kinders ek is 'n foster kind kind nie ek is 'n gewone kind as julle nie tevrede is met my nie – gaan weg van my af

en as kinders vra hoekom bly jy by jou materne ouma dis mos nie hulle besigheid nie – hoekom ek by my ouma bly nie

sjoe jy is tough wat maak jou hartseer

toe my oupa gesterf het hierdie jaar somtyds sit ek stil dan dink ek my oupa het ons altyd gehelp oupa het 'n heart attack gehad op 21.03.03

wat dink jy as die social worker kom kuier

somtyds as ek die mense sien dan dink ek hulle gaan vir my hier weg wat dan sê ek vir my ouma gaan hulle my wegvat ouma sê nee hulle gaan jou nie hier wegvat nie hulle kom kyk of julle ok is

dink jy die social worker moet meer met julle praat en sê hoekom julle daar is

as hulle wil kan hulle ek sê nie hulle moet nie as hulle wil weet hoe die kind voel moet hulle vra

vertel my meer van jou oupa

ek mis my oupa baie, in die aand dan huil ouma dit is 'n groot vermissing. hy was 'n baie goeie mens oupa het altyd die mense gehelp elke dag R2,00 gekry en in die middag vrydae aande het ons movies gekyk en chips geëet hy het taxi gery hy was

70 hy was nie siek nie hy het niks gekla nie wil nie hospital toe gaan nie hy was baie moeg hy het nie opgehou werk nie

hoe voel jou ouma oor jou ma

ouma het ma verstaan sy was 'n goeie skoondogter sy het haar lewe weg gegooi soos 'n bergie ouma het gesê hulle moet nie drink nie want moslems drink nie

en jou pa

my pa drink nie

hoe was jou ouers

my ma het baie upset dae gehad ek sal nie lieg nie hulle was nie by my ouma nie

sien jy jou pa

my pa kom daar hy gee ons R2,00

vertel my meer hoekom jy 'n psychologist wil wees

ek wil mense help ek wil weet hoe hulle voel, ek sal beter verstaan ek sal vir hulle sê as hulle probleme het hulle moet met my praat ek sal vir niemand sê nie - ek wil net weet hoe hulle voel ek sal enigiets doen om hulle te help

Waarvan hou jy

Sokker ek speel onder 19 goalie ek het vir die meneer gesê ek wil sokker speel ouma het ja gesê skool gee die uniform ek het tevore gespeel

wat doen jy nog by die skool

help met die litter probleem ons het 'n competition gewen ons tel die litter op by die skool en die environment baie kinders van graad 8 – 12 help dit laat my goed voel ek neem deel aan al die activities deel wat jy kan kry by die skool

die RCL – dissipliene by die skool

ek is nie deel daarvan nie. jy moet in graad 11 wees ek sal dit doen wil ook 'n prefek wees in soos jy apply vir 'n job cv en 'n statement uitskryf discipline is nodig by die skool

skooldabatte

ek kan nie so lekker engels prat nie mense praat 'n hoer engels en ek kan nie verstaan nie

doen goed in engels 55% afrikaan 51% ekonomie 41% sukkel met wiskunde en rekeningkunde

This interview as done at Pick 'N Pay Hypermarket, Cafeteria in Ottery on 01.02.02.

A letter was sent to A.

During an Office interview the purpose of the research was explained to A and her paternal grandmother who is her foster mother. A and her younger brother and

sister are in foster care. Mother's whereabouts are unknown. Although foster mother knows where her son lives she is unwilling to give this information.

Foster mother cared for all 3 children from babyhood.

The family live in a rented two bedroomed flat close to Grassy Park. They have moved twice since March 2002 when foster father died. Foster mother is assisted by her daughter, and son-in-law to care for the family. The family battles financially.

It was decided to do the interview outside the family home as there is no privacy in the home.

Foster mother is dedicated to her foster children and will do what she can to protect them.

I have worked with the family for 18 months before the interview. The work focused on including the children in activities and in writing the required statutory report. Foster mother is very co-operative but volunteers only the minimum information. She protects her son and the mother of the children by not providing knowledge of their whereabouts. The parents did not attempt to make contact with the Society.

It was frustrating to supervise this placement. Foster mother is very guarded regarding the information she makes available. She does however care very well for the children and appears to have a good relationship with all three grandchildren. Foster mother is a devout Moslem.

A presents as a very positive teenager who has a ready smile. She found it easy to speak about her family. She impresses as being assertive and confident.

Joseph 08.05.2002

Wat dink jy is foster care

Kinders wat ...en mense wie se ouers hulle eenkant toe stoot en nie omgee vir hulle nie

Hoekom is jy in foster care

Omdat my ma my geslaat het met die graaf dit het eenkeer gebeur dit was baie erg

Hoekom het sy dit gedoen

Sy het my baby broer hospitaal toe geneem toe hy tande gesny het en toe sê sy ek moet die kooie regtrek onse kooie was reggetrek toe is die ander kooi nie reg getrek nie toe sien sy toe die kooi is nie reg nie toe sy net inkom by die deur toe hom sy met die graf

Hoe oud was jy

12 jaar oud

Toe hardloop ek weg en kom hiernatoe

Was daar ander goed wat gebeur het voor dit

Nee

Gaan jy nog vir haar kuier

Ja

Kom sy vir jou hier kuier

Nee

Jy gaan nog soontoe hoe is sy nou teenoor jou

Sy is kalm

Hoekom het sy so kwaad geword wat was die rede

Ek weet nie wat was die rede nie

Was sy gedrink gewees

Nee sy was nie dronk nie

Jy wil nie weer teruggegaan het nie!

Nee

Het sy en die baba se pa baie gestry

Ja

Het jy nie daarvan gehou nie

Nee

Wanneer hulle so gestry het, waar was jy

By my ander ouma

En joy eie pa hy is in Johannesburg Sien jy hom nog

Ja as hy afkom dan kom hy hiernatoe of hy sê ons moe na hom toe kom

Is dit lekker daar Wil jy daar gaan bly

Ek weet nie

Hoe oud is jy en in watter graad is jy

17 jaar oud in graad 10 ek wil graad 12 klaar maak

Hou jy van skool

Ja

Wat is jou beste vakke

Engels afrikaans geskiedenis

Was julle ooit met julle social worker in groepe gewees

Net eenkeer uitgegaan na die ice ring

Hoekom het kinders in foster care 'n social worker

Stilte

Dink jy nie dis nodig nie

Ek dink nie dis nodig vir my nie

Jy is by jou ouma

Ja

Spoil sy jou

Ja

Slaan jou ouma jou nie Het jy al weggeloop

Vorige tyd het sy my geslaan toe ek nog by my ma was

Vertel my wat daardie oggend gebeur het

Ek het my skool klere gehaal toe gaan ek skool toe. ek sê toe vir die mense wat gebeur het en toe kom my auntie en my broer en daarvan toe gaan hulle saam met my na die hof en toe gaat ons na die welfare

Kan jy onthou dat jy by die kindertehuis was

Ja maar nie daai tyd nie in dieselfde maand

Kan jy onthou wat by die hof gebeur het

Ek het nie much note gevat nie

(Ek verduidelik hoekom kinders 'n maatskaplike werker nodig het wanneer hulle in pleegsorg is)

Wanneer jy klaar is met skool wat wil jy dan doen

Ek gaan navy toe ek het klaar met my niggie gepraat sy werk daar

Wat wil jy in the navy doen

Ek gaan 'n kok wees

Het jy huishoudkinde op skool

Ja

Help jy jou ouma kook

Ja skil die aartappels goi die aartappels in die pot

Waarvan hou jy baie

Om te loop in die berge ons het eenkeer 'n kompetisie gedoen in Grabouw saam met die skool meneer ons het oorgeslaap in die berg ons het tweede gekom dit was die Boland Trail ons he 15 km na die hut gestap en 15 km terug

Hoe het hulle die kompetisie beoordeel

Kyk wie eerste klaar is wie eerste in die kamp kom kyk na die apparate en hoe spanwerk is daar was scout spanne en die navy en skool teams Ek hou van rugby ek speel 0 19 in die flank posisie

Waarvan hou jy nie

Onbeskofte kinders
Hou nie van winkel toe gaan nie
Kinders wat joy name roep (terg)
Die kinders weet nie ek is 'n pleegkind nie

Wat van die briewe wat pleegkinders by die skool moet laat voltooi (VRT 147)

Dit word na die juffrou gestuur sy neem dit na die onderhoof

Voel jy skaam om 'n pleegkind te wees

Ja

Lyk jy soos jou ma of jou pa

Ek aard na my pa

Jy en jou broer – (wat ook in pleegsorg is) stry julle of sien julle mekaar in

Ons stry baie keer

As jy 'n groot probleem het – met wie sal jy praat

Ek hou dit either vir myself as dit nie erg is nie los ek dit

I found this interview extremely difficult. J appears to be an introvert. He would just answer questions and would not volunteer information except on his hobby hiking. It would appear as though he denies that he is in foster care and does not want to talk about it.

The interview was done in the lounge of the foster home. His foster mother was in the kitchen. She was talking to someone in the kitchen while the interview was conducted.

Anthony brother of Joseph 15.05.2002**Wat is foster care**

As jy onder iemand se sorg is en hulle kyk mooi na jou en gee jou wat goed is en kyk dat jy skoolgaan

Hoekom is jy in foster care

Omdat my ma my broer geslaan het met die graaf en toe kom hy na my ouma toe en sê hy vir my ouma wat gebeur het daarna het hulle 'n klag gelê by child welfare en toe sit hulle ons eers onder my auntie se sorg daarna gat hulle weer terug ons het voorgekom en toe sê hulle dat my ouma moet toesig vat oor ons

Is jy tevrede daarmee of sal jy by jou ma wil gebly het

Ek is tevrede daarmee

Gaan kuier jy by jou ma of kom kuier sy by jou

Ek gaan kuier by ma

Sal jy weer by haar wil gaan bly

Nie eintlik nie

En jou pa kom hy vir julle kuier of kuier julle vir hom

Hy kom kuier party keer vir ons en as dit vakansie is dan gaat ons na hom toe

Is jy tevrede daarmee sal jy by hom wil gebly het sal dit nie werk nie

Ek dink nie so nie

Hoe maak jy as iemand jou terg oor pleegsorg

Dit gebeur nie met my nie

Hoe gaan dit by die skool

Dit gaan goed

In watter graad is jy

Graad 11 ek is 16 jaar oud

Van watter vakke hou jy die meeste

Geskiedenis rekeningkunde engels en afrikaans

Wat wil jy doe na skool

Ek het daarvan gedink om na die vloot te gaan toe dink ek weer my pa het vir my gesê dat ek law wil study dan kan ek gaan

Hoekom wil jy law study

Se nou maar as iemand 'n saak maak en iemand doen aansoek vir 'n lawyer en hy kom na my toe dan gaan ek na die hof en ek defend my client

Het jy baie maats by die skool

Ja

En as jy nou 'n probleem het met wie sal jy praat

Daar is ene saam met wie ek kan praat

Sal jy met jou ouma praat

Somtyds hou ek nie daarvan om te praat oor iets nie dan sal ek net stilbly

Hoekom het pleegkinders 'n social worker

Ek wet nie eintlik nie

Vertel my waarvan jy baie hou

Sokker uitgaan saam met die jeug ek hou ook van skool

Waarvan hou jy nie

Onbeskofte mense

Ek het baie maats by die sokker klub

Het jy ooit gedink om weg te hardloop

Nee my ouma raas so nou en dan as ons nou verkeerd is sal sy vir ons sê sy sal nie nog vir ons slaat nie sy praat mooi saam met ons

As jou maats probleme het sal hulle met jou praat

Hulle praat saam met my

Ek try om hulle te help eenkeer toe se my maat hulle het weg geloop van die huis toe sê hy so en so het verkeerd gegaan by die huis toe sê ek moenie weghardloop nie dis oraaie toe sê hy hy wil ook nie meer skool toe gaan nie – toe sê ek waar kan jy die skool los jy is dan nou in St 9 daar is net een jaar oor jy moet klaar maak met skool toe luister hy na my toe het hy nie weg gegaan nie Net my goeie maats praat met my

As jy vir jou ma gaan kuier wat doen jy daar

Ek praat 'n bietjie saam met haar ek gaan winkel toe vir haar en so aan

Kan jy enige tyd na haar gaan

Nie enige tyd nie partykeer maak ek tyd om na haar toe te gaan

Hoekom stuur jou ouma vir jou winkel toe

Omdat ek goed kan onthou soos laas week toe stuur my ouma my na Russel's toe om iets te betaal vir haar my broer hou nit eintlik van sulke goed nie toe stuur my ouma vir my

Die feit dat jy 'n lawyer wil word is dit omdat jy dit op t v sien of wil jy mense help wat dink jy

Ek dink ek wil mense help

Mag julle uitgaan

Ek gaan saam met die jeug uit as hulle uitgaan

Wat sê ouma daarvan

As ons haar vra sê sy ja maar as ons net gaan sonder om te vra sal sy skel en sê julle gaan nie weer uit nie op public holidays gaan ons met die jeug uit jy moet jou eie vleis bring en luxuries en R 10 dan gaan ons uit vir die dag laaste was ons by Oudekraal vir die dag daarna het ons om die berg gery en by Muizenberg geswem Ek hou nie van die berg nie ek hou nie baie van weg van die huis gaan nie ek sal op kampe gaan ek het saam met my vriend hulle gaan kamp die einde van die jaar by Slanghoek die eerste dag het ek gevoel ek wil by die huis gewees het daarna het ek gewoon geraak daaraan

Toe jy by jou ouma kom bly het was dit vir jou moeilik gewees is hier meer orde

Dis meer orde hier. Ek hou daarvan

Dink jy jou ma sal verander

Ek dink nie so nie

Toe jou broer by jou ouma kom bly het het die hof nie vir jou gevra of jy wil gaan of nie

Hulle het my gevra of ek wil toe sê ek ek wil by my ouma bly

Somtyds was my ma onbeskof

Ek is tevrede om in pleegsorg te wees

Homevisit to foster family on 24.04.2002 to discuss the letter and purpose of the research. Spoke to foster mother and J was practicing rugby. Foster mother and J was willing that the brother's speak to social worker. They will ask A for permission and discuss the purpose of the interview. Visited on 02.05.2002 and made arrangements to do the interview on 08.05.2002.

The family live in a council house in Ottery. Foster mother's son bought the two bedroomed house. Relatives are living in the backyard. They live about 200 m from the Yuru Cat gang area.

Biological mother lives in the vicinity. Father lives in Johannesburg with his girlfriend.

Paternal grandmother foster's the brothers': their younger brother was removed from the mother's care +/- 2 years ago. He has a different father.

According to foster mother their mother abuses alcohol and lives a promiscuous life. She lives with her mother. Foster mother gave this information when the boys were out of ear shot. She is sensitive to their feelings and protective of them.

She was willing that the brother's co-operate but I got the feeling that she expected of me to be careful not to upset her grandsons. She is a small person with a no nonsense attitude and comes across as very assertive.

It was possible to interview the brother's in the lounge of the foster home. This room was neatly furnished and had a wall unit displaying different glass sets of pudding bowls.

It was arranged to interview the brothers together on 08.05.2002. I was 5 minutes late for the appointment. Foster mother sent A to Wynberg to pay an account. J agreed to be interviewed alone and arrangements were made to interview A on 15.05.2002.

It was much easier to interview A. He is more of an extrovert than J and more willing to discuss his feelings. I felt more comfortable speaking to A than to J. A volunteered information. J only answered questions. Both brothers confirmed what the other one said. Both impress well, they are neatly dressed and both appear to have foster mother's direct way and assertiveness. I did not know A and J before this interview.

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Jackie**date 07.05.2002****wat dink jy is foster care**

ek het nie geweet waarom dit gaan nie

toe jy die eerste keer 'n social worker gesien het wat het jy gedink – dat hulle jou kom haal?my ouma het gesê ja ek dink because nog nooit klagtes van ons nie ons verstaan mekaar kom goed oor die weg
my ouma en haar man het ons groot gemaak**hoekom is jy in foster care**

omdat jy nie meer 'n moeder het om agter jou te kyk nie by wie jy kan bly nie

het jy gedink om by jou pa te gaan bly

nee

sien jy hom party keer

ja weinig hy kom kuier baie na ons toe

wat van jou broer en suster

hulle sal nie sonder my weggaan nie

jou pa is in bonteheuwel

ek sien hom as ons daar na toe gaan of hulle na ons kom

sal jy by jou pa wil bly

ek sal nie

ek was aan altwee gewoond geraak ek het geweet wie is my pa en (ma se tweede man) is nie my pa nie

vertel my van skool

Ek het St 8 klaargemaak ek was 18 jaar oud daarom is ek uit die skool ek het st 6 gedruip dit was nie moeilik nie maar ek het meer speel werk gedoen as wat ek skoolwerk doen

wat wil jy eendag doen

ek wou 'n hairdresser wees nou sal ek enige werk doen

hoe kom jy met jou ouma oor die weg is dit gevaarlik waar jy bly

dit is nie gevaarlik nie sy laat my uitgaan so groot soos ek hier is vra ek haar

dans

ek gaan saam met my auntie en ek gaan met die kar ons loop nooit nie eers in die aand nie

is daar gangs by julle

nie by ons nie verder op is 'n gang

soek jy werk gaan iemand saam

ja niemand gaan saam miskien wil daai een ook gaan vir werk

wanneer jy probleme het met wie praat jy ouma auntie vriende

auntie en ouma ek sal met altwee praat vir altwee dieselfde ding sê dan sal laat ek vir altwee vir my advice altwee moet sy side van die storie sê

het jy al ooit weggehardloop

is nie worth it om weg te hardloop van die huis nie

boyfriend

nie op die oomblik nie ouma sal dit aanvaar as ek eerlik is en vir haar sê ons is open met mekaar dit maak dit maklik once ek skelm wil wees dit gaan nie werk nie

as jou ouma nee sê

dan verstaan ek sy sê nee dan bly dit nee sy gee baie om vir ons ek dink ek sien ek need nie om by ander mense te vra nie want daar is elke dag vir ons sy gee vir ons alles wat ons wil hê sy koop vir ons – daar is niks om te praat nie ek dink nie iemand anders sal beter wees as wat sy is nie

sê vir my 3 dinge waarvan jy hou

uitgaan – enige plek so mostly weekends dans toe – net die saterdagavond saterdag healtyd by die huis kosmaak en huiswerk doen help in die huis

waarvan hou jy nie

van rondloop nie in die straat en in die aande nie

het jy baie vriende

stel nie eintlik belang in vriende nie het nie eintlik vriende nie van ek skool gelos het

is daar 'n generation gap

sy is oraait. sy verstaan daar is nie fout met haar nie dit was een so dat ek nie kan uitgaan nie maar dit is nie meer so nie

wat is die werk van 'n social worker as kinders in foster care is

ek dink som van die kinders moet 'n social worker hê want daar is ma's wat nie omgee vir die kinders nie – ek het lank gelede van sulke kinders gehoor hulle (social worker) moet sê watter tyd hulle moet kom al die mense is nie altyd gereed nie daar is kinders wat omkrap veral as daar baie kinders in die huis is nou lyk dit as die social worker kom hulle maak miskien nie hulle plek skoon nie – sit heeldag of so nie

die brief aan die skool het jy skaamgevoel

my eie ouma het dit geneem ek het nooit 'n briefie geneem nie hulle het meeste het my ouma na die skool gegaan

het jou ouma ooit gedrieg dat julle na 'n home sal gaan

ouma het nooit gedrieg van home toe gaan nie

as jy eendag kinders het hoe sal jy hulle grootmaak

ek sal hulle die beste gee wat ek ken gee wat ek het sal mooi na hulle kyk nie vir hulle neglect nie slaan met die tong slaan help nie more doen die kinders dit maar net weer

het julle ouma met julle gepraat

ja sy het vir ons verstaan gemaak jy sê nie voor wat ek wil sê nie luister dat ek klaar praat sy het verduidelik vir ons toe ek nog klein was

kan jy sê as jy ongelukkig is oor iets

ek is nie eintlik so nie ek hou my mond maar nie altyd nie – dis nie vir violent wees nie daai nie jy moet ook at least sê wat jy wil sê want once jy jou mond die eerste keer hou dan vat hulle advantage van jou – laat hulle jou elke keer wil vertel

hoe kom julle reg met geld

die familie wat saam woon het meeste die ouma gehelp
ek sê ma vir ouma my suster sê mammie omdat sy klein was ek was 9 jaar oud (toe ma oorlede is)

het jy gedink om by jou pa se ma te bly

nee ek sal nooit daar gaan bly nie dis deurmekaar daar is nie orde nie daar is nie rules nie jy gaan jou way

hou jy van rules

ja ek meen as iemand vir my sê ek moet daai doen jy bly vanaand in die huis jy gaan nie dan doen ek dit is mos net so met jou eie ma ouma gee om vir ons

as jy rerig kwaad is wat doen jy huil jy

(lag) ek huil as ek kwaad is

hoe oud is jy

word 20 18 augustus 2002

This interview was done at Pick 'n Pay Hypermarket Cafeteria in Ottery on 07.05.2002.

J responded to a letter sent out on 22.04.2002.

She was the only person who responded to the letter asking for interview. 28 people were contacted.

I did not know J at all. J was placed in foster care in March 1993.

I met her stepfather at Child Welfare Society. He wants J's two half siblings to live with him and his second wife. He is employed as a labourer at the South Peninsula Council and lives in Mitchells Plain.

The foster home is situated in Lotus River on a busy road. The house is the only tin shack in the road. The neighbours all have built houses and the properties are privately owned.

It would appear as though the foster parents and their extended family live on the property. There are more shacks in the backyard.

I am unsure of how many people were inside the yard but it appeared as though more than 10 adults were around as well as a number of children.

I was invited into the house. There are two beds and wardrobes in the living room – no lounge furniture. Everybody was very friendly and I felt accepted. Foster mother and her one daughter did most of the talking. Foster father was also in the room. I explained the reason for the letter and requested an interview with J. They all agreed to this (J sat on one of the beds – and foster mother and J sat on the bed opposite me).

There was no privacy at the home. While we were talking in the living room people were walking in and out.

Foster mother agreed that J goes with to the Hypermarket and that I do the interview there.

While doing the interview with J I remembered that I met foster mother at Child Welfare's offices earlier this year. She returned the younger two children's VRT 147 school forms to the office. At the time we discussed the younger children's father's visit to the office and his wish to have them in his care. He also made allegations that the foster family was running a shebeen from the home. Foster mother was very friendly. She said that the allegations were untrue.

I suspect that other people who live in the yard could be involved in the shebeening and that all in the family have some benefit from this income.

J was willing to take part in the research. I explained that the information would be kept confidential. She agreed that I could tape record the interview.

Before we left J changed the jacket she wore. She wore a plastic jacket and changed into a leather jacket. She wore a stud in her nose.

J was relaxed during the interview. She was honest but guarded during the interview.

She is very close to her family and very protective towards her half brother and sister.

She made it clear that she was happy in her foster home. She did not volunteer to give more information than what I asked for.

J was her mother's first child and she and her mother lived with maternal grandmother, now foster mother. When her mother died she remained with her maternal grandmother who was an important figure in her life from birth. She appears to be able to form close relationships and has a clear sense of belonging and identity.

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APPENDIX B

Correspondence

University of Cape Town

Hand. Delivered 18/04/02.

10-04-02.

Mr Wardson
PAWC Social Services.
Wynberg.

Sir,
re Research project.

I am busy with the Clinical Master's Course in Social Work at the University of Cape Town. My supervisor is Mr. Patrick Smith.

I intend doing follow-up work with 10 children who received services according to the foster care model using groupwork and 10 children who received services using casework. (in 1992).

The children I intend interviewing would now be approximately 17 and 18 years old.

I need permission, from your department, to interview 10 foster children who live in Lotus River and who receive services from your department.

The research will be done in my own time and at my own expense.

Should you need more details please contact me on 7617130 (w) or

712 9755 (h).

Your co-operation will be appreciated

Yours faithfully,

Kara Lee-Jones (Ruster)

University of Cape Town

Mr Jackson

I request permission to do research on the foster care model used by Mr Gurston's team. This would be a part of my clinical master's course at the University of Cape Town.

The research will be an examination of the model used by Mr Gurston's team.

I intend doing follow-up work with 10 children who received services - according to the foster care model used by Mr Gurston's team and a control group of 10 children who did not receive services according to the model.

The children I intend contacting would now be approximately 17 and 18 years old.

I intend doing the research in my own time and at my own expense.

May I request written authorization for this project. Thank-you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

L. C. Rinder

10.04.02.

Ms Abrahams
PAWC Social Services
Athlone.

Madam,
re. Research project.

I am busy with the Clinical markers Course in Social Work at the University of Cape Town. My supervisor is Mr. Patrick Smith.

The research will involve doing follow-up work with 10 children who received services according to the foster care model using groupwork and 10 children who received services using casework. (in 1992).

The children I intend interviewing would now be approximately 17 and 18 years old.

I need permission, from your department, to interview 10 children who live in Hanover Park and who receive services from your department.

The research will be done at my own expense and in my own time.

Should you need more details please

Contact me at 7617130 (w) or 7129755(6)

Your co-operation will be appreciated.

Yours Faithfully,
Hava Lee-Jones (Risto).

University of Cape Town

APPENDIX C

Questionnaires

University of Cape Town

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FOSTER CHILDREN IN ORDER TO DETERMINE HOW THE FOSTER CHILD VIEWS HIS/HER PLACEMENT, HIS/HER SOCIAL WORKER, HIS/HER FOSTER FAMILY, HIS/HER BIOLOGICAL FAMILY, HIS/HER PROGRESS AT SCHOOL AND TO DETERMINE HIS/HER SELF CONCEPT

UNDERSTANDING OF FOSTER CARE SITUATION

WHAT IS FOSTER CARE?

WHY ARE YOU IN FOSTER CARE?

ATTITUDE TOWARDS FOSTER PARENTS

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE REASONS THAT CHILDREN ARE PLACED IN FOSTER CARE?

DO YOU HAVE ANY CONTACT WITH YOUR BIOLOGICAL PARENTS OR FAMILY?

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT YOUR OWN PARENTS?

a) NAME OF FATHER: _____
AGE OF FATHER: _____
WHEREABOUTS: _____
CIRCUMSTANCES: _____

b) NAME OF MOTHER: _____
AGE OF MOTHER: _____

WHEREABOUTS:
CIRCUMSTANCES:

c) OTHER FAMILY:

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CONTACT WITH BIOLOGICAL PARENTS/FAMILY

HOW DO YOU FEEL RE. CONTACT?

THE FOSTER CHILD'S VIEW ON THE ROLE OF THE SOCIAL WORKER, IN HIS FOSTER PLACEMENT

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE WORK OF THE SOCIAL WORKER?

ATTITUDE TOWARDS SOCIAL WORKER

SCHOOL

WHAT IS YOUR AGE? _____

WHAT SCHOOL STANDARD ARE YOU IN? _____

WHAT IS THE LAST SCHOOL STANDARD YOU PASSED? _____

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO WHEN YOU ARE FINISHED WITH SCHOOL?
IF YOU ARE FINISHED WITH SCHOOL WHAT ARE YOU DOING NOW?

MENTION THREE THINGS YOU LIKE ABOUT YOURSELF AND THREE THINGS YOU DO NOT LIKE ABOUT YOURSELF.

LIKE ABOUT ME

DO NOT LIKE ABOUT ME

WHEN YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WHO DO YOU ASK FOR HELP?

HOW DOES GANGSTERISM AFFECT YOU.

Self Concept Assessment Device for Foster Children

PLEASE ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS BELOW

Section A

Tick only one of the 4 blocks next to each statement.

You will need to decide whether the statement is true for you – always or usually (most of the time) or seldom (not very often) or never.

1. I can ask my friends a favour
Always
Usually
Seldom
Never

2. If a shoplady give my the wrong thing, I can tell her
Always
Usually
Seldom
Never

3. I can answer back if children tease me
Always
Usually
Seldom
Never

4. I wish I could make friends with someone
Always
Usually
Seldom
Never

5. I can say "NO" to my friends
Always
Usually
Seldom
Never

6. I wish I could do better at school
Always
Usually
Seldom
Never

7. I am happy
Always
Usually
Seldom
Never
8. I like my looks just the way they are
Always
Usually
Seldom
Never
9. I am satisfied with the way I behave
Always
Usually
Seldom
Never
10. I am sad
Always
Usually
Seldom
Never
11. I enjoy talking to other people
Always
Usually
Seldom
Never
12. I am selfish
Always
Usually
Seldom
Never
13. I can make up my mind easily
Always
Usually
Seldom
Never

Section B

Tick either the top or the bottom block next to each number.

Tick the statement that is true for you most of the time, even if not always.

Tick the statement that comes nearer to being true for you than the other.

1. I feel that I am better than most people
I feel that I am worse than most people
2. I am good at sums
I am bad at sums
3. I am good at reading
I am bad at reading
4. I think I am pretty
I think I am ugly
5. I am proud of myself
I am ashamed of myself
6. I am a healthy person
I am a sick person
7. My mother loves me
My mother does not love me
8. I am important
I am a nobody
9. I am a good person
I am a bad person
1. I like myself
I hate myself
2. I feel well
I feel sick
3. I find it easy to decide what to wear
I find it hard to decide what to wear.

APPENDIX D

School progress and contact with biological parents

University of Cape Town

SCHOOLING

School progress: Lotus River/Ottery

School progress of foster children from Lotus River/ Ottery

Age & Sex	School Grade	Academic Progress
16 Male	Grade 11	Progressing age appropriately.
16 Female	Grade 10	1 year behind
17 Male	Grade 10	2 years behind
20 Female	Grade 10	Completed grade 10 at age 20, 2 years behind

Only one of the four (25%) participants from this area is progressing age appropriately at school.

Joseph is 17 years old and in Grade 10. He hopes to complete Grade 12 and would like to work as a chef in the Navy.

Anthony is 16 years old and in Grade 11. He plans to become a lawyer. He states that he wants to help people and that he watched TV programs where lawyers are helping people. He mentioned that he enjoys going to school.

Jackie is 20 years old. She left school after completing Grade 10. She would like to be a hairdresser. She said: "School work was not difficult. I played more than what I did my schoolwork". She will accept any employment she is able to find.

Annele is 17 and in grade 10. She struggles with mathematics and accounting. She would like to become a psychologist as she wants to

help people. She is satisfied with her English and Afrikaans marks, which are usually about 50%.

School Progress: Hanover Park

Hanover Park School progress of foster children

Age & Sex	School Grade	Academic Progress
16 Male	Grade 10	Progressing age appropriately.
17 Male	Grade 11	Progressing age appropriately
17 Male	Grade 11	Progressing age appropriately
19 Male	2 nd year Technikon	Progressing age appropriately
19 Female	Grade 11	2 years behind for her age
20 Female	Grade 12	2 years behind for her age. (Grade 12 at age 20)

Four of the six (66.6%) of the participants who live in this area are progressing age appropriately at school.

Keenan is in Grade 10 and is 16 years old. He does not know what kind of employment he will find when he is an adult. He is starting a part-time, weekend job to supplement the family income. He impresses as bright and observant.

Charlene is in Grade 11 and is 19 years old. She finds schoolwork difficult and thinks she failed because she did not work hard enough. "I would study something and when I get to school I know all the work but then everything slips away". From the discussion there are indicators that she might be showing signs of depression and that she may suffer from anxiety attacks (during examinations).

Bonita admitted to having had difficulties at school. "I could not concentrate". She failed Sub A and Std 9. "When I finished Grade 12, I

turned 20". She states that she is glad she completed Grade 12. She has not managed to find employment although she has had casual jobs. She remembers times before her removal when her father failed to wake her up in time for school. She would not have had an opportunity to eat and when she got to school she got a hiding for being late. The researcher was impressed with this respondents' insight into her learning difficulties i.e. lack of concentration and her resilience, despite the problems she completed her schooling. It would appear that she was affected by earlier life experiences before being placed in foster care.

Calvin, brother of Bonita is in Grade 11 at age 17. He failed Sub A as well as Grade 8. This participant presents with facial features indicative of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome. He declined to complete the questionnaire on self-concept. He stated that he is too busy preparing for exams to spend time on the questionnaire. He stated "I want an education, I want to become something in life".

Adrian is 19 years old and in his second year of a course in Public Management at a technicon. He states that he wants to help people and would like to complete a BA degree.

Clint is in Grade 11 and is 17 years old. He stated "I want to better my life. I want to further my education. That is why I go to school everyday". He is happy that he is doing well in accountancy and states that he achieves grades of 70% and above for this subject. He states that his teacher encourages him to do well.

Comparison: School progress

Comparison of the participants.

Hanover Park (Sable House Model)			Lotus River/Ottery Traditional model		
Age & Sex	Grade	Age appropriate	Age & Sex	Grade	Age appropriate
16 Male	Grade 10	Yes	16 Male	Grade 11	Yes
17 Male	Grade 10	1 year behind	17 Female	Grade 10	2 years behind
17 Male	Grade 11	Appropriate	17 Male	Grade 10	2 years behind
19 Male	2 nd year tech	Appropriate			
19 Female	Grade 11	2 years behind			
20 Female	Grade 12 Finished school at age 20	2 years behind	20 Female	Grade 10 at age 18	2 years behind

The researcher noted that four of the six participants from Hanover Park (66.6%) and one of the four participants (25%) from Lotus River/Ottery area are progressing age appropriately and were placed in foster care at a young age, before starting to attend school. Whether the Sable House Model contributed to the success of the participants' from Hanover Park is not clear from this research study. Initially the Sable House Team proposed a homework help programme but were not able to implement this as no volunteers could not be recruited.

Those foster children who were not progressing age appropriately at school mentioned factors such as lack of concentration and over active behaviour, as reasons why they failed at school. According to Blome (1997), foster children are often “fragile Infants ”who later experience abuse and neglect”. This statement holds true for Bonita of Hanover Park and Anthony of Lotus River/Ottery, who were neglected and abused before their placements. Bonita’s school progress was delayed by 2 years. The three participants, who were older when they were placed in their foster homes, failed either once or twice. This could be ascribed to changing schools at the time of placement as explained by Rice and Mc Fadden (1988), Kahan (1979), and Aldgate, Maluccio and Reeves, (1989). Both groups of foster children appear to enjoy their schooling and several of them stated that they want to have an education in order to better their chances in life.

CONTACT WITH BIOLOGICAL PARENTS/FAMILY

Responses from foster children of Lotus River/Ottery:

Lotus River /Ottery: Contact with biological parents.

Age and Sex	Contact with mother	Contact with father
16 year old male	Visits mother	Father lives in Johannesburg Visits foster child bi-annually
16 year old female	Mother visits foster child irregularly	Father visits foster child more often than mother but does not have regular contact
17 year old male	Visits mother	Father lives in Johannesburg. Bi-annual contact
20 year old female	Mother deceased	Father lives in Bonteheuwel. Foster child visits father.

Anthony 17, brother of Joseph visits his mother and runs errands for her. He enjoys speaking to her. He does not wish to live with his father who lives in Johannesburg. (Their mother does not visit them at the paternal grandmother’s home, also their foster home, because the foster mother

does not want the biological mother in her house. It would appear as though Joseph feels anger towards his mother although he did not state this. He is a very private, introverted person who finds it difficult to express his feelings. He stated that he prefers to keep his thoughts to himself. The researcher probed to find out whether there was a pattern of physical abuse but he only acknowledged one incident of abuse. He appears to have "blocked out" previous experiences and may be in a state of denial which could be preventing him from verbalizing and expressing his thoughts as the bad feelings may threaten to escape and overwhelm him. According to the developmental stages of Erikson, Joseph appears to have difficulty in trusting people. Bowlby's attachment theory could also be applied and Joseph's withdrawn attitude could be the result of early maternal deprivation.

Jackie said that her mother died of jaundice. She has contact with her reputed father but does not wish to live with him. Her reputed father visits her. She stated: "I will never live with my father, it is untidy and there is no order". She appears to enjoy the structure and containment provided by her foster parents.

Annele said about her mother: "She gets cross with her mother but she overcomes this feeling". She is glad when her mother visits her. Her mother's present address is unknown to her. Her father visits his children at the paternal grandmother's home. Annele stated that she will visit him and stay over for a few days but she does not want to live with him permanently.

Response from Foster children of Hanover Park.

Hanover Park contacts with biological parents.

AGE and SEX	Contact with Mother	Contact with Father
16 year old male	Regular visits by mother	Father unknown
17 year old male	Mother deceased	Father unknown
17 year old male	Visits Mother [schizophrenic].	Father unknown
19 year old female	Mother deceased	Father lives in Kimberly. Visits annually
19 year old male	Telephonic contact with Mother	Irregular contact with father.
20 year old female	Mother deceased	Lost contact with father

Bonita's mother died when she was 14 years old. She was placed in foster care at the age of six years. Initially, after the placement her mother would visit them and Bonita remembers that she wanted to return home with her mother after visits. She informs that she missed her mother and cried when her mother left. Of this group of respondents she was the oldest at the time of placement. She has no contact with her father. Bonita experienced neglect before her placement which could have contributed to insecure attachment with her biological mother before her placement. According to Bowlby insecure attachment during childhood could be related to psychological problems during adulthood, for example difficulties in interpersonal relationships and anxiety disorders.

Calvin's mother is deceased. He was two years old when he was placed in foster care. He stated: "I always wondered how my mother looked and what she would do if she sees me". He now regards his foster mother as his mother. He does not know his own father but stated "I think I know what he is like". Kadushin (1980), Dinnage and Pringle (1966), Fahlberg (1994), Strijker, Zandburg and van der Meulen (2002) are researchers who stressed that the age of the child at the time of the placement contributes to the success it. Calvin adapted well in his placement and one of the important contributory factors could be that he was young at the time of the placement however he still longs to know about his past. This does not negate a good foster placement. .

Keenan said that his mother visits them. He is glad to see her. He does not know his own father and cannot remember ever seeing him. He said "When I watch a programme then I feel sad. I think, why can't I have a mother and father". After the interview he confided in the researcher that his own mother lives with the foster family. He is a very open, honest person, with a friendly face. The researcher is of the opinion that his foster mother would deny that his mother lives with the foster family as she is dependent on the foster grant. Keenan stated that his mother has a psychiatric problem. He calls his own mother "ma" and foster mother "auntie". (Keenan told the researcher that his mother lives with them at the end of the interview after a degree of trust had developed and he was comfortable with the fact that confidentiality was ensured).

Charlene's mother died of an asthma attack approximately ten years ago. She has not grieved the loss of her mother and suppresses her feelings as according to her she has no one to speak to. She was sad and tear full when we spoke about her mother during the interview. She misses her father who lives in Kimberley and states that she sees him during December school holidays. It would be helpful for this participant to receive grief counselling. The phases of loss as described by Kubler Ross (1985) were explained and discussed during the interview. From the data collected during interviews it became apparent that Charlene is

anxious about her schoolwork, has low self-esteem (her responses to the questions on self-concept seems to indicate this) and because a loss at a young age might be prone to depression.

Adrian says about his mother: "I don't go to her. We talk only when I happen to answer the phone". Adrian further informed that when he visits her he watches Television. His feelings about his father was expressed as follows: "I don't see my own father. He comes here once in a while. He is a father but you want more, since you know both your parents and your father is part of the family (foster family) but he is not here all the time and you want to be with him. Maybe if my parents were married, we would all have the surname.

Clint states the following of his mother: "I don't visit her much, only now and then. She will phone and will ask me to visit her and then I'd so. She has a quiet lifestyle. I just watch Television and relax there". His feelings about his father are expressed as follows:

Three of the boys in this group do not know their own biological fathers. Clint seems to be most affected by the fact that he does not know his father or, perhaps he was more able to communicate his feelings in this regard. When referring to the theme

Comparison of Contact with Biological Parents.

Hanover Park			Lotus River / Ottery		
<u>Age & sex</u>	Contact with mother	Contact with father	<u>Age & sex</u>	Contact with mother	Contact with father
16 Male	Mother visits, daily	unknown	16 Male	Visits mother weekly	annually
17 Male	Deceased	unknown	17 Male	Visits mother, fortnightly	Annually
17 Male	Visits mother monthly	unknown	17 Female	Mother visits irregularly	seldom
19 Male	Telephonic contact, Monthly	seldom	20 Female	Deceased	seldom
19 Female	Deceased	annually			
20 Female	Deceased	none			

Contact with biological parents

The four respondents (100%) from Lotus River/Ottery maintained contact with their biological parents. All four respondents said that they do not want to return to the care of their biological parents but have no objection to visiting them. The two brothers, Anthony and Joseph, visit their mother at their maternal grandmother's home as she does not visit them at the paternal grandmother's home. They also visit their father in Johannesburg. From information available in the files, it appears that the mothers of three of the participant's have personality or psychiatric problems. The mother of the fourth respondent is deceased.

The mothers of three (50%) of the Hanover Park participants' are deceased and the mothers of the other three participants (50%) have psychiatric problems. The six participants from Hanover Park were able

to express feelings of sadness and anger. Three of the biological fathers (50%) of the boys are unknown to the foster children and all three respondents have expressed the wish to know who their fathers are.

Contact with biological parents, or lack thereof, will affect the foster children's identity development. This is confirmed by researchers such as: Stein, Gambrill and Wiltse (1978), Palmer (1990) Johnson, Yoken and Voss (1995), Klee, Kronstadt and Ziotnick (1997), Sanchiro and Jablonka (2000) and Howe (1996). In the literature study it is stated that access between the foster child and their biological parents' helps the children with identity formation and generally enhances the foster placement. The theme of loss was very relevant when participants spoke of their biological parents and feelings of sadness and anger was expressed. For some participants the loss of the primary care giver is so painful that they could not articulate their feelings (see section on loss and grief).

The researcher was astounded to learn that although the foster mothers made claims that they have no knowledge of whereabouts of the parents two of the respondents maintain contact with their fathers and one respondent has contact with his mother. The foster mothers could be protecting the parents so as to ensure that they receive the foster grant, to support the foster children.

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