

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN



An exploratory study of the experiences of youth transitioning out of
Child and Youth Care Centres in Cape Town to independent adult
living.

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

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

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Abstract

Every year youth living in child and youth care centres (CYCCs) in Cape Town prepare themselves for independent adult living as they approach the age of majority, eighteen years of age, which enables them to legally leave state care. This research study explored the experiences of Cape Town youth transitioning from CYCCs to independent adult living. The study was conducted with a sample of twenty youth from five different CYCCs in Cape Town, South Africa. The study adopted a qualitative approach using a semi-structured interview schedule for face-to-face interviews with the participants. A purposive sample was used for the selection of participants for this study. Data collected during this study was analysed using Tesch's eight-step approach to data analysis.

The study findings revealed that participants had various perceptions regarding their transition from their CYCCs to independent adult living. Some perceived their exit from state care as a disturbance in their lives which resulted in them experiencing a range of emotions such as fear and anxiety as they anticipated how their lives would change once they leave state care. Others recognised that during this time they would experience some independence which meant taking on more responsibility for their lives such as being accountable for their daily living costs which include groceries, electricity and transport. Participants also viewed this transitional period as a time to actively look for alternative accommodation before leaving state care to avoid potential homelessness. Living in care was also understood as an opportunity for youth to successfully complete their high schooling without any disruptions.

In addition to this the study findings revealed that participants had aspirations that they hoped to see come to fruition while they prepare for independent adult living. These included making contact with their families of origin, enrolling into tertiary institutions, finding employment and helping others in need. They also foresaw challenges that may arise while they prepared for independent adult living. These challenges included repetition of negative past behaviours, struggling to find employment, worries about safety, worries about not having support after leaving care and possible financial challenges.

The study findings also revealed how youth living in CYCCs can be better supported during their transition to independent adult living. This can occur through improving existing transitional programmes, assigning youth living in CYCCs with mentors during their

transitional period and improving the government's role in supporting CYCCs and youth leaving care by, amongst other things, creating more employment opportunities for youth.

The main recommendations of the study include that CYCCs provide youth preparing to leave care for independent adult living with the necessary emotional support such as individual counselling sessions where they can disclose and deal with their fears and anxieties about leaving state care. It is also recommended that CYCCs continue to push their education agenda with youth preparing to leave state care so that they can continue to be ambitious when it comes to furthering their education. Another recommendation is that CYCCs readily support youth wanting to make contact with their family of origin during their transition to independent adult living. Finally, children living in CYCCs should be introduced to transitional programmes soon after their entrance into the CYCC programme rather than too close to their exit from state care.

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Contents Page:

Abstract..... (i)
Acknowledgements..... (iii)
Table of Contents..... (iv)

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction 1
1.1 Problem Context 1
1.2 Geographical location of the problem 3
1.3 Rationale 4
1.4 Main Research Questions 6
1.5 Research Objectives 6
1.6 Main Assumptions..... 6
1.7 Concept Clarification 7
1.8 Outline of the chapters 8
1.9 Reflexivity 9
1.10 Ethical Considerations 10
1.10.1 Informed Consent 10
1.10.2 Confidentiality 11
1.10.3 No harm to participants 11
1.10.4 Deception of subjects and/or respondents 12
1.10.5 Voluntary Participation 12
1.11 Summary..... 12

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2. Introduction 14
2.1 Legislation and Policy 15

2.1.1 Children’s Act No. 38 of 2005	14
2.1.2 National Youth Development Strategy	15
2.2 Theoretical Models	15
2.2.1 Social Development	17
2.2.2 The Life Model	18
2.2.3 People-Centred Development	19
2.4 The history and nature of family life in South Africa.....	20
2.5 The history of CYCCs in South Africa	21
2.6 Main Themes	23
2.6.1 How youth understand their transition out of CYCCS.....	23
2.6.1.1 The restrictions of life in the CYCC.....	23
2.6.1.2 Gaining independence	24
2.6.1.3 Being “cut off”	25
2.6.2 The aspirations youth have as they transition out of CYCCs	26
2.6.2.1 Self-determination	26
2.6.2.2 Education aspirations	26
2.6.2.3 Reuniting with the family of origin	27
2.6.2.4 Altruism	27
2.6.3 The challenges faced by youth associated with their transition from CYCCs....	28
2.6.3.1 Vulnerability to unemployment	28
2.6.3.2 Emotional Trauma	28
2.6.3.3 Potential Homelessness	28
2.6.4 Transitional support programmes available to youth transitioning out of CYCCs...	29
2.6.4.1 Maintaining relationships.....	29
2.6.4.2 Life Skills Preparation	30
2.6.4.3 Independent Living Programmes	30
2.6.4.4 Mentoring Programmes	32

2.6.4.5 Transitional support offered by non-government organisations (NGOs).....	33
2.6.4.6 Lack of resources	33
2.6.4.7 Recommendations made by youth on transitional programmes	34
2.7 Summary... ..	34

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3. Introduction.....	36
3.1 Research Design	36
3.2 Philosophical Assumptions	37
3.3 Methodology	39
3.3.1 Population and Sampling Method	39
3.3.2 Data collection	40
3.3.2.1 Data Collection Approach	40
3.3.2.2 Data Collection Instrument	40
3.3.2.3 Data recording device	41
3.3.3 Data Analysis	41
3.4 Limitations of study.....	43
3.5 Data Verification	44
3.6 Summary.. ..	46

CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4. Introduction	47
4.1 Profile of participants	47
4.1.1 Table 1: Profile of participants	47
4.1.2 Description of participants	49
4.1.3 Participant backgrounds	49
4.1.4 Organisation profiles	50

4.2 Framework for discussing findings	52
4.2.1 Table 2: Framework for discussing findings	53
4.3 Presentations of findings	54
4.3.1 The perceptions of youth concerning their transition to independent adult living..	54
4.3.1.1 The feelings youth have about leaving the CYCC programme.....	54
4.3.1.2 Gaining Independence	57
4.3.1.3 Finding an alternative place of residence	60
4.3.1.4 Perceptions of adulthood	62
4.3.1.5 Completing their education	64
4.3.2 The aspirations of youth transitioning out of CYCCS.....	66
4.3.2.1 Contacting families of origin	66
4.3.2.3 Entrance into a tertiary institution	67
4.3.2.4 Finding employment	68
4.3.2.5 Helping others in need	70
4.3.3 The challenges youth face when preparing to leave a CYCC.....	71
4.3.3.1 Repeat of bad past behaviours	71
4.3.3.3 Struggle to find employment	72
4.3.3.4 Worries about safety	74
4.3.3.7 Worries about not having support	75
4.3.3.7 Financial challenges	77
4.3.4 How youth can be better supported during their transition to independent adult living	78
4.3.4.1 Transitional programmes for youth leaving CYCCs.....	78
4.3.4.2 Pitfalls of transitional programmes.....	83
4.3.4.3 Mentors needed for support and guidance	87
4.3.4.4 How the South African government can assist youth transitioning from CYCCs	89

4.3.4.5 How CYCCs can better support youth transitioning to independent adult living	92
4.4 Summary... ..	96

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5. Introduction	97
5.1 Main Conclusions	97
5.2 Recommendations	106
5.3 Summary... ..	110
References	113
Appendix A: Consent Form	121
Appendix B: Interview Schedule	123
Appendix C: Plagiarism Declaration	125

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

All youth reach a stage in their lives when they need to prepare themselves for adulthood. For youth residing in child and youth care centres (CYCCs), this period of development comes along with its unique challenges. According to South Africa's Children's Act 38 of 2005, once children in child and youth care centres reach the age of majority, which is 18 years of age, they need to exit the child and youth care centre programme (Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005, 2005). These youth are forced to make adult decisions regarding their future especially in relation to accommodation, education and employment (Keller, Cusick & Courtney, 2007). This can be a stressful or an exciting period for youth as they embark on their journey to adulthood.

This research study explored the experiences of youth transitioning from child and youth care centres (CYCCs) in Cape Town to independent adult living. This chapter presents the problem context, rationale, significance of the study, the research topic, main research questions, the research objectives and its main assumptions. These are followed by a brief outline of this report, the key ethical considerations and the researcher's reflexivity.

1.1 Problem Context

In South Africa, the historical legacy of Apartheid as well as political, social and economic factors in the country has had a severe impact on family life (Goldberg, 2013). This has led to high rates of substance abuse, neglect and domestic violence occurring within families. Children living in South Africa experienced countless horrors, trauma and were constant victims of human rights violations during the rule of the Apartheid government (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 1998). Many children's family networks were shattered due to the impact of Apartheid policies and legislation (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 1998). Parents were unable to look after their children and provide them with the support and necessary care that they needed.

Non-white South African families were undermined by Apartheid through influx control and the underinvestment of rural areas (Bray, Gooskens, Kahn, Moses & Seekings, 2010). During the 1970s and 1980s many black South African women left their homes and moved to the cities and left their children in the care of family members in rural areas (Bray et al., 2010).

Economic factors contributed to the separation of families as parents separated from their children to alleviate poverty and find employment. Bray et al., (2010) states that many young people growing up in Cape Town in the post-apartheid era have spent a part of their childhood separated from their parents.

Today families still bear the brunt of the past Apartheid regime with many having disintegrated or separated from each other. As a result of these circumstances, there are many children in South Africa who are placed by the Children's Court in state care programmes such as CYCCs. According to the Children's Act 38 of 2005, the law governing the manner in which children are cared for and protected in South Africa, children are placed in CYCCs due to abuse, neglect or abandonment experienced within their family of origin (Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005, 2005). CYCC management and staff are then responsible for the care, protection and development of children placed in their care (Mamelani Projects, 2012). Social workers, other child protection practitioners and the Department of Social Development are tasked to work with children placed in CYCCs with the goal of returning them to their families of origin when they reach the age of eighteen (Mamelani Projects, 2012).

The Child Gauge (2015:101), in its section entitled "Children Count", indicates that there were 18.6 million children in South Africa in the year 2013. From this population of children 18% have lost a parent or both parents and 22% do not live with either of their biological parents (Child Gauge, 2015). In South Africa an estimated 21 000 children reside in 355 registered children's homes (Proudlock, 2014:6). In addition to this, 2000 children are cared for in 115 unregistered CYCCS (Proudlock, 2014:6). According to the National Youth Policy (2009), the number of youth in South Africa is continually increasing. Statistics South Africa (2016) indicates that 20.1 million South Africans are youth and 4 million of them populate the city of Cape Town. Some of these youth who reside in CYCCs have reached the age of majority and need to leave this state care programme. These youth who are preparing themselves to transition from state care to independent adult living are often faced with multiple challenges (Daining & DePanfilis, 2007). Many do not possess the basic skills needed to survive without state support and they are often unprepared for life's challenges (Tanur, 2012).

When youth prepare themselves to transition from state care they experience important changes in social roles and responsibilities that can result in them feeling stressed, which influences their capacity to adapt to adulthood (Keller et al., 2007). For youth living in South

Africa it is even more challenging because of the high levels of crime, poverty and few support systems available for youth leaving state care (Van Breda, 2013). Nevertheless, the time spent in CYCCs can also be a viable training ground where youth can accumulate skills and coping techniques to positively support their transition into independent adult living.

The process of transitioning out of a CYCC can be challenging for youth if they are not adequately prepared and equipped with skills to cope with independent adult living. It is also important that their transitional needs are met through programmes offered by CYCCs and other relevant role players. This research is therefore aimed to explore how youth experience their transition out of CYCCs, what their aspirations and challenges are regarding their transition and whether transitional programmes made available to them address their transitional needs.

1.2 Geographical location of the problem

Many research studies have been done on the experiences of youth as they prepare to leave state care. However, not many studies have been done in South Africa. Pinkerton (2011), confirms this situation by noting that there are significant gaps in research on youth who have transitioned out of state care in countries like China and India, as well as in countries in Africa and South America. In addition to this, Van Breda (2016) writes about the lack of research done in South Africa on transitioning youth and how youth transitioning to independent adult living is under researched even with the large number of youth transitioning out of state care. This research study was located in Cape Town and therefore provided information from a South African context on this important area of study.

To understand the geographical context of the study, it is important to recognize the socio-political history of the city of Cape Town. The Cape Colony was inhabited by native communities such as the Khoe San who were subjected to the colonial and Boer expansion which led to the decrease of independent chiefdoms and the initiation of forced labour (Mabin, 1992). Slavery was rife on the Cape Colony however it was abolished in the early 1840s which influenced the new formation of urban politics and landscape (Miraftab, 2012; Mabin, 1992). The abolishment of slavery was driven by a large amount of capital paid by the Queen of England to slave owners, a compensation for property lost (Miraftab, 2012).

In the latter part of the 19th century, large amounts of capital were injected into the city of Cape Town which shaped its urban politics, physical infrastructure, race identities and

municipal governance (Miraftab, 2012). A large sum of money was also invested into upgrading the city centre buildings (Miraftab, 2012). These massive developments led to Cape Town's geographical expansion and the increase in the city's properties (Miraftab, 2012). Cape Town dominated the Western Cape and became a commercial centre that attracted land and insurance companies as well as headquarters of banks (Miraftab, 2012). After gaining independence from the British colonisers, South Africa went through a period called Apartheid.

The National Party introduced the ideology of Apartheid in 1948 with a manifesto that strengthened the pass system as well as the police force (Mabin, 1992). The Apartheid government adopted policies that encouraged the segregation of different race groups in South Africa. Before the implementation of the Group Areas Act No. 41 of 1950, an act that was aimed at separating race groups in the urban areas, the city of Cape Town was unique to other cities in South Africa in that it was arguably the most racially integrated (Bickford-Smith, 1995; Adhikari, 2013). Individuals from different ethnic and racial backgrounds lived together in one accord.

The drastic measures implemented by the National Party to segregate the city of Cape Town is an indication of how racially diverse its residential areas were (Adhikari, 2013). The Apartheid government based its forced removals on the premise that racial integration bred conflict, and that forced removals would eliminate friction between the various race groups (Adhikari, 2013). Many families were disintegrated and forced to live in underdeveloped urban townships. When the African National Party (ANC) came to power in 1994, they assisted victims of forced removals with land or financial compensation (Adhikari, 2013). However, many families are still unstable, separated and many children still do not have the opportunity to experience a stable and nurturing family environment.

1.3 Rationale

This area of research is largely underdeveloped in South Africa. Van Breda (2016) states that little research has been done on care-leaving in South Africa by social workers. Van Breda (2016) investigates existing research studies done on the topic of youth transitions and he discovers that the *Social Worker Practitioner-Researcher* only has one publication whereas *the Social Work* journal only has a few publications on youth transitions. In addition to this Van Breda (2016) states that even less attention is given to youth transitioning from state care

to independent adult living. This is a serious concern as youth are constantly transitioning from state care to adulthood and there is limited research data that can be used as a guideline for best practice when dealing with youth transitioning out of state care.

The rationale behind this research is to understand how youth living in CYCCs experience their transition from state care to independent living, as well as to ascertain how they are being supported through this transition. The transition from state care to independent adult living is not always an easy process because many youth do not have family members to turn to for emotional and financial support (Courtney & Dworsky, 2006). According to Mamelani Projects (2012), a non-profit organisation whose work is focused at supporting young people making the transition from residential care to independent adult living, the cornerstone of transitional planning and preparation done by non-profit organisations (NPOs), is to assist youth with achieving their dreams for the future and to prepare them for adulthood. According to the Children's Act No 38 of 2005 (Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005, 2005), CYCCs are tasked to offer transitional support to youth leaving state care. However, many CYCCs are reliant on other NPOs to provide youth with transitional support and programmes.

This research study explored this process of transitioning to adulthood through listening to the views of youth in CYCCs about their aspirations and challenges associated with leaving state care. It is important to establish what these aspirations and challenges are so that transitional support programmes can be aligned with the transitional needs of youth. As mentioned earlier, The Children's Act states that support must be given to transitioning youth but it does not identify specific services that provide sufficient aftercare support (Tanur, 2012). Preparation and aftercare support is largely underdeveloped in South Africa as it is a new area of work (Tanur, 2012). There are less than five post-transition to independent living programmes in the Western Cape. As a result of this poor service to youth, very few CYCCs prioritise preparation for youth leaving care (Tanur, 2012).

The process of transitioning out of CYCCs will also impact the social development of youth as they enter independent adult living. Many of these youth will return to their communities of origin, being exposed to social ills that may have led them to state care (van Breda and Dickens, 2014). Therefore this research study will add to the existing knowledge of the social development of youth transitioning from CYCCs to independent adult living as well as the

existing interventions targeted at them. There are limited studies on the experiences of youth transitioning out of child and youth care centres in Cape Town and therefore this research study will address the gap in knowledge around this topic. It will also assist CYCCs, non-government organisations, the state as well as other stakeholders to understand what this transitional experience is like for these youth and how they can better support them during this time.

1.4 Main Research Questions

The main research question for this study is: What are the experiences of youth in CYCCs as they transition out of CYCCs to independent adult living. Associated research questions include:

1. How do youth understand their transition out of CYCCs?
2. What are the aspirations of youth as they transition out of their CYCC?
3. What are the challenges youth have associated with leaving their CYCC?
4. What transitional support programmes are made available to youth to assist their transition out of their CYCC?

1.5 Research Objectives

1. To investigate how youth understand their transition out of the CYCC they reside in.
2. To ascertain the aspirations of youth as they transition out of their CYCC.
3. To determine the challenges youth have that are associated with their transition out of their CYCC.
4. To examine the transitional support programmes made available to youth to assist their transition out of their CYCC.

1.6 Main Assumptions

1. Youth understand the process of transitioning out of state care and have a strong desire to leave their CYCC.

2. Youth aspire to find employment and be financially stable once they leave their CYCC.
3. Youth have difficulty emotionally adapting to their transition from their CYCC.
4. There are transitional support programmes offered to youth by CYCCs as well as NPOs during their transition out of institutionalised care. These programmes are effective in preparing young people for life outside of their CYCC.

1.7 Concept Clarification

The following concepts are important to this study

Experiences:

The term experience (s) is defined as any event through which an individual has lived (Reber, 1985). According to Hohr (2013) John Dewey views the concept of experience as the interaction between human beings and the world. Experience is a central aspect of human existence and consequently it's communicative, historic and a cultural phenomenon rather than a mental or individual one (Hohr, 2013).

Youth:

According to the African Youth Charter (African Union, 2006), youth are defined as individuals between the ages of 15 and 35 years old. This definition is similar to the definition of youth in South Africa where the National Youth Policy defines youth as young people who fall within the age bracket of 14 to 35 years old (National Youth Development Agency, 2015). For the purposes of this study, the term youth will refer specifically to youth who are 18 years of age and preparing to leave the CYCC programme. Eighteen is considered the age of majority, the age at which youth are expected to leave institutional and also the designated age for participants in this study (Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005, 2005).

Transitioning:

The term transitioning is defined as the movement from one area or state to another (Reber, 1985). In the context of institutional care, in CYCCs, transitioning is considered as the journey young people take from residential care to independent adult living in pursuit of creating a better future for themselves (van Breda, Marx & Kader, 2012). Therefore when this term is used, it refers to youth moving from state care to independent adult living.

Child and Youth Care Centre:

The Children's Act No 38 of 2005 defines a CYCC as "a facility that provides residential care to more than six children outside of the child's family environment according to a residential programme suitable for the children in the facility" (Mahery, Jamieson & Scott, 2011:29).

Independent Adult Living:

The concept of independent adult living in the context of youth transitions from CYCC's which has also been referred to as "instant adulthood" (Van Breda 2013:1), involves young people becoming independent according to society's demands, and engaging in activities such as finding accommodation, employment to pay bills, transportation and a network of support (Van Breda 2013).

1.8 Outline of the chapters

The following is the chapter outline of this dissertation consisting of five chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction - This chapter introduces the reader to the research study and the rationale for the completion of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review – The literature review looks at a range of literature pertaining to youth transitioning from CYCCs to independent adult living and how they relate to each other. Included in this chapter are relevant legislation and theoretical frameworks relating to the study.

Chapter 3: Methodology – The methodology used and research design are presented in this chapter. The population and sample are described as well as the data collection process, the tools used to capture reliable data and how this data was analysed. The study limitations are also presented here.

Chapter 4: Presentation and Discussion of Findings – This chapter presents the discussion and analysis of the study findings from the one-on-one interviews held between the researcher and the participants.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations - The main study conclusions are drawn from the data gathered and analysed in chapter 4. In addition to this, a few recommendations are

made to CYCCs, NPOs and the government for the development of support given to youth transitioning out of CYCCs in Cape Town. A reference list is included at the end.

1.9 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a reflective exercise that the researcher partakes in throughout the process of his/her research study. According to Engel and Schutt (2010), reflexivity is the honest account of a researcher's interaction with participants involved in the study, problems that he/she may have come across and how these problems were dealt with or resolved. The researcher conducted research in the field of youth and social welfare before, however this study was a new opportunity to formulate and engage independently in research on a topic of interest at an advanced level. The researcher was therefore enthusiastic about conducting this research study and was keen to meet the objectives set out for this study.

The researcher's enthusiasm was elevated in the beginning stages of the research process. The data collection process however proved to be challenging and timeous and a more serious focussed assessment of the process was required. Although the researcher struggled initially to get the number of interviews needed (twenty) for her study, due to the schedules of the youth in CYCC's and identifying suitable participants, she eventually managed to complete all of them. This process affected the researcher's levels of motivation. However, once the researcher engaged with her interview data, she felt re-energised and once again enthusiastic about discussing the findings of the study. She found that she had managed to obtain good data to provide and discuss credible findings and outcomes of her research.

Conducting the interviews with the youth participants was an enjoyable and insightful experience for the researcher who has an interest in youth development. The researcher enjoyed engaging with these youth and found their resilience and ambitious character to be inspiring and added to her increased motivation to complete the data collection process.

The researcher was aware that in conducting this study, she would need to be objective and not react to participants as a social worker when interviewing them. Her professional role in wanting to intervene to assist clients to support their wellbeing could have come into play during the data collection process as participants shared their feelings regarding their transition from CYCCs. The researcher was aware of these factors when conducting

interviews with participants and she was able to remain objective and not allow her profession to intervene during interviews.

1.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are born from our interactions with humans, other beings or our environment (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). This is especially true when these interactions have the potential for a conflict of interest. Ethical considerations, in most cases, involve a compromise between the interests and rights of parties involved (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). When conducting a research study, the researcher has the right to search for truth however this cannot be done at the expense of the rights of those involved in the study.

It was therefore important for this study to receive ethical clearance before being conducted by the researcher. After reviewing the proposal of this research study, ethical clearance was given by the University of Cape Town's Ethics Committee in June 2016. According to Babbie & Mouton (2001), the main role of an ethics committee is to minimize any potential risks that would negatively impact participants involved in a research study. The researcher made the following ethical considerations to protect the participants involved in this study.

1.10.1 Informed Consent

Informed consent is a written agreement given to participants which outlines the intentions of a research study as well as the rights of the participant with regards to participating in the study (Neuman, 1997). Participants in this study were given an informed consent form which outlined the study in terms of its objectives, research procedures, participants' rights as well as any benefits/incentives associated with the study. This form is attached to this report labelled Appendix A. Participants signed the consent form, which also served as a means by which they could make sure that the researcher stayed true to the intentions of the study. Some youth involved in this study needed their CYCC director to sign on their behalf and agree to their participation in this study. These child and youth care workers are their guardians by law and provided additional consent on behalf of the youth in their care.

1.10.2 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a fundamental ethical consideration as it ensures the privacy of participants involved in the study. According to Neuman (1997), interviews can be viewed as an invasion of a participant's privacy as the researcher probes into the beliefs, history and behaviours of a participant. Therefore it was important that the researcher implemented a strategy to uphold participants' identities and ensure a sense of confidentiality. By upholding confidentiality, participants may feel safer to share details about their lives with the researcher because a safe space had been created for them to speak freely.

This study involved some individuals who are classified as children in terms of the Children's Act, younger than 18 years of age, therefore confidentiality needed to be upheld to protect the identities of these minors. Participants were given pseudonyms as a way of upholding confidentiality and their identifying details were not revealed in any way, including in the dissertation.

1.10.3 No Harm to participants

Research is commonly thought to minimise the risk of harm to participants, however researchers still need to put in place measures that protect participants from any type of harm (Punch, 2014). According to Punch (2014), there are various types of harm associated with research which include physical, social, psychological and occupational harm. He recommends that researchers constantly assess and monitor risks and seek confidentiality and consent throughout the process of research (Punch, 2014). Transitioning from a CYCC to independent adult living can take its toll on youth socially and psychologically. The researcher was aware of this risk and planned to recommend that participants seek counsel from their CYCC social worker if they were affected by the interviews or by their participation in the research study in any way. However, when conducting the interviews the recommendation to seek counsel if needed was not required as no participants felt harmed in any way by the study.

1.10.4 Deception of subjects and/or respondents

It is essential for a researcher to be transparent regarding his/her research. In doing this, the researcher avoids deceiving research participants involved in the study. According to Neuman (1997), subjects involved are often deceived when a researcher intentionally misleads them through verbal or written instructions. In order to avoid deception of participants, the researcher was transparent in terms of her intentions regarding the study. The researcher made her intentions known to the directors of the various CYCCs contacted, as well as the participants involved in the study. This was done by through an email and verbally in person when meeting with the various directors. Participants were given the choice to participate in the study to ensure voluntary participation. One youth that was approached by her director to participate in the study opted not to be interviewed and the researcher respected this decision and allowed her to exercise her right to voluntary participation.

1.10.5 Voluntary Participation

The activities included in social research can be disruptive to a participant's daily living (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Participants are asked to reveal some personal information, information that may be unknown to others close to them (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Researchers often justify this request by stating that the information requested will serve the best interests of the subject or help all of humanity and therefore individuals often agree to participate in research studies based on this premise (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Voluntary participation is a major component of social research ethics. No individual can be forced to participate in any type of research (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). In the case of this research study, voluntary participation was upheld by the researcher. Some youth were approached by their CYCC directors to participate in the research study however some declined and the researcher respected their decision to not participate in the study.

1.11 Summary

This chapter presented the problem context, rationale, the research topic, main research questions, the research objectives and its main assumptions. The problem context gave a brief

history of family life in South Africa and how this was impacted by the Apartheid regime. The rationale emphasized the lack of studies done on this topic in South Africa and the need for more programmes aimed at supporting youth transitioning from child and youth care centres to independent adult living. It also provided a brief outline of this report and the key ethical considerations such as informed consent, confidentiality and no harm to participants that were employed by the researcher.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2. Introduction

This chapter presents the literature review. It contains the legislation and policy, theoretical models, social theories, as well as the main themes identified from the literature that are relevant to this study. According to de Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delpont (2011), the purpose of a literature review is to create a clearer understanding of the nature of a research problem that has been identified by the researcher. In addition to this, a literature review creates a foundation from which the researcher can work based on existing literature related to their research problem (de Vos et al., 2011). Therefore the literature review assists researchers with refining their research questions and it also gives them an indication of what has already been researched within their area of interest.

In reviewing existing literature the researcher made use of a few avenues to obtain sound literature. The researcher made use of databases from the University of Cape Town's library website which included Google Scholar, Jstor, EbscoHost and Science Direct. These databases were equipped with various journal articles that the researcher was able to use in this literature review. Research textbooks and other relevant books were also used. After a broad review of the existing literature, the researcher found that studies had been done on youth transitioning out of state care however many of them were older studies, very few were recently done. The researcher also noted that there is a gap in research done on youth transitioning out of state care in South Africa and only a few were done in Cape Town.

2.1 Legislation and Policy

2.1.1 Children's Act No. 38 of 2005

The Children's Act No 38 of 2005 was signed off by the President of South Africa in June 2005. This Act gives effect to the rights of children according to the Constitution of South Africa (Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005, 2005). The objectives of the Act are to promote the strengthening and preservation of families; it gives effect to certain constitutional rights of a child and makes provision for services to children as well as promoting and monitoring the psychological, emotional, physical and social development of children in South Africa (Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005, 2005). The Children's Act stipulates distinct guidelines

pertaining to CYCCs. There are clear functions that CYCCs have to fulfil pertaining to children residing in their facilities.

According to the Children's Act, children can be ordered by the children's court to be placed at a CYCC if there is no alternative care options for the child (Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005, 2005). The children's court will determine the residential care facility best suited for the child and order that the child be placed there (Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005, 2005). The age of majority according to the Children's Act is eighteen years old. This is the age at which the child is considered to be responsible for his or her own actions. Children placed in CYCCS have to leave the facility after turning eighteen. They are entitled to stay in care until the end of the year that they turn eighteen (Mahery, Jamieson & Scott, 2011).

The Children's Act No 38 of 2005 states that CYCCs are tasked to offer transitional support to youth leaving state care (Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005, 2005). Therefore, by law, CYCCs need to support youth as they prepare for independent adult living. Youth are able to extend their stay in state care. The continuation of alternative care in a CYCC can occur up to the age of twenty-one, in which case, the youth concerned will need to make an application to the provincial head of social development to request this continuation of care (Mahery, Jamieson and Scott, 2011). This is usually done when youth wants to stay in care to continue their academic studies or training.

2.1.2 National Youth Development Strategy

Due to the unjust and inhumane policies and legislation of the Apartheid regime, youth were left with a poor social and economic standing resulting in them not being able to live a fulfilling life and reach their full potential (Department of Social Development, 2007). Youth were unable to participate meaningfully in mainstream political, economic and social activities within society. To address this issues within the country, a Youth Development Unit was established to work in collaboration with government departments and youth in various forums such as the South African Youth Council, the Umsobomvu Youth Fund and the National Youth Commission (Department of Social Development, 2007). The National Youth Development Strategy (NYDS) was born from the collaboration of the above mentioned entities.

The NYDS is a framework that was created to secure national action and raise support around the situation of youth in South Africa (Department of Social Development, 2007). It specifically targets vulnerable youth between the ages of 18-28 years old. The NYDS encourages national action and support for youth development, it complements and reinforces other departments outside of youth development, it promotes collaboration on youth development issues and most importantly, the NYDS is underpinned by the inputs of youth and youth focused organisations (Department of Social Development, 2007).

There are specific principles that underpin the NYDS namely the integration of youth development, inter-sectoral co-operation, mainstreaming youth development, nation building and increasing social cohesion among the nation, building capacity for youth development and lastly youth-centred and youth-driven development (Department of Social Development, 2007). The NYDS also has objectives that it strives to meet and they include reducing the number of youth affected by poverty by 30%, building and strengthening the capacity of youth organisations working in the social development sector, to promote co-operative governance through the mainstreaming and integration of youth development and to facilitate youth work professionalism (Department of Social Development, 2007). One of the key performance areas of the NYDS is to improve the social conditions that youth find themselves in.

Youth are faced with socio-economic challenges such as poverty and unemployment which prohibits them from being active participants in the development of South Africa (Department of Social Development, 2007). Interventions such as the Expanded Public Works Programme has been put into place to improve this situation however more can be done to improve the situation. Two of the proposed actions of the NYDS to improve this situation is to educate, advocate and create awareness around youth development and to establish provincial and national youth forums (Department of Social Development, 2007).

Transitional programmes and youth based organisations should strive to be underpinned by the principles of the NYDS. An NYDS principle such as youth-driven development is key for the successful transition of youth from CYCCs to independent adult living. Interventions implemented by the NYDS such as the Expanded Public Work Programme, is an avenue of employment that youth can access before leaving their CYCC to ensure that they have a source of income when they embark on their journey of independent adult living.

2.2 Theoretical Models

2.2.1 Social Development

This research study uses the social development approach as a core theory as this research study seeks to add knowledge to the field of social development pertaining to the care of youth in CCYCs. The idea of social development was introduced in the 1960s by the United Nations in response to the human development needs of the world's poorest nations after they became independent of colonial rule (Patel, 2005). Midgley (1995: 250), defines social development as “a process of planned change designed to promote the well-being of the population as a whole in conjunction with a dynamic process of economic development.” The process of youth transitioning out of state care to independent living can be viewed as an intervention that forms part of a planned process that promotes social development since the Department of Social Development has made provision for it by requiring CYCCs to implement transitional programmes for youth who are transitioning to independent adult living.

There are five key features to social development theory namely a rights-based approach, integrated social and economic development, participation and citizenship, welfare pluralism and bridging the micro macro divide (Patel & Hochfield, 2008). A rights-based approach to development emphasises social justice, equal access to services and benefits, and a commitment to meeting the needs of all South Africans, most importantly disadvantaged citizens (Patel & Hochfield, 2008). Integrated social and economic development “promotes people-centred development, social investments in human capabilities and the building of social capital” (Patel & Hochfield, 2008:195). Participation in social development places a focus on active citizenship and civic engagement which results in human development (Patel & Hochfield, 2008). Welfare pluralism is informed by the partnership model of social provision between various role players within society (Patel & Hochfield, 2008). The last feature of the social development theory focuses on bridging the micro macro divide which allows for the empowerment of individuals, groups and communities (Patel & Hochfield, 2008).

This social development approach requires intervention from all key role players in society which include the state and non-state actors, as well as the creation of organisational and institutional arrangements at a national level that compliment economic and social policies committed to people centred and socio-economic development (Patel, 2005). Therefore it is

evident that the social development approach is a pluralist one with a strong focus on government action in collaboration with civil society and the private sector (Patel, 2005). This approach highlights the collaborative efforts of the state and non-state actors in the development of individuals within society. Many NPOs and other key role players within society offer transitional support to youth transitioning out of CYCCs together with the programmes offered by the government. This research assessed this systematic engagement of these different sectors of society in relation to the wellbeing of young people who are living in state care, which links to the context and principles of social development.

2.2.2 The Life Model

The Life Model of social work practice was created by Germain & Gitterman. This model is based on the thinking that individuals are interdependent on each other and their environment (Payne, 2005). Payne (2005) explains that the relationship between individuals and their environment is reciprocal because through exchanges and over time, each influences the other. Individuals are seen as moving through their own distinctive life course in which they experience transitions, life stressors as well as events that disturb their relationship with their environment (Payne, 2005). These disturbances can challenge an individual's ability to cope and adapt to their current environment.

Payne (2005) argues that once an individual has identified a disturbance in their life, they move through two stages of appraisal of the stressor. In the first stage, the person judges the severity of the disturbance and its potential impact on their life (Payne, 2005). In the second stage the individual looks at their arsenal of coping mechanisms. She/he will try to cope by making necessary personal adjustments or adjustments to their environment. In this process, personal resources that individuals use to cope are competence, self-esteem and self-direction. Thereafter signals from their environment and their own physical and emotional responses will provide feedback regarding the success of their implemented coping mechanisms (Payne, 2005).

The transition that youth make from CYCCs to adulthood is an example of a potential disturbance that they encounter and therefore they may find it difficult to cope with the period of this transition. The Life Model provides a good theoretical framework to understand their experiences thereof.

2.2.3 People-Centred Development

David Korten is a founding theorist of people-centred development. He defines people-centred development as a development vision in which the well-being of individuals comes first (Korten, 1990). According to Davids (2014) public participation, social learning, empowerment and sustainability are the building blocks of people-centred development. Davids indicates that public participation became part of development ideologies during the late 1960s and early 1970s. During that time public participation in the creation of legislation and law was not initially welcomed by government officials especially those in developing countries. However, it is an essential part of people-centred development. According to Davids (2014), participation should not be viewed as a process of consultation but rather a two-way interchange of decision making, preferences and views.

Davids relates participation to social learning. He states that social learning refers to “learning how to use oneself and one’s environment to better meet one’s needs and those of others” (Davids, 2014:19). In a similar way, Paulo Freire, a Brazilian sociologist, refers to the process of social learning to conscientisation. Conscientisation is being aware of one’s ability to initiate and manage positive change for the advantage of oneself and others (Davids, 2014:19). Social learning is also closely linked to empowerment as one can be empowered through the process of social learning.

Empowerment is based on the root word “power” and power is the essence of what empowerment is. According to Zimmerman (1990), at an individual level empowerment refers to a sense of personal influence or control. Empowerment can also occur at a community level. According to Davids (2014), empowerment can be collective action where individuals work together to achieve an impact that may not have occurred if each individual worked on their own. An important aspect of the process of empowerment is that it cannot be imposed or bestowed on another individual. Davids (2014) states that true power comes from within however, external support can quicken the process of empowerment.

It is therefore important for interventions aimed at youth transitioning out of CYCCs to be based on a people-centred approach. Youth can then be involved in stating their transition needs and transitional programmes can be created to address these needs. They can also be empowered through this process and leave state care as self-reliant individuals.

2.4 The history and nature of family life in South Africa

In order to understand the nature of this research in relation to the lives and experiences of young people in CYCCs, it is important to understand the context of youth and family in South Africa. Over twenty years have passed since the end of the Apartheid regime however the effects of Apartheid are still very evident in South African society. The effects of Apartheid were devastating on many families who were separated by laws which prevented mothers and their children from living with their husbands and fathers (Bray et al., 2010). The current state of families in Cape Town are shaped by the effects of Apartheid in the following three ways: 1) the end of legislation that structured families in various ways; 2) family members need to learn the form of families and households such as engaging in everyday family activities and learning to share a home and 3) children and youth growing up post-apartheid have changed their perception of family life through their actions, ideals and aspirations (Bray et al., 2010). In short, family life in South Africa has changed, new generations have been born unaffected by the Apartheid regime however some families still bear the brunt of this era and need to re-establish their family life.

The Apartheid government implemented laws that mitigated black children from experiencing a stable family environment (Lockhat & van Niekerk, 2000). These laws attacked family cohesion and the ability for heads of households to provide for its members (Burman, 1996). These children were deprived of the opportunity to experience a nurturing environment where they could reach their full potential. Forced removals supported by the Group Areas Act, Act No 41 of 1950 and Land Acts such as the Natives Land Act of 1913, resulted in the destruction of black families who were uprooted from their homes to live in underdeveloped townships (Lockhart & van Niekerk, 2000). Due to the number of people moving into townships, they became overcrowded and a breeding ground for social ills such as poverty, crime and poor service delivery. These social ills gave rise to tension within households which led to violence and abuse of children (Lockhat & van Niekerk, 2000).

In 1996 the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was instituted to assist South African citizens in dealing with the conflict and violation of human rights that occurred during the Apartheid regime (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, 1998). For many families, the TRC hearings were an opportunity to concentrate on the impact of Apartheid on children and youth (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, 1998). Apartheid laws and structures led to the humiliation, deprivation and

oppression of the majority of South African children (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, 1998).

South African children experienced countless trauma and they were constant victims of human rights violations (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, 1998). For just about every adult that was violated during this time, two or more children suffered as a result of this (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 1998). Family life was damaged by the Apartheid laws which made it challenging for parents to support and take care of their children (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, 1998). The outcry of violence led to many children being displaced or running away from home. Being displaced made it difficult for children to reunite with their parents (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, 1998).

The elimination of Apartheid laws has made it easier for children to reside with their parents however, the effects of poverty continues to challenge family life. Economic factors, such as unemployment, is a contributing factor to the rising rates of parental separation (Bray et al., 2010). However the introduction to social grants such as the child support grant has assisted parents in gaining some economic independence (Bray et al., 2010). The reality for many children and youth growing up in post-Apartheid Cape Town is that many of them have spent a certain period of their childhood living apart from either one or both of their parents (Bray et al., 2010). One major contributing factor to this is chronic paternal absence. Today, many children are placed in alternative care by the Children's Court due to reasons which compromise the child's well-being such as neglect and abuse occurring within the child's family of origin. This has resulted in many children being placed in alternative care such as foster care and CYCCs.

2.5 The history of CYCCs in South Africa

The roots of foster care in South Africa began in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when needy persons were given monthly compensation from the Dutch East India Company (Beukes & Gannon, 1996). The Masters and Servants Act of 1856 was the first form of legislation which allowed for a magistrate to place a neglected child in the care of a suitable family member or unrelated person. This Act did not make any mention or allude to institutional care (Beukes & Gannon, 1996).

Institutional care for neglected children only developed in the earlier years of the nineteenth century in South Africa. This means of alternative care was led by churches who in 1814 established the South African Orphanage and in 1964 St George's Home in Cape Town (Beukes & Gannon, 1996). In 1937 the South African government established the Children's Act, a notable legislation affecting the care of children in the country (Beukes & Gannon, 1996). The Act stipulated practices and regulations around residential care, governance of children's homes and subsidisation of these services (Beukes & Gannon, 1996).

In 1997 the South African government compiled the White Paper for Social Welfare which outlines the state of social well-being of the country post-Apartheid. The document comments on family life and mentions how increasing economic stress is a major factor contributing to the breakdown of families (White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997). Poverty combined with environmental stress results in family dysfunction which can ultimately impact the family's ability to function at its best (White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997). The well-being of a child rests on their family who need to nurture and provide the child with a safe environment (White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997). Simply put, a child's survival and development are very much dependent on their family life.

Families are faced with increasing pressure from family problems which include marital conflict, drug and alcohol abuse, parenting problems and a lack of family or community support (White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997). These family problems have led to the breaking down of families and as a result there has been an increase in children being placed in alternative care. In the White Paper for Social Welfare, the Department of Welfare indicated that 29 000 children were in residential care and 39 024 in foster care (White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997). Current statistics indicate that an estimated 21 000 children residing in 355 registered children's homes and 2000 children in 115 unregistered children's homes (Proudlock, 2014:6). The number of children placed in CYCCS has decreased since 1997 however the number of children placed in alternative care is still high which has led to the increase in the number of CYCC facilities being opened to accommodate these children. These statistics also indicate that issues such as parental neglect and abuse are still prevalent in South African families today and the leading causes to children being placed in alternative care.

2.6 Main Themes

This section comprises themes that are relevant and aligned with the objectives of the research study. These themes are 1) how do youth understand their transition out of CYCCs, 2) the aspirations youth have as they transition out of CYCCs, 3) the challenges faced by youth associated with their transition from CYCCs, and 4) transitional support programmes available to youth transitioning out of CYCCs.

2.6.1 How youth understand their transition out of CYCCs

2.6.1.1 The restrictions of life in the CYCC

Youth in CYCCs often feel restricted in terms of living a full life as a young person in state care. According to Stott's (2013) study on transitioning youth, activities that are commonly associated with youth such as unsupervised socialising with friends and dating are often prohibited to youth in CYCCs. This may contribute to youth wanting to leave CYCCs so that they can enjoy these activities without any restrictions. Some of them exit state care by emancipating themselves or absconding from CYCCs to escape the restrictions that come along with it.

There are youth in CYCCs who do not intend on extending their stay in these programmes and depart from them as soon as they reach the age of majority. In a study conducted by McCoy, McMillen & Spitznagel (2008) on youth leaving state care, four key findings of their study revealed that many youth left state care in unplanned ways; most older youth left state care because of personal frustrations; older youth who had externalising behavioural problems were most likely to leave care early; and youth who remained in the system stayed on their own in their community. McCoy et al., (2008) observed further that youth who decided to leave the system were found to be living with their families. When youth left state care as a result of personal difficulties, they still ended up living a life of dependency whereas youth who remained in the system are more likely to live a life of independence when departing from state care.

2.6.1.2 Gaining independence

Many CYCCs facilitate programmes that enable youth to start thinking and acting independently. In a study conducted by Hines & Merdinger (2005) on resilience and the transition to adulthood of former foster youth, results showed that all respondents were extremely independent and self-sufficient. Respondents explained that they were left on their own at a young age and had to fend for themselves (Hines & Merdinger, 2005). In Hine & Merdinger's study one respondent explained, "Ever since I was like very young, I always been very independent, very . . . like I said I had to take care of my siblings, I was a young child myself. . . . I didn't have any support at home" (Hines & Merdinger, 2005: 388).

In contrast to Hines & Merdinger's (2005) study, other studies indicate that youth need more opportunities within CYCCs to practice their independence. Stott (2013) discusses the experiences of youth prior to their aging out and she states that youth's ability to learn responsibility from gradual increases in freedoms are largely limited as a result of rigid rules within foster homes. Some of these rules would include preventing youth from spending their own money and having unsupervised access to a computer (Stott, 2013). These rules prevent youth from learning basic skills like budgeting and how to use the internet, a valuable resource that could assist them with entering the job market. While mentioning these restrictions, youth are expected to live independently and support themselves once they leave their place of care (Stott, 2013; Geenen & Powers, 2007). However, majority of aging out youth in the United States of America leave state care still needing financial support and continued emotional support from their places of care (Stott, 2013).

Concurring with the above study, Geenen & Powers (2007) study findings state that many child welfare professionals agreed that youth needed to be given more opportunities to take responsibility for their lives which could contribute to their successful transition. One child welfare professional explained that they should not be telling youth what to do but rather assisting them by providing them with guidance (Geenen & Powers, 2007). According to Osgood, Foster & Courtney's (2010) study entitled vulnerable populations and the transition to adulthood, they mention that youth can benefit from gradually assuming responsibility while still receiving guidance and support from concerned adults. They go on to state that youth in care need for continued guidance while they transition to adulthood is greater than other youth (Osgood et al., 2010).

Concerning the topic of independence, Mamelani Projects (2012) found that institutionalised living activities such as food, accommodation and schooling were being presented to youth as being done for them and not being done with them and therefore this leads to dependency and a lack of opportunities for youth to learn responsibility (Mamelani Projects, 2012; Tanur, 2012). As a solution to this issue Mamelani suggests a move toward experiential learning, a suggestion that was welcomed by focus group participants who mentioned that they would prefer being more involved in managing their lives (Mamelani Projects, 2012).

2.6.1.3 Being “cut off”

Research shows that not all youth look forward to their transition out of state care. According to Tweddle (2005:6) youth leaving care often speak of feeling frustrated about being “cut off” from the system once they reach 18. In addition, they are expected to fend for themselves with a limited skills set, financial support and social support (Tweddle, 2005). There is therefore an expectation that youth will be able to fend for themselves once they transition from state care, without fully understanding the personal turmoil that they face in the process.

Geenen & Powers (2007) study on transitional support for youth leaving state care, highlighted the fact that for young people, leaving state care means that they will lose positive relationships and a certain standard of living. The transition from state care can cause a range of emotions in youth including a sense of secondary trauma as youth have already experienced the trauma of being removed from their families of origin. According to Mamelani Projects (2005), the period of transition out of state care can induce memories of previous trauma that youth have experienced, which can affect their behaviour during this time.

Youth also voiced certain concerns about leaving state care and challenges they would face such as uncertainty about who would support them, where they would live and who would provide them with emotional and practical support (Mamelani Projects, 2005). In this overall context youth have concerns about the fulfilment of their basic needs and receiving support which may not be continued once they leave.

2.6.2 The aspirations youth have as they transition out of CYCCs

2.6.2.1 Self-determination

Geenen & Powers (2007) share how youth in foster care have made known their desire to practice skills of self-determination while they are in care. In response to this, child welfare practitioners have realised that they need to grant youth the opportunity to take responsibility and ownership of their lives as this is essential to their transition from state care (Geenen & Powers, 2007; Osgood et al., 2010). Child welfare workers are therefore becoming important facilitators rather than directing the pathways of youth transitioning out of state care. Self-determination is a good skill for youth to possess especially when they are faced with challenges in the greater society after leaving state care.

2.6.2.2 Education aspirations

Setting goals is an exercise often practised by youth as they enter adulthood. According to Hines & Meridinger (2005), when describing their goals and future plans, respondents had high expectations for themselves when it came to their education and career choice. Eleven of the fourteen respondents said that their future plans included continuing their education and twelve of them knew exactly which career path they would follow (Hines & Meridinger, 2005). The state places a lot of importance on education and while in state care, youth are encouraged to focus on completing their schooling.

However other research shows that these educational goals are not always met. Geenen & Powers (2007) study indicates that youth residing in state care are less likely to graduate from high school compared to their peers who possess the same skills and live with their biological parents. Stott (2013) also states that because of the frequent moving within the welfare system as well as in schools, youth in state care commonly end up leaving school early and not graduating from high school. This is a great disadvantage for youth especially when they enter adulthood because they may struggle to obtain employment with a low academic skills set.

2.6.2.3 Reuniting with the family of origin

Despite being removed from their family of origin for reasons such as child abuse and neglect, youth transitioning from state care have fantasies of reuniting with their family of origin once they are emancipated from state care (Geenen & Powers, 2007). These are desires that cannot be controlled by CYCC workers or the government, as youth have the freedom and choice to reunite with their family of origin once they leave state care. This could however be an obstacle for the youth especially in establishing ties and family life with their family of origin, as they return home as an adult and no longer a child (Geenen and Powers, 2007).

2.6.2.4 Altruism

According to study results from Hines & Meridinger (2005) research, nine respondents displayed a desire to give back to their community, family of origin as well as society. In a study on altruism Staub & Vollhardt (2008), examined the connection between altruism as a result of suffering to resilience and posttraumatic growth. Staub & Vollhardt (2008) suggest that certain psychological changes may influence or lead to altruistic action such as empathy and believing that we have a responsibility for others' welfare.

Youth who are ordered by the court to live in CYCCs often have faced some sort of trauma or victimization within their households. Individuals who have been victimized in the past can display violent behaviour, be prone to aggression and decreased pro-social behaviour (Staub & Vollhardt, 2008). However, these same individuals who experienced trauma can also exhibit a positive adaption in adversity in other words, resilience (Staub & Vollhardt, 2008). Children exposed to good social support and loving connections before or after being victimized could result in positive outcomes for their development and protect them when dealing with difficult situations later in life (Staub & Vollhardt, 2008). This gives children a positive view of human beings based on their engagement with them. It is evident that there is a close link between altruism and positive socialization.

2.6.3 The challenges faced by youth associated with their transition from CYCCs

2.6.3.1 Vulnerability to unemployment

Research has shown that youth transitioning from state care are vulnerable to unemployment. According to Stott (2013) youth who have transitioned from state care are at high risk of negative outcomes such as unemployment. In a study done by George, Bilaver, Joo Lee, Needell, Brookhart & Jackman (2002) in South California, findings showed that youth transitioning out of state care earn incomes that are below the poverty line and they progress more slowly in the labour market compared to other youth. It is evident that based on these findings that youth in state care may struggle when they enter the labour market.

2.6.3.2 Emotional Trauma

Youth who live in state care facilities are often faced with situations that trigger emotional trauma. This starts from them being removed from their family of origin, changing foster homes, changing schools and the ending of their institutional care when they turn eighteen (Kaplan, Skolnik & Turnbull, 2009). This can result in the youth feeling disempowered by current and future life events (Kaplan et al., 2009). Results from Hines & Meridinger's (2005) study showed that five respondents disclosed that they felt stressed related to finances and housing and in addition to this, the fear of failure.

2.6.3.3 Potential Homelessness

Securing a place to stay is a key task for youth transitioning to adulthood. In Berzin's (2008) study on the difficulties of transitioning to adulthood, she states that youth facing an impending emancipation which to them means the loss of their current accommodation can be a difficult part of their transition. Berzin (2008) goes on to state that 1% of the US population endures homelessness for one night in a year but that this is even more so experienced by emancipated youth. Many youth therefore fear homelessness because of statistics that show that youth leaving care are vulnerable to homelessness.

In a report written by Maunders, Liddell, Liddell & Green (1999) on young people leaving care and protection, the authors state that finding and maintaining accommodation can be difficult for young people leaving state care. Many of the participants involved in their study

were not in stable accommodation when they left state care. Maunders et al., (1999) state that there is a relationship between housing stability and self-efficiency, a character trait that youth hope to achieve as they transition to adulthood. Housing instability can impact youth's development when it comes to them continuing their education or keeping a job (Maunders et al., 1999).

Maunders et al., (1999) states that there are barriers to youth accessing stable housing these include individual characteristics such as inadequate income and assets, no family safety net and a lack of relationships with supportive adults. Other barriers include child welfare system factors like preparation for independent living and the housing market. What Maunders et al., (1999) points out is that youth are often ill prepared to live independently and struggle to secure accommodation because they lack the knowledge and skills needed to do so.

2.6.4 Transitional support programmes available to youth transitioning out of CYCCs

2.6.4.1 Maintaining relationships

Relationships for youth in state care are not always long term due to various circumstances. Geenen & Powers' (2007) study findings reflect that participants emphasised the importance of youth having a long-term relationship with an individual as they transitioned into adulthood. Parents and child welfare professionals echoed what youth shared in the focus group conducted for this study.

In Hines & Merdinger's (2005) study, respondents stated that they realized the important role that people played in their lives. Family related attributes and the role of the foster care system were relationships valued by respondents. Majority of the respondents in this study valued their friends, significant others and the role of positive parents figures in their lives (Hines & Merdinger, 2005). They added that they were careful in choosing those close to them.

Youth are also encouraged to maintain good relations with their family of origin while transitioning from state care. In a study by Daining & DePanfilis (2007) on the resilience of youth transitioning from out-of-home care, the authors observed that close ties with family can assist youth by sustaining them through their process of transitioning. Family connections are an important source of support during this time. Informal support from peers can also help sustain youth during this time as the bond between youth and the individual is a valuable one

(Daining & DePanfilis, 2007). It is important to note that the support given from family should be the kind that encourages the independence of transitioning youth and not be one that enables dependence.

Many respondents spoke about how the foster care system changed their lives for the better because it afforded them new opportunities for positive relationships with adults and new opportunities (Hines & Merdinger, 2005). Youth may not have been exposed to these opportunities if they were living with their biological parents in a poor socio-economic state.

2.6.4.2 Life Skills Preparation

Life skills preparation is an essential form of support to youth transitioning out of state care. In a study done by Massinga & Pecora (2004) on providing better opportunities for youth in state care, findings showed the importance of life skills preparation that covers areas including self-care, career development, and daily living tasks. It is also mentioned that more emphasis needs to be placed on such programmes than programmes that focus on clinical and rehabilitation services (Massinga & Pecora, 2004). In essence, there needs to be a good balance between the psychosocial interventions and the life skills programmes presented to youth by their respective CYCCs.

2.6.4.3 Independent Living Programmes

Mamelani Projects compiled a report to the Department of Social Development after conducting an independent living pilot study. This report indicated that youth who participate in independent living programmes (ILP) are more likely to complete high school, obtain employment and are more likely to be self-efficient when leaving their CYCC (Mamelani Projects, 2011). An ILP offers youth between the ages of 16 and 21 a range of services focused on preparing them for self-sufficiency and is aimed at reducing any difficulty youth experience during their transition to independence (Mamelani Projects, 2011). Some of these services included in the ILP are preparing youth for employment and life skills training to enhance their ability to manage daily living (Mamelani Projects, 2011). Upon entering the ILP youth work closely with a social worker or mentor to address their goals and develop an independent living plan based on the youth's needs (Mamelani Projects, 2011). Youth will

also have individual services that they can access such as one on one counselling, life skills training and resource referral.

Mamelani Projects ends off their report by making recommendations regarding ILP for youth in South Africa. One recommendation that they make is for the government to extend the foster care grant to cover children over the age of 18 to assist them with continuing their education (Mamelani Projects, 2011). Tertiary education is far more costly than primary or high school education and it can become a burden on poorer families. Therefore due to financial constraints, youth may decide not to further their education even when they have the academic ability to do so. Further education and employment, are the building blocks of independent living and if the state can offer financial support to youth then they can help them to become less dependent on their families who are often unable to meet their educational needs (Mamelani Projects, 2011).

Another recommendation made by Mamelani Projects (2011), is that child and youth care workers should be trained and equipped with the necessary skills needed to support youth transitioning out of state care. Mamelani Projects (2011) go on to say that this training should be done in collaboration with the National Association of Child and Youth Care Workers, the statutory board that oversees child and youth care workers.

In Geenen & Powers (2007) study youth recommended that there should be a creative, individualized and flexible approach to transitioning out of care as this will result in youth overcoming obstacles when they reach adulthood. Mamelani Projects encourages transitional programmes to have an aspect of individual work. Successful individual work would be as a result of a shared understanding of the young person's transitional journey and a positive relationship between the adult and young person (Tanur, 2012). Having this platform created for young people will enable them to work through their challenges and achievements with guidance, support and affirmation (Tanur, 2012). The rationale behind individual work is two-fold, it is a reflective space for youth to explore their transitional journey and secondly it develops and strengthens the collaborative relationship between young people and their facilitators (Tanur, 2012).

One tool used in this individual work is called an Individual Development Plan (IDP). When a child enters a CYCC an IDP is developed and when they start their transition process, Mamelani Projects builds on it by addressing areas of concern such as accommodation,

further education and identifying support structures (Tanur, 2012). For example, Mamelani Projects may provide support to youth by assisting them to obtain their identity documents.

2.6.4.4 Mentoring Programmes

Research has shown that mentorship programmes have been successful in aiding youth as they journey through their transition from state care. According to Kaplan, Skolnik & Turnbull (2009), the objective of youth mentoring programmes is to provide youth with a positive and long-term relationship with their mentors. During this period of transition, a consistent and caring adult is precisely what youth lack when they reach the age of eighteen and no longer have access to state care services (Spencer, Collins, Ward & Smashnaya, 2010). Mentors are therefore beneficial to these youth because they fulfil the function of being a guidance counsellor, a role model and a friend (Kaplan et al., 2009).

In the Western Cape, one successful mentorship programme The Transition to Independent Living (TIL) Youth Mentoring Programme has been effective in supporting youth transitioning out of state care. This programme was created and implemented by a non-profit organisation called South African Youth Education for Sustainability (SA-YES). TIL focuses on equipping youth with the necessary skills that they need to participate as independent members of society. In this programme youth in state care are matched with mentors and together they deal with various aspects of the process of transition such as housing, employment and personal development (Mamelani Projects, 2005; Pinkerton, 2011). According to Spencer et al. (2010), a thorough mentoring programme is key in youth experiencing a healthy, creative and productive transition to adulthood. Some youth do make a healthy and productive transition to adulthood however, for youth in care basic goals such as finishing high school and stable housing remain difficult to achieve (Spencer et al., 2010).

Mentoring can take different forms for example, youth are matched with adult mentors and they meet in person on a regular basis or online mentoring can occur where communication between the mentor and the mentee take place through emails (Spencer et al., 2010). Mentoring programmes can prove to be key in assisting youth to achieve a successful transition to adulthood, however it cannot be viewed as a one solution fits all approach. This is one of the pitfalls of mentoring programmes and Spencer et al. (2010) brings to the attention of social workers that micro and macro efforts need to occur simultaneously as

opposed to disproportionate attention given to mentoring which may prohibit addressing other structural challenges faced by youth.

Waller, Houchins & Nomvete (2010) conducted a study that explored the establishment of school-based mentoring programmes for youth transitioning from secure facilities. They discussed various aspects of a mentoring programme such as its goals and how to match mentors with mentees. One of the building blocks of a good mentorship programme is its goals. These goals may address social, academic or career-orientated needs of youth (Waller et al., 2010). For example, a mentoring programme aimed at student's career interests may include a visit to their mentor's workplace where job shadowing could take place.

Mentoring programmes often seek to match youth with mentors of their same gender (Waller et al., 2010). This is often done based on gender-specific related issues that can be easier discussed with youth and adults of the same gender. Recruiting mentors are often challenging, especially recruiting them from communities (Waller et al., 2010). However, youth find mentors from the community less threatening and this assists the mentor-mentee relationship (Waller et al., 2010). Alternatively, mentors can be recruited from the business sector or other organisations.

2.6.4.5 Transitional support offered by non-government organisations (NGOs)

In a study conducted by Mutongwizo (2009) on non-government organisations working with unemployed youth, Mutongwizo states that organisations in Cape Town working with youth need to assess the needs and problems that they are faced with when formulating their interventions. Unemployed youth aged 15 to 24 years old in Cape Town can benefit from engaging with these NGOs as they offer youth immediate and long-term benefits (Mutongwizo, 2009). Some of these benefits include having access to a shelter, stipends, meals and positive peer relationships which unemployed youth deem as being valuable (Mtuongwizo, 2009).

2.6.4.6 Lack of resources

CYCCs often struggle to obtain funding and are therefore poorly resourced. This has a direct impact on the children that reside in CYCCs. According to Mamelani Projects (2005), their

study findings from focus group sessions revealed that transitioning programmes are not always prioritised by CYCCs and it is often over-shadowed by greater demands and needs from other children in these CYCCs. Funding is therefore reserved for other matters that CYCCs have given priority to over transitioning programmes.

In another study conducted by Mamelani Projects (2012), CYCCs from around the Western Cape were participants in a focus group discussing transitional programmes for youth and they stated that a lack of funding affects the kind of programmes the centre is able to run. However despite funding issues, CYCCs are still expected to assist youth transitioning out of care through providing interventions to stabilise the child and reconnecting children with their families (Mamelani Projects, 2012).

2.6.4.7 Recommendations made by youth on transitional programmes

Youth, CYCCs and other organisations were given the opportunity to share their ideas on what could contribute to successful transitioning. Four key suggestions were made by participants which are 1) when a child enters the state care system that shortly after they should be included in transitional programmes, 2) youth should be actively involved in the transitional preparation phase, 3) there should be careful planning and management of transitional programmes and lastly 4) transitional programmes should be individualised to suit the various developmental needs of youth (Mamelani Projects, 2012).

Participants also highlighted programmes and activities that work well and positively assist transitioning youth. Based on their discussion, these were what participants felt were key components of their transition: committed and well trained adults/mentors who support youth through every step of their transition, experiential learning activities that allow youth to gain independent living skills, ongoing support post care (mentoring), psycho-social support programmes from NGOs and regular engagement with families and communities which youth will return to (Mamelani Projects, 2012).

2.7 Summary

This chapter presented the literature review which enlightens readers to the experiences of youth transitioning out of CYCCs. It contains the legislation and policy, theoretical models

and social theories such as the Children's Act No 38 Of 2005 and the social development theory that were relevant to the study. It also presented the four main themes identified from the literature that are relevant to this study namely 1) how do youth understand their transition out of CYCCS, 2) the aspirations youth have as they transition out of CYCCs, 3) the challenges faced by youth associated with their transition from CYCCs, and 4) transitional support programmes available to youth transitioning out of CYCCs.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3. Introduction

This chapter presents the research design, philosophical assumptions sampling design, data collection method, data analysis procedure, the limitations and data verification of this research study. All the elements mentioned above is aligned with a qualitative research approach. Based on the research topic, the researcher understood that a qualitative research design would be best suited for this study.

According to de Vos, Stydom, Fouché, & Delport (2011) qualitative researchers start off their research process with a general research question, they collect a large amount of data from a small sample size, analyse the collected data in a coherent manner and use verbal descriptions to describe the situation they studied. This chapter will unpack how the researcher went about her study, from choosing a research design to analysing the data collected from face to face interviews.

3.1 Research Design

There are two main approaches in social research, namely quantitative and qualitative research. According to Punch (2005), quantitative research works with data that are in the form of numbers whereas qualitative research works with data in the form of words. Before establishing which design will be best suited for a research study, the researcher must first develop a research question or problem. When formulating a research question, the researcher should be able to identify a question-method connection. According to Punch (2005), this question-method connection is vital as the research method will closely follow the research questions. Wording within a research question can carry a question-method connection and can indicate which research design to use. According to Punch (2005:19), key words such as “discover”, “describe the experiences” and “explore a process” may suggest a qualitative approach to research. Based on the wording of this study’s research question, a qualitative approach was evidently the most appropriate approach because of its explorative nature.

Qualitative research is defined by Tutty, Rothery & Grinnell (1996:4) as “the study of people in their natural environment as they go about their daily lives.” Qualitative researchers tend to go into the field and collect data from the location where participants experience the issue being studied (Creswell, 2007). According to Ritchie, Lewis & Elam (2003), the purpose of

qualitative research is to explore as well as describe participants' understanding and interpretations of social phenomena in a manner that captures their inherent nature. With this research study the researcher was interested in understanding how youth experienced their transition from their CYCCs to independent adult living. In stating all of the above, it is evident that a qualitative approach was the most appropriate for this research study.

There are various research designs used by qualitative researchers. The appropriateness of the design will depend on the purpose of the research study, the nature of the research questions and the resources and skills available to the researcher (Fouche & Schurink, 2011). This research study looks to explore the experiences of youth transitioning from CYCCs in Cape Town to independent adult living and therefore the phenomenological research design is most appropriate and the chosen design for this study. According to Creswell (2007:57), phenomenology is described as a study of "the meaning of the lived experiences of a phenomenon or concept for several individuals". In this study the phenomenology of youth preparing for independent adult living was explored and the study findings indicate how participants constructed meaning to their experience of preparing for independent adult living.

3.2 Philosophical Assumptions

When conducting qualitative research, certain philosophical assumptions are made. These assumptions form the basis of the research study. According to Creswell (2007) there are five philosophical assumptions: ontological, epistemological, axiological, rhetorical and methodological assumptions. The researcher was guided through the study by these assumptions and will show how they relate to the study.

The ontological assumption is concerned with the nature of reality which is constructed by participants involved in the research study (Creswell, 2007). When conducting qualitative research that studies individuals, researchers will be exposed to multiple realities which they should report on (Creswell, 2007). The researcher presents evidence of multiple realities through multiple verbatim quotes from participants and their diverse perspectives (Creswell, 2007). In this study the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with twenty participants.

The interviews contained multiple quotes and presented the participants diverse and similar perspectives on their reality. These interviews were voice recorded and then transcribed by the researcher. The transcription and data analysis of these interviews allowed participants to share the reality of their experiences of transitioning from CYCCs to independent adult living. Participants shared their stories in their own words which allowed for the researcher to understand how they constructed meaning to their experience.

Epistemology refers to the relationship between the researcher and that being researched (Creswell, 2007). It concerns the time spent by the researcher in the field with the participants of the research study (Creswell, 2007). The researcher assumes the role of an “insider” and an “outsider” when spending time with participants (Creswell, 2007:17). In this study the researcher did make time to meet and introduce herself to the participants before conducting interviews with them.

An axiological assumption relates to the values that researchers bring to a study. (Creswell, 2007). The researcher implements this assumption by reporting their biases, values and the value-laden data gathered in the field (Creswell, 2007). The researcher acknowledged her values and biases of this study during the process of reflexivity which is recorded in this report.

Rhetorical assumptions stem from researchers using labels and names for aspects of qualitative methods (Creswell, 2007). Qualitative research makes use of specific language and the researchers personal voice which guides the research design. These include words such as “discover” and “understanding”, qualitative terms which are important rhetorical indicators when the researcher is in the process of formulating research questions (Creswell, 2007). In this study the researcher made use of the word “explore” which is fitting for this study because the researcher wanted to discover the lived experiences of youth transitioning from CYCCs to independent adult living in Cape Town.

The methodological assumptions concerning qualitative research are inductive and shaped by the researcher’s data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2007). Categories and themes develop from the research process. The researcher made use of Tesch’s eight steps of data analysis and identified various themes and categories relating to the research topic. During interviews with participants, the researcher made use of a semi-structured interview schedule which contained probing questions which assisted the researcher in eliciting varied responses relating to the research topic.

3.3 Methodology

3.3.1 Population and Sampling Method

In the African Youth Charter (African Union, 2006), youth are defined as individuals between the ages of 15 and 35 years old. In South Africa, statistics indicate that 20.1million of the population are youth of which 4 million populate the Cape Town area (Statistics South Africa, 2016). Some of these youth find themselves living in state care due to their family circumstances. It is estimated that some 21 000 children reside in 355 registered children's homes in South Africa (Proudlock, 2014:6). For the purposes of this study, the population under study was youth living in CYCCs in Cape Town.

When conducting qualitative research, non-probability sampling methods would be used. There are various approaches to non-probability sampling, however for this research study purposive sampling was used to select the sample for this study. According to Ritchie, Lewis & Elam (2003:79), "purposive sampling involves selecting a sample of individuals with the purpose of representing a location or type in relation to a key criterion." The criterion used for the sample of prospective participants was that the researcher would interview twenty youth who needed to be eighteen years of age or turning eighteen within the current year that the interview took place, they needed to be residing at a CYCC in Cape Town and then lastly be willing to participate in this study. In addition to this, participants could have been of any gender, race or faith.

Once the criterion for the sample was created, the researcher then thought of ways to contact CYCCs that would have youth who met the sampling criterion. The researcher approached 15 CYCCs in Cape Town by email to request the participation of their youth in the study, however only five CYCCs responded to the email and showed an interest in her study. The sample of twenty participants was selected from the following CYCCs in Cape Town namely Lawrence House, Leliebloem House, Heatherdale Child and Youth Care Centre, St George's Home for Girls and Beth Uriel. According to Ritchie et al. (2003), qualitative research studies usually have a small sample size and participants for individual interviews may often be less than fifty people.

The authors explain that an increased number of participants may become difficult to manage especially in terms of adequate data collection and data analysis (Ritchie et al.,2003). Once the sample was selected, the data collection process could begin. The researcher made

arrangements with CYCC directors and participants to determine a date and time that would be suitable to conduct interviews.

3.3.2 Data collection

3.3.2.1 Data Collection Approach

Qualitative research uses distinct methods of data collection namely participant observation, focus groups as well as one-to-one interviewing (Engel & Schutt, 2010). In order to obtain rich data, one-to-one interviews were conducted with the selected sample. Qualitative interviews are “an interactional exchange of dialogue” (Mason, 2002:62). Legard, Keegan & Ward (2003) define interviewing as a conversation with a specific purpose. In qualitative research, one-to-one interviews can be structured, unstructured or semi-structured.

The interviews conducted for this study were semi-structured in nature. The researcher made use of semi-structured interviews where the researcher focused on engaging with the participant rather than being detached from the conversation. The researcher prepared a set of open-ended questions that were specific to the research questions the researcher would like to answer (Greef, 2011). The questions prepared for the interview are there to guide the conversation which leaves room for some flexibility such as adding follow up questions within the interview. The researcher conducted twenty one-on-one interviews that were forty-five minutes to an hour long and they were conducted at the CYCC that the participant resided at.

3.3.2.2 Data Collection Instrument

The data collection instrument used for collecting data was a semi-structured interview guide. This can be found in this report labelled Appendix B. According to Arthur & Nazroo (2013) a semi-structured interview guide should be used by researchers to steer the discussion that takes place within the interview. Semi-structured interview guides also allow for unplanned discussions that may be relevant and enlightening to the research topic. This semi-structured interview guide was piloted with three youth at Lawrence House to establish if the questions were clear, understandable and answered the main research questions. Researchers are urged to pilot their data collection tools with a small number of their participants to work through

the practical aspects of the data collection process such as accessing participants, conducting interviews and being aware of their own interviewing skills (de Vos et al., 2011).

The researcher piloted the interview guide and asked for feedback from participants regarding the questions after each interview. All three participants felt that the questions were easy to understand and made no recommendations about any questions needing to be improved or removed. After reviewing the data from these sessions, the researcher found that her main research questions were being answered and good data was being produced from the interviews. The researcher relayed this information to her research supervisor who then gave her the go ahead to start the data collection process.

3.3.2.3 Data recording device

To capture all the information shared between the researcher and participants during the data collection process, all interviews were recorded with audio recording devices. Wilkson and Birmingham (2003) state that for many years researchers have made use of audio recording devices during interviews for the simple reason that audio recorded interviews can be transcribed. Recording interviews also gives the researcher the opportunity to really engage with participants instead of writing frantic notes to capture what participants are sharing. After gaining permission from participants to do so the researcher made use of computer audio recording software called Audacity as well as a recording application on her Apple Ipad to record the interview sessions she had conducted. The recording mechanisms worked well and made the transcription process a smooth one. All interviews were transcribed verbatim from the researcher's recording device.

3.3.3 Data Analysis

Up until her death in 1994, Renate Tecsh was at the forefront of the qualitative data analysis debate (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Qualitative data analysis, simply put, transforms data into findings which includes reducing a large amount of raw data and bringing order and meaning to it (de Vos et al., 2011). During this process of data analysis, the researcher identifies vital categories among the collected data as well as patterns and relationships through the process of discovery (Engel and Schutt, 2010). The data collected for this study was analysed by using Tesch's (1990: as cited in de Vos et al., 2005) eight steps of data analysis.

1. The researcher needs to get a sense of the whole by reading all the interview transcripts carefully (de Vos et al., 2005).
 - The researcher carefully read through all the transcribed data from the twenty interviews she conducted with the participants. This was a lengthy process but the researcher managed to read all the transcripts and got some meaning from the data collected.
2. The researcher should select one interview to understand what the participant is saying in relation to the research objectives (de Vos et al., 2005).
 - The researcher read through two interview transcripts to ascertain whether the research objectives were being addressed. After reading these transcripts and getting an understanding of what the participants were saying, the researcher was able to identify that the research objectives were being met.
3. The researcher must start making notes by noting themes and clustering data to the appropriate themes (de Vos et al., 2005).
 - The researcher read through each interview transcription and made colour coded notes noting the various themes that emerged from the data and they were 1) the perceptions of youth concerning their transition to independent adult living, 2) the aspirations of youth transitioning out of CYCCs, 3) the challenges youth face when preparing to leave a CYCC and 4) how youth can be better supported during their transition to independent adult living.
4. Cluster data into themes and as a result, a coding framework will be established and used when the findings are documented (de Vos et al., 2005).
 - The researcher created a coding framework that is used in chapter 4 of this report. This framework consists of themes and sub-categories.
5. The researcher must find the most descriptive words to change topics into categories and by doing this, categories can be reduced (de Vos et al., 2005).
 - The researcher began to relook at the various topics and organised them so that they became eighteen categories.

6. The researcher must make decisions about categories and how they will be abbreviated (de Vos et al., 2005).
 - The researcher gathered categories that were similar and abbreviated long sentences into shortened phrases.
7. Group together all the data belonging to various categories thereafter, the researcher can begin to analyse them (de Vos et al., 2005).
 - After sorting data into their appropriate categories the researcher began to analyse them using the data presented in the Literature Review in chapter 2.
8. After doing step seven, it may be necessary for the researcher to recode or refine existing data (de Vos et al., 2005).

The researcher followed the above steps when analysing the data collected from interviews. All interview transcripts were read and coloured-coded according to various categories. Once the eighteen categories were noted, the researcher grouped those under four main themes. After reviewing the various themes and categories, the researcher made some changes by recoding some data and once this was done, the data analysis process was completed. The themes chosen for the data analysis process were: 1) the perceptions of youth concerning their transition to independent adult living, 2) the aspirations of youth transitioning out of CYCCS, 3) how youth can be better supported during their transition to independent adult living and 4) the challenges youth face when preparing to leave a CYCC. These themes were chosen based on the data collected which once grouped, were appropriate and sub-categories were developed thereafter.

3.4 Limitations of study

There are often limitations identified by researchers when research studies are conducted. According to de Vos et al., (2005) limitations are often predictable and may arise in even the most carefully planned research studies. Therefore limitations are inevitable and need to be identified. One limitation of this study was that because of its qualitative nature, its findings cannot be generalised to the greater population. However, it is important to note that qualitative studies are not geared to generalise its findings but that its findings are specific to

the selected sample of participants (Tutty et al., 1996). In addition, Tutty et al (1996) states that qualitative researchers place less importance on the generalizability of their study findings than quantitative researchers.

The sampling size was adequate but a more diverse sample would have produced intriguing data showing the variation in experiences among a diverse sample of youth transitioning from CYCCs. Factors that could have contributed to a diverse sample are disabled youth, orphaned youth and a larger number of foreign youth. Among the participants that the researcher interviewed, some were foreigners, children born in other African countries, who had different concerns regarding their transition from their CYCCs than South African born participants. It may have been interesting to investigate these two groups of young people and their respective transitional needs.

One-on-one interviews are very intimate and may lead to participants not wanting to share information with the researcher and as a result they answer in a dishonest manner (de Vos, 2005). However, participants may also find comfortability in the intimacy of the interviewing style and may view the researcher as a therapist and discuss past traumas (de Vos, 2005). The researcher was aware of this factor and ready to make the necessary referrals to the respective CYCC social worker.

3.5 Data Verification

Qualitative research is often described as fictional and not scientific especially by quantitative researchers who question the trustworthiness of qualitative research (Shenton, 2004). However according to Lincoln & Guba (1999) there are four main constructs that can be used to verify qualitative data. These constructs are credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

Credibility also known as authenticity, allows for the researcher to make the connection between the participant's views and the researcher's reconstruction and representation of these views (Lincoln & Guba, 1999). Shenton (2004) provides strategies to increase the credibility of a qualitative study which include tactics to ensure the honesty of participants, frequent debriefing sessions and the qualifications and experience of the researcher. The credibility of this study was ensured by the researcher attending supervision sessions with the researcher's university supervisor where various aspects of the research study were discussed.

Meetings with the researcher's university supervisor were also for debriefing purposes. The researcher engaged with the CYCCs involved, meeting with the directors and discussing the objectives of the study and whether they could be met.

Transferability gives the researcher an opportunity to question whether the findings of the study can be applied to various contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1999). Showing generalizability of a qualitative study can be problematic in that study findings cannot be generalised to other settings or populations. However, the researcher can show the transferability of the study by providing a detailed description of the research design and methodology. The researcher can refer to theoretical models to show how data collection and data analysis will be used as a guide for this study (Lincoln & Guba, 1999).

The researcher made use of the relevant theoretical models and clearly stated how data was collected and analysed in this report to ensure the transferability of the research findings. For example, the researcher stated that Tesh's eight steps of data analysis was used to analyse the data collected from interviews conducted. Despite the study not being able to ensure generalizability, the study findings can still be utilised for future work with the chosen sample of individuals.

Lincoln & Guba (1999) describe **dependability** as the ability of another researcher to duplicate a study that will result in the same findings, if it were to be carried out within the same context. Dependability is enhanced if the research process is logical and sound, well documented and audited (de Vos et al., 2005). The researcher followed these principles to increase the dependability of the study. Before starting the research, the researcher requested ethical clearance from the Ethics Committee of the University of Cape Town.

The study proposal was cleared and proved that the research study would be carried out in an ethical manner. The research was logically applied, well documented and analysed on the completion of the data collection process. This was achieved by the guidance and auditing of the researcher's work by her university supervisor. The researcher met with her supervisor as needed and the supervisor was able to guide the researcher to ensure that the work produced was aligned with the principals of sound research.

Conformity also referred to as objectivity, is the final construct of data verification. The data gathered for a study needs to reflect participants' own ideas without the biases of the researcher's perspective. (Lincoln & Guba, 1999). The researcher has made known the

assumptions of the research questions. She has also presented her reflexivity as a means of displaying her desire to be objective throughout the process of this study. The researcher also made a commitment to be true to participants by having their voices heard in this research study. This commitment can be found in the written consent form presented to participants before interviewing them.

3.6 Summary

This chapter presented the research design, sampling design, data collection method, data analysis procedure, the limitations and data verification of this research study. The researcher made use of a qualitative approach for the study as it was the most appropriate. Concerning the methodology, the researcher used purposive sampling to obtain the study sample, used one-to-one interviews to collect data from this sample and then used a semi-structured interview guide as a data collection tool. The researcher made use of Tesch's 8 step data analysis approach and stated what limitations arose as well as how she ensured that the data could be verified. The next chapter will present and discuss the findings of this research study.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS

4. Introduction

The study findings will be presented and discussed in this chapter. Firstly, a description of the participants and CYCCs involved in this study will be presented. This will be followed by a framework of analysis which contains the main themes and sub categories derived from the collected data. Findings will be discussed under four main themes namely the perceptions of youth concerning their transition to independent adult living, the aspirations of youth transitioning out of CYCCs, the challenges youth face when preparing to leave a CYCC and lastly how youth can be better supported during their transition to independent adult living. These main themes align and respond to the objectives of this study. The research findings will be discussed and supported by using quotes from participants and analysed in relation to the literature and theoretical frameworks underpinning this research to provide an in-depth insight into the experiences of youth transitioning from CYCCs.

4.1 Profile of participants

The following table contains information regarding the twenty participants involved in this research study.

4.1.1 Table 1: Profile of participants

Name	Age	Gender	CYCC	Length of stay at CYCC	Year of departure from CYCC	Current occupation
Participant 1	16	F	Leliebloem House	10 months	2016	High school learner
Participant 2	17	M	Leliebloem House	3 years	2017	High school learner
Participant 3	18	F	Lawrence House	11 years	2017	High school learner
Participant 4	19	F	Lawrence House	9 years	2016	High school learner
Participant 5	18	M	Lawrence House	6 years	2017	High school learner
Participant	20	F	Heatherdale	12 years	2016	Unemployed

6			Children's Home			
Participant 7	18	F	Heatherdale Children's Home	5 years	Unsure	High School learner
Participant 8	17	F	Heatherdale Children's Home	6 years	Unsure	High school learner
Participant 9	18	F	St George's Home for Girls	16 years	2016	Unemployed
Participant 10	22	F	St George's Home for Girls	13 years	Unsure	Employed
Participant 11	21	F	St George's Home for Girls	14 years	2017	Student
Participant 12	19	F	St George's Home for Girls	7 years	2016	Unemployed
Participant 13	20	F	St George's Home for Girls	19 years	2016	Employed
Participant 14	21	M	Beth Uriel	4 years	2016	Student
Participant 15	21	M	Beth Uriel	4 years	Unsure	Student
Participant 16	22	M	Beth Uriel	2 years	Unsure	Student
Participant 17	20	M	Beth Uriel	4 years	2017	High school learner
Participant 18	21	M	Beth Uriel	3 years	2018	Student
Participant 19	26	M	Beth Uriel	12 years	Unsure	Student
Participant 20	22	M	Beth Uriel	3 years	2017	Employed

4.1.2 Description of participants

The participants involved in this research ranged between the ages of 16-26 years old. Some participants have been staying at their CYCC for a long time, the longest participant having stayed at their CYCC for nineteen years. Other participants had stayed for less time, the shortest stay being ten months. Five out of twenty participants were unsure about when they were going to exit state care; whereas the remaining fifteen knew that they would be leaving in either 2016 or 2017. Eight participants were in high school, six were students at tertiary institutions, three were employed and three were unemployed.

4.1.3 Participant backgrounds

As stated in the Children's Act no 38 of 2005, children are ordered by the Children's Court and placed at a CYCC if there are no alternative care options for the child (Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005, 2005). There are various contributing factors that led participants to their respective CYCCs. Some of these factors were disclosed to the researcher by the participants.

Before being placed in a CYCC, a few of the participants were in foster care. One participant shared that he had moved through as many as five foster homes and other CYCCs before being placed at the CYCC he currently resides in. Some of these participants were fostered by family members such as their grandmothers however, due to old age or death, these family members were no longer able to care for them and the state then placed them at a CYCC. Other participants lived with their parents but were removed from their care due to factors such as substance abuse, prostitution or their parents not having the capacity to care for them.

Some participants ended up living in a CYCC due to their own behaviour. One participant spoke of his involvement in crime, using drugs and dropping out of school. He found himself living in a community that fostered bad activity which gave him easy access to substances like drugs. Another participant shared that he grew up in a rough community that fostered negative social activities. Due to his bad behaviour his parents asked him to leave their home however after unsuccessful stays with other individuals, he was able to be placed at the CYCC he currently resides in. As stated in the White Paper for Social Welfare (Republic of South Africa, 1997) and as proven by the circumstances which led these participants to leave

their families of origin, parental neglect and substance abuse are contributing factors to the breaking down of families and therefore children are placed in alternative care.

4.1.4 Organisation profiles

Leliebloem House

Leliebloem House was founded in 1868 as a House of Mercy by Bishop Gray, the first Anglican Bishop of Cape Town as a place of refuge for fallen women (Leliebloem House, 2018). It was first located in Plein Street, Cape Town. In 1886 Leliebloem House relocated to Leliebloem House Estate, where the current Holiday Inn is in Walmer Estate, Cape Town (Leliebloem House, 2018). Leliebloem House relocated again and is currently located on the Cape Flats in an area called Crawford.

Leliebloem House is a registered NPO and operates as a residential CYCC that caters for 60 children from the ages of 4 to 18 years old who have been placed in alternative care by the children's court (Leliebloem House, 2018). Leliebloem House residential care programme comprises the following: individual treatment plans for residential children, life skills programmes, educational programmes, sports and recreation and referral to specialised services in the community (Leliebloem House, 2018). In addition to this, the organisation works intensively with the children's families and communities to improve the circumstances that contributed to the children's removal.

Lawrence House

Lawrence House, located in Woodstock Cape Town, is a registered CYCC that accommodates up to 25 children and youth. The home specialises in care and protection of refugee children, unaccompanied foreign minors and also children who have experienced trauma (Lawrence House, 2018). Lawrence House aims its interventions at covering topics such as identity, sense of belonging and self-discovery, and topics that are crucial for healing and growth.

Lawrence House offers a variety of programmes that address the needs of its beneficiaries such as documentation status for which they collaborate with the advocacy team at the

Scalabrini Centre as well as other stakeholders (Lawrence House, 2018). In addition to this, there is a programme is dedicated to assisting youth so that they may have a successful transition from institutionalised living to independence.

Beth Uriel

Beth Uriel is a “transition to independent living programme” NPO located in Woodstock (Beth Uriel, 2018). The organisation caters for young men aged 18 to 24 from previously disadvantaged communities. Beth Uriel is committed to long term care and support which over the years has led to greater educational success and independence for youth when they leave their care (Beth Uriel, 2018). Beth Uriel prepares young men for independent adult living in the following ways: 1) assisting youth in school and providing after school academic support at secondary and tertiary levels, 2) engaging youth in positive social activities over the weekend and during school holidays, 3) encouraging job readiness through work experience and life skills training and 5) exploring issues of identity and masculinity through one-on-one counselling, group work and peer support (Beth Uriel, 2018).

St George’s Home for Girls

St George’s Home for Girls is a registered CYCC located in Wynberg. The centre caters for girls aged 3 to 18 who were neglected, abused, abandoned or are orphaned. The residential care programme is at the core of the centre’s programmes and comprises of the following: individual treatment care plans of residential children, referral to specialised services in the community, life skills programmes, educational programmes in the community and sports and recreation (St George’s Home for Girls, 2018). In addition to this, St George’s Home for Girls offers a family reunification programme, a transition to independence programme, a tutor programme and a hosting programme (St George’s Home for Girls, 2018). They are able to provide this with the assistance of their dedicated staff and therapeutic team.

Heatherdale Children's Home

Heatherdale Children's Home is a CYCC, under the patronage of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, situated in Belgravia, Athlone. It is a safe haven for "children at risk", those who have been traumatised and disrupted by various social ills existing in their home environments and communities (Heatherdale Children's Home, 2018). The home caters for 30 girls and 25 boys aged between 4 and 18 years old. Heatherdale Children's Home aims to be a place of refuge for children at risk however it also believes that a child's stay at the home should be temporary and that the child should be reunited with his/her family and community (Heatherdale Children's Home, 2018). Therefore the home engages with families from the children's entry into the home, helping these families address the challenges within their home.

Other programmes offered by the home include life skills training, spiritual development, therapeutic services, educational support and sport activities (Heatherdale Children's Home, 2018). Heatherdale Children's Home tailors these programmes to the unique needs of the child, which are based in the child's Individual Development Plan. This plan maps out the child's areas of development and the various interventions planned for these areas during the child's stay at the CYCC.

The profile of participants indicated that participants ranged between the ages of 16-26 years of age. Many of the participants have been residing at CYCCs for a number of years, the longest being nineteen years. Each participant had a different cause to their entrance into the CYCC programme which included parental neglect or the death of a caregiver. The CYCCs mentioned in this study have been around for several years and provide residential care to about 25 – 60 children.

4.2 Framework for discussing findings

The table below contains the main themes and categories that were developed from the interview transcripts. The researcher followed Tesch's (1990: as cited in de Vos et al., 2005) eight steps of data analysis when analysing the data collected from the twenty interviews. Every interview transcript was read and colour coded according to various categories. Once all categories were recorded, the researcher grouped them under various themes. After reviewing the various themes and categories, the researcher made minor additional changes

by recoding some data. These themes and categories will guide the discussion of the research findings.

4.2.1 Table 2: Framework for discussing findings

Theme	Categories
The perceptions of youth concerning their transition to independent adult living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The feelings youth have about leaving the CYCC programme ○ Gaining independence ○ Finding an alternative place of residence ○ Perceptions of adulthood ○ Completing their education
The aspirations of youth transitioning out of CYCCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contacting families of origin ○ Entrance into a tertiary institution ○ Finding employment ○ Helping others in need
The challenges youth face when preparing to leave a CYCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Repeat of bad past behaviours ○ Struggle to find employment ○ Worries about safety ○ Worries about not having support ○ Financial challenges
How youth can be better supported during their transition to independent adult living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transitional programmes for youth leaving CYCCs ○ Pitfalls of transitional programmes ○ Mentors needed for support and guidance ○ How the South African government can assist youth transitioning from CYCCs ○ How CYCCs can better support youth transitioning to independent adult living

4.3 Presentation of research findings

The study findings were categorised into four main themes namely the perceptions of youth concerning their transition to independent adult living, the aspirations of youth transitioning out of CYCCS, the challenges youth face when preparing to leave a CYCC and how youth can be better supported during their transition to independent adult living. When discussing the research findings existing research from the literature review and relevant quotes from participant interviews will be used to support the analysis.

4.3.1 The perceptions of youth concerning their transition to independent adult living

Participants have various feelings about and reactions to leaving their CYCCs, a place that has been their homes for a significant period of their lives. In analysing the data, four categories emerged under this main theme. These categories were youth's feelings about leaving their CYCC, gaining independence, finding an alternative place of residence, perceptions of adulthood and completing their education. Some participants were unsettled by having to leave care due of the uncertainty around where they will be moving to after leaving their CYCC. However, others found their transition process to be useful because it assisted them in understanding independence through various CYCC tasks and activities. In addition to this, participants felt that they are able to stay focused on completing their high school education while staying at their CYCC.

4.3.1.1 The feelings youth have about leaving the CYCC programme

Participants were asked to respond to questions about how they felt about leaving their CYCC. Participants shared that their CYCC gave them a sense of security, a place where all their basic needs were met. Other participants shared that they would miss living in their CYCCs and may find it hard to adapt to life outside of their CYCC. Participants also shared that they were worried about what would happen to them once they left their CYCCs and not have access to the resources made available to them there. The feelings youth have about leaving their CYCC are reflected in the following quotes.

“I’m very unsure of how I feel because Leliebloem has become my comfort zone, where I can be myself and when I’m by my grandmother, which is my foster mother, I always have to be that person, the perfect child that she raised. So I don’t know if I will be able to be who she wants me to be or whether I will be able to be myself.” [Participant 1]

“I’m worried because here you get everything and it’s going to be different out there and I’m sad because this was like my home. It’s going to be difficult to adapt outside.” [Participant 6]

“Like everything changes like I think you’ll miss the life like in the home because you know that if like you like. Like. Like just not doing something and then you know somebody else will do it for you...Like I don’t think you, you will be like that. How can I say in the future like maybe it will be hard to get those things because okay my friends I’ll see them, still be in...” [Participant 8]

“So it’s gonna be difficult and it’s sad because I don’t want to leave... It’s sad because yoh I grew up here and now all of it I must just leave. I’m so used to the people here they like my own my parents.” [Participant 9]

“So I know I could always depend on them to get me where I wanna be that show me what great love is they’ve helped so I am very thankful for St Georges for today.” [Participant 13]

“The brotherhood that you build in the house, I don’t think you get that anywhere else. Uhm that’s the one fear that I feel that I’ll probably be alone. I love being around people so I mean when I go home for the weekend or a holiday, I feel like I’m a visitor in my own house. Once you get here, you feel like this is where home should be. So that’s the one thing that I fear, that I won’t get this. So going out there, I’m scared of being alone.” [Participant 14]

“Shoo, it’s really scary because I’ve been here since I was 6. So it’s very scary. The thought of waking up and not being in the same place and hearing the same sounds, noises and everything. It’s something that I will have to adapt to. – Moving on is scary” [Participant 3]

“But I think my mental state is stressed out uhm this has always been like a secured place it was a constant so you knew if, if stuff go wrong you can come back.” [Participant 11]

“..as a new experience for me. Which is exciting but at the same time scary. Moving out, it is quite emotional but I know that it would have to be done.” [Participant 5]

From the quotes above, it is evident that participants felt a range of emotions when thinking about having to leave their CYCCs. The thought of having to leave their CYCC caused some participants to feel scared, stressed and worried while other participants felt excited. A contributing factor to participants feeling worried was because all their basic needs are met at their CYCCs. Many of these participants were removed from their parent’s care at a young age and have spent most of their childhood at CYCCs. They were removed out of situations

of neglect or abuse and placed in a CYCC where child and youth care workers provided them with a safe living environment and have attended to all their basic needs. The thought of losing this type support made many of the participants feel stressed as they anticipate how life would be outside of their CYCC. Some participants do not feel hopeful about their move from their CYCC and anticipate that their lives will not change for the better.

In terms of the Children's Act No 38 of 2005, CYCCs were implemented to take care of children's physical, emotional and psychological needs (Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005, 2005). Therefore, living in a CYCC gives participants a sense of physical, emotional and psychological security which they did not have in their previous place of residence. Participants have access to various resources and have built good relationships with child and youth care workers who have over the years become their parental figures. These findings concur with Geenen & Powers (2007) study findings which states that youth leaving state care will lose positive relationships and a certain standard of living.

When children and youth are placed in CYCCs their family relationships are abruptly interrupted and sometimes ended however new relationships are formed between children and youth living together at CYCCs. Participants talk about brotherhoods being formed at CYCCs and how family-like bonds are formed among children and youth living in care. These findings concurs with Mamelani Projects (2005) study findings that highlights youth's concerns about leaving state care and possible challenges they may face such as where they would live and who will support them. The participants have become so accustomed to being fostered by the state that they questioned whether they will be able to survive without support from the state. Some participants have lived in state care for most of their lives and cannot fathom moving on from their CYCCs to independent adult living without the security provided by the state.

These findings are also consistent with Germain & Gitterman's Life Model theory which states that individuals are interdependent on each other and their environments (Payne, 2005). When thinking about their exit from their CYCCs, participants are clearly in the first stage of the Life Model where they judge the severity of the disturbance in their lives and how it will impact them. From what participants have shared, it is evident that they find their exit from state care to be a disturbance in their lives. Feelings of worry, uncertainty, stress and difficulty with coming to terms with their exit from care, supports the notion that participants

view this transition from care to independent adult living as a disturbance in their lives. Participants are also aware of how this disturbance can impact their lives. The participants expressed uncertainty of what their lives will be like and possibly not having the comfort and support that they receive while living in state care. After this stage of the Life Model theory, participants will look at coping mechanisms that would assist them in dealing with this disturbance in their lives.

The next stage of the Life Model may not happen immediately as some participants may find it hard to accept and move on from the disturbance in their lives. This is why the guidance and support from an adult is important during this stage to help and guide youth, and to assist them in recognising their coping mechanisms and utilising them correctly.

4.3.1.2 Gaining Independence

Participants' experiences of independence while living in a CYCC differed from each other. Some participants felt that they gained some independence while staying at their CYCC while others were excited about exercising their new found independence that would come along with independent adult living. For participants, gaining independence at their CYCC meant that they were incorporated into the centre's daily tasks and given certain responsibilities such as managing their personal finances. This is reflected in the following quotes by the participants.

“The preparation we got from Lawrence House was buying our own toiletries. So they give you, before they used to give the children who are leaving R150 but now they see that they didn't use the money efficiently. So the minimum amount that we get now is R80. So you have to budget with all your expenses.” [Participant 4]

“..., I was eight years old when I came here. It was amazing because there was like big girls always helping with the little ones and they treated you with respect. I'm the eldest here and there's another one, she's eighteen years old so we have to help the ladies. There's only two ladies that work like on a shift on the girls' side and the boys' side. So then we have to fall in when they can't. One is on kitchen and there's only one upstairs helping with the bathing stuff and we help with stuff. So I think it's what can I say (laughs) like I'm learning to become independent inside.” [Participant 6]

“Like I said, it's scary but I've been at the independent living for almost 3 years now, more than 3 years and the fact that it has moulded me to. It has taught me a lot about the outside world but in a safe environment. We must

still go buy groceries, you must do washing, you must buy electricity and you must work out your transport money. Everything is done independently and you must provide for yourself. The home gives you a roof over your head and they give you a safe environment.” [Participant 10]

“In preparation I think that the care workers they had me do stuff on my own more. So now I know that I can’t always ask other people I must learn to do stuff for myself” [Participant 11]

What participants shared relates to Korten’s (1990) theory of people-centred development. CYCCs have assisted youth by creating ways for them to gain independence by using the building blocks of people-centred development namely participation, social learning, empowerment and sustainability. Korten (1990) states that participation is a process that involves a two-way exchange of decision making. By allowing participants to manage their own finances, CYCCs are providing an avenue of participation for youth to be involved in their own financial development and learn new valuable skills such as preparing a monthly budget so that they are able to cover their daily living expenses.

One participant spoke about her experiences of independence while living in the independent housing facility at her CYCC. She mentioned that while living in this housing facility, she is responsible for her daily living costs such as food, transport and electricity. This manner of living gives youth a sense of what responsibilities they would need to fulfil when they leave care. This participant also spoke about being able to engage with the outside world but by doing so she also recognises the safety and security provided by CYCCs. Participants living in CYCCs are sheltered and provided with safety that they cannot be guaranteed when they are outside of their CYCC premises.

By allowing youth to live in this independent living housing facility, CYCCs are encouraging a process of social learning. Participants are able to initiate and manage positive change within their lives as they go about sustaining their lifestyles by taking over responsibilities that their CYCC would have taken care of such as buying groceries, transport costs and electricity. This process can also lead to youth feeling empowered when CYCCs entrust them with managing their own lives. By allowing youth to manage their finances and allowing for them to be empowered by this process, youth may leave state care feeling more confident about being able to care for themselves when they leave care for independent adulthood.

Participants have also stated that they have been independent and to some extent self-sufficient prior to them preparing for independent adult living. Some participants went on to share how excited they were about gaining independence once they have moved out of their CYCC. They shared:

“Okay to be honest I’m quite, I’m quite excited because I’ll be moving out. I’ve always wanted to be independent... I’ll be more free. I want freedom.”
[Participant 8]

“There’s a part of me that’s a bit nervous but overall I’m kind of excited and I’m a guy that is willing. I like challenges so I’m kind of excited also in a way about how it’s going to turn out when I leave.” [Participant 14]

“So I don’t stay in the house with my parents but with the stage that I am now, I’m ready to leave, I don’t think I need spoon feeding. I need to be able to pick up that spoon and feed myself, I don’t need someone feeding me...To be honest with you on the other side I feel that there is a bit of excitement you know? Moving out and the reason why I’m saying that is because I will have more freedom. Ja that’s why I’m excited.” [Participant 14]

According to the participants, becoming an independent adult meant that they would get a little more freedom than what they have when living in a CYCC. Participants shared how excited they were about moving out of their CYCC so that they can be independent and free. When living in CYCCs, children and youth are bound by the centre’s rules and practices and so as they reach the age of maturity, they want to exercise their agency but cannot always do so while they are in state care. This finding supports Stott’s (2013) study findings which indicates that youth often feel restricted when living in a CYCC.

Youth want to enjoy certain activities such as unsupervised socialising with friends and dating, and therefore because of the restrictions on these activities, they want to leave their CYCC (Stott, 2013). Participants mentioned that they do not need supervision from child and youth care workers any longer and want to experience doing things for themselves. In contrast, McCoy et al., (2008) found that youth leave care for reasons such as personal frustrations and externalising behavioural problems. In this study participants did not have any plans to prematurely exit the care however, some participants did emphasise that they looked forward to moving out of their CYCC so that they can enjoy more freedom.

4.3.1.3 Finding an alternative place of residence

Participants were asked where they would move to once they leave their CYCC. Some participants were unsure as to where they were going to move and this worried them because of the potential consequences of not finding alternative accommodation such as homelessness. Other participants were actively looking for alternative accommodation but found renting or buying a house expensive and out of their budgets. Participants shared:

“So it’s actually sad to leave the home because first of all, where am I really going to go to?” [Participant 2]

“Well that I’m not too sure of. Just waiting to hear from universities and residence and all that stuff so.” [Participant 3]

“ I could be moving to my host parents or my uncle.” [Participant 5]

“So it was the scariest thing to think of and we, I’m looking for something now at the moment and it’s the hardest thing because like you don’t get something in your budget.” [Participant 10]

“Hopefully my life changes in a positive way like I become something, I better myself, I get out of the statistical community challenges like okay I’m not a teenager anymore but like pregnancy at a young age or drugs and alcoholism. So oh and also being employed because unemployment is also like a huge.” [Participant 11]

“My biggest fear is that I’m going to leave and I do get like a place and then I don’t have money to pay for the place and then I start living on the street again and not having a place to stay. I won’t be able to go to school or take a shower. I won’t function well. That is my biggest fear.” [Participant 18]

“I feel overwhelmed. There’s so much choices. Firstly, I don’t want to go back, it’s all about going forward. I was looking for places to rent but the renting is ridiculous. Like I can see why people go to informal settlements because they don’t have to pay that much there but I fell it’s going to be difficult at first and I need to make the right networks to survive. So that’s why it’s all about building relationships.” [Participant 19]

“I can say it’s difficult and you know I’ve been used to Beth Uriel for 3 years but I’m ready to go and stay at home because I go and visit so I’m used to going home and staying there for weeks or months and people in my community they also know me. I’m no longer involved with gangsterism.” [Participant 20]

Participants had different concerns when it came to the topic of finding alternative accommodation. Some appear to be stuck in the first stage of the Life Model theory. They are overcome by this disturbance in their lives and they cannot see past having to find alternative accommodation. Participants also recognise that they may have to return to the communities they once lived in, some of them being communities infested with social ills. This makes them worry about whether they will be able to withstand social ills such as gangsterism, drug abuse and teenage pregnancy. Some of these social ills are contributing factors to these participants ending up in CYCCs. While living in state care, participants are protected against these social ills however, participants are aware that they will not have this type of protection once they leave state care.

Other participants are in the second stage of the Life Model theory where they assess their existing arsenal of coping mechanisms (Payne, 2005). These coping mechanisms enable them to proactively look for alternative accommodation to avoid being homeless once they reach the age of majority and need to leave state care. Some participants shared that they are hoping to live in student residence if they get accepted into university. Others are using their social networks such as friends and family to find available accommodation.

One participant has experienced living on the streets and was homeless for a period of his life. The participant fears that if he does not find alternative accommodation he will end up living on the streets again and not be able to partake in certain activities such as attend school or even wash himself. These findings concur with Maunders et al. (1999) report on young people leaving care in which the authors state that finding and maintaining accommodation can be difficult for young people leaving state care. In addition to this Maunders et al. (1999) state that housing instability can impact youth's development when it comes to them continuing their education or maintaining employment.

The Children's Act No 38 of 2005 states that youth can extend their time in a CYCC up until the age of twenty-one and they can do so by making an application to the provincial head of social development and he/she will either grant or deny their request (Mahery et al., 2011). Youth who would like to continue their studies at tertiary institutions often make an application for the continuation of care. As one participant pointed out, if youth do not manage to secure a place for themselves in student residence, they could still live at their CYCC if the provincial head of social development grants them this opportunity. Six out of

the twenty participants involved in this study are students at tertiary institutions and were granted a continuation of care because they were studying.

4.3.1.4 Perceptions of adulthood

Some participants found it hard to define what they thought being an adult meant. The Children's Act states that when children turn 18 years old, they reach the age of majority and are able to consent for themselves (Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005, 2005). In other words, the state recognises 18 year old individuals as adults and therefore they are able to leave the CYCC programme and care for themselves. Participants were asked to share their views on adulthood:

“Basically being an adult is like taking more responsibility. You need to go work, study. All of those things. You must do everything like on your own. There's no more mommy, daddy or child care worker that's looking after you or helping you. You must do it on your own also.” [Participant 2]

“Because when you are an adult you need to be out of that being small minded and childish. Not supposed to be childish you supposed to know what to do with your life when you go out here. So I think mentally wise that's also going to be a change having to think having to make decisions by myself because decisions were always been made by them for me that's going to be mentally wise. And then physically...” [Participant 13]

“So when I do leave the home one of the things that's gonna happen is that physically wise I am going to have to look after my body always look presentable wherever I go even though when sometimes I am in the road people will ask me where I live and then I am like I live in a child and youth care centre. You wouldn't say so because I look well after myself so that's going to be one of the things that's going to be a challenge out there nothings been done for me anymore by these people I am doing it for myself.” [Participant 13]

It is evident that participants understand that with adulthood comes taking responsibility for one's actions and being less dependent on parent figures or other adults when it comes to decision making. Geenen & Powers (2007) research findings correspond with these findings stating that there is a desire for youth in state care to practice self-determination as they enter into adulthood. Participants have acknowledged that while living in a CYCC, many decisions are made on their behalf and they have become accustomed to this. However, child welfare workers recognise that they need to provide youth with opportunities for them to take

accountability for their own lives (Geenen & Powers, 2007). It is important for youth to learn to make good adult decisions while living in care and being under the supervision of child and youth care workers so that they are equipped to make adult decisions when they leave care.

Participants also mentioned that living in a CYCC gives them the opportunity to uphold a certain physical appearance. They recognise that their physical appearance, specifically their clothing, is maintained by their CYCC and they may not be able to uphold this standard of living when leaving their CYCC. Other participants shared how adulthood is defined within their culture and how certain cultural practices lead to adulthood. This is a new finding and is reflected in the quotes below.

“In my culture you have to go to the bush to be considered a man. So I come from that process, actually I’m in that process now of being a man you know. So with me moving out of the house, that’s also a benefit because in my culture you don’t get forced to go through this process, it’s more of a decision that you take. So when you ready to become a man, it’s a decision that comes from within so for me I would say that you need to be independent.” [Participant 14]

“An adult is someone who is expected to be mature. It’s more like stepping in a stage of leading, like leadership, being big and being an example to others and being responsible also. Ja just being mature, growing up and pushing yourself to reach your goal.” [Participant 15]

As is reflected in the quotes above, one participant compared the transition to adulthood in their culture to that of the state. The participant explained that in Xhosa culture becoming an adult is a process and a decision that one takes and not one that you are forced into. The practice of *ulwaluko*, is the Xhosa rite of passage from boyhood to manhood carried out by boys aged eighteen years and older (Mfecane, 2016; Morei, 2017). Over ten thousand young men in South Africa take part in *ulwaluko* where they are circumcised by traditional leaders (Morei, 2017). This process lasts for about three to six weeks in which young men are circumcised and live separated from the rest of society in a secluded “*ibhoma*” lodge (Mfecane, 2016: 204). When these young men are circumcised and have completed the *ulwaluko* ritual, they called an *indola* (Mfecane, 2016).

It is implied by a participant that the law of the state regarding the age of majority is imposed onto children who cannot declare for themselves when they are ready for adulthood. In addition to this participants also equate adulthood with independence and maturity an individual that is responsible and an example to others. When Xhosa young men are reintegrated into society after *ulwaluko* they are judged by their public conduct such as their dress code, respect, responsibility and their avoidance of violence (Mfecane, 2016). Here we see the cultural factors associated with adulthood and how participants' definitions of adulthood are influenced by these cultural factors.

4.3.1.5 Completing their education

Participants in this study have recognised that while staying in a CYCC they are able to finish their schooling without being interrupted by their family environments or any other possible disruptions. In addition to this, participants have recognised the importance of completing their education while living at their CYCCs. Hines & Merindinger (2005) state that youth in state care had high expectations for themselves when it came to their education and career choice. This is true for participants in this study who are focused on completing their education while staying at their CYCCs. For many, this was of first importance to them. Participants had this to say:

“It seems that at any institution, your main goal is to get done with school. You here just to get an education and that’s it but now I’m starting to realise that I never had time to think about my own personal life and how I would like to be in the next years you know so I feel like I was always pressurised to do good and to prove to people that I can do it and now yesterday I sat back and I don’t know much about myself.” [Participant 4]

“I came here for one reason and that was to finish my school. So there’s no other reason for me to stay. So if I’m done with my school and I feel like, I have to leave because that was the whole plan in the first place but if I’m still struggling then I will have to stay for a year to just gather myself.” [Participant 17]

“Because I managed to go to school without being interrupted by anything. So I managed to finish high school without being interrupted by anything. I managed to go to a tertiary institution without being interrupted and I didn’t have to look for sponsors or anything. My things were just sorted out.” [Participant 20]

Participants were very clear that a contributing factor to their contentment with staying in state care is the opportunity for them to finish their schooling. These participants were very focused on achieving the educational goals that they have set out for themselves. These findings agree with Hines & Meridinger (2005) study results that indicate that youth's plans during their transition to adulthood included continuing their education. Some youth knew exactly which career path they wanted to follow when they leave care. In addition to this participants also shared that while living in their CYCCs, their schooling was uninterrupted and because of this, they were able to get into tertiary institutions and further their studies. Participants may not have had these opportunities afforded to them if they had prematurely moved out of their CYCC and lived on their own. Other participants shared how they plan to further their studies by pursuing tertiary education once they leave their CYCC.

“I'm leaving at the end of the year. I wanted to leave in June but with the studies and everything they said I would leave once I have graduated and then at the end of the year I can leave once I graduated.” [Participant 14]

“The first goal that I have is that I want to finish college and then I want to sort out my papers. At the moment I don't have a passport and I don't want to always be in South Africa. I want to go to another place that will be better than South Africa.” [Participant 16]

“Short term, I had this in mind of me getting into university. It depends like I said if I do well in my studies. If I just get a high certificate then I can just go to college.” [Participant 17]

“I haven't really thought about that and I don't really want to stress about that, I want to focus on my studies first and then I'll think about that.” [Participant 19]

As previously mentioned, CYCCs can make provision for an extended stay for youth living in care who have reached the age of majority but are students studying at a tertiary institution. One participant shared that his CYCC has made provision for him to remain in care until he graduates. Participants are very focused on completing their studies and do not want to be interrupted while doing so. These findings are contradictory to Stott's (2013) research findings which state that due to frequent moving within the welfare system and schools, youth in state care end up leaving school early and not completing their schooling.

From the quotes above, it is evident that participants are highly focused on continuing and completing their studies before they leave state care. They see the benefits of having a tertiary qualification and how this can benefit them once they leave their CYCC. The majority of participants were either in high school or a student at a tertiary institution in Cape Town.

4.3.2 The aspirations of youth transitioning out of CYCCs

Participants had aspirations which they hope to achieve when they leave care for independent adult living. Five categories emerged from this theme namely making contact with biological family members, entrance into a tertiary institution, finding employment and helping others in need. Participants' aspirations materialising is unfortunately not guaranteed especially since when leaving care they will lose the guidance and support of adults and resources made available to them at these CYCCs. However the participants were determined to make their goals a reality.

4.3.2.1 Contacting families of origin

Some participants had an innate desire to make contact with their families of origin. Despite the circumstances that led to them leaving or being removed from their families of origin, participants shared that they plan to find and make contact with their families while transitioning from their CYCCs. Participants shared:

“My first goal is to finish school because I am in grade 10 and then I want to get a closer bond with my foster family's side and my biological family's side...” [Participant 1]

“Mmn finish school and go and study also and try to get any contact with my family.” [Participant 2]

“So that has always been a goal maybe to go and look for my family. To know where I come from and background from my family because there are kids here at the home because it's easy to trace down their family because they weren't in the home since they were small.” [Participant 13]

These findings correspond with Geenen & Powers (2007) study findings which state that youth transitioning from state care have fantasies of reuniting with their family of origin once they exit care. Participants explained that making contact with their family of origin will enable them to know what their family history is. It will help them establish their identity

within the context of their biological family. In addition to this participants also highlight the difficulties that come along with tracing biological families for children who entered CYCCs as babies compared to those who came as older children who may still have ties with their family of origin. Geenen & Powers (2007) states that this reunion could impact family dynamics as youth return home as adults and not children. Forming relationships and bonds as adults would be more challenging than it would be if participants were reunited with their families when they were still children.

4.3.2.3 Entrance into a tertiary institution

Some participants expressed a real desire to attend a tertiary institution to continue their education. They also admitted that they need to work hard and get good results at high school in order to do so. Another factor that participants highlighted was the financial implications of enrolling at a university and that they may need financial aid in order to do so. This is a new finding and is reflected in the quotes below.

“Short term, I had this in mind of me getting into university. It depends like I said if I do well in my studies. If I just get a higher certificate then I can just go to college.” [Participant 17]

“Firstly, one of my goals is to study really hard so I can get good marks to go to university. So far that’s my only goal.” [Participant 3]

“Okay at the moment my biggest goal is to go and further my studies. That will enable me to (disrupted by house mate coming into room, resumed once he left). I really want to further my studies. I think you know at Lawrence House there’s so much opportunities. So they have given me an option, if I am accepted at university it is possible for them to get someone to sponsor me for my education. That’s one of my biggest goals and that’s why I’m actually trying to get good grades so I be accepted and not be a burden to my family to pay those fees.” [Participant 4]

“Yes, I do. I’m looking to decide. Depending on my marks as well this year but studying is one of the main goals that I have to do after my matric and uhm mainly part time studying and work. That’s what I’m mainly looking at.” [Participant 5]

“So for, for the studying I was thinking about applying for a bursary.” [Participant 8]

It is evident that furthering their education is a priority for the participants. Participant's mentioned that while living in a CYCC they are exposed to resources and social networks that have encouraged them to further their education by applying to universities. They also recognise that their entrance into university is dependent on their marks and this has motivated them to work hard.

Being admitted into a university comes with certain financial implications however participants have been informed about various channels of financial aid such as bursaries. They recognise that by receiving financial aid, their CYCC nor their families would have to carry the financial burden of paying their tuition fees. A participant shared that the CYCC he resides at offered to assist him in finding sponsorships for his tuition fees. By CYCCs having a strong education agenda, they are also contributing to the economic sustainability of youth transitioning from CYCCs. Participants who possess a tertiary qualification are in a good standing when they enter the job market.

4.3.2.4 Finding employment

For participants, finding employment was on their list of goals that they hope to achieve before leaving their CYCC for independent adult living. Participants realise that certain expenses that are currently carried by their CYCC would need to be taken over by them when they leave care. They showed great urgency in obtaining employment because it would enable them to earn an income. Participants shared:

“The first thing I’m gonna do is find a job. I wanted to study. So I’m gonna have to work. I want to get my own place because I have a brother that’s still gonna live here so I want him to stay with me. So I’m gonna try and build myself up for him.” [Participant 6]

“And to live independently I was thinking of working and then like maybe sharing a flat or I was like thinking of like living on campus.” [Participant 8]

“Okay the goals for this year basically is to find a job” [Participant 11]

“To have a like job” [Participant 12]

Participants realise that by earning an income they can support themselves financially and even their families. One participant would like to study and so she realises that she would need to work so she can pay her tuition fees. Participants also shared that in order to get their own homes, they would need to earn an income. Other participants were actively looking for

employment and knew which avenues could assist them in obtaining employment, as can be seen in the quotes below.

“Well my goals I have set for myself just recently. Like I said Cape Town City, I’m just going to play for one season and then move to France or Belgium to one of my aunts or uncles and maybe try and study more on that side and maybe try and play on that side because most of the money is on that side.” [Participant 18]

“And then apply for au pairing it’s through a, what you call this agency” [Participant 11]

“Well at the moment I am job hunting. So when I do get a job I must save a certain amount of money for rent, food and transport and the rest I can send to my Mom and she can use it for whatever she wants to use it for. So that’s also the reason why I chose the career path that I am studying so that I can make enough money to sustain my life and stuff.” [Participant 18]

Potential avenues of employment have already been identified by some participants. Some have also identified working in other countries as a lucrative move for them to make in terms of earning a better salary than they would in South Africa. Participants who do not find employment during the time that they are preparing for independent adult living could struggle to cover certain costs of necessities such as accommodation, food and transport.

Levels of unemployment and inactivity are high among all age groups in South Africa, particularly among youth (Ardington, Bärnighausen, Case & Menendez, 2013). The White Paper for Social Welfare (Department of Social Development, 2007) states that socio-economic challenges such as unemployment prohibits youth from being active citizens of the country. In 2015 the Child Gauge indicated that 37% of youth aged 15 to 34 years old were unemployed (De Lannoy et al., 2015). The rate of youth employment has increased from 33% in 2008; one contributing factor to this being the decline of youth entering the labour market (De Lannoy et al., 2015).

Anand Kothari & Kumar (2016) suggests that in South Africa age, sex and race have played a significant role in determining unemployment and labour market outcomes. Unemployment is especially high among black Africans, youth and woman. When young people finish school and seek employment, they are often at a disadvantage due to their lack of work

experience. Young people with prior work experience have 50% more of a chance of obtaining employment than those with no work experience; therefore contributing to the youth unemployment rate (Anand., et al 2016). Anand et al (2016) research findings also suggest that Apartheid legacies, poor educational outcomes and a large skills mismatch are significant contributors to the high unemployment rate and continued inequality in South Africa.

Some participants have plans to support their families and without an income they will struggle to do so. These findings agree with Maunders et al., (1999) study findings which state that there are barriers to youth accessing stable housing which include individual characteristics such as inadequate income and assets, no family safety net and a lack of supportive relationships.

4.3.2.5 Helping others in need

Youth living in state care could develop a desire to give back to the communities that have played an integral part in their upbringing. In this study two participants shared that they had plans to give back to their communities.

“...my goals would be to help people even though it means I can’t take them in at least I know if they come through a meal I know I will be able to give them something to eat. Another goal is maybe to support my foster mom because she is old at the moment and would be going on pension so I think that’s one of goals work hard and give the money that I have saved for her and just continue saving and make her proud at the end also.” [Participant 13]

“When I am in the township for a whole week, my goal is to do school work and not get involved with the problems there and then on the weekend I come here to Beth Uriel and then I will be here from Friday until Sunday just to be back you know and giving back by helping the aunties that work here to prepare the food for the guys. So that is my goal, I’m planning on doing that.” [Participant 14]

There is a clear sense of altruism among these participants. They displayed a sense of responsibility to those who cared for them and also to others in need. When making a contribution to the tasks of their CYCC such as preparing food, they feel like they are giving back to the CYCC and the staff that take care of them. These findings concur with Hines & Meridinger’s (2005) study findings which indicated that respondents displayed a desire to

give back to their community, family of origin as well as society. The quotes above also support Staub & Vollhardt's (2008) study findings which suggest that certain psychological changes may influence or lead to altruistic action such as empathy and believing that we have a responsibility for others' welfare. We see this play out among participants as they feel a sense of responsibility for the welfare of those within the communities who for a long time have served them.

4.3.3 The challenges youth face when preparing to leave a CYCC

Youth face a number of challenges in their preparation to leave state care. Five categories emerged from this theme namely repeating of past behaviours, the fear of being alone, the struggle to find employment, worries about safety, worries about not having support and financial challenges. These challenges can become stumbling blocks for youth as they prepare to exit state care.

4.3.3.1 Repeat of bad past behaviours

In discussing the challenges that youth face while they prepare themselves for independent adult living, participants mentioned that they were afraid that with their new found independence, they may revert to bad past behaviours. This is what participants had to say:

“Only that the past will repeat itself. That I might lose focus and then do something wrong and then my Ma most probably wouldn't want me there again.” [Participant 1]

“I will be different, I will be changed. Maybe I will learn more new stuff. Maybe make new friends, bad friends. Get into Gangsterism and those things. That's why I say, I would rather be in another place than be out there. The lady that I lived with stayed in Mitchell's Plain.” [Participant 2]

“I could go into drugs...because I mean okay I was into drugs...and then Imma get me a place to stay a proper place to stay and I'm, I'm not gonna surround myself with negative people that's gonna bring me down the whole time I'm gonna surround myself with positive people” [Participant 9]

There is a real fear among participants that they may revert to their old patterns of bad behaviour. Participants are aware of the negative activities taking place outside of CYCCs, some of which are the cause of them being placed in state care. Some of the communities that

participants' families or foster parents live in are infested with social ills such as gangsterism, crime and drug abuse. According to a research report released in 2009, Africa was dubbed one of the most violent continents and South Africa, the most violent country in the world (Brown-Luthango, Reyes & Gubevu, 2016). In response to this finding, there was a drive toward eradicating informal settlements in South Africa by 2014 due to its correlation with violent crime. However it was found that increasing levels of violence has been linked to fast-paced urbanisation occurring within the country (Brown-Luthango et al., 2016). Urban violence has been found to be coupled with poverty and inequality resulting in poor living conditions for residents (Brown-Luthango et al., 2016).

When large population groups in cities have access to limited resources such as access to land and basic infrastructure, increased levels of criminal violence prevails creating a feeling of fear in residents especially when having to use public spaces (Brown-Luthango et al., 2016). Participants are aware of the realities that await them once they leave their CYCCs and so they question whether they will rise above these social ills or get trapped in a vicious cycle of negative behaviour. One participant mentioned that he would rather move to another CYCC or state facility than the community in which his foster mother lives because then his chance of returning to his past behaviour would be much smaller.

The information shared by participants corresponds with Mamelani Projects (2005) research which states that this period of transition can induce memories of previous trauma and can impact youth's behaviour. Participants highlighted the safe environment and positive relationships that they are exposed to at their CYCCs and how these elements have a positive influence on their behaviour. This finding agrees with Hines & Merdinger's (2005) study where the authors state that youth in state care valued the role of their friends and parent-like figures in their lives.. Participants mentioned that they will take special note of the friends they make when they leave their CYCC. They plan to form relationships with people who will have a positive influence on their lives.

4.3.3.3 Struggle to find employment

In South Africa there is a large number of youth who are currently unemployed. One of the contributing factors to this is that the labour market cannot accommodate the influx of youth wanting to enter the labour market and therefore many find themselves unemployed.

Participants mentioned that they found finding employment during their transition out of their CYCC to be challenging. Participants shared:

“Okay we live in an institution hey but yes we do have those talks and workshops about how you can get a job but now since I’m staying at the home, I’m trying to get myself like a back-up and just go and work. I don’t want to stay at home and do nothing. So I’ve been applying to most of the online jobs and I feel that we didn’t have enough experience, work experience from this institution that we can put on our CV and say that we have done this course for all the years that we have been staying here or whatever. That’s a big challenge for me.” [Participant 4]

“I will ask them to give me another chance (laughs). I’ll keep going back if that’s the job I want, I’ll keep going back.” [Participant 6]

One participant acknowledged that their CYCCs provide them with talks and workshops geared to preparing them for employment, however she feels that CYCCs do not provide them with opportunities to gain work experience. This participant highlights the need for CYCCs to help their youth by creating opportunities for them to gain work experience. It is evident that a lack of work experience is a barrier to youth entering the labour market. Finding employment is especially challenging for non-South African youth living in CYCCs in Cape Town. A participant shared this regarding finding employment:

“I have done welding but as a practical but now it’s been hard to find even a part time job because it’s hard to find a job here in South Africa, you need connections. It’s not easy like other South Africans. I think for, I can speak for a non-South African, firstly we always have problems with the papers because there is no one that is going to employ you if you don’t have the papers.” [Participant 16]

CYCCs in South Africa accommodate foreign children from other African countries who are in need of state care. These children are at a disadvantage when it comes to seeking employment because they do not have documentation that permits them to work in the country. These findings concur with George et al., (2002) study findings which state that youth transitioning out of state care progress more slowly into the labour market compared to other youth. From what participants have shared, a lack of work experience counts against them when they apply for jobs. For foreign participants, not having a work visa prohibits

them from finding employment in South Africa and as a result these participants will not receive any income and struggle to meet their daily living costs.

The United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child states that all child care and protection should be based on the principle of the "best interests of the child" (Magqibelo, Londt, September & Roman, 2016: 73). This principle applies to all children and in this case includes unaccompanied minors seeking asylum. The UN Global Report of 2015 indicated that approximately 65 refugees from countries such as Somalia, Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of Congo, are in South Africa; 50% of them being children (Magqibelo et al., 2016). The Constitution of South Africa makes provision for the protection of refugee children which gives them access to social services, education, employment opportunities and other basic services (Magqibelo et al., 2016). However, many public establishments do not recognise refugee permits which inhibits them from exercising these rights (Magqibelo et al., 2016). Another reality is that many refugee children do not have the legal documentation needed and are denied employment opportunities because of this.

4.3.3.4 Worries about safety

CYCCs are places of safety for children and youth, especially those who were removed from environments that were unsafe. Participants emphasised their worries about their safety as they prepared themselves to leave their CYCCs for independent adult living. The participants spoke of the safety and security that their CYCCs provide from the world outside. Participants shared:

"Yes! I don't know what it is but there is so many stories of people getting raped outside. So for me, I find that this place is protected from all that. I'm very scared, I'm not sure if it's going to be safe out there. Here it's safe because the environment feels safe but now, especially for me as a women I feel it's a bit, it's not the right place for me to be. I'm scared of that type of things ja." [Participant 4]

"Not being able to come around the corner knowing you can speak to someone. I think the scary thing is moving out of this safe environment because we are so protected here. Say I move to Parkwood or Hanover Park, because my budget only leads me there and it's not a safe environment to grow up in." [Participant 10]

“Into the world oh I dunno I think I’m gonna become very paranoid. Because even now when I travel it’s like oh my word is someone going to rob me, oh my word am I safe? Uhm that’s just, that’s going to be tricky that’s the challenge. I dunno not knowing what to expect outside.” [Participant 11]

“The fears I have...oooo the biggest fear I have for leaving St Georges home this place is so secured, so secured. They look well after you people won’t harm you, you never get harmed. So I think the fear when I do leave the home is that I am going to have look after myself protect myself stay in a good environment because Wynberg is a good environment not much goes on in Wynberg. So then stay in a good environment then you know your life is out of danger because danger is the fear for me.” [Participant 13]

Living in an unsafe society is a reality many people living in Cape Town have to face. CYCCs provide children with a safe environment in which to live, however the participants are still exposed to the vileness of society through the media and other forms of communication. This is why participants fear for their safety once they leave their CYCC. Furthermore, many of the CYCCs are located in some of the safer communities in Cape Town and participants fear that they may not be able to continue living in these communities due to their accommodation budget constraints.

Referring to the Life Model (Payne, 2005), these participants will find themselves facing a disturbance in their life, as their safety is no longer guaranteed by their CYCC, and will need to implement the necessary adjustments to their environments to ensure their safety.

4.3.3.7 Worries about not having support

After living with a large group of people for most of their lives, participants expressed their fear of being alone once they leave their CYCC. Participants shared that losing support from child and youth care workers and their friends is a concern for them. The quotes below support Geenen & Powers (2007) study findings that when youth leave state care it means the end of positive and supportive relationships.

“Yes. That’s one thing, one of my fears, I don’t like being alone. Also, I’ve never been alone. Never.” [Participant 2]

“My fear is living alone (giggles). It’s ironic because when you are here you are like I don’t want to live here with so many girls but the minute you leave.

Like I would even just come here to watch a TV soapie because it's awkward watching it alone. I think the fear of living alone would be the scariest thing.”
[Participant 10]

“But I, I fear that, that isn't really applicable in a sense like they just saying it so that I feel like I have support and then once I'm outside I don't really uhm that's, the fear of not being supported basically not having anyone because the reason I came was cause outside it felt like I had no one. Family it, it just went away and then when I got here I felt supported, cared for and exactly loved”
[Participant 11]

“Is support even though I have my work that would support me and stuff and that's a great help. But like it's always that part when the kid's mothers come here and visit them. They always know they have someone biological like I am there that's the only thing that triggers me at times is when the kids real family come and visit them. And then I sit there wishing it was me.”
[Participant 13]

The participants' worry about not having support once they leave their CYCC, stems back to when they were removed from their homes. While staying in their family homes, many of the participants experienced feelings of loneliness and a lack of support before being placed at their CYCC. Therefore participants mentioned that it is frightening to contemplate that they may experience loneliness and isolation when they leave their CYCC. However this may not be the case for all children who leave their CYCCs. Some CYCCs work with families and prepare them for their child's return home.

One of the objectives of the Children's Act no.38 of 2005 is to promote the preservation and strengthening of families through family or parental care (Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005, 2005). CYCCs are often instructed by the Children's Court to provide early intervention services and family preservation programmes to children and their families with the objective of children returning to their biological parents (Mahery, Jamieson, Scott, 2011; Potgieter & Hoosain, 2018). These programmes, usually carried out by a social worker rendering family reunification services, are aimed at preserving family structures, strengthening the skills of parents and caregivers, and the prevention of child neglect, abuse or exploration (Mahery, Jamieson, Scott, 2011). In South Africa, social workers have high caseloads, with the average number of 150 cases per social worker at one time (Potgieter & Hoosain, 2018). Due to this high case load and poor working conditions, social workers may be unable to deliver effective reunification services (Potgieter & Hoosain, 2018).

In their study on the voices of children living in children's homes, Perumal & Kasiram (2009: 204) recommend that a "structurally balanced national family preservation programme be formulated" due to children's preference to living with their family of origin when they exit care. They suggest that parental commitment should exist at the onset of this programme, it should be time limited so parents are equipped to assume their parental responsibility of their children and it should include counselling services and parent skills training. In addition to this, the programme should be aimed at restoring families' financial statuses and provide financial management training (Perumal & Kasiram, 2009). These programmes are all aimed at equipping families and preparing them for the return and care of their child. Therefore if families are equipped and prepared for their child's return home, the child will be more likely to feel supported and less likely to experience feelings of loneliness.

CYCCs accommodate a large number of children and youth who become accustomed to living with many people around them. These children and youth generally become one big family and often do things together as a group. One participant shared how they get together every night to watch their favourite soap opera on television which has over the years become a tradition within their CYCC. This participant further expressed that she fears living alone after living with a large group of people for most of her life.

One participant mentioned that some children living in CYCCs have support from their biological families while staying in care but others do not and will lose the supportive relationships once they leave care. It is clear that CYCCs provide many forms of support and participants are at risk of losing this support when they exit care.

4.3.3.7 Financial challenges

Participants shared that they foresee themselves having financial challenges as they transition from their CYCCs. They recognise that the services their CYCC supplies such as food and electricity, will become their own expense once they leave state care. These findings support Hines & Merindinger's (2005) study findings which indicate that youth transitioning out of state care felt stress related to finances and housing. The quotes below support this finding.

"So that's one of the challenges that I will be facing when I leave the home and I also think money wise because when I leave the home myself I will need to pay for electricity groceries toiletries everything that's going to be the biggest challenge probably." [Participant 13]

“Well financial first of all. That’s a big problem. I’m not working and the money that the bursary gives me is just enough for sustaining my transport and lunch money. That’s going to be the biggest factor.” [Participant 18]

“Money because if I’m not going to have money, I’m not going to survive, you need to have a job in order to survive. That’s one of my challenges..” [Participant 19]

“So when you do go out here finance is your biggest challenge you are going to face that is the biggest challenge even though you are working been working for two years and stuff and leaving you are not going to be financially stable when you leave.” [Participant 13]

Participants acknowledge that there are financial responsibilities that come with independent adult living such as maintaining a household with electricity, groceries and toiletries. It is evident that participants see employment as the solution to their financial troubles. They understand that by being employed and earning an income, they will be able to financially sustain themselves once they leave their CYCC. However some participants felt that despite being employed and earning an income, they will still struggle to meet their financial obligations.

4.3.4 How youth can be better supported during their transition to independent adult living

After reviewing existing literature on youth transitioning out of state care, a reoccurring theme was that of the necessity of support. Participants transitioning from their CYCCs expressed a need for consistent support throughout their transitional process. Five main categories were developed from this theme and are as follows: transitional programmes for youth leaving CYCCs, pitfalls of transitional programmes, mentors needed for support and guidance, how the South African government can assist youth transitioning from CYCCs and lastly, how CYCCs can better support transitioning youth.

4.3.4.1 Transitional programmes for youth leaving CYCCs

There are transitional programmes available to youth living in CYCCs in Cape Town however they are limited. According to Tanur (2012), there are less than five post-transition to independent living programmes in the Western Cape and as a result of this poor service to

youth, very few CYCCs prioritise preparation for youth leaving care. When asked about their involvement in transitional programmes, the majority of the participants had been involved in transitional programmes, many of them participating in programmes offered by Mamelani Projects and SA YES. In discussing transitional programmes participants shared the following:

“A few months ago. It’s like a self-development in the society, thing like that. Then now all the children who are leaving at the end of the year are also having group sessions every Thursday here at Leliebloem.” [Participant 1]

“Well it’s the staff members here, Uncle X and aunty Y, they have this independent living thing that they do with five of us that are going to leave. So we have it once a month where we just speak and they do an activity with us, something like that.” [Participant 3]

“Yes there are. Like in the home, we have this transition programme which do like from the year before you start leaving, they give you a certain, how to prepare yourself.” [Participant 5]

“That’s one of the skills they taught us at Beth Uriel, to budget.” [Participant 18]

From what the participants shared, it is evident that the CYCCs do offer transitional programmes to youth preparing for independent adult living. Participants were recruited into these programmes close to the time of them exiting care, as one participant pointed out, recruitment starts a year before their departure. CYCCs offer transitional support to youth leaving state care as this is stipulated in the Children’s Act No 38 of 2005. According to participants, these in-house transitional programmes promote self-development and youth are taught various skills such as budgeting their finances. These findings coincide with Massinga & Pecora’s (2004) study findings which emphasised the importance of life skills preparation for youth in care which covers areas such as self-care, daily living tasks and career development.

In addition to in-house transitional programmes, youth also attend transitional programmes outside of their CYCCs. SAY YES and Mamelani Projects were programmes that most of the participants were involved in. Participants were asked to share details about these transitional programmes and if they found them to be useful. The majority of the participants indicated that these programmes were highly beneficial, as can be seen in the following quotes:

“Well I started a, I did a workshop at Harambee so that’s a start. It’s helping me to find a job so it’s helping me like, it’s preparing me for a job” [Participant 9]

“Yes I did Montrose’s programme.” [Participant 1]

“There was SA YES, this programme that I was part of. We actually had a closure meeting yesterday. It’s this programme where they offer the youth mentors. So each person is allocated a mentor and then they help you with whatever support you need and stuff like that. So my mentor has been helping me with job shadowing and stuff.” [Participant 3]

“Yip. There is a programme that I have attended for the last 10 years, it’s called SA YES. The SA YES team, they have people from outside volunteering to speak to us and giving us information about college and homes outside but for people that leave.” [Participant 7]

“I’m also part of this program it’s called Say Yes we also have mentors there” [Participant 8]

Participants shared that a non-profit organisation called SA YES offered a mentorship programme to youth transitioning out of CYCCs. South African Youth Education for Sustainability otherwise known to participants as SA YES, created a successful mentorship programme for youth transitioning out of CYCCs in the Western Cape, called the Transition to Independent Living (TIL). As participants have shared, youth who participate in the TIL programme are matched with mentors and together they deal with the process of transitioning and the various facets of it such as housing, personal development and employment (Mamelani Projects, 2005; Pinkerton, 2011). Participants went on to speak about their involvement with Mamelani Projects. They had this to say:

“So and then we also have, I’m part of another organisation that trains us how to live our own life so its Mamelani programmes so you go there. Depending if you are not busy, they give us a date and you must say if you are going to attend. So we also do training outside so it’s a lot of stuff that we do.” [Participant 4]

“So there’s another one which I’m going to join next year, it’s Mamelani. They do lots to like prepare us for moving out.” [Participant 5]

“Oh and sorry, there’s another one that I attended. It’s called Mamelani Projects” [Participant 7]

“Ja Mamelani is one...“Ja, we basically had life skills programmes and they provide a tutor for school work.” [Participant 20]

Participants point out that Mamelani Projects programmes are geared at life skills training. Mamelani Projects have a practical approach to assisting youth with their transition to independent adult living. Both SA YES and Mamelani Projects are underpinned by the theory of social development. Two specific features of social development theory are emphasised by these transitional programmes namely harmonising economic and social policies and programmes and participation in development (Patel & Hotchfield, 2005). Both organisations make social investments in youth transitioning out of CYCCs which results in the expansion of their social capital.

Mamelani Projects allows for youth from various CYCCs to engage with each other and as a result, a process of universality takes place. The practical aspect of Mamelani Projects programme allows youth to engage with people in society, outside of their CYCC, as they experience various activities that are associated with independent adult living. SA YES provides youth with mentors that will guide and support them during their transition out of state care. Participation in development is also reinforced in both transitional programmes.

Activities presented by SA YES and Mamelani Projects involve active participation from its participants. Participants are guided by these organisations but there is a push toward youth becoming self-reliant and empowering themselves. Participants were asked if they found these transitional programmes useful or not and they had this to say:

“That has been really helpful, fun as well as educational. I enjoyed it and I gained a lot from SA YES group. They provide mentors. Like for example, I want to be an entrepreneur so they look for someone who is an entrepreneur. Ja. So from there I expand my network in terms of work opportunities. They also help me to achieve my future goals” [Participant 5]

“Yip. There is a programme that I have attended for the last 10 years, it’s called SA YES...Yes so they have great people. They give you great advice. They always with you like if you have like for your ID for instance. I struggled for a year and eight months, almost two years just to get my ID” [Participant 7]

“I think SAY YES have been useful with the things they do for like example when I just left school I never had a job or anything it was through SA YES that I got this job at Neto.” [Participant 14]

“So I think they’ve played a very good role in my life because I think if it wasn’t for them I would still be without a job because they have so many

contacts so many people to show you to run to. The things like the workshops they would have on Saturdays there's always people you can talk to about jobs." [Participant 13]

"Oh and sorry, there's another one that I attended. It's called Mamelani Projects. They are also great. They support you financially, not me now at the moment. I'm living in a children's home and say you used to live in a children's home but you still attending the programme. You left while you were still in the programme then they still help you financially, then they give you vouchers, like food vouchers." [Participant 7]

"Yes it has been useful because in the beginning I was quite scared and unconfident about the process even though my objective was to like go out there but now I feel more confident in terms of like leaving and changes so it's really prepared me in advance." [Participant 5]

"Ever since I've been with Mamelani I've learnt to travel on my own. I was scared at first because here they always drive you around wherever you want to go. There's a kombi and a car so they take you to where you must go. With SA YES it's meeting new people. I was an introverted person but now I'm not anymore because there you have to mingle with lots and lot of people like one Saturday a month." [Participant 7]

"So I think SA YES is a good one because you stick to one person all the time they gonna show you all the things they have but if you get a new mentor they can show another path that mentor can show you another that mentor can introduce you to their contacts that's more support. So having to get a new mentor can also help and then with Mamelani is with Mamelani they can also support you. Mamelani is a very good program I haven't started with them yet I think I will probably start with them in June with Mamelani and with SA YES is a programme called TILL." [Participant 13]

It is clear that participants found the transitional programmes offered by SA YES and Mamelani Projects to be useful for various reasons. Participants found these programmes to be educational, fun and valuable during their period of preparation for independent adult living. Assisting participants with finding employment, providing financial support and providing mentors are three of the many ways in which SA Yes and Mamelani Projects support youth who are transitioning from their CYCCs. Participants also went on to say how these programmes have encouraged them to partake in activities such as travelling with public transport, which has helped build their confidence and taught them to do certain things for and by themselves.

These findings tie in with Korten's (1990 as cited in Davids, 2014) people-centred development theory as SA YES and Mamelani Projects allow youth to engage in social learning. Certain activities such as obtaining an identity document, networking with other people and travelling alone are activities that assist youth in becoming aware of their ability to manage positive change to their advantage (Davids, 2014). By engaging in these activities participants recognise that they have the ability to do things by themselves without the help of other adults in their lives. Both Mamelani Projects and SA YES produce transitional programmes that are people-centred and are geared toward the social and economic development of youth leaving state care for independent adult living.

4.3.4.2 Pitfalls of transitional programmes

Participants were asked about the pitfalls of the transitional programmes that they participate in. Programmes were critiqued however participants were more concerned with how they thought these programmes could be improved. This is what participants shared:

I just wish it could have been done earlier...probably from fifteen because when I was fifteen, I didn't know any of these things until like last year, end of last year." [Participant 3]

"It's the way they communicate with us. The person doesn't even have that energy to talk. The stuff that she is saying don't make you feel like you want to listen so. Be more active...Yes! Like for me I would want someone who has experience. You have experienced something and now you telling me and I would want to feel what you felt because now one of the staff here is telling me how to move out but she never experienced such a life and so I'm like okay no big deal." [Participant 4]

"No. Cause its stuff that people tell us all the time. All our groups are exactly the same. It's nothing that we haven't heard before. Maybe if they find out what we want to talk about and what we need from them then they will be able to satisfy us in the groups but other than that, they just talk the stuff over and over." [Participant 1]

"I think it would also be nice to do it on an individual. No, they do it on an individual level. I think it would also be nice for us to do outside activities like forcing us to go out there and do something rather than to attend workshops inside the house because these are things that you do with people that you know and it's nice to have to interact with other people and they just watching from a distance." [Participant 3]

“Like they should actually have outside social gatherings because the transition here we only do it inside here in this environment. So it’s not going to motivate a person. So if you have to go do it in an area that makes a person reflect back you know? To make that person want to go further and learn something in that environment but also they should offer advice as to how to talk to the youngsters because when they talk to us we don’t see them as staff or someone that I would want to listen to or take their advice. So yes we do listen to them but we don’t take it in. So they should find ways on how to make or convince that person that look here whatever we are saying is so important that you need to listen because I do go to the talks. My presence is important there but then I’m not there to listen so” [Participant 4]

“The independent living program is not helping I don’t want it to close down or anything but they were given a time set a time frame to be in the program right. That was an initially a year and a half or 2 years at most and they almost going on to their fourth year.” [Participant 11]

“I think many children should know about this because I don’t think many children know that there is support like this offered to them in a home or maybe certain children’s home don’t offer it, I don’t know. I think they should be made aware of these things, types of support systems and ja offer like funding to support the children so they can do more things outside to interact with people or workshops that forces them to have to go out in the physical world and you know like explore. Like job shadowing and stuff because it’s always been with an adult and stuff.” [Participant 3]

“I think they okay the, they should be stricter on their rules on their initial rules of the independent living program and also they should admit children to these programs like Mamelani at an earlier age so at 16. I think they should be admitting the children or encouraging the children to join at that time because then they can go through first phase and second phase and then at their third phase that would be the, the time they leaving the home so they would be like properly prepared to actually leave the child and youth care centre that would be all I think.” [Participant 11]

Participants shared their thoughts on the pitfalls of their in-house transitional programmes. Some mentioned that children living in CYCCs should be introduced to transitional programmes at an earlier age. Participants recognised the importance of sufficient preparation for independent adult living which needs to occur well in advance prior to their exit from state care. These findings support Mamelani Projects (2012) report where youth, CYCCs and other organisations recommended that when children enter state care they should be included in transitional programmes shortly thereafter. Many CYCCs only start exposing youth to

transitional programmes the year before or the year in which they will be leaving care and this could be a contributing factor to youth feeling that they are inadequately prepared for independent adult living.

Other participants shared that a pitfall of in-house transitional programmes is that child and youth care workers are not adequately skilled to take youth through this process. This finding is in contrast to Mamelani Projects (2011) study results which states that youth found that a key component of their transition are committed and well trained adults who support them through every step of their transition. It is evident from what participants have shared that some child and youth care workers are not adequately trained nor do they possess the skills needed to guide youth through their preparation to independent adult living. Mamelani Projects (2012) report states that youth recommend that child and youth care workers receive training and are equipped with the necessary skills needed to assist youth during their transition out of state care.

In addition to this, participants spoke about the pitfalls of their in-house transitional programmes. Participants felt that they needed to be able to explore other environments and people outside of their CYCC. In-house transitional programmes are presented within the centre and participants felt that the programmes need to move outside the walls of the CYCC. There was also a concern raised by a participant that some youth transitioning out of CYCCs are not aware of external transitional programmes such as Mamelani Projects. This may also be a contributing factor to some participants feeling limited in terms of the transitional programmes that they have access to.

One participant also brought up their independent living housing programme at their CYCC and questioned the successfulness of it and whether or not it contributed to youth becoming independent. This is new information and is in contrast to existing literature. The participant pointed out that the independent living housing programme is there for youth to access for a limited amount of time, eighteen months after completing matric, and when youth are prepared to leave care for independent adult living, that housing facility is then made available for the next person in the process of transitioning to independent adult living. The participant added that the CYCC management had been lenient toward some youth and had extended their stay in the independent housing programme. This may have contributed to increased dependence on the CYCC to assist them in meeting their needs and decreased their desire to move out of the CYCC to independent adult living.

Participants went on to share the pitfalls of external transitional programmes and this is reflected in the following quotes by the participants:

There was a programme SA Yes where you have a mentor. They were here to help us but I felt like it wasn't actually for me. For me being a mentor, they should take time to come and engage with us. Once a week I would meet that person, only for a year. For me actually, I couldn't build that relationship.” [Participant 17]

“Because the hours in which they did the programmes. My weekends are my weekends because I work during the week. So if they arrange their programmes properly. I understand that the other kids go to school and they also work their shifts and so for me to take weekends off just to attend the programme” [Participant 10]

“But my mentor oh my word she sucks balls. They just assigned her to me and uhm I thought that like at first when I met her I was like you know what I'm gonna try to make this work. And oh my word she is terrible because she's like a life coach so I feel like I'm in therapy with her because I was diagnosed depressed.” [Participant 11]

“They say once a week. That's sort of okay but like the person has to walk with you. They have to fit into your shoes and see how the struggle is. If you just come from nowhere and expect you to tell. You in my life, do you think I'm just going to open to you, no! I have to kind of understand how he thinks. It takes time, for me personally that's what it is. The mentor should stay longer than a year but they have their own reasons as to why they only here for a year.” [Participant 17]

The selection process of mentors for mentorship programmes was highlighted as an area that needs attention for youth transitioning out of CYCCs. Participants shared that youth were not always happy with the mentors assigned to them. Mentors are usually recruited from the business sector, other organisations or communities (Waller, Houchins & Nomvete, 2010). In addition to this, there must be a willingness from individuals to fulfil the role of a mentor. Participants have no participation in the recruitment or assignment process of their mentors. Some participants said that building rapport with their mentor is an important building block of the mentor-mentee relationship however, this cannot take place if the relationship is short lived and if meetings are irregular.

Participants mentioned that the time spent with their mentors is limited. The participants expressed that they needed to meet more frequently and be assigned to their mentor for a period longer than a year. These findings correspond with existing literature which states that the objective of youth mentorship programmes are to provide youth with positive and long term relationships with their mentors (Kaplan, Skolnik & Turnball (2009). However in reality, according to the participants, the relationships are often short-term. In addition to this Spencer et al., (2010) mentions that youth are matched with mentors and they meet on a regular basis, which is also not the case for the participants of this study. Therefore the literature supports frequent contact sessions between mentors and their mentees however this does not occur in practice.

One of the reasons for mentors and mentees not meeting regularly or having a longer relationship is because these mentors do not have the time and capacity to meet more regularly or for longer than a year. As the literature points out, mentors are recruited from the business sector, other organisations or communities and often these people have full time jobs and do their mentoring on a volunteer basis. This often means that they are only available to these youth a few times a month and can only mentor youth for a year at a time. It is evident from the findings above that these limitations are barriers to participants experiencing the true positive impact of the mentor-mentee relationship.

4.3.4.3 Mentors needed for support and guidance

Participants were asked what type of support would assist them in achieving the goals that they set out for themselves. Participants felt that mentors were necessary to fulfil the role of providing support and guidance. Participants had various mentors, some of which were from external programmes such as SA YES, social workers or even their parents. Participants had this to say regarding mentors:

“Oh yes, obviously and a mentor. Someone that is going to stick by me. I like mentors actually.” [Participant 7]

“So with Say Yes I can say like with my mentor I’ve had last year she’s been very supportive like with the projects that I did like she would also always help me everything I needed like I like ask. I wouldn’t like ask her I would just tell her that you know what like I’m gonna have to like get this but I never asked her like I would just tell her and then she would like make it possible for me and we accomplished a lot actually.” [Participant 8]

“Yes I think I need a mentor like just to be there for me and just to help me man like you know mos how mentors are they there to provide for you they not there to spoil you. There to help you physically, mentally. I just need somebody to guide me and I need people in my life that’s willing to help me...Yes like yoh the social worker that is one person that’s very helpful. And she’s helped me since primary school till high school she even fought for me to get in a good school for a better education.” [Participant 9]

“Even though you are out there, you need to someone to like coach you. Somebody to coach you. Okay you are independent but you have someone behind you reminding you to do this and that. Sometimes you are so stressed but if there is that little bit of hope, you can achieve much more.” [Participant 17]

“Well it comes to that point again in help where you need some help. So X, he studied IT. Like I don’t know computers but I do computers at school now so he can be there to assist me with what I don’t know and with life as well. X is about 50 years old so he has been through life. He has much life experience than I have so he can tell me what is wrong and what is right in this world, how to live life if you want to succeed in life. So his kind of like my advisor. So if I want to do certain things and I’m not sure about it, I’ll talk to him and ask him how I should handle this situation and stuff. I mean people like in my house, it’s a house full of guys so there’s people that have problems with some stuff so you can always go to your mentor and say I really feel like this and your mentor can come and sit you both down and find out what is the actual problem and not just take one side. So my mentor is really someone who you can rely on when times are tough.” [Participant 18]

The findings above agree with existing literature on mentoring programmes for youth transitioning out of state care. Kaplan et al., (2009) states that mentors fulfil the role of being a guidance counsellor, a role model and a friend. The objective of youth mentoring programmes is to provide positive and long lasting relationships between youth and their mentors (Kaplan et al, 2009). These mentors assist youth in making a healthy and productive transition to adulthood (Spencer et al., 2010). It is evident that participants see their relationships with their mentors as valuable. The participants explained how mentors are able to guide them and advocate for them in times of need. Mentors also possess experience and expertise that participants found to assist them especially with their schooling and careers.

4.3.4.4 How the South African government can assist youth transitioning from CYCCs

A social development approach requires intervention from key role players within society which includes the state as well as non-state actors such as NGOs and the private sector (Patel, 2005). These role players are interdependent of each other and are all needed in order for society to function. However, too often the state relies on non-state actors to fulfil roles that the state should be fulfilling within society. The NYDS stresses strengthening the capacity of youth-focused organisations within the social development sector such as Mamelani Projects and SA Yes, so that the conditions of youth can be improved in South Africa (Department of Social Development, 2007). However, this has yet to be seen in practice since the field of youth transitioning out of CYCCs to independent adult living in South Africa is underdeveloped and needs more attention concerning independent living programmes.

Participants were asked how the state can better assist with their transition from their CYCCs and they had this to say:

“If I had to come up with an idea, I would like say like get the children and put them, get a place where they can make for kids that are getting out of places like this. Put them in another home or place for people like me and get a place for people 18 and older but they can only live until a certain age...26. Live until 26 there but in that time they can't only like just stay there for the sake of staying there. They should go do their schooling.” [Participant 2]

“Well to be honest with you the government does very little for young men. They are only focusing on the young ones from below the age of 18. From 18 and up they don't really focus and the biggest problem we are having right now is the government not supporting NGOs like Beth Uriel because they only give R160 a month for one person and that's not enough to buy a proper toiletry. So how do they think young men are going to live on R160 a month? The government is really shitty right now but the government can give some support for the NGOs. Like I mean what they are doing is really running the place and relying on people to donate and if people don't donate then Beth Uriel is not gonna be running. So if the government can just add a certain amount towards one child.” [Participant 18]

Extending the age in which youth can stay in CYCCs and starting more facilities for youth who reach the age of majority were two suggestions that participants felt in which the state could intervene. Participants also expressed that the government should do more to

financially invest in the CYCC programme. Some CYCCs are just about making ends meet with the state subsidy they receive and therefore have to rely on donations from the public as an extra source of income. This is a new finding that has not been expressed in existing literature. Participants went on to discuss other ways in which the state can assist their exit from care:

“They [the state] can create more jobs.” [Participant 7]

“You know, one thing I think the government must do is you know when people graduate and they don’t get jobs, I don’t want to add to that number when I graduate and finish and then I stand in the queue with those people who graduated and got their qualification and they cannot get jobs. So I think government must make sure that there is more job opportunities for youth in South Africa.” [Participant 20]

There is a great need to expand the labour market to accommodate the large pool of youth seeking employment. The NYDS indicates that the South African government has put in place interventions to combat youth unemployment in the country such as the Expanded Public Works Programme (Department of Social Development, 2007). Participants mentioned that the state should assist their transition to independent adult living by creating more jobs. A stable income can assist youth in their transition to independent adult living and relieve them from potential financial stressors.

Literature indicates that many NPOs provide interventions targeted at unemployed youth, Harambee being one of them. Mtuongwizo (2009) states that unemployed youth in Cape Town can benefit from engaging with NGOs because they offer immediate and long term benefits such as the access to shelters and stipends. In this study we have seen the benefits of participants engaging in NPOs such as Mamelani Projects and SA YES. These benefits include skills development, the access to mentors and the opportunity to expand one’s social network. Participants went on to say that the government needs to invest more into these transitional programmes.

“And creating more programmes like that, like Mamelani. Making people aware of it. Uhm oh they should have conferences like here at the home and all the different homes where the children and the child and youth care workers are given a topic that they have to speak about in front of

everybody... Yip. Like stuff like that just to boost their confidence, especially the youth.” [Participant 7]

“Well the government, like you said life skills programmes. To be honest, most of the guys in the home don’t know how to treat women. So they can just send like those women awareness to come and just give a speech even if it’s just once a month or once in a blue moon just to come and give us a talk because we all young men here and we talk bad about women and stuff. We listen to different types of music and we start thinking that way about women. So if they can initiate a programme where they have women come and talk to us and give us like their points of view of how women should be treated and stuff. That would really help. Sports, we’ve got to keep fit.” [Participant 17]

The participants acknowledged the good work that programmes like Mamelani Projects do for youth transitioning from child and youth care centres. These organisations are not run by the government however many of them are funded by the government. Participants recognised that CYCCs and other organisations need support from the government, especially financial support in order to create more transitional programmes. Similarly to the NYDS which promotes the collaboration of sectors on youth development issues, the government should encourage other role players such as the private sector to invest in NGOs like CYCCs, Mamelani Projects and SA YES (Department of Social Development, 2007).

Participants recognised that they need skills that will assist them as they embark on their journey to independent adult living. They emphasised a need for life skills programmes that will equip them with skills such as self-confidence. These findings coincide with Mamelani Projects (2012) study findings which state that youth shared that experiential learning activities that allow them to gain independent living skills are helpful.

One participant raised a concern about how boys living in CYCCs view women. This participant acknowledged that some boys living in CYCCs lack respect for women and that there is a need for awareness talks around this issue. For many individuals gender socialisation starts at birth. During early adolescence, ages 10-14, gender attitudes develop as puberty reshapes male and female self-perceptions and social expectations from others (Kågesten et al., 2016). Sexual differences can give rise to gender inequalities which manifests itself through power, education, unequal access to resources and discriminatory socio-cultural practices (Kågesten et al., 2016). Gender inequalities affect both boys and girls

lives however in most instances they are more of a disadvantage for girls (Kågesten et al., 2016). Gender norms are the foundation from which gender equalities evolve as they suggest different power, status and opportunities for boys and girls according to what culture depicts masculinities and femininities to be (Kågesten et al., 2016).

The participant suggested that women themselves come to present talks on gender equality to educate young men on the impact of gender inequalities on the lives of women. This effort would be a process of social learning in which the state can challenge the minds of young men living in CYCCs and educate them on gender equality and human rights. This can be done through social media campaigns or through a collaboration with other NPOs that advocate for gender equality, who could host a series of workshops aimed at educating youth about this important topic.

4.3.4.5 How CYCCs can better support youth transitioning to independent adult living

The monitoring and evaluation of a product or service is a practice that many organisations are participating in to ascertain the impact of their work. A good indication of the impact of an organisations work will come from their beneficiaries. Participants have already commented on the strengths and weaknesses of transitional programmes that they participate in. In addition to this, participants were asked how CYCCs can better support their transition to independent adult living and this is what participants had to say:

“From the staff here and just check up on how the person is doing you know? Not because we leaving and now you can forget about things so check up and encourage the person because we not really sure how life is out there. So we need someone to encourage us and help us and then from there we’ll probably get better. So they should actually just keep in touch with the people and they should always because some of the children leave without knowing where they are going. So maybe if they have a shelter, like a temporary shelter for you to actually make sure that you are comfortable enough to look after yourself and then they should let you go but just for people to leave and you don’t know where you starting and where you going to end. One of the boys left and he doesn’t know where his life starts because now his like everywhere. I don’t want to end up in that situation.” [Participant 4]

“Ya like maybe like get people in because the program that, that they doing here is like, like for me I think it’s like mostly for the small one’s because they, they trying to accommodate everyone because there are mostly smaller

children than the bigger one's so if we sit in this program it's like I actually get bored I don't like it at all" [Participant 8]

"Can like set up days where it's like a presentation and then also an physically doing thing where they tell the youth this is what would be, I dunno ways in which they should be living if they go into independence. And then have like activities or weekends where they just do their own thing or how, how do I say this? So travelling would be like an activity to do on their own and then cooking and then I dunno starting a company and stuff like that you know that...Yes and I also think they should have programs where they set the children up for job interviews and CV's and stuff like that so" [Participant 11]

"They should give us courses. Life courses just in general about life itself." [Participant 4]

"For me I think even though we have the opportunity to learn skills they must like, like we have a coffee shop and if they can ask the new boys to work in the coffee shop to learn some skills. We can learn skills because how can you go work if you don't have any skills. I think they must ask the people in the house, what skills is it that they would like to learn. I think that is one of the challenges, having skills, at least more than one." [Participant 17]

One participant voiced her concern about youth being cut off from their CYCCs once they leave state care. This participant expressed her hope that the relationship between youth leaving care and CYCC staff not be terminated once leaving care but that staff will still keep in touch and check up on them. It is evident that youth feel that they still need the support of CYCC staff when they leave state care. This finding concurs with existing literature which states that youth transitioning out of CYCCs worry about who will provide them with emotional and practical support (Mamelani Projects, 2005). In addition to this, youth transitioning out of state care mentioned that ongoing support post care would positively assist their exit out of state care (Mamelani Projects, 2005).

Participants added their thoughts on programmes and activities that can improve their transition to independent adult living. In some CYCCs transitional programmes and activities are not prioritised for youth preparing for independent adult living. This finding agrees with Mamelani Projects (2005) study findings which state that transitional programmes are not prioritised and it is often overshadowed by the greater demands of other children in CYCCs. We see this play out as one participant shares that because there are younger children at their CYCC, the needs of transitioning youth are not prioritised. The participants therefore

recommended that CYCCs make use of external organisations to offer them transitional programmes because they do not have the capacity to implement these much needed programmes.

When participating in transitional programmes youth are equipped with the necessary guidance and instruction however they do not always get the opportunity to practice what they have learnt. Participants have recommended that transitional programmes include a practical aspect whereby they can go out into society and exercise being an independent adult. In addition to this, participants made the recommendation to include more skills training in the transitional programmes at CYCCs. The lack of skills training at CYCCs for youth transitioning to independent adult living is often due to a lack of funding in these organisations (Mamelani Projects, 2005). Another way participants felt that CYCCs can provide better support is assisting them in making contact with their biological parents. One participant shared in this regard:

“The support I am going to need...I think the support I am going to need is from social workers because to trace up my family I am going to have to deal with social workers because that’s my main goal. So I am going to need support from the home because they would know more because I can’t go to my work and be like I need to look for my mother they not going to know where to start. As if I ask here they will know where to start. So the support I will need is from the home to help me with that and then maybe as things go along and I do end up tracing my mother and it’s going to be emotional then I can get support from my work where they can help me emotionally so ja.”
[Participant 13]

CYCCs house important information about the background of children and youth residing at these centres. Participants are aware of this fact and therefore CYCC staff members, such as social workers, play key roles in helping youth trace their families of origin during their transition to independent adult living. According to Mamelani (2005), CYCCs are expected to assist youth transitioning out of state care by providing interventions to reconnect children with their families. One of the objectives of the Children’s Act No 38 of 2005 is to strengthen and preserve families (Children’s Act, No. 38 of 2005, 2005). It should therefore be the intention of CYCCs to assist youth with reconnecting with their families of origin and offering the necessary support and interventions to make this happen. This finding supports

existing literature which states that youth transitioning from state care have the desire to connect with their biological families once they leave state care (Geenen & Powers, 2007).

After making various recommendations to their CYCCs about ways in which they can better assist youth transitioning to independent adult living, participants shared what they felt CYCCs were doing right in this regard. This is what participants had to share:

“Basically for me I think because I have been here since I was small having no one I think they’ve done a good job because it would be different for the kids that were here that came when they were 5 6 there around because they had their family when they were 1 2 3 there around some children come to the home when they were 13. So they have had those chances with their family so I think St Georges home has done a great job for me. So I don’t think there’s anything they need to improve” [Participant 13]

“Well I think what they doing is enough already because just this much that people can do for you for you to survive out there and the rest is up to you. So they help you out like they give you rent if you need rent for this month and if you really struggling then they will help you out unless they really can’t. If you having a financial problem, they will take you back until you get back on your feet.” [Participant 18]

“For me I think BU have done everything. We have people coming here to do life skills but I think I will find out when I go home by using the resources that they have given me. So I think they have prepared me enough.” [Participant 20]

Some participants felt that their CYCCs have done a good job in preparing them for independent adult living. The participants spoke of the commitment of CYCC staff in preparing them for independent adult living. These findings support existing literature which states that a key component of the transition of youth is committed adults/mentors who support youth in every step of the process (Mamelani Projects, 2012). These findings also relate to Korten’s people-centred development theory as CYCCs have assisted youth in the process of social learning. Participants have shared that they are able to use themselves and their environment to better meet their needs and the needs of others through the transitional programmes and activities of their CYCCs (Davids, 2014). This process of social learning can result in youth feeling empowered when they exit state care.

4.4 Summary

This chapter presented the study findings and the discussion thereof. The chapter presented a profile of the participants and the CYCCs they reside in, a framework for discussing the study findings and the discussion of these study findings. Four main themes were identified from the data collected and were discussed with reference to quotations from the participants and literature provided in the literature review chapter. The study produced results that can be useful for CYCCs, NPOs and the government in understanding how youth are impacted by their transition to independent adult living and how they can be better supported during this time.

Prior literature was integrated into the discussion of the research findings which were either confirmed or contested. The study findings are valuable in that they contribute new and meaningful information to the existing literature on the experiences of youth transitioning out of CYCCs in Cape Town. It is hoped that these study findings alert various role players working with youth, who are preparing for independent adult living, to explore ways in which youth can be better prepared and supported for independent adult living.

The next chapter will present the conclusions based on the study findings and the related recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5. Introduction

In this final chapter of the report the study conclusions and recommendations will be presented. The conclusions are presented according to the objectives of the study which were to investigate how youth understand their transition out of the CYCC they reside in, to ascertain the aspirations of youth as they transition out of their CYCC, to determine the challenges youth have that are associated with their transition out of their CYCC and to examine the transitional support programmes made available to youth to assist their transition out of their CYCC. The chapter concludes with recommendations presented according to the main research questions of the study.

5.1 Main Conclusions

1. **To investigate how youth understand their transition out of the CYCC they reside in.**

The findings revealed that youth in this study typically understand that as they prepare to leave state care there are certain factors that come into play. These factors can make their transition to independent adult living a challenging or an exciting one. CYCCs house children and youth who have lived in state care for a number of years, who have become accustomed to being fostered by the state. Many of these children were removed from family environments that were unstable and unsafe for them. When these children and youth move to CYCCs they are provided with a home, a place that provides them with stability and security. The study findings indicate that while participants prepare for their transition from their CYCCs they experience a range of emotions. These emotions range from sadness to stress. It can be concluded that youth in this study experience the move from their CYCCs as a disturbance in their lives. They worry about how they will survive without the support structures of their CYCCs once they leave state care.

While preparing for independent adult living, youth experience various forms of responsibility. Youth in this study recognise that with independent adult living comes a great deal of responsibility unlike while living in CYCCs where participant's activities and behaviours are monitored and restricted by child and youth care workers. The study findings

show that CYCCs try and incorporate youth into activities that would teach them some level of independence and responsibility. Some of the ways CYCCs do this is by incorporating youth into the daily living activities of the home by giving them certain responsibilities such as caring for younger children and managing their individual finances. In addition to this, the findings indicate that some youth in this study were excited about leaving their CYCC because they will be truly independent and do things for themselves. It can be concluded that CYCCs allow youth to experience some independence while living in care however youth in this study looked forward to leaving their CYCC so that they can experience true independence.

When leaving care, youth are aware that they need to arrange alternative accommodation. Youth understand that transitioning to independent adult living means that the time they have to reside at their CYCC will shortly come to an end. The study findings show that youth in this study were anxious about moving out of their CYCCs because they did not have an alternative residence to move to. It can be concluded that these youth were worried and unsure about where they were going to move to however, some youth were actively searching for alternative accommodation and had an idea about where they could possibly move to. The process of looking for alternative accommodation exposed youth to the realities of the cost of living as they found accommodation outside of their CYCC to be unaffordable.

With the hurdles presented to youth seeking alternative accommodation, the Children's Act does allow for youth who have reached the age of majority to extend their stay up until the age of twenty-one. This is helpful for youth who are struggling to find alternative accommodation and need more time to do so or those who have enrolled to study at tertiary institutions and are not able to secure student accommodation. It can be concluded based on the study findings that the continuation of care was granted to youth involved in this study, especially those who are furthering their education at tertiary institutions.

The Children's Act views youth who have reached the age of majority as adults, people who are able to consent for themselves. The study findings indicate that youth in this study based their understanding of adulthood on the behaviours they have observed from other adults living around them. It can be concluded that for these youth, being an adult meant taking on more responsibility and being held accountable for their decisions and actions. In addition to this, the perception of adulthood is also defined by youth in this study through a cultural lens.

They see adulthood as a process that it is entered into and begins when the person feels ready for adulthood.

CYCCs have done youth well by prioritising education on their agendas. The staff members motivate youth to complete their high school education and encourage them to pursue tertiary qualifications once they complete high school. The study findings indicate that youth in this study were highly focused when it came to finishing their schooling. They felt that while they were staying in care they could focus on their schooling without any disruptions. It can be concluded that youth in this study desire to complete their high schooling while they are still residing in their CYCCs. CYCCs have clearly played a role in participants seeing the value in prioritising their education.

2. To ascertain the aspirations of youth as they transition out of their CYCC.

As youth prepare to leave their CYCCs they have goals that they wish to achieve which include making contact with their families of origin, enrolling into tertiary institutions, finding employment and helping others in need. While living in CYCCs some youth have contact with their biological families whereas others do not. The study findings indicate that there is a desire among some youth in this study to make contact with their biological families. The youth want to investigate their roots as this helps them uncover a part of their identity that they feel is missing. This is especially true for youth in this study who came into CYCCs as babies and have little information on their families.

As previously mentioned, while living in CYCCs youth are encouraged to prioritise their education. The study findings indicate that some CYCCs have done well in exposing their youth to resources and social networks that have motivated them to further their education by applying to tertiary institutions. This has changed the work ethic of youth and placed their schooling high upon their list of priorities. It can be concluded that youth in this study planned to work hard to obtain good matric results so that they can enter into a university or college. The study findings also indicate that these youth are aware of the financial implications that come with enrolling into a tertiary institution. Financial aid such as bursaries has been identified by youth as a means to ease the financial load that may fall on their families. CYCCs have also been helpful in assisting their youth with finding channels of financial aid for those who intend on studying further.

While living in state care, all living costs incurred by children and youth are covered by their CYCC. The study findings indicate that youth in this study understand that when they move out of their CYCC, certain daily living costs that were carried by their CYCC will now become their responsibility. These include accommodation, transport and food costs. It can be concluded that youth in this study desire to obtain employment while they are preparing to transition from their CYCCs so that they are able to cover their daily living costs once they leave care. Some of these youth have already found possible avenues of employment which include working overseas. They saw this career move as a lucrative one because they would earn a higher income than what they would earn as an employee in the South African labour market.

There are some youth living in CYCCs that display a spirit of altruism toward individuals and communities. Youth recognise the needs within their communities of origin and feel the need to assist where they are able to. It can be concluded that youth in this study feel a sense of responsibility to people who have cared for them and for other individuals in need. Being helpful with daily tasks at their CYCC was a way in which these youth felt that they were able to give back their time and show appreciation to CYCC staff members.

3. To determine the challenges youth have that are associated with their transition out of their CYCC.

While preparing for independent adult living, youth foresee a few challenges that may arise during this time. These challenges include the repeat of bad past behaviours, the struggle to find employment, worries about safety, worries about not having support and financial challenges. Youth in this study preparing to leave their CYCCs recognise that when they exit care they may fall back into bad past behaviour. The CYCC living environment is a controlled one and does not allow for social ills to infiltrate into it. The study findings show that youth in this study are aware of negative activities occurring within society, some of which were the cause of participants being placed in alternative care. In addition to this, many of the communities that these youth are returning to are infested with social ills such as crime, substance abuse and gangsterism. It can be concluded that youth in this study fear that they may be influenced by others to engage in these social ills and return to patterns of bad behaviour. In trying to avoid being influenced by these negative activities, youth have chosen

to carefully select the network of people that they engage with. They will also only socialise with people who will have a positive influence on their lives.

Another challenge that youth foresee for themselves as they prepare to leave their CYCC is struggling to find employment. The findings indicate that CYCCs do provide participants with workshops and presentations geared at finding employment however these programmes lack a practical aspect to them. Youth are not able to put what they have learnt through these programmes into practice. It can be concluded that youth in this study need to be afforded opportunities to experience the labour market so that they can apply the skills that they have learnt and add to their existing knowledge of the labour market. Accumulating work experience would only benefit these youth when they eventually seek permanent employment however, entering the labour market without any work experience is another challenge experienced by them.

There are CYCCs in Cape Town that accommodate youth who come to South Africa to seek refuge from other African countries. These youth also desire to obtain employment however this exercise is particularly challenging for them. The study findings show that foreign youth in this study cannot obtain employment in South Africa because they do not have the legal documentation that allows them to do so. This was especially difficult for those who possessed certain trade skills but could not use them to obtain employment and earn an income.

CYCCs are perceived as places of safety for children and youth needing alternative care. Youth who are placed in CYCCs often come out of unsafe environments and communities. The study findings indicate that despite living in the safety of a CYCC, youth in this study are still aware of the vileness of Cape Town society such as child murders and various types of abuse. It can be concluded that these youth fear for their safety as they prepare for independent adult living. They know that they are safer while living in a CYCC than in certain unsafe communities in Cape Town. The reality of the situation is that youth in this study may not be able to afford accommodation in safer communities in Cape Town and may need to live in the unsafe communities that they initially come from.

CYCCs house more children and youth than the average household would in Cape Town. These children and youth get used to living with a large group of people. The study findings show that living in a household with many members is part of the CYCC culture. Connections and bonds are made and these children and youth become like one big family

who share certain traditions and routines such as watching soap operas together every night. It can be concluded that while preparing for independent adult living, youth in this study fear that they may experience feelings of loneliness. When they leave care they will no longer be around familiar surroundings, faces and sounds and this prospect makes youth feel anxious.

In a CYCC, close connections are not only made between youth and other CYCC occupants but between youth and CYCC staff members too. The findings show that youth in this study receive various types of support from their child and youth care workers, support that some youth do not get from their own families. Child and youth care workers become parental figures to these youth who guide and support them through their transition to adulthood. It can be concluded that youth in this study fear losing this support that is readily available to them because they may not have this strong support system of adults when they leave their CYCCs.

While living in a CYCC the daily living costs of youth are covered by their CYCC. This will however change once youth leave their CYCC for independent adult living. Youth recognise that they will not have financial support from the state once they leave care. It can be concluded that youth in this study foresee themselves having financial challenges when they leave their CYCC for independent adult living. This realisation causes them to feel stressed because they will not be in the financial position to cover some of their daily living costs due to unemployment. These youth are of the opinion that being employed would be the solution to their potential financial challenges.

4. To examine the transitional support programmes made available to youth to assist their transition out of their CYCC.

When preparing to leave state care, youth need various role players and support systems to assist their transition from their CYCC to independent adult living. Youth in this study were given the opportunity to share how they think they can be better supported during their transition from their CYCC. While preparing for independent adult living, they participate in transitional programmes which are aimed at assisting their transition out of their CYCC. It can be concluded that the majority of youth involved in this study were participants in transitional programmes. Some CYCCs have their own in-house transitional programmes that they offer to youth preparing for independent adult living. However, these youth were only

recruited into these programmes close to the time of their exit out of care. These transitional programmes focused mainly on topics such as life skills development. In addition to this, the findings show that youth in this study also attended transitional programmes offered by other NPOs namely SA YES and Mamelani Projects.

SA YES focuses on providing youth with mentors who will support them during their transition to independent adult living; whereas Mamelani Projects focuses on life skills training and practical skills that equip youth for independent adult living. Both these organisations make investments in youth that are aimed at expanding their human capabilities which will aid them as they transition to independent adult living. It can be concluded that youth in this study found both SA YES and Mamelani Projects transitional programmes to be useful. Two key reasons for this are that both these organisations assess the transitional needs of participants and address them in their programmes by using the appropriate interventions.

SA YES assigns mentors to youth transitioning from their CYCCs and these mentors work with them addressing their transitional needs and providing them with support and guidance throughout this process. The second reason for youth in this study finding these programmes useful was because of the practical component of the programmes. Mamelani Projects encourages youth to go into society and experience life outside of their CYCC. For example, Mamelani Projects would encourage youth to make use of public transport to attend programmes. Both SA Yes and Mamelani Projects are aligned with the theories of social development and people-centred development. Even though these programmes were viewed as being useful, youth in this study also felt that some of them have pitfalls which could be addressed.

The youth in this study identified areas in which CYCCs, SA YES and Mamelani Projects transitional programmes need improvement. They also suggested ways in which these improvements can be made. It can be concluded that these youth felt that they should be introduced to transitional programmes at an earlier period of their stay at their CYCC. The study findings suggest that youth in this study should start being prepared for independent adult living at the age of fifteen. These youth evidently felt that they needed to be prepared in advance for independent adult living which is currently only taking place at the beginning of the year of their departure from their CYCC. This early induction to transitional programmes could help them feel better prepared for independent adult living when they do finally leave care.

There were three pitfalls that youth in this study found with their CYCCs transitional programmes. The study findings suggest that some child and youth care workers facilitating transitional programmes lacked the knowledge and skills needed to conduct these programmes effectively. Youth in this study suggested that child and youth care workers take into consideration the various needs of those youth participating in their programmes and have these programmes address their needs. In addition to this, they shared that the content being shared in CYCC transitional programmes are repetitive and they feel that it needs to be geared toward their current transitional needs. It can be concluded that due to the lack of skills and expertise, child and youth care workers should receive the necessary training that will equip them with the skills needed to adequately prepare youth for independent adult living.

One other pitfall of in-house transitional programmes is that it lacks a practical component. Youth in this study felt that their CYCC transitional programmes confine them to the CYCC premises and they have little interaction outside of their CYCC. It can be concluded that these youth feel that their CYCCs transitional programmes should be more interactive allowing them to move outside of the CYCC premises and engage with the rest of society.

Youth in this study who were part of the SA YES mentorship programme had some challenges with the mentors assigned to them and the frequency of meetings with their mentors. The study findings indicate that mentors need to be carefully chosen to assist these youth in preparing for independent adult living. It can be concluded that youth in this study felt that they should have more frequent meetings with their mentors so that they are able to build rapport and establish a good relationship with their mentor.

Mentorship is evidently an important building block for youth transitioning from their CYCCs to independent adult living. For some youth in this study CYCC staff members such as the CYCC director or social worker have become mentors to them during their transition too. It can be concluded that these youth felt strongly about having mentors that would provide them with guidance and support. Existing literature points out that the aim of mentorship programmes are to provide positive and long-lasting relationships between youth and their mentors. It can be concluded that youth in this study see the value in a mentor-mentee relationship because mentors have experience, expertise and can advocate for them in times of need.

The South African government often provides CYCCs with funding however study findings show that there are other ways in which youth in this study feel the government can intervene in relation to their transition to independent adult living. Study findings indicates that extending the age in which these youth can stay in CYCCs and starting more facilities for youth who reach the age of majority were ways in which they felt the state could intervene and support youth preparing for independent adult living. Another way in which these youth mentioned that the state could intervene was by creating more jobs for youth. It can be concluded that if the government creates more jobs for youth, then these youth would be able to care better for themselves when they leave their CYCCs for independent adult living. In addition to this, youth in this study stated that they see a great need for life skills programmes for youth transitioning to independent adult living. After discussing various channels of support, these youth commented on how they think CYCCs could better support youth preparing for independent adult living.

Youth living in CYCCs place great emphasis on their need for continuous support throughout their transition to independent adult living. Based on the study findings it can be concluded that youth in this study would like their CYCCs to provide them with support post their departure from state care. When having left care, these youth do not want to feel like they are going to be cut off from their CYCCs but that they will still be able to access their CYCCs network of resources. In addition to this, youth in this study had other recommendations on how CYCCs could better support them during their transition to independent adult living.

Youth would like CYCCs to prioritise transitional programmes for youth preparing for independent adult living. Due to the majority of occupants of CYCCs being younger children, transitional programmes for youth are not prioritised but overshadowed by the needs of the younger children occupying the home. After all the pitfalls of transitional programmes were made known and the appropriate recommendations were made, there were some youth in this study that felt that their CYCCs were doing a good job in preparing them for independent adult living. They praised CYCC staff for their commitment to supporting youth during this transition in their lives.

5.2 Recommendations

This section presents recommendations based on the findings and conclusions of the study. The recommendations are discussed under the following relevant themes: the role of CYCCs in supporting youth transitioning to independent adult living, social work practice in CYCCs, transitional programmes, CYCC practice and the role of the government in supporting youth transitioning from CYCCs to independent adult living.

1. The role of CYCCs in supporting youth transitioning to independent adult living

Youth leaving their CYCC for independent adult living experience a range of emotions when dealing with and preparing for this exit from care. It is recommended that CYCCs provide youth with the necessary emotional support such as counselling sessions where youth can talk about and deal with their fears and anxieties about leaving state care.

CYCCs have incorporated youth into the daily living tasks which have aided youth in understanding and experiencing independent adult living. It is recommended that CYCCs continue to incorporate youth into daily living tasks and allow for the process of social learning to take place. In addition to this, it is recommended that CYCCs allow youth to experience certain social activities such as socialising with their friends outside of their CYCC. This would eliminate youth feeling socially restricted while living in a CYCC. This freedom given by CYCCs could also teach youth to become accountable as they would need to take responsibility for their own behaviour when socialising outside of their CYCCs.

Youth preparing to leave their CYCCs need to find alternative accommodation before leaving state care. They fear that they may not find alternative accommodation by the time they need to exit care and as a result, they could end up being homeless and living on the streets. It is therefore recommended that CYCCs assist youth in accessing affordable housing by connecting them with the necessary key informants within society. Housing projects such as Communicare offer affordable housing within various communities in Cape Town.

CYCCs have a strong education agenda and expose youth to the various educational pathways which they can pursue after completing high school. It is recommended that CYCCs continue to push this education agenda with youth so that they can continue to be ambitious when it comes to furthering their education. In addition to this, CYCCs should

continue to assist youth in obtaining bursaries to cover their tuition fees as this lightens the financial burden on youth and their families.

Finding employment is a challenge that youth foresee for themselves as they prepare to leave their CYCCs for independent adult living. It is recommended that in addition to workshops and presentations that equip youth for the labour market, CYCCs should create or enquire about opportunities for youth to gain work experience. CYCCs should bridge the gap between youth and their access to the labour market. This can occur through volunteering, job shadowing, holiday jobs or interning at corporates. It is also recommended that CYCCs assist foreign youth living in their care with obtaining work permits so that they may be able to legally enter the South African labour market.

2. Social work practice in CYCCs

While preparing to leave their CYCC some youth have the desire to make contact with their family of origin. It is recommended that CYCCs readily support youth wanting to make contact with their family of origin. Social workers working with CYCCs would be particularly helpful to youth in sourcing information needed for this investigation. It is also important that youth receive counselling during this process because this investigation into finding their families of origin could be successful or unsuccessful and therefore affect youth emotionally and psychologically.

Youth leaving CYCCs for independent adult living foresee a few challenges that they might experience during this process. It is recommended that CYCCs have their social worker work with youth on an individual and group basis as some youth have no choice but to return to their communities of origin which could make them vulnerable to repeating bad behaviours of the past. In these counselling sessions, youth can be taught coping mechanisms that can deter them from engaging in negative activities and socializing with people of bad influence when they leave state care.

When leaving state care, youth are at risk of losing some of their support systems which include child and youth care workers, social workers and friendships made with other youth residing at their CYCCs. When leaving their CYCC, youth won't have easy access to these support systems. It is therefore recommended that CYCC social workers assist youth by expanding and strengthening their support systems outside of their CYCCs. Other forms of

support systems could be mentors, church groups, family members and work colleagues. Youth may feel less worried about losing the support they have within their CYCC because of the support systems they have established outside of their CYCC.

3. Transitional programmes

Some CYCCs involved in this study provided their own transitional programmes to youth preparing for independent adult living. It is recommended that these programmes focus on life skills preparation which could include daily living tasks, career development and self-care, so that youth are equipped with the necessary skills needed for independent adult living. Youth living in CYCCs also participate in transitional programmes provided by external organisations such as SA YES and Mamelani Projects. It is recommended that CYCCs allow for youth to participate in these programmes as they have been found to be valuable for the social and economic development of youth as they prepare for independent adult living.

Youth feel that there are ways in which transitional programmes can better support them as they transition to independent adult living. It is recommended that children living in CYCCs be introduced to transitional programmes at an early age than too close to their exit from state care. Youth preparing for independent adult living realise the importance of sufficient preparation for this new phase in their lives which needs to occur well in advance prior to their exit from state care.

Some aspects of transitional programmes were identified by youth as needing improvement. Youth identified that in-house transitional programmes lacked activities which enable them to participate with people and environments outside of their CYCCs. It is recommended that CYCCs incorporate a practical aspect to their transitional programmes which will enable youth to interact with people and environments outside of their CYCCs. This would assist youth in experiencing the ways of society and what is expected of them as adults within society. In addition to this, it is recommended that CYCCs inform youth about external transitional programmes such as Mamelani Projects and SA YES.

Transitional programmes such as SA YES assign youth living in CYCCs with mentors who support and guide them during their transition to independent adult living. The study findings indicate that mentor-mentee relationships are short lived and meetings between these two parties are sporadic. It is recommended that youth preparing to leave state care are assigned

with mentors that are able to have a long term relationship with them. In addition to this it is recommended that meetings between mentors and mentees occur regularly so that these parties can build a rapport and have a positive long term relationship.

4. CYCC practice

Child and youth care workers are often involved in presenting transitional programmes at CYCCs. The study findings indicated that some child and youth care workers are not adequately trained nor do they possess the skills needed to guide youth through their preparation to independent adult living. It is recommended that that child and youth care workers receive training which will equip them with the necessary skills needed to effectively assist youth during their transition out of state care.

Youth are able to extend their stay in care up until the age of twenty-one however this is on the basis that their request for the continuation of care is granted by the provincial head of social development. It is recommended that CYCCs assist youth with the application process for the continuation of care. This will enable youth who may need more time to prepare for independent adult living to get certain things in place such as alternative accommodation. The continuation of care will also be beneficial to youth who are in the process of completing their studies and staying in care could prevent disruptions that could jeopardise them completing their studies.

Due to the lack of funds and the needs of other children within CYCC's, the needs of youth preparing for independent adult living are not always prioritised. It is recommended that CYCCs encourage youth to participate in external transitional programmes that are dedicated to assisting youth during their transition to independent adult living.

5. The role of the government in supporting youth transitioning from CYCCs to independent adult living

It is important that all key role players within society play their part in supporting youth transitioning to independent adult living. The study findings indicate that the government can better assist youth transitioning from their CYCCs. Although some CYCC's allow youth to extend their stay until the age of 21 (if they are attending tertiary institutions), it is recommended by youth that the government should extend the age in which youth can stay in a CYCC from eighteen years of age to twenty-six years of age. In addition to this, youth feel

that the government should do more to invest in CYCC's. It is recommended that the government should increase the subsidy that they currently give to CYCCs so that transitional programmes can be improved. .

Due to the lack of funds and the needs of other children within CYCC's, the needs of youth preparing for independent adult living are not always prioritised. Due to the lack of funds or CYCC staff not having the capacity to give the necessary attention to youth transitioning from state care, it is recommended that CYCCs encourage youth to participate in external transitional programmes that are dedicated to assisting youth during this transitional period.

5.3 Summary

In concluding this final chapter, the conclusions and recommendations were provided based on the study findings. Some of the main conclusions were that youth in the study experience a range of emotions such as fear, anxiety and excitement as they anticipate how their lives will change once they leave state care. They also recognise that during this time they need to actively look for alternative accommodation and use their time in care constructively by completing their high schooling. Other main conclusions were that youth in this study have aspirations which include making contact with their families of origin, enrolling into tertiary institutions, finding employment and helping others in need. They also foresee challenges that may arise while they prepare for independent adult living. These challenges include repetition of bad past behaviour, struggling to find employment, worries about safety, worries about not having support once leaving care and possible financial challenges.

Some of the study recommendations include that CYCCs provide youth with the necessary emotional support to deal with their fears and anxieties about leaving state care. It is also recommended that CYCCs continue to prioritise the education of youth so that they can continue to be motivated when it comes to furthering their education. Another recommendation is that CYCCs readily support youth wanting to make contact with their families of origin during their transition to independent adult living. It is also recommended that children living in CYCCs be introduced to transitional programmes soon after their entrance into their CYCC rather than too close to their exit from state care.

The aim of the research study was to conduct qualitative research which explored the experiences of youth transitioning out of CYCCs to independent adult living in Cape Town.

The findings indicated that preparing for independent adult living impacted these youth in various ways. Some youth in the study found the process of transitioning to independent living a stressful one due to factors such as feeling unprepared for adult responsibilities that comes along with being an independent adult. However, others were eager to leave care to experience a true sense of independence. For these youth leaving care meant a new found freedom and being freed from the restrictions of living in a CYCC programme. As youth prepared for independent adult living, each of them had aspirations for their lives, which they hoped to achieve while living in care and when they leave care. These include furthering their education and making contact with their families of origin.

There is no guarantee that these youth will achieve their goals when they leave care and all the support and resources that comes along with it. However, they are passionate and have a strong desire to achieve the goals that they have set out for themselves. The findings indicated that youth in the study identified a number of challenges that could affect their transitional journey to independent adult living and some that could impact them once they leave care. Some are foreseeable and current struggles that impact other youth such as unemployment and homelessness. These struggles cause youth to feel stressed about leaving care as they are unable to predict what their socio-economic status will be. It is therefore important for CYCCs to work with these youth and help them address their challenges and explore ways in which they can tackle them.

There are transitional programmes available for youth transitioning out of CYCCs in Cape Town but whether or not these programmes suffice is debateable. This study was beneficial in that the findings indicated that there are gaps in the way youth in Cape Town are currently supported during the time that they prepare to leave care. The findings indicate that there is more that key role players such as CYCCs, NGOs and the government can do to better support youth transitioning out of CYCCs to independent adult living in Cape Town.

The research methodology used in this study was beneficial in obtaining new and relevant data for the research area concerning youth transitioning out of CYCCs to independent adult living in Cape Town. It is hoped that the study findings will encourage further research in this area and explore ways in which youth can be better supported and prepared for independent adult living. It is also hoped that the findings and recommendations from this research are considered by key role players in society and that this research enlightens these role players to the experiences and transitional needs of youth transitioning from CYCCs to independent

adult living. By better supporting and understanding the individual transitional needs of youth, CYCCs and other key role players can better prepare youth for independent adult living and contribute to them becoming active members of society.

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APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION & CONSENT FORM

Name of Researcher: Chanel Fredericks

Student number: FRDCHA006

This research forms part of the qualification for a Research Master's degree in the Department of Social Development at the University of Cape Town

Title of Study:

An exploratory study of the experiences of youth transitioning out of Child and Youth Care Centres in Cape Town to independent adult living.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To investigate how youth understand their transition out of the CYCC they reside in.
2. To ascertain the aspirations of youth as they transition out of their CYCC.
3. To determine the challenges youth have that are associated with their transition out of their CYCC.
4. To examine the support structures youth have to assist their transition out of their CYCC.

Please read the following and sign if you agree to participate in this study.

Research Procedures: I understand that I will be participating in an interview process to explore the experiences of youth in Cape Town as they transition out of child and youth care centres to independent adult living. The interview will last approximately one hour and will be recorded with your permission using a digital recorder or by taking notes. The recording will be transcribed and the notes, the recorded information and the transcripts will be kept in

a secure place. Once the research has been completed, this material will be only be used for academic purposes and the transcripts will be destroyed.

Risks and Harm: There are no foreseen risks or harm in participating in this research. However, in the event of any emotional distress by a participant, the researcher will make a referral for appropriate assistance.

Benefits/Incentives: I understand that this research will not benefit me directly and that I will not be paid for agreeing to do this interview. However, through my participation, the information gathered will provide important information that can be used by the government and NGOs as they create transitional programmes to support the needs of youth transitioning from child and youth care centres.

Participant's Rights: I understand that I am free to withdraw from participating in this study at any time, without giving any reason and that there are no consequences should I decide not to participate at any stage.

Confidentiality: I understand that the interview process will be kept strictly confidential and that information will be available to the researcher and the supervisor. Extracts from the interviews will be included in the final research report without anyone being able to link my quotes to my identity. The final report will be examined by an external examiner and the findings will be made available to participating agencies. Under no circumstances will my name be revealed in the report or any other publications related to this research.

I understand that if at any time I would like any additional information about this research, I can contact the university research supervisor, Dr.Somaya Abdullah telephonically at 021 650-4219 or by email at somaya.abdullah@uct.ac.za

I confirm that I have read this consent form or the researcher has read it to me and that the study has been explained to me. I voluntarily participate in this study.

Name of Participant: _____

Age: _____

CYCC: _____

Signature of Participant

Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

Signature of Guardian (if under 18 yrs)

Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

Signature of Researcher

Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

APPENDIX B

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Participant Information

- What is your name?
- What is your age?
- What is the name of the CYCC you are staying at and long have you been staying there?
- Will you be leaving this CYCC in the next year?
- Where will you be moving to once you leave this CYCC?

2. How do youth understand their transition out of the CYCC they reside in?

- How do you feel about the preparation you have been doing to transition from your CYCC?
- Describe your experiences of living in this CYCC

3. What are the aspirations youth have for themselves as they transition out of their CYCC?

- How does it feel to know that you will soon be leaving this centre?
- What does being an adult mean to you? (probe around the theme of independence)
- What goals have you set for yourself as you prepare to leave your CYCC?
- What do you think are your chances are of achieving your goals once you leave your CYCC? (probe around the theme of support)

4. What are the challenges youth have that are associated with leaving their CYCC?

- What are some of the challenges you expect to experience during this time as you prepare to leave your CYCC?
- Are there any fears that you have about leaving this CYCC?
- If yes, what are they? If no, skip to last question in this section.
- How do you plan to overcome these fears?
- How do you think your life will change once you leave this CYCC?

5. What support structures do youth have to assist their transition out of their CYCC?

- What types of support would you need to help you achieve your goals that you previously mentioned?
- Are there any programmes that are already helping you in achieving the goals you have set out for yourself once you leave your CYCC?
- What forms of support are available to you as you prepare to leave this CYCC? These can be transitional programmes or actual people such as social workers. (If there are no structures of support, skip to second last question.)
- Have these support structures been useful in terms of preparing you for life outside of this CYCC?
- If yes, how has it helped? If no, explain why you feel it has not helped?
- What can the CYCC do to better support your transition into the greater society?
- What can the government and civil society do so that you can feel more supported while you transition out of your CYCC?

6. Additional comments?

- Do you have any further comments?

APPENDIX C

Plagiarism Declaration

1. I know that plagiarism is wrong. Plagiarism is using another's work and to pretend that it is one's own.
2. I have used the Harvard convention for citation and referencing. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this report from the work, or works of other people has been attributed and has cited and referenced.
3. This report is my own work.
4. I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.
5. I acknowledge that copying someone else's assignment or essay, or part of it, is wrong, and declare that this is my own work

signature removed to avoid exposure online

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: 14 December 2018