

**A SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL ANALYSIS
OF MULTI-DISCIPLINARY PROGRAMMES
FOR LEARNERS WITH EMOTIONAL BARRIERS TO LEARNING:
TOWARDS A MODEL FOR PREVENTION, INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT**

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I declare that ***A socio-educational analysis of multi-disciplinary programmes for learners with emotional barriers to learning: towards a model for prevention, intervention and support***, submitted in fulfilment of the degree Master of Education to the University of South Africa, is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signed: _____
Mornay Scott
Date: 28 February 2005

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
COLTS	Culture of Learning, Teaching and Service
DoE	Department of Education
DoH	Department of Health
DoL	Department of Labour
DoW	Department of Welfare (Social Services and Community Development)
DPASA	Department of Public Service Administration
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ELRC	Education Labour Relations Council
ETDP	Education, Training and Development Practices
ETQA	Education and Training Quality Assurance (body)
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
HRD	Human Resource Development
INSET	In-service Education and Training
IT	Information Technology
LSEN	Learners with Special Education Needs
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
NSF	National Skills Fund
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SASA	South African Schools Act
SBST	Site-based Support Team
SDA	Skills Development Act
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SGB	School Governing Body
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNHCR	United Nations Refugee Agency
WHO	World Health Organisation
WSP	Workplace Skills Plan

ABSTRACT

Realising children's rights through the provision of legal protection, quality services and an enabling environment is central to a meaningful democracy. To achieve this in South Africa, education's role is pivotal. However, the current social milieu hinders learners' ability to learn optimally. It is argued that the state's capacity to deal with this issue is limited and necessitates community involvement. Yet communities need to be empowered. An ecological systems approach, focused on improving the health and wellbeing of the whole school community to tackle emotional barriers to learning, is proposed to address these twin concerns. A documentary review and a case study of a multi-disciplinary intervention project in Gauteng found this approach to be theoretically sound, context appropriate and enabling. It facilitates meaningful and sustainable cooperation between state and whole school community, provided that the former does not relinquish its responsibilities. A model for intervention based on findings is outlined.

Key words: South Africa; whole school community; socio-education theory; multi-disciplinary intervention; ecological systems approach; enabling; developmental; systems theory; emotional barriers to learning.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION, RATIONALE, PROBLEM STATEMENT, AIMS AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 New approaches to challenges facing South African schools: The need for multi-disciplinary interventions and community involvement

It can be argued that the rights and protection of the child lie at the core of what constitutes the modern, liberal, democratic state. Since democratisation, South Africa has signed numerous treaties and declarations on the rights of the child and the responsibility of the state to protect its children. Hence, the process of nation-building in contemporary South Africa depends heavily on investments in its children. Yet, current historical and contemporary social factors place South Africa's children at risk. Poverty, inequality, prejudice, high levels of crime and violence and the spectre of HIV/AIDS impact on learners' ability to cope with the education system successfully and on the state's ability to care for and nurture its citizens. In turn, these factors threaten the democratic structure.

The ten years following the first democratic election in South Africa have been marked by many and sometimes radical systemic changes in different spheres and domains of governance. Education, and in particular schooling, is one such area. According to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA 1996:29) and the South African Schools Act (DoE 1996c:3.1), all children from the age of seven to fifteen have to attend school. An impressive legislative output since 1994 bears testimony to the commitment of both the national government and provincial governments to producing an education system that delivers education for all learners, 'from children to adults, according to their needs and abilities...', as the vision statement of the Department of Education so concisely outlines (GDE 2000b:5).

Given the complexities of bringing together into a single system the more than fifteen education systems that existed before 1994, whilst at the same time attempting to efface inequities and discrimination across the system and revise curricula, an outcome of systemic coherence may seem like a solid achievement. However, education as a process is embedded in the social fabric of a society. Hence, getting teachers to teach

and learners to learn in South African schools requires more than the development of a single, national, integrated and coherent education system.

The burden and the lingering legacy of South Africa's past in tandem with the present socio-economic and political dispensation in which ordinary South Africans make their living have consequences that impact on learning and on the learning process in several ways. Limitations are placed both on the *system* of education and on the *actors* that participate in that process and it encompasses economic, social, psychological and emotional dimensions.

The economic constraints produced by South Africa's position as a developing country for example, place a cap on the amount of resources that government may spend on education. On the other hand, social factors – such as the effects of trauma and disease – impact on the ability of individuals and collectives to participate optimally in or support a process of education. In educational terms, factors that negatively influence the learning process are generally referred to as barriers to learning.

In its response, the South African Government has demonstrated a clear understanding that: (1) the eradication of barriers to learning requires more than systemic and legislative change, given the relationship between barriers to learning and the social fabric; (2) addressing barriers to learning requires understanding of and intervention in domains previously regarded as falling outside the scope of education, in order to address issues such as poverty, violence and HIV/AIDS, all of which impact negatively on the learning process; and (3) attempts to address common barriers to learning in contemporary South African society require collective effort, involving both state actors and ordinary citizens.

Three documents are referred to here to illustrate how this latter understanding is articulated. The first of these is the *Batho Pele* White Paper (DPSA 1997), the second is the *Tirisano* document (DoE 1999a), and the third the *Strategies and Plans* document that outlines strategic priorities for the Gauteng Department of Education for the period 2004/5 – 2008/9 (GDE 2004c).

The White Paper on quality service entitled *Batho Pele* (DPSA 1997:23-24), focuses on government's commitment to improve service delivery and emphasises that public service will improve through the establishment of clear targets and performance indicators. Already in this document, which outlines the core values of a national civil service and provides a blueprint for service quality in the public sector, the idea that the state alone

cannot deliver quality service and therefore needs to involve other stakeholders, is apparent. Hence, partnerships with communities, civil society organisations and with citizens themselves are explicitly encouraged in this document.

The strategic plan for education released in 1999, in which Prof. Asmal, the former Minister of Education, outlined his priorities for that period, was the Department of Education's response to what was perceived as an erosion of a culture of learning and teaching that threatened efforts to build a winning nation (DoE 1999a:6). In the plan, designated a Call for Action, the Minister calls upon citizens to mobilise and to build a South African education and training system for the 21st century (DoE 2000a:6). The document, which uses the notion of '*tirisano*' the Tswana word for 'working together', makes an appeal to South Africans to take hands and address together the five major problems in education identified by the Minister and his department. These are: (1) the dysfunctional state of the institutions; (2) inequities in facilities and resources; (3) illiteracy; (4) sexual harassment and violence, including crime and drugs, and (5) the scourge of HIV/AIDS. It is clear that the list of challenges straddles systemic problems endemic to the education system and social problems that were previously regarded as falling outside the responsibility of education departments. It is also evident from both the contents and the language register used, that the remedy to the perceived problem involves both the state and the ordinary citizenry.

The Gauteng Department of Education's *Strategies and Plans* document (GDE 2004c) is based on and provides a response to the strategic objectives that the present Minister of Education, Ms Naledi Pandor, adopted for her term. While it does not differ considerably from the *Tirisano* document, education here is not seen as the problem that may derail the national initiative but rather as an enabler thereof. The minister favours an approach that will develop 'the spirit for learning and teaching', create an 'enabled environment', produce 'effective education', contribute to economic growth, alleviate poverty, create jobs, and enhance wellness (GDE 2004c:14). In the same document, the Gauteng Department of Education follows her example and rephrases the challenges it faces as desired outcomes: a province with a *caring government* that is responsive to the *needs of its citizens*, a place where *citizenship and democracy is deepened* and where its *people are healthy* (GDE 2004c:6). This document therefore addresses barriers to learning, but here they are articulated as positive challenges and achievable solutions. The document makes it explicit that education priorities and challenges incorporate issues that were previously regarded as non-educational matters. These include monitoring of access to

social grants, provision of clothing to orphans and children from informal settlements and expanding the nutrition programme for learners (GDE 2004c:13).

Two of the ideas that are expressed in these documents – namely that (1) the state needs to work in partnership and consultation with ordinary citizens, communities and civil society organisations and (2) that educators and the education department need to concern themselves with issues usually dealt with by other state departments – which were only kernels in earlier policy documents, are gaining currency and influence in the sphere of education. It is beginning to change the way in which schools operate, educators see themselves, education departments organise their projects and different state departments interact with and relate to one another. It also fundamentally challenges definitions of what comprises the school, and is underpinned by the idea of the whole school community, a much broader concept that emphasises the interrelationship and interdependence between schools and communities. With regard to organisational models, it favours, or perhaps necessitates, a multi-disciplinary approach. In terms of educational theory, it brings socio-educational theories, in particular the Ecological Systems Theory, sharply into focus for remoulding educational practice.

The argument has been presented that the past decade saw the consolidation of national nation-building efforts. The broader social goals of developing a national identity, strengthening and expanding the economy, and deepening democracy, may be included under this rubric. It has also been argued that the protection and development of the child is located in the centre of these initiatives. The health, wellness and future potential of a country's people are mirrored to a large extent in the health and wellness profile of its school communities. Education, as a sphere of government, is therefore expected to play a central role in enabling this overarching National Plan of Action for Children (see for example NCRC 1994; NCRC 1996; SA TP OSC 2000). The Department of Education has to respond to the challenges it faces, but it cannot do so alone. From policy documents it is evident that the Department recognises the need to forge partnerships within and across state departments. It needs to involve local, non-state actors, to open up schools as community resources and to decentralise and localise decision-making.

This dissertation examines this process of 'opening up' (previous paragraph) in practice. From the vantage point of a multi-disciplinary project in Gauteng Province, it considers the potential and pitfalls of the ecological systems approach and of programmes or strategies to address barriers to learning. But many of the barriers to learning that learners in South African schools have to overcome are context-specific and are closely linked with South

Africa's turbulent and discriminatory past, its current position as a developing country, and its location at the southern tip of the African continent. A brief overview of the social milieu of South Africa is provided in the following section as an introduction to a more extensive discussion on barriers to learning in a subsequent chapter.

1.1.2 The South African social milieu: past and present

A political structure based on discrimination over centuries seldom affects only the people subject to that rule. This statement rings true for learners in South Africa today. South Africa's history of discrimination, which stretched over three and a half centuries, endures in its after-effects. In terms of social structures, the migrant labour system, racially-based spatial planning, work reservation and the permit system have profoundly affected the family structures of black families in particular. The consequences of South Africa's colonial past are still evident in terms of the economic stratification, access to housing, services and education, as well as the life expectancy of its people. But it is also tangible in public perceptions and attitudes pervasive in South African society and sets of practices and actions that have their origins in the past or that relate to the past in specific ways. The fact that the contours of present day South Africa are still shaped by the past and the likelihood that South Africa's past will for an indefinite period saturate its future are widely accepted and well supported in the literature (Pillay 2002:332-334; Maree & Prinsloo: 2001:3). Past inequities live on in the present, as is illustrated by the availability of sport facilities at schools. Only 29.3% of former Bantu Education schools or black schools report that their school has a sport facility, even if it is only a single facility, while 95.5% of previously white schools (some of them are now multi-cultural) report that their school has one or more sports facilities (GDE 2004b:40).

However, in part as a consequence of the past, and in part the result of new social and economic forces, contemporary South Africa also finds itself in the grip of a moral and sexual licentiousness, the AIDS pandemic and high levels of violence and crime. The country is also experiencing an economic climate that has seen the number of jobs in the economy shrink. It has a large part of its population living in abject poverty and is located on a continent where civil wars and internal conflicts threaten the livelihood of many of its people.

Despite these challenges, South Africa today is a far cry from the country it was in 1995 when only 64% of children of primary school age were enrolled in a primary school and only 36% of learners of secondary school age were enrolled and from 1993 when 11

million learner days were forfeited in 16 000 instances of disruption at schools (GDE 2004c:7). There have also been countless other improvements, also in the field of education. One can derive from the following statistics that Gauteng is a better place for the majority of young people than it was before. Presently 410 000 learners are being fed through the nutrition programme; more than 400 students have been trained in skills relevant to the automotive industry; there has been an improvement in matriculation results; more schools have electricity, water, phones, computers, libraries and other facilities; and R32 million is being invested in renovating and refurbishing schools, including making them accessible to learners with disabilities (*City of Tshwane in Context* 2001:5). In Gauteng, in the Education District Tshwane South, the matriculation pass rate has improved from 66.04% in 2000 to 84.51% in 2003 (GDE 2004b:35).

This, then, is the social milieu in which learning is taking place. The combined effects of these factors impact on the school community, and thus on the project of learning, on a number of levels. Therefore, an understanding of the way in which external factors impact on the learning environment and the learning process is pertinent. But in order to introduce such a discussion, a fuller description of the present social milieu is required. Three components of this milieu are briefly outlined here. The first of these is 'Pressures on the family and the changing idea of the family'. The second considers 'Schools, school communities and change', while the third focuses on 'The contemporary social environment and the disintegration of the social fabric'.

1.1.2.1 Pressures on family structures and relationships and the idea of the family

It has been argued that remnants of the apartheid era as well as lingering consequences of that era are innumerable and continue to influence the present. The development of geographically dispersed, economically uneven racial enclaves as a result of the migrant labour system, the permit system and racially-designated townships and high levels of illiteracy affecting black South Africans are but two of these. These remnants are still impacting on the social fabric for example, the family structures on the schooling context. Scholars such as Persell (1990:54) report that ...

[D]uring the past decades the family structure of particularly black families in South Africa was deeply wrenched by the increasing separation of family and work.

If pressures on family structures, produced as a result of separation from a spouse, the displacement of family members, forced removals and high levels of family disintegration,

contribute to emotional trauma, as Lauer (in Lauer & Ballantine 1993:439) postulates, then it can be argued that fractured families and a disrupted social fabric have been a barrier to learning for many South Africans and their children and will continue to be barriers to learning.

This pressure on family structures and relationships has been continued over the past ten years when a new kind of separation started to affect black families. When black parents were for the first time allowed to place their learners in public city schools, they took the opportunity, wanting 'the best' for their children. These learners from the townships started attending city schools or boarding schools, where they not only met with severe discrimination and racism (Dooms 2000:9), but also, on returning to their homes, found that they had become disconnected from their homes, families and culture.

A key challenge facing South Africa in the period of social change following the first democratic elections in 1994 is the need to end illiteracy. Almost 50% of South Africans cannot read or write and it is reported that 24% of adults in this country have never been to school (Lackey 2001:17). High levels of illiteracy affect family dynamics too, since illiterate or semi-literate parents do not feel able to assist their children with schoolwork and they are embarrassed by the fact that they have never attended school (Mashau 2002:303,308). Mkhize (1998:2) describes the position in relation to family and schooling of the average black child in South Africa as follows:

[M]any students have non-supportive homes, little parental care and involvement, few resources in the homes, little intellectual stimulation and illiterate parents.

By the end of 2000 there were 200 000 HIV/AIDS orphans in South Africa (Love Life 2000:10) and it is projected that by 2010 there will be close to 4 million children under the age of 15 who will have lost their mothers to AIDS (Rademeyer 2004c:9). In Mamelodi, a township in Tshwane South Educational District, the number of orphans has increased by 54% in one year. There were 1 617 new cases reported where family members had to take over the care of orphans (Slabbert 2003:11). When the full impact of these statistics confronts one, it becomes clear that the term 'parents' needs to be used sparingly. These 'commodities' are becoming scarce and too many families and children are excluded when we think of and plan around the traditional nuclear family, comprising a mother, a father and their children. The concept of parent empowerment or parent participation or school/home partnerships takes on new meaning against this background, since home may imply a household where the primary caregiver is still a child.

Hence, the family is under pressure both structurally and emotionally, and this fact has important implications for schooling. The role and function of the modern family has taken on a new shape and it should be recognised. It will most certainly also affect the role and function of the modern school. The process of reshaping the family will accelerate in South Africa and as a result schools will be reshaped, the role of the educator will change and the idea of the school community will be redefined. But beyond pressures on and changes within family structures, school systems have also been affected by other developments. These are briefly reflected on in the following section.

1.1.2.2 *Schools, school communities and change*

Because of social segregation between racially-defined communities in South Africa, which was enforced and encouraged by colonial rule and the system of apartheid, and the consequent lack of understanding among different cultures and communities in South Africa, it follows that professionals often know and understand very little about the language and cultural practices of the learner or group of learners they interact with. As a result, such professionals often approach learning situations from within their own cultural framework, which in turn may constitute a real barrier to learning for some learners.

This researcher personally observed this disjunction when a group of white facilitators from an education district office visited primary schools in a township over a period of one year. The aim of the intervention was to teach learners something about the learning process and to demonstrate the quantum of information that could be obtained merely by listening well, asking the right questions and making the correct links. Their target group was the grade seven learners. The topic of their listening comprehension was 'Dinosaurs.' The learners had to listen to the story, draw the main character and answer some questions. Needless to say, very few drawings showed any resemblance to this prehistoric animal – that is, if the learners had made an effort at all to draw. Dinosaurs were not part of the knowledge base of the average grade seven learner in the township. Books, films, videos, toys, drawings and pictures of these animals had not been available to most of these learners. The programme continued throughout the year, with the facilitators arriving at the conclusion that the level of understanding of the average black child was way below standard.

This fallacy was also entrenched in the initial post-1994 transformation process, which saw many black learners moving out of their apartheid-designated schools. Being unaccustomed to multicultural schools, the transformation process was a painful experience for some of these learners who enrolled at formerly white-designated schools. Many experts, including educators and educational psychologists, ignored or discounted the fact that past inequities had created a value system of exclusion in which the minority led the majority; class differences matched racial classifications; and racial segregation and discrimination were legislated and enforced and resulted in degrading experiences for large numbers of South Africans. Therefore they also failed to recognise the resultant emotional harm and harm to self-image, that were part of the inheritance of most black learners who attended formerly white-designated schools post-1994, as the primary drivers affecting the learning process adversely. In this regard, Dooms (2000:9) reported that even after so many years, racism was still very vivid in schools. She wrote that she...

tried to systematically study the psycho-social factors that negatively impact on black pupils' performance at school and found that teachers', pupils' and parents' attitudes ranked as one of the most significant factors in the learning environment, especially in a so-called culturally diverse classroom.

When a young black boy in grade 7, one of only two black learners in an Afrikaans school, was asked if he had friends he answered positively. When asked if he plays with them, his answer was, 'no, because my friends are hitting me' (personal observation).

The lack of understanding between cultural communities becomes apparent even more convincingly when we consider the situation of children from other African countries living in South Africa. Following South Africa's democratisation, increasing numbers of children from other African countries migrated to South Africa (UNHCR 2001b (f):17). Long-lasting wars in some of these countries had affected their schooling and these child refugees desperately wanted to be educated. In South Africa, however, these refugees have been exposed to xenophobia, a dislike of foreigners based partially on unfounded myths and stereotyping as well as on the perception of further job losses for South African citizens. In the context of displacement these children and adolescents have lived through previous traumatic experiences of violence; separation; fear; loss of the family, home, friends, self-respect and self-confidence. Jordaan summarises the experiences of these children by stating that 'they are not just orphans – they are orphans coming here with a huge load of unfinished business' (Jordaan in Prinsloo & Du Plessis 1998b:193,194).

In the context of schooling, experts argue that educators are unaware of the emotional status of these children, because they have not been sensitized (Mayer, Van Garderen, Handmaker & De la Hunt 2000:19). For example, it was reported to this researcher that at a school in Pretoria, a child from the Sudan was locked up in the classroom every break time to 'protect' him from the other learners. The school did not perceive this action to be abusive in any way.

In another recent development, physically and mentally impaired children, or children with special educational needs, who were previously diverted from mainstream schooling into special schools, are now gradually starting to attend regular schools as a result of the Inclusion Policy (DoE 2001b). In an effort to protect these learners from the hurt and pain of labelling attached to being in an LSENS (learners with special educational needs school), these children now run the risk of being exposed to the hurt and pain of rude remarks, stereotyping and social separation in integrated schools. This issue needs to receive the necessary attention. Chervin (1986:332) argues that:

There must be an emphasis in education today on social and emotional issues for children with special needs. Unless this call is heeded, we run the risk that the most severe barriers to learning for children with special educational needs may emanate from untreated and unrecognised emotional scars and the reaction of the community and society to the impairment, rather than from the impairment itself.

In addition to challenges brought about by post-apartheid integration, schools have ceased to be safe places for children. Perhaps they never were safe places for children, but because of a lack of transparency it was never as apparent as now. If educators are responsible for a third of all child rapes, as reported by SAPA AFP (2002:3) it implies that schools are not the safe havens that they are usually perceived to be. Therefore, neither parents nor learners can feel at ease once the learners arrive at school. Naidu (2001:19) does not foresee the likelihood of improvement in the near future, mainly because of the lack of values and respect for human dignity that is pervasive in some school environments:

The National Department of Education has among its goals a desire to create a safe and tolerant learning environment that celebrates innocence and values human dignity. The department is far from achieving this, and in fact, has not even proceeded beyond the starting blocks. The school's security policy, no matter how good, will be too little too late if it is implemented after another fatality involving educators or learners at any of our schools.

Whilst the world is still trying to recover from the shock of the 3500 people that died in the World Trade Centre disaster in 2001 and the Tsunami disaster where 290 000 people died, South Africa's death rate resulting from AIDS is estimated at 900 per day (Brümmer 2003:8) i.e. more than 320 000 per year. From these statistics it follows that a large percentage of learners will experience the death of a friend, parent, educator or close family member. Moreover, learners themselves are at risk of contracting the virus with a resultant effect on the emotional wellbeing of the learner.

Whilst learners are affected by HIV/AIDS on a number of levels, there are also an estimated 14% to 16% HIV-infected educators and 7% to 8% HIV-infected principals, according to Monare (2001:6). Theron (2004:2) reports that in 1999 about 100 000 South African learners lost educators to AIDS. In a survey reported on by Theron (2004:5), 52% of responses suggested that learners' wellbeing suffers as a result of disrupted education. Potenza (2001:16) has found that 'teacher morale is low where the impact of HIV/AIDS is high, combined with considerable student and teacher trauma'.

1.1.2.3 *The contemporary social environment and disintegration of the social fabric*

South African society finds itself in the midst of a world-wide war on values. Honesty, integrity, chastity and the ability to solve problems without conflict are being discarded and ridiculed in communities and with great emphasis by the mass media (Prinsloo in Landsberg 2005:30) Yet the development of values, including respect for human dignity and tolerance, is essential to the project of rebuilding the South African nation in order to prevent the perpetuation of new forms of racism or discrimination against any group of people. The perceived loss of a shared value system has had a negative influence on the social fabric of the country. Communities suffer because of crime, violence and greed. Instances of corruption have become so commonplace that these do not even make headlines any longer. An editorial note in *City Press* (2001:8) stated that:

The major enemy of our time, it would seem, is no longer racial oppression but rather the horrifying low levels of morality our society has sunk to.

In addition to the apartheid legacy, South Africa has a large part of its population living in abject poverty and finds itself in the midst of an economic climate that has seen the number of jobs in the economy shrink. These factors impact directly on housing, safety and services. President Thabo Mbeki (2004:4) explains the challenge as follows:

Endemic and widespread poverty continues to disfigure the face of our country. It will always be impossible for us to say that we have fully restored the dignity of all our people as long as this situation persists. For this reason the struggle to eradicate poverty has been and will continue to be a central part of the national effort to build the new South Africa.

Whilst poverty permeates the social fabric, changes in economic stratification are taking place, Mzamane (2004) warns that this may result in a new form of discrimination, which he terms neo-apartheid. He argues for a 'decolonisation' of South African minds.

It is not inconceivable that in South Africa the much vaunted new South Africa becomes not so much the post-Apartheid state most people envisaged, but a neo-Apartheid enclave, in which the black *nouveau riche* become a comprador, co-opted class. Such a battle will be fought, lost or won in the intellectual trenches of the classroom.

Basic services or the lack thereof may also have an effect on learning. Between 55% and 59% of the people in Gauteng have access to on-site water, electricity and waterborne sewer systems, which leaves a vast percentage of people without these commodities (*City of Tshwane in Context* 2001:5). But, on the positive side, two million homes have been delivered in South Africa since 1994 accommodating eight million people (FNB 2004). These homes provide increased safety to lives and life possessions of their new occupants.

Fear and a sense of insecurity have become part of daily life in South Africa. Dr Norma Mohr of the Medical Research Council found that the risk for children to develop post traumatic stress disorder after being raped is 85%, after being beaten or physically abused by a family member the risk is 83%, and for children who saw a family member being killed or hurt the risk is 53% (Caelers & Viall 2001:6). When one reads about an average of two people who are murdered in Tshwane per day (Olivier 2001:35) and forty to fifty women older than 18 who are raped every month in Mamelodi, a Tshwane township (Oelofse 2001:5), one feels obliged to ask for an explanation. Between January and June in 2001, 3 874 cases of rape of women over the age of seventeen years were reported in Gauteng (Steenkamp 2001:9). These statistics form part of the grim lived reality, and do not contribute to feelings of wellness. Cock (2002:2) explains these phenomena as follows:

We are a region emerging from 30 years of war, violence, brutalised people and what we are seeing now is the degree to which SA has been brutalised.

1.1.3 Social context and its impact on schools and the learning process

A portrayal of the modern South African social milieu with all its positive and negative dimensions, as the one provided above, remains merely a statistical and descriptive account if it is not understood and explained in terms of the effect these have on the learning process. Of importance for this study is to gain an understanding of how these stress factors impact on ecological systems and how dysfunctional ecological systems in turn impact on the mental health and emotional wellbeing of learners. Research has shown convincingly that traumatic experiences may produce behavioural changes in children. Lauer and Ballantine (1993:439) found that

[T]he capacity and will to form relationships can be disturbed by experiences which destroy trust and which create fear and suspicion in others.

This finding is echoed in a report produced by the UNHCR (2001(b):21) that states the following:

Young children who have had frightening and confusing experiences may regress – i.e. lose (usually temporarily) developmental gains such as speech or control of bladder and bowel. Disturbances in sleep and eating habits are also common. These kinds of reactions may be compounded in situations where the parents or other caregivers become depressed or anxious and may have less energy for and interest in the child. Where traumatic experiences are compounded by the loss of parents or other caregivers, or separation from them, reactions and distress may be greatly magnified. The apparent loss of capacity to play is sometimes observed, or children become preoccupied with themes of violence, death etc. in their play and drawing.

We know that children who have experienced trauma and violence may display feelings of hostility; emotional instability; lack of self-esteem; academic underachievement; depression and anxiety; difficulty in forming satisfying social relationships; distress; self-destructive behaviour and dependence (Potgieter 2001:2). Kaywell (1997:5) makes the link between these destructive behavioural patterns and the learning process:

Approximately a fourth of our students are experiencing emotional problems of the severity that can prevent learning from occurring with even the best teachers. Until the basic emotional needs of these troubled students are addressed, these teenagers are prime candidates for dropping out of schools and becoming delinquents. Further, many are destined to become prisoners of either our welfare or penal systems.

The interrelatedness of all of these risks clearly indicates how the one system feeds into the other. If one system feeds the other with poison, the greater system will be poisoned. If, however, disharmonious relationships can be restored in one area, the other systems will also experience increased harmony. Hence, the role of the school in terms of enhancing the health and wellbeing of the learner is evident. But this cannot be done without considering the other people in the life of the child. The nurturer also needs to be nurtured. Therefore, the health and wellness of the educator should also be a priority. This focus is noticeably absent. In a report prepared for UNICEF (Coombe 2001:33,34) the compiler states that 'many teachers perceive that the system does not care about them and is unresponsive to their needs'. Coombe continues by asking 'if no one cares for teachers, why should they care about each other or about the children and their parents?'

Based on the overview of the social milieu in Section 1.2, one could easily conclude that most communities in South Africa are terminally ill. I would like to argue that South African society is slowly recovering from a long illness, but still needs to be nurtured. Irrespective of how one prefers to look at it, it is clear that old and new social problems and opportunities directly affect families, schools and the broader social fabric. It is therefore imperative that a shift in focus takes place in South Africa, bringing to the centre an emphasis on the health and wellbeing of its people.

But perhaps more importantly, this section demonstrates that systems are interrelated and interdependent. Social context impacts on the learning process in countless ways, Schools are therefore not protected enclaves with the luxury of focusing exclusively on narrow, school-based educational development, but have to take account of, interact with and take responsibility for what is happening outside their boundaries. The idea of the school or the school community is therefore fundamentally challenged. The school thus comprises a whole school community, a concept that seeks to encapsulate the complex set of interrelationships and interdependencies between what was previously the dividing line between school and non-school: parents, community, civil society and nation.

If South African society is ill, the question is to what extent do professional support services have the capacity to make an intervention? This issue is considered in the next section.

1.1.4 Current responses: The capacity of state service providers

In discussing the health and wellness of the South African community, the problem that presents itself is how to measure the ability of the state's social networks to respond to the needs of the community. South Africa is not unique in reporting high levels of crime, poverty and social problems. Newspapers in other countries also reflect similar problems. Yet, it seems that many other countries cope better with these circumstances. The reason for this might be the sheer numbers of human resources they can muster to intervene.

South Africa has five psychologists per 100,000 people, which is the highest level in Africa. The USA has one educational psychologist per 2,500 learners (Swanepoel 2001:15). South Africa also has a ratio of one psychiatrist per 100,000 people, an achievement that is equalled by only two other African countries. But, whilst the USA has one social worker per 800 learners, South Africa has one per 50,000 learners in some provinces and 10 per 50,000 learners in others.

From 2005, the Gauteng Department of Education will have, on average, 12 educational psychologists working in each of its 12 districts, which implies that, on average, there will be one educational psychologist per 8,000 learners (GDE 2004a). UNESCO's recommendation is one educational psychologist per 6,000 - 7,500 learners (Oakland & Saigh 1987:293). Again this would appear not to be far from target.

However, the comparison between South Africa and the rest of Africa merely highlights the lack of resources in the rest of Africa and is not an indication that South Africa is well resourced in these disciplines. Another disadvantage is the fact that the individuals representing the abovementioned professional therapists in South Africa are not representative of the demographic and geographic spread of the population or of the language and cultural differences. These factors pose further barriers for the effective delivery of these much needed services.

The capacity of the social systems to cope with the growing demand for their services is further limited by lack of training in the pre-service phase in some of these sectors. At a national conference held in 2001 for professionals dealing with child abuse, 98 people attended the one particular session (SAPSAC 2001). When this group had to indicate who had been trained in their pre-service training on any matters of child abuse, only two indicated that issues relating to child protection or child abuse formed part of their pre-service training, whilst four others had attended a four-hour course on this topic during

their pre-training phase. Dr Neil McKerrow, in a paper presented at SAPSAC's 5th national conference on child abuse, stated that he was not aware of any medical faculty that spent more than six hours at graduate level educating students on the diagnoses and handling of child abuse cases (Meintjes 2004). At the same conference, Nomangwane Mzamo argued that educators do not know how to identify and deal with child abuse and often ignore the signs and symptoms (Meintjes 2004).

Whilst the ability of professional services to cope with increased demand and to address important concerns such as the high incidence of child abuse is limited, a number of positive developments may lead the way towards the creation of more robust, multi-disciplinary approaches to extend the reach of these services. South Africa has seen some 790 new acts being promulgated since 1994, some of them to counterpart these statistics. A number of the new acts have replaced prior legislation that still embodied the principles of our previously divided society. New pieces of legislation indicate a strong move towards development and support (see sections 3.3 & 3.4). These legislative processes have already culminated in new programmes, such as 'The South African National Literacy Programme', which has reached two million people. It has also contributed to new structures. The Department of Education has put in place 2 371 structures to assist in the training and development of 210,569 people in agriculture, business management and technology (Rademeyer 2004a:2,15).

These statistics indicate an improvement on many different levels affecting learners directly. In addition, changed systems provide the children of this country with enhanced protection through a protective policy framework, improved structures and quality services that should address some of the barriers to learning. However, these measures are not fully implemented at ground level. South Africa has indeed started with this shift although outcomes are sometimes slower than anticipated. If the idea of the school is to be broadened in the way suggested here, it follows that schools, the state and the professional support services need to forge very close relationships. This is essential, because schools are nodes that connect different concerns, rather than centres of expertise on all matters. However, to assess the potential of such collaboration, one has to give consideration to the capacity of the professional support services. Improving the health and wellness of the whole school community is a gigantic task and cannot be the responsibility of any single department or organisation. The professional services and the government services have introduced radical changes, most of which are to the benefit of the learners. But the question that needs to be answered is whether they can really do it on their own.

1.1.5 What is envisaged in order to address barriers to learning?

The South African Constitution (RSA 1996) gives everyone in South Africa the constitutional right to basic education, with *basic education* defined fairly narrowly in terms of literacy and numeracy, rather than more broadly as a foundation for a lifetime of learning and citizenship, as suggested at the Education for All (EFA) Conference in Jomtien (UNESCO 2001a:17).

Whilst South Africa has an obligation to deliver quality education to all learners, children and adults, the school community also has an obligation to ensure that home and community systems provide the necessary nurturing and support for these learners. The South African Schools Act (DoE(c) 1996) implies that parents/caregivers should take responsibility for the school and that parents/caregivers should become more involved. Already in 1988 Epstein (:59) stated:

It is now becoming more widely accepted that positive parent involvement and partnership with schools is a pre-requisite of effective schooling and that cooperation between home and school can raise educational achievement.

At the same time, the previous Minister of Education, Dr Kader Asmal had a dream of 'making schools the centre of community life' (DoE 1999(a):5). This implies community activities within the school grounds and an effort to embrace the school community, making it an integral part of the school. This might assist in bringing together different systems which, in the past, were separated.

Even if schools wanted to focus on attaining narrow educational goals, it has been shown in this discussion that social factors of which the origins lie both within and outside the school environment impact on the learning process. Schools therefore have to take account of, act upon, and work around these factors. At the same time it is clear from policy documents that the state regards its citizens as vested with responsibilities themselves. Parents and caretakers, civil society and communities – in other words, the school community – also need to be active in producing an environment that is conducive to learning. Finally, the school community needs to be integrated into and benefit from the resources and services that schools offer. This synergy seems to suggest that the idea of the school is under review. And if this synergy could be realised, it may assist in closing the gaps between systems, thereby contributing to addressing barriers to learning for all.

The fact that Gauteng Province has now for the second time appointed a former MEC of Social Services and Community Development as MEC for Education could be a sign of the changing role of schools. The way in which the role of schools is being re-articulated is also evident from the way in which the Deputy Minister of Education talks about empowering educators to cope with the HIV/AIDS pandemic by '...doing things we did not do before or in ways we did not follow before' (Mangena 2002:3). It is especially in the fight against HIV/AIDS that the new approach is most evident. In a presentation on HIV/AIDS by the Chief Executive Officer of the GDE, he stated that 'capacity must be developed to support infected and affected employees and learners' (Petje 2002). This was also confirmed at a conference on HIV/AIDS at Gallagher Estates in Midrand, Gauteng, for the education sector, when it was concluded that education is the principal line of defence for the protection of society against AIDS (GDE(a) 2002:3):

The education sector can – and must – work in a coalition with partners that include all government departments and in particular the Department of Health, parents, learners, learning institutions and educators, the media, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), teacher associations, as well as student-, faith- and community-based organisations (own insertion).

But there are also other areas in which the discourse of multi-disciplinary intervention and community involvement has become more pronounced. The Jomtien Declaration (1990) in UNESCO 2001a:17, 18) pledges that the scope of basic education should be broadened by calling upon families, communities, early childhood care organisations, literacy programmes, non-formal education programmes, libraries, the media and a wide range of other delivery systems to assist with basic education in terms of life skills that will build, develop and lay the foundation for further personal development.

The Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa (HRDS 2001) is based on the principle of linking education and training to the very basic needs within society. This country should 'initiate an integrated programme to tackle skills shortages and provide a plan to ensure that people are better equipped to participate fully in society, to be able to find or create work, and to benefit fairly from it' (HRDS 2001:5). Mr Kgalema Motlanthe, secretary-general of the African National Congress (ANC) argues that the SETAS do not cater for the illiterate (Rossouw 2004:17) and argues that there should be other ways to develop 'these people' (quote), and to prepare them for work opportunities. If the 'basic need' in the community is the need for emotional wellbeing, then 'basic education' should cater for that need.

Recent legislation states that parents should be 'mobilised' to 'assist' the schools. The White Paper on Special Needs Education (DoE 2001b), the *Tirisano* Document (DoE 1999b), the HIV/AIDS Schools Policy (DoE 1996b) mention the 'mobilisation of the community', but this depends on *ad hoc* initiatives with no substance or legislative support.

The question posed here is: Is it not time that a holistic view be adopted in which learners, educators and parents are equally enabled, supported and protected and where the health and wellness of the parents and the school community form part of the broader strategy to address multiple issues of concern, including barriers to learning?

1.2 RATIONALE

1.2.1 Factors giving rise to the study

Against this backdrop the argument outlined so far is that there is a need to deal with the emotional health problems of the whole school community. Within the local setting, where South Africa's turbulent history together with present day value confusions still impact on relationships, levels of crime, violence and unemployment, the building and establishing of harmonious relationships between all systems should take first priority.

Unfortunately, there is a tendency to see programmes and services to promote health development and emotional health as a supplementary item on the school agenda (*Barriers to Learning* 2000c:5). It is generally accepted that the core role of the school is to educate and there is concern that these other activities will absorb resources required for this primary function. While this response is perhaps to be expected, since 'schools are after all, not in the mental health or social service business' (*Barriers to Learning* 1999:3), the result is a marginalisation of all such activities.

Drawing on recent local and international developments, it is evident that a response to barriers to learning should be based on models of cooperation and coalition, and of collaboration and integration, in which all work together towards a common goal. These models should encompass the various state departments and organisations, organisations outside the state, the parent community and the business community.

The idea propagated by Prof. Kader Asmal (see section 1.1.5) to bring the community into the school coupled with a broader understanding of the constitutional right to basic education, possibly opens up a way for schools to begin thinking about how they can carve out a role for themselves within such a framework. By starting to think in terms of linking learner support, employee support and parent support with the country's Human Resource Development Strategy it might be that one could get more than was hoped for.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The legacy of isolated cultural communities, segregated living areas, different languages, many religions, economic classes with huge disparities between each of the classes, and separate schools, together with a myriad of other social factors characterising our society affected inter- and intra-relationships. To work across disciplines and across various sectors is a strategy new to the South African society. It has been implemented with such vigour over the past ten years that one should ask whether it is indeed the best way of achieving our goals.

The ideal of 'improved quality of education in terms of better facilities, better trained educators, improved methods of teaching, improved school conditions, better motivated learners and improved discipline' (DoE 1999b) may be jeopardized if we do not also give the people of South Africa the opportunity of developing mechanisms to deal with adverse factors, to become resilient in the face of such barriers. At the same time all possible strategies should be applied to address, remove or change these negative factors. Socio-emotional disturbances such as crime, poverty, child abuse, moral decay, HIV/AIDS, racism, and unemployment may seriously impede the learning process and learner performance and require an intervention to 'enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life' (World Health Organisation [WHO] 1997:1).

Given the severity of deprivation, violence and trauma marking the social milieu in which learning takes place as outlined so far, it is evident that the normal school programme does not really cater for children with this range of experiences. The previous and current Pre-Service Education and Training (PRESET) and In-Service Education and Training (INSET) do not prepare educators to support these learners, nor are the psychological services in this country making a real contribution in terms of building the emotional health of the whole country. The training of educators is curriculum-based while the psychological services still prefer to work on a one-to-one basis, in spite of various efforts to change this. The education system is not fully geared to provide the necessary support

for these learners in the course of executing its normal line function activities. Yet, a response to the needs of these children from the education system is essential, as research findings are fairly consistent in their claim that 'the nurturing of a child becomes imperative for both teachers and parents' (Langa 1999:149). This notion is widely supported by the literature (Barriers to Learning 2000a; Welch & Sheridan 1995; Weeks 2000).

In line with the above discussion, the problem addressed in this research can be described as follows:

How can multi-disciplinary programmes be utilised to address successfully emotional barriers to learning?

1.3.1 Research questions

The primary research question that guides this research is the following:

How can the state and the whole school community mutually assist one another in ensuring improved health and wellness for all, thereby breaking down emotional barriers to learning?

The secondary research questions that guide this research are the following:

- Why does the present status of the health and wellbeing of the whole school community pose a threat to quality education for all?
- Who should take responsibility for addressing social and emotional barriers to learning?
- Which programmes or strategies can be used to address social and emotional barriers to learning?

Other questions guiding this research are outlined below. Some of these questions are answered by means of a literature review and documentary study, whilst the case study of a particular network of support programmes in the Tshwane Metropole is used to provide answers to the others. The questions are:

- What kind of programmes have successfully been implemented nationally and internationally to address social and emotional barriers to learning?
- Can the health and wellness of the learners be enhanced without addressing the health and wellness of the adults in the learners' lives?

1.4 THE AIM OF THIS RESEARCH

This research project has three primary aims. These are:

- To analyse the roles and responsibilities of the state, the community, the parent and the learner in addressing barriers to learning;
- To outline a possible model for enhancing the health and wellness of the whole school community;
- To determine whether the multi-disciplinary approach is the most suitable approach.

The following section briefly introduces the research framework and describes the components of the research report.

1.5 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND DESIGN

1.5.1 Research methodology

In order to achieve its objectives, this study draws primarily on qualitative research methodologies. According to Strauss and Corbin (in Van Wyk 1996:127) qualitative research can be defined as:

Any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification.

In the social sciences and in education there are social phenomena that cannot easily be described by numerical data and for which it is more appropriate to collect data through observation, description and recording. In this research a triangulation of methodologies was used, including the following:

- A literature study was conducted in order to gain insight and to 'place the research project in a context and demonstrate its deliverance by making connection to a body of knowledge' (Neuman 1997:89).
- A documentary study was undertaken to give added value and assist in gaining insight into recommendations regarding the multi-disciplinary approach.
- The qualitative study took the form of a case study and included semi-structured interviews with individual participants as well as a focus group interview with a mixed parent/educator group. The researcher was an active participant, which contributed to a richness of insight into this phenomenon.

- Project documents were used to verify and illuminate some of the data (see Annexure A). Data were also obtained from field notes.

The case study drew on a particular network of support programmes in the Tshwane Metropolitan Council that will be examined and described in order to explore how a multi-disciplinary programme may be implemented.

After collecting relevant data about this case study and extracting evidence from those documents, certain themes were identified. These were further explored by means of interviews held with individuals who were participants in the project. By embedding the insights within the existing body of present research findings, the researcher conducted further exploration for similarities and differences.

In identifying which respondents to include in the sample of persons to interview in the case under study, the following factors were considered:

- Quota sampling was used in the first selection based on the different groupings that participated or were involved in the project and on the role they played within their own organisation. This kind of sampling was also used to ensure a wide spread of educational qualifications, race and gender.
- The relatively small sample cannot be said to be representative of all the involved service providers and role-players and is not representative of any other project, but it yielded rich descriptive data (Van Wyk 1996:13). This kind of sampling is called theoretical sampling because it is guided by the researcher's developing theory (Neuman 1997:370).
- The purposeful selection technique was applied to select participants who, on the basis of previous experience, would be in a position to compare different systems. Based on the above, five respondents were selected for in-depth interviews and one group of parents/educators who completed the parenting course for the focus group interview.

These were the factors that had been considered when respondents were selected. But because the research design is qualitative, rather than quantitative, these factors were only used as guidelines. The aim was not to identify a representative sample in the narrow sense of the word. Babbie (1992:291) also indicates that field researchers should attempt to observe everything within their field of study; thus, in a sense, they do not sample at all. Such observations were, however, reflected in all the regular reports, letters, notes and submissions drafted in these four years.

The study has been approached from the position that there is no formal theory when the researcher starts the study, but that grounded theory will develop as the research progresses.

1.5.2 Definition of concepts

Child

The South African Constitution (RSA 1996) defines a child, as anybody under the age of eighteen and this study will uphold this generic definition. Reference to 'child' will therefore include any person between the ages of 0 and 18 if referred to in a general context.

Community

The UNHCR (2001(b):47) describes a community as:

A particular type of social interaction – typically characterised by a sense of belonging, a sense of purpose and common goal, a high degree of co-operation and participation in pursuing common goals, an inter-personal climate characterised by mutual respect, a sense of fraternity or fellowship.

For the purpose of this study, the school community will be regarded as constituting all people, groups, and systems that are in any way involved with, or affected by the local school or the school that their children attend.

Learner

A learner is defined as any person, whether a child or an adult, who receives education according to the South African Schools Act [SASA] (DoE 1996b:7). For the purpose of this dissertation a child will be referred to as learner if he/she is enrolled at a school or institution from Grade R to Grade 12 or attends any level used in schools for learners with special educational needs (LSEN schools).

Parents/caregivers

In the light of the one million orphans in this country and the broken family structures, this dissertation will use the double form of parent/caregiver wherever possible, unless it is particularly called 'parent' in some documents. This form will refer to those caregivers (sometimes children themselves) who are mainly responsible for the basic care of children enrolled in schools, or who will be enrolled in schools in the near future, irrespective of whether they are biological parents or caregivers.

1.5.3 Research framework

Chapter one provides the introduction, rationale and aims of the study. It situates the research problem by providing a brief profile of the South African social milieu. The chapter also summarises the research design and defines central concepts used in the study.

Chapter two comprises an overview of the theoretical framework on barriers to learning and socio-educational approaches. The chapter compares multi-disciplinary interventions against other possible models. Finally, this chapter describes various approaches and strategies around the enhancement of the health and wellbeing of the whole school community. These models are critically reviewed and analysed against the backdrop of South African society.

Chapter three describes the outcomes of a documentary study on international, national, and provincial guidelines on the protection of the rights of the children of this country. The role of the state, society, parents and the community is analysed in terms of this protection, support and development. The chapter also outlines the philosophy underpinning the adoption of the multi-disciplinary approach to child protection.

Chapter four describes the research design and methodology used in this study.

Chapter five comprises the empirical investigation that was conducted using a case study of a multi-disciplinary project on health and wellness in the Tshwane Metropolis from 1998 through to 2001, and which still continues in different forms at present. It is presented to illuminate aspects relating to the practical implementation of a programme on health and wellness that was initiated and executed across state departments and also involved non-state role-players.

Chapter six concludes the study by describing the research results. It consists of a summary of findings, leading up to conclusions and recommendations towards a model emanating from this study. In this chapter, cross validation and literature control were used to develop an outline towards a model for enhancing the health and wellbeing of the whole school community, thereby addressing barriers to learning. The chapter also outlines areas and questions that should be illuminated by further research.

1.6 CONCLUSION

There are many factors, emanating from both the past and the present, that give rise to great concern regarding the emotional wellbeing of the whole school community and the effect thereof on learning and the development of the learner. The profile of South Africa illuminated the fact that there is a lack of interaction and a lack of integration between many systems in the broader society as well as in the world of the learner. The fragmentation of relationships does not seem to contribute to good learning practices.

Hence, improving the health and wellness of the whole school community is a daunting task. It cannot be the responsibility of any single department or organisation. Over the past few years a multi-disciplinary approach has been propagated extensively. This study constitutes an attempt to answer questions such as (1) why this approach has been propagated; (2) whether this approach is actually the best approach given the circumstances; and (3) whether multi-disciplinary programmes will be able to address emotional barriers to learning.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE OVERVIEW ON SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL BARRIERS TO LEARNING: TOWARDS A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

No more prizes for predicting the rain. Prizes only for building the ark.
(Lewis, V Gertner, Jr. in *Barriers to Learning* 2000b)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Extensive research has been undertaken over many years to find answers to an old question in the field of education: Why do some learners experience problems with learning, what are the causes of learning difficulties, and how can these be addressed?

Whilst these questions seem to be deceptively simple, attempts to answer them have given rise to an expansive literature straddling a number of disciplines. New theoretical approaches have been developed and dominant theoretical approaches have been replaced. This has been the result of a series of historical developments, a growing body of research on the theme, the application of models and theories in new contexts, advances made in other disciplines and critiques of the underlying assumptions and social consequences of existing theories. These developments have led to a broadened understanding of what barriers to learning are and how these are defined.

This study supports an expanded definition of barriers to learning. Barriers to learning are defined as any factor or action or lack of action, including biological, social, mental and material, that directly or indirectly limits a learner's ability to achieve optimally in an educational context. Social and emotional barriers to learning are defined as any interaction or lack of interaction that leads to disharmonious relationships between people in the ecological systems and hence limits the ability of the learner to take an active role in his or her own development.

Questions about barriers to learning arise in various sub-disciplines in the field of educational studies, including educational management, curriculum studies, inclusion studies, education policy studies and special needs education. In order to produce an educational response to the phenomenon of barriers to learning, educationists have incorporated and adapted a broad range of theories developed in different disciplines, including sociology, psychology, organisation studies, anthropology and criminology.

At the same time, however, the notion of barriers to learning has been studied from the vantage point of other disciplines. This is because barriers to learning do not only arise from and cannot be addressed adequately solely within the system of education itself. Contemporary understandings of barriers to learning underscore the relationship between problems learners encounter in the educational setting and other social factors, such as poverty, xenophobia, and child abuse. At the same time, scholars and practitioners who work in fields as diverse as welfare, safety and security, human rights and education are all involved in realising the project of a modern democratic state: to put in place the necessary structures and facilitate a social environment in which each child is protected, supported and can develop optimally.

The fragmentation into different disciplines – each with its own theoretical history and disciplinary language – of what is referred to here as the broad field of study that speaks to the issue of barriers to learning, on the one hand, and the broad range of issues that are included under the rubric of barriers to learning on the other, makes it very difficult to provide a summary of the central debates and overarching set of theories that have come to shape the field. But, in order to facilitate interdisciplinary discussion, and to outline the theoretical framework within which this study is embedded, an attempt is made here to do so.

It is argued here that our understanding of the phenomenon of barriers to learning has been fundamentally shaped by two schools of thought. The first of these, usually referred to as the ‘medical view’, originated in the life sciences and humanities and postulates that *intrinsic* physical, psychological or neurological factors are the cause of learning problems. The second school of thought developed from an attempt to insert debates on barriers to learning within the field of social theory. Drawing on systems theory, this school argues that *extrinsic* factors in the social environment are the reasons for academic underachievement.

In order to understand why the two different approaches have developed and to situate current understandings within the debate, it is necessary to review briefly the context in which these theories originated. The first school of thought developed mainly in developed countries with homogenous populations, low levels of economic inequality and under conditions of a strong and interventionist state. The second school of thought developed when the education system in societies in the new world, in postcolonial states, as well as in some developed countries came under pressure and presented problems that affected learners’ ability to learn that could not be adequately explained or addressed by the

medical view. These societies were marked by one or more of the following: high levels of inequality, multicultural populations, and limited state resources. In these contexts, it became evident that groups of learners with a shared characteristic or characteristics did not perform optimally in the education system. Hence, the individualistic approach of the medical view with its focus on intrinsic factors did not seem to account for this phenomenon. Theorists therefore turned to social theory to expand the definition of barriers to learning and to account for the relationship between social phenomena and demonstrated barriers to learning. In addition, because barriers to learning in these contexts affected larger numbers of learners in contexts where state resources were limited, the expensive model of intervention associated with the first school of thought could no longer be replicated. But what both schools of thought had in common was a largely positivist approach, with an emphasis on causal relationships situated in a modernist project.

From the 1960s a number of factors contributed to sustained critiques of these two models and led to the development of new approaches. These factors included a strong critique of structuralism and positivism because of its disregard for local context, its meta-theoretical claims, and its use of explanatory models inappropriate for complex social phenomena; a resultant retreat from meta-theory; economic change that saw the decline of the welfare state; the rise of cultural theory; political critiques of structuralism that argue that it pays little attention to questions of agency, overemphasises hierarchical and formal structures and reduces social actors to victims; the development of processes aimed at the deepening of democracy and the emphasis on 'participatory' democracy; the development of management sciences and organisation theory; and the emergence of a strong human rights discourse (Sadovnik 2004: 1-12; OJJDP 2000:3, 4).

Hence, a diverse group of theories, which can be described broadly as organic, ecological and enabling, emerged. These theories place a strong emphasis on a holistic approach to addressing barriers to learning. These theories cast new light on our understanding of the phenomenon of barriers to learning. Whilst ecological theories do not reject many of the advances and claims made by the earlier theories, they deepen existing explanations of the phenomenon of barriers to learning and can be said to add another dimension (Daniels & Perry 2003:2).

According to this group of theories, focusing on either *intrinsic* factors or *extrinsic* factors as the cause of barriers to learning is inadequate. This is because barriers to learning are the result of complex social processes that are not easily reduced to mere cause and effect relationships. Secondly, such approaches underplay the importance of including in the debate on barriers to learning the child as social being. The latter refers to the child-in-context, the child embedded in sets of social relationships. Thirdly, this approach is suspicious of the contribution of problem diagnosis (i.e. as either intrinsic or extrinsic) to the effective development of appropriate responses to address barriers to learning. This is because both these theories situate the responsibility for addressing barriers to learning outside the immediate world of the learner. Hence, if these approaches fail, there are no resources that the learner can draw on. Therefore, these theories advocate an approach that foregrounds social interrelationships and is cognisant of and embedded in the local context. It regards the strengthening of social relationships in the ecology of the learner as a central strategy for addressing social and emotional barriers to learning.

This group of theories has subsequently been modified to include the strengths of systems theory approaches. The ecological systems view has become the dominant theoretical approach adopted by scholars interested in not only explaining but also addressing barriers to learning.

The following section offers a short overview of the four theoretical approaches, outlined above and that constitute different attempts to answer the question of why learners experience problems with learning. The *medical view* is located in the life sciences/humanities paradigm, whilst *systems theory*, *ecological theory* and *ecological systems theory* can be described as social theories.

In essence, it is argued here that over the last few decades the contours of the debate on why learners experience difficulties in learning have changed.

Initially this question was posed only by scholars and practitioners who focused on individual learners in the schooling system who demonstrated specific problems affecting their ability to cope in the educational setting. Hence, the idea of 'learning disabilities' was coined. The answer to the question was therefore that learners experience difficulties in learning because they have learning disabilities. In order to address this problem, it was the responsibility of the state to put in place mechanisms to diagnose the disability and to provide specialised treatment for learners identified with learning disabilities.

But the learning disability paradigm came under pressure for a number of reasons: (1) this medical discourse was socially debilitating, because it stigmatised learners, (2) research pointed to the negative effects of social phenomena such as social inequality and discrimination on the ability of groups of learners to succeed. Hence, the very idea of 'learning disability' or 'learning problem' was turned on its head and re-cast as 'barriers to learning'. The notion of barriers to learning casts the net wide to include anything that hinders the child from performing optimally. To address barriers to learning, the attention had to shift from treatment to prevention. The responsibility of the state was therefore extended. In particular, the state also had to consider how it structurally produced barriers to learning. This included unequal resource provision, inadequate management, poor training, lack of infrastructure and so forth. Hence, state systems had to be strengthened and restructured, and discriminatory practices changed. At the same time, the state had to act on its responsibility to protect children from risks posed by social forces external to the state. Each of the state apparatuses protects children through its own set of practices. In the Department of Education, the need to protect learners gave rise to curricular and co-curricular programmes focused on countering risk by equipping learners with knowledge and skills to deal with these risks.

Yet, the state and its resource-base are always finite. Hence, an over-reliance on state structures to address barriers to learning always leaves the child more vulnerable and less protected than if he or she was protected and supported by structures other than the state. Hence, a counter position developed advocating parents and communities should have a more pronounced role in prevention strategies. In other words, prevention should not only be initiated by the state, but should also develop from the bottom-up, that is, from local communities. It is argued that this is a more comprehensive response to barriers to learning, because the focus is on enabling and empowering communities and learners to play a larger role in and to take on increased responsibility for their own development. It is regarded as a more holistic response, since its focus is not the child, but the child-as-social-being, that is, a child embedded in a series of interrelationships.

The reality is, however, that many communities are ill equipped to take on these kinds of responsibilities. The challenge is therefore to develop a model in which the state takes on the task of empowering and enabling communities to play a larger role and to take on more responsibilities with regard to the protection and support of their children, but that does not lead to either a retreat by the state from its responsibilities or to a stifling of local initiatives.

2.2 THEORETICAL APPROACHES

2.2.1 The medical theories: A problem-focused approach

According to this set of theories, sometimes also referred to as the Individual Pupil View, barriers to learning are *intrinsic* to the learner and may be found in the physical, mental, psychological or emotional make-up of the learner. Medical theories on barriers to learning advocate a problem-focused approach, or a medical deficit approach, since intervention is based on the assumption that there is an established and identifiable *problem*, and that the problem manifests itself in the *individual*.

2.2.1.1 Associated intervention mode: treatment

The intervention mode associated with this theoretical point of departure is treatment. This is because medical or psychological theories on barriers to learning are problem-focused and have as their starting point the idea that an established and identifiable problem exists that can and should be 'treated'. The approach is therefore reactive, since it is applied only after a 'learning problem' has been identified. As a result, all interventions take place on what is known as tertiary intervention level, that is after diagnosis, rather than at the primary intervention level (all learners) or secondary intervention level (learners at risk). These theories place emphasis on the correct diagnosis of the problem.

Interventions comprise of providing aid that is focused on and tailored for the problem the learner experiences. But, as the medical view holds, this aid can only be provided by a specialist educator for learners with special education needs, therapist or medical practitioner.

In terms of the implementation of this intervention within the formal education system, and more specifically the context of schooling, two models historically emerged. First, because these interventions were specialist-driven, they fell to a large extent outside the schooling system. The learner was taken out of the school or classroom, and into the office or consulting room of the professional. But, in cases where the nature of the learning problem was diagnosed and the dominant theory held that the learner could not be accommodated in the schooling system, the learner was removed from mainstream schooling and referred to special schools that were set up for LSEN and that brought the services of experts into the school. Hence the model of specialist intervention aimed at the

individual was replicated in the form of specialist intervention aimed at the group, but still with a strong treatment component.

Interventions based on the treatment mode are described as tertiary interventions, because they are offered by experts to a selected group of learners with an already identified problem and the mode relies on the services of experts.

2.2.1.2 *Limits of the approach*

With its focus on *intrinsic* problems and problem-specific solutions, this approach is not responsive to the social or emotional aspects of barriers to learning, except to the extent that these are part of the identified problem itself. In other words, social context, the impact of broader social systems and the importance of interrelationships are not integral to the way in which barriers to learning are understood. Also, by labelling the child as 'having a problem' the learner may be psychologically and emotionally affected. That is why this approach has been found to have adverse effects on the learner that may even lead to the learner developing further barriers to learning.

This theoretical approach does not deem the learner's parents, family, peers and community members as really qualified to be active members of the intervention process or to provide assistance (Engelbrecht & Green 2001:18). Therefore, there is more often than not very little reciprocal interaction between the learner and the professional or the parents and the professional. Hence, it does not see as its aim to encourage or enable the development and mobilisation of more human resources in order to provide enhanced support or assistance for the learner. This is because its focus on the individual and the problem that must be treated precludes it from investing in the development of other role-players in the learner's life as part of the treatment. It also diminishes the responsibility of the other ecological systems (for example parents, educators, the school and the learner) for producing and addressing the barrier to learning.

In the process of intervention, the learner is viewed as a passive receiver of inputs (De Boer (in Kapp 1991:29). Simplistically stated, or in its most conservative form, the learner is viewed as the victim of his/her situation. Hence, it places a ceiling on the achievements expected from the learner.

The support provided to the learner with the identified problem is usually located within a single discipline and the learner can depend on a multi-faceted intervention only if he/she presents a multi-faceted 'disability'. The multi-disciplinary team-approach is sometimes used, but usually at the diagnostic phase or when professionals from different disciplines give their opinion about the management of the problem. Pfeiffer (in Termini 1991:389) found that in cases where the multi-disciplinary team-approach is used, each discipline tends to overrate its own importance and team members are inclined to protect their own territory.

In summary, the drawbacks of this problem-focused approach outweigh its advantages. It is particularly inappropriate in contexts where large numbers of learners experience learning problems. It relies heavily on expertise, is highly individualistic, and is not well suited to deal with complex problems that do not neatly fall into a single category. Finally, individual pupil approaches used by the medical views are very limited and have little to offer in terms of prevention. Ford (2002:7) states that there should be a way of dealing with barriers to learning without adding more barriers.

Whilst this theory no longer holds much sway, it does not mean that the idea of specialist intervention and treatment has been discredited completely. The knowledge base that specialists use to intervene in learning problems remains highly valued and the role of the medical, psychological and other specialists with a focus on treatment is still widely acknowledged. Rather, the reductionist theoretical assumptions that underpin this approach and which do not take account of the child-as-social-being have been the focus of criticism, coupled with the recognition of the impossibility of making available these services on large scale due to their high costs.

Many components of what can be regarded as the medical view's tertiary intervention model are still an important part of responses to barriers to learning. But these interventions have to take place in different contexts and on different terms. For example, developments in fields such as Philosophy of Education and Sociology of Education have led to a questioning of the social implications of continuing to support a model in which children with identified problems are redirected to LSEN schools, if these children later have to take up their place in the ordinary social world. The idea of inclusion has therefore been developed as a counter to LSEN, but the role of treatment is not denied.

2.2.2 Systems theory: A risk-focused approach

From the vantage point of sociology, the disciplinary home of systems theory, education is seen as sub-system of society and as nestled in between other sub-systems of society. Because of its focus on the interrelatedness of these systems, these theories argue that what is happening in the one sub-system will also impact on the other sub-systems. And as a result of its structuralist inclination, this body of theories posits that learning problems are the result of *extrinsic* factors. These extrinsic factors are located within a social system. Therefore, this body of theory maintains that barriers to learning are manifestations of a breakdown within social systems. Whereas the medical theories turn to the individual for the explanation and treatment of the problem, approaches informed by systems theory turn their attention to society to find explanations for the phenomenon of barriers to learning and advocate systemic interventions in response to risks identified in society.

A varied body of research has been produced that examines the phenomenon of barriers to learning by focusing on factors external to the learner that influence his/her learning success. Analyses of barriers to learning informed by systems theory have high purchase in contexts where larger *social phenomena* affect discrete groups of people. In the South African context, for example, Du Plessis, Naude & Viljoen (2003:20) argue that a large proportion of learners in South Africa 'experience special educational needs as a result of factors relating to *socio-economic* disadvantage and educational deprivation'. Donald (1993:140) also explains how poverty, lack of educational support and inadequate informal literacy experiences can form barriers to learning.

The development of this set of theories further benefited from psycho-social and socio-analytical literatures that were brought to bear on learning problems. In particular, these theoretical advances demonstrated a link between the existence of certain social phenomena and the effects thereof on the emotional wellbeing and the self-image of the learner. In other words, it argues that the manifested learning problem may in fact be a secondary problem that is derived from a primary problem, namely a lack of self-esteem or poor emotional wellbeing. Factors identified include discriminatory political structures and/or adverse socio-economical structures that cause behavioural and cognitive barriers to learning.

For example, theorists subscribing to the historical view argue that a history of discrimination against one particular group may lead to the underachievement of that particular group (Badenhorst 1998:111). Another example is the development of social disorganisation theory, a branch of theory that accounts for problems that occur in learning situations at times when major societal changes are taking place. Lauer (in Lauer & Ballantine 1993:12) describes the situation that occurs at such times as 'a state that signals change because people, for one reason or another, no longer share a set of expectations and behaviour'. Hence, in a period of transition, such as South Africa's political transformation, entire sets of values, beliefs and identities held by individuals and groups collide, or are upset, replaced, or discarded. This produces conditions of fundamental or radical uncertainty, which have implications for learning. Finally, socio-emotional disturbance theory states that when structures, systems or patterns of behaviour affect the learner emotionally, or affect his/her self-esteem, then barriers to learning will develop (Wood 1996:126). In other words, macro structures that regulate exclusion and inclusion, or produce certain patterns of behaviour, may manifest in learning difficulties in the individuals or groups that were subjected to that experience, such as refugee children, girl children in contexts where educational opportunity and social mobility are gendered, learners with special educational needs, or black learners that were denied access to exclusively white schools.

Not all explanations of learning problems are macro level explanations as the ones above, but they have in common a reference to the impact of macro level system. For example, more localised theory on barriers to learning includes research that points to failures in *school systems*. Researchers found that under-qualified educators or under-resourced schools, an inflexible curriculum or the exclusion of certain learners in mainstream schools played a role in learners not benefiting from the learning process (Booth & Ainscow 1998; Roaf & Bines (eds) 1989; Fulcher 1989). Other researchers ascribed poor academic achievement to the situation at the *home* of the learner (Bonferbrenner 1990; Cochran 1989; Kapp 1991; Epstein 1988). Factors such as illiterate parents, the socio-economic position of the family, or the parenting style adopted by learners' parents were found to have an effect on learning. In these cases explanations for parent illiteracy or poor social circumstances in the home of the learner are related to failures elsewhere in the social system, such as the economic system, which perpetuates economic inequality, or the welfare system, which is under resourced.

Systems theory has been influenced largely by a functionalist view of society. It posits the social world as an integrated whole and each of the smaller parts as interlinked in such a way that a change in any part will also affect the other parts. Because systems theories are generally accompanied by a macro level theoretical analysis, systems theories place emphasis on the hierarchical relationship between various systems. Moreover because the notion of systems is central to this school of thought, formalised systems, such as state systems, receive more attention than the less tangible, informal 'systems' that operate on lower levels.

Applied to the field of education, systems theory views education as a social structure that has as its primary responsibility the education of the child. But because it views society as operating through a complex and interlinking number of systems, and because it situates the cause of barriers to learning in extrinsic factors, it recognises that the health and emotional wellbeing of the child is not the sole responsibility of the education department. Hence, it recognises that other formal social structures also have their own particular roles and functions. The approach is based on the reasoning that if all structures and procedures are in place, it will together provide the learner with what he/she needs in order to fully develop.

2.2.2.1 *Associated intervention mode: prevention and intervention programmes and system enhancement*

Because of the expanded definition of barriers to learning, the emphasis in intervention in systems theory as applied to the context of barriers to learning is *prevention*. Interventions are aimed at responding to risks posed to learners by extrinsic factors. Interventions in barriers to learning informed by systems theory therefore comprise a two-pronged approach, with preference given to pro-active strategies aimed at prevention.

On the one hand, this theoretical approach places emphasis on the importance of a generic, ongoing process of developing and strengthening the structure of the education system, because of the understanding that weaknesses in this system pose threats to the learner. Hence, a focus on organisation development and improved education management on all levels of the education system is core to systems theory approaches.

On the other hand, because this approach is risk-focused, interventions also comprise a specific response to risk. Having identified risks, it focuses on the development of a series of programmes aimed at *preventing* a certain risk from developing into a barrier to

learning, by raising awareness and providing learners with knowledge. Programmes are also developed for learners who are identified to be at risk. These programmes focus on the transfer of knowledge about the risk, but also include values and skills components.

Hence, the specific mode of intervention in this model is *prevention* and *intervention* through programmes and the generic mode of intervention is system enhancement through ongoing organisational development and improved education management.

(a) *System enhancement*

Two central components of system enhancement are information flow (communication) and training.

With its emphasis on higher level systems, which emanates from the understanding of the cascading effect of systemic changes from the higher level to lower level systems, subscribers to a systems theory approach would argue that the higher systems within the system of formal education need to be structured in such a way as to ensure reciprocal data flow between the higher levels and lower levels systems in the chain of command.

In this way, it is argued, risks will be identified and strategic plans will be devised to address these risks. Katz and Kahn (in Dowling & Osborne 1985:3) illustrate this approach by invoking the metaphor of a living cell that needs inflows and outflows to be able to stay alive, to align itself and to restore the equilibrium.

When this metaphor is applied to a system, such as the education system, the flows that are required to keep the cell (i.e. the system) alive are comprised of reporting structures, monitoring structures, evaluation procedures and training interventions. These structures and procedures provide the necessary links and connections between the various parts of the system.

The following figure (Figure 2.1) indicates the linear, top-down approach where the higher systems identify the needs; prescribe the interventions while the communication strategies and relationships do not accommodate upward feedback. In Figure 2.2, indicating the interaction between the macro levels, the lack of upward feedback is again accentuated, even though the networking between departments may contribute to the identification of possible societal needs. Figure 2.3 points to a more holistic approach to needs identification, with no interaction between the lower systems.

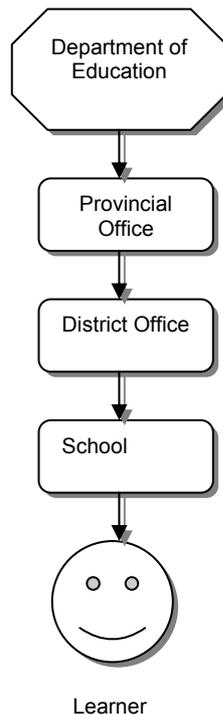


Figure 2.1
The systems model: Linear, hierarchical relationships

Training plays an important role in systems approaches, since it argues that each system and sub-system should be optimally developed to provide the best possible services, and in terms of education, the best possible protection to the learner. Through pre-service or in-service training, trainee educators and educators acquire professional skills for their careers as professional educators. Training is mainly conducted by specialists, for example, training at institutions of higher education, and takes place through normal chains of command, thus starting with the higher systems and cascading the training down to the lower systems.

Because systems are understood to be interrelated, it is argued that educational planning, policy, and programmes aimed at the protection of the learner, in order to be effective, need to be aligned with planning processes, policies and programmes that are developed in the other systems. Hence, a systemic approach argues that the responsibilities and power of a system of education cannot be viewed independently from other systems, and therefore places a premium on information flow between systems. Because systems theory tends to emphasise linear and hierarchical relationships, information-sharing and networking take place primarily between the higher levels of the systems.

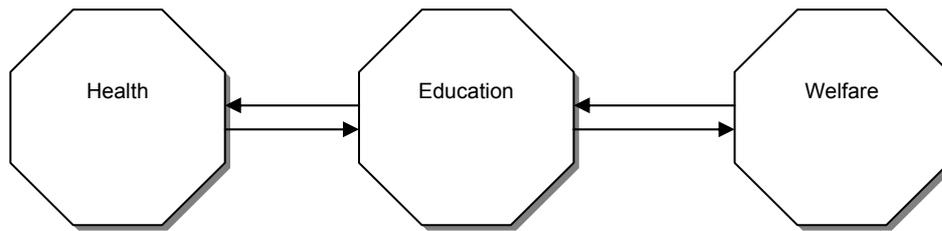


Figure 2.2

The systems model: Information-sharing between systems on macro level

The networking or information-sharing that takes place may give rise to new understandings, revised policies, new projects or specific programmes. Inputs are received and made by each of the systems. Moreover the output of the process is then cascaded down by each of the systems involved to the lower levels in the chain of command.

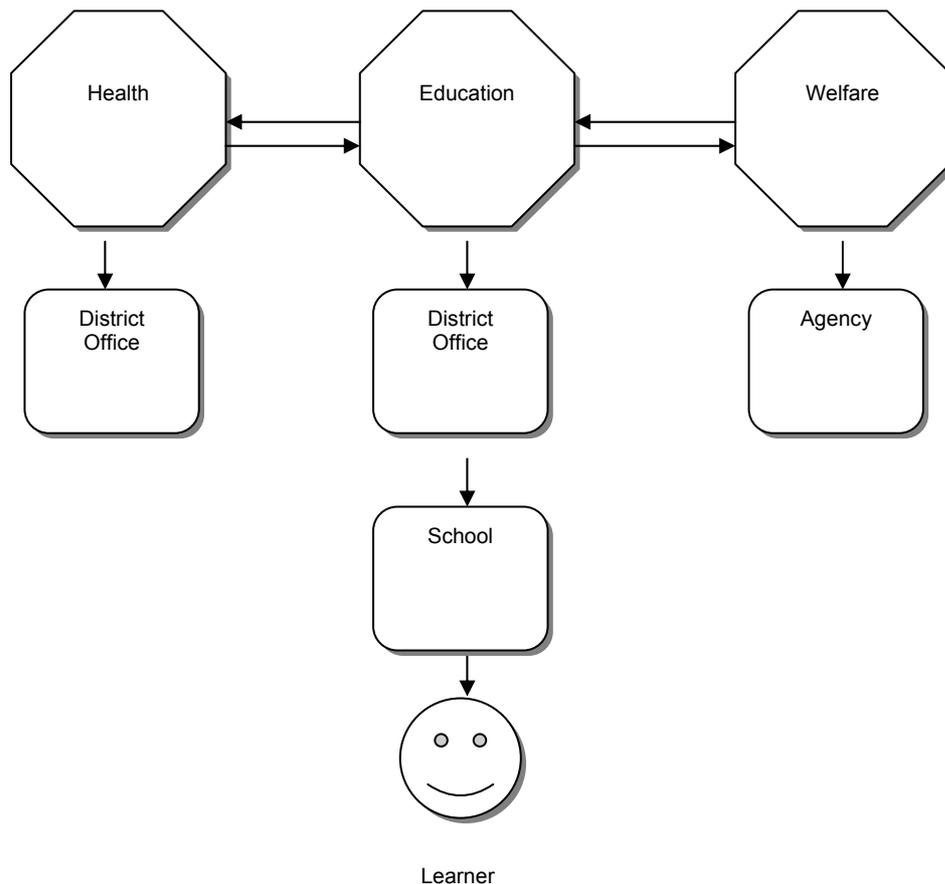


Figure 2.3

The systems model: Information-sharing and consultation between systems in the development of education policy that is then cascaded to lower levels in the system

Because this theoretical approach makes provision for interaction between different systems, it provides some scope for information-sharing and consultation between different systems and on different levels of each of the systems. The caveat is that the implementation of systems approaches lends itself more to information-sharing on the higher levels of each of the systems than on lower levels and that the level of penetration of this information flow is shallow.

Applying the principles of systems enhancement to the issue of barriers to learning would imply that communication and information-sharing take place at the higher level between the Department of Education and the other service departments that have as one of their foci issues related to the protection, support and development of the child. The format that this information flow takes may vary from limited information exchange to joint planning or projects. But full collaboration on multiple levels across the system cannot be achieved, since, ultimately systems integrity has to be maintained, and each of the service providers remains responsible for service delivery in its own system.

(b) *A programmatic intervention model*

In the context of the field of education, a response to barriers to learning includes of necessity an intervention that is directed to learners and that takes an educational form. Programmatic responses can broadly be categorised in the following three groups: (1) primary intervention (prevention) programmes; (2) secondary intervention programmes, and (3) tertiary intervention programmes. Programmes are developed on the higher levels of the education system, with or without input obtained from other structures.

(i) *Primary prevention programmes*

Primary prevention programmes are directed at all the learners in a particular grade or phase. The programmes are aimed at preventing a given risk from affecting the learner. By making learners aware of the consequences of particular actions, it is believed that they will refrain from getting involved in high risk behaviour, for example early sexual activity, drug abuse or bullying. Typical life skills programmes on such risks are presented to the learners by a specialist educator. Input is mainly one-directional, there are no others involved and there is usually very little reciprocity in the interaction (Botvin 1997:179-181).

Risks are dealt with singularly, for example substance abuse, child abuse and teenage pregnancy, while in effect all these risks may have been addressed by teaching skills such as assertiveness, conflict management or communication. But, whilst in core these programmes use risk-focused approaches with an emphasis on the *specific risk* at hand as well as the *specific audience* at risk, these primary intervention models do have the potential, albeit limited, to extend beyond these narrow confines and become enabling. This can be achieved if the prevention programme is not only knowledge-based, but combines knowledge with skills and values.

In systems approaches, primary prevention programmes are the main intervention mode. This is because primary prevention programmes are curriculum-driven. But because system integrity has to be maintained and the Department of Education is ultimately responsible for education delivery, programmes that are offered as part of the school curriculum are not multi-disciplinary, that is, planned collaboratively and offered jointly by specialists from all the service organisations. These programmes seldom target multiple problem behaviour and often focus on one particular problem, e.g. drug abuse. (Weissberg, RP, Caplan, M & Harwood, RL 1991:830-837).

(ii) *Secondary intervention programmes*

Secondary intervention programmes are directed at learners who find themselves in particularly risky situations or who already display certain characteristics and are therefore deemed at risk of developing learning problems. These programmes often fall within the cultural or language field. The American literature indicates that such intervention programmes are also presented to the parents of these learners, though this is not the general practice in South Africa (Bar-On & Parker 2000; Donmoyer & Kos 1993).

These interventions take the form of supplemental programmes or compensatory programmes (Kapp 1991:54) presented to a small group of learners who are at risk of developing learning problems. The idea underpinning this model is to compensate for any environmental or cultural 'lag' that may have influenced the learners' scholastic achievements negatively. Phrased differently, this kind of intervention is aimed at 'deliberately developing the child's stronger abilities or skills so that they may compensate for the existing deficiency' (Kapp1991:55). It was developed in the 1960s in the USA and later implemented by Israel and England. It may also take the form of extra-curricular or co-curricular activities. (Durlak 1995:463-465; Donmoyer & Kos 1993:12-16)

Interventions take place during school hours when learners are taken out of their classes, or when classes split to allow this kind of intervention. The same approach is used when learners are involved in extra-curricular activities. The latter is believed to assist in building self-esteem, in acquiring different skills, including social skills and psychological skills such as winning and losing, determination and so forth. These activities provide additional development opportunities for the learner and have the potential to enhance his or her emotional wellbeing. This kind of prevention provides the best results when it is focused on the pre-school group as part of a school-readiness programme.

Secondary intervention programmes are therefore tailored for learners who find themselves in similar situations, for example, learners in transition, learners who are new in the school, learners with a very low self-esteem or learners that demonstrate negative behaviour patterns, such as drug or substance abuse, bullying or aggressiveness and truancy. Weeks (2000:19) mentions the disadvantaged learners and describes them as 'learners whose education has fallen behind as a result of social, economical or political circumstances'. In South Africa this group will constitute 80% of learners. Such programmes are presented by professional teachers, or in privileged schools, by internal or external psychologists or therapists.

(iii) *Tertiary intervention programmes*

Tertiary intervention programmes are offered to learners with established learning problems. These take the form of small group intervention, working with learners with behaviour disorders, using both cognitive and behaviouristic approaches. Agencies, educational psychologists or therapists are called in, or the learners are referred to them for this kind of intervention.

Learners that fall in this group, needing tertiary intervention, are mainly those that have serious problems with, for example English as language of learning and teaching (COLTS), e.g. migrants. It will also involve learners who are suicidal, very ill, or who come from dysfunctional homes that are e.g. those that have parents suffering from substance abuse, or with a parent in jail, or learners that themselves have been involved in criminal activities. Such programmes serve as additional support and additional opportunity to discuss feelings. Such courses are offered within the school setting of the mainstream school. The bridging courses to universities are also examples of tertiary intervention with special focus on writing and/or reading. (Weeks 2000:19-21; Kapp 1991:54)

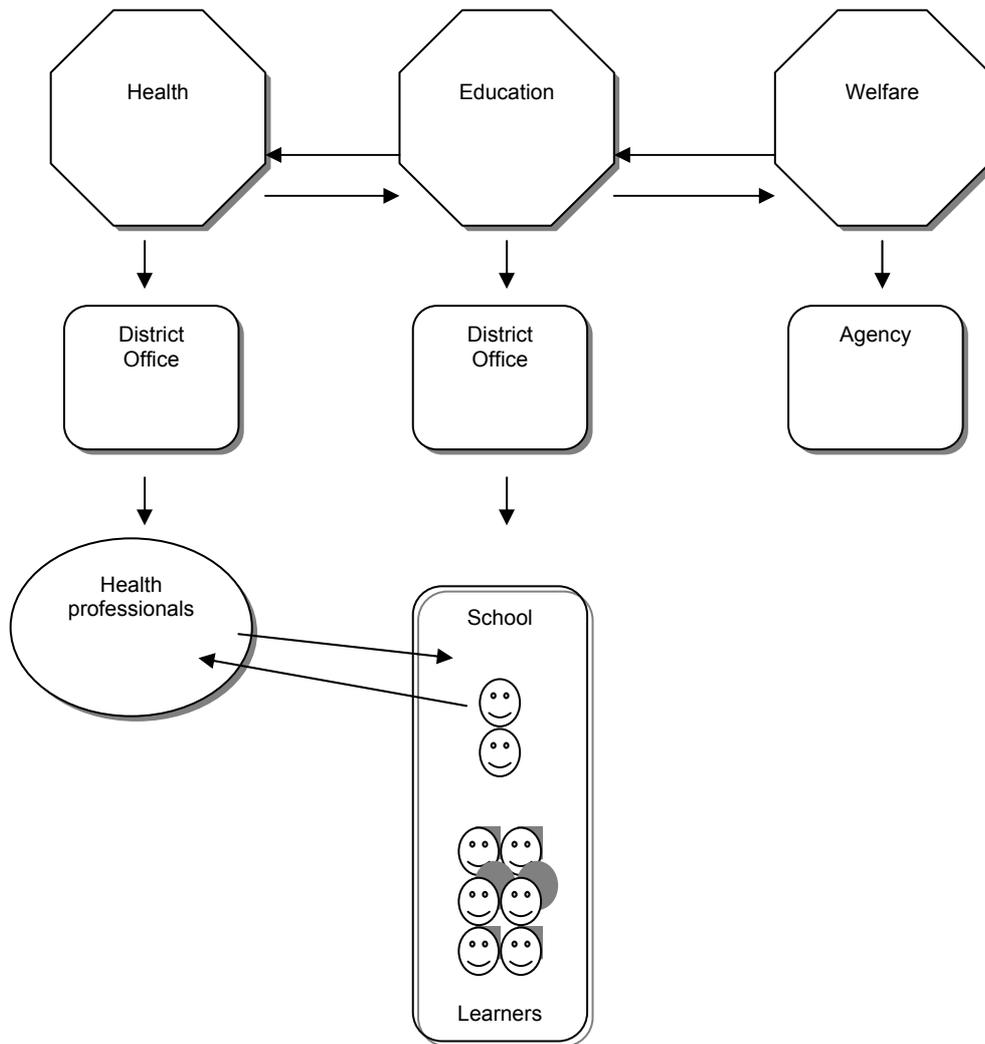


Figure 2.4
The systems model: Tertiary intervention programme

2.2.2.2 Limitations of this approach

Critiques of this approach apply to both the theoretical assumptions of the approach and its associated intervention mode.

On the positive side, sociological or systems theories have enabled researchers to think about and to address learning problems that affect groups rather than individuals. Learning barriers can, however, seldom be adequately explained by invoking a direct cause-effect relationship. These theories do not explain the many exceptions to the rule where learners excel academically in spite of a social milieu not conducive to learning. It does not take into consideration resilience in the face of negative sociological factors and it does not explain why learners with no obvious barriers in the social environment also

experience barriers to learning. Because the risk-focused approach advocated by theories emanates from the understanding that there exists a causal relationship between barriers to learning and social factors, the critique of the explanatory power of causality also casts doubt on the appropriateness of the risk-focused approach.

Another problem with this body of theories is that it overemphasises the impact of structure on the individual. If the medical view argued that the specialist will solve or arrest the problem identified in an individual learner, the systems theories argue that systemic interventions will limit or remove barriers to learning. The role and characteristics of the child are not theorised at all. He/she seems to have no choices at all and no ability to respond to the impact of social pressures except to internalise the strategies offered through systemic intervention.

A related problem is the fact that the role of individuals within systems is not explored. Systemic interventions are only possible because of individuals who take particular actions. The role of these actors within a system needs to be further explored.

Hence, systemic interventions, as rendered through this model, are protective and risk-focused, rather than enabling and resource-focused. While these theories may provide some solutions to the root causes of barriers to learning, these theories do not provide sufficient answers.

From the above it follows that if there are limitations to the theoretical approach, these also apply to the intervention mode.

The thinking underpinning modes of intervention in the systems theory approach is essentially a top-down approach. The role of higher level systems is over-emphasised and it results in a disregard for local context and for the abilities of local actors to find appropriate ways of responding to problems in their own contexts. The focus on linearity places limits on the way in which networking, coordination and collaborative relationships can develop across systems. Whilst in principle the systems approach encourages interrelationships across departments, the limitations imposed on these relationships by the internal structures of each of the systems – such as planning schedules, budgetary processes, procurement procedures and planning mechanisms – impede the ability of these relationships to develop into collaborative ones.

The systems approach is viewed by many scholars as a control-orientated management structure in which systems are hierarchically embedded. Critics maintain that whilst lower level systems are purported to be autonomous, they are *de facto* controlled by higher-level systems and can be described as authoritative and involuntary. Another objection is that institutions, in this case, schools, do not identify their own training needs, and that the government or a government department decides on the needs, the training model, and the service providers or trainers. Trainers come in from a 'specialist' level and they tend to adopt the hierarchical structure and a one-directional communication from 'those-who-know' to 'those-who-do-not-know' when conducting training. It takes initiative away from the local structures and prescribes content and methods. Finally, Perrow (in Adler & Gardner 1993:5) warns that there are costs associated with such an integrated approach and that the benefits are only presumed benefits. He finds that there are substantial increases in redundancy and uncoordinated activity.

In terms of the programmes, their risk-focused nature limits their potential to become enabling and empowering. As is the case in the medical view, a role for role-players in the child's ecology, such as his/her peers, parents and the community, is not constructed, partly because they are located outside the formal systems.

More specifically, research findings indicate that attempts at primary prevention often fail to produce permanent behaviour change. Generally, such interventions were found to produce very limited effects that do not last over time (Carter 1984 in Donmoyer & Kos 1993:13). Recent studies have however proved that the learners do benefit from these interventions. Durlak & Wells (1997:115) have actually found that there is substantial gain from such programmes and that the negative effects of primary prevention programmes were almost negligible. Only nine out of the 177 programmes assessed by Durlak proved to be harmful. Moreover, the negative results he found may not have been the result of the intervention approach, but of other factors. Weissberg, Caplanm and Howard (1991:833), for instance, consider that the negative results of such programmes may be due to the fact that many of these so-called prevention programs are unrealistically short, are poorly implemented, or fail to intervene simultaneously with the child and his or her other ecological systems or factors. Daro (2003:3) found that 'on balance most evaluations find significant, if not always substantial, gain in a child's knowledge.....and how to respond'.

Another limitation of the systems approach with regard to primary prevention programmes is that service departments, such as the police service, welfare and health – all of which have a demonstrated interest in primary prevention initiatives – do not have a coordinated vehicle through which to gain access to the learners they need to protect. This is because systems theory does not make provision for the delivery of multi-disciplinary programmes by multi-disciplinary teams to schools. Whilst specialist intervention is possible through tertiary intervention programmes, it happens in an *ad hoc* fashion and does not offer possibilities for integration.

Tertiary intervention programmes are restrictive, because of the limited number of people they involve. There is also usually very little interaction between the 'school' on the one hand and the 'agency', 'professional' or 'specialist' on the other, except on the level of networking or on a knowing-where-to-find-you basis. As a result, there is little sharing of knowledge and skills. These programmes seldom develop the potential for sustainability and when the professionals leave, the support also disappears. Because tertiary intervention programmes are based on some of the assumptions that underpinned the medical view, the problem is treated in isolation, rather than as a problem-in-a-social context. Hence, the primary focus of these programmes is the individual with the identified problem, and knowledge and skills are not beyond the educative situation comprising specialist and learners. This is problematic, as, for example, Stern (in Botvin [1997]:256).

Most substance abuse prevention programs (sic) continue to bypass the use of the family as a major target audience or targeted delivery system for alcohol and drug messages.

The role of the parent is also questioned. Farkas in Fine (1980:119,120) describes this objection by saying, 'School systems should be considered supplementary to family systems rather than family systems being perceived as adjunctive to the school'.

Since these programmes may rely on specialist scarce skills, this approach has certain restrictions. For example, in developing countries, the capacity of the professional services to meet the demand for its services is limited, as a result of the large gap between supply and demand for these services. Language barriers, lack of knowledge about other cultures, poor representation and financial restrictions further complicate this kind of intervention. Finally, the description of these kinds of programmes as 'compensating for an existing deficiency' (Kapp 1991:127-129) is however a disabling notion, which is not motivating or empowering.

2.2.3 Ecological theories: A resource-focused approach

Ecological theory is an umbrella term adopted in this study to refer to a broad range of social theories that emphasise among other things the importance of recognising agency, being sensitive to local context, taking cognisance of the social and interpersonal structure of society, and understanding the centrality of interpersonal relationships in the life world of the child. These include social interactionism, organic theories, development theory, organisation theory and empowerment theory. Different disciplinary traditions emphasise one rather than the other of these theories. The development of, what is for the sake of brevity termed here 'ecological theory', has been applied in educational contexts and incorporated into socio-educational approaches, and more specifically from socio-psychological theory and the work of Bronfenbrenner in Boemmel and Briscoe (2001). It was argued in the introduction to this chapter that this body of theory developed from a range of critiques of the medical view, because of its exclusive focus on 'learning disabilities' and failure to insert learning difficulties into a broader social context, and of systems theory because of its over-reliance on structure, linear and hierarchical relationships, and thin understanding of the child as embedded in a social world. But it has also developed from the political imperative and the urgent need to build additional support for children on grassroot level to enhance the child's development, particularly given the reality of adverse social circumstances (Weeks 2000:33-36).

Two ideas underpin ecological theory as it has been applied to questions of barriers to learning in particular and to issues related to the protection, support and development of the child more generally.

The first is the need to situate the child in his/her world, that is, to think of the child in his/her environment, and to bring into focus the importance of local context. Doing so requires resisting any impulse to dislocate the child from his environment or think of the child outside of his/her environment. This is because the ecological view maintains that the child is ultimately sustained by the systems in his/her environment in which he/she is embedded. The term ecological was taken from the biological life sciences, and the emphasis of the latter on symbioses and interrelationships has been applied in social contexts. Taking the ecological view seriously requires identifying the ecological systems around the child and strengthening these as a way of providing further protection and support to the child.

The second, which follows from the first, but has been informed by a different set of theories, is the emphasis placed on interaction and interrelationships. That is, the child is viewed as an inherently social being, whose ideas about himself or herself are shaped by his or her interaction with others. The child can only become a person by creating meaning through relations with fellow human beings. A relationship implies contact, interaction, care, respect and emotional intactness. Such interrelationships imply dependence on each other and acceptance of each other and as in any relationship, the level of intimacy will depend on time spent together, on the sharing of ideas, on a shared vision and on sharing of resources, values, skills and knowledge. There is emotional intactness implied in this relationship and a feeling of togetherness (Prinsloo & Du Plessis 1998a:3). In order to understand how interrelationships develop, the point of departure in educational theory informed by ecological theories, is the first setting in which learning takes place for every individual. In its most basic form, the first learning experience takes place within the mother-and-child relationship, or in the caregiver-and-child relationship. This primary, intimate and personal relationship forms the basis of all further social interaction. The I-you relationship should develop to gradually encompass more people within more social settings. Hence, it starts moving away from the very intimate and close emotional relationships to the more impersonal relationships with systems and sub-systems.

The result of the twin focus on interaction (which implies relationships) and local context (which implies ecological systems) is that ecological theories maintain that the role-players in the child's environment need to interact with each other and work together in the interests of the child. Hence ecological theory prioritises partnerships and collaboration.

The way in which ecological theories relate their debates on barriers to learning can best be explained by comparing their central assumptions with that of systems theory. Social interactionism, one of the building blocks of ecological theories, is a social theory, which shares with systems theory the understanding that the individual is always embedded in society. As a result, there is a constant interplay between the individual and various social systems. It also concurs with systems theory that there is a network of relationships between various systems. Where it departs from systems theory is therefore a question of emphasis rather than content. That is because social interactionism emphasises that if society is construed as a network of social systems, then systemic interaction is facilitated through *personal* relationships. Fine (1980:2) explains it as follows:

There is reciprocity of influence so that we cannot think of one system or individual person impacting on a second system or individual person without appreciating the interplay between them.

These relationships occur on a continuum from highly intimate to highly formal. Moreover, social interactionism holds that the relationship between the individual and society is less one-dimensional than portrayed in systems theories. In fact, it argues that the individual can also have an impact on social systems. Hence, while system theory tends to emphasize the structuralist approach, social interactionism follows an interpretive tradition, in which the capabilities, resilience and skills of the social actor, rather than the nature of the threats posed by the system is the focus of attention. Rather than foregrounding the issue of risk, it therefore aims to strengthen human resources.

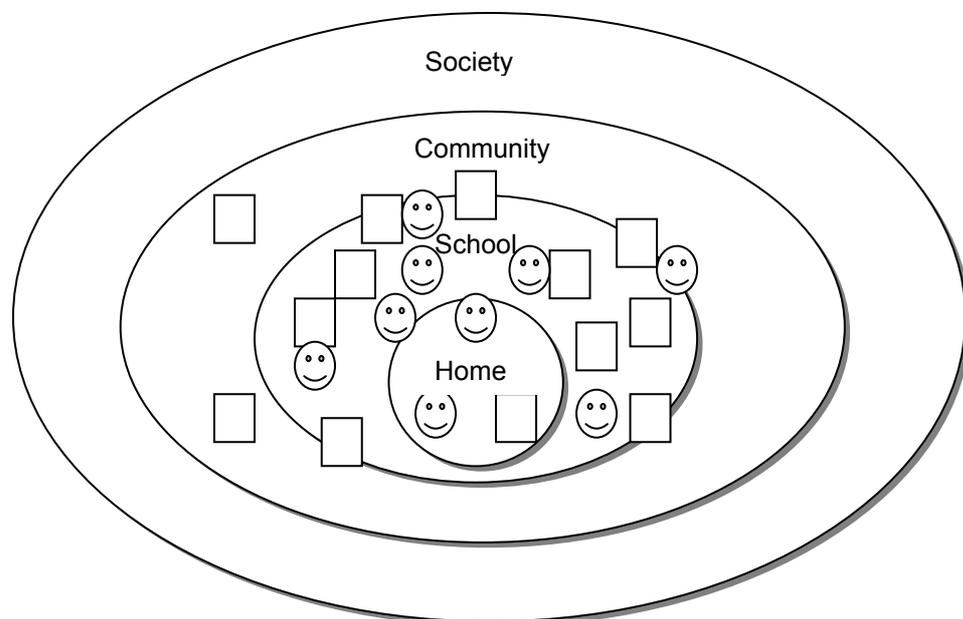


Figure 2.5
The ecological model

As Figure 2.5 indicates, the child is at the centre of these theories, but this is therefore 'a child in context', a child that is embedded in a series of relationships with people in ecological systems that make up a social whole. These relationships evolve from the very intimate relationships in the ecological system of the home, to the more abstract and less personal relationships in the ecological system of society. But the way in which the child is portrayed in this model is not as a victim, but as someone that has the ability to play an active role in his or her own development, if he or she feels adequately protected and supported by the ecological systems.

Simplistically stated, ecological theories are therefore less interested in diagnosing the cause of barriers to learning and more interested in empowering the child through strengthening his or her support system. Rather than attempting to explain barriers to learning in terms of a cause-effect relationship, or labelling it as in intrinsic or extrinsic factors, ecological theories argue that the development of learning problems comprises complex and nuanced processes. Jacobs and Weiss 1988:497) explain it as follows:

Theories of child development that propose ecological models of intervention recognize that development is a complex negotiation between external, contextual forces and innate capacities and temperament.

Therefore, the primary focus is to address social and emotional barriers to learning, which are understood to be the result of disharmonious relationships in the ecological systems, by strengthening and making more intact the social relationships that structure the child's world. The argument is that this cognitive approach to building resilience also contributes to the health and wellness of the learner and gives the learner a feeling of belonging and of wellness, which may contribute to his or her ability to cope with adverse circumstances.

Another component of the ecological approach is that it draws attention to the importance of factors such as cultural imagery and norms, and the significance of developing an awareness and pride in own cultural goods. This is done through improving the number and quality of resources available to support children and their families and strengthening existing community resources such as clubs for children or facilities for parents (UNHCR 2001b:18).

If systems theories are typified as underpinned by a top-down approach, ecological theory can be characterised as a bottom-up approach. It argues powerfully for the role of local ecological systems in and their responsibility for shaping and leading the child's development through partnerships and collaboration in the local ecological systems.

Finally, through interaction, people in the ecology start developing a common view and a shared consciousness. This creates the conditions for social intactness and the emergence of a shared value system. In turn, this forms a basis for collaborative social action. (Wood 1996:126-128; Stern 1999:34-35; Chervin 1986:331-335)

2.2.3.1 Associated intervention mode: enablement and empowerment through interaction

Because this set of theories also supports an expanded understanding of the definition of barriers to learning, the aim of intervention in this theoretical tradition too is prevention. In particular, it is interested in the prevention of social and emotional barriers to learning. It is resource-focused, because it attempts to develop the number and quality of human resources available to support the child.

The mode of intervention it proposes is increased interaction between people in the ecological system. Subscribers to this theory believe that relationships are strengthened through interaction, and that improved and strong relationships between persons in the child's ecology will enhance the emotional wellbeing of the child, and hence assist him or her to become resilient. Hence such a theoretical approach holds that the pre-requisite for best learning practice is harmonious interrelationships between persons within the local ecological systems (Rampershad 2000:33). The fundamental point of departure is that the purpose of intervention is to facilitate interaction that will lead to the development of harmonious relationships in the ecological systems of the child.

But, this theoretical approach argues that intervention need not be part of a coordinated structure imposed from the higher level systems and does not require a formal programme as is the practice within system theory approaches. Rather, it argues that intervention should be initiated at the level of the local ecology, based on local needs, and should develop organically from this ecology. This is because this tradition is underpinned by the idea that individuals and communities should take responsibility for their own development.

Yet it recognises the importance of and encourages the use of a range of instruments through which to facilitate increased interaction. These include intervention programmes, such as those outlined in the discussion of systems theory. It also includes various forms of partnerships, collaborative undertakings and projects. The prerequisite is that these involve individuals from the ecological systems. Programmes, projects, partnerships and other forms of collaboration are, however, not seen as the mode of *intervention*, but rather as *strategies* or *vehicles* for achieving the primary purpose of the intervention, namely increased interaction. Interventions in this tradition therefore occur on a meta-level: various strategies are used, but these are only a means to an end, not an end in itself.

Botvin (1997 S.a.:270) distinguishes between different models of parent empowerment, parent involvement and parent integration. Parent education programmes are sketched as programmes where parents are taught about parenting styles, discipline and motivation while behavioural parenting programmes focus more on skills training of how to act to bring about behavioural change. Other programmes, which he refers to as Adlerian Programmes, focus on teaching parents on interrelationships, listening skills, and how to stimulate communication between parent and child.

Intervention is therefore seen as process-driven, rather than task-focused or outcome-oriented, since the primary aim is to facilitate increased interaction. This means that risk-based intervention programmes, as was outlined in the systems theory section, may be used as a strategy to enhance interaction. The key question is therefore not what the content of the programme is, but rather who is brought together in the programme delivery. The presentation of a risk-based programme at school, might enhance interaction between learners and the presenter, but this interaction is part of the design. But if such a programme is presented to learners, teachers and parents simultaneously, the strategy is successful in enhancing interaction and hence becomes truly enabling. It reaches a broader audience, facilitates enhanced interaction, and diffuses knowledge and skills wider and deeper into the ecological system. The mode of intervention associated with ecological theories can therefore be described as empowerment and enablement through interaction.

2.2.3.2 *Limitations of this approach*

The limitations of the ecological system approach relate to some of the theoretical underpinnings as well as the implementation mode.

It is argued that this set of theories made a valuable contribution to understandings of the nature of barriers to learning and appropriate responses to this phenomenon from a local level. But, if this theory is pushed too far, it produces a situation in which the local ecology becomes insulated and an enclave. It is cut off from higher level systems, and it has no contact with other ecological systems on the same level. The important information flows that this 'cell' requires to stay alive are no longer present. As a result, the healthy growth and development of this community will be stifled, and it will become out of sync with the broader society in which it is embedded.

In terms of the preferred intervention mode, four critiques are offered. First, because this approach places so much emphasis on interpersonal relationships, the possibility exists that charismatic individuals may abuse their powers. The focus on individual relationships also undermines the sustainability of enhanced interaction, because it is dependent solely on individual networks. Whilst teachers are regarded as very important actors that can initiate strategies that will lead to enhanced interaction, teachers are generally overworked and overwhelmed by their responsibilities, and not that likely to initiate without additional support.

Second, because initiatives develop organically and on the basis of perceived need, with no coordination function embedded in the ecology, ecological interventions run the risk of being piecemeal, scattered, poorly conceptualised and, finally, unsustainable.

Third, whilst the idea is that the community should take responsibility for the support of the child, it is quite difficult in practice to persuade community members to become involved. There are a number of reasons for this difficulty. In many cases community members are intimidated by school structures because they are illiterate or did not complete their schooling. But it is also difficult to persuade community members that their involvement will somehow be to their own benefit and to the benefit of the community.

Finally, there is a concern that in cases where vast disparities exist between schools, the implementation of this model may result in one school having all the services and systems available, all of the disciplines represented in the ecology, adequate financial resources and human resource capacity, enough business partners and leadership and management skills within the ecology, while in another school the ecological variants may lack the resources, capacity and skills. Lack of knowledge, skills and resources will hamper further development of such schools. In such cases the disadvantaged or dysfunctional school will not only remain disadvantaged and dysfunctional, but the discrepancies between schools will also become more apparent. In the same way in which you cannot add on ecological programmes on top of a system that is not strong, you also cannot devolve your responsibilities to a community that is crippled. Moreover, it has been argued in Chapter One that some South African communities are close to terminally ill.

2.2.4 The ecological systems view

The ecological systems view is derived from a body of theory that attempts to develop a model in which the state takes on the task of empowering and enabling communities to play a larger role and to take on more responsibilities with regard to the protection and support of children, but that does not lead to either a retreat by the state from its responsibilities or to a stifling of local initiatives. It is therefore an attempt to combine ecological theory with systems theory, and to do so in a way that not only builds on some of the central concepts contained in ecological theory, but also with key elements of systems approaches to provide added support. Recent research indicates that these two theoretical views should not be regarded as mutually exclusive, but should be seen as compatible. Ecological systems theory concurs with this view, but tips the balance of the scale slightly to the side of ecological theory. This means that it situates the locus of decision-making and responsibility on the lower level of systems, at the point where state structures are integrated into and become part of the ecological systems. In other words, it makes provision for both top-down and bottom-up approaches to be simultaneously implemented on a developmental continuum of possibilities, but based on the needs and requests of the ecological systems. (Bronfenbrenner 1994:58-67; Boemmel 2001:1,3)

Ecological system theory concurs with many central tenets of ecological theory discussed in the previous section. It accepts that the protection of children is not only the responsibility of statutory and formal welfare organisations, but of the whole community and all its individuals. It takes cognizance of the strengths, assets and resources in the ecology (UNHCR 2001(b):17) and understands the importance of bringing together these resources around the development of the child. It also shares with ecological theory an insistence on the development potential of enhanced interaction as an enabling approach. It takes as a point of departure the fact that communities and individuals, including learners, have the ability to take responsibility for their own development, and that local communities and schools are well placed to identify their own needs. Moreover, this approach aims to address barriers to learning by enhancing the health and wellbeing of the learner (Termini 1991:387-396).

There are, however, three subtle differences or changes in emphases between ecological theories and ecological systems theory. The first is the emphasis that the ecological systems theory places on *structures* in addition to that of *processes* and interaction. According to this view the people in the structures do not use a top down approach, but are merged with the multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary structures and processes. Thus

the focus is as much on the *process* of interaction and collaboration as on the *structure* of the integrated whole. Second, ecological systems approaches aim ultimately to achieve *integration*. Integration is understood to have taken place when state services and community structures are all interwoven in such a way that internal and external systems have merged, and that, in the process of planning, resources and services have become one (Himmelman in Lamprecht 2000:41; Welch & Sheridan 1995:12). Third, this model supports coordination between the different ecological systems. It does not focus on the learner but on the interaction between the learner and the systems in the learner's environment (Charlton & David 1993:11). Phrased differently, it means that state structures always remain available to the local ecological system as a resource.

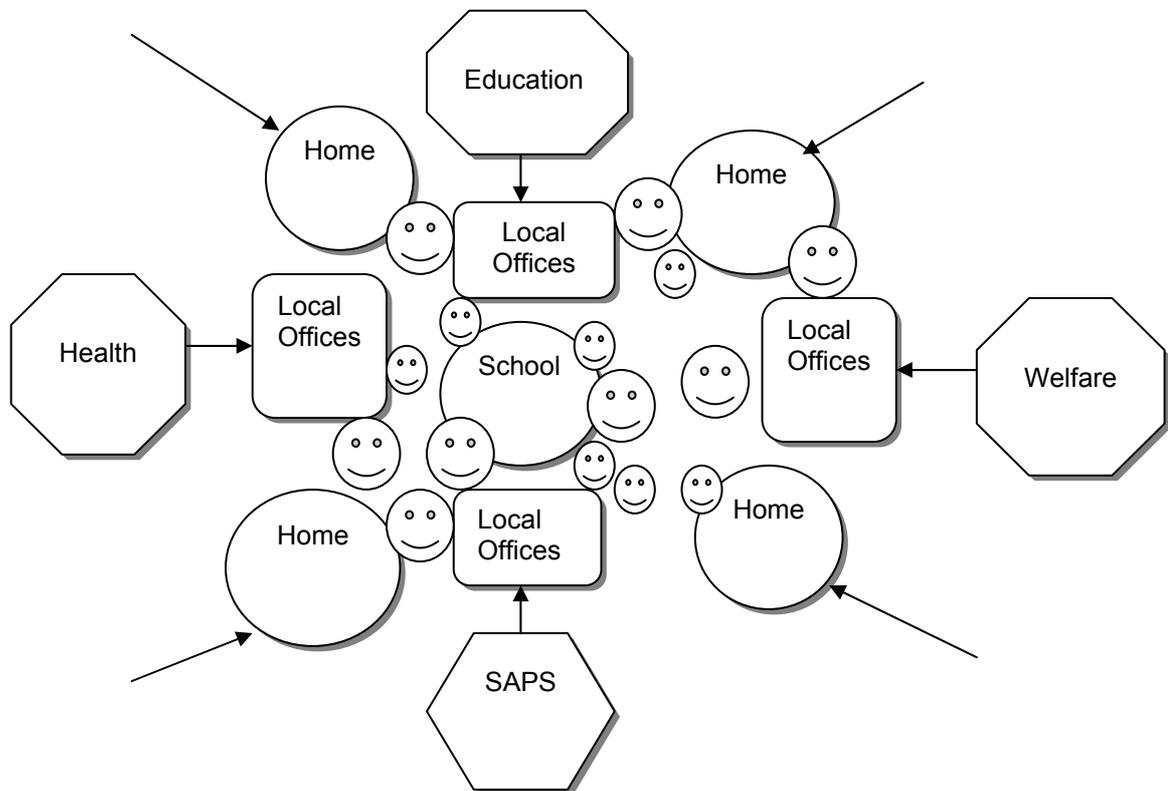


Figure 2.6
The ecological systems strategy

Ecological systems theory has radical social implications, because it requires paradigm shifts and structural change both at the level of the ecology and the system. At the point where bottom-up and top-down approaches meet, a difficult process of social engineering takes place that aims to alter the shape of both the hierarchical, linear state structures and the flat, cyclic ecological systems. But because this is a developmental theory, the process is always ongoing, the merger never completed, and the potential for further development never exhausted.

In ecological systems theory, state services have to become more comprehensive and flexible, and more decentralised, placing the decision-making authority within the community and at the school and neighbourhood level (Farrow & Joe in Adler & Gardner 1993:43). In its extreme form, this view supports the idea that the school should accommodate the other health services so that the health needs of the whole school community can be addressed at a one-service delivery point (*Barriers to Learning* 2000c). But state services also have to start working together in new multi-disciplinary or multi-sectoral structures or teams.

Finally, ecological systems theory, with its focus on enhanced interaction, also incorporates a range of models and programmes that are used as enabling strategies. As was the case in ecological approaches, ecological systems theory also operates on a meta-level, where interventions are double or two-pronged. Programmes, such as the programmes described under systems theory, as well as collaboration and partnership models described in the section following this one, may be used. But all of these are seen as means to an end, rather than ends in themselves.

The meta-level recognition that is required, according to subscribers to the ecological systems model, is that *any* activity that brings people together provides a *development opportunity*. Even an ordinary staff meeting that has a fairly narrow and limited aim can therefore be transformed into a *development opportunity*, if only because it provides an opportunity for enhanced interaction between teachers. But a meta-level understanding will enable staff members who participate in such a meeting to strengthen the quality of this activity as a development opportunity, by ensuring that knowledge and skills are shared, by bringing together more role-players, by circulating relevant documents and asking for input of more people. Any activity can become *enabling* if participation is broadened. Extra curricular activities can become enabling if the teacher invites parents and/or out-of-school youth, students to assist him or her with these activities and thereby broadens the network of participants.

But, what is novel about the way in which this thinking emerges in ecological systems theory is that this type of thinking is no longer applied only on the level of the local ecology. It is now argued that this mode of thinking and doing needs to be replicated on all levels of the system. The argument presented is that enhanced interaction through enabling strategies on higher levels of systems will still ultimately strengthen the level and intensity of support for the child. Hence, any activity that takes place through the 'systems', such as teacher training, now needs to be re-conceptualised as an opportunity to facilitate enhanced interaction. It is therefore not enough merely to put in place necessary structures or to coordinate programmes. The actual process of designing programmes and setting up structures is now used to close the gaps between these structures.

Because various state service agencies have to work together collaboratively in the ecological systems model, they are in a position to design a multi-disciplinary or multi-sectoral programme for implementations in schools. This standard, risk-focused approach, which has been shown to have limited impact, is, however, now converted into a resource-focused approach. This is achieved by virtue of the fact that the programme is designed by a multi-disciplinary team. But this can be expanded by involving more people from varied ecological systems in the flat structure, including parents and community members. Such a programme thus succeeds in bringing together people in the systems to plan the programme. It therefore has the potential to empower and enable more people and to lead to increased interaction with reciprocal influence. Whereas systems theories tend to view these types of programmes (there described as compensatory programmes) as programmes that 'deliberately develop the child's stronger abilities or skills so that they may compensate for the existing deficiency' (*Barriers to Learning* 2000a:11), ecological systems theory allows for recasting such programmes as opportunities to 'create and maintain a positive social climate that facilitates socialisation, rather than attempts to compensate for a prevailing negative social climate' (*Barriers to Learning* 2000b:5). This kind of multi-disciplinary programme, can be conducted on various levels of interaction, from coordinating, cooperating, collaborating or integrating. By spending time together and sharing resources or budgets, training is done unofficially. By sharing a budget and sharing the responsibility by involving more of the systems learning about management skills, administrative skills and communication skills from each other, the various systems that are involved, all benefit.

In the context of the discussion on barriers to learning and the need to provide the child with enhanced protection and support, it is argued here that, through a multi-disciplinary

programme, a fragmented system such as the child protection system can be strengthened to form a closer, more intact network of protection. This is because enhanced interaction between people from different disciplines will lead to the sharing of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. All involved will have learnt from the experience, which means that they will be able to provide increased support for the learners. These programmes can also be used to get educators to interact and to develop their own skills and internal strengths. The activities create additional challenges and opportunities for development, for example organisational skills, managerial skills, social skills as well as the core skills for the particular activity. These activities become the very vehicle that ensures enhanced interaction between educators, including educators from different schools.

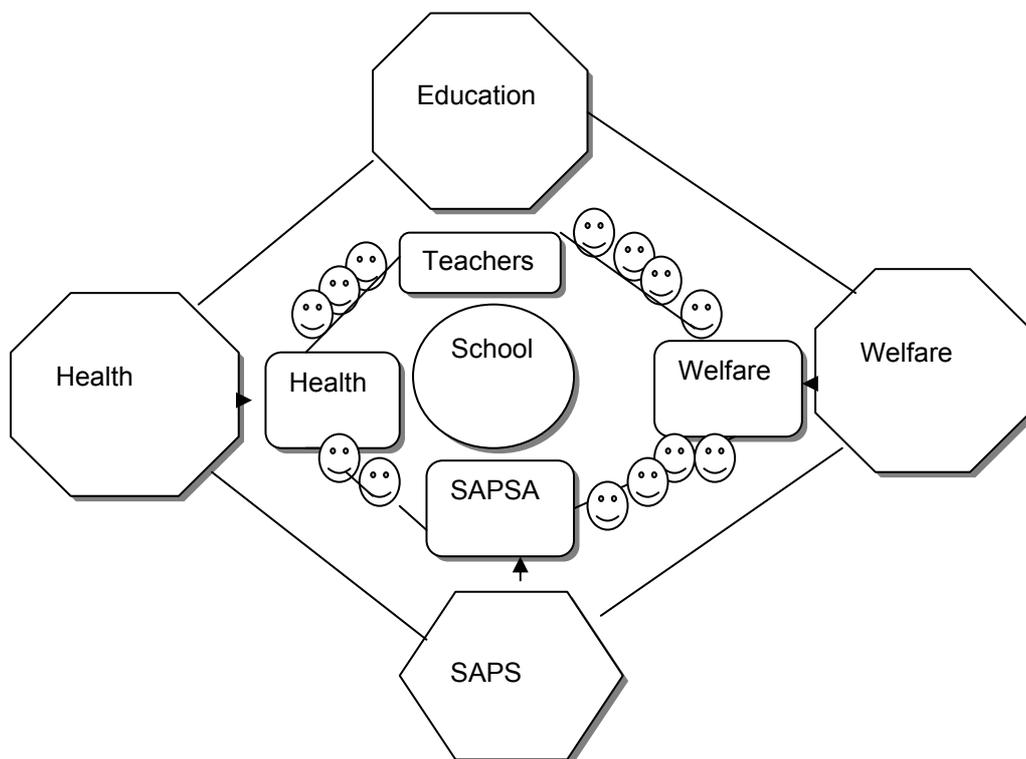


Figure 2.7
A multi-disciplinary programme

2.3 MODELS, PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

In order to facilitate interaction, a number of models may be implemented. These models can operate at different levels and include models that focus only on increased interaction in the ecological system of the school, as well as models aimed at facilitating interaction in an expanded ecological system that includes the school, home and/or community. A multitude of models are available on this spectrum, but, for the purposes of this study, three different models can be distinguished. These are (1) a school-based model, (2) school-based partnership models and (3) community-based partnership models. (Mawhinney 1993:33-35; UNHCR 2001(c):15-19)

2.3.1 A school-based model

This model has a fairly narrow application, and sees the responsibility of the school to strengthen relationships in the school context. In this model, the responsibility of the school to protect and develop the learner is emphasised. It comprises (1) enhanced interaction between teachers, (2) enhanced interaction between teachers and learners, with the former encouraged to take on a pastoral role and make use of positive reinforcement, (3) emphasis on the creation of an affective learning environment, (4) the provision of development opportunities and (5) collaborative decision-making and management. The aim is to enhance the learner's emotional wellbeing, since this model postulates a link between emotional wellbeing and the capacity to learn. Weissberg, Caplan and Harwood (1991:835) explain the link between emotional wellbeing and learning as follows:

Enhancing the learner's mental and physical health will improve their ability to learn and achieve academically as well as enhance their capacity to become responsible.

It implies that the school should identify its own needs, plan its own intervention or enabling strategies and use both internal and external resources to accomplish that. In this strong behaviouristic model, interaction between teachers is based on internal development models (Fine & Carlson 1992:4,5) according to which each staff member is viewed as having something to share. Through sharing knowledge, skills, values or resources educators and staff make a contribution to developing each other. In this model, educators are not seen to compete with each other, but viewed as a team that works together.

Teacher development is based on a reflective dialogue model whereby educators use a few colleagues as a 'soundboard' to test their self-appraisal and to get feedback from others on their performance (DoE 2003a:1-14). In this way, teachers hold each other accountable in an open and non-threatening way. Teacher development is driven by internal interaction and is used as a strategic tool to facilitate the identification of needs and to provide a platform for the school to find best practices (Fine & Carlson 1992; 2.2.3.1) Teacher development further depends on internal processes of interactive planning, of sharing skills and of team and peer teaching in the ecological tradition. Welch and Sheridan (1995:282) explain this interaction between professional educators as follows:

Staff development truly exemplifies collaboration, as professionals share their expertise and resources with each other to address immediate and long-term needs.

The pastoral role of educators is highlighted and educators are sensitised to the feelings of the learner and on the importance of a nurturing and supportive educator looking at the learner holistically. Educators are therefore thoroughly trained on psychological models for classroom relationships and classroom organisation. Learning styles, group process, communication, classroom management, disciplinary methods and problem solving skills (Donmoyer & Kos 1993:14) are all strategies that are used to build a positive self concept and to create best practices for learning. (Sadovnik 2004:9; Weissberg et al:836)

The environment within which learning occurs is viewed as very important, and emphasis is placed on open communication. It is maintained that such a positive, affective environment will contribute to increased participation and positive behaviour patterns. The model also holds that the ethos and the morale of the school should be accommodating and friendly. This model also emphasises the importance of creating development opportunities for learners, for example through offering extra-curricular activities.

By considering each issue or problem or risk from an ecological perspective, the focus is on collaborative management styles, using consensual decision-making in the school, drawing on available expertise and applying joint ownership. Teacher collaboration is encouraged because it facilitates opportunities for people in school systems to interact, share knowledge and skills.

This model is predicated on the understanding that if schools start taking responsibility for their own development, they will also be able to report on a feeling of achievement and ownership. Successful implementation of this kind of model is therefore a necessary step towards a model for full cooperation. Unless schools start taking ownership of their own development, other partnerships or collaborations will be unsuccessful.

But, even though a school-based model can be very successful in a well capacitated school, and whilst there are many schools that operate on this model, it poses threats on two levels if the South African scenario is taken into account. It can be so successful that the school does not want to reach out to other schools, is not aware of the situation in other schools, and becomes very self-satisfied. The skills acquired remain inside the school and there is no sharing of knowledge and skills with other schools, educators, and systems. Such schools, usually very affluent, appoint more educators, and therefore teach small classes and have ideal teaching situations where educators receive bonuses and private sector-like perks. They sometimes become too self-sufficient, while at other times, because of lack of inflow and outflow of ideas and information, they almost become stagnant.

In contrast there may be schools, communities, and areas that are financially not strong enough, where schools cannot depend on parents to assist financially and that do not have sufficient human resource capacity. Some schools do not have the capacity to even identify their own needs and resources, and therefore will not be able to take control of their own development. Bernstein in Sadovnik (2004:9) writes about these inequalities as follows:

Schools are limited institutions in reducing educational and social inequalities as the origins and inequality are outside the educational systems in social and economic structures.

2.3.2 School-based partnership models

This model emphasises the importance of developing mutually beneficial interaction between the school and other ecological systems.

2.3.2.1 *Home-school partnerships*

This model postulates a stronger link between school and family. Parents are not viewed as assistants or handymen, but as equal partners in the development of the learners.

These kinds of home-school partnerships may take on various forms, but are all based on the principle that parents should become equal partners in educating their children. This approach may include involving parents in classroom support, in strategic intervention through the school governing bodies and even in curriculum modification. Other models described below expand on this model to broaden the circle of involvement.

2.3.2.2 School-community partnerships

Welch & Sheridan (1995:353) describe these partnerships as 'interactive exchange of ideas, resources, services and expertise between educational and non-educational agencies in a variety of settings that mutually address the need of students [i.e. learners] and the community as a whole by enabling students [learners] to become meaningful participants in their community'. This approach can be visualised as a 'nurturing nest'. It is an integrated comprehensive continuum of learning support, where school and community resources for addressing barriers to learning and development are restructured and woven together. It does not wait for a need to appear, but ensures that any one can draw from the available resources in a timely and responsible way. (Donmoyer 1993:16)

2.3.2.3 School-based community/home/school partnership model (whole school development model)

In terms of its scope and broader social impact, this model is the most comprehensive and ambitious. It has radical implications for our understanding of the role and responsibilities of the school and the way in which schools function. It uses a cross-disciplinary model and sees the school as a strong centre of learning, and as a location in which, teacher, parent and community member relationships are developed. It goes beyond the idea that the school should initiate relationships with other ecological systems, to state that the school should not only regard these partnerships with the local ecological systems as initiatives aimed at developing harmonious relationships, but also *to empower people in those systems through facilitating the transfer of skills and knowledge.*

The whole school development model highlights the importance of collaboration between every sub-system in the school community. It regards this as a way of opening up a space in which to raise issues and transfer information. For that reason, it is very important for teachers to be part of the process. The model involves the whole school with all its ecological systems (teachers and learners, home and community) in the intellectual and personal nurturing of all children (Eric Digest 1998:2). It aims to address many problems

in a cohesive, multifaceted manner by addressing barriers to learning, enhancing healthy development and strengthening families and neighbourhoods (UNHCR 2001[c]:18). The classroom simply becomes an extension of this nurturing and loving support system, which encourages home involvement in schooling (Barriers to learning 2000[d]. Advocates of whole school development maintain that building the capacity of a whole institution and all its supporting structures or systems is the best strategy to ensure that the learner is developed and supported, and has the potential to create an ecology in which the learner can grow and become strong.

By adopting the whole school approach the whole school community will determine the ethos of the school and will have as goal the support of attitudes and behaviour consistent with that ethos (Jones & Southgate 1989:185). Such programmes may include different kind of parenting programmes.

2.3.3 Community-based models

2.3.3.1 *The community-based model*

These programmes depart from the assumption that interventions should be in the form of an integrated whole where the community owns certain coping strategies and that problems are collectively experienced (UNHCR 2001a [c]:17). The model is underpinned by the belief that the community may develop strategies to overcome barriers to student learning by building stronger links between communities and schools. Programmes developed on this model may therefore be offered collaboratively with community partners, utilising local resources and engaging parents to educate other parents, thus linking community resources to the school site (<http://www/laep.org/about/familycare.html> 30/06/2002). Examples of such programmes include business-school partnerships, or functional life skills programmes or vocational education (Jones & Southgate 1989:198). All such programmes are initiated and implemented outside the school, but for the benefit of the school and the community. The situation of the *entire community* is taken into account and actions are taken to prevent and reduce risks for the population as a whole (UNHCR 2001a [f]:19). It allows for community structures, for example, metropolitan councils, city councils, districts, schools, and institutions to start programmes to empower and enable all relevant structures, groups, individuals as the need arises. Based on a continuum of development, it may be possible that gradually these structures, strategies, initiatives and programmes will be drawn into a coordinated, well planned and well resourced menu of activities.

2.3.3.2 *The community systems model*

This model encourages communities to find ways to restructure existing resources and to work on ways to enhance the total environment in order to combat problems in the community. This approach does not rely only on funding and external influences to address the problems, but actively involves communities in finding their own solutions. This model views the processes of engaging in collaborative multi-channel and innovative learning as being critical for the development of the individual and the building and linking of culturally diverse communities (UNHRC 2001a [c;f,jj]:17-20). This programme involves:

- Lowering barriers (space, time age, circumstance);
- Critically rethinking some of the basic assumptions, roles, processes, relationships, approaches and discourses underlying conventional education systems; and
- Initiating ongoing dialogue, critical reflection and creative action.

This kind of intervention may assist in impacting on the health and wellness of the whole school community in a broader perspective. It will lead to personal involvement of community members according to their needs. The situation of the entire community should be taken into account and actions are taken to prevent and reduce risks for the population as a whole. The problem with this type of programme is that the needs identified by the community are often stated in terms of physical resources, such as housing, care centres, sporting facilities and so forth, and that these needs cannot always be matched with available external resources (UNHCR 2001a [f]:19). But it has been found time and again that this kind of initiative gets blocked somewhere if the necessary provincial mandates are not there to support these interventions (UNHCR 2001a [jj]: 20)

Another problem is that if the school has not yet managed the internal interaction, cooperation and collaboration efforts, it will be very difficult to involve any other stakeholders. Some schools might need assistance with the establishment of such collaborative processes. Mitchell and Scott (1993:84) warn that the systems (school and home) should first be capacitated and developed before any other kind of ecological programme can be successfully implemented. Although the argument is fair and the reasoning is without doubt correct, the implementation remains a problem and there is no clear-cut strategy.

2.3.4 Barriers to collaborative efforts

Welch (2002:17) states that fixed roles and structures inherited from the past might be a barrier to this kind of working together, because it implies that people will have to take on new roles, which is always a difficult transition and requires a paradigm shift. For example, if you have been trained to believe that only specialists can perform a specific task, you first have to change that idea. This takes time and requires proper planning on all levels to draw people from different systems closer where they have to make choices on priorities between key performance areas and other activities. Managers also have to adapt to a new way of thinking. Welch and Sheridan (1995:20-22) mention attitudinal barriers, for example fear of the unknown, old ways of doing things, or resistance to change. There is, however, another attitudinal aspect that will have to change: an emotional change, a change of heart, to want to make it work. Schools should be able to develop and grow, to provide support and to address barriers to learning, on a continuum of ever improving possibilities and strategies, within a range of different kinds of programmes according to the 'as-far-as-possible' principle. School-based management alone will lead to increased disparities and a prolonging of previous discrepancies. This is the reason why both top-down and bottom-up approaches should simultaneously be implemented on a developmental continuum of possibilities according to needs and strengths of the institution or the individual.

2.4 CONCLUSION

A number of factors prompted a change in the way in which the idea of learning difficulties or 'learning disabilities' was conceptualised and led to this concept being reframed as barriers to learning. Instead of focusing narrowly on the way in which learning difficulties manifest in learners and on the different types of 'learning difficulties', the idea of barriers to learning approaches the field from the opposite direction and is informed by the question: what are the factors that may hinder the optimal development of the child? As a result of this paradigm shift, the field of study has been radically broadened and this question is now central in debates in socio-education.

Factors that prompted the change included the limited explanatory power of the medical view, which located the origin of learning difficulties in factors intrinsic to the individual learner. This position cannot adequately account for the fact that groups of learners with a shared demographic characteristic, i.e. girls or black learners, in some contexts consistently performed at lower levels than their peers.

The associated model is also costly and resource-intensive, which makes it unsustainable in contexts where large numbers of learners need support and in which fiscal resources are limited. The hegemonic position of these theories is out of sync with expanded definitions of barriers to learning, because of the strong focus these theories place on the narrow end of the funnel where 'identified learning problems' are situated, rather than on the wide opening of the funnel where prevention needs to take place. Finally, these theories and related set of practices lacked a social dimension and failed to conceptualise the learner as a social actor embedded in a series of interrelationships.

In Chapter One, the argument was made that the child is located at the centre of the modern state. The way in which the child is supported, protected and developed in his or her society to a large measure reflects the nature of that society. A key question in this regard is that of responsibility. Who is primarily responsible for protecting the child? In modern nation-states, the state is vested with substantial powers that it exercises to regulate the way in which the child is treated in that society and is in possession of a large number of instruments and social infrastructures that it can summon to influence the way in which the child is treated in that society (see Chapter Three). In the context of a recasting of the field of barriers to learning to include the influence of social factors on the ability of the child to achieve optimally, the place at which to start to analyse the phenomenon of barriers to learning and to start addressing these problems for many scholars seemed to be the state. Systems theories proved to be valuable for exploring the relationship between the learners' social world and barriers to learning. It argues that the causes of barriers to learning are extrinsic factors in the social context. These theories also offered an answer to the question of how to produce systemic change. With its emphasis on the way in which systems impact on each other and underpinned by the belief that higher level systems have a greater impact on lower level systems, the idea emerged that strengthening the state systems at the highest level through systems enhancement (including policy, organisational management and resource-allocation) and designing programmatic interventions that are risk-focused will ensure that a protective system is cascaded into schools and becomes diffused throughout society. The limits of this approach include the fact that state structures are rigid and do not facilitate collaboration across departments. In addition, systems theory is not responsive to the issue of local context and needs. Systems theory subscribes to limited notions of agency and does not focus adequately on socio-psychological explanations of the way in which the child is embedded in society. The way in which children are shaped through societal relations and become resilient, is also not sufficiently explained.

The importance of focusing on the emotional health and wellbeing of the child by strengthening the social relations in which the child is located is under-explored.

Ecological theories offer a counter position to systems theory, and constitute an attempt to address some of the shortcomings outlined above. Subscribers to these theories argue that learning difficulties are the result of complex negotiations between extrinsic and intrinsic factors. It is therefore difficult to predict the way in which children will respond to the challenges they face. But, because it draws on socio-psychological theory, it argues that emotional health and wellbeing will always have a positive effect on the ability of the child to respond to challenges. At the same time, ecological theory is sensitive to the fact that local contexts differ. It therefore argues for the importance of foregrounding the enhancement of emotional wellbeing, but in ways that are responsive to local contexts. In this sense, it operates on a meta-level, since it does not advocate particular strategies. Any strategy may be used to enhance interaction. These strategies become enabling when they extend participation to include other people in the ecological systems. Activities should develop organically, that is, from below, and should be needs-based. The aims of the activities are seen as primarily focused on increasing interaction and fostering harmonious relationships between the role-players in the child's ecology. Limitations of ecological theories are that an ecological system may become insular, that activities are often unsustainable, and that initiatives from below cannot replace the importance of overarching systems that protect the child (Donmoyer & Kos 1993:17).

As has been argued at the opening of this chapter, if one takes the above critiques seriously, the current challenge seems to be to develop a model that allows for the state to empower and enable communities to play a larger role and to take on more responsibilities with regard to the protection and support of their children, but that does not lead to either a retreat by the state from its responsibilities or to a stifling of local initiatives. The ecological systems theory, with its focus on interaction, interrelationships between the various ecological systems, and the importance of various forms of collaboration and partnerships, including the multi-disciplinary approach has been put forward as the theoretical model that combines the strengths of both systems and ecological theories. Ecological systems theory, when applied to the field of barriers to learning supports a broader vision of the role of the school. Through models such as whole school development, an emphasis on partnerships, and a pronounced role for state structures at local level, this theoretical model aims to enable and empower local communities through interaction, thereby enhancing the emotional health and wellbeing of learners.

Ecological systems theory is therefore the theoretical perspective explored in this study. It is underpinned by sound educational and developmental principles. But the theory is not uncritically accepted. This is because it should be recognised that the consequences of the implementation of this theoretical model will not only be localised but indeed be systemic. Hence, the implications of such a model need to be thought through carefully and the way in which theoretical assumptions translate into practice needs to be critically engaged. The generic theoretical tenets also need to be tailored to and adapted for local contexts. In turn, the way in which theories are put into practice and the outcomes of such processes should be fed back into the theory, so that the theoretical model can be enhanced, modified, extended or discarded. The research project reported on here – albeit its limited scope – casts light on the possibilities of and prerequisites for the successful implementation of an ecological systems model in the South African education system.

It is necessary to relate the theoretical discussion above to the South African situation. In order to do so, a few points of qualification are made. First, in practice, few theories are implemented in their pure form. Second, the theoretical approaches outlined above are not necessarily mutually exclusive. From these two points it follows that in terms of the implementation of theories in a social context, hybrid models develop and different theoretical traditions often overlap. Each theoretical perspective foregrounds certain aspects of the phenomenon under scrutiny. The important question therefore is which theoretical perspective constitutes the dominant approach and which theoretical approach should be brought to bear on the current situation to enhance or complement an existing theoretical model.

In apartheid South Africa, both the medical view and the systems approaches were in place with regard to the field of learning problems. But, the models were unequally applied to different sectors of the population. Discriminatory policy meant that white children had access to the services of specialists, while black children did not have this same safety net. Risk-based prevention and intervention programmes were offered in white schools, and provision was made for tertiary intervention. Whilst practice as it relates to the white population indicated that an expanded understanding of barriers to learning was used, this was not necessarily the dominant approach. A strong emphasis was placed on treatment. The very truncated notion of the idea of learning difficulties and barriers to learning was operationalised with regard to the black population. In practice, it meant that the state failed to protect and develop the black child.

It was this system that South Africa's first democratic government inherited in 1994. In Chapter One the enormity of the social problems South Africa has to deal with was described. The argument presented was that for reasons that have both historical and contemporary explanations, South African children are not adequately protected and supported. But South Africa is a developing country with limited state resources. Moreover, problems such as high levels of inequality, poverty, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic are unlikely to be resolved in the short term. This chapter and Chapter One highlighted the relationship between adverse social circumstances and the difficulties learners experience in the learning process. Hence, this has important implications for education.

Understandably, and supported by the theoretical discussion above, the new government in its first term, focused its attention on systemic change. Since the state itself had been identified as a system that failed the majority of learners in the country, this state had to be remodelled and restructured. Systemic change, it was argued, would put in place the policy, mechanisms and procedures for providing support and protection for South Africa's children. Consequently, discriminatory policy was revisited, new policy drafted, and structural changes made to integrate fragmented education systems to produce a single coordinated education system. This focus on change at the higher levels of the system corresponds with the ideas of systems theory. It can therefore be argued that the new government in its first five years produced a policy framework through which the system was to be re-organised and remodelled, and spent the next five years to aligning structures with the new framework.

The government's policy response is discussed in Chapter Three. The argument was presented in Chapter One, and will be further extended in the next chapter, that government policy documents and government opinion as these are expressed by persons in positions of power increasingly place emphasis on partnerships with communities, greater community involvement and a need to involve, what is termed here, the ecological systems. This signals a move in the direction of ecological and ecological systems theories. In the context of current South African educational reform, the ecological systems model offers the most comprehensive educational approach to the challenges at hand. Following an ecological systems approach will ensure that decision-making and funding are devolved to lower levels as and when necessary and that there is added support for those systems that require it.

The model allows enough scope for interaction, networking, coordination, collaboration and integration whilst government can be an equal partner in providing assistance in the form of training and development, maintaining quality control and providing financial support where needed in order to strengthen the systems. In this model, communities will be enabled to take increased responsibility for their own needs, whilst support is provided where the community does not possess the relevant skills or knowledge. By using both the top-down and the bottom-up approach all resources are mobilised. The ecological systems approach is ideal for facilitating proper coordination and effective and efficient management of funding through the multi-disciplinary approach in the light of incapacitated communities and schools. But it should also ensure that outcomes are achieved that are aligned to national objectives. In this respect, multi-disciplinary programmes lend themselves ideally to bring about change in the short term, to assist in achieving governmental strategic goals to facilitate and manage [the] transformation and re-orientation (GDE 2000a).

South Africa is still a society in transition. A lot has been achieved, but in the education system systemic changes are not yet completed and the ecological approach, which seems to be part of the planning for the near future, has not been implemented. Important questions that need to be answered include the following:

- What is required to successfully implement an ecological systems model involving schools in the South African context?
- What are the conditions and prerequisites for such a model to be successful?
- What are the advantages and the dangers of such a model?

In this moment of fluidity when a new social order is still under construction, and in which the direction that government policy seems to take (see section 3.2 & 3.3) has not yet come to fruition, initiatives have already emerged on the ecological level, that is, initiatives from below, that give us a glimpse of the shape this model may take in South Africa.

CHAPTER 3

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE PROTECTION OF THE CHILD: A DOCUMENTARY STUDY

The problem with education is not in training children, but in the development of a community in which children can grow up to be democratic, intelligent, disciplined to freedom, relevant to the goals of life, and eager to share in the tasks of the age. Schools cannot produce the result; nothing but the community can do so (Hart 1924).

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As Salomone (2000:43-51) and Els (1998:37-42) argue, ideas about the child and his or her development through education have undergone substantial changes during each of the phases in human development, in particular concerning the rights and responsibilities of parents and children. The summary below is based on their accounts of the shifts that have occurred.

In *ancient* Greek society, children were sent away for formal education and apprenticeships from between the ages of twelve and seventeen 'for the sake of the state and the community' (Salomone 2000:43). A different understanding was however dominant during the *Middle Ages*. The child was now considered as an integral part of the family (Els 1998:38). As a result, children were 'regarded as miniature adults with corresponding rights and responsibilities' (Salomone 2000:43). Children almost became the assets of their parents. Girls were betrothed at an early age and lived in the home of their future husbands. Hence, children had to acquire life skills necessary for survival (Salomone 2000:43). From the time of the Renaissance, and particularly during the Reformation era, the idea emerged that children are 'innocent and weak' and therefore need to be 'nourished and educated'. The 'divine duty' of parents to discipline their children, 'during the imperfect state of childhood' was highlighted by people like John Lock, Rousseau and John Stuart Mill. They also reiterated that the child can only hold autonomous rights on the grounds of capacity and reason, both of which they argued were only acquired when the child reached maturity (Salomone 2000:46). It was these ideas that formed the kernel of a new understanding that was beginning to take shape, namely that the child actually belongs to the state, and that the state can remove the child from the parents' care. Under conditions of industrialisation, this notion was further

developed. Until deep in the 18th century it was quite acceptable for the state to interfere in family matters, morals, religion, and so forth.

As the social momentum generated by the Renaissance led to rapid industrialisation, the *industrial phase* produced two distinct approaches to children and their development. In affluent families, the child was treated as a 'treasure'. Whilst slaves did the work, children had to do parrot learning and were protected against any possible harm. Children from poor families, on the other hand, were treated as objects or implements with which work had to be undertaken to earn daily bread (Els 1998:33). Such children received no schooling and were taught survival skills by force.

The social implications of the latter development necessitated the intervention of the state to protect these children. Since the mid 1800s the idea of institutional care for abused and neglected children and juvenile delinquents started to win field and laws that support this kind of 'protective' thinking were passed. Legislation relating to compulsory education and child labour were developed, and a juvenile court system saw the light. At the same time, this *technology phase* brought with it such a variety of possible careers and specialist fields and learning opportunities, that parents could no longer provide all the necessary schooling or skills (Feinberg & Soltin 1998:21). This necessitated the state to intervene on another level and provide development opportunities including schooling. The view that the child was a valuable resource for society, informed the idea that the state should take over the education of children to prepare them for their services to society. Fortunate children were taught by many specialists and schools became centres for multi-disciplinary teaching and development. In South Africa, most black children remained in the subsistence phase during this time, with little or no formal schooling and only survival skills on which to depend.

We are at present in an *electronic phase* or a *global phase*. Toffler (1980:232) calls it the 'high-speed revolution' but there are numerous other words to describe this phase in which it has become possible to travel in cyberspace within seconds to almost any place in the world, or bring the world into your home. But, as in the pre-industrial phase, some are fortunate and others have to acquire life skills simply to survive. The fortunate ones comprise only a small proportion of the children of this country. Many children do not have parents to nurture, protect or develop them. They are again in need of basic care and – more than anything else – they need basic life skills to survive.

From the above discussion a number of observations can be made that are also pertinent to this study. The first of these is that education has been conceived as a response to a particular kind of need that exists in society. Second, the needs of society change over time, and are linked to development phases in human history. Third, the state and home (parents) are regarded as the two primary agencies responsible for the child's development. Fourth, it is possible for a situation to develop where the state and home have conflicting interests and ideas about what needs to be done with the child. This leads to the fifth point, which is that the idea of education is closely linked to understandings about what kind of social being the child is. These understandings are influenced by the development of knowledge, but are also based on values and philosophy. Finally, ideas about the child and a child's access to education are not only determined by the development phase in human history, but also by the child's social position in that society.

A number of other questions arise from the discussion above and in the context of the importance of protecting, developing and enabling the child and the difficulties associated with realising this ideal in South Africa:

- Who is responsible for the protection, development and support of the child?
- What documents (protocols, legislation and policy frameworks) form the basis of our contemporary understanding of the nature of the child, which have given rise to children's rights and an emphasis on the need to support, protect and develop children?
 - At what levels were these documents developed?
 - What are the ideas purported in these documents, in particular in relation to the child's right to protection, health and safety and education opportunity?
 - How do these documents define the roles and responsibilities of parents, the community and the state in terms of the protection, development and support of the child, and therefore in the rendering of the required services?
- What are the rights and services that children in South Africa are entitled to and what is the foundation of these rights?
- What policies and strategies have been developed and which agencies and structures have been tasked with turning the rights of the child in South Africa into practice?

The first part of this chapter discusses various paradigms that exist on how responsibility for child protection and development should be negotiated between state and home, and situates the South African case in relation to these. The second part of the chapter is devoted to a discussion on the development of international policy documents, treaties

and declarations that relate to the protection, development and support of the child. An attempt is made to indicate how the understandings that underpin these documents have changed over time and have been adapted in different contexts. The changes that have occurred are then linked to the paradigms. The third section examines the rights of the child in South Africa, with specific reference to the South African Constitution and the Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children. The final section examines policy documents and frameworks that have been developed by different government departments as instruments for turning children's rights in South Africa from lofty ideals into practice.

3.2 THE LOCUS OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROTECTION, DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT OF THE CHILD: FOUR PARADIGMS

Globally there have been mainly four legal perspectives on the responsibility of providing children their rights or providing basic services to the child (Els 1998:36). According to the *traditional view*, parents are held responsible for protecting their own children and seeing to it that the child has full access to his/her rights. This includes all aspects of the child's development, from education, health and safety to a home, food and clothing.

The *protective view*, on the other hand, requires a regulatory and intervention role from society, and more specifically from the state. According to this view, the state is primarily and in the final instance responsible for the child and has to protect the child, and see to it that the child has access to necessary services. According to this view children will belong to the state and will be working for the state and therefore the state will decide on what the child needs.

The *liberationist perspective* is propagated for example by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1989). This perspective is characterised by its focus on the rights of children and the necessity to ensure that these rights are realised. It does therefore not stipulate who is ultimately responsible for doing that, but states that the child has the right to be cared for and to be protected – irrespective of who carries the responsibility. This is a child-centred view, which requires both parents and the state to play a role in realising these rights. June Sinclair (1998) states:

Parental power has shifted to parental responsibility and to children's rights.

However, since the lines of responsibility are not clearly outlined, it means that in practice the state is still ultimately responsible.

Finally, the *neo-traditional view* favours the return of a stronger role for the family (also the extended family) and for the community to ensure that the child receives all the necessary services.

A question that arises from this discussion is: who is responsible for the protection and the development of the child in contemporary South Africa? To which of the paradigms outlined above does the South African position conform?

In an attempt to contextualise these four approaches in the South African context, it can be argued that before 1994, the white child in South Africa was protected by the state (protective view), while the black child did not receive the same level of protection from the state. In terms of education, the black child received no protection from the state. If the black parent did not want to send or could not send the child to school, the state did not intervene and the child was deprived of educational opportunities. When white parents could not fulfil their responsibilities, children were removed from their families and placed in institutions or alternative care (Els1998:43). This was not the case with the black child. The number of orphanages and children's homes for white children and the absence of these institutions for black children are ample proof of this statement. Ironically, this very discriminatory factor resulted in extended black families taking over the responsibility of caring for the child, which was in most instances to the child's benefit.

The South African Constitution of 1996, and more specifically the protection it extends to children, changed this state of affairs. All children may now demand protection from either their parents or the state, in line with the liberationist perspective. The state has a shared responsibility to protect all children, and it may prosecute any parent, for example for not sending a child to school.

With the HIV/AIDS pandemic hitting the country, an estimated 50 000 educators that will die because of HIV/AIDS between 2001 and 2010 (Rademeyer 2004c:9) and with an envisaged 50% of all deaths to be HIV/AIDS related in 2010 (Basson 2003:13) the state will have to ensure that it has the capacity to take care of and to fulfil its responsibilities towards all children in South Africa. But, in perhaps over-simplified terms, one can foresee that very soon the state will lack adequate resources (Section 1.1.4). Hence, it is argued here that, since South Africa is a developing country, it is evident that neither the state,

nor the extended family or community, can take full responsibility for providing all the services required to ensure that the child can develop in a healthy and safe environment. It will be a challenge to provide the children of this country with all the rights and services that have been awarded to them by the international documents, through the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1989), and in the South African Constitution. This is specifically true, given some of the challenges marking the South African community such as the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the need for child protection as a result of widespread instances of abuse and neglect as outlined in Chapter One, and the fact that the health and safety of children are under threat.

In the context of education, which is at the heart of this study, Prof. Kader Asmal, the former Minister of Education, articulated this sentiment when he reflected on the limitations of state education as a fix-it-all strategy. Therefore he argues that (DoE 1999a:3):

An education system of the 21st century cannot be built by a small group of people, or even by the government. It calls for a massive social-mobilisation of parents, learners, educators, community leaders, NGOs, the private sector and the international community, motivated by a shared vision.

It therefore seems likely that the responsibilities of the state towards children may in future incorporate more elements of the neo-traditional paradigm. Such an approach relies on well-developed community structures to assist with the care and support of the child while the state provides the legal protection only, and hence enforces these rights. Thus, despite the fact that the Constitution of South Africa articulates a liberationist perspective, it would seem that some the responsibilities allocated to parents and communities in the neo-traditional approach are likely to dominate future debates on the protection of the child in South Africa not only in terms of care but in all aspects of protection, support and development. This would be ironic, since it is likely to take place at the instigation of the state, rather than the demand of local communities, as is mostly the case where this paradigm is invoked.

But this kind of partnership between community and state does not take place without its own challenges and built-in discrimination. At present parents are already contributing R1,5 billion per year to contribute to salaries of School Governing Body appointments of educators. The number of these appointments has increased from 1093 in 1996 to 29 939 in 2000. It is estimated that double this number of appointments have been made in terms of non-teaching staff (Rademeyer 2004b:15).

But already the appointment of additional staff is additional to what the state can supply, but it is also only available to the previously and presently advantaged schools and communities. The state dares not say no to this kind of support to enhance education in this country, but it may also not allow further discriminatory practices where only a particular group of learners is advantaged. This same scenario may repeat itself when school communities are requested to take more responsibility for schools, educators and learners.

3.3 CHILD PROTECTION, DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT WITH AN EMPHASIS ON ENHANCING THE EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF LEARNERS: INTERNATIONAL PROTOCOLS AND TREATIES

The following section provides an overview of international, national, provincial and local documents on the protection and development of the child. A number of themes or topics relating to the protection and development of the child emerge in these documents. By tracing and eliciting these themes it is hoped that a broad view pertaining to approaches and strategies will emerge. The idea that a child should be protected is closely associated with the idea that a child should not be abused. The World Health Organisation (WHO 1998:1) defines child abuse as:

Any interaction or lack of interaction between a child and his or her parents and/or other caregivers which results in the non-accidental harm to the child's physical and or developmental state, constitutes child abuse.

This definition, with its reference to 'interaction or lack of interaction' corroborates the understanding of society that underpins ecological theories, which view social problems in terms of disharmonious relationships and characterise relationships by the frequency and intensity of interactions between the parties. Such theories therefore hold that child abuse, here understood in terms of this broad definition that is focused on the integrity of social relations or their absence, impacts negatively on the emotional wellbeing of the child and hinders his or her ability to learn.

From the above it follows that the child has a right to be protected from 'any interaction or lack of interaction which results in harm to the child's physical and or developmental state'. But, if a child has the right to protection and the right to develop fully, then some agency should be responsible for making this happen. This section reflects current policy

positions on this matter as articulated in international policy documents, treaties and declarations. In the context of this study with its emphasis on the child's wellness and emotional wellbeing, it focuses on the following three aspects in particular:

- A child's right to protection;
- A child's right to basic health and safety;
- The locus of responsibility for protecting the child: the role of the state, parents and family.

3.3.1. A child's right to protection

Children's rights, or seen from another perspective, ideas about services that should be rendered to children, have different meanings in different countries, in different parts of the same country and at different times in history. The first vague mentioning of 'special protection for children' in international documents can be found in the Geneva Declaration of the rights of the child of 1924 (in Pre-ambule to the UNCRC 1989:2). This document simply states that there is a 'need to extend particular care to the child'.

The Universal Declaration on Human Rights in the Geneva Declaration on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1959b Pre-ambule) mentions the following:

The child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including proper legal protection, before as well as after birth.

This is in line with the views of Rossouw and Lock on the vulnerable child that should be led to adulthood (see section 3.1). The Convention on the Rights of the child (UNCRC 1959 Article 27) goes a step further and makes explicit what is meant by the idea of extending care to the child. It states that:

The child ...shall be given opportunities and facilities ... to *enable* [my emphasis] him to develop physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and socially in a healthy and normal manner.

This signals an important shift in emphasis, since the notion of 'enabling' in contrast to the idea of 'protecting' is introduced here for the first time. The 1960s was also the time in which socio-educational and ecological theories with their 'enabling' and 'holistic' views started to attract attention. This 1959 Declaration (Principle 5) is then also the first to make mention of special treatment for the physically, mentally or socially handicapped

child and was most probably the genesis of the concept of Special Schools, LSEN Schools, and Schools for Specialised Education. A few years later, with the emergence of inclusion models, the idea of 'special treatment for the physically, mentally or socially handicapped child' would be viewed as discriminatory, as placing limitations on the opportunities of the child, and hence as a barrier to learning. In South Africa, these institutions were established for white learners who were 'protected' by the state. Article 39 also mentions something more than enabling, where it mentions the 'social integration of a child victim..... in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child.'

More recent documents seem to further support the idea that the child should be enabled and developed, but also again emphasise the idea of 'protection'. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC:1989 Article 19) describes child protection as 'all legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child'. This means structural, organisational, socio-educational and functional assistance. The World Health Organisation's definition of child abuse places emphasis on the harm inflicted on the child as a result of child abuse (which is defined as interaction and lack of interaction). In both these documents, the protective view is clearly implied if the child is portrayed as the potential victim and the systems or environmental factors are described as potential perpetrators, well within the sociological view.

The UNCRC (1989:Article 27), the most significant and comprehensive international treaty dealing with the rights of the children, stipulates that a child should receive a 'standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development'. This allows for a very wide scope of interpretation, which is a characteristic of the Convention. It allows for differences between signatory states and is underpinned by an 'as-far-as-possible' principle. This approach makes it possible to work on a continuum of improvement – irrespective of the starting point.

The elements of child protection that are advanced in these documents link up closely with concerns about the child's emotional wellbeing and include the following:

- The importance of a safe and healthy development of children in terms of their mental, moral, physical and spiritual spheres;
- The roles and responsibilities of individuals, institutions and processes in ensuring the above; and
- The legal, administrative, social and educational structures that need to be in place to facilitate the development of the child (UNCRC 1989: Article 19).

3.3.2 The child's right to basic health and safety

The first International Conference on Health took place in Ottawa in 1986. The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion states that health promotion is not just the responsibility of the health sector, because the idea of health is conceptualised in broad terms and understood as extending beyond a narrow focus on healthy life-styles to include a focus on wellbeing. The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (United Nations [S.a.]) defines health promotion as follows:

Health Promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve their health. To reach a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing an individual or group must be able to realise aspirations, to satisfy needs, and to change or cope with adverse factors in the environment.

The 'enabling' character of this charter, which portrays the learner as an 'active participant' and places emphasis on the concept of 'wellbeing', fits in well with ecological theories and underpins such approaches to address barriers to learning.

Although other international documents mention basic health and safety as important rights of the child, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child Article XIV (ACRWC 1990) is the first to recommend preventative health care structures, family life education and the provision of services to the family. This Charter states that structures should be put in place to take responsibility for informing all segments of society (especially parents and children), of basic knowledge on child health. Moreover, the Jakarta Declaration on Health Promotion into the 21st Century (UN 1997a:11,12) has a very strong enabling character. It states that approaches to health care must be 'multi-faceted'; should use a 'multi-sectoral approach'; should 'consolidate' and 'expand the number of people working together' for health; should 'increase community capacity' and should 'empower the individual'.

3.3.3 The locus of responsibility for protecting the child: The role of the state, parents and family

A scrutiny of the most important international documents pertaining to the protection of the child reveals that there is not a single position on what the role and responsibilities of the parent with regard to the protection of the child are. In some documents the role of the parents and the responsibilities allocated to parents carry a lot more weight than in others.

Moreover there is variance in the way in which the notion of family is conceptualised. The United Nations Geneva Declaration of the Rights and Welfare of the Child (UN 1959[b] Principle 7) states that the responsibility for the child's education and guidance 'lies in the first place with his parents'. Even though in the UNCRC (1989: Article 5) the state is held responsible for everything and it only 'respects' the rights of the parents, this is also the first document in which the position is stated that both parents have common responsibilities (Article 18). Article 42 (UNCRC 1989) expands on this notion, and states that the family shall be the natural unit and basis of society, but that state parties are held responsible for many other child protection services, such as ensuring the development of institutions, facilities and services for the care of children (Article 18) and taking all appropriate measures to supply assistance and support programmes with regard to health and education and even to assist the parent in child rearing (Article 24). This is quite a big responsibility, although somewhat vaguely defined. On the one hand, it makes parents the primary care givers. But then it requires of the state to take responsibility for ensuring that children of working parents are provided with care services and facilities (Article 18). These discrepancies give the impression that parents may take on all caring services for their children, should they so wish, but if they do not want to, or are unable to do so, the state will be there to assist. Phrased in this way, parents seem to have no real obligations. Of importance is the fact that the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1989) negated the role of the family and extended family in the upbringing of the child (Viljoen 1998:206). This is perhaps because the document was developed at a time when the state was viewed as responsible for the protection and development of the child. This document therefore commensurates broadly with the protective view. Yet, because the idea of the family is expanded in this document (by virtue of the fact that the father is included and the family identified as an important role-player) it opens up space for signatories of the convention to adopt a policy that supports a more liberationist view.

The drafters of the document, however, did not adequately take into account contexts other than the European or developed world context. The plight of the African child and the specific challenges facing children in other developing countries are therefore not addressed in the Convention. The leaders of Africa decided to address the African scenario and compiled the African Charter. But this African Charter on Human and People's Rights, adopted by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU 1981) only refers to children once, and only as an afterthought.

A separate African Children's Charter (ACRWC 1959) or the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child was subsequently developed and paid particular attention to the needs of the child in the African context. The situation of the girl child, the practices of female genital mutilation and circumcision, the situation of children living under apartheid, the issue of internal displacement, illiteracy and low levels of sanitary conditions, were addressed in this Children's Charter. (Viljoen 1998:203,204)

The recurring themes that emerge in these documents show some shifts in emphasis and a move towards a change in focus in international policy documents, treaties and declarations on the protection, health and safety of the child over the last few decades. The following themes are taken up in the African Children's Charter, and some of these are already built into policy structures e.g. the Education White Paper (Paper 6) on Special Needs Education (2001b); Life Orientation as full learning area and youth and culture programmes and projects that contribute to learners being actively involved in extra-curricular activities.

From the above one can derive the following distinct areas of responsibility assigned to the state:

- To develop facilities, institutions and services for the protection of children;
- To assist parents and other persons that are responsible for the child in child rearing;
- To provide care services for working parents; and
- To assist and support programmes with regard to health and education.

South Africa is still a far cry from achieving these outcomes and with present financial restrictions it is not likely that it will be able to meet such expectations without having communities as active partners and participants. But these international guidelines also have expectations in terms of the families. Families are expected to ensure:

- A family environment in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding
- Health in terms of mental, physical and social spheres

Existing families and envisaged families of the near future will also not be able to live up to these expectations. The health of the families is already jeopardised and with child-headed families, broken families, terminal families which are to be the family structures of South Africa's future, the 'happiness, love and understanding' cannot be perceived. Families will need 'care centres' and community structures to assist them.

Education, according to these conventions, charters and declarations, is directed to:

- Promotion and development of personal talents, mental and physical abilities
- Strengthening of positive African morals, traditions, values and customs
- Building respect and friendship
- Encouraging respect for the environment and natural resources
- Promoting the child's understanding of basic health care
- Working towards free and compulsory primary school education
- Allowing freedom to choose which school to attend
- Allowing pregnant learners to return to school

Earlier documents almost exclusively focused on portraying the child as 'victim-of-outside-factors' (Loffel & Matthias [undated]:7-9) and hence focused on 'problems', 'threats' and the need for 'protection'. More recent documents however emphasise the importance of developing a society in which everyone is empowered to take control and to exercise choices in order to ensure his or her own health and emotional wellbeing. The health sector had a major influence on this kind of thinking. The focus is therefore also on enabling and empowering the child (NCIPCA in Loffel & Matthias:8).

A space has also been opened up for communities to play a more active role and accept more responsibility for the child. At the same time, service departments and disciplines are encouraged to enable, empower, improve and inform groups and individuals and to facilitate their empowerment and contribute to the building of resilience. Therefore, the focus is no longer merely on combating negative factors, but on promoting and developing existing strengths and resources in a positive way. More recently, in the fifth report of the US Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect, known as 'A Nation's Shame' (United States Advisory Board April 1995:xxv) the importance of the emotional health and wellbeing of the child and the role that the community could play in enhancing the child's emotional wellbeing are explicitly addressed:

Our design for primary prevention stresses child and family wellbeing
in a healthier, more active, community-based setting.

This document also refers to the fact that the neighbourhood, the family, and friends will have to play a more prominent role in ensuring the wellbeing of learners. If this is the recommendation in the United States, it may very well feed into prominent international documents. Moreover it poses a question about South Africa's position on these aspects.

3.4 THE PROTECTION, DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT OF THE CHILD WITH AN EMPHASIS ON ENHANCING THE HEALTH AND WELLNESS OF LEARNERS: THE SOUTH AFRICAN CASE

In 1993 former S.A. presidents Nelson Mandela and Mr FW de Klerk endorsed the World Summit Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children (WSDSPDC 1990). This Declaration was a pledge of support to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention was ratified by the South African Government of National Unity on 16 June 1995. Since becoming a signatory to these two documents, South Africa has been bound to monitoring, promoting, and protecting the rights of children as well as to report on the status of the country's children in order to ensure that the principle of 'the best interest of the child' is upheld (UNDSPPDC 1990 Article 3). This puts South Africa on the road to roll out enhanced protection for its children.

The Action Plans that followed as a result of the World Summit laid down the path for the development of South Africa's own National Programme of Action (NPA[C]) in 1994. In other countries the NPA is an entity that stands alone. But in South Africa, the NPA forms part of and is integrated into a broader system of governance and development, which includes representatives from government and civil society (NPA[C] 1996:75). For this reason, the NPA provides a platform for future collaboration between government and NGOs and for integrated partnerships focused on the protection of children.

The principles at stake in the NPA document are: integrated partnerships; sustainable solutions; low-cost solutions; and community-based programmes (NPA 1994:14). The National Steering Committee of the Development of the NPA also included the Directors-General of these seven core departments: Health; Welfare; Education; Finance; Foreign Affairs; Justice; and Rural Development. Safety and Security was not represented, but subsequently joined when its provincial structures were established. This committee decided on *mainstreaming*, which means that each government department has to incorporate children's issues into their respective portfolios. It calls upon each department to reflect its commitment to South African children, and to follow a holistic approach in implementing a programme for children. Given that all departments have made budgetary provision for children's programmes, it has great potential for sustainability.

The National Strategy on Child Abuse and Neglect (NSCAN 1995 in September & Loffel 1998) drafted the broad plan, which included recommendations with regard to policy and legislative reform, preventative strategies, research, child protection management strategies as well as structural provisions (Els 1998:313). This took place in 1995 and in 1996. These strategies were echoed in the South African Constitution (1996), which acknowledges principles of co-operative government and intergovernmental relations.

The Constitution of South Africa (RSA 1996) spells out the rights of the children of this country. According to this Constitution, children have the right to adequate housing, to basic nutrition, health care and social services; to parental care or alternative care, and to be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation. The child also receives added protection through special rights as taken up in Section 28 (RSA 1996), for example, the rights to education progressively made available to them until grade nine and health services for children under the age of seven (RSA 1996 Section 27). These rights imply that government departments as well as caregivers have the responsibility to ensure that children can access these rights. This is because rights are translated into services that the child may rightfully claim.

The South African Constitution also prescribes the structures to ensure that children have access to these rights (RSA 1996). These are described as:

Accessible, integrated and co-ordinated services, focusing on primary, secondary and tertiary prevention, intervention and rehabilitation, based on integrated partnerships and the multi-disciplinary approach, taking into account the particular context of each South African Child.

Should any of these rights be withheld from the child, such an action (or inaction) could constitute child abuse. The Report of the National Commission of Inquiry into the Prevention of Child Abuse (NCIPCA 1998:8) adds to this and states that child protection is: 'Anything which individuals, institutions or processes do or fail to do which directly or indirectly harms children or damages their prospects of safe and healthy development into adulthood'. This implies that the child also has the right to be developed and to be cared for. However, rights always imply responsibilities.

3.5 THE BROADER SOUTH AFRICAN POLICY ENVIRONMENT PERTAINING TO THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

Based on the above discussion, it seems that the three new foci of South African approaches to the protection of the child are the following:

- A focus on introducing enabling and empowering strategies, not only protective ones;
- The importance of integrated partnerships and multi-disciplinary intervention; and
- An increased role for the community.

In this section, the extent to which these foci have filtered down into national, provincial and regional policies and have influenced practice is considered.

3.5.1 New foci in policy and legislation

In response to the policy shifts outlined in the previous section, South African state departments have been involved continuously over the last few years in drafting new policies and appropriate legislation on national, provincial and regional levels in order to effect the country's commitment to protecting the child. (Jansen 1998: 133) goes as far as to blame government for 'window dressing' by producing one act after the other, whilst he accuses the state of not being interested in implementing any of these acts. It is generally accepted now that the most crucial issues pertaining to the protection of children have now been addressed by legislation, bringing about great systemic changes. As a result of this new legal framework, some of the structural and social problems inherited from the previous dispensation have been addressed. For example, the Department of Social Services issued policy to ensure that basic care is provided to all children (Child Care Act 74 of 83 as amended). But in addition to policy and legislation aimed at directly supporting and protecting the child, legislation and policy that open up the space for community members to become more involved in the task of protecting and supporting the child have also been compiled.

A set of acts and policies aimed at supporting families to take on more responsibility with regard to the child has been developed. For example, through the National, Social Security Programme members of the extended family in the communities may apply to receive small children's grants for taking care of children up to eight years, and ongoing per year up to 14 years of age (Gauteng Legislature 2004:4). This provides some support for the grandmothers and aunts to take over the care of the many orphans and children in need.

New acts and changes to acts however also ensure that the family members have to take full responsibility for children in the family. Such acts are for example the Child Care Act 74 of 83; the Children's Status Act 82 of 87; Act 86 of 97 on the Natural Father of Children Born Out of Wedlock. These acts also make the father responsible for the child's basic care. The Guardianship Act 192 of 1993 was affirmed in the case of *Petersen v Maintenance Officer, Simon's Town Maintenance Court 2004/2 South Africa 56 (C)* meaning that grandparents can also be held responsible for the basic care of the child if the parents are unable to do so. New strategies to deal with children if their parents do not have the means to provide basic care are now implemented. Children will no longer be removed from their homes, but caregivers are enabled to perform their responsibilities as primary care givers by implementing family intervention strategies. The 'good-enough-family' concept has been introduced. Both these changes will open up a way for more community involvement but also greater responsibilities for communities.

Other legislation drafted directly focuses on facilitating the greater involvement or empowerment of *community structures*, which in turn will provide new avenues through which the child can be protected and supported. For example, the processes described in the National Development Agency Bill (SA 1998a) and the Directorate of Non-Profit Organisations (SA 1997) make it easier to enter into an appropriate and sustainable partnership between the Government and civil society organisations to eradicate poverty and its causes. It outlines processes and structures through which NGOs can develop and implement multi-sectoral programmes in close liaison with government departments, and will assist with the establishment of smaller community groups working on agency level in the communities. By relaxing the regulations around having a 'welfare number' before starting with any initiatives, the opportunities for partnerships and collaborative efforts have been increased.

An example of the way in which policy can enable changed practice is the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS). The NCPS, with its focus on youth and children, brings together a top-down/bottom-up approach in which the child is protected through a policy framework that is focused on the improvement of government services and based on an expanded role for the community. In this strategy, the school is used as vehicle to embark on primary prevention. The NCPS commenced with 'a comprehensive policy framework to enable government to address crime in a coordinated and focused manner' (Maree & Prinsloo 2001:2). The four-pronged design focuses on the justice process, environmental design, transitional crime and public values and education. The latter is invoked through the principle of 'greater citizen responsibility and involvement in crime prevention' and it is

foreseen that the implementation strategy will comprise 'developing a schools-based education programme on the criminal justice systems, victimisation and crime prevention'. The NCPS points out that such factors as alienation from school, economic recession and substance abuse are most likely to turn the youth into offenders. But, instead of dealing with these factors reactively and individually, it adopts a broad based strategy of human development.

There are three other initiatives within this framework that also seem to be positive steps towards the realisation of the UNCRC (1989). The first is the Proposed Child Justice Bill (SA Law Commission 2000:7); the second is the policy decision that the sub-directorate of Child and Youth Affairs in the Department of Justice will become a full directorate; and the third is the Children's Bill (DoJ 70 of 2003) being a redrafting of all the legislation pertaining to children in the private law sphere. These bills promote the wellbeing of the child, they divert the child/youth perpetrator away from the criminal justice system, and they involve the family and the community to empower the victims (Maree & Prinsloo 2001:211).

Unfortunately, though, the new foci have not yet penetrated all spheres, and legislation on the multi-disciplinary management of the AIDS orphan or the abused child is not yet in place in terms of broad-based policy to provide the basis for broad-based enabling structures (Louw 1998:5).

Hence, it is argued that (1) South Africa's policy and legal framework is gradually changing to make provision for collaborations and partnerships across government departments and between government and NGOs; (2) it is also opening up a space for greater community involvement to ensure that communities take full responsibility; and (3) in addition to protective strategies, a broader focus on strategies that are enabling and empowering is evident. But, the need that still exists for adequate 'protection', coupled with the huge demand for appropriate policy and the speed at which new regulations and policy often have to be churned out, means that this change in emphasis is not always prevalent in the policy generated. This is illustrated by the case of the Department of Education, which is considered below.

3.5.1.1 Policy approaches to protecting, developing and supporting the child: The case of the Department of Education

The Department of Education provided the country with several acts and policy documents, some of which are summarised in Table 3.1. These have as common goal the increased protection and support for learners by means of:

- *Clarifying roles and responsibilities* (for example codes of conduct for learners and educators, norms and standards for educators and for public servants and for school funding, the professional body for educators (South African Council for Educators [SACE]), policies on drug abuse, HIV/AIDS, safety, initiation practices at schools, and so forth. (DoE 2003[b]).
- *Removing obvious barriers to learning* (for example all the regulations taken up in SASA (DoE 1996[c]), such as compulsory school attendance, exemption of payment of school funds where a parent does not have the money, the admission and language policies, prohibition of corporal punishment, etc); and
- *Preventing learning barriers*, for example HIV/AIDS policies, safety policies, drug abuse policies, codes of conduct, quality management, furthering values and norms and workload of educators and their interrelationships (DoE 2003[b]).

In addition to the primary strategies of protection and support, most of these policies provide additional protection to learners, for example through:

- Stipulating compulsory schoolgoing ages;
- Moving towards mainstreaming and inclusion
- Prohibiting corporal punishment;
- Exempting parents from the payment of school fees; and
- Preventing misconduct of educators.

Other legislative measures have been devised in order to legalise the responsibilities of the different role-players and to secure a protective net for learners. Such policies include:

- Norms and Standards for Educators (DoE 2000[c]); and
- The South African Council for Educators Act (DoE 31 of 2000 [b]).

The *'Signposts for Safer Schools'* document (DoE 2003 [b]) ensures prevention, early intervention, interaction and the strengthening of all systems in order to produce strong pillars that can carry the load. These include policies, draft policies, guidelines, roles and strategies whereby school, parents and school communities are involved. These suggestions or signposts are as follows:

- National Policy on HIV/AIDS for Learners and Educators (DoE 1999 [b]);
- The National Policy on the Management of Drug Abuse by Learners in Public and Independent Schools (DoE 2002 [a]);
- Regulations for the Safety Measures at Schools (DoE 2001 [d]); and
- Regulations to Prohibit Initiation Practices in Schools (DoE 2002 [b]).

This legislative and policy framework is therefore meant to support programmes to address emotional barriers to learning. Table 3.1 provides a list of the relevant legislation, policy and framework documents that have been produced to address the most obvious barriers to learning. It is not meant to be a comprehensive list of the Department of Education's legislative and policy framework, but is intended to highlight the different approaches embodied in each of the Acts. These include, for example, protective approaches, enabling approaches, and combinations of these approaches.

Table 3.1

Legislative and policy framework for education: Addressing barriers to learning

Act	Topic	Focus	Strategy	Responsibility
National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996	Admission policy for ordinary public schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compulsory school going ages • Learners with special educational needs • Non-citizens and illegal aliens 	Protection of the rights of children by removing the obvious barriers to learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SGB • Caregivers of learners at school
	National policy on HIV/AIDS for learners and educators in public schools and students and educators in further education and training institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-discrimination • Admission/appointment • Disclosure • Safe school • Prevention • Education/information • Responsibilities 	Protection of rights of the child <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention • Support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School • Learner • Parent • SGB
	Norms and standards for educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles of educators • Learning mediator • Interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials • Leader, administrator and manager • Scholar, researcher and lifelong learner • Community, citizenship and pastoral role • Assessor • Learning area specialist 	Responsibility of educators to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the rights of learners and caregivers • Ensure quality education • Support learners and caregivers • Facilitate learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DoE
	Criteria for the recognition and evaluation of qualification for employment in education based on the norms and standards for educators 2000	<p>Quality assurance of educators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation • Lifelong learning 	Responsibilities of educators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights of learners and caregivers concerning quality educators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DoE
	National policy on the management of drug abuse by learners in public and independent schools and further education and training institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners, educators, caregivers • Prevention, intervention and management 	Describing procedures (structural)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DoE • SGB • Educators

Act	Topic	Focus	Strategy	Responsibility	
South African Schools Act 84 of 1996	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compulsory school attendance • Admission to public schools • Prohibition of corporal punishment • Provision of public schools • Governance and professional management of public schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing all obvious barriers to learning 	Protection of rights of learners and responsibilities of parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government • SGB • Educators • Caregivers 	
	Norms and standards for language policy in public schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect learners • Facilitate communication • Redress 	Protection of rights of learners and parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government • SGB • Educators 	
	Guidelines for the consideration of governing bodies in adopting a code of conduct for learners	<p>Principles and values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rights of learners • School environment • Education • Rights and responsibilities • Responsibilities of parents regarding the code of conduct • Discipline • Punishment • Dispute resolution • Prevention • Due processes 	<p>Protection of rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibilities <p>Determine ethos of the school community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SGB • Educators • Caregivers • Learners 	
	National norms and standards for school funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeting expenditures for redress, equity and quality • Fee charging • Parents' responsibilities • Subsidy policy 	Responsibilities of parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SGB 	
	Exemption of parents from the payment of school fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative processes 	Protecting rights of learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing obvious barriers to learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SGB
	Regulations for safety measures at schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence and drug free public schools • Access to public school premises • Visits to public schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing obvious barriers to learning • Protecting children's rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SGB • Educators 	

Act	Topic	Focus	Strategy	Responsibility
	Regulations to prohibit initiation practices in schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principles and values Prohibit practices Responsibilities of principal SGB Responsibility of educators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protection of children's rights Removing obvious barriers to learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SGB Educators
Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principles and values Incapacity and misconduct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative measures regarding educators' rights Preventing misconduct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protection of learners' rights Ensuring quality education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal Educators SGB
Further Education and Training Act 98 of 1998	Quality education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish institutions Governing institutions Funding institutions Administration of institutions Ensure quality education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring quality education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provincial offices District offices Educators
South African Council for Educators Act 31 of 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workload of educators Duties of educators Appraisal of educators Quality assurance measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educator and learner Educator and parent Educator and community Educator and colleagues Educator and profession Educator and employer Educator and council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educators' responsibility to respect, protect, enable, and promote the rights of learners and parents Acknowledge community Respect, protect and support, colleagues and profession and promote their development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal SGB Educator Senior management SACE
General Documents	Signposts for safer schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background knowledge on crime and violence Understanding the causes and possible intervention strategies Dealing with sexual and child abuse: role of educator Skills that build resilience Promoting healthy schools Building healthy alternatives Approaches to evaluation crime prevention/youth programmes Develop programmes for intervention Monitor and assess programmes Report on successes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protecting the learners Development learners, caregivers, community Building resilience of all Work collaboratively Skills transfer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SGB Educators Community structures

Based on scrutiny of the above legislative and policy framework, it is clear that the dominant strategies advocated in these documents are still largely 'protective', and that these documents in general do not focus on enabling and supporting strategies.

Yet, many of the items listed in the 'focus' column under 'General Documents', when read in combination with the strategies attached to them, indicate that consideration is being given to the implementation of enabling and supporting strategies in addition to protective ones. The *Signposts for Safer Schools* document is contained in section 8 of the Policy Handbook for Educators as published by the Education Labour Relations Council (DoE 2003 [b]). Prof Kader Asmal writes as introduction to this part of the document:

It may seem to some inappropriate for the Department of Education to provide signposts for crime prevention partnerships, and that this is a task for the police or the Criminal Justice Systems. We have however come to realise that issues of safety cannot be relegated to one or other department that we must share the responsibility for the security of our communities just as we must share responsibility for education with those beyond the formal bounds of my department.

Yet, whilst this document is a positive indication that different government departments (in this case, Education and Safety and Security) have considered strategies related to a holistic approach to address what can be regarded as constituting a barrier to learning, no formal policy documents have been introduced. It also appears that this initiative has now been lost in a 'no-man's land' and that the *Signposts* document for the moment remains just another unofficial document. The need for policy on multi-disciplinary strategies, collaborated and integrated services is necessary for the way forward.

Furthermore where in policy an enhanced role for communities is sometimes referred to, the role and functions of the parents and school communities in the school as these are outlined in policy remain vague. As a result, these relationships cannot be enforced, and are in the end dependent on goodwill, internal motivation, strong leadership, and a shared vision. Whilst there is evidence that the state or department understands that it has to 'let go' some of its responsibilities and devolve these to communities and schools, this 'letting go' seems to come fairly easily when it implies giving away responsibilities. But when the state still assumes these responsibilities, they also retain the funding. The devolution of responsibilities to the ecological systems is frequently not coupled with funding provision. The state will not be able to devolve the responsibilities to the ecological systems, while wanting to keep all the decision making responsibilities. Neither will it be able to devolve responsibilities without also devolving the budget for local decision making.

3.5.2 Changed practice aimed at protecting, supporting and developing the child

The policy shift to collaborative programmes and partnerships as well as the increased focus on community involvement and the use of enabling strategies have resulted in new practices. But the implementation of these programmes has also met with some challenges.

- The Department of Health has worked in collaboration with many other departments. The partnership with the Department of Education has resulted in Life Skills/HIV/AIDS/Sexuality Education becoming a full curriculum learning area since 2001. Though this process does not involve the parent or the community, it is a primary prevention programme aimed at the learners.
- The Department of Safety and Security responded to the new policy climate by making internal structural changes to align the department with the provincial level structure that is used by the other departments. This placed the SAPS in a better position to work collaboratively with other departments.
- The Department of Safety and Security entered into a partnership with many other departments to be partners in the safety of our land.
- The Department of Labour also set the scene for community development with the implementation of its learnerships programme. President Thabo Mbeki stated that the purpose of this human resource development strategy was 'to provide a plan to ensure that people are equipped to participate fully in society, to be able to find or create work and to benefit fairly from it' (HRDS 2001:3). Throughout South Africa there is a renewed vibrancy and excitement about the vast spectrum of learning options that may become available. However, this is not fully operational yet, since it is still a laborious process to obtain accreditation and not all skills programmes are readily available.
- Youth and Culture Programmes and Sport Programmes are examples of enabling programmes that have been implemented by government and that involve community structures.

- The Social Plan of the Gauteng Provincial Government has provided funding for a very strong enabling programme that has been implemented since 2001. This programme has provided opportunities for many learners to get involved in environmental clubs, in cultural activities like the Tirisano Choir Competition, in drama contests and debating competitions. Through these extra-curricular activities learners can acquire new skills, develop a positive self image and come into contact with learners from other cultures. These kinds of activities do not only provide opportunity for learners to develop, but also for educators. For many years, many educators had very few opportunities to become actively involved in these kinds of activities.

In addition, these programmes provide a platform for the collaboration between state departments. There are many ways in which these programmes can be expanded and strengthened. Community members, students from higher education institutions, and the out-of-school youth can also become involved at schools in the afternoons. Hence, the processes that now exist for accreditation as coaches and as instructors will further assist in the formal involvement of other disciplines and the community. It is therefore argued that these programmes have the potential to become more than school-based programmes for learners by teachers.

The relationship between policy and practice is, however, not always one-directional. Sometimes progressive programmes are developed to respond to the overall policy focus, but are then hindered by new policies and regulations that do not reflect some of those overarching concerns. For example:

- Contrary to the Safety Project and the Health Promoting Schools model of the Department of Health, the Gauteng Department of Education's Draft Safety Policy shows very little evidence of a holistic approach. The draft has a restricted focus and addresses physical safety only, not taking into consideration emotional safety, cultural safety, nurturing, knowledge, skills and attitudes or values. The very measures to secure safety at schools, also keep the community out. Moreover, the lack of funding for this project contributed greatly to the fact that in many districts or areas, the programme came to a halt. The problem with this kind of policy is that it is not process-centred. As soon as the school has fences, gates, burglar proofing, and perhaps a security guard, the child is considered to be safe. The people in the systems were not requested to come out of their boxes in order to learn.

- Policy on the real roles and responsibilities of parents is sadly lacking. Even in cases where policy has been introduced ostensibly to empower the community, there are limitations in practice. In spite of the comprehensive list of acts and official policies and guidelines in which the School Governing Body is represented as an equal partner of the school, the Department of Education, educators, and the senior manager of an education district office, the way in which this understanding is cascaded to all parents is problematic. Whilst parents are ascribed rights and responsibilities, and are portrayed in policy as equal partners, most of them do not know this and are not really part of this. It is a mistaken belief to think that between six and twelve people serving on a governing body of a township or farm school or any school, can justifiably represent all parents. It is therefore a fallacy to think that the mere existence of a SGB means that parents have become equal partners.

3.6 CONCLUSION

Over the past few decades, conventions, treaties, declarations and charters focused on the protection of the child have underscored the role and responsibilities of the state in protecting the child. Since the 1960s there has been a slight change in emphasis, with a focus on the rights of the child in the necessity not only to protect the child, but to enable and empower the child. However, it was argued that there are indications that the pendulum is slowly swinging back in the direction where there is a more pronounced role for and responsibility on parents for not only protecting the child, but also for the care of the child, the nurturing of the child and the healthy development of the child.

The South African Constitution (RSA 1996) is also underpinned by the notion that it is the state's responsibility to protect its children. This understanding has led to changes in existing policy and the development of new policies. But it has also become clear that the state cannot ensure effective child protection on its own. Considering the broad set of rights that are accorded to the child in the Constitution (1996), the responsibilities that are placed on the state to assist parents and caregivers in child rearing, the expectation that the state should provide care services for working parents, and the role of the state in assisting and supporting programmes with regard to health and education, total service delivery has not been realized.

The Constitution (1996) is however 'open-ended' in the sense that it does not exclude the responsibility of the parent and the community. None of these can effectively be done without the assistance of more than one government department, community structures, and parents or caregivers.

It has therefore been argued that three other foci have emerged in South African policy documentation. These are a result of the shift in emphasis in international declarations and treaties, but are also a pragmatic response to broaden the strategies for protecting the child and to release the overwhelming burden on the state. These are: (1) a focus on introducing enabling and empowering strategies, not only protective ones; (2) the importance of integrated partnerships and multi-disciplinary intervention; and (3) and increased role for the community.

If the state is responsible for protecting the child, as the Constitution holds, then the multi-disciplinary approach is suggested as the vehicle to be used to coordinate processes aimed at protecting the child. The multi-disciplinary strategy is also seen as a protective and developmental instrument to effect increased protection for children and the community. At the same time, there is increasing evidence that the South African policy environment, including acts, guidelines, frameworks and policies, demonstrates a move to increased accountability for parents, with indications that their role and that of communities will have to become more pronounced.

In general, this policy environment provides a solid foundation for the protection of children. Programmes based on this legal and documentary framework will not only protect the learners, but their emotional wellbeing and feeling of security, will enhance learning and will contribute to their cognitive and academic performance (Du Plessis, Naude and Viljoen 2003:25). Through the Skills Development Act (DoL 1998 [b]), Lifelong Learning Strategy (DoL 1998 [a]), the National Human Resource Development Strategy (HRDS 2000) and the National Qualifications Framework [NQF] (DoE 1997b) the opportunities to learn and develop will open up new visions for all. The legislation provides keys to many entrances whereby communities can be strengthened, learners can be protected and systems can come together to take up their responsibilities. It invites parents to become more involved in their children's total development, including their academic development. The legislation makes it compulsory for all systems to ensure quality services, quality education and quality protection for communities by the communities.

It has also been pointed out that not all new policy bears testimony of the new kind of thinking. Despite the fact that shifts in policy have enabled the establishment of multi-disciplinary programmes, cross-departmental collaboration and the use of enabling and empowering strategies in addition to protective ones, such developments are not always backed up by appropriate structures and regulations. These trends are also evident in the field of education. Key foci of new education policy are to enable redress and to increase the participation of historically disadvantaged groups. Educational reforms do, however, not take place in isolation. Many other processes (both political and social) have a direct or indirect effect on educational change. It is clear that government cannot do it all; educators cannot do it all; and parents cannot alone carry the weight of developing the child in all facets. Hence, only multi-faceted programmes dealing with identified barriers as they become known at a specific place and at a specific time, in a specific community, will enable those involved to find solutions. As a result, recent education policy envisages a greater role for parents in the world of the school.

Despite the fact that the South African Schools Act (DoE 1996 [c]) indicates that parents should take a greater responsibility for the school the policy framework does not indicate how this is to be achieved, except for statements such as that 'parents should be encouraged', or that 'parents should be empowered to', which can in any case not be enforced by that act. The increased responsibility of the parent is therefore only based on an understanding, and not on a structure. The strength of such an understanding will have to be tested. The only way to strengthen this 'understanding' is to strengthen the community and to enable the child, the state and the community to address barriers to learning through collaboration and collaborative approaches. Such approaches should include all matters regarding child protection. On the other hand government structures are increasingly canvassing for more expertise; monitoring and control processes are tightened up and the pressure is exerted on educators, health workers, social workers, and the police and justice departments to deliver quality work, to provide the learners with quality education. Hence, in practice parents are not yet regarded as part of the whole school system. To turn the idea of greater parental involvement into a reality will require a systemic change whereby parents are also considered as a complete system and not an add-on.

The above arguments confirm that a strategy based on the ecological systems theoretical paradigm can address the needs of and ensure ever increasing resilience and improvement of the whole school community.

CHAPTER 4

QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1 INTRODUCTION

There are mainly two approaches in research methodology, namely quantitative and qualitative methodologies. It is often argued that, primarily, the difference between qualitative and quantitative approaches or paradigms rests in the different data collection strategies associated with each of these approaches. Thus, qualitative approaches are classified as being *non-numeric* research and quantitative approaches as *numeric* research. Strauss and Corbin (in Van Wyk 1996:127) define qualitative research as 'any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification'. For that reason, qualitative methodologies are often regarded as 'soft, subjective and speculative' (Els 1998:169). In the manner in which the debate between proponents of quantitative versus qualitative methodologies has developed, it has been held that the natural sciences and the human sciences cannot be studied by the same methodologies, with the inference that qualitative data collected in the pursuit of knowledge in the social sciences is somehow less empirical than quantitative data (Du Plessis 1998:4).

Although research in education traditionally employs quantitative research methods, the past decades have seen a marked change. It is now widely accepted that certain authentic human activities cannot be studied and understood within the natural scientific mode and in order to explain such phenomena, a research strategy should make provision for the additional dimension of 'verstehen' (as coined by Max Weber in Du Plessis 1998:15), which is prominent in qualitative research.

This chapter provides a theoretical overview of qualitative research methodologies, the rationale for selecting this research tradition, and a description of the research design employed in the present study.

4.2 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

With its early influences including the scholars Emmanuel Kant, Emil Durkheim and Max Weber, qualitative research methodologies comprise a subjective interpretation of the social phenomena in question. The researcher tries to construct a social reality by striving to understand the motives and beliefs behind people's actions on a personal level. Fraenkel and Warren (1990:368) indicate that one of the characteristics of qualitative research is the natural setting as source of data. The qualitative researcher evaluates products or processes and tries to develop innovations (Charles 1995:20-59). In this kind of research pursuit, the question of authenticity is central. Qualitative approaches can be said to be more fluid and humanistic than quantitative approaches, and reject the notion of neutrality or objectivity in research. Qualitative methodologies are more informal, make use of ambiguous concepts rich in meaning and vague general hypotheses that are often properly formulated only at the end, and are based on unstructured observation and unstructured or semi-structured accounts. This type of research is modelled on the hermeneutic procedure and method. The qualitative researcher focuses on interactive processes and events. He/she makes use of thematic analysis and thus tries to construct social reality and cultural meaning. Neuman argues that qualitative research involves 'documenting real events, recording what people say, observing specific behaviours, studying written documents, or examining visual images' (Neuman 1997:328). Qualitative methodologies draw on the 'informal wisdom that has developed and may have a personal autobiographical account tailored to a particular study', according to Neuman (1997:330).

The researcher is the key instrument in qualitative research. Given that the relationship between the researcher and research subject could have a profound impact on the data and the conclusions reached (Weinstein-Shr 1990:346), the researcher must strive to build a relationship of reciprocal trust and rapport with his/her subjects. The researcher's role is therefore to attempt to depict a situation as it exists or once existed (Charles 1995: 20-59).

Qualitative research aims to generate hypotheses and theories rather than test hypotheses. In qualitative research the researcher does not start with a hypothesis, but only with a loosely formulated question. Whereas quantitative research methods are based on deductive processes, qualitative research processes rely on inductive processes. As the researcher proceeds, he/she develops a theory around the research problem. By combining theory and data collection, making use of any combination of

available evidence, he/she develops his/her theory. This is called grounded theory. Grounded theory is an inductive method of developing theory and has particular salience with regard to applicability of research findings. Els (1998:175) argues that 'there are numerous advantages of developing theory in the context of practice, inclusive of the benefits of the application of research findings in the practical world'.

A type of qualitative research design that integrates a range of qualitative methods is case study research. A case study can be used as method to explore particular kinds of social phenomena. Advantages of case study research according to Haralambos and Holborn (1995:833) are that case study methods – which are usually qualitative in nature and make no claim to be representative – generate rich and detailed information and are useful for generating typologies or general categories, which can be used in future research. Bell (1993:190) notes that a major advantage of the case study method is that the researcher is more likely to be able to identify dimensions that may stay hidden in a large-scale survey, given that he or she concentrates on a specific situation. A major drawback of case study research is that it is not possible to generalise on the basis of findings. Haralambos and Holborn (1995:833) state that 'it is impossible to determine how far the findings of a study into one example of social phenomena can be applied to other examples'. In addition, many researchers have tended to avoid the case study method as it is sometimes seen as biased and lacking in rigour (Yin:1982:97). However, as Bell (1993:193) points out, case study research, like all research, should be collected systematically, and needs to be methodologically planned. Furthermore, all research, including quantitative studies, ultimately involves analysis and interpretation and is therefore open to research bias. By being aware of the possibility of bias and by making explicit one's own subjectivity and process of research, it is possible for an individual researcher to limit the bias.

4.3 THE DESIGN OF THE PRESENT STUDY

4.3.1 Background

My interest in the research topic developed over a period of seven years while working closely with other government departments and also completing a certificate course on Children's Rights. This period of time included a preliminary reading of legislation, policies, documents and guidelines around child protection, HIV/AIDS. This field of study became part of my background study and has an effect on the present research.

The study draws on a particular network of support programmes in the Tshwane Metropolitan, which is examined and described in order to explore how a multi-disciplinary programme may be implemented. Data were obtained by means of semi-structured in-depth interviews with role-players, a documentary review, participant observation and field notes. This research study culminates in the development of a framework for a functional implementation plan for supporting a partnership model located at schools as centres of community life.

4.3.2 Research aims

The health and the wellness of a community are determined by the relationship between the different ecological systems and the coping mechanisms of the community. Over the past decades more emphasis has been placed on enabling structures at schools and globally there is a strong focus on emotional wellbeing of employees to enhance their work performance. Similarly some research has been done on the correlation between health and wellness of the learner and his/her academic performance. The emotional health of the learner is also directly linked to the health and wellness of the family or caregivers (UNHCR 2001c:17).

In order to answer the question of whose responsibility it should be to enhance the health and wellbeing of learners, there is a considerable amount of evidence that points to the multi-disciplinary approach or school-community collaborations. The argument does not mainly concern the choice between these approaches, but the possibilities of using these approaches on a basis of probability and available resources as well as on a continuum of development from one kind of intervention to another. As Durlak (1995:viii) states, 'it is unlikely that there will ever be sufficient resources within the mental health field to satisfy the need and demand for services'.

There are, however, different views on whether these programmes should be well planned and coordinated programmes or whether community programmes, school-based programmes, curriculum-based programmes or school-based community programmes can simply be developed. Unfortunately the research produced so far is rather vague and very few of these studies produced definite results. The reason for this is that school-based prevention is an applied field of research and 'when investigators intervene in real-world settings they usually are unable to control every aspect of the research that might affect the conduct and outcome of the intervention' (Durlak 1995:10). In spite of this major drawback, the positive results that are reported indicate that school-based prevention

programmes prove to be very successful and that such programmes intercept a large percentage of the personal, social and economic toll that accompanies maladjustment (Durlak 1995:1). In South Africa, in particular, there is very little available on the social dynamics around the implementation of these strategies in the South African milieu. Recent policies articulate a strong argument in favour of mobilising resources in the community, but not many successful projects in South Africa have so far been described or thoroughly researched. This is then the primary aim of this research study.

In addition, the research study reported on here has the following aims:

- To contribute to the existing body of knowledge about the multi-disciplinary strategies and collaboration in education;
- To contribute towards an understanding of the way in which the community can support the school and the school can build the strength of the community.

4.3.3 Problem formulation and research questions

The research problem is the health and wellness of the whole school community in South Africa as a possible barrier to learning. The argument presented in this dissertation is that the whole school community needs to be nurtured and cared for to ensure the health and wellness of all and to address barriers to learning for all. The primary research question that guides this research is the following:

How can the state and the whole school community mutually assist one another in ensuring improved health and wellness for all, thereby breaking down barriers to learning?

The secondary research questions that guide this research are the following:

- Why does the health and wellness of the whole school community pose a threat to quality education for all?
- Who ought to be responsible for enhancing the health and wellness of the learners?
- How can the health and wellness of the whole school community be enhanced?

Other questions guiding this research are outlined below. Some of these questions have been answered by means of a literature review and documentary study, whilst the case study of Project Awareness provides answers to the others. The questions are:

- Which kind of programmes have successfully been implemented nationally and internationally to address emotional barriers to learning?
- What contributed to the success of these programmes?
- What kind of support programmes or enabling programmes have successfully been implemented nationally and internationally?
- What contributed to the successes of these programmes?
- Which of the models that have been implemented internationally will be suitable to the South African context?
- Can the health and wellness of the learners be enhanced without addressing the health and wellness of the adults in the learners' lives?
- Who should be responsible for enhancing the health and wellness of the learners?
- Who should be responsible for enhancing the health and wellness of the school community?
- Do schools provide support for learners with emotional barriers to learning?
- Should support structures for learners with emotional barriers to learning be dealt with in curricular, extra curricular or co-curricular activities?
- What is the status of the health and wellness of the school communities in the Tshwane South District of the GDE?
- What intervention model can be suggested for the enhancement of the health and wellness of the whole school community?
- Will such a proposed model in any way address barriers to learning for all?

4.3.4 The purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to gather evidence about the possibilities of a collaborative approach in South Africa as a possible strategy for improving the health and wellness of the whole school community, thereby eradicating a barrier to learning. To explore this phenomenon and to further illuminate the way in which systems work and the various forms of interaction between these systems, a case study of such a project is used to contribute to the development of a practical, functional implementation model. The interpretation of the research results of this study may, in the words of Bassey (2002:109), 'inform educational judgments and decisions in order to improve educational action through theoretical understanding'.

This case study does not attempt to provide general findings that can be tested universally, but it does provide more clarity on the feelings experienced by the role-players involved, on the challenges the project presented as well as providing an overview of hindering factors and contributing factors to the practical implementation of multi-disciplinary programmes. The programme that is reviewed used different levels of multi-disciplinary interaction in four different strategies that were applied. It provides rich evidence of the experiences of the interaction between the role-players, the dynamics around this change in strategy and also describes possible successes and challenges in terms of addressing barriers to learning.

4.3.5 Unit of analysis

Whilst the unit of analysis in case study research is the case presented, this study has for all intents and purposes focused on the Gauteng Province where it analysed some of the initiatives that have been implemented over the past few years. This province is viewed as amongst the more advanced provinces in terms of physical resources, capacitated human resources, child care services and academic performance (Els 1998). The case study is limited and although it will contribute to the field through its richness and deep level of probing, the results can, however, not be generalised.

The case study to be analysed is a project that had been running in 1998 to 2001 in the Tshwane South District, but what was then referred to as Educational District N3. The project was known as Project Awareness. It was a multi-disciplinary approach towards enabling programmes at schools. This project is the unit of analysis.

4.3.6 Locality

The findings of the research study and the findings resulting from the empirical research data relate mainly to data about learners, educators and service providers within the Educational District N3 for the period 1998 to 2001. Although this research deals with the multi-disciplinary approach to address the issue of learners with emotional barriers to learning, the results of this research will most likely be relevant to all kinds of multi-disciplinary intervention programmes at schools.

4.3.7 Selection of Participants

Project Awareness was a multi-disciplinary project aimed at addressing child abuse and HIV infection and promoting health and wellness. It was run in all public primary schools and secondary schools in Atteridgeville, a black suburb and Laudium, an Indian suburb in the Tshwane metropolitan. Two secondary schools in Pretoria West, previously white and Afrikaans medium, were also targeted, thereby conducting the programme in all the secondary schools in the Pretoria West area. The aim of the project was to initiate Life Skills/HIV/AIDS programmes in these schools. The selection of schools was made on the basis of schools originating from prior education departments where educators had never before conducted classes on sexuality education and HIV/AIDS. The following table lists the number of schools that were targeted for the project:

Table 4.1

Schools targeted for the project

Area	Primary schools	Secondary schools	Total
Atteridgeville	26	8	34
Laudium	5	3	8
Pretoria West		2	2

Schools that were excluded from the programme were the city schools and LSEN schools. They account for 72 schools in aggregate. The reason why these schools were excluded was because they were from a previously different educational system where sexuality education, Life Skills/HIV/AIDS education and guidance were all part of the school curriculum. Each one of these schools had at least two trained Life Skills educators and guidance was a subject on the school timetable. Most of these schools had some kind of tutoring system in place, and register-class teachers took responsibility for a class of learners. Although the existence of these structures does not ensure proper support for learners, it informed the decision to start with the schools in the other areas.

4.3.8 Respondents

The respondents were selected from the projected participants because of their previous involvement in certain structures. Their profiles are:

- A young black male, in his twenties, with a grade twelve certificate as only qualification;
- A white female in her fifties with many years of service in education. She completed her doctorate with a thesis on Parent Involvement at Schools. She had been working previously as Educational Superintendent, as facilitator, as trainer, and as programme developer on various levels including the National HIV/AIDS forums, and provincial forums in the district;
- A black female health worker in her mid-thirties, with a nursing background from the Department of Health;
- A white female speech therapist in her early forties, who previously worked in an educational office, serving 150 schools and who was at the time of the research the chairperson of the multi-disciplinary forum (see chapter 5), and also served on the Gauteng Task Team for Safety at Schools and Child Protection and Treatment;
- A black, female educator in her late thirties, school-based who coordinated the Parenting Programme in one area;
- The researcher herself who is a white female in her fifties, previously educator for 20 years and who has been based at the district office since 1997. She holds an honours degree in education;
- One group of parents and educators from Laudium who had attended and managed a course on parenting that stretched over twelve weeks for two hours per week;

4.3.9 The researcher's position

In qualitative research, the role of the researcher is always an active one and the subjectivity of the researcher needs to be acknowledged. As Mishler (in Neuman 1997:372) states:

The interviewer's presence, and form of involvement – how she or he listens, attends, encourages, interrupts, digresses, initiates topics, and terminates responses – is integral to the respondent's account. It involves a mutual sharing of experiences.

In this study, however, there is a further dimension of involvement, given that I, the researcher was actively involved in this project. As a result, my subjectivity will play an active role in the study. I was involved as member and later as chairperson of the multi-disciplinary forum referred to before. I also coordinated all four components of Project Awareness and served on the Gauteng Child Protection and Treatment Committee, which contributed greatly in building up the full picture of some processes in other parts of

Gauteng, relating to multi-disciplinary interventions. It would have been difficult for me to separate myself completely from my experiences in these different roles. I accepted that my experience forms an integral part of the research.

As a 'total participant' (Neuman 1997:357), I was completely emotionally involved while in the field. The fact that I did not realise at the time that the project that I was involved in would become a research study is seen as an advantage in ensuring the authenticity of the study. By starting the research two years later, I became more detached from the process and was better able to view my own participation with less emotional involvement and feelings of ownership.

My background knowledge and experiences that contribute to richness of data include my work in education in various capacities namely as school-based educator from pre-primary to secondary school level, as head of department (Guidance) and deputy principal for many years, as an office-based staff member with responsibility of Life Skills HIV/AIDS coordinator in the curriculum support structures and in human resource development structures. I am a complete participant in the sense that I was participating in this case study. (Gold in Babbie 1992:288). In the light of the fact that I am a total participant, it is necessary to provide personal background.

As an educator for 20 years, I was never particularly interested in matters of child abuse except for the natural outrage I felt when I came across a shocking report in a newspaper. Nor was I overly concerned with the emotional wellbeing of the total school community. Whilst I was always aware of the importance of creating a classroom atmosphere that was non-threatening, accommodating and caring, and where I had frequently addressed the militant and disciplinarian approaches of some teachers when I was deputy principal of a large primary school, this did not mean that I was a child protector. Reflecting on my experience, the reasons why I was not a child protector now seem obvious to me:

- I had not been abused as a child;
- Child abuse, child protection and the emotional wellbeing of the community were not topics dealt with in my pre-service education and training period, which meant that I had not been sensitised to these phenomena;
- In a large, Afrikaans medium, former Model C school catering for white children in a middle class suburb of Tshwane, where I worked with colleagues who had also not been sensitised, we actually met with very few cases of abuse. Only later did I realise in how many cases I had misinterpreted information because of a lack of knowledge and skills as well as lack of contact with other professionals.

Then, when working in an educational district office, I became involved in a multi-disciplinary project, where I had the opportunity to work with people from other departments and organisations, community workers and out-of-school youth. I became aware of their perceptions that educators were guilty of emotional abuse, could not be trusted with confidential information about learners and were 'harmful to learners'. As educators, we in turn communicated our perceptions about social workers who always promised to follow up a referred case and then disappeared for months, about the police who frequently mislaid their files and about health workers who came with very explicit condom-based prevention programmes, without instilling values and attitudes. What happened after that was a process and the way in which it unfolded made me realise how poor, conservative and restricted relationships between different organisations and interest groups had been in the past. It was an 'Aha-Erlebnis' for me and it motivated me to try and find more ways to build nurturing relationships between home and school, and to further cooperation between local departments and organisations, thereby enhancing the health and wellbeing of the whole school community and strengthening the protective network for the benefit of all.

4.4 RESEARCH METHOD

The project was initially not intended as a research project, therefore the project can only be described in retrospect, using reports, letters, minutes, notes, in-depth interviews, focus group interviews, field notes written by the researcher and the observations of the researcher as active participant as sources of information.

The research was conducted on two levels. On the first level it provided an overview of the conceptualisation, design and aims of the project and gave an overview of the way in which the project developed.

On the second level the project constituted a descriptive inquiry with the purpose of unravelling the dynamics of multi-disciplinary collaboration according to themes that emerged strongly throughout the total research. This included the different structures on provincial level, local level and organisational level and a consideration of how these structures contributed or hindered the flow and development of this project. Also, extrapolating from the project experience, lessons for future projects of a similar nature were drawn and these were used to identify guidelines in conjunction with guidelines from the literature study as a possible way forward.

4.4.1 A qualitative approach and the case study method

A qualitative research design naturally flows from the nature and scope of this particular research topic. In qualitative research, the researcher is more interested in the social phenomena from the actor's perspective than just observing them objectively. As a result, the data gathering methods are also methods that assist the researcher in the real understanding of the phenomena. By probing and describing, by illuminating and zooming into a particular situation, it is possible to identify the finer nuances of relationships, feelings and perceptions. The case study approach was used to 'explore significant features of the case and to create plausible interpretations of what is found' (Basse 2002:110). It was an ideal vehicle for such a research study, as the project took place within a certain geographically defined area, within a particular time frame, with the authentic role-players performing their authentic activities. Whilst each case study is unique, it is necessary to have a flexible investigation design that enables the researcher to focus on issues in one context which are central, but which are not important in another context.

The phenomena that are observed in this study could be studied and illuminated by many different kinds and sources of data. Finch and Mason (in Coleman & Briggs (eds) 2002:25) argue that 'for outsiders who are not privy to the changing contextual basis of this kind of research decisions can look rather ad hoc.' The advantage of the case study design, as stated by Watling (2002:268), is that it allows for all relevant data to be brought to the arena and to be used to illuminate the research phenomena.

4.4.2 Data resources

4.4.2.1 *Project documents*

Authentic documents drawn up and used during the four years of Project Awareness were used for this research. Most of the original documents were filed in nine files. These are the typical files of a project manager, including planning and budgets, schedules and operational plans, agendas and minutes, district memos and internal memos, letters and notes, thank you cards and official correspondence, proposals and reports, reminders, invitations and photos. As this project was conducted under the umbrella of the multi-disciplinary forum (Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative) and was in a way sustained by this forum, the documents from the forum also form part of the body of data.

The files include:

- Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative: 1998;
- Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative: 1999;
- Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative: 2000;
- Gauteng Child Protection and Treatment Committee: 1999-2000;
- Project Awareness Primary Schools: 1998;
- Project Awareness Secondary Schools: 1999 -2000;
- Youth Club: 2000-2001;
- Parenting Atteridgeville: 2000-2001; and
- Parenting Laudium: 2000-2001.

4.4.2.2 Conventions, treaties and policy documents

The following types of literature had an influence on Project Awareness or provided a setting and background to the project, and are therefore relevant to this study:

- International documents some of which reach back as far as twenty years pertaining to child protection, the role of the parent and the rights of the child also focusing on references pertaining to the multi-disciplinary approach and the inter-sectoral approach.
- National and provincial policies and documents of the past ten years pertaining to child protective structures at schools, multi-disciplinary or collaborative approaches, the roles and responsibilities of the different departments, Non-Profit Organisations and parents as well as the role of the educator.

4.4.2.3 Other data resources

No numerical data were gathered as part of the research, but existing data that had been collected during the implementation of Project Awareness were used. Other data that were drawn upon were day-to-day data collection, as it had been collected by district officials in their ongoing activities. Where other researchers have drawn their data from the very same area or schools, there will also be reference to these outcomes. These data resources include:

- Media reports used to sketch the profile of the South African community in general.
- Provincial documents, including documents about operational plans, projects and budgets. The focus is mainly on the Gauteng Province. This was necessary to narrow the research to the province relevant to the schools that had been identified.

- National documents on literacy, development and redress are included in the previous category.
- International research findings and views on barriers to learning, strategies and models regarding health and wellness and emotional wellbeing, supporting structures, and collaborative partnerships.
- National and local research findings and views on successful programmes and interventions; including statistics on the health and wellness of South Africans.
- Overview on possible multi-disciplinary or collaborative programmes, school-based and school-based/community programmes.
- Dissertations, especially on research done in the Tshwane Metropolitan area.
- Project logistics, including the number of schools visited and the numbers of educators, learners and parents who were involved;
- Research statistics of a baseline evaluation conducted by Visser & Scott (2001) in terms of five of the schools that were visited;
- Feedback forms submitted after courses on emotional wellbeing that were presented to educators in the district; numbers and interest in courses on emotional wellbeing, reports on the needs and strengths of educators. These are unofficial statistics that shed light on some of the more 'hidden' processes.

4.4.2.4 *Participant accounts*

During the time of chairing the multi-disciplinary forums I was often requested to report on processes and implementation and to speak on these matters. These reports and mini-papers and speeches served as valuable information to draw from. The different papers delivered over a period of time, stretching from 1999 to 2001, also provided me with valuable and comparable views and gave some insight as to how personal involvement can influence a person to report subjectively on something, without projecting the more objective view of all involved. In addition to these reports, the quarterly reports that had to be submitted to the GDE Head Office provided me with statistics on numbers, on challenges and on perceived or real successes.

The different data collection techniques that were applied are described in the section below.

4.4.2.5 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews with five participants of Project Awareness provided rich and in-depth insights into feelings and perceptions around Project Awareness. The focus-group discussion with one group of parents who had been involved in a parenting course in Laudium, offered insights from the perspective of the recipients of these parenting programmes.

4.4.3 Data collection

Van Wyk (1996:136) warns that the process of data collection should not be 'a means in itself' but should serve to illuminate some educational phenomena, in this case, the multi-disciplinary approach to health and wellbeing of the school community. A triangulation of qualitative data gathering techniques was used. It is necessary to use a variety of methods as each is best suited to generate a specific category of information that may not be possible to elicit by using another method. All methods have their strengths and weaknesses and it is therefore necessary to decide which combination of strategies will be the most fruitful.

The following methods of data collection were used for this research study:

4.4.3.1 Literature study

The literature study comprises an overview of the theoretical framework on barriers to learning, strategies for addressing the barriers to learning and programmes around the enhancement of the health and wellbeing of the whole school community. Different enabling models are discussed and analysed against the backdrop of the South African scenario.

4.4.3.2 Documentary study

Having been at the district office since 1997 I had the privilege of being part of policy reviews, drafting policies and receiving policy documents in order to put structures in place for implementation. These served as valuable sources of knowledge and the processes involved in drawing up some of these draft policies, have added to my knowledge base and perhaps provided me with insights that would in other cases have been lost.

4.4.3.3 Empirical study

(a) Interviews

In qualitative research, the researcher uses interviews rather than surveys to enable him/her to really understand the phenomena. Van Wyk (1996:151) states that 'such an unstructured interview is rarely conducted in isolation and is often part of a broader programme of research.' The interview has been described as a conversation between researcher and respondent with the purpose of eliciting certain information. In this regard, Bell (1993:91) states that a 'major advantage of the interview is its adaptability'. A skilful interviewer can follow up ideas, probe responses and investigate motives and feelings, which the questionnaire can never do. It involves asking questions, listening, expressing interest and recording what is said. One of the advantages of the interview method, according to Bell, is that 'a response in an interview can be developed and clarified' (Bell 1993:112). In an interview situation, the respondent 'can express his/her thoughts freely, spontaneously and in his/her own language' (Drew & Hardman 1985:111). A further advantage of the interview is that questions can be rephrased and unanticipated issues can be taken cognisance of. A problem with interviewing is that it leaves data on the level of 'reported' action and so it may be necessary to use observations to verify what has been reported. The interview has been described by Bell as a conversation between researcher and respondent with the purpose of eliciting information (Bell 1993:112).

Five in-depth interviews were conducted with individuals who were involved in any one or more of the different components of the project. These interviews either illuminated some of the themes as they emerged in the documentary study, or generated some new themes that had to be explored. This led to a revisiting of the documents and a search for further evidence. This method offered access to immediate and detailed information. I used all three types of questions, namely: (1) descriptive questions for which respondents had to describe their experiences, and, in one or two instances, hypothetical scenarios; (2) questions about structures in the departments and organisations that they represented; and (3) contrast questions focusing on similarities and differences between the present scenario and that which existed before 1994, or between the four different components of the project that served as the case study.

Semi-structured, nondirective, in-depth interviews were used in interviewing five key participants and team members.

I started off with a framework for the questions posed, but allowed myself the freedom to modify the questions and probe further where necessary. I asked questions about why things happened the way they did and then tested the trustworthiness of answers against other findings. The interviews consisted mostly of open-ended questions. These questions had been structured in such a way as to generate open-ended responses, which enabled greater understanding and that allowed for capturing the points of view of those involved in the project under study. As Patton (1990:24) argues:

Direct quotations are basic sources of raw data in qualitative inquiry revealing respondents' depth of emotion, the ways they have organised their world, their thoughts about what is happening, their experiences, and their basic perceptions.

In a few instances, I had to go back to the respondent, which I did by telephone, to clarify certain statements and to probe a bit more. I often asked the respondents to say more, to explain, to expand, or to clarify. See the framework that guided the interview (Appendix B).

Some of the respondents and I know each other fairly well. We have worked together on these projects for four years and also had other working relationships. Prior to the interviews, there existed a sense of 'us being a team' or a feeling of 'oneness,' because we have completed the project successfully. It was therefore not difficult to establish rapport and reciprocal trust. Even though there had been many different opinions about the success of the programme, all the role-players were willing to give their inputs. It was necessary to be meticulous in ensuring that personal successes or failures or strengths and weaknesses did not influence the outcome of the research in such a way that the validity of the results would be in danger of being jeopardised.

The in-depth interviews provided a rich body of data that had to be analysed. Digitally recorded data was used once I started with the interviews. A tape recorder was used during interviews to ensure accuracy. Verbatim accounts of the in-depth interviews, transcripts and direct quotations were used in this research. The interviews were fully recorded on tape and about sixty per cent of the interviews were transcribed in full. Patton in Van Wyk (1996:164) argues that only relevant material should be completely transcribed because of the expense and time involved. After having listened to the tapes several times, making notes, identifying themes, listening to nuances, I selected certain themes and transcribed those sections. After doing that, I again listened and read at the same time, and decided to add more themes.

(b) *Participant observation*

As full participant it was possible to identify the problems from the view of the coordinator. It was also possible to be aware of finer nuances of relationships between groups and people, and particularly to explore these dynamics further. The fact that I was involved on a provincial level, district level and local area level in inter-departmental forums, gave me insights into the levels of cooperation and collaboration and on how the relationship and interaction in these different levels impacted on each other. Different departments and organisations used different management styles and these styles had a direct impact on the involvement of the staff and the success of the project. It would have been almost impossible to trace these by interviews, if the first hand experience had not triggered the questions.

(c) *Focus group interview*

Focus group interviews offer the researcher the opportunity to engage directly with a group of people, usually six to twelve at a time, on issues relevant to the research. As such, focus groups are more cost effective than in-depth interviews as it is possible to gather the opinions of a larger number of people in shorter periods of time. Conceptually and methodologically, focus groups differ from questionnaires – another cost effective way of tapping into the thoughts and opinions of a larger number of individuals – because the focus group approach does not assume that respondents already know what they think, but rather allows individuals and groups to develop thoughts on a specific topic or issue during the focus group discussion. Drawbacks of focus groups are that they are difficult to assemble and the data generated by focus group interviews is difficult to analyse. Information from focus groups may illuminate important themes and enhance the trustworthiness of the study.

For the focus group discussion, I asked a group of educators and parents to participate. They all had completed a 24-hour parenting course that stretched over twelve weeks. The parents were still involved at the school two years after the project had come to an end, which assisted me in tracing them. The fact that these parents were still involved in school matters, may, however, point to a possible bias in selection. The fact that they were still involved in school activities could indicate that the parenting classes were very successful or it may indicate that these particular parents were in any case involved parents and that they do not constitute the average parent.

Focus group interviews were used for triangulation purposes and were employed together with other data gathering techniques. Frey and Fontana (in Van Wyk 1996:135) state that 'group interviews triangulate with the cross-referenced multiple opinions stemming from its group nature, lending methodological rigor to the one-on-one interpretive nature of field interviews and ethnographic reports'. I conducted one group interview with educators and parents who had completed a course on parenting in Laudium. An interview guide was used to guide the interview (see Annexure B).

(d) *Field notes*

I took notes when the interviews and focus group were taking place, and added to these when I listened to the recordings. Usually, this was about thirty minutes after having conducted the interview and the flashes and observations that I could not jot down at the time because of time limits were noted. While being part of the project, however, I wrote several letters, reports, and notices that all served as field notes, although they were not intended to be.

(e) *The researcher as total participant*

My experiences, feelings, attitudes and values played a very important role and had to be tested repeatedly to ensure the scientific value thereof. In addition, my background knowledge regarding the supporting structures, policies and guidelines, as they had been used in the previous educational departments, assisted in interpreting many of the attitudes, feelings and experiences of the respondents and when identified, the bibliographical evidence had to be traced as proof of evidence.

4.4.3.4 Collection of other kinds of data

I have collected newspaper clippings on child protection since 1997 when I joined the district office. These clippings had to do with the youth, with statistics on HIV infection, matters on child abuse and matters on multi-disciplinary interventions. Although newspaper statistics are not considered high level data, some discrepancies, some trends and some useful evidence could be collected and drawn from three files and two boxes of clippings.

4.4.4 Data processing

In this section, the data collection and storage phase is described. Whilst this may not come across as a central part of the process, the research experience demonstrated that a solid performance during this phase could facilitate the research process. Thus, I describe some of the activities that took place during this phase.

4.4.4.1 *The thematic collation of evidence*

I used this method to analyse the documents and the interview materials. A literature study on theories about barriers to learning provided me with a thorough background and overview, which can be considered a self-study, but also a motivation for wanting to implement programmes to enhance the health and wellbeing of learners. Information about programmes, structures, processes and procedures that were in place in South Africa before 1994 were required in order to understand some of the perceptions and interpretations of the respondents. What they thought and said, and what I thought, said, and asked were undoubtedly coloured by the systems from which we came. The same kind of literature review was used in terms of international guidelines on child protection. By first looking at the responsibility of the parent historically and then linking it to international and national guidelines, I managed to get answers for certain trends in the literature and on the development of certain views.

4.4.4.2 *Sorting and numbering, coding and re-filing*

The data processing was not something that started somewhere into the research study, but was ongoing. From the onset of the study, all policy documents were filed together and articles were sorted into different themes. Part of the processing was a result of the fact that the files from Project Awareness already contained evidence of some kind of collating system, with some files dedicated to the different components of the project and others sorted according to the different years. The filing system contained agendas and reports, schedules and memos, all in their separate plastic pockets. But eventually these pockets had to be removed, and a second processing had to take place, this time according to theme and not data types. Highlighting different themes with different coloured markers formed part of the broader phase of processing the data. Eventually this process became ineffective since I had run out of colours. I was forced to start looking for other ways of processing the data. I realised that I would have to start an innovative data processing system. In an effort to protect myself, I sorted the different sources by

numbering the policies and acts. By this time, I had already used colour coding when I read through or searched, but now it was time to number the different highlighted areas with more clarity and finer distinction of nuances. From there on it was necessary to start typing this on the computer as field notes. Storing the information in different files was the main mechanism for sorting data and the colour codes assisted in identifying sections that needed clarity, that were of importance, or that revealed discrepancies. I also made use of several schemes and tables – on the computer – and colour coded them. This was very helpful when scanning through a number of field notes, in search of particular information.

4.4.4.3 *Transcribing interview materials*

The in-depth interviews and the focus group interviews were not fully transcribed. By listening to the tapes again and again, I was able to identify the themes and areas that emerged and some themes that proved not to be of importance. This led me to identify sixty per cent of the total length of the interviews as important. The interviews filled 10 sixty minute audio tapes of which some sixty per cent were transcribed in order to analyse them.

4.4.5 Data analysis

Data analysis is something that happens throughout and cannot be regarded as a separate function or phase. As Watling (2002:263) explains, data analysis is 'an iterative and persistent part of the process'. The different processes go hand in glove. Whilst the first moments of data analysis may easily lead to superficial analysis and findings, not really based on true analysis of all data, but on 'feelings' and 'perceptions' of the researcher only, data analysis involves several processes, such as 'examining, sorting, categorizing, evaluating, comparing, synthesizing, and contemplating the coded data as well as reviewing the raw and recorded data' (Neuman 1997:427). Watling (2002:262) warns that seeing the analysis of data as an activity that can only be done at the end of the research because these chapters only appear in the last chapters of a research report, is dangerous.

It is not possible to state exactly upfront how one is going to approach the question of data analysis. Only after I had been through this process, was it possible to explain exactly how I had done it. Often researchers working within a qualitative framework do not state which data analysis techniques will be used prior to collecting data. One reason for this is that the flexibility required for some qualitative research projects may make it difficult for a

researcher to pre-empt the kind of data that will be collected, and thus the mechanisms of analysis most appropriate. It must be done in such a manner that the researcher will in all aspects, with all findings, be able to account for how he or she had reached that finding. All tools, techniques, instruments and approaches should be accounted for, and their use motivated.

Data analysis cannot be separated from all the different activities described so far. Watling (2002:263) mentions the defining and identifying of data as part of the analysis and 'the collection and storing of data holds elements of data analysis'. The manner in which a project is conceptualised and its central notions defined is also not an add-on at the end. Without proper conceptualisation right from the start, it will not be possible to analyse correctly. Data processing is based on finding 'similarities and dissimilarities' as Babbie states (1992:301) and therefore involves analysis. Sampling too forms a part of the analysis, since it forces one to make certain choices on the grounds of similarities and differences, representativeness and unique qualities.

A case study researcher faces an overwhelming amount of data that he/she is immersed in. Immersion gives the researcher an intimate familiarity with people's lives and culture. He or she looks for patterns in the lives, actions, and words of people in the context of the complete case. Bassey (2002:110,111) identifies the stages in data analysis as follows:

- Explore significant features of the case;
- Create plausible interpretations;
- Test for trustworthiness;
- Construct a worthwhile argument; and
- Relate argument to relevant research in the literature.

These steps will now be described in terms of this research study.

4.4.5.1 *Exploring significant features of the case*

Neuman (1997:422) explains this phase as follows: 'open coding brings themes to the surface from deep inside the data'. The long list of research questions in chapter one, led to some of the identified themes, and more concepts from the literature study were then added. At first I focused so much on the concrete data, that I found it difficult to identify the abstract concepts. Reading through these themes again, the finer nuances started to emerge. This is when key concepts should be highlighted and are clarified. The themes emerged right from the start, which means from the day that the particular research

problem came to my mind. But Neuman (1997:423) states that this second phase might be the first phase of identifying real themes. I continued writing down all themes adding on as they emerged, right up to the end. One of the final activities was to go through the whole list of themes again – those that had been discarded and those that remained, and to ask myself critically whether I could motivate why they were included or excluded – whether I had enough evidence that this was necessary. It was an involved process, seeing that I could not base my choices on the number of times that inscriptions or referrals to each of these themes appeared, but to the quality and meaning that it would contribute. This relies on insight, or lack of insight, on critical thought, on inductive and deductive processes of analysis and on the 'comprehension of meaning of text of action and on reflection' (Tesch in Watling 2002:273).

4.4.5.2 *Creating plausible interpretations*

This involved grouping data into either highly unlikely or plausible categories. I found that there were just too many that did not fit either of these two categories. I then turned to methods of comparison and verification and found them closely related. By comparing some findings to other forms of evidence, I was looking for similarities and differences.

4.4.5.3 *Testing for trustworthiness*

Bassey (2002:111) states that the term trustworthiness is preferred above validity or reliability, when it comes to case study research. This is because questions about validity and reliability are generally directed at quantitative research findings. According to Bassey (2002:111), the word reliability is an imprecise term for a case study, given that it will never be repeated again – it is a once-off process. A question about reliability in the context of the present study is misplaced, since no two partnerships are the same and no two people will view a project from the same perspective. The concept of validity in research generally refers to the extent to which a particular measuring instrument is appropriate to the topic or theme of the research, whereas the notion of reliability refers to the extent to which an instrument yields consistent results (Henderson 1987:133). Thus, issues of validity and reliability do not so much apply to qualitative research. However, for this research project, the case study method with all its various components was deemed to be the most appropriate research approach, and the various instruments used were based on this method (Du Plessis 1998:7).

Bassey (2002:120) mentions several tests for trustworthiness, for example:

- Prolonged engagement with data resources: In the case of Project Awareness there was a four-year period of involvement after starting the research project. During these years the project developed and changed and these developments could be observed.
- Persistent observation of emerging issues: This has already been mentioned earlier, namely that the case study was not actively observed during the three years with the eye on research. The persistent observation took place by later on examining the relevant documents and by means of the interviews as well as questioning the feelings and experiences of the researcher as participant.
- Checking the data with its sources: This was readily done and all data and sources used were authentic.
- The triangulation of data was by means of the literature study, the documentary study, the interviews and the researcher as active participant.
- The working hypothesis or the evaluation of the emerging story has been tested systematically against the analytical statements.
- A colleague, acting as critic, challenged my findings.
- The case study record does provide an adequate audit trail.

4.4.5.4 *Constructing a worthwhile argument*

Before I started the research, I had some ideas about multi-disciplinary collaborations and about community involvement. I had experienced the project in a particular way. But it was only after having looked at all the data, the evidence, exploring the feelings of the other participants and looking at the documents again after a few years had elapsed, that some arguments started to emerge strongly. I questioned them by looking for similarities and more evidence or for dissimilarities.

4.4.5.5 *Relating argument to relevant research in the literature*

Bringing data and theory together and comparing the data collected with theory used in this study notably that of the socio-education theoretical framework and the multi-disciplinary approach to programme management was the next stage. To find literature references on the computer was easy, but I needed information that was not available on the Internet. Neuman (1997:428) refers to this method of data analysis as the 'illustrative method'.

It is of importance to address the question about the trustworthiness of the research. It is particularly necessary to address the concern about bias. Two threats to the trustworthiness of the research outcomes are the fact that I knew some of the respondents who were interviewed and I was involved with the project. However the very same two factors may also contribute to a richness of data. Due care was exercised in developing the research design, in collecting, processing and analysing data, taking into consideration all reasonable steps to assure the trustworthiness of findings (Bless & Higson-Smith 2000:477). In this regard Neuman (1997:333) demonstrates very neatly how the issue of the intimacy of the qualitative researcher with her object of study can also be seen as an advantage:

A qualitative researcher with first-hand knowledge of events, people or situations cuts two ways: It raises questions of bias, but it also provides a sense of immediacy, direct contact, an intimate knowledge.

To further the trustworthiness of this study a triangulation of methods was used. Neuman (1997:336) highlights two advantages of triangulation. Firstly, triangulation increases the sophisticated rigour of the data collection and analysis process thus making the methods more open to public scrutiny. Secondly, triangulation helps to reveal the richness and diversity of social settings. In this research study there is evidence of methodological triangulation by means of data triangulation. A broad range of data collection strategies was employed, ranging from documentary review to semi-structured in-depth interviews. This should have enhanced the validity of the research findings (Van Wyk 1996:141) and assisted in revealing the richness and diversity of social settings (Neuman 1997:336). The data triangulation included interviews, both in-depth interviews and focus group interviews; a literature study; a documentary study and the researcher as total participant.

4.4.6 Replication and generalisation

Whilst questions about replication and generalisation also apply specifically to quantitative studies, all records relating to this study have been archived and it would therefore be possible to retrace and retract most of the actions and activities. As such, the trustworthiness of the research outcomes rests in the fact that another researcher may draw on the same archive of materials to verify research findings.

Given that the present study is based on qualitative research methodologies, it is not possible to generalise its findings to other contexts. However, it is possible to think about the extent to which the research findings and recommendations are applicable to and may

be implemented in another context. In doing so it is important to keep in mind that the research site was an urban environment, with 44 schools in an area of about 15 square kilometres. Moreover Tshwane has the highest percentage of professionals as inhabitants if compared to almost any other city or town in South Africa. Resources are therefore more readily available for training and research in the greater metropolitan areas. The model could, however, still be applied to smaller towns and typical rural areas although the availability of professional resources might be smaller. This could be counterbalanced by the fact that there are fewer schools in those areas and that the composition of professional teams could include church ministers or members of other professions despite the fact that they may not be professionally qualified psychologists.

4.4.7 Ethical considerations

Neuman (1997:443) states that 'a researcher's personal moral code is the strongest defence against unethical behaviour'. When a researcher is not honest about informants, data, the methods of data collection or any other part of the research study he/she may be found guilty of scientific misconduct. Research fraud and plagiarism are forms of scientific misconduct. Sometimes researchers may not be guilty of contravening the law, but during the research process people are emotionally harmed or institutions and organisations are brought into discredit.

Therefore all possible measures were taken to protect the informants, to get permission to use data and to protect the rights of other researchers. Ethical considerations such as confidentiality and the protection of the identity of organisations and individuals were upheld. Sensitivity and respect for the privacy of the individuals were preconditions set by me before conducting any interviews. Accurate disclosure need not be full disclosure. The informants' identities were protected, although they gave me permission to use them. Respondents were treated with respect. However, the fact that we held a relationship of trust and respect, even when we had different opinions about matters, assisted the process, but it made objective analysis and the reflection process more difficult. We agreed on the terms of the research and I undertook to report my findings truthfully.

I undertook to write up the research findings truthfully without being influenced by any personal involvement, ideology or personal perspective. This is called scientific objectivity and was adhered to.

4.4.8 Significance

The research results could assist in the following:

- They provided a profile of one educational district in the Tshwane Metropolitan, which should offer an indication of what the other districts look like;
- They described the process of implementing and designing collaborative integrated projects, which is of importance to areas and districts that are in the process of trying to establish multi-disciplinary collaboration and those that have not yet started by illuminating the pitfalls and emphasising the strengths of the model used in this study;
- They provided a description of support programmes aimed at enhancing the health and wellbeing of a whole school community in a South African context, and thereby adds to 'localising' current international theory on the topic;
- They might also benefit organisations that are developing proposals for the enhancement of the health and wellbeing of learners and educators; and
- They may hopefully motivate other researchers and school managers to investigate the possibility of obtaining funding for programmes aimed at enhancing the wellbeing of the school community.

4.4.9 Limitations

The strictly qualitative design of this study is a limitation on this research and has implications around the reliability and validity of the findings. It has already been pointed out that, as a result of the qualitative nature of this research, as well as the choice of research study, the finding of this research cannot be generalised.

The case study method is limited in scope but rich in depth. The fact that only one project with its four components has been intensively researched limits the extent to which this research can speak to other contexts, but provides for a nuanced description of social phenomena that is sensitive to contextual factors. As this study was limited to one school district in Gauteng, generalisation with regard to other settings cannot be made. The fact that I was coordinator of all of these multi-disciplinary actions means that I fulfilled a dual role. However, as long as I was aware of this position at all times, it could add to richness of data. If the researcher was a total participant, but without being aware of it, it could be considered as a serious limitation, seeing that the observation relies on memory, feelings, documents and reports. On the other hand, in this study, it means that the data is authentic and was in no way manipulated to serve any purpose (Du Plessis 1999:1-5).

The use of unstructured interviews may have led to subjective interpretation, but they were regarded as the most appropriate method for eliciting information of this kind. Interviews allowed me to trace some ideas to verify the arguments or deny them.

4.5 SUB-SYSTEMS

The following sub-systems as listed in Table 4.2 were included as part of this case study, seeing that they had a direct influence on the project or were directly involved:

Table 4.2

Sub-systems

• GDE Head Office	Auxiliary Services Directorate; Life Skills/HIV/AIDS Programme
• Educational District Office	Life Skills/HIV/AIDS; Youth and Culture; Psychological Services; Speech Therapist (Auxiliary Services); School-based educators; and learners
• Department of Health	Health Promotion Mental Health
• Department of Social Services	Social Worker ; Child Welfare Organisations
• South African Police Service	Police Dog Unit, Local Police Stations, Mr Crime Stop
• Community members	Out-of-school youth; parents; volunteers from religious groups
• NGOs	Youth Health Services; Mental Health Society, SANCA; Lawyers for Human Rights
• Higher Education Institutions:	Universities; Technikon (Drama Department)
• Provincial Government	Gautrans (Gauteng Transport Services)
• Local Government	Traffic Department; Crime Prevention Unit
• Business	Multi-national corporation dealing in Female Products
• Sponsor	Nelson Mandela Children's Fund Department of Social Services Local car manufacturer (SAMCOR) Life Skills/HIV/AIDS Budget

4.6 CONCLUSION

The first chapter provided the background against which it was possible to identify the need for intervention strategies to ensure improved learning of the whole school community. The second chapter provided theories on possible barriers to learning and strategies and programmes to address these barriers while the third chapter offered an international perspective as well as a local perspective on roles and responsibilities in terms of protecting children and ensuring their best health and emotional wellbeing. In this chapter the research design is explained in detail. The empirical study will now take a close look at an example of one such intervention and the four levels of multi-disciplinary collaboration that were involved in this intervention. This case study and the results of this research will then be compared to what was found in the previous chapters to lead to a possible strategy for South Africa in terms of lifelong learning for all.

CHAPTER 5

PROJECT AWARENESS: A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY INTERVENTION

If people could learn to listen and talk to each other with the humanness of the other in mind, the possibility exists to transcend the barriers of race, gender, class and religion (Eliza Venter 1988:4).

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapters described theoretical discussions and the policy framework on barriers to learning and ways to address such barriers. In this chapter the focus shifts to the practical implementation of such a programme, using Project Awareness as case study.

Project Awareness is a fourfold intervention that was conducted at altogether 31 primary and 13 secondary schools in the Tshwane region between 1998 and 2001, with a further secondary school intervention again a year later. In this chapter, Project Awareness is examined as a case study. Project Awareness, which can be described as a multi-disciplinary strategy, used four distinct models over a period of four years. A year later one of these interventions was repeated, but in a slightly modified form. For the sake of clarity, the report will therefore refer to five interventions.

This research was conducted with the aim to illuminate factors that may hamper or assist the process of working across the boundaries of departments and organisations. It attempts to emphasise practical matters around collaborative partnerships. Also, it endeavours to answer the question on the role of such multi-disciplinary interventions in addressing emotional barriers to learning. Whilst Project Awareness is central to this chapter, the study is not limited to the project and will also draw upon and reflect on similar programmes that were conducted in the four educational districts of the then greater Pretoria area. This is in part because many other structures and strategies impacted on Project Awareness. Although the project officially came to an end as a result of restructuring in all the government departments involved, the project and parts thereof have in some instances been moved into other multi-disciplinary programmes, projects and collaborations that are still ongoing. Some of these will also be mentioned.

An analysis of any programme implemented in the last decade in an educational setting in South Africa however needs to take account of the overarching need of this society to establish a democratic, non-discriminatory, open community that encourages the development of its people. Hence, such a programme should contribute in some way to break down barriers between people and systems, to develop people through interactive strategies, to solve problems collectively and to build respect between people. These criteria constitute the basic qualification for a successful programme and the success of a programme will be further enhanced by the extent to which it addresses the other values contained in the Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy (DoE 2001 [c]). When children grow up in a society where there is respect for each other, where people are 'knowledgeable, sensitive to environmental issues and able to respond and act upon the many challenges that will still confront South Africa' (in DoE:2004:1), the process of producing learners who are emotionally strong and resilient would have commenced. An emotionally resilient population is a prerequisite for building a healthy, democratic society. Hence, Project Awareness is analysed against these criteria, which are also emphasised in socio-educational approaches to barriers to learning (Chapter 2).

The chapter comprises five sub-sections.

The *first section* is descriptive and includes a project synopsis and description of the design of the five different intervention components of Project Awareness, namely (1) the Primary School Intervention, (2) the Secondary School Intervention, (3) the Second Secondary School Intervention, (4) the Youth Empowerment Club and (5) the Parenting Programme.

The *second section* analyses the processes around the coordination of such multi-disciplinary interventions:

- Getting started;
- Identifying the needs for an intervention;
- Planning collaboratively;
- Coordinating processes;
- Formulation aims and outcomes;
- Obtaining funding;
- Designing and implementing follow-up and sustainability measures;
- Monitoring and assessing progress and outcomes;
- Reporting on the project.

The *third section* is an analytical discussion of factors that impacted on Project Awareness. These are discussed under the following headings:

- Factors, programmes and structures that contributed to the successes of the processes of Project Awareness;
- Factors that hampered the success of the multi-disciplinary processes of Project Awareness.

The *fourth section* critically reviews the successes and failures of Project Awareness as a multi-disciplinary strategy based on the ecological systems model. The chapter concludes with an assessment of the extent to and mechanisms through which Project Awareness addressed emotional barriers to learning.

5.2 SECTION ONE: SYNOPSIS AND DESIGN OF THE FOUR (PLUS ONE) INTERVENTIONS

Project Awareness had its genesis not in a macro-strategy, but was organically evolved from a one-time intervention to a multi-faceted project. The initial idea to bring together different role-players in a programme at primary schools in Atteridgeville came from students from the ASPIS Centre of the Department of Criminology at UNISA. They identified the purported lack of knowledge and experience of educators in matters related to child protection as potential contributory factors to the high child abuse statistics in the Tshwane area.

The student group initially visited a few schools to present a one-hour slide show on child abuse. They met with challenges, including the following:

- Educators could not accommodate such an activity (slide show) after school because of other commitments.
- To make the arrangements with the schools, they had to visit them personally, which was difficult, since they did not have transport. Visits required a lot of time and money.
- They lacked credibility with the schools, since they were regarded as being 'only students'.
- To do the presentation with the educators during school hours would mean the learners were left unattended.

These problems forced them to change their strategy in order to meet their needs. They contacted the social worker in Atteridgeville with the request that the agency should do a programme with the learners, whilst they would take responsibility for the slide show. However, at that stage the Child Welfare Agency lacked the capacity to work with so many learners. Hence, the need for someone to manage the logistics, to obtain the necessary permission, and to liaise with the schools was identified. The social worker and I both served on a multi-disciplinary forum, at the time called the Greater Pretoria Child Protection Committee, and she in turn contacted me to act as the link with the schools. A meeting followed with Professor Herman Conradie from Unisa's Department of Criminology. On this 'I-know-someone' basis the project started.

Observed in hindsight, the project came about as the result of a chain reaction set in motion by a series of needs. The original request took on a developmental pattern, and on a 'I-need-you basis', the Department of Health, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based-organisation (CBOs) and many others were drawn in and became part of the project. Everyone already involved who knew of anyone else that could assist submitted the names of people and their organisations and this was followed up. Gradually the programme started to take form and developed into a project that ran for four years at both primary and secondary schools in Atteridgeville and Laudium as well as at two white Afrikaans medium secondary schools in Pretoria West. The programme continuously changed shape and involved different partners.

Project Awareness comprised five primary prevention projects, both risk- and resource-focused, that made use of enabling strategies. These are briefly summarised below:

- 1998/1999: A multi-disciplinary risk-focused and resource-focused programme aimed at enabling and protecting the learners, while also enabling the educators was offered at the primary schools. The programme was based on the ecological systems approach.
- 1999/2000: A risk- and resource-focused programme aimed at kick-starting the Life Skills/HIV/AIDS Programme was presented at secondary schools. Again the programme followed an ecological systems approach.
- 2000: The secondary school programme was repeated, but this time only at the eight secondary schools in Atteridgeville.
- 1999/2000: A Youth Empowerment Club was established at the secondary schools for interested learners. The programme was modelled on the ecological systems approach and used an enabling strategy.

- 2000/2001: A Parent Empowerment Programme was established on a voluntary basis for two communities, comprising of six groups in total. The programme was based on an ecological systems approach using specialists for each of the presentations, while trainees consist of both parents and educators.

Table 5.1 provides a schematic overview of the design structures and target group of each of the interventions.

Table 5:1

A schematic summary of the five interventions of project awareness

Projects	Time Frames	Structures	Target Groups	Years
Primary School Intervention 31 schools	One-day intervention 4 x 1-hour workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cellular structure • Each service provider works individually • No involvement from schools • Little collaboration between service providers except for one day peer teaching, two courses and a few meetings 	All learners: Grade 1 – 4 in large groups of 60-80 All learners: Grade 5 – 7 in small groups of 40/50 All educators: 10 - 30 educators in a separate group	April 1998 – March 1999
Secondary School Intervention 13 Schools	One-day intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service providers plan together, work together, facilitate together • No involvement from schools 	Twinning between Education & Health; SAP, Road Safety; Educational Psychologists, Welfare; Educational Psychologists and students.	April 1999 – March 2000
Secondary School Intervention 8 schools	One and a half -day interventions at each school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service providers plan together. Some work together, facilitate together. • Very little involvement from schools 	All learners. Normal class groupings with educator and facilitators in the class	March 2000 December 2000
Youth Club: 13 secondary schools	Once per week for six weeks x 1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only three out of fifteen service providers involved • Any combination of two facilitators plus two educators from the schools • Schools are consulted, plan together on time frames and trainees 	More individualized with 20 learners and four facilitators Voluntary attendance	August 1999 – November 2000
Parent Empowerment Total of 6 groups Four groups in Atteridgeville Two groups in Laudium	One day per week x 2 hours for twelve weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals/Specialists • Schools and community assist with planning. • A representative from a cluster of schools takes over full coordination. • Local coordinator of parent empowerment assisted by overall coordinator of programme 	20 Parents per group Some educators also attend.	April 2000 – April 2001

A synopsis of the project is provided in this section, in part as background to the study and the larger questions it wants to address. But the synopsis is also presented as evidence of the many opportunities for development, interaction and growth that a project modelled on an ecological systems model using a multi-disciplinary team can yield. It is argued that despite difficulties and setbacks, the potential of such projects is almost unlimited.

5.2.1 Primary school intervention (1998/1999)

The main reason for initiating the primary school project was the sharp rise in crime and violence as well as abuse, in particular child abuse, as indicated in statistics reported on in Chapter 1. There was a general awareness of this situation amongst the South African public and this was amplified by widespread media reports on child rape, child neglect and gruesome reports about incest.

The intervention was intended to be a resource-focused programme, aimed at enabling the educators. The field of basic child care resorts strictly speaking in the welfare and health sectors. Yet, the idea that underpinned the project was that by training educators in these matters, more human resources would be enabled and would provide learners with added support. It was difficult to find an afternoon when staff were available for training, and it was therefore decided to conduct workshops with the educators in school time. As a result, this strategy also required a programme for the learners. Four-hour programmes, one for educators and another for learners, were facilitated by different departments, NGOs, agencies and the staff from the city council, targeting all the learners and all the educators in one particular school on one particular day on different aspects of child protection. The same programme was presented at the next school the following week. In total, 31 primary schools were involved in this programme on child protection between February 1998 and April 1999.

A report from an external assessor (St Mary's Outreach 1999) summarises the intervention strategy as follows:

This programme makes use of a two-pronged strategy targeting both learners and educators in the school. In so doing, it provides a platform for holistic change within the school, in line with the practice of whole school change.

Whilst the idea of 'networking' was at the time recommended by the Gauteng Department of Education, this programme on child abuse was not in their operational plans and was not funded in the usual way. The multi-disciplinary team involved in this project, of which the GDE was a participating member, had in this instance identified the need for the programme, found an outside sponsor and together presented these workshops.

This intervention was the first of five during the following four years. It led to increased interaction between service providers, an enhanced networking system in the area, an intact partnership between the services and gradually developed into a collaborative partnership, whereby all parties could benefit.

During the 31 weeks a total of 390 primary school teachers and 14 800 primary school learners in Atteridgeville attended these one-day workshops, and the intervention reached 75 educators and 2500 learners in primary schools in Laudium. This Primary School Programme came to an end in April 1999, with the understanding that the primary schools educators would sustain the programme.

Table 5.2 provides a summary of the Primary School Programme, whilst Table 5.3 outlines the programme for the educators.

Table 5.2**Primary school programme**

Time	Grades 1&2	Grades 3&4	Grades 5, 6, 7
8:00 –9:00	Department of Health: (4 people) Basic hygiene Cleanliness Dangerous situations	Department of Welfare: (4 people) Good touch, bad touch Safe/unsafe behaviour Who to trust I can say no	Department of Education: Who am I? The left brain/right brain whole person What can I? Future perspective
9:00 –10:00	Department of Welfare and SAP: Good touch, bad touch Safe/unsafe Who to trust Speak out I can say no	Department of Health: Basic hygiene Cleanliness Dangerous situations	Department of Education: Problem solving Decision making Responsible behaviour Resources in the area
10:30 – 11:30	Pretoria Technikon: (4 people) Names of body parts Good feelings, bad feelings Assertiveness	Traffic Department: (5 people) Cross the road Drive in taxi How far is Alcohol and driving	Department of Education: Being assertive Video: Yes, you can say no
11:30-12:30	Traffic Department: Cross the road Drive in taxi Impact Alcohol and driving	Pretoria Technikon: Names of body parts Good feelings, bad feelings Assertiveness	Department of Education: Role play: Scenarios : Assertiveness
12:30-13:00	Captain Crime Stop or Police Dog show Or City council fire brigade	Captain Crime Stop Police dog show Or City council fire brigade	Crime busters Education Sport Unit (Only a few times)

Table 5.3**Programme for the primary school teachers**

Time	Provider	Theme
8:00 – 9:00	Unisa Department of Criminology	Identifying the abused child (slides and discussion)
9:00 - 10:00	Child and Family Care, SAPS	Reporting child abuse. Understanding the procedures
10:00 – 10:30	School	Tea Break
10:30 - 11:30	Traffic Department	Importance of Road Safety Education at school
11:30 – 11:45	City Council of Pretoria	The Ten Safety Commandments
11:45 - 14:00	Department of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your role as teacher in the protection network • SCAN: Support, Counselling and Assistance Network • Incredible Connection for Child Protection • Protection Network for Children Competition • Lesson structure: Knowledge, Skills, Values and Attitudes

From Tables 5.2 and 5.3 it can be derived that albeit we went out as a multi-disciplinary team, the presentations/workshops were presented to the learners by individual disciplines, each discipline presenting to the learners and educators in a particular time slot. Despite what may appear to be a lack of integration between service providers, the planning phase brought systems in interactive sessions to prepare for this outreach.

If seen from a bird's eye view, the programme did not follow the normal guidelines for these kinds of groups.

- The groups were large, with sixty to eighty foundation phase learners in a classroom in some schools.
- Each group was facilitated by staff members from a department, NGO, agency or city council department for a one-hour period before the next organisation took over for another hour. This continued for four hours with a break after the first two hours.
- Each group of service providers planned their own interventions, but all the interventions had to do with child protection of some kind.
- It was mainly a top-down intervention where the schools did not identify their own needs and were not part of the planning. They simply received a letter informing them of this visit.
- The training materials were sometimes not appropriate for large groups.
- The facilitators were not always fluent in English; neither could all speak a vernacular.
- It was a once-off intervention except for the secondary schools that were visited again the following year.

In spite of what may seem negative statements above, the feedback from the educators, the learners, the schools and involved service providers was positive and all found the programme worthwhile. One respondent described the experience as follows:

For the first time I worked with a multi-disciplinary team where all had the same purpose. Because the task was greater than the individual, the barriers, which previously existed between us, fell away.

In working with the learners, different facilitation strategies were used. Some facilitators took learners outside, playing games to teach them certain skills, whilst others presented a puppet show, or screened a video followed by interactive discussions. Others made use of role play and case studies.

The following scenario, based on field observations, describes a typical classroom training scene for the Grade 1 to Grade 4 learners:

Scenario 5.1

Typical classroom situation

There are 60 to 80 learners in the classroom. Some learners are sitting on chairs. Others are trying to get those sitting off their chairs. Some are standing on the chairs. A few of them are trying to stand on the same chair, which means that they fall off the chair. The facilitator (sometimes two) is using a flip chart with small pictures. There is no educator around given that all the educators are in the staff room engaged in a workshop. The children at the back are trying to see, but the children in front are standing up which implies that the children at the back cannot see. When the facilitator gets them all to sit on the floor, there are a few more distractions, for example one sitting on the other one's dress and one pulling the other one's jersey. The facilitator is good, but the learners speak 2 or 3 different vernaculars. Some facilitators can deal with this, but one facilitator only speaks English, which is not the first language of any of the learners, neither of the facilitator. Other facilitators are trying to translate here and there.

Whilst this description may seem to highlight negative aspects of the training scenario, it does not differ much from ordinary school practice where frequently two classes are merged because of teacher absenteeism. The situation is therefore not unusual. This description reminded some of the respondents of similar situations, in some instances dating back more than ten years. One respondent reflected on a time when she was the Guidance Teacher in a former model C primary school:

Often the whole standard was grouped together sitting on the pavilion and the teacher speaking to the wind. Sometimes it was total chaos.

In terms of venues, the different groups were all in different learning settings. The Grade 5 to 7 learners were in classrooms where the educational psychologists facilitated workshops on various aspects of study skills, motivation and building resilience. The educators were in the staffroom, where they met with the different local child care systems. These included social workers, members from the SAPS and students from Aspis (Latin word for 'protect'), a Child Protection Centre at Unisa, presenting a slide show on child abuse, the city council staff responsible for road safety and some members of the educational district office. At some schools this interaction was focused on the very problems with which the community was battling. Hence, through interaction, real community problems were addressed. The exchanges were lively and engaged. Below several interactions are sketched:

- Service providers were challenged by educators: *Ahh - you say, 'no transport', but that car stands here around the corner the whole day.*
- Real life scenarios were analysed: *When I reported that case... Up to now you did not get back. I don't know if I should check or not.*
- Legal matters were explained: *I may not discuss the case with you. We sign a code of confidentiality.*
- Gaps were identified: *We have 427 cases on our books and we are four people.*
- Insights were gained : While a representative from Road Safety was giving an involved explanation about the importance of using one's rear mirror, understanding road signs, and proper procedures for going around a traffic circle, it came to light that only one educator had a driver's licence.
- Accusations were thrown around: *Yes but you teachers, we will never tell you, you 'skinner' (gossip) and tell your husband about this child and that child, while your own children are playing around.*

At the end of a day-long workshop held with the educators, representatives from each 'system' had a very good idea of the perceptions held by representatives of the other systems about their systems, about particular problems in the community and about particular challenges in protecting the child. The school had the opportunity to get first-hand accounts of the real problems experienced by the different services, such as lack of transport, lack of human resources, and the number of child abuse cases that are withdrawn because community members are not willing to testify in court. In all, everyone developed a better understanding of the whole child protection system, the roles and responsibilities of the different systems, the gaps in their own system and, in particular, the role of educators in identifying the abused child, reporting the incident and supporting every learner, irrespective of whether the learner is a victim of child abuse or not.

All the activities were interactive. The activities for the learners were also enabling, providing them not only with knowledge, but with skills and clarification of values, whilst the presentation to the educators was focused on additional support for the learners.

This programme was a breakthrough for most of the involved parties, because it was the first time that so many organisations had worked together for such an extensive period. Suddenly everyone had a 'friend' in the other services. There was a matrix of networking.

Whenever anyone in the team needed advice or needed to contact someone in the other services, whether for personal needs or institutional needs, they would just phone their new contact instead of laboriously looking up the number or taking the risk of being referred from one person to the other. There was a spirit of congeniality between the different groups. More and more people reported on services that had speeded up because of this contact. There was an incident where a learner was allegedly molested by a teacher, and within two hours the Department of Education, the social worker, the SAPS and the Child Protection Unit were all at the school. Previously this would not have been possible.

This primary school project came to an end in April 1999, as the focus then shifted to the more urgent need, which was identified by the service providers (i.e. the ecological systems), to start such a programme at the secondary schools. This programme was also designed to provide additional support for the Life Skills HIV/AIDS training that was to take place in that year.

5.2.2 Secondary school intervention (1999/2000)

All staff members working in the Education Auxiliary Services in the N3 district, which included educational psychologists and educationists, were trained in Life Skills/HIV/AIDS in 1998. Staff members from Health Promotion were also trained as Master Trainers in Life Skills/HIV/AIDS at the same time, but not together. This later on seemed to have been a pity, as it would have been an ideal opportunity to network. From there two educators per school had to be trained in Life Skills/HIV/AIDS, using the cascade model. The secondary schools project of Project Awareness was planned to support this training by modelling the new facilitation methodology as well as the new curricula to the educators. It was decided not only to have the Life Skills educators present at the training, but also to introduce all educators to this new curriculum and methodology, as the same facilitation methods were also advised for outcomes-based education. The secondary school educators had not yet been introduced to Curriculum 2005 at that stage.

This time it was not difficult to find more partners. Some groups now started to contact the Project Awareness team to offer their services. It was also much easier to explain that we had conducted a similar programme in the primary schools and that, because of its success, we wanted to take it to the secondary schools. People became involved for different reasons (see section 5.3.2).

The project came off the ground at a very opportune moment when from the highest level of government departments there was an appeal for service providers to use new strategies to combat the threat of HIV/AIDS. Without that kind of support and urgency from the top systems, it is unlikely that such an initiative would have been introduced. People in the various departments were instructed to network, in order to collectively plan strategies to combat HIV infection, or to provide evidence of working with other government departments in order to qualify for funding. For the mental health sector, this was a difficult request, especially in the light of the historical past where organisations and departments did not at all communicate and were accustomed to working on a one-to one basis. Project Awareness seemed to be the opportunity many needed, and the pledges of support were sincere.

This Secondary School Project again comprised a two-pronged strategy aimed at both educators and learners. It had as its aim to give an introduction to the new methodology, to allow all educators in the school to experience what Life Skills Education is all about and to kick-start a more sustainable Life Skills programme. At the same time, the programme would assist in combating the rate of HIV/AIDS infection, teenage pregnancy, drug abuse, child abuse and so forth.

The service providers planned this intervention for all thirteen secondary schools in Pretoria West, including Atteridgeville, Laudium and the two previously white and Afrikaans schools of the former Educational District N3. In the words of a World Health Organization Report (Canada 1999:1) this project can be described as an attempt to initiate:

A holistic approach to life skills education, designed to promote healthy psychosocial development whilst providing a rational, integrated approach to addressing behaviour-related health and social problems.

Table 5.4 reflects the secondary school programme.

Table 5.4**Programme for secondary schools**

Grade	Themes	Facilitators	Knowledge, skills, attitudes, values
Grade 8	Sex education and HIV/AIDS prevention	Education Health	Skills such as assertiveness, decision-making, communication skills, self-awareness and value clarification
Grade 9	Career Guidance	Educational Psychologists University students	Aptitude tests
Grade 10	Prevention of crime and violence	Education	Focused on self-awareness, self-esteem, interpersonal relationships, assertiveness and interpersonal conflict management. Gender and racial sensitivity were also included.
Grade 11	Prevention of substance abuse/drinking and driving	Education/ Road Safety City Council and Gautrans SAPS	Knowledge about the biological effect of different substances, as well as skills such as communication skills and resistance of peer group pressure
Grade 12	Parental education	Education Mental Health Welfare	Focused on their own experiences as children and how that influenced their own development, they learnt about ways of caring and disciplining children and the rights of children.

This project reached 14 000 learners and 300 teachers in 13 x four-hour courses of which eight were in Atteridgeville and three in Laudium with another two in Pretoria West at two Afrikaans medium schools in Pretoria West. This approach meant that all secondary schools in Pretoria West area were visited. This intervention was repeated again the following year by a total of 57 facilitators from seventeen different organisations, in a one and a half -day intervention. On the first day all learners were involved in a workshop on sexuality education, HIV/AIDS and teenage pregnancy and on the second day they attended a two-hour workshop on life skills, with a focus on issues such as conflict management and communication skills. Several new partners now joined the group, whilst most of the others continued their involvement. Table 5.5 reflects the changes in structure, organisations and people involved.

Table 5.5**Structures, organisations and people involved**

Structures and people	1st Outreach Primary school intervention	2nd Outreach Secondary school intervention	3rd Secondary school intervention	4th Youth club	5th Parenting programme
Departments	4	4	4	2	4
Departmental Units	12	9	9	4	6
NGO's	3	7	10	3	6
Higher Ed. Institutions	2	3	3	1	1
Businesses	0	1	1	0	0
Offices	20	25	29	4 per intervention	9 per intervention
People	43	53	57	18	-
Schools	31	13	8	13	9

The structure of these two secondary school programmes was a great improvement on that used for the primary school intervention. There was a deliberate attempt to steer away from the large groups, the teachers-in-the-staffroom concept and the 'mock-multi-disciplinary programme' idea. This time facilitators from different disciplines worked together in one classroom, supporting each other and learning from each other. This strategy seemed to be effective. However, on the second day, education representatives were not present and the reports indicated that things were not well coordinated. Principals did not know who was responsible for certain tasks and the programme did not flow smoothly.

The following scenario, based on field observation, provides a glimpse of the classroom training scenario during this intervention:

Scenario 5.2**Classroom training scenario**

One or two facilitators from different organisations go to each class. Classes are large with between 40 and 50 learners in one class and sometimes, when a facilitator is absent, the classes are merged, resulting in groups of 60 or 70 learners. Hence, three or four learners get squashed into one double desk. For the learners this does not seem to be a problem, as many of them often sit three-threes at these desks. Learners in each grade participate in four different one-hour activities on one particular theme (Table 5.4). Educators are asked to attend the workshops in their register classes, either to observe or to assist. They are invited to be actively involved and to contribute to the facilitation process, but this seldom happens. Some of the teachers leave the classroom at a particular stage and only return much later. We realised later on that these teachers left to go and prepare tea and sandwiches for the many facilitators, even though they were asked not to provide refreshments. Others continue with other tasks. The request that a parent attends in each class did not often result in the presence of a parent during the intervention.

This sketch represents the worst-case scenario and in many schools the experience was totally different. Parents or religious leaders were present during training in the Laudium schools. This was welcomed and although there were differences in opinion, it was possible to discuss the issues. At the Afrikaans medium schools, the team met with completely new situations, and many of the facilitators could not speak Afrikaans. The educators were very helpful and acted as translators. Both these schools had a small component of black learners. The use of black facilitators did not bother anyone, as we might have expected. One of the participants wrote about it as follows (see Annexure C):

Then of course there was also the language problem. Some of us are not quite fluent in English and others could not present in Afrikaans. When we moved into Pretoria West, we had to draw on new facilitators (fortunately educational psychologists).

During this intervention some concerned facilitators (mainly staff from the mental health sectors) expressed their concern that it might be necessary to provide a nurturing follow-up structure for learners who needed more support after the intervention. This need was further confirmed when the results of a baseline assessment conducted by Visser (2000) at five of the schools indicated that 15% of the learners had been in abusive situations or were involved in high-risk behaviour. These statistics necessitated another intervention. The summary of this base-line assessment is provided in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6
Summary of results of base-line assessment conducted at five of the schools

Possible risks to learning	Percentage of learners affected by these potential risks
Substance abuse	17% indicated that they had been involved in alcohol abuse 11% admitted to binge drinking on more than one occasion
High-risk sexual activity	36% were sexually active 21% admitted to having multiple sexual partners 31% of the sexually active learners said that they did not use condoms
Family problems	15% had been physically abused 10% wanted to run away from home 5% had been sexually abused 38% reported parental substance abuse
Emotional and behavioural problems	11% felt depressed 10% had suicide tendencies 12% experienced feelings of uncontrolled aggression

The above results were given to the department in an interim report, but the report does not explicitly state what criteria were used that led to these findings. Questions that remain unanswered include the following:

- What are the criteria for substance abuse of the parents?
- Does being 'involved in alcohol abuse' mean that the person used alcohol once or twenty times?
- How often did the person want to run away from home and at what age?
- How often does the learner have feelings of uncontrolled anger and how uncontrolled is it?

Yet, despite these 'vague' results, the findings provided evidence that learners perceived themselves as having been in situations that were detrimental to their emotional wellbeing. It helped to convince the schools of the importance of Life Skills at schools as a school-based programme. It also supported the concern that led to the establishment of youth clubs for those learners that needed extra support after the one-day intervention, or for those that wanted to acquire coping skills.

5.2.3 Youth empowerment clubs (1999/2000)

Learners were asked to complete a questionnaire at the end of their 6-hr course (one and a half school days). An overwhelming 70% of the learners indicated that they would like to attend similar courses in the afternoons and listed their particular problems. The questionnaire was intended in the first instance to provide feedback on the day's activities. But it was also designed to provide an indication of learners' needs for an extra-curricular activity in the form of small interactive groups to discuss life skills. Finally, the questionnaire was used to identify learners who were particularly affected by the day's events. Learners could indicate on the form if they needed specialised assistance. Once the questionnaires were processed, care was taken to select participants from two groups – those demonstrating problems and those whose questionnaires did not point to problems overtly. This was done to ensure that learners who participated in the clubs were not labelled in a pejorative manner (UN 2001 [a]:27). Schools had the prerogative to decide who would attend. The feedback forms helped them to select a particular grade, and they then invited the learners. Youth empowerment clubs were subsequently established at the thirteen secondary schools.

Figure 5.1 is an example of the feedback form that was used to determine the need for intervention.

Figure 5.1

The questionnaire used in determining needs in secondary school intervention

PROJECT AWARENESS		
Tick (✓) means YES Cross (x) means NO		
School		
Date		
1 I would very much like to attend more classes like today (during school hours) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
I would like to learn more about.....(make a tick next to three topics of your choice)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Gender issues (male/female rights)	<input type="checkbox"/> Drug/Substance abuse	<input type="checkbox"/> Crime and Violence
<input type="checkbox"/> Future planning	<input type="checkbox"/> HIV/AIDS Infection	<input type="checkbox"/> Career Matters
<input type="checkbox"/> Shyness/Assertiveness	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual matters	<input type="checkbox"/> Parenting skills
<input type="checkbox"/> Emotional problems	<input type="checkbox"/> Teenage Pregnancies	<input type="checkbox"/> Conflict Management
<input type="checkbox"/> Responsible choices	<input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving Skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Communication Skills
I would like to join similar classes in the afternoons for a six to eight week course, one hour per week, on Self Awareness, Problem Solving Skills and other necessary Life Skills Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
If you would like to write your name in order for someone to help you, you may write your name:		
2 If any of the following experiences apply to you and you wish to talk to someone confidentially, make a tick		
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical abuse	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual abuse	
<input type="checkbox"/> Drug/alcohol abuse	<input type="checkbox"/> Thoughts about suicide	
<input type="checkbox"/> Exposure to violence	<input type="checkbox"/> Living with HIV/AIDS	
<input type="checkbox"/> Unpleasant pregnancy	<input type="checkbox"/> Living with alcoholism at home	

The youth club programme comprised of six one-hour sessions or, as preferred by some facilitators, learners and schools, sometimes three two-hour sessions. These sessions were facilitated by four facilitators per school, of which two were educators from the school. The other two facilitators were educational psychologists, post-graduate psychology students, social workers or educationists. Two out-of-school youths were also involved in these outreaches. Group activities provided a safe environment for teenagers to learn and practise certain life and social skills that could be of assistance in their future life. At the same time, the fact that there were four facilitators provided a safe environment for the facilitators in which they could learn from each other. The educational psychologists or psychologists-in-training took the lead, whilst the others facilitated discussions in smaller groups. Learners were encouraged to identify and understand their feelings. They practised certain coping strategies, communication skills, decision-making and problem-solving skills. Learners did not disclose any of their personal problems given that case studies were used as point of reference. These interventions were based on the principle that learners are active agents in their own development and not only passive victims of adversity.

5.2.4 Parenting Programme (2000/2001)

The need for similar programmes for parents was expressed by the learners in the feedback received during the one-day programmes, as well as from those received from the youth groups. An example of these requests is given below:

But please do this with our parents. Not just us. We must all learn these things (feedback from learners).

Now, for the first time in Project Awareness' lifespan, local structures were involved in the planning of the intervention, but planning still excluded parent communities. The Educational District Office Life Skills Committee invited the service providers participating in Project Awareness together with the schools' Life Skills coordinators to a planning meeting regarding parenting programmes. The latter were asked about their dream for their communities, and the interventions so far and the requests from the learners to involve the parents were explained to them.

At this meeting it was decided to elect a local coordinator and coordination team for each area to manage the parenting classes. The whole group participated in small group discussions and made suggestions for possible themes for discussion at these meetings.

The welfare organisations were to assist in inviting parents who would benefit, either because of their personal situation or their potential to sustain such a programme for the benefit of others. The following themes were identified by the group attending the planning meeting as possible topics to be included in the programme:

- What is parenting?
- Self-awareness;
- Sexuality and my child;
- HIV/AIDS;
- Emotional abuse;
- Building my child's self-esteem;
- Communication in the family;
- Drug abuse and my child;
- Safety at home;
- Developmental phases: What can I expect?
- Discipline in the home;
- How do I prepare my child for school?
- What can I give my child if I have no money?
- Can I assist my child with his/her schoolwork if I did not attend school?
- How does one solve conflict between brothers and sisters?
- Should I talk to my child about sex?
- What do I tell my 6, 7, 8 year old about HIV/AIDS?
- What do I tell my teenager about HIV/AIDS?
- How can I protect my child against abuse?
- How do I discipline my teenager?

The parenting classes consisted of two-hour workshops once per week stretching over a period of twelve weeks, and were aimed at empowering parents in different aspects of parenting, giving them a broader knowledge and a skills-based background. Schools were asked to send two or more educators to these classes for the sake of sustainability. The two coordinators for the two different areas were both local Life Skills school coordinators volunteering for this function. They received a list of the facilitators who were involved in the other interventions, but had the option to invite anyone to facilitate. Parents attending the programme were not necessarily the parents of those learners who had attended the youth clubs. A report to the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (see Annexure D) explains the content of the programme as follows:

The first two groups are at the moment doing this training. We find this an excellent third leg – learner, teacher, and parent – and we deal with the same topics: Self Awareness, Sexuality, HIV/AIDS, Communication, Child Abuse, Support Groups; Healthy Life Style, Problem Solving, Drug Abuse, Gender Issues, Conflict Management; Crime, Discipline, Problems encountered by extended families living together.

The coordinators found it very difficult to get the parents to attend. Some could not find enough parents to participate and merely made up the numbers with educators. At one of the venues, these courses commenced a year later than intended, because of this problem. However, once implemented, these interventions brought about a better understanding between school and home. Parents, educators and schools reported on the success of these interventions (see Annexure E, F and G). One coordinator reported that the parents were 'delighted and enthusiastic' to attend every session and that they felt empowered due to their limited knowledge of the topics discussed (as reflected in the report received from one community coordinator). She remarked:

And it's very important for us to attend because besides being educators, we are parents also. And we need the skills. And we also need to show the parents that this is not only for you ... maybe because you are less intelligent eh ...or maybe you are not as intelligent as we are. It's for everyone. It brings up that the holistic part of it that this is for everyone. It's not just for those who know nothing. But if we are also there it is like... but the educators are also attending, they are also going to gain something (Interview: community based coordinator of the parenting classes).

In terms of implementation, there were a number of differences in the way in which the project developed in the two areas. Table 5.7 indicates the differences.

Table 5.7
Differences between areas

Laudium	Atteridgeville
One venue, two groups	Two venues, two groups in each.
More difficult to find the parents	Easier to find the parents in the school close to the informal area
Started a year later, because of lack of interest	Started immediately
Used mostly education staff from district offices as facilitators	Used only people from own community, speaking the vernacular
Decided half-way through to double up the courses, spending four hours per day, for fewer days.	Often absent because of funerals. Saturdays do not work well and first Saturday of month no one turns up
Few asked for follow-up to be trained as facilitators	Some asked for a repetition of the course, wanting to 'drink more.'
Complained about long hours.	Often remained after the classes to ask more.
Saturdays: Four hours x 6 days	Saturdays: 2 hours x 12 Saturdays
Frustrated because school did not ask them to find more parents to attend.	Formed informal support groups
At least one or two educators attended the presentations every time.	11 educators in first group attended the whole course. Thereafter only a few from other schools attended the other courses.
Only two groups. Trainees wanted more training but as facilitators to sustain the programme.	After the third group, both the coordinator and the sub-coordinators started to facilitate the classes themselves, feeling completely empowered.

This table indicates a few patterns:

- Schools and communities have different needs that should be considered.
- Training and development is more effective if the trainees know how they can use the acquired skills and knowledge.
- Accreditation for those that are interested should be an option.
- In the disadvantaged areas it is more important to have someone who speaks your language and from your culture to facilitate than to have the best specialist in the field.
- Redress was managed in a natural way because of the needs of community.
- By attending two or three courses, adults with minimal experience can start facilitating themselves.
- Courses that continued for 12 weeks were more successful in building closer interpersonal relationships between people than those that did it in six weeks.

The two groups were different and it was later realised that a pre-discussion could have solved many of the problems. The one group, for example, indicated their frustration at the school for not utilising them as parents to full capacity. They felt that they could have been more involved in marketing the course, in inviting the parents, and after the course, in training more parents or starting support groups. Their request was never adhered to, because of time constraints. The other group requested more courses. They wanted to come back to receive more, to remember more, to 'come and drink more' (respondent) and to benefit more. This latter group was also the group that remained after classes to discuss further and to talk to the facilitators while the other group complained about the long courses and decided to hold double sessions in order to finish the programme sooner.

A coordinator of the parenting classes suggested that all educators should attend these classes, but with the parents. She reported on enhanced relationships between parents and educators. Three of these parents got involved in other nurturing activities at the school. This respondent reported on the benefits of this approach:

As parents eh sometimes we take parenting e .e for granted. We take it as eh ... something that is inborn. But through these workshops we realize that -as parents even I myself we've done many mistakes with our children that can have everlasting effect on them. Even the educators -they don't know. So parenting is a skill. Children do need emotional support and if they do not get it at home they demand it from you. If they get enough emotional support at home they come to school more confident and it makes your work much easier.

The one group decided mostly to use facilitators not specifically from the area, but specialists in their field. The other group decided to use facilitators who could speak the vernacular and people mostly from the community or from a similar community even if they knew that there could have been more experienced facilitators from other cultural groups. They also reported on the advantage of having somebody from their culture, speaking their language. The fact that the one coordinator started herself to facilitate a group can be seen as true empowerment.

These two groups had different needs and ways of addressing the needs. There was also a different kind of involvement from the coordinators. For one it was a personal challenge. She viewed this as an opportunity to grow and develop as a stepping stone to other opportunities (report). The other one saw it as a responsibility that she was prepared to take, a task that had to be performed, that took a lot of effort and was difficult to fit into a busy programme. Both of them acquitted themselves well. It was also more difficult to find parents who wanted to attend the courses in Laudium than in Atteridgeville. In Atteridgeville the venue closest to the informal area was easier to fill with parents. These parents also asked to return. In Laudium the parents also asked for a follow-up course. This was to be accredited so that facilitators for further parenting classes in Laudium could be trained.

These parenting workshops came to an end during 2001 because of the following reasons:

- Restructuring in the Department of Education;
- Many of the involved people were transferred to other units;
- Community-based coordinators could not continue on the same basis;
- No funding for honorariums (R200 per two-hour session) because of lack of funding and of procedures to pay monies out to the schools for such interventions;
- The funding from the NMCF had stopped; and
- Life Skills/HIV/AIDS funds of the Department of Education could not be allocated for parenting projects.

They were, however, resumed again, but in a different form managed by another unit and by other people in Atteridgeville and Mamelodi. Two members of the multi-disciplinary team got involved: the out-of-school youth and one health care worker started another two series, using funds from the Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative.

Whilst this section provided a brief synopsis of the Project Awareness interventions, the following section focuses on a review of the processes operative during the pre-implementation and implementation phases of Project Awareness.

5.3 SECTION TWO: ANALYTICAL DISCUSSIONS ON THE COORDINATING PROCESSES IN A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY SETTING

The following is an analytical review of the processes operational within a multi-disciplinary setting. By analysing some of these processes, the section aims to shed light on the dynamics and the development of such a programme. This is because a multi-disciplinary programme implies coordination, as any programme does, but in this case it requires coordination across systems. A key motivation for including this section is that many international researchers have considered the impact of one-day intervention programmes as almost negligible (Welch 1995; Botvin 1997:182) and some researchers even view these kinds of interventions as secondary abuse (Lamprecht 2000:31,34). But one needs to look at the processes and structures in which the shorter interventions are embedded in order to be able to assess the lasting effects, if any, and unexpected benefits of the intervention.

Table 5.8 provides a concise view of the coordinating processes operational in Project Awareness. It demonstrates how these were modified and developed from one outreach to the other, sometimes retaining the previous form and then changed again. In most cases, changes were positive and indicative of growth and development.

Table 5.8

Project Awareness: The coordinating processes within this multi-disciplinary setting

Coordination processes	Primary school outreach	Secondary school outreach	2nd year secondary school outreach	Youth club	Parenting
HOW IT STARTED	<p>Difficult to find the service providers</p> <p>Many telephone calls</p> <p>Lots of faxes</p> <p>Many closed doors</p> <p>Talking to wrong people</p> <p>Inviting the wrong structures</p> <p>A lot of talking and a lot of different understandings of what the project should achieve and what form it should take on</p>	<p>Search for more stakeholders.</p> <p>Some organisations and individuals now contact you</p> <p>Some of the previous team members supply you with names and addresses</p> <p>Some institutions have brought more people from their organisations to join the group</p> <p>Others come with ideas</p>	<p>Searching for more organisations, because more people are needed</p> <p>More people and business contact you</p>	<p>Training necessary for more specialised scenario</p> <p>Some decide not to become involved</p> <p>Demarcated area of work</p>	<p>Only involved by invitation from the area coordinator</p> <p>One group uses mainly staff from education</p> <p>Other group does not use one facilitator from education, but mobilises those of the same culture or from the community</p>
COORDINATOR	<p>One person takes lead to gets things going</p> <p>Education is elected to serve as bridge to school</p>	<p>Each group appoints a sub-coordinator to serve as contact between coordinator and all the participants</p> <p>Sub-coordinator takes full responsibility for each person in their organisation</p> <p>Sub-coordinator responsible for reporting to that organisation</p>	<p>Project coordinator not there on second day of every intervention</p> <p>Things tend to be uncoordinated and lack integration</p> <p>No bridge between services and schools</p> <p>Principals feel unsure of who to address and who to work with</p>	<p>Increased delegation</p> <p>Intern at educational district office takes strong lead to set the pace, to compile the manual using all the inputs</p> <p>Educational psychologists make own internal arrangements with school and other people in their teams</p> <p>Project coordinator acts only in administrative capacity</p>	<p>Area coordinators coordinate their own courses</p> <p>Provides area coordinators with list of identified topics for discussion, as compiled by Life Skills educators and service providers, and list of possible facilitators</p> <p>Project coordinator serves as motivator, as bridge between area coordinator and treasurer</p>

Coordination processes	Primary school outreach	Secondary school outreach	2nd year secondary school outreach	Youth club	Parenting
PLANNING					
• Needs identification	Service providers identify their needs to train and not schools	Provincial office supports the intervention, but district offices chooses model.	Provincial office supports the intervention, but district offices chooses model	Mental Health Sectors	Learners and educators
• Funds	External funding (NMCF)	External funding (NMCF) Small Life Skills government funding for stationery	External funding (NMCF) Life Skills government funding for stationery	Life Skills Government funding	External funders NMCF Social Services (Protocol) SAMCOR
• Aims and Outcomes	Social worker	Each multi-disciplinary group compiles own manual	Each multi-disciplinary group compiles own manual	Intern as part of an assignment University of Pretoria as part of their research	Individuals
IMPLEMENTATION	Go to school together but work separate groups for educators and learners	Work in pairs with other disciplines For educators, learners and parents	Work in pairs with other disciplines and business for educators, learners and parents	Work in teams with educators and students and out-of-school-youth For learners	Work individually with parents and educators For Parents and Educators
FOLLOW-UP	Assignments Lessons Booklets Flip Chart Training of 2 (HIV/AIDS) Visit from Health Promoter Parenting (Two Years later)	Visit from educational Psychologist Visit from Health Promoter Lessons (WHO) Youth Clubs Parenting Healthy Life Style	Visit from educational psychologist visit from health promoter lessons (WHO) Youth Clubs Parenting Healthy Life Style Business returns to educators	Two individual referrals	Asked for training as master trainers
MONITORING	None	Structures of youth clubs, parenting, Healthy Life Style, Special Days and Health Worker	Structures of youth clubs, parenting, Healthy Life Style, Special Days and Health Worker	None	None
EVALUATION & ASSESSMENT	St Mary's Outreach	Provincial Life Skills Teams	Provincial and District Life Skills Teams University	University	None

The above table bears evidence of a variety of relationships, new contacts, evolving, improved processes and, ultimately, improved outcomes. It demonstrates how the need of a group of students developed into an enabling process for more than 32 000 learners, parents, educators and service providers.

It will be argued in this section that a focus on the project start-up and coordinating processes of Project Awareness is essential not only to provide detailed information about and reflections on how such processes should be set up in future, but also because the way in which these processes were negotiated and implemented is indistinguishable from the overarching project aims. What seem to be 'pre-activities' are indeed foundational. In an ecological systems approach these activities are just as important as the actual implementation of the programme. The organisational shape the project took provided a rich environment for breaking down all kinds of barriers and strengthening the local child support system. The coordinating processes adopted in Project Awareness were developmental, enabling and brought people and systems together, closing the gaps and strengthening the systems, while simultaneously opening the systems to give all enhanced insight of processes and structures in other systems, thereby addressing barriers to learning.

5.3.1 Getting started

As outlined in section 5.2, locating role-players to participate in the first programme was a huge task. It was difficult to find their locations and telephone numbers. It was hard to talk to people one does not know at all and persuade them to comply with plans that might differ from the way they do things. Phoning all the child care organisations that we could get hold of was a Herculean task. Most of the departments had restructured, moved from their premises to new ones, changed telephone numbers, and changed job descriptions. This part of the project was a learning experience in itself.

However, from this point onwards, the process developed its own momentum. The second time round it was much easier to find the service providers and often they now found us. The Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative proved to be the best place to make known what you are looking for.

The 'getting-started' process often resulted in contracting and involving the wrong people. For example, at one of the first meetings all the school nurses attended, not knowing why their presence was required. At the time, I did not know that the Department of Health had

a training division for such interventions. But this very 'mistake' later led to the 'Healthy Life Style Service' that was implemented for a while (see Annexure H). Once organisations and service providers were invited to the meeting, it was necessary for all of us to see if we could 'make our needs meet.' If that happened, we had a project.

5.3.2 Identification of needs

The original need for initiating such a programme was identified by students from Aspis, a centre of the Unisa Criminology Department and echoed by the manager of the Atteridgeville branch of Pretoria Child and Family Care Society (5.2). In the proposals for funding (5.3.6) it was stated that the primary school project was initiated to combat child abuse, or to further child protection, whilst the secondary school project was aimed at assisting schools to implement Life Skills HIV/AIDS Programmes. The other two programmes were aimed at further support for learners and the enabling of parents. One after the other, organisations agreed to become involved.

Project Awareness therefore addressed the need of the different services to develop educators or to combat child abuse. Schools were not approached to identify their needs. In this regard, one of the respondents stated the following:

We have always found that the needs that we identify coincide with the needs of the school.

Another respondent commented that some of the schools were at that stage under a lot of pressure and were overwhelmed by a series of courses, training workshops and meetings. Therefore they lacked the capacity to identify the needs. The findings, however, indicated that this kind of argument, which was shared by the entire group, did not take into consideration that the needs of schools cannot be generalised. For example, parents in Laudium had a particular need to be trained as trainers. If that need had been identified and responded to, they could have played an enabling role in their communities. Even if schools were incapacitated, interaction and consultation with schools before the initiative took place, may have led to improved relationships and enhanced success.

When ASPIS identified the need to present a course on child protection (see section 5.2), the thinking behind it was correct, because child protection was not part of the pre-service training of most educators. But by not involving the schools in the identification or refinement of needs, or at least in the planning of the intervention (as discussed under parenting), an opportunity for development that would have resulted in a better product

was lost. But it also became apparent that there were also other needs that were addressed through these programmes. When facilitators were asked why they had become involved and how they had personally gained from the experience, they mentioned a number of reasons. Some of the respondents said that at the time they became involved, they were unaware of their own personal needs, but knew that the concept appealed to them or that the model suited them. The respondents' responses were listed and further supported by feedback forms, reports and thank you notes. The classification in Table 5.9 followed later.

Table 5.9
Schematic summary of why the facilitators became involved

TYPE OF NEED	REASONS
Moral Need (intrinsic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children must be helped • Child abuse must stop • We must combat HIV/AIDS • Parents should be empowered • The youth need more support • It will be secondary abuse not to follow up • People can't die like this • My religion does not allow me to sit back • My conscience urged me • Finding it meaningful
Organisational Need (extrinsic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic goal • Operational strategy • Only way to receive a grant from Social Services • Strategy proposed by leadership • Having to report on community work • Having to report on prevention of child abuse • Having to report on HIV/AIDS prevention programmes • Having to report on safety programmes • Organisation needs more assistance with workload
Development Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal experience in the family • Challenge • Need for recognition • Need to improve myself • Needed experience of working in townships or with other cultures • Hoping to find a job/income/opportunity • Study purposes
Practical Needs (extrinsic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A way of getting into the schools • Need for more human resources to deal with the large numbers of learners • Need for financial resources to conduct programme • Seeing an opportunity to venture into the townships without going there alone • Easier to find sponsorships and grants • Seeing an opportunity to get my work done more effectively than doing it on my own • Practical experience for me and/or my group
No particular need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was asked • Was forced • Thought I had to • Everyone became involved

The needs outlined in the table above reflect a broad spectrum of motivating factors that sparked respondents' involvement in Project Awareness. These needs emanated in part from a set of values that hold that children need to be protected and that the youth need support. But the needs also represent the idea that people need recognition and that

organisations want to develop and that there should be something in it for everyone. They also bear evidence of the fact that individuals take opportunities that come their way.

Based on the above it can be argued that the multi-disciplinary programme is an ideal catalyst for addressing various needs. These needs include both organisational and personal needs. This should not be viewed as negative. It does not mean that the services rendered by those who became involved for personal reasons were worth less than the others. Many of those who were frank enough to acknowledge that their participation was initially driven by moral considerations also admitted that they were enhanced as people and empowered as service providers. In most instances the facilitators indicated a combination of needs.

5.3.3 Planning collaboratively

This phase of the intervention was the most chaotic, but also the most meaningful. It involved getting to know the members of the project team and setting their roles and responsibilities. The planning process comprised a diverse and multidimensional set of tasks, from distilling what should be 'in' and what should be 'out'; finding out the correct procedure for referrals and getting clarity on the role of the police and/or social worker; to debate on whether we should talk to learners about the use of condoms or not. Representatives from mental health gave input on parenting and family life; social workers pointed to certain aspects of child protection that the others were not aware of and the Department of Education shared experiences on disciplinary measures, the roles and the rights of parents and facilitation methods. The respondents agreed that the collective planning brought fresh insights, ensured a more holistic approach to matters, assisted in developing an understanding of structures and processes and was one of the best forms of development for all the service providers. One respondent described the planning phase as follows:

Everybody realised that they had skills. We were definitely enhanced as individuals and as organizations.

Other respondents regarded this process as cumbersome, time consuming and difficult, but worthwhile in the long run. One respondent expressed her feelings as follows:

The outcomes... the insights you would never get that in another way – not with all the data-projectors in the world! Nothing can ..can replace those discussions.

Scenario 5.3 provides a brief sketch of the way this participant experienced the planning process.

Scenario 5.3

Getting to know each other

The first planning session starts off with a lot of strangers from different organisations, none of them knowing anyone else than their own colleagues. Decisions have to be made about themes and structures, programmes and content. Leaders for each of the groups have to be appointed or elected, and training manuals and training materials have to be developed. The process is highly interactive. Some participants offer their suggestions while others keep quiet and one is not quite sure if they are happy or unhappy with the direction that proceedings are taking. But this kind of planning with stakeholders is time well spent. At times one experiences an 'aha-erlebnis' when two minds meet and an idea is developed that could benefit all in more than one way. Sometimes one is shocked by the lack of skills in some organisations. Other times one is amazed by the wisdom or knowledge of some of the participants. There are also times when one comes to realise and is forced to face one's own prejudices. It is at this point that you become sensitive to other cultures and ideas and obtain an understanding of the gaps in your own knowledge base or experience.

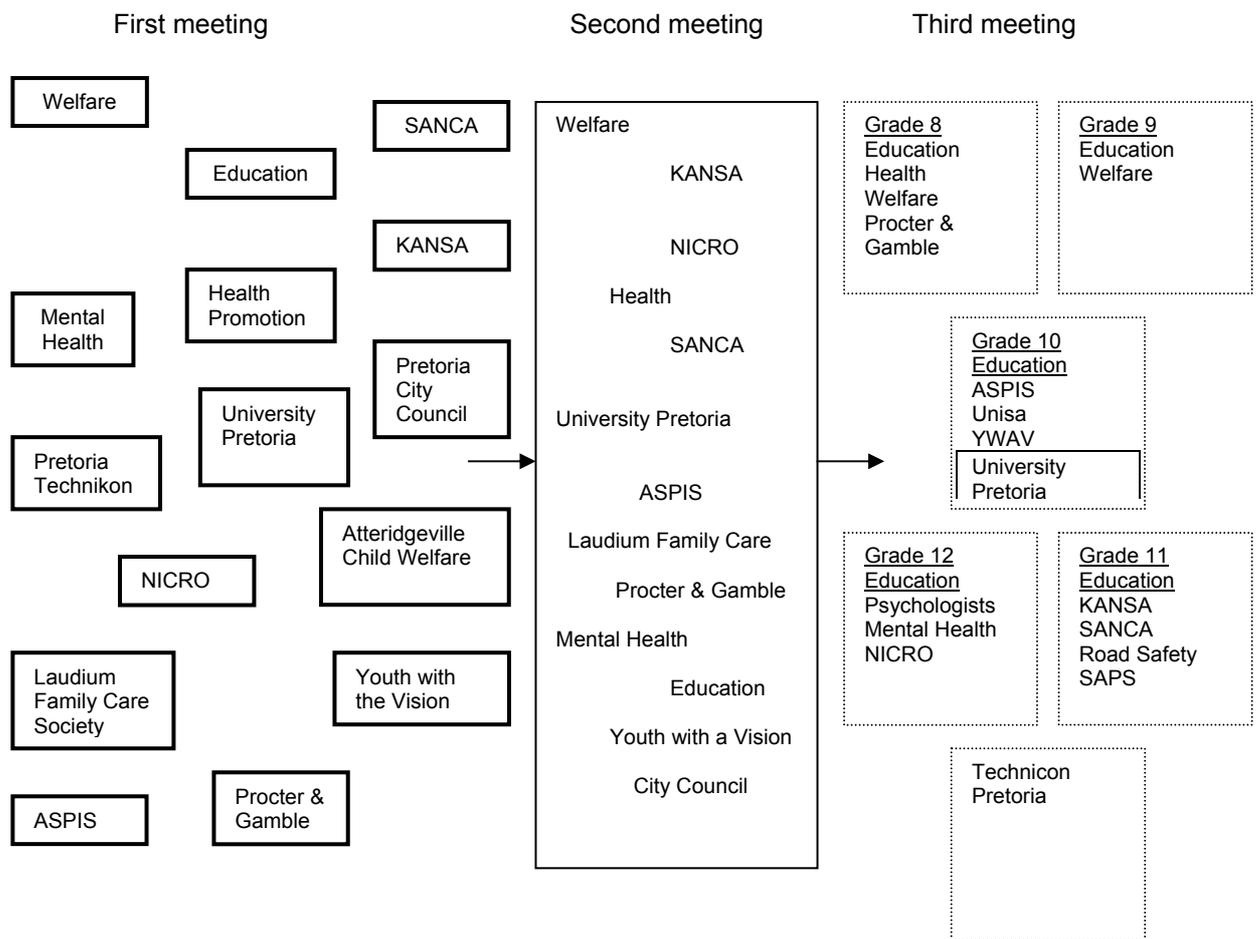
All of these contribute to a more fully developed understanding of the different child protection structures and their roles and functions. One suddenly wonders how on earth South Africa could have survived in the past without this kind of multi-disciplinary interaction. Perhaps most importantly, through these planning sessions one achieves the primary objective, namely to network. After this day of intervention you know some of the other role-players by name. You have the telephone numbers of the other service providers and you know who to contact in an emergency. You learn to understand those that are going to work with you. You identify their strengths and their weaknesses. At the end of day one you feel as if you have travelled many kilometres and covered far distances, but that you have actually arrived at your destination.

When the next intervention had to be planned, the process was more integrated and became somewhat of a group activity. Now everyone had an opinion about what might work better, because they could draw on their experience of the first intervention. The manuals had to be drafted, working in small groups. Hence, people from different disciplines started working together. One of the participants (Barkhuizen) reported on this process (see Annexure C). This preparation phase was just as much a developmental phase as any other. Errors made along the way do not seem to have had a major impact on the process of collaboration.

Figure 5.2 that follows is a schematic representation of this 'getting-to-know-you' process, and indicates how the groups started mixing and merging from the one meeting to the next. The process commenced with a series of organisations involved in a joint project in which each organisation participated as a distinct entity, with a specific set of roles and

responsibilities. Each organisation knew what component of the programme they had to present and they started planning for the intervention. Here and there a group found that they did not have enough people and would have to draw in more representatives from their own field. The Laudium social workers assisted the Atteridgeville group and they did their planning together, but this cooperation took place within the delimitations of a single field.

Figure 5.2
Getting to know you



5.3.4 Coordinating processes

If a matrix management model is embedded in a government department, the coordinator of that project usually reports to both his/her direct internal manager and to the provincial coordinator. However, with a multi-disciplinary project in which various government departments and other child care structures are involved, this reporting structure becomes much more complex. There are many leaders, many coordinators and many managers to

be considered. Project Awareness provided the opportunity for participants to gain insight into how other structures manage such activities. But in coordinating the project's activities, the following managers had to be considered:

- Project coordinator;
- Line-function manager;
- The senior managers in each department;
- The directors of each organisation;
- The principals of all the schools;
- The area coordinators of the parenting classes;
- The sub-coordinators in each one of the participant organisations;
- The sub-coordinators for each group in the grades and phases; and
- Project managers at provincial offices (If only if the budget came along those lines).

The different dynamics between these managing structures will now be discussed.

Some invitations to the first meetings were verbally delivered in person or by telephone, whilst others received a written invitation. In some cases the entire unit with their line function manager came to the meeting, whilst other organisations sent the line-function manager only to see exactly what the invitation was all about. In some cases the line-function manager did not even know about the meeting. It must be remembered that in 1997 when the planning was done, government departments were still very much in disarray as a result of processes to get them re-organised in new structures.

In selecting a coordinator, most respondents indicated that they felt a representative from the Department of Education should coordinate school intervention programmes or projects. For these respondents, such a choice was mainly based on practical considerations, since an educational official would have contact with the schools, the necessary logistical support and the credibility at the schools. One respondent explained it as follows:

Education was in the best position to coordinate. The Department of Education did the paper work, they wrote the letters, they arrived early in order to get everybody to the classrooms. Because it was well managed it was meaningful

and

The district office has the credibility with the principals, parents, learners. The others were extremely thankful that somebody was prepared to take responsibility.

However, in one of the other districts the project was successfully coordinated by the director of a small youth empowerment NGO in close cooperation with the Department of Education. Nonetheless, they reported that some problems were experienced at the schools when a representative from the education department was not there. The one report states the following

If S... indicates willingness to further coordinate the program (sic) the District is willing to give all information and cooperation although we are unable to take the responsibility to drive the program (sic).

In the parent empowerment classes, a local person from the particular area took the lead with the educational district office offering some administrative assistance, for example, writing letters to the schools. The coordination for the parenting group was done on a voluntary basis. The group took full control, planned their own activities and certificate presentation functions. They only contacted the Project Coordinator for organisational tasks such as requests for money or payments. A coordinator of the local parenting groups reflects on the positive experience of having to take responsibility as follows:

Actually I'm glad. It taught me a lot of things. A lot of things about myself – you know, self-awareness. I learnt more about my skills, my vision and mission in life. I like to help people.

On the question about the extent to which the project management function can influence the outcomes of the project there was consensus amongst respondents that it was indeed an important function and therefore likely to influence the outcomes of the project. Comments such as the following were forthcoming: 'It needs a very strong, motivated driver to drive the whole process' and 'The project will be as good as the person driving it.'

Another respondent reflected on the importance of the line-function manager:

You need a coordinator ... the one conducting the work – you know, the project manager, but then you also need a leader. The one understanding how meaningful it is, how it fits into the bigger picture. That one should encourage the team, focusing on the bigger picture and aim of the interventions.

The project had to come to terms with many different management styles adopted by the various line-function managers. These management styles influenced the way in which the project evolved. At times a line manager's management style hindered a project, whilst in many cases it enabled it. Below are a few examples of how line managers' management styles impacted on the project. These examples are drawn from feedback received from project team members, field experience and observation, and respondents' comments:

- A line manager prevented a district, office, group, or organisation from taking part, because the programme was not included in the operational plans of the province. A few people who had already become involved in the project had to withdraw as a result of this.
- A line manager prevented an organisation from taking part, because Atteridgeville does not fall in their working area.
- A line manager prevented a unit/section from attending the development workshops or the monthly meetings, because it would 'take them away from their work.'
- A line manager never visited the site or paid any attention to the project, but reported on it in quarterly reports 'with great fanfare' as one respondent expressed it.
- A line manager never visited the site where the project took place, but gave a full report as well as the necessary support and acknowledgement at unit meetings. The way this line manager reported on the project to management and unit members clearly underscored the impact of such a programme in terms of improved relationships.
- A line manager visited the site every now and again, motivated the team, gave full support and explained to everyone else the major breakthrough made in many areas as a result of this project.
- A line manager was fully involved in the project.
- A line manager became fully involved as facilitator in the programme. Although this line manager was not coordinating the project, she worked with the team, supported the coordinator and provided the necessary vision for such an intervention, also imparting it to the rest of the team.

Some of the organisational leaders joined the group, fulfilling this role with the greatest charm, and at the same time acted as 'motivational leader'. When a line-function leader is negative about the project, it requires hard work to convince his/her subordinates to remain involved.

This was emphasised by one of the respondents:

Attitudes of some people can be a problem. Some of the organisation's middle management members did not like the idea. They did not like the circumstances. They did not like being out of their comfort zones. This attitude influenced the other staff.

Another respondent reported on the complexities of multi-disciplinary teams, especially from the perspective of leadership:

Matrix management was not easy for all. Some thought it took the limelight away from them.

Several different management structures developed as the project unfolded in order to improve the processes. One of these strategies was to make use of several middle managers of the participating organisations to fulfil key organisational roles, including:

- A coordinator for every grade presentation in the secondary schools and one for each phase presentation in the primary school interventions;
- A coordinator for every secondary school to contact the school, make the final arrangements and to keep the school informed;
- Coordinators for the parenting courses were drawn from the community. There was a coordinator for each one of the geographical areas.

It was also found in one or two cases that a particular person, and once a particular group, did not comply with the agreements made. Either they did not turn up at all, leaving the rest in the lurch, or they cancelled at a very late stage, were regularly absent, or often arrived late. A large and disparate group such as the one involved in Project Awareness at some point develops a sense of cohesion, of 'oneness'. Hence, such behaviour upset them all, since it was detrimental to the image of the group.

The difficulty of responding to this kind of problem, is related to the question of whether a project coordinator can take any action, or what kind of action can be taken by the coordinator if the offending person or group is in another government department, is a person with a higher ranking in the bureaucracy, or is a person involved in the local office of a department. Due to the fact that the entire initiative was based on a positive attitude, cooperation, a shared vision and mutual trust, not much could be done. The sub-coordinators of the participating groups were usually requested to take steps in cases where non-compliance could be linked to an individual. But full integration or cooperation

on provincial level does assist in getting the cooperation of all relevant systems in the local areas.

An issue that emerged strongly was the apparent lack of interest on the part of school principals.

Principals did not take it to heart – especially the high schools. We were mostly primary schools. Next time first speak to principals, members of the SGB and then explain the whole concept of parent empowerment classes. Get LIFE Skills educators involved and SBST (Respondent).

However, the apparent lack of enthusiasm from some of the principals could be seen in another light. One of the respondents pointed out that the level at which decisions is made makes it difficult for principals to participate. This was one reason why one should never take the obvious route of top-down coordination:

The principals' role is very important. Sometimes the principals might have found that it was something pushed on them from the district's side. They were not involved in the decision-making. They were not there, supporting (respondent).

With the coordinating function finalised, it was time to start with the actual planning of the interventions.

5.3.5 Formulating aims and outcomes

The following discussion describes two aspects related to the aims and outcomes of the different interventions. The first sheds light on how the processes used in deciding on the aims and outcomes impacted on the formulation of the outcomes. The second aspect that is explored is the way in which the formulation of the outcomes impacted on the interventions. All the projects that were undertaken under the Project Awareness rubric can be described as double-barrelled or two-pronged strategies, since they were aimed at addressing a risk by enabling learners and the support systems at the same time. The outcomes stated for the project are analysed in terms of its content (that is, linguistically) but also in terms of probability to be achieved and in terms of the likelihood of outcomes to address barriers to learning successfully.

When an idea for a project or programme is born and it gradually develops, eventually turning into a full-fledged programme, the final form and the scope of the project are not

always envisaged in the beginning. This was the case with Project Awareness. It started with an idea, and one by one other individuals or groups joined the project for a range of reasons. Each new group joining the project knew why they had decided to join and what they wanted to do. Hence, no one considered formulating the project outcomes in well-structured terms. It was only when it was suddenly necessary to apply for funding that the envisaged outcomes had to be identified and formulated.

The overall aim of the first community-based intervention was to combat child abuse or, a more positive articulation, to undertake an intervention aimed at empowering educators in order to protect children (proposal for funding to NMCF 1998). It aimed at generating a greater awareness about all matters concerning child abuse generally, and more specifically about how to identify the abused child, what the appropriate referral and reporting processes are and the importance of the supporting role of the educator.

The following general outcomes were stated for the Primary School Intervention:

- Long term relationships with all relevant role-players as well as sustainability, real involvement and empowerment.
- That more child abuse cases will be reported, which means a greater increase in awareness and hoping to see at least a 30% increase in reported cases in Atteridgeville and Laudium.
- That the children will be more aware of what is okay and what is not okay. This includes touching, fondling, children's rights, children's responsibilities, as well as those of the teachers. We hope to see at least a 30 % increase in cases reported to teachers.
- We expect to empower teachers to handle these reported problems in an effective way.
- We want all the children in the school to know within one month after our visit which different options they have when they want to discuss a problem or when they want to complain about something. These 'grievance procedures' and 'reporting structures' should be displayed all over the school for all children to see.
- We wish to see both learners and teachers to seek for solutions by means of counselling, brainstorming, committees to oversee the different problems, therapy sessions, procedures and creative thinking processes. We expect a 30% increase to that of last year.
- We want to see children and teachers making responsible choices.

These outcomes can be summarised as focused on enhanced relationships (long-term relationships, outcome 1); improved processes (outcome 2); greater awareness measured by an increase in number of referrals (outcome 3); enabled human resources (outcome 4); added support for learners at schools (outcomes 5 and 6); and informed choices (outcome 7). These outcomes are all located within the socio-educational framework.

The outcomes for the Grade 1 to 4 group were mostly focused on skills: how to be assertive and on feelings and knowledge, for example, how to discern between good and bad experiences. These envisaged outcomes are listed below:

The learners will be...

- Aware of what safe and unsafe behaviour is (what is 'okay' and 'not okay');
- Aware of what is 'good touch' and 'bad touch' and how to protect oneself;
- Aware that there are grownups one can trust, that help is available;
- Able to assert themselves against abuse;
- Able to understand the difference between pleasant/unpleasant feelings;
- Able to report an abuse and know where to find help (run, yell, tell);
- Able to communicate to someone (adult) whom they trust;
- Able to speak out after or during the abuse;
- Aware of personal hygiene and keeping one's body healthy; and
- Aware of safe behaviour on the roads with specific reference to pedestrian behaviour.

For a Grade 1 learner these are complex aims, but if achieved, learners would potentially become assertive, communicative, independent and well-protected.

The outcomes stated for the Grade 5 to 7 learners were also vague, and no performance standards were given. The aim of these programmes was for the learners to understand that there are multiple intelligences, and that in spite of any previous negative experiences at school or home, they can do well in many things. They also wanted to build their self-esteem and make them understand that there are different ways in which you can learn, that you should involve more of your senses when learning.

We want the learners to...

- be aware of how the human brain functions (use of both the left and right brain);
- be aware of their own intellectual potential;
- acquire improved study skills, including trying to create an ideal study environment;

- develop a positive self-esteem and a future perspective;
- be able to handle and cope with problems in the family, like alcohol and drug abuse, violence and poverty;
- be able to identify of their own emotions, like sadness, happiness, anger, etc., and how to handle these feelings;
- be able to clarify values, e.g. decisions to combat social problems like violence, theft and alcohol and drug abuse;
- acquire skills to generate funds where there is poverty (entrepreneurship);
- be aware of the available resources in the environment.

Examining all the outcomes linguistically, it is possible to state that there was a low probability of achieving most of these outcomes within the given time frame of four hours. In addition, some outcomes are based on the wrong assumptions, such as that a traumatised child will be able to remember detail when reporting an abusive situation. Other outcomes are potentially dangerous, for example the slogan 'run/yell/tell'. Moreover, in most cases it would not be possible to determine whether the stated outcomes have been achieved, because of the absence of explicit performance indicators and/or a baseline evaluation. In addition, it is not useful to refer to an envisaged 30% increase in referrals without having access to or make reference to a database of referrals. Other outcomes cannot reasonably be achieved, for example, it is unlikely that learners would be able to discern 'well-intended attention' from 'attention with a hidden agenda' after having been trained for thirty minutes only. Most adults would be satisfied if they could achieve some of these outcomes in a lifetime, for example 'to be able to handle and cope with problems in the family like alcohol and drug abuse'.

As outcomes for a risk-focused, school-based approach, these outcomes could not have been achieved. But taking into account the aim of both the primary school intervention and the secondary school intervention, this day was meant to be the beginning of a process in which learners would become better protected because their educators would be more enabled and informed, and as a result would be able to support them. This support would therefore be extended long after the training group had left. The success of the programme did therefore not depend on the success of formulating the correct outcomes or achieving the specific outcomes for the day, but on secondary outcomes that emerged during the process.

The outcomes for the secondary school learners all implied behavioural change, something that is difficult to assess. It is widely accepted that behavioural changes very seldom occur after a four-hour intervention, which is enough reason to believe that the stated outcomes for this component of the programme could most probably not have been achieved in one day. This was also confirmed by the research findings (Visser and Scott 2001:3). The envisaged outcomes for the learners are stated below:

The learners will be able

- to combat HIV/AIDS
- to make responsible choices
- to plan their future
- to build self confidence
- to be assertive
- to think of consequences
- to do proper problem solving
- to understand the principles of conflict management
- to prevent/identify/ report child abuse
- to combat dangerous behaviour on the roads
- to combat drug and substance abuse
- to know where to go to with problems (family member, school, community, church, organisations).

Contextual factors contributed to the fact that there was a higher probability that the envisaged outcomes for the educators could be achieved. The outcomes are mostly based on lesson observation aimed at producing a change of mind about Life Skills/HIV/AIDS education. The fact that educators experienced in practice how to use the methodology; how to deal with very sensitive material, and how to manage the learners increased the likelihood that they would become more receptive to this curriculum. This finding was corroborated in the feedback received from the educators.

But given that the primary aim of the project was not to change lifestyles in four hours, but to model Life Skills lessons to educators and to initiate the implementation of Life Skills, the programme to the learners was simply the strategy to achieve the following outcomes as stated below:

The Teachers will...

- have a kick start to Sexuality Education and Life Skills/ HIV/AIDS programmes;
- all be trained in Life Skills and will know how to talk to learners about such matters;
- be empowered to continue with the programme;
- have parents to assist them in establishing a committee to drive the process;
- have first hand knowledge of resources in the area;
- be able to identify abused children (grade 8 teachers);
- be able to teach the principles of problem solving and conflict management;
- understand the importance of a permanent Life Skills period at schools;
- be aware of the available resources in the environment, e.g. support groups, clinics, Home Care Organisations, NGOs and other health services;
- be aware of the 21 Safety Commandments of Tshwane City Council regarding a safe environment, for example, preventing hazards caused by fires, taxis, crime, etc.

The fact that there were envisaged outcomes for the service providers as well is indicative of the resource-focused approach that advocates enabling all human resources and drawing relevant child support systems together closer in order to protect the learner. The outcomes for the service providers are stated below.

The service providers will...

- gain by sharing skills, knowledge;
- be empowered to work together with other organisations on other matters;
- learn to know the members of the involved organisations on ground level working in that education district;
- save time by not having to organise their own visits to schools;
- gain by sharing resources;
- be strengthened through the co-operative and integrated process;
- experience better co-operation with other projects which require a multi-disciplinary approach

Based on the feedback, the latter outcomes were achieved in full, since they demanded a gradual improvement of skills and relationships as part of a process. This shows that even though the programme might not have achieved the risk-focused outcomes, it was successful in terms of the process set up to develop and enable human resources.

5.3.6 Obtaining funding

It was previously reported that many provincial government activities came to an abrupt end in 1998 because of budgetary constraints. This came at a very inopportune time for Project Awareness. The project was under way, schedules had been sent off to the schools and the multi-disciplinary team was ready to go. Suddenly, there was no transport, no telephones, no money for duplication of training materials, no faxes, no stationery, no money to reimburse taxi fares, and no funds to pay for the Technikon puppets, used as visual aids.

Even though the initial plan of the project team was that all organisations participating in Project Awareness would fund their own participation, it did not realise in practice. There were costs involved in including students in the programme; the NGOs could not spend one day per week – a fifth of their work week – without generating any income; everybody needed stationery for the work with the learners, and so forth. Having depended on the Life Skills/HIV/AIDS budget and failing to get it or to get even a basic budget allocation to cover running costs such as transport, the team was forced to find a sponsor urgently. This was fortunately found in the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (NMCF).

Having secured a grant from the NMCF, financial troubles were not yet something of the past, because government employees working at district office level are prohibited from arranging donor financing for official projects. NGOs participating in the project could have acted as intermediary and could have managed these trust funds on behalf of the project. However, NGOs levy a 10% management fee on all trust receipts. Paying such a fee was not one of the allowable expenditures prescribed by NMCF. This left the group in a dilemma.

But beyond issues related to regulations and technicalities on donor funding, the issue of control of the funding remained difficult. Control over financial resources is often a source of tension. If one department or one NGO manages the money, others may either feel that they are 'working' for that organisation or that the former is unfair in the allocation of the funds. One participant articulated this problem in the following way:

You know, historically there has always been a lot of competition between the NGOs, all fighting for the same bone. This didn't stop suddenly, and organisations simply did not trust the others to manage the budget.

Another respondent explained it as follows:

As soon as people are being paid for a service you get competition, jealousy, back stabbing.

Project Awareness attempted to address this problem through the multi-disciplinary forum. The role of this forum is explained in full hereunder. All involved parties were either members of the forum or were welcome to join the forum. Once the money was paid into that account, all of the involved parties would have a direct interest. This had a very positive effect on all the role-players, since the funds now belonged to all and were not managed by one NGO or department. It also had other positive consequences. Sponsors were more inclined to give money to a forum with so many members from such a variety of departments and organisations. The money obtained by the Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative from the main funding agency was instrumental in ensuring that Project Awareness could continue throughout the year.

More funding was later received from the Department of Social Services for the training of parents/volunteers and from SAMCOR for parent empowerment courses. These varied sources of funding covered most of the necessary expenses. It also gave the team experience in both government-funding structures and in negotiating and managing sponsorships, grants, proposals and financial reporting. Both the government and the external sponsors had particular conditions as to how the money should be spent. This provided a safe environment for the coordinator.

The more funding the project received, the more difficult it became to manage the funds. No-one in the Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative was there fulltime. The funding received from the Nelson Mandela Fund was enough to fund another educational district in Pretoria. As a result, expenditure (and hence the number of claims) doubled and the work load became impossible to manage.

Comparing the problems that arise when a project such as this one is funded by external donors compared to the other option of government funding, it became clear that the government-funding model makes multi-disciplinary interventions almost impossible to manage. Collaborative efforts, involving so many structures, people, schedules, time tables, plans, and institutions, need time and flexibility in order to work well. Regulations and procedures, whilst important, can at times be very restrictive if one needs to manage a project. Where funding was made available by a government department, the project

demonstrated that there were various stumbling blocks that hampered the progress of the project.

Government funding was problematic for a number of reasons. The mismatching of cash flows between the availability of funds and expenditure make it difficult to run year-round programmes. There is also not enough flexibility to accommodate changes in programmes and new developments. An important concern is that it does not easily accommodate the need for petty cash and taxi money, which are essential expenditures in community programmes. When using an ecological systems approach, petty cash is vital for taxi-money to pay for transport to and from meetings. It is also vital to enable students to facilitate the youth clubs, for the local coordinators of the parenting programme to collect the overhead projector with a taxi, and for facilitators conducting the parenting programme in the evening or on Saturdays to be paid small honorariums. Government funding also does not accommodate growth and development that is aimed at enabling people other than those who are formally part of the government system and other systems. Community coordinators, for example, are unable to claim or receive monies, since such financial transactions fall outside the scope of state financial regulations. Hence, to implement these types of programmes, new funding structures will have to be devised.

A respondent, who has taken responsibility for several other projects since Project Awareness had come to an end, commented the following on this matter:

That is why...uh ...why some of our collaborations with others well... did not materialise. You hear that you will receive so much. But you don't see it. Then...when it comes it is only half of what they said. You know... then suddenly at the end of the year they give you thousands – but now it is too late for proper plans.

Despite the success of the multi-disciplinary forum to manage the funds allocated to the project in a responsible manner, there was another set of difficulties on the financial front that had to be overcome. These are listed below:

- The project placed an additional workload on the treasurer.
- The project incurred very high banking costs that were not sponsored by anyone.
- The funds had to be audited, but no funder wanted to pay for that.
- Money received from sponsors sometimes arrived only much later, when the project was already in full swing. For a small organisation with no or limited resources, this proved to be a problem.
- In cases where running costs were covered by departments, a unit that has to organise a specific activity linked to Project Awareness may in one week have to send

fifty additional faxes, or photocopy handouts, or send letters to all service providers. These concentrated, high volume uses of office resources were difficult to account for in the unit's budget report and reflected negatively on the unit's ability to manage its resources. Even where the project was sponsored, this problem could not always be addressed. For example, how does one reimburse a government department for telephones and fax expenses? This was addressed by buying fax rolls from the forum's budget, or by giving the department paper.

There were also more substantial issues that emerged in relation to the issue of funding. One respondent mentioned that in other multi-disciplinary activities that started as an outflow of Project Awareness, it was evident that some groups only became involved because it provided them access to funding. These groups did not necessarily share the vision of the projects:

Another one never got off the ground...made me realise how difficult it is to get something off the ground ...hidden agendas ...especially NGOs. They need the money. They don't often want to be part of the project if there is not money involved. For that you need money.

The question of how funding should be spent and what it should be spent on should be clear and negotiated from the outset. In the case of Project Awareness this necessitated compiling a set of rules. Members interacted, discussed, and motivated their reasons for some of the rules. The following agreement was reached by the role-players on the financial management of the funds:

- Government employees could not claim for transport or training materials unless the service was rendered outside working hours, given that this outreach was part of their operational plans.
- Stationery was provided to all facilitators.
- For the parenting classes that took place outside office hours, facilitators were paid a small honorarium. This amount was to cover travelling expenses and the development of training materials.
- Organisations were allowed to get other sponsorships for the outreach, but they had to declare them and would then forfeit this small allowance.
- Higher education institutions were treated on a case-by-case basis. One institution required a sum of money for the development of the training materials and for the time spent on the preparation, whilst the other only asked for taxi-money for their students and the third did not claim any money but requested practical assistance to get to the venues.

But the focus on obtaining and managing responsibly sums of money from different sources had a positive and unintended consequence. Social workers and teachers were suddenly asked to draw up spread sheets and income and expenditure statements. These required new skills. Learning the ropes was not easy, but held in store benefits for those who attempted to master these skills. By handing out to everyone copies of spread sheets and financial statements, discussing these openly, and including more people on the financial committee of such a team, more people were empowered.

In summary, whilst the difficulties related to obtaining and managing funding for a project such as Project Awareness proved to be challenging but ultimately empowering, the successful development of further programmes based on this model requires a funding structure that is flexible enough to ensure that all ecological systems can benefit. Given the limitations on the management and use of government funding, such a funding structure should be managed slightly differently from government funding. Stakeholders need to be informed well in advance how much money is available for a specific project, and they should be able to access these funds throughout the year.

5.3.7 Designing and implementing follow-up and sustainability measures

The first two Project Awareness interventions were not designed as one-day interventions, but were aimed at initiating processes to ensure improved protection of the child. A letter that was given to the primary schools on the day of the outreach listed recommendations on how to establish follow-up and sustainable measures. Schools and educators were motivated to set up internal structures and to start with processes necessary for the continuous running of child protection programmes. Follow-up actions recommended included strategies aimed at making the school systems interact and to ensure enhanced support for learners. Schools were also encouraged to establish an integrated health service. Secondary schools were expected to:

- Establish a Life Skills committee;
- Ensure that the committee constitute representatives comprising learners, educators and parents;
- Submit roll-out plans for the year;
- Lend assistance to the learners and give them the opportunity to share their problems, listen to them and assist them or direct them to the appropriate people;
- Contact the staff of the Youth and School Health Services working at their school Healthy Life Style Services (see section 5.4.1.4) and to make sure that this service is accessed as soon as possible after the completion of the projects.

Assistance was given to the schools by means of the following:

- Contact numbers for the service providers in the area;
- Handouts with important information on how to identify abused learners/families and what procedures to follow once this has been identified;
- Life skills courses that were run simultaneously for two educators per school, formed part of a back-up system;
- A set of questions for each grade was provided. Educators were encouraged to pose these questions to their learners as a strategy for opening up communication about the interventions and to help learners to internalise the knowledge, skills and attitudes related to the interventions;
- Training materials in the form of lessons for classroom teaching were sent to the secondary schools. These were supplied by the GDE (World Health Organisation);
- Educational psychologists would visit schools to ensure that Life Skills is implemented and to deal with possible referrals resulting from the outreach;
- Youth clubs were established at secondary schools for those learners who needed more intervention after the one-day program; and
- The Parent Empowerment groups would provide a model for ongoing parent empowerment groups, ensuring that there would be a protective nest for the learners.

St Mary's Outreach, the external evaluator of the programme, commented on handouts that were at a later stage given to the educators in order to assist them with the planning of follow-up activities linking subjects and furthering objectives of OBE (see Annexure J).

Table 5.10 represents a summary of the follow up actions and the results.

Table 5.10

Summary of follow-up actions and their successes

Intervention	Planned follow-up actions	Success	Notes
1. Primary School Intervention	<p>Letter with guidelines to schools on how to follow up</p> <p>Educational psychologists to visit schools for possible referrals</p> <p>Life Skills training for educators</p> <p>All service providers to continue with activities/ support</p> <p>Handouts from the different service providers</p>	<p>Sent to schools</p> <p>No official report, but mostly not achieved</p> <p>Offered to educators Mostly achieved</p> <p>Only Health Promotion returned</p> <p>Schools received the handouts</p>	<p>Only seven schools out of 42 replied and reported that guidelines were followed</p> <p>Reasons provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full programmes • Unplanned training by Head Office • Unplanned responsibilities at the end of the year e.g. • to check schedules (passing and failing rates) • to monitor the Grade 12 exams • Lack of transport • Women not wanting to go into the townships on their own <p>Only two per school could be trained per year, due to budget constraints</p> <p>Reported improved access to schools after intervention</p> <p>Resource list with telephone numbers of local service providers/List with 21 safety hints/Reporting procedures/ Guidelines to identify victims of child abuse/Gauteng North Road Safety: Activity Book /Flip charts on Road Safety.</p>
2. Secondary School Intervention	<p>Life Skills training for educators</p> <p>Youth Health Services with weekly support and individual clinic</p>	<p>Offered to educators</p> <p>Only four schools applied. Learners did not use the service Stopped soon after the commencement of service</p>	<p>Only two per school per year due to budget constraints</p> <p>This was not marketed enough by the schools Resistance to this kind of intervention Health workers were not keen Did not give the programme enough time Was not supported by Head Offices</p>
3. Youth Club	<p>One group to demonstrate model for schools. Schools to continue with youth club</p>	<p>Achieved, but this is a short term intervention for only 25 learners. Schools did not continue</p>	<p>University continued the next year with youth clubs, using peer support model Other youth clubs, for cultural and environmental activities, established two years later</p>
4. Parent Empowerment	<p>One or two groups in the area as model; Manual to schools as guideline to continue</p>	<p>Two facilitators out of 55 continued. Schools did not continue. Programme was again initiated in another area the following year</p>	<p>No official report on further implementation</p>

Whilst it can be concluded that the implementation of follow-up activities was not entirely successful, it did effect change. It is argued that even the partial implementation of follow-up activities would have led to increased interaction between the internal systems and is likely to have produced learners and educators who are more enabled than before. In addition, it would have made inroads into getting more educators to understand the Life Skills Programme and to involve them in its implementation. Hence, the intervention and its associated follow-up activities resulted in an improvement on the situation that existed before the outreach. This certainly is a measure of success.

5.3.8 Monitoring and assessment of the progress and outcomes

To assess a risk-focused programme it is necessary to have formulated outcomes, performance indicators or a baseline assessment, since one has to know the starting point in order to track development. The process of formulating the outcomes has already been reviewed. It was indicated that even though the outcomes were not formulated particularly well and often were not achievable, the formulation of outcomes contributed to a process of interaction and sharing of information, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. This does, however, not mean that the outcome of the project and measuring its successes and failures were unimportant. Several quantitative and qualitative assessment strategies were put in place by the project team or initiated for the purposes of this research project, in order to monitor and assess the project development and outcomes. These strategies encompassed the following:

- Feedback forms received after the one-day or two-hour interventions;
- Baseline and summative evaluation by the University of Pretoria;
- Observation of classroom practices by students of the University of Pretoria, using a tick list;
- Focus group interviews conducted by Pretoria University with a few learners per grade about the intervention;
- Focus group interview with a few learners about the effect on their behaviour;
- A post-report issued by an independent assessor based on qualitative interactive methods;
- A focus group discussion with the parents for the purposes of this dissertation;
- Interviews with the respondents for the purpose of this study.

5.3.8.1 First level of assessment: feedback forms

Feedback forms and oral or written feedback was received from the following groups:

- Educators who attended the workshops at the schools;
- Learners who attended the one-day interventions;
- Learners who attended the youth clubs
- Schools in letters of thanks to the project team; and
- Presenters themselves in their reflections in their own presentations and their perceptions about the project.

Some respondents felt this type of feedback is not entirely reliable since there could be several reasons why people opt to give feedback in a particular way or to give positive feedback. A few of these are:

- A culture of saying nice things to make other people feel good;
- The general body language of some of the teachers such as sleeping or yawning in the seminars, which contrasted with their positive feedback forms;
- The lack of skills to give feedback, as many participants were unable to express their feelings in writing – as contradictory statements in a single sentence on some of the feedback forms bears testimony to;
- The lack of skills to evaluate a course;
- Lack of knowledge to successfully evaluate a course; and
- Lack of assertiveness to say how one really feels.

Other respondents thought that the educators were honest in their feedback and that they had gained a lot:

I think it was meaningful for them and empowering. The feedback we got months later, confirmed it. Even now, they ask for more ...and those feedback forms from the learners! It was shocking to see that.

Whilst the feedback obtained through these processes cannot be regarded as entirely reliable, providing participants and team members with an opportunity to reflect on the experience is a very necessary component of a project that aims to be enabling. Moreover, the quality and reliability of the feedback obtained through these mechanisms can be assessed by comparing and relating the findings of the first level of assessment with the findings produced through higher level, independent assessment exercises.

5.3.8.2 *Second level of assessment: baseline and summative assessment by an independent researcher*

An independent researcher, (Visser 2000:3) conducting research on the impact and status of life skills at schools contacted the project team to request permission to do research on Project Awareness. It is through her that the students from the University of Pretoria became involved in the project. They conducted the following types of assessments:

- A baseline evaluation of the presentations, the process and outcomes, and behaviour trends (see Table 5.6);
- A summative evaluation of the outcome of the interventions by comparing results of a questionnaire completed by a stratified sample of learners before the intervention and again a month after each intervention;
- Observation of the workshop presentations and the responses of learners by means of a task-involvement checklist; and
- Focus group discussions with learners about their experience of the interventions and the impact thereof on their life styles (preliminary report to the N3 Education District office 2000).

The preliminary report from Visser to the N3 Education District Office (2000) stated:

The majority of the learners benefited from the workshops. The workshops provided some guidance for the learners, because they experienced a lack of guidance and behavioural models in their community. The suggestions made by the learners stressed the need of learners for more interventions, the discussion of life issues and training in life skills.

5.3.8.3 *A post-assessment report issued by an independent assessor*

The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund required an assessment report from an external assessor. This was done by St Mary's Outreach, an NGO that works in that area with the schools. They conducted a summative assessment of the programme. Because of their involvement with some of the schools, they were in a position to do qualitative assessment of the project. The various reports produced as part of this exercise reviewed several aspects of the interventions, such as skills learners or educators had acquired, presentation styles, language proficiency of the facilitators and quality of the handouts.

The assessor summarised the findings as follows (see Annexure J):

Probing questions concerning purpose, facilitation techniques, the ideas raised in the workshop, the handouts, and the extent that participation was encouraged. All aspects of the programme were praised. Without exception, the programme was viewed in an extremely positive light, and participants were quick to substantiate their comments.

Although all of these different assessment methods were valuable for the people who participated in the project, the real benefit of these multiple forms of assessment was the way that it served to motivate participants to continue with and improve the project, and provided affirmation that it was worthwhile to continue with the innovative project.

In terms of a socio-educational analysis, the different assessment methodologies achieved the following:

- It provided all the participants the opportunity to give their views and express their feelings.
- It provided insights into the lives of the other participants.
- It gave direction to the facilitators for further action.
- It assisted in motivation by creating a feeling of success as a team.
- It served as confirmation that the programme should continue.
- It served as interactive and ongoing needs-identification.
- It refined the skills of the presenters.

5.3.9 Reporting

A multi-disciplinary programme generates a large number of formal reports on many different levels. In the case of Project Awareness, the following regular reports had to be produced:

- Once per term progress report to the project facilitators;
- Once per month report to the Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative, through which the grant had been secured;
- Quarterly report to Education Provincial Office as part of the regular quarterly reports on activities;
- Reports to the head offices of each of the different structures involved compiled by staff from that structure;
- Report to the Education District Life Skills Coordinator, given that the project was tied in so closely to Life Skills/HIV/AIDS;

- Six-monthly report to the Department of Social Services, since this department provided funding for training;
- Report to SAMCOR, an organisation that also contributed funding for training;
- Six-monthly progress report to the Nelson Mandela Children's fund;
- Several *ad hoc* reports to Educational Provincial Office for data required on several aspects, for example: What actions have you taken in terms of teenage pregnancies/drug abuse/networking/career guidance? These reports always brought a feeling of accomplishment, because the numbers and data were overwhelming.

All parties involved also had to report to their senior structures. In many cases, these were verbal rather than written reports. In many cases, these verbal reports proved to be far more successful in soliciting a response and generating support for the project. A respondent had the following to say about the way in which her department made use of a verbal feedback strategy to share information between different district offices:

Always when we go there we tell them. Now they start asking – how do you do it? We now hear they have also started in And inthey have a big project like ours.

Respondents reflected on the fact that these verbal feedback opportunities assisted in producing a better understanding of the kind of challenges other units, departments or organisations faced:

They will say that they you know, could not do this or that because there is only one social worker or because the SAPS did not have transport (respondent).

In summary, the practice of reporting, both in oral and written form, became an important tool for assessing what had been accomplished and identifying what still had to be done. It was motivational for members to be able to ‘track progress’ in written reports and provided encouragement for those that had to report on challenges and how they coped with these.

The multi-disciplinary and multi-level composition of the project resulted in cross-reporting that ensured that feedback is monitored, that there are no gaps and that incorrect information is not reported. For example, at my district office three different units reported on their involvement in Project Awareness. The three reports reinforced each other, explicitly mentioned the support received from each other in the quarterly report and provided different perceptions on the project, which produced a much richer sense of what the project was all about. The same thing happened at provincial level when one

provincial coordinator from one department reported that there was nothing to report on from his department concerning collaborative initiatives. Another provincial coordinator, from another discipline, then reported on the successes of the very department that 'had nothing to report' (respondent). Cross-reporting also contributed to producing comprehensive reports.

The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (NMCF) also played an important role by stipulating the different aspects of the project that were to be reported on. It served as a quality management tool, and was especially useful for guiding groups and individuals who have not done anything similar before. The NMCF format is as follows:

- Goals, objectives, desired outcomes;
- Activities;
- Number reached, data, statistics (adults and learners);
- Impact and evaluation;
- Problems and subsequent adjustments;
- Future plans;
- Development/maintenance of organisations' capacity;
- Evidence of sustainability; and
- Community involvement.

The NMCF meticulously read through their reports and regularly provided feedback. Some of the other reports were produced to meet requirements, but little or no feedback was received. Whilst regular reports do assist the provincial offices in exercising control, the reports are not utilised in a way that could further develop or enhance the project or other projects. The purpose of reporting without receiving feedback on the reports is unclear and report-writing in such a context has little meaning. If departments and managements do not give feedback on reports and as a result of the report ask probing questions, congratulate staff on some initiatives and offer support on other issues, reporting becomes an administrative function only. One respondent complained:

They never read these ...in all those years we had to report I don't think they ever read them The only place where we report I mean verbally ...is at the Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative.

Project meeting minutes indicate that verbal feedback was often found to produce solutions for challenges. An area coordinator for the Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative for example gave a verbal report in which he stated that they could not continue with the project unless they had more counsellors. The funding was then secured for more

counsellors to be trained by Life Line. In verbal reports, because these are interactive and allow for follow-up questions to be posed, gaps are identified. These can sometimes be addressed. People, who listen to verbal reports on the activities of other people, are able to develop a better understanding of contexts, procedures and organisational culture of other initiatives and structures than their own. In other cases, verbal reports lead to suggestions or offers of assistance. Submitting a similar report but in written format to various provincial government department offices in most cases would have had no effect.

Verbal feedback in contexts where different groups are present, may potentially lead to the following positive spin-off effects:

- It acts as motivation for those that have accomplished something;
- It provides motivation for others to attempt something similar;
- It contributes to identifying and responding to needs in a particular area;
- It provides insight into the challenges that other areas or groups have to face;
- It could assist in challenging or unmaking wrong perceptions held by some;
- It could help individuals to face and come to terms with their own prejudices;
- It contributes to a process of solution-finding and could lead to assistance being offered;
- It forms part of a broader process of skills transfer; and
- It constitutes a form of knowledge transfer.

5.4 SECTION THREE: AN ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION OF FACTORS THAT HAD IMPACTED ON THE PROJECT AND ITS PROCESSES

5.4.1 Synergy between the programmes and structures

Any programme, including a multi-disciplinary programme, is unlikely to be constructed on a completely blank slate. That is because people who come together to initiate and implement a project – in this case drawn from the different disciplines and organisations to participate in the multi-disciplinary programme – come into the project with a particular set of perceptions, attitudes, values, and all of those also have an effect on how the project is conceptualised and evolves.

In the case of Project Awareness, a number of structures and processes had a profound influence on the way in which the project was designed, developed and evolved. Some of

these structures and processes prepared the field for Project Awareness, whilst others contributed to sustaining the project. There were structures that played the vital role of facilitating the process of getting everyone on board, whilst others assisted in sustaining the project aims even after Project Awareness had officially come to an end. This section provides a brief account of some of the structures and processes that impacted most on Project Awareness.

The purpose of this section is twofold. On the one hand it provides a chronological account of the development of processes and establishment of structures that in some ways led to or enabled the development of Project Awareness. It is therefore part of the background information that is required in order to understand how Project Awareness developed. But on the other hand it is argued here that the successes and failures of Project Awareness can only be explained and fully understood, if the embeddedness of the project in a range of structures and procedures is adequately accounted for. Project Awareness can be described as a small system that was located within and evolved from other higher level and lower level systems, Therefore, the strengths and limitations of these other systems also enabled or limited the project's development and growth. In this section it will be shown that the issue of integration on the level of the higher systems is absolutely essential for the success of a project such as Project Awareness. Without a multi-disciplinary partnership on higher level, and the institutional support and stimulus that this generates, projects based on the ecological systems approach will not be easy to initiate or will not be able to integrate all partners. The need for interactive forums is also highlighted and will be further explored in a subsequent discussion on 'ecology' (see section 5.4.1.3).

5.4.1.1 *The role of the multi-disciplinary forum: Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative (a local forum)*

It is unlikely that Project Awareness would have developed into the project it became, had it not been for the contribution of the Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative (GPCPI). Membership of this forum was open, and since 2000 based on the protocol for child protection and treatment, which was again based on the international and national guidelines on community ownership (RSA 1996:3). The GPCP initiative, a forum that aimed to bring together all role-players in the child protection arena in the Tshwane area, provided opportunities for networking and information-sharing. Attending meetings and reporting on activities motivated individuals and organisations to continue with the endeavours and to feel proud about the distance they had covered. It also provided a

convenient basis from which to coordinate projects involving multiple organisations. Most importantly, the GPCPI advocated the idea of and facilitated the implementation of the holistic approach. In many ways the GPCPI therefore paved the way for the development of Project Awareness. The existence of such a forum focused on all matters around child protection, ensured that everyone working in the field was fully informed and able to see the bigger picture. It provided an opportunity for organisations that wanted to get involved to meet with the other stakeholders. It created a space for people to get a bird's eye view on the challenges and successes in the other areas. The GPCPI addressed issues of prejudice, challenged erroneous perceptions that were prevalent because of a lack of information or understanding, and facilitated a stronger, more informed grasp of the context wherein the other organisations and systems operated and the challenges they had to face. The latter concern formed the crux of Project Awareness.

In addition to providing a general climate conducive to collaborative, multi-disciplinary work, this forum assisted the genesis of Project Awareness also in more practical ways:

- The GPCPI provided a list of names with contact details of groups and individuals that had been involved in child services in the area;
- The GPCPI with its regular meetings provided a fixed structure for networking;
- People and organisations that wanted to offer services could come to this forum and explain their particular offer.
- When Gauteng was divided first into five and later seven regions by the Gauteng Task Team for the purpose of compiling and workshopping the Gauteng Protocol for Child Protection and Treatment, Pretoria, through the GPCPI, already had appropriate structures in place and could easily adopt the added role (Report GPCPI).
- It was under the umbrella of this forum that funding could be secured for Project Awareness, and it was this forum that accommodated the needs of the multi-disciplinary team to manage their own funds.
- It provided an opportunity for reporting on initiatives in the different areas, thereby sharing experiences and motivating others to become involved.

All the participants of Project Awareness were not involved in the GPCPI. Some of them were not personally involved but had seniors who attended the forum. Those that were involved commented very positively about the forum and the way in which it created a space for the development of Project Awareness. One respondent mentioned that this forum facilitated the sharing of ideas across all regions in Tshwane, since all departments and NGOs with vested interests in the protection of children were provided with an

opportunity to report on progress made and on new initiatives. In addition, companies were also more willing to give grants to such a formal structure than to one or two individuals with a plan. Another respondent emphasised the emotional support the forum offered:

Whether your project is small or large, there were others to congratulate on small achievements.

In a report on Project Awareness to the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, the importance of the GPCPI is emphasised:

The networking system in N3 is working well. Twenty-four organisations are now involved in this committee and the monthly flyer, with the most relevant and important news items, is being distributed to 75 offices. This assists in getting information spread across the district and across Pretoria.

Respondents also commented on the total lack of hidden agendas and occupational jealousy amongst the members of the forum and the respect members and member organisations displayed for the work the other organisations were doing as commendable and therefore enabling. The forum provided a practical, central place to meet once per month. A respondent commented thus on its contribution:

This is where the links are strengthened and where teams are formed to later on work together on improving the lives of our children.

Beyond the scope of Project Awareness, the GPCPI created a platform to launch a range of initiatives of which the effects were evident beyond the Tshwane region. In 2000 the GPCPI Annual Report stated that the aim for the year was to strengthen area or local multi-disciplinary forums in at least all four the educational districts across Tshwane. Different organisations played leading roles in local, area-based committees. One district was not involved at all, while a university played an important role in another area. The Department of Education played an important role in the third area, whilst the director of a youth group working closely with the Department of Health was the driver of a project in a fourth area. One respondent reported on this as follows:

It is very much important to have that (such a forum). I can say that Tshwane is more advanced than other areas, for if maybe we have meetings for Gauteng, we say Tshwane did this and this and this and they hear and they copy. Now we know each other and we are supporting each other. They would come to us and ask how did you start and how did you do this and now I think we should just stick to be together. This should be sustained (health worker).

The one report from one of the other districts stated the following:

The Department of Health (as health promotion) was the main thrust of our programme. They were well presented.

5.4.1.2 *The Life Skills/HIV/AIDS programme (an Education/Health partnership)*

The integrated partnership on issues of Life Skills/HIV/AIDS that existed on national level and was driven by a National Project Committee, led to the establishment of Provincial Coordinating Committees. The Gauteng Provincial Coordinating Committee therefore constituted an integrated partnership between the Departments of Health and Education as well as provincial NGOs on the issues of Life Skills and HIV/AIDS. This partnership played a very important role in the development of Project Awareness and led to several multi-disciplinary interventions across Gauteng.

The provincial roll-out took the form of Master Training of Life Skills/HIV/AIDS course that took place in 1997/1988. The model that was used in the Master Training of Life Skills/HIV/AIDS (1997/1988) was a multi-disciplinary model, underpinned by cascading as a training model. Districts were requested to build on both aspects of that model in the process of implementing Life Skills in their districts. It was at the point at which the districts had to implement this model, that the top-down and bottom-up approaches to issues of child protection, life skills and the fight against HIV/AIDS finally came together in and through Project Awareness. For practical reasons, the multi-disciplinary approach was not used in the training programme for two staff members from each school, which was the strategy through which the Master Training of Life Skills/HIV/AIDS course was cascaded down to schools. Only education officials conducted the training. But a multi-disciplinary intervention based on the cascading model came to fruition when staff from the other departments and NGOs became collaborative partners with education in Project Awareness. It is through this project that Life Skills/HIV/AIDS would be implemented.

The Life Skills/HIV/AIDS programme initiated by the Gauteng Provincial Coordinating Committee was the first provincial structure built around, driven by and advocating a multi-disciplinary approach for departments. It therefore became the reporting structure for Project Awareness and funded some of the project's needs. In turn, Project Awareness became the vehicle through which the Life Skills HIV/AIDS programme was taken to the schools. Hence, the Life Skills/HIV/AIDS Programme served the purpose of facilitating changes in perception of education and health officials working in the province and the district, and provided clarity on the philosophy underpinning the Master Trainer's Courses.

As a result, this programme can be regarded as the drive behind Project Awareness. If it had not been for the call for and encouragement of multi-disciplinary programmes on national and provincial level, it would have been impossible to conceptualise and implement Project Awareness. It heralded a radical change in practice.

But the programme had limitations. Not all relevant stakeholders were involved. This could be ascribed to the fact that they did not share a common understanding and vision, which was due to the lack of integration by some of the departments on provincial level. Also, not all departments had provincial structures and their management was unable to share and support this new approach. Because of the lack of integration on these various levels the Life Skills/HIV/AIDS programmes were unbalanced in its application and matters like safety, child abuse, drug abuse, entrepreneurship and various other matters did not receive their full share. This impacted negatively on the development of a comprehensive multi-disciplinary collaboration when this programme eventually had to be implemented at the schools. This lack of integration or coordination at national level, which was reiterated on provincial level, was experienced as a barrier on local level. Another limitation was the fact that departmental priorities did not allow programmes to develop if they themselves had not initiated them (Life Skills HIV/AIDS Education 1998:5).

5.4.1.3 *The Gauteng Protocol for Child Protection and Treatment (An international partnership via Social Services and GPAC)*

The Gauteng Protocol for Child Protection and Treatment (Lamprecht 2000) was launched by the Gauteng Child Protection and Treatment Committee, a sub-committee of Gauteng Programme on Action for Children (GPAC), in 1999. It had as its envisaged outcomes the following:

- Closing the gaps in the systems through increased clarity on roles and responsibilities;
- Strengthening the systems by means of sharing of knowledge, skills and values;
- Improved relationships between the different child protection systems;
- Bringing the child care systems closer;
- Increased interaction among the people in the systems;
- Decrease in the incidence of structural or secondary abuse by the systems; and
- Improving the quality and quantity of the human resources in the ecological systems.

The strategy through which these outcomes were to be achieved was by bringing together all ecological systems in operation in the field compile or approve a Gauteng Protocol for Child Protection and Treatment. The process was initiated on national level by a multi-disciplinary committee (an interdepartmental structure, The National Programme of Action for Children), coordinated on provincial level through a multi-disciplinary task team (The Gauteng Child Protection and Treatment Committee, a sub-committee of the Gauteng Programme of Action for Children) and on district level by means of a local multi-disciplinary committee.

Project funding was received from an international donor. This grant allocation was not managed by the government departments as a 'partnership with the government' fund, but was an independent fund managed by the Rand Afrikaans University (Els 1998). Because of this, the project did not appear on the departmental budget plans. As a result, no monitoring, evaluation or reporting structures had been built into the system. The only reporting that took place was through verbal and, at times, written reports presented at the Gauteng Child Protection and Treatment Committee.

Involvement in the GPCPT was not compulsory and took place in an *ad hoc* way. Some departments were not represented at all, whilst other departments were represented but on different levels. In some cases members involved came from district offices, in other cases they were based at the head office or came from local NGOs. Some members were senior and occupied leadership positions in the structures they came from, while others were the proverbial foot soldiers. Some people were officially asked to represent their system (i.e. department or organisation), whilst others became involved purely because of their interest in the initiative.

Based on minutes, written and verbal reports, the following typical problems reported on by the different districts could be identified:

- Senior managers did not allow staff members to get involved as the programme did not appear on strategic plans or operational plans or the score card;
- The use of government transport to and from GPCPT events was not approved;
- There was a paucity of structures to support the initiative, for example, some of the Gauteng districts did not have a bank account to which funds for local activities could be transferred;
- There were many logistical problems with infrastructure, especially in townships. Some offices with very strict rules on the use of telephones and faxes did not allow the necessary communication to take place;

- Monies were not channelled through the normal departmental structures;
- Involvement and membership was on an *ad hoc* basis;
- Major projects involving hundreds of learners had to be cancelled at short notice because of the lack of line function involvement, as happened for example when senior managers not involved in the project required upholding the regulation that no children should leave school grounds during school hours;
- These conflicting priorities led to poor relationships between the different services systems.

There was a noticeable lack of coordination, cooperation, partnership and integration at provincial level; the activities were not reflected in the educational operational plans and thus never reported on; the SAPS was not involved because it lacked provincial structures, except for the nine Child Protection Units, which could not attend any forum discussions because of their workload. The professional bodies and individuals were not involved at all, and universities were not involved except for managing the fund.

Nonetheless this programme, which commenced in 1999, assisted the Pretoria region in a peculiar way. It gave the Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative formal status as sub-committee of GPAC. All the things that the GPCPI had been doing in any case suddenly became official, and full recognition was now extended to the forum. The forum was now integrated into a reporting structure, was allocated a small budget to cover running costs and was given representation on the provincial Child Protection and Treatment Committee. This committee encouraged multi-disciplinary processes by making money available to train multi-disciplinary groups. This training initiative ensured that service providers interacted with each other, and, at the same time, that they were informed about matters concerning child protection.

This programme made funds available for the multi-disciplinary training of the service providers. Because of the high level of the training conducted and because of the funding that made such training possible, it gave the whole of the Tshwane region a lift in terms of knowledge and skills, but in particular, insight into the dynamics of child abuse relationships. There was also enhanced interaction between the ecological systems and depending on the different area coordinators many volunteers were also trained on the structures, processes and challenges around child protection. (GPCPI Report; Els 1998:Annexure). Even though this committee was a sub-committee of the GPAC, the cooperation or integration at that level was not strong enough and this impacted negatively on the programme.

The cross-influence of these different structures, processes and programmes later became so intertwined that it was difficult for the respondents to recall what started where.

Programmes like these emanated as a follow-up for Project Awareness. This programme allowed funds to be used for parent empowerment. When all had to stop because of lack of funds, this programme contributed to sustainability. In other programmes two educators were trained on Life Skills, others were trained on child abuse, others were trained on Site-Based Support Teams, and slowly but surely the school staff, or some of them, were enabled, strengthened, empowered and took it back to their schools, and thereby strengthened the school systems.

5.4.1.4. *Healthy Life Style Service (an ecological systems health initiative)*

This initiative was an ecological systems initiative that evolved as a result of the Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative and Project Awareness. Through the implementation of the Life Skills/HIV/AIDS programme, local systems identified the need for a service that would enable learners to access health service at the school. The idea was that the school could apply for the service and that the Youth Health Services would then visit the schools that applied in the afternoons (see Annexure H), providing learners with advice on the following:

Skin care	Weight problems
Eating disorders	Depression
Testing for pregnancies	Dietary information
Testing for HIV/AIDS	Counselling
Info on health matters	Contraception

District staff from the Departments of Health and Education was very excited about the service. It was intended as a health service for secondary school learners, but was also advertised at the primary schools. However, the service came to an end after a while. Whilst the reasons for the termination of the service were never officially or formally reported, responses from the different groups that were involved suggest that the following may have been contributing factors:

- Only a few schools asked for the service;
- Learners did not access the service;
- The schools were very much against the 'service' because of the service providing condoms for those that asked;

- This service was not fully supported by the provincial office; and
- Health workers did not want to work at the schools in the afternoons.

This experience once again highlighted that if provincial systems are not part of the planning, if they do not give their approval, the local systems will find it almost impossible to make structural and long-term changes involving more than one system.

5.4.2 Factors that hindered the success of the project

Project Awareness can be assessed both as a programme and as a process. Assessing its successes and failures as a programme will require examining the envisaged outcomes and conducting a summative evaluation of the programme in which the stated outcomes are compared with the findings. As a result of such an exercise, successes and failures can readily be identified. It would also be possible to identify programme failures by examining the coordination of the project and assessing it against criteria for project coordination for a risk-based approach and for a resource-focused approach. An assessment of the programmatic component of the project was undertaken using a range of assessment strategies. This is reported on in section 5.3.7. The outcome of the assessment exercises made it clear that whilst Project Awareness did not achieve all the outcomes stated for each of the interventions, the project can be regarded as a success. This was because the programme was embedded in a larger process, which was successfully initiated and organically developed and evolved.

However, an assessment of the project as a process, rather than a programme with finite objectives and lifespan, makes it much more difficult to identify failures. The argument advanced here is that it is the process rather than the programme that requires closer scrutiny, since the success of the project was pinned to the process it set in motion, rather than on the programmatic interventions it employed as a strategy for initiating the process. But from within an ecological systems paradigm, the only way in which a process can fail is if the process itself weakens the systems that it is attempting to improve or if the process imposes a limit to its own organic development. Based on the evidence derived from the various assessment processes as well as data gathered for the purposes of writing this dissertation, it is clear that Project Awareness succeeded very well in strengthening the systems it attempted to bring together. It did therefore not in any way weaken the system. From that perspective, the single failure of Project Awareness was that it did not adopt problem-solving, task-focused approaches in the Youth Club and Parent Empowerment interventions. Because the two interventions were instructional,

rather than collaborative and problem-solving, learners and parents were never fully incorporated into the project on an equal footing with all the partners. The necessary enlarging and strengthening of the system that may have resulted from the bonding and interaction between service providers, parents and learners therefore never took place. In this way, the project placed a limit on its own growth.

Having dealt with this failure though, the project is regarded as highly successful. This opens up the space for a discussion about factors that hindered the success of the project, as programme and as process. As a strategy for bringing people in the ecological systems closer together, Project Awareness experienced success both in terms of development and growth. There were, however, certain factors that were identified as hampering the internal functioning of Project Awareness. Many of these are very practical and procedural concerns that may be encountered in many projects, not only multi-disciplinary ones. But there were also factors that were identified as specifically hampering multi-disciplinary processes, and therefore as factors detrimental to collaborative efforts. The latter are the focus of this section.

Whilst Project Awareness was strictly speaking a community-based programme not initiated by the higher level systems, it was faced with its own peculiar barriers.

5.4.2.1 Conceptual barriers

One of the most important conceptual barriers that arose as a result of the multi-disciplinary nature of the project was the different perceptions participants had of roles and responsibilities. This barrier was apparent on four levels of organisation:

- The roles and responsibilities of line-function manager versus project coordinator;
- The roles and responsibilities of the sub-coordinator from each organisation versus those of other facilitators;
- The responsibilities of school as opposed the responsibilities of service providers; and
- Responsibilities of the different service providers.

In this regard, there was a noticeable difference between the attitude and approaches of the different groups that participated in the project. Some departments were prepared to work with others, while others were not. The way in which the responsibilities of the role of the line function manager (see section 1.6.3) was construed in the different organisations, made the difference in approach very apparent. In the two or three organisations where the fact that the line-function manager and coordinator had different but equally important

roles and responsibilities and that the involvement of both these persons was crucial to the success of the project, was not understood, respondents reported feelings of uncertainty. They felt that they were not getting feedback from the line-function manager, and were not supported:

We ..eh. never seemed to know eh if we were doing you know the right thing. If you do it, you get into trouble. If you don't, you get into trouble. It was like a tug-of-war. He was not therenot even once, to see what we were doing.....just complained about us not being at work enough.

The sub-coordinators for each structure also met with frustration because the rest of the staff did not always understand their roles. Even though the sub-coordinators were prepared to coordinate, some of the team members did not treat them with respect. Sometimes they would announce a half an hour before the outreach was about to start that they would not be present.

Yet, the success of this kind of project depends almost entirely on the attitudes of the participants and requires mutual respect for each other, commitment, cooperation and goodwill. Engelbrecht and Green explain it as follows:

Whenever they feel responsible for the activity because they see the meaningfulness ownership of intention takes place. They are therefore empowered not only because of the knowledge but also because of the skills and attitudes towards the activity (Engelbrecht & Green 2001:5)

A factor that hindered the success of the project was the fact that school responsibilities versus the responsibilities of the other systems involved were never clearly defined. This lead to some uncertainty. The reasons for this were discussed in section 5.3.1. An example of the way in which this confusion manifested was the lack of learner discipline, as recounted by a respondent:

Some schools are under the impression that whenever another stakeholder comes to school there is not a need to participate on their side. Whenever the school is targeted for the programme they should also give a commitment, not only to participate but also to take the programme further.

These were also the findings in the follow-up actions. It is important to acknowledge and integrate into the plan an understanding that there is a stage at which only the school can take responsibility. This is supported by a Project Awareness District Memorandum dated 5 of 7 January:

We found that in the schools where the principal was convinced of the importance of Life Skills, it worked well and was implemented.

Attitudes are, however, often incorrectly interpreted if there has not been enough interaction between different groups. The fact that many educators did not attend the school interventions at first seemed to be the result of an attitudinal problem. However, through probing and listening, it became evident that the symptom had been diagnosed incorrectly. When some educators did not attend, arrived at sessions late, and kept moving in and out of the training, it was because the female educators were preparing refreshments and tea for the facilitators. They were doing this despite the fact that the school was asked not to cater for the team of facilitators, as an expression of goodwill. The provision of refreshments was well intended, but led to many outcomes not being achieved. The initial wrong impression could only be remedied as a result of ongoing interventions at the different schools. Eventually we realised the nature of the barrier.

Finally, it is argued that there is a close association between different ideas that exist about role and responsibilities and different ideas of professionalism. This sentiment is stated in the report from one of the other districts:

It is actually quite impossible for anybody to keep a stakeholder committed if they do not feel any ownership or responsibility towards the goals and objectives of the programme

5.4.2.2 Geographical areas

During the period from 1998 – 2001 many white people were afraid of entering townships, the colloquial term used for areas designated under apartheid for black, coloured and Indian South Africans. Some white participants in the project therefore refused to go to township schools, whilst others requested to drive with someone else or as a group. Follow-up visits were also affected by this and it affected the involvement of other professionals. Professionals would request to become involved in training activities, but when they heard that these were held in the township, they were no longer willing to offer their services.

The Pretoria Technikon, however, came up with an innovative solution. They arranged for all their students who were part of the drama division to visit Atteridgeville before the intervention in order to gain a better understanding of the children with whom they were going to work. This proved to be a very successful venture according to them, and demystified the fear of the township:

It was a very informative visit and helped us to understand the background from which our future audience comes (letter to coordinator).

Those participants who were able to overcome their initial fear and doubt, often succeeded in turning this barrier into a new opportunity. In feedback opportunities, many participants reported that they had gained a lot, professionally and personally from working in the townships. The educational psychologists reported that it assisted them in making contact with the black schools, enabling them to render their other services to the township schools.

(a) *Provincial structures/National structures/Metropolitan structures/City Councils*

System structures (or the lack thereof) on national, provincial and local levels impacted on the compatibility between systems and sometimes hindered the development or capacity of multi-disciplinary projects. In the case of Project Awareness, problems were experienced with the involvement of some of the role-players over the full period of three years. The same challenges were experienced in the multi-disciplinary forum. One such group was the South African Police Service. It was very difficult to get a representative from the SAPS to attend meetings or to participate in interventions. It was later realised that this was because the SAPS did not have a provincial structure. Each one of the police stations operated as a separate entity. Only at the end of 2001 did they establish a forum and was it possible to work interactively with them.

Not only the provincial geographical borders, but also the departmental demarcation of geographical areas posed problems. Pretoria was managed by three different city councils: Pretoria, Centurion and Acasia 'and naery the twain shall meet'. These structures could not see their way open to allow one or two staff members to work at a school in another area for one hour per week, for five weeks. This came at a point at which two NGOs had already worked with the group in planning sessions, and the groups were already divided into facilitation groups,. Hence, these participants were actively

involved in the project, but were then informed that they could not work in Atteridgeville or in Laudium.

Another district experienced similar challenges in the implementation of the same project in an area that was situated far from town. They reported that the resources in that area were scarce and service providers were not as keen to drive out that far, especially the members of the higher education institutions because of time and budget implications.

This district reports (15 October 1998):

The programme we envisaged for our district was too complex and extensive for the resources available in our district. It was very difficult to coordinate and organise a project of that magnitude

These experiences and examples raise the question of what exactly is meant by the concept 'ecological'. In other words, exactly how local does an initiative need to be, to be described as 'ecological'? According to decentralisation trends, the term 'ecological' refers to district level. When looking at the entire system of education, a district does seem to be a local area. But in some districts, the district office may be 50, 100 or 200 km from the school. For a person without a car this is not local. Hence, the Project Awareness experience demonstrated that initiatives need to be on a more local than district level, since ecological systems are understood to be those systems and agencies that operate in the school vicinity. These concepts therefore need to be clearly defined if they are to be operationalised in a multi-disciplinary programme.

But beyond the need to refine and question some of the conceptual tools, Project Awareness and other multi-disciplinary programmes point to the importance of remoulding existing systems to facilitate local involvement on a number of levels. Getting access to schools and getting permission to work in schools, have been problematic for many years. Whilst too many regulations and unnecessary restrictions may smother initiatives and result in role-players withdrawing their services as a result of the red tape, a laissez-faire attitude, on the other hand, places a tremendous responsibility on the principal. The latter has to assess whether an activity, project or offer of working with the school is in line with policy, of high standard, reasonable in terms of costs, and in general a worth while intervention. Hence, considering these issues and taking into account the recent policy shift that calls for increased parent and community involvement in schools, it is clear that there is an urgency to adapt existing processes regulating access in order to accommodate different kinds of assistance and collaborations on all levels by all stakeholders.

5.4.2.3 *Difficulty in involving the parents*

One of the most important challenges that faced the Project Awareness project team was the difficulty of involving large numbers of parents in the Parent Empowerment intervention as well as in the other interventions. The coordinators of the parenting groups both mentioned that it was difficult to find parents to attend the workshops.

The principal of a school where the parenting classes were presented held the view that the historical political situation in South Africa contributed to this. For many years there was no contact with parents and especially during the early 1970s when anarchy ruled. When they were now invited, they perceived that they were not welcome. The coordinator of one parenting group had a very pragmatic explanation. According to her, parents worked and lived in other localities and only came home perhaps once per month. They simply could not manage such courses. The focus group discussion led to an entirely different view.

I think by and large people are not aware that there are people just waiting to be used. There are people in the communities with influence. They could do it (find more parents to attend).

There is a misconception that people without the papers can't do the job. Parents, who cannot read or write, did not have the courage to attend.

It would therefore seem that four factors contributed to the difficulty of getting parents involved. In the first instance, South Africa's political past produced a legacy of distrust and suspicion amongst groups in South Africa. Because of a racially-segregated past, people first had to overcome their perceptions of the past and to start trusting each other before they could work together collaboratively. The project facilitators had to overcome the same set of perceptions and prejudices. But, in the second instance, South Africa's history also introduced, especially in township schools, a strong separation between parents and school. It is therefore necessary to convince parents that they are wanted in and needed by the school. The third reason for the difficulty emanates from the fact that parents need to provide for their children, and to do so often implies taking jobs in the city or elsewhere, and to work long hours. This makes it difficult for them to become involved in the school. Finally, it may have been that the Project Team did not know of, or adequately understood how to make use of existing community networks through which parents could be recruited.

5.4.2.4 Administrative support

A large-scale intervention programme such as Project Awareness places a tremendous administrative load not only on the department that takes the lead in the project, but also on the person that takes the lead. In the case of Project Awareness, the coordinator was also the administrator. The coordinator received no administrative support at all, except at the GPCPI where the project funds were managed. The GPCPI secretary and treasurer took on the additional tasks of drawing up financial statements and issuing cheques for Project Awareness.

Respondents who had previously or since worked in other projects regard administration as the backbone of every project. It was agreed by all that when the administrative aspects of a project – including notices and lists, minutes and agendas, the database and financial statements – are not kept up to date, the entire project is likely to wither and die. Moreover, the project will only be revived once the administration is updated. This issue is often reported on in the minutes of the multi-disciplinary forum, for example:

L.K. acted both as treasurer and secretary. During short periods of the year she had assistance from staff members of the Department of Social Service and Community Development, but for the rest she carried the double responsibility. This department offered to carry the administrative costs. As no person on this committee is doing it full time, and all of the members (and L) have full time jobs, it is not recommended that one person carry the burden of both secretary and treasurer (Report 2000 GPCPI).

If the intervention is planned on a smaller scale, the administrative load is not a major problem. But any large-scale intervention needs a carefully planned strategy for managing the administration.

5.4.2.5 Language and culture

In South Africa language or cultural barriers are likely to slow down any kind of effort where people gather for any reason. This also posed a problem for Project Awareness, where all the facilitators could not speak the vernacular and where small children, illiterate parents and even primary and secondary school learners, could not always follow the facilitator's train of thought in English. Problems identified included the following:

- Facilitators used academic English;
- Facilitators spoke in accents that were strange to the ears of the learners;
- English was often not the first language of the facilitators;
- Facilitators used examples that were not familiar to the culture of the trainees; and
- Facilitators did not understand the background of the trainees.

It was imperative that one of the two facilitators per group should speak the mother tongue of the trainees. In this regard, the report stated that:

The need for first language speakers to facilitate overshadowed the need for experienced people to facilitate.

When respondents were probed about their feelings on this aspect, they felt strongly that there should be both black and white facilitators. One of the learners who attended the Youth Club said it in his own way:

And the time that black women came, we talked and I finally knew what I wanted.

But the respondents were quite adamant that this factor should not imply that only facilitators from the same culture as the trainees should facilitate.

5.4.2.6 No training units

In Project Awareness, a clear distinction could be drawn between organisations that have their own training units and organisations that do not. This had an effect on Project Awareness and impacted on its work in a number of ways.

In the first instance, staff members based in training units had training as their main responsibility. It was therefore fairly easy for them to accommodate Project Awareness' training schedule. However, participants drawn from organisations that did not have in-

house training units, had line functions they had to attend to, whilst also having to take responsibility for training. As one such group explained:

When we get to the office in the morning, we first have to see what kinds of emergencies are lined up. We can't just leave without attending to the cases.

When these facilitators arrived late at schools, the other team members were dissatisfied. Yet, the 'offending' members found themselves in a dilemma, unsure of which priority to attend to first.

These groups distinguished themselves in the following ways:

- They had a very clear understanding of the strategic goals of their organisations/ departments and their role, but they were also aware of the important roles of the other role-players.
- The professionalism of the group was clearly revealed by the way in which they dealt with some of the date clashes. Because of other priorities in the work situation, it sometimes happened that a group could not attend. Some would shrug their shoulders and say that they could not help it. Others would explain in advance to allow time for possible cancellations. Health Promotion went out of their way to bring a group of health workers from another district a week earlier, showed them what they were doing and then these health workers took their places when they had to attend a compulsory training initiated by the Head Office.

When they were asked why they behaved differently they gave the following answers:

- Both these groups had undergone training in preparation for this outreach and they had been taught the skills and values around collaboration.
- They had been sensitized on the interpersonal skills necessary to work in multi-disciplinary teams.
- Their supervisors place a high priority on the success of working together.

5.4.2.7 Lack of vision, bad attitudes or demarcated budgets

Although the multi-disciplinary approach was propagated in 1997/1998 during the Gauteng Education Masters' Course for Life Skills/HIV/AIDS, there was initially still the tendency to 'reserve' the Life Skills/HIV/AIDS budget for HIV/AIDS programmes exclusively. Any attempts from the district offices to see the programmes for combating HIV/AIDS as an umbrella tool for addressing other barriers to learning, such as child

abuse, drug abuse, teenage pregnancies, gender discrimination, crime, violence, and so forth, met with opposition, for example when a few video snippets on child abuse were screened during a Life Skills/HIV/AIDS launch, they were met with disapproval. A respondent explained it as follows:

It has to do with reporting structures at national or provincial level. If one directorate receives money for HIV/AIDS and another Department receives money for Child Protection while a third party receives money for Safety, then the ground soldiers, having to do all of those, should not slip up and 'confuse the issues'.

The strong objection to the video clips can be explained not by a lack of vision, but as the logical outcome of a process that has always been geared to ask: What is the source of the budget that was used to stage this event? In this paradigm, monies allocated to an HIV/AIDS prevention programme, should therefore not be 'misappropriated' by spending them on child protection. The reason why it is difficult to resolve this problem even once the source of tension is diagnosed, is because multi-disciplinary projects or initiatives based on an ecological systems approach generate their own internal logic, which makes it difficult for these initiatives to articulate with rigid systems.

The example of the Life Skill/HIV/AIDS Launch is a case in point. Because multi-disciplinary projects are based on a system of synergy, merging, and sharing, the relationships between the various structures involved become so entangled that at a later stage it becomes impossible to distinguish what came from where and who contributed what. Funding structures and sources become interwoven where one system pays for catering and another for the services of a consultant. The fact that in most departments the same individual or group is responsible for dealing with almost all of these activities results in a connection between them that cannot be negated. One finds that one activity concentrates more on child protection and the next one more on HIV/AIDS. The Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative, a multi-disciplinary structure that accommodates most of these activities, has its own funding, which then becomes one with the others. As a result, these multiple entanglements produce a certain momentum. Hence, when the HIV/AIDS launch had to take place, it was natural to invite the entire multi-disciplinary team to be part of this event. Everyone was excited and worked on getting the venue in order, inviting their directors to the launch, giving advice. Through collaborating with each other, this group of people had already realised that child protection activities and the fight against HIV/AIDS are part of the same project, require the same skills, target the same learners, and above all, use the same people in each of the different systems.

A respondent that played an important role in this process expressed his/her thoughts about this issue as follows:

Child abuse and child prostitution both lead to HIV/AIDS infection. The whole idea of the launch was after all to say that the schools are doing something about it, that the approach is to teach life skills and that it is not the responsibility of only education, but of all.

It is therefore clear that government structures do not easily accommodate the natural growth and integration patterns that are a result of multi-disciplinary programmes. From this it follows that government structures and procedures do not lend themselves to collaborative efforts, not in terms of funding or in terms of human resource development. These issues need to be addressed in order to unlock the potential benefits of multi-disciplinary interventions. Once this was recognised, concern about the HIV/AIDS pandemic gradually started 'assisting' South African schools to develop and manage long overdue learner support strategies and systems.

The same barrier was experienced on district level. Some managers (direct or indirect) did not understand the role of the multi-disciplinary initiative, and therefore refused to give 'time off' to participate in the project. Those organisations did not experience the same kind of success in terms of working across boundaries of race, place, career, language and development levels. This 'lack of vision' also seems to have affected parent participation at schools, because schools do not acknowledge the knowledge, skills, and expertise of the parents and do not appreciate their worth.

5.4.2.8 *Lack of policies*

Policy is there to strengthen the hands of practitioners at ground level. Without an adequate and appropriate policy framework, the group or individuals experienced feelings of being rendered impotent. The work of Project Awareness was hampered by the fact that appropriate policy framework on inter-departmental collaboration was not available. There is a lack of structural support in terms of an integrated budget or integrated working relationships standing in the way of implementation.

Sometimes there is a paucity of policy in important areas. For example, education has been concerned with children since the first school was opened in South Africa by a government department. Yet, child abuse is not part of the pre-training of educators, and there is no policy on how child abuse should be managed in schools. In the past few years there was great activity on the policy development scene. Another concern relates to the implementation of policy. Many policies are not implemented or not implemented by all. The question can be raised regarding the piloting of policies before final implementation.

Many recent policy documents recommend 'community interventions' and 'mobilising the community resources'. These communities have now been trained in parent empowerment classes, have facilitated support groups for parents and would now like to apply their newly acquired skills and hence want to offer their services. However, the provincial budget does not allocate funds to use for such purposes as to draw parents closer, rewarding them, if only by a qualification in Basic Life Skills.

5.4.2.9 Funding

Following on from the issue of policy, at present, multi-disciplinary programmes cannot be used to strengthen human resources other than those located in government systems, unless there is a specific budget for them for example, for parenting. As a result, it remains a challenge to give people even a small sum of money as symbolic payment or reimbursement for their time, expenses and the services rendered, without at the same time opening up the opportunity for people to misuse the system. It is so difficult to make these payments. Therefore one has to find 'openings' in budgets and systems to facilitate this. This opens up the entire process to corruption, nepotism and struggles for budgetary control.

The next section will analyse the successes of Project Awareness, an ecological systems strategy, in its own terms. That is, the project will be evaluated against the set of principles for addressing barriers to learning as advanced by socio-educational theory generally and the ecological systems approach more specifically.

5.5 SECTION FOUR: AN ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION ON THE SUCCESSES EXPERIENCED IN THE PRE-IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PHASES OF PROJECT AWARENESS

If this project had to be described briefly, its enabling, empowering, capacitating capacity would have been the most important aspect.

Project Awareness used many strategies whereby learners, facilitators, parents, students, out-of-school youth were enabled. Not only were the people in the systems capacitated and developed, and the learners enabled, but all the involved parties found themselves doing things that they had not done before, visiting places where they had not been before, working with people that they had not worked with before. It also mobilised and empowered people outside the government systems.

There were conscious efforts to train, develop or empower, but there was also a development process that took place on an unconscious level and which was later recognised as being enabling. The interaction and the facilitating strategies, skills transfer, the knowledge-based and skills-based development, the clarification of values and the double barrelled training in all the interventions, proved to be empowering according to the feedback, reports and interviews.

Interaction lies at the core of all of these successes. It was found that every time the interaction was limited, the outcomes were limited. Every time the interaction increased, the success increased. These different capacity building strategies and outcomes will now be discussed.

5.5.1 Problem solving

The difference between the first interventions and the last two, mainly relates to the problem-solving strategy. The first problem-solving strategy was: How can we best address child abuse by means of a programme to the schools? This engendered discussion. The next strategy was: How can we best get Life Skills going at the schools? Again everyone was interested, because they could see themselves performing their functions. However neither the parenting programme nor the youth club used a problem-solving strategy. This immediately coloured the intervention to 'Us-teaching-you' and not to 'How can we best address the following problem?' This is the difference between a programme and a partnership. The one is collaboration, the other is a programme.

5.5.2 Increased interaction

The strategy of starting with an outreach to the schools to empower the educators resulted in many hours of interaction among the participants; collaborative planning (see section 5.3.3); smaller group planning of manuals; meetings and outreaches. The interaction was enhanced by the different training and development strategies.

5.5.3 Mobilising more human resources

Project Awareness did by no means plan to empower any other human resources than the educators and the learners. It happened mainly on the basis of a need expressed either by the Project Awareness Team, or by the service providers. Once the process has started to involve people, it is difficult to stop at a particular point to say 'only as far as this'. It was found that one of the positive factors in enabling people was a lack of human resources. The need for more people, led to a process of finding more people. This again provided the opportunity to do more. This was a continuous process of development.

5.5.4 In-service training and development opportunities for all participants

A number of different development opportunities were planned as preparation for this venture:

- A course on drama as therapeutic intervention presented by an external consultant. It provided the necessary background and theory on interactive approaches. It also facilitated a process of experimenting with other methodologies instead of formal presentations. It added value by encouraging interaction between the trainees with lots of laughter and play.
- Another course on the facilitation of small groups also provided the group with some skills. These skills were further refined when working with the therapists (educational psychologists) in the youth groups.
- The educationalists shared their practical experience about classroom management with the rest of the group.
- Facilitation techniques were workshopped with the whole group. The necessary expertise was available, and they shared this with the others.

- Presentations by the different groups before the first outreach contributed to all 40 facilitators having been trained on the many aspects of child protection. Clarification on issues around these matters often took place. This sometimes brought about lively discussions, but by the time everyone went home, there was a common understanding on most issues.
- This also facilitated a process of clarification of values.

One respondent referred to this training opportunity:

You did very well in giving us guidelines in how to present to the schools. You gave us materials and pamphlets and you helped us a lot. We felt we are doing something. We've done a lot.

5.5.5 Pre-service training opportunities for the students

The students were trained by the universities/technikons specifically for their roles in this programme, and then they joined the project for practical work. They also mentioned this involvement on their CVs, for some it meant credits, for others it counted as a practical assignment.

- The ASPIS students from UNISA presented a slide show to the educators concerning child abuse.
- Educational Drama is part of the course of the Technikon students. They were thoroughly trained and obtained practical experience by joining the project.
- The Pretoria University students got the opportunity to do baseline assessments, summative assessment, focus group interviews, to observe the lessons and evaluate them and obtain experience in facilitating small groups and working in different cultural groups.
- The NGO had a student learner in their service who was developed through this project.

This reciprocal influence was mentioned by the respondents. Not only did the students get practical experience in what they were being trained for, they also obtained a much better idea of the practicalities around their future work. While they were still in training, they developed other ideas through peer teaching and team teaching e.g. the educators, the staff from the local systems (departments and local government structures), the out-of-school youth and the learners themselves. This is an example of synergy and working together.

5.5.6 Development opportunities for the out-of-school youth and parents

The out-of-school youth, four young people from Atteridgeville, were invited to attend a Life Skills training session. Prior to this they had announced themselves at the district office to say that they were involved at a few schools, helping the learners to make the right subject choices. They helped them with career guidance. During these Life Skills training sessions the four of them gave such valuable inputs, that they were invited to become involved in Project Awareness. Two of them became co-presenters in the youth groups, together with the psychologists. One of them also went to the other departments and did short courses on lay-counselling and child abuse. We further supported them by providing them with handouts. One became so involved that he has recently received an office from the city council, from where he can do his work as youth counsellor and Life Skills Youth Worker in Atteridgeville. Later he acted as venue manager for the parenting classes and attended those workshops, further empowering himself. He took responsibility for his own development and grabbed every opportunity that came his way. He brought new dimensions to these parenting groups, by representing the youth.

Throughout the programme, the learners were enabled. The workshops used many enabling strategies in terms of skills, motivation, knowledge. Instead of focusing on the problems the project looked at strategies to build and develop.

St Mary's Outreach, the independent monitor of the primary school project, reported that the information was relevant and balanced and included relevant content, skills, attitudes and values. In addition, it was found that the presentations were interactive and participatory. This style ensured that learners remembered vital information, especially the drama and the song techniques.

The base line assessment report (Visser 2000) on the secondary school intervention stated the following concerning the facilitation:

The workshops were generally presented in such a manner that it captured the attention and interest of the learners. Small group discussions and role-play activities were especially effective in involving the learners. Situations where the attention of learners was low were identified as situations of long explanations and monologues by the presenters, when presenters moralized about the subject, during general class discussions and when the presenters answered individual questions, not involving the group as a whole.

These different enabling opportunities were enhanced by using particular enabling strategies facilitating the acquisition of skills, knowledge, experience, values and attitudes. By using different enabling strategies, all human resources who were involved with Project Awareness, were enabled in terms of quality and quantity. These enabling strategies will now be analysed.

By using these different strategies, the following outcomes were achieved. These outcomes are not based on a particular level, performance standard or pass rate, but they are based on any improvement from a previous point in time to the present. These strategies led to various levels of development for the individuals involved as well as for the institutions involved. If the people are enabled, the institutions are strengthened. Therefore all the ecological systems were enhanced in various ways, on various levels, and on a continuum of possibilities.

5.5.7 Networking system established

Throughout the four years the interaction between the service providers improved, and the different stakeholders started contacting each other outside the framework of Project Awareness. This was new for most, as one respondent mentioned:

Networking with others was not advised. Now the gates are open

This increased networking also led to improved services. These services were both in terms of work and personal. When child molestation was reported by a principal, with the alleged perpetrator being a teacher, it took two hours for three role-players to be at the school. Because they knew and trusted each other, and understood each other's roles, the matter could be addressed through the proper channels.

That incident made me realize that if this had happened before - it just would not have been the same. The only bad thing was the reaction of the other teachers trying to protect the teacher. I then knew that we still had a lot of work to do to change perceptions.

One of the service providers contacted me about a learner at the school that was terrified of a teacher walking up and down the isles, swinging his revolver. She reported that before, she would not have known where to start looking for 'the department.' 'It took me a few telephone calls to initiate an investigation.'

Visser (2000) reported:

The most important benefit of the intervention was the forming of a network of service providers and communication between the services providers and the school system. The intervention contributed to the forming of networks of resources and can be seen as a first step in a preventive strategy.

The schools were left with all the telephone numbers. This had an influence on the report from the local child welfare agency confirming an 'increased number of referrals'.

These improved relationships brought the people in the systems closer. But it also had an effect on the structures.

5.5.8 Planning collaboratively

This phase of the intervention was the most chaotic, but also the most meaningful. It involved getting to know the members of the project team and fixing their roles and their responsibilities. The planning process comprised a diverse and multidimensional set of tasks, from distilling what should be 'in' and what should be 'out'; finding out the correct procedure for referrals, getting clarity on the role of the police and/or social worker to debating whether we should talk to learners about the use of condoms or not. Representatives from mental health gave input on parenting and family life; social workers pointed to certain aspects of child protection that the others were not aware of and the Department of Education shared experiences on disciplinary measures, the roles and the rights of parents, and facilitation methods. The respondents agreed that the collective planning brought fresh insights, ensured a more holistic approach to matters, assisted in developing an understanding of structures and processes and was one of the best forms of development for all the service providers. One respondent described the planning phase as follows:

Everybody realised that they had skills. We were definitely enhanced as individuals and as organizations.

Other respondents felt this process was cumbersome, time consuming and difficult, but worthwhile in the long run.

5.5.9 Acquiring new skills

Throughout the period of four years there was a sharing of skills, consciously and unconsciously. The skills mentioned in various forms (feedback, thank you letters, reports, interviews) cover a variety aspects: facilitation skills, compiling a training manual, communication skills, administration, operating training equipment e.g. video machines and overhead projectors, working with large groups, working with learners, working with black learners, small group facilitation, writing proposals, reporting skills, delivering a paper at the university, project coordination, conflict management, people's skills, multi-disciplinary working relationships, finding your way in a township, teaching learners from other language groups and working with people from other racial groups and problem solving skills.

This indicates the enabling potential of multi-disciplinary programmes. One of the very small community-based organisations reported:

We learnt so much from youall the letters and faxes. We did not know to do this. We became very strong and will now do it like this.

Certain attitudes contributed to the sharing of skills. The latter was referred to as being 'accommodating' by one respondent and 'to share everything' by another. 'Sharing' can be explained in the following ways. It means

- to have openness about who can do what, without focusing on who are 'qualified' to do something;
- to giving each person feedback (the budget report, the proposal for funding, the reports to the funder, the internal letters to different people and organisations) provides examples on which people can improve.

What happened after that was a process and the way in which it unfolded made me realize how poor, narrow minded and restricted relationships between different departments, organisations and interest groups had been in the past. It was an aha-erlebnis (Scott 2003:112).

The process of collaboration requires a sense of openness, the intention to incorporate individuals and groups even though it might not seem to be the best choice. The extent to which this principle underpinned Project Awareness is evident from the feedback of one of the respondents:

You invited me to the Life Skills Course. You gave me that manual on parenting. You wrote a letter to the schools with our names. You helped us a lot (Out-of-school youth).

5.5.10 Sharing of knowledge

Increased interaction has inherently built into it the potential to facilitate the sharing of knowledge. It is hardly possible to talk for an hour without sharing information, knowledge, or to convey your view/value system or attitude to the others. Each one of the participants, whether it was the learner, the trainee, the facilitator, the observer, owned some knowledge that they could share with the others. The enabling strategies provided the way to share it and it depended on each participant to take whichever parts of the knowledge-base they needed. The basic knowledge that was shared through Project Awareness had to do with the various aspects of child protection as can be seen in the programmes and the themes. But a wide range of other knowledge was also transferred. Participants were more aware, or had increased knowledge of structures, processes, procedures, legislation, people, places, roles and responsibilities, other resources in the community and more.

5.5.11 Clarification on roles and responsibilities

The respondents reported that they had a much better understanding not only of the roles of the other service providers, but also of their own roles. This kind of intervention provides an opportunity to gain a broader understanding of how the different systems and structures relate to each other.

At the same time the project led to a blurred boundary between roles and responsibilities. There was a gradual movement into the terrain of the other roles. One respondent explained it as follows:

Yes, maybe there were psychologists, but maybe one or two. How can they do the work?

In social research it is always difficult to determine why things are happening the way they do, since there are numerous variables that influence processes. In this part, drawing on my experiences as project participant and the semi-structured interviews conducted with participants, those factors that most likely contributed to the multi-disciplinary character of the project and the successful collaborative interventions as well as those that impeded the success of the project are outlined.

5.5.12 Benchmarking

The more the different participants interacted, spent time together, worked together, the more they had the opportunity to benchmark. Many of the respondents in the empirical study remarked that they had an opportunity to benchmark their organisation with others, and their own performances with others. The respondents reported that they had become aware of their own inadequacies as well as their own strengths, by having another organization by which to benchmark. Valuable lessons were learnt in this respect. A respondent commented:

When the facilitators did not pitch up. That one when the combi broke and they phoned. Or the video machines. Carrying them in and out - but you learn to know who can make a plan, who can laugh, who gets angry, which organisations can you trust. For that other one we always needed a plan B.

This kind of programme almost serves as the mirror of the organisation.

When working in multi-disciplinary teams the other departments, the NGO and public evaluate your district by the work and the attitudes of the one or two involved staff members.

5.5.13 Outreach: New experiences - geographical areas

During the period 1998 - 2001 some of the white participants in the project were fearful of going into townships. Some refused to go, others asked to drive with a group and others were simply afraid. The follow-up visits were affected by this, and it affected the involvement of other professionals. They requested to become involved in training activities, but when they heard that they were held in the township, they were not willing.

The Pretoria Technikon, however, came up with a solution. They arranged for all their students who were part of the drama division to visit Atteridgeville before the time so that they could better understand the children with whom they were working. This proved to be a very successful venture according to them:

It was a very informative visit and helped us to understand the background from which our future audience comes (letter to coordinator).

This same barrier proved to be a valuable attribute later when many participants reported that they had gained much by working in the townships. The psychologists reported that it had assisted them in making contact with black schools, enabling them to render their other services to these schools.

5.5.14 Learn new skills: Multi-disciplinary training team/model - teaching

Multi-disciplinary training teams proved to be an effective strategy for people to learn from each other, whilst making sure that different perspectives are accommodated. The research found that in the first primary school interventions, the facilitators also referred to a multi-disciplinary training team, while facilitation took place on a rotation basis, one hour per group. Whilst this did not have the same effect, the facilitators sometimes overlapped, some coming early, others staying after their presentation and two people from the Department of Education attended the full day. This primary school model for training was based on cooperation rather than collaboration in the training scenario.

In presenting to the schools, the programme took on a 'systems model with elements of the 'specialists' speaking to the 'know-nothings'. Depending on the school, however, this top-down situation sometimes changed to an interesting and lively flat-structured, interactive relationship.

By dealing with the educators apart from the learners, with two people from education facilitating the process and the service providers rotating, many issues between educators and the people in the local services were addressed. It was possible to follow up accusations or to provide reasons for certain actions.

The respondents reported very positively on this particular model.

No one could blame the otherI mean....they were all there (the service providers). They had to talk and explain. The teachers talked...they explained some problems – like no transport. We all understood better.

When this programme was taken to the secondary school, there were a few attempts to improve on the primary school model. By asking the educators to be in the classroom, there was an effort to reduce the top-down effect and to make them partners, giving inputs where necessary and act as co-facilitators. This was purely cosmetic, as facilitation itself was new to the educators and the concept of co-facilitating could not be perceived at all. The 'co-facilitation model' was in fact 'model-teaching'. Educators could observe how the multi-disciplinary team used this new methodology, as well as obtain some insights on the new curricula.

The multi-disciplinary training team model was also used in the youth clubs, where different combinations of educational psychologist, educationalist from the district office, post-graduates from the Psychology Department of the University of Pretoria, two educators, out of school youth, social workers, in various combinations managed the youth groups. One took the lead while the others acted as small group facilitator for a group of five when they divided for activities. By observing and doing, everybody was empowered. The reports indicate that the students and the out-of-school youth impressed with their skills to facilitate and especially their skills to create rapport with the learners.

The above-mentioned reports accentuated sharply the loss of opportunities which occurred when many educators did not attend the full day. As one respondent remarked:

Yes...That....That I think was one of the problems. They thought that this is a day off. That they did not... They were supposed to stay in the class so that they could learn, and so that they can see what you do so that they can then go and repeat it so that there can be sustainability of this programme and I don't think that's what happened. Cause often you would find the teacher would be there for a while and then have some sort of excuse and leave.

However, the parenting programmes adopted the top-down model with specialists facilitating. The positive aspect of this model was the parents and the educators who were on the same level as trainees. Teachers explained later that they were not 'parent-specialist' and that the relationship between them and the parents gradually changed over the twelve weeks of the intervention.

This project provided scope for a wide variety of training and development opportunities that could be accessed or that were made freely available to those who wanted to avail themselves of them.

5.5.15 Use skills acquired: Facilitation

Facilitation in itself is enabling, ensuring interaction and accommodating other perspectives. Instead of taking the educators for a course on facilitation methods, the secondary school model of observing for four hours the different facilitation skills used by the facilitators was found to be more effective. From the discussions during educator training, it was often mentioned that the problem with the OBE training was that it did not take into account the classroom situation of 50 learners squeezed into a small classroom with no place to move. This lesson observation ensured that the suggested model could be implemented.

The project also demonstrated that you need not to have been trained as an educator to be able to facilitate. Project Awareness used all the human resources they could gather. If a person was unsure, the other facilitator showed the way until this facilitator felt comfortable with the idea. The group varied from trained facilitators to students still in training, from out-of-school youth to university lecturers, from educational psychologists mostly working on a one-to-one basis to trainers from the city council. There was a built-in protection and support system for both the trainees as the facilitators by facilitating in pairs.

This strategy lends itself to empowerment of educators, learners and the facilitators themselves through the reciprocal effect of facilitation. Facilitators reported that it assisted them in broadening their views and experience. One of the learners in the youth group wrote in his feedback:

The session is wonderful because I learned to [sic] many things, how to be free and open and communicate with people. I think the session was great, cause I think it really taught us that, it helps to talk to somebody you trust if you have a problem. And that if you do not want to talk about it, you can still express your feelings.

This view was also supported by one of the coordinators of the parenting groups:

I developed a lot of facilitating skills and I've learned a lot of empathy you know. Because when you are not involved in a situation you see it from outside and you often point fingers and you say why don't they (parents) do this and why don't they do that? But once you're involved and you listen to what they have to say you see there is a need out there for parents to reach out for people who can help them. The community is just in need of skills and knowledge.

On the delicate matter of whether it was important to consider demographical issues, particularly cultural concerns, in selecting facilitators, both community coordinators stated emphatically that it was not necessary:

You brought in experts from all over. I think we need to bring in people from all kinds of cultures. Once we are even able to understand the other people's cultures then we are able to tolerate them. It doesn't just start and end with parenting it goes into the community and touch all the cultures. As long as they've got the skills. But there should be someone from the community to help with the support groups.

This whole process of facilitating the small groups, also led to referrals. As one coordinator said:

Most of them opened up. Some even asked Dr F to help them personally so he went further and he helped them further. And they came to us, contacted us and we referred them to other places. Many facilitators became involved in other matters when the parents ask them about drugs or discipline.

This following personal experience indicates that it is necessary to be open and to be able to see the potential and to utilise it when it comes to the enabling of human resources, also in terms of possible facilitators. Through this process another group of people are again interacting, learning greater insight and sharing knowledge, skills and attitudes.

5.5.16 Role release

The project provided the opportunity for role release, where more people could assume the responsibility and the work of others. The educational psychologists who were used to working only on an individual level, found themselves in front of a group of learners, educators and parents. An educator found herself in a very close relationship with only 20 learners, sharing thoughts and feelings. An educator found herself next to another parent who shares feelings of inadequacy when it comes to child rearing.

The interaction was enhanced by the different training and development strategies.

A letter from a principal stated the following:

Words cannot really express how highly the school thinks of what you and your team did on the 09/02/99. You made us revisit our souls, you re-kindled our awareness to some issues we took for granted. (Letter of thanks from principal of Matseke Primary School)

5.5.17 Professionalism

The following scenario sketches the coordinator's observations about professionalism among the groups.

Scenario 5.4

Professionalism

Some groups involved in the project immediately distinguished themselves in terms of professionalism. The professionalism was experienced on various levels. It was evident in the behaviour of the organisation, individuals, groups, departments, school staff, facilitating staff and administrative staff. It was evident in the correspondence between individuals and groups. It was evident in the way the school received the facilitators and introduced them, but it was also evident in the way in which the facilitators involved the teacher in the classroom in the discussions; the way in which the facilitators communicated with the others during breaks and the way they communicated with the learners, all reflected on different levels of professionalism. There were particularly two groups that excelled and were mentioned by the others. They never arrived late. They never 'misunderstood' the timetable. Everybody would remark on the fact that one could rely on them. Not once did they lose their tempers, look discouraged or complained. They were cautious of time and never overstepped the time limits. They made sure that the resources, videos, training materials were well kept and safe. One group once had to attend a provincial workshop. They made a plan to involve staff members from their department, working in another district; they trained them and asked them to stand in on their behalf. These organisations remembered to write a letter at the end of the year to indicate that their management was aware of the work done, appreciated the collaborated efforts and welcomed further collaboration.

I made lists of possible 'criteria' and worked through the data, listing the probabilities, noting the references and reading again the transcriptions, considering variables ranging from experience, age, and 'what is to be gained' to 'leadership'. Having gone through this exercise, I concurred that representatives from departments and organisations with specific dedicated training units, portrayed more of these attributes. It can possibly be explained in the following way:

- It was in the best interest of their supervisors that the programme should be successful.
- The group leader or organisational management portrayed integrity and insight into group dynamics of this kind.
- Such groups had undergone excellent training in preparation for this outreach and the 'foot soldiers' were actually taught the knowledge, skills and values around collaboration.
- The group (or management) thought that collaboration was important and therefore complied with the working agreements.
- They had a very clear understanding of the strategic goals of their organisations/ departments and the role of their organisation/department, but they were also aware of the important roles of the other role-players.

Before they go out, they are trained. We took them to have a look at the area, familiarising them with the area.

- Matrix management was an accepted structure in the organization (one group had to withdraw, because of the fact that the line management model had not been followed).
- The organisational manager shared the vision with the staff around the pros of multi-disciplinary intervention for achieving the outcomes of the organisation.
- The information about the project was communicated to the management or by the management.
- The organization found reasons for being part of such a collaboration according to the what's-in-it-for-me principle (see 5.3).
- Multi-disciplinary intervention was welcomed by the organization. Some organisations specifically stated that they preferred not to work like this, but that they were forced to do so to obtain funding from the Department of Social Services.

Scenario 5.5

Out-of-school youth as service providers

A young man accompanied by three friends walked into my office in 1998 to tell me that for the past two years they had been working in schools, during school hours and after hours, presenting Guidance and Drama to the learners. They had only matriculation certificates. They found that their subject choices had limited them when they wanted to study, and decided to go and warn the learners in the school not to make the same mistakes. The principals allowed them and they did this type of thing for many months. At this stage we were busy training the educators in Life Skills, and I invited the four to join the training. It just so happened that their input was so relevant and brought about so many new dimensions and dynamics to the training scenario, that they were brought on board. They were then invited to join the Youth Clubs as co-facilitators, and once again they excelled in this role. Thereafter they assisted with the parenting classes as venue-managers and eventually the one became a facilitator and coordinator of more such courses.

That is perhaps why the one youngster made the following remark:

You see when I work with the children I see the one side. There must be another side. So what about the other side? The space between the children and the parents somewhere it must be broke. So when I talk to the parents, I say what you are saying. But because I am young, I can explain to them how we feel. I can explain to them what helps me to become a better person. They believe me, because I am young. I just tell them the same thing, from the other side.

The idea of making use of young people was reinforced when we saw the skills and rapport the students had with the learners in the youth clubs. The facilitators reported on the effective way in which they communicated with the learners, in spite of the language barriers:

They simply communicated on a level that we find difficult. Sometimes the English was all wrong, but the communication was all right.

Involving the out-of-school youth in the workshops, brought in a new dimension to the training scene that was not only helpful but also assisted in enhancing the interaction in the youth groups.

But I wish it was possible just for the department to get some youth, eh eh eh take them to the trainings and then after take them to the training, place them one at each school and then this one will just work in the extra curriculum activities, like youth club, or drama or counseling.

The interviews reiterated that affective activities can be powerful tools for opening and enhancing the channels of communication between the teacher and the learners, the facilitator and the parents, the parents and the educators.

5.5.18 Changing paradigms

An unintended consequence of the project was that the inequalities produced as a result of policies of racial discrimination became apparent to project members who had never been exposed to life in a township. In turn, this led to the breaking down of barriers between groups and races. This view was reported mostly by the white respondents. For them, this project resulted in a paradigm change. They reported on these feelings in conversations with colleagues, sharing their experiences. For some, the issue of differential resource allocation was central, others spoke more explicitly about how their feelings of prejudice were eroded by the experience:

Those of us that are in the classrooms working with the learners, experience a feeling of *dejavu*. A child is a child is a child. There are the learners with the wonderful sense of humour and those who are easily embarrassed. Some are interested and some are more interested in the girl in front of him.

And

You are white and you speak English. They do not laugh at your little jokes they do not understand English or ...perhaps perhaps it is not funny ..to them, you know..and you realise - you have to talk or you will never understand.

It was reported that many paradigms, perceptions, negative feelings and thoughts about other groups, people, races, and services had been changed by the outreach.

There were spin offs that I didn't foresee. The facilitators all experienced the meaningfulness. I have learnt to know and understand the children from other cultures and realized that all children have the same problems.

This programme assisted in building bridges between cultural groups:

Going into the schools week after week, you gradually start to realize some things and you begin to understand. After the first visit to a school you remember the dust. On the second visit you remember the broken windows and doors and floors and chairs and desks. On the third day you think about the little girls on the floor, washing and scrubbing and polishing and shining. On the fourth day you start looking at the size of the playgrounds. You realize that one school was built on the playgrounds of the other school. This means there are two schools, without any grounds, separated by a wired fence. On the following day you start asking about school fees and funding for the school. When you hear with how little these schools are supposed to run their schools, develop their grounds, safeguard their property, you cannot believe it. And then gradually the truth starts breaking through and you start comparing: the lawns and rugby fields and netball fields, the pavilions and the paving, the three pianos and the numerous store rooms, the double sets of xylophones and drums stacked under the stage of the big hall, not used by anyone because there are more in the classes. If I had not spent every Tuesday in the township for two years, I would still be talking about the differences between them and us. Now I know that teaching in South Africa has many faces (Article submitted for CLAWS, an internal newsletter of the district).

Even though the parenting programmes were limited in terms of numbers, and only a limited number of parents attended these courses, schools reported on improved parent involvement after the parenting classes. One parent was elected on the School Governing Body shortly afterwards. Another parent started with a clothing bank at the school and another with a project to give lunch packets to learners that did not get lunch (reported at the Education Summit in Atteridgeville). No structured support groups were established at the schools, but one local coordinator of the parenting programmes reported that in the first group, there was a tendency for the parents with similar problems to discuss matters and to leave together (Atteridgeville).

In the first group, they were like a support group themselves. They opened up. They came together. There was one very strong lady. That lady came out and said you don't have to be quiet about [abuse]

There were real benefits to some of the parents. As one of them explained:

We became a team in that time. We were not lost anymore. If you knew about someone who needed help; you could help them (Facilitator of the parenting group in Atteridgeville).

The educators who attended the parenting groups reported on improved understanding of the children in the class, suddenly seeing the child within the family setting.

By listening to the parents and their concerns, I just realised that there is a mother somewhere, hoping that the teacher will be kind to her little one.

5.5.19 Improved relationships

Certain occurrences contributed to a more intact relationship among the facilitators. These factors varied from very small and unimportant situations, to a situation where the group was asked to deliver a paper at the University of Pretoria (SAAIMAD). Reporting back once per month to the Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative, writing short articles for the organisational new letter, and giving each facilitator a copy, contributed to a feeling of success. When the members of the provincial health office visited a school on a day of our outreach, and when an article was placed in the provincial newsletter, this feeling grew.

The second year of the secondary school outreach, when the programme stretched over one and a half days, and most of the partners only came on the second day, this relationship was not fully developed and it was not much more than coordinated presentations.

5.5.20 Clarification of values

The Manifesto on Values (Doe 2001 [c]) identifies ten fundamental values of the Constitution. These values were never consciously transferred, but automatic transfer took place in a group setting.

The values that emerged in the discussions and documentation were the following:

- Non-racism: People reported on how barriers between different races fell away
- Respect: By having contact with people from different backgrounds, races, cultures, academic holding, organisations and by realising the strengths, skills, knowledge and wisdom that they have, respect starts to grow and your own perceptions are questioned.
- Accountability: This was developed by a feeling of group coherence. You saw how the others acted and realised the importance of being accountable.
- An open society: Areas, people, groupings, settings, scenarios that were previously closed, began to open up and all of us had a broader vision and scope of what South African society entails.

Working in a multi-disciplinary relationship with other organisations requires a particular value system and organisational ethos from all role-players. These values and norms were often discussed in correspondence and during interactions, but they were mostly modelled. These values related to work ethics, family values and social, political and religious values. Values are so much part of each person, that sometimes they are unaware of them.

Many respondents explicitly or implicitly referred to their understandings of the norms and values that both informed a project of this nature and are vital for its implementation. When asking the respondents about how these values and norms in this working relationship were made explicit, or where or when these become tangible, they reflected:

- It could be measured by the way in which people were prepared to accommodate others in the group.
- I think it is when they share their knowledge and skills.
- Isn't it the way in which you respect the other involved parties?
- Maybe the ground rules and working agreements? If everyone sticks to that....
- Your commitment.
- All the others know they can depend on you.

When visiting a school week after week, you learn to 'read' the ethos of the school. In one school the principal did not attend the workshop, or left the office but sends a message for you to continue. At another school the principal starts the day with a motivational introduction, reiterating the important role of the educator in terms of care and nurturing.

5.5.21 In-service development opportunities for the whole school staff

Through Project Awareness all the primary school educators in the 31 schools were developed in different aspects of Child Protection for four hours. None of the educators had received training in child protection in their pre-service years, although they were working with children daily. Previously educators were supposed to teach, and social workers were supposed to tend to the abused children. The educators had now been trained in aspects that strictly speaking, had always been the domain of the social worker or the health worker. These are:

- How to identify the abused child
- How to be a nurturing teacher, sensitive to the feelings of the learners
- How to facilitate the disclosure
- How to report
- How to support, each child having a 'guardian angel' special teacher
- Introducing the post box concept
- How to plan Life Skills lessons
- HIV/AIDS: What to do and what to say?

The secondary school educators (350) were not only developed by observing how these courses were being facilitated in the classroom, but they also observed in practice the facilitation methodology and experienced how very sensitive matters were dealt with in the classroom. This meant that for each of the following topics, four or five educators per school (there were four to five classes per grade per school) were sensitised and informed about each of these different themes:

- Sexuality and HIV/AIDS / Teenage pregnancies and abortion
- Career Guidance, Future Perspective, My Strengths
- Drugs and Substance Abuse / Drinking and Driving
- Crime and Violence: Safety Measures, Being Assertive
- Parenting and Family Life

Two secondary school teachers per school attended a six-hour in-service training course through participation in the Youth Clubs (22) and were thereby trained in Small Group Therapeutic Intervention. There was another opportunity for any number of educators who wished, to attend the parenting classes. These educators were therefore also supported and developed through this course.

The administrative staff was also invited to attend the workshop, but this did not realise in any of the schools.

5.5.22 Enabling all the participants

The strategy of starting with an outreach to the schools to 'empower the educators' resulted in many hours of interaction among the participants. There was the initial planning around dates and times; the best model to use; the content of the presentations; the methods and activities. Then there was the planning in smaller groups to compile the training manuals. Throughout this process there was a continuous and ongoing sharing of skills and multi-faceted influences between facilitators, teachers and learners.

Prior to the programme, almost all the facilitators (excluding the students) were trained in their field of expertise, working in different fields, but mostly in the child-services. In spite of that, only four were particularly trained on child protection in their pre-training phase. Project Awareness changed this situation by developing the people in the services in various ways.

5.5.23 Increased support

This programme also contributed by providing additional support for the learners, not only enabling the learners but also their support systems. The educators and parents themselves were enabled, understanding their roles as supporters and protectors. The Youth Club provided an opportunity to feel supported. Learners reported on a feeling of belonging in this group. Parents started supporting each other and two of them started with nurturing activities at the school, having become more aware of the plight of the child (Report, Atteridgeville). The schools became aware of the need for programmes and support structures. The secondary school teachers were shocked to see the reaction of the learners, the great number of them asking for support in the questionnaire.

One respondent reflected:

Children do need emotional support and if they do not get it at home they demand it from you. If they get enough emotional support at home they come to school more confident and it makes your work much easier (respondent).

The independent assessors from St Mary's Outreach reported:

There was indeed an increased awareness of educators to involve themselves in more than just syllabus teaching and the school as a whole taking responsibility for addressing areas of concern

5.5.24 More openness between systems and improved access to schools

The literature study and the interviews indicate many discrepancies around access to schools in the past and at present. If a system is closed, it means that there is no inflow and outflow of information and it becomes stale. This is what happened to schools in the past. In the past it was almost impossible for NGOs and CBOs to work in the previously white schools.

The NGOs were kept at arm's length, especially by the traditionally privileged education departments. Being a teacher then, I did not really know what an NGO was and thought of them as terrible people that wanted to say horrible things to little children and then get money for it (respondent).

In the township schools even the staff from Health Promotion could not get access easily.

During the past we used to go to schools to do sexuality education and... .. we had problems especially with some other principals. They didn't accept us to just come into the schools and work in the schools. Sometimes they will tell us that they don't have time and that we are disturbing the classes in school. You see because they didn't know us and we had no permission to work in the schools.

Access to schools was previously managed in an ad hoc manner. Some visitors were allowed to enter at any time, while others were not allowed at all. This was given as a reason why the police found it difficult to work in such a multi-disciplinary structure as Project Awareness. Previously they could announce themselves at any school at any time and they were allowed to address the learners. The strict time frames and particular programmes inherent in Project Awareness, did not suit them. There were also the four members of the out-of-school-youth who were allowed to implement any intervention with the learners, from dancing and drama to career guidance.

I went to the principal – he took me to that teacher. I asked the learners: Whowants to dance? Do poetry?...or act on stage and so...? And then we start practicing. The other time I ask the teacher – may I talk to the class?

But problems around access to schools are not restricted to the past. One parent mentioned that the telephone directory is of little use if one does not understand the government structures. A parent in one of the parenting classes remarked how she once tried for one hour and forty five minutes to report a case of serious neglect. After 13 telephone calls and 19 people, she found the right person.

The more recent experiences do not indicate an improved process to encourage community involvement. The out-of-school youth reported that, more recently, it has become more difficult to obtain permission to work in schools:

Never [It was never difficult] ... eh eh eh until for now because things have changed. Because from the department they said: 'You have to go to the department, you have to go the school, you have to go to the governing body, from the department you must get a letter... Before they just let me in. These days it needs a lot of paperwork.

When I asked him about the process of obtaining permission, he answered:

I take the taxi, or I ask my friend. I come there, but she [the lady who is responsible] (my insertion) is not there. Tomorrow again I take the taxi. They say she's out. Ai, it takes long. Ai

The fact that permission at the district office rests with one person, and that there are no criteria to motivate the decisions for allowing a person to work or not to work in a school, was mentioned.

I worked with you for two years. The school asked me.
Now I may not.

In Gauteng the cross-department provincial procurement agency does not take into account any collaborative relationships that have been established and often service providers from another town are procured. This implies that all the cooperative and collaborating efforts are wasted, and one has to start afresh every time with new people. There is no sustainability built into this process. These kind of structures and process, according to the respondent, will smother all further multi-disciplinary and collaborative strategies.

You know how we worked to get all the people together in Atteridgeville. Now ...they just give us names ... you never know what to expect. You have the capacity in the community, but may not use them when they are to be paid for their services.

Three service providers reported that Project Awareness impacted positively on matters relating to access. They regard improved access to schools as a direct consequence of the intervention:

But since ...after the Project Awareness and the Department of Health and the Department of Education made partnership and we worked together ...because we are working for our own communities. You see, they know me.

The multi-disciplinary programmes facilitated such access in a responsible way. Someone from the Department of Education gave her view:

Ja, I think what... what helped them (the other service providers) a lot was that it was eh organized... it was a structured way. They just knew that they just had to be at the school at this time – everything was done for them, they did not have to do anything. It made it much easier for the other departments that didn't have easy access. . And to be part of a recognized group – gave them sort of like some leverage. You know, we come as a team to the school.

Never before or since have so many service providers visited the school in one year. Never before has any service provider spent four hours at a school. Previously the police or the social worker would enter, address a group of learners for thirty minutes and leave. This means that the school received much more than they would have, and it was a coordinated effort.

5.6 SECTION FIVE: CONCLUSION

In this chapter, a case study of Project Awareness was presented. Case study research, as used here, employs qualitative methodologies and is grounded in theory derived from the interpretative tradition. Qualitative research is interested in generating rich data and in gaining deep access to social phenomena. The theory that underpins this study makes a claim that projects such as the one described in this chapter should be studied with a focus on process, rather than outcome. Moreover, given that an important theme of this study is emotional health and wellbeing, the research also aimed to uncover the feelings and thoughts of some of the project participants, who were asked to reflect on how they

benefited from the project on a number of levels. Another question that needs to be answered is what kind of project was Project Awareness?

Based on the theoretical discussion put forward in Chapter Two, it is argued here that the project was a hybrid model that did not neatly comply with any of the models, but that displayed many of the characteristics of initiatives based on the ecological systems model. There are a number of reasons for making this claim: (1) the project was not initiated through the formal systems; (2) it was not originally envisaged to develop in scope and depth, but rather developed organically; (3) it involved both state employees and community members; (4) it was not funded through government funding; and (5) it was based on the multi-disciplinary team approach. It was not a 'pure' model, but then it was argued in Chapter Two that when theoretical models are translated into practice, few of them remain 'pure'. Of course, if Project Awareness is conceived of as an ecological systems model, the project did not meet some of the requirements and did not fully realise others. But, because the ecological systems model is a developmental model, these shortcomings do not necessarily impede understanding of the project's success.

Project Awareness is therefore described as a multi-disciplinary project that used a risk-focused programme that was initiated on ecological level. In the four years that it operated, it took on a developmental pattern, changing shape and structure as different needs emerged during the process. During the course of the project it emerged that the risk-focused intervention, which at the outset was the primary aim of the project, became a secondary aim. It was only a strategy for realising the enabling and developmental potential of the project, which produced a series of outcomes that were initially not expected or conceptualised.

An evaluation of the project as is given here is not undertaken from the vantage point of whether the project achieved its stated outcomes. A more traditional evaluation of the project in that sense has already been undertaken and was reported on in this chapter. Rather, what is considered here is whether the project succeeded in a broader sense. If it enhanced interaction among people in the ecological systems and if it realised its enabling capacity, then it was successful. The project therefore needs to be evaluated against the following criteria:

- Whether the project contributed in some way to breaking down barriers between people and systems;
- Whether the project made a contribution towards developing people through interactive strategies,
- Whether the project enabled participants to solve problems collectively and to build respect between people.
- If the project was managed in such a way that more people got in depth understanding of child protection, development and support.

It is argued here that if these criteria were met, the process of producing learners who are emotionally strong and resilient would have commenced and the Project Awareness would therefore have succeeded.

The formal part of Project Awareness comprised of four different intervention components, namely:

1. A Primary School Intervention;
2. Two Secondary School Interventions;
3. Youth Empowerment Clubs; and
4. Parenting Programmes.

These interventions, especially the first two, developed in response to concern about risks posed to learners through high levels of child abuse and the dire outcomes of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. These interventions were described in the first section of the chapter and successes and areas for improvement were outlined. The primary school programme reached 465 primary schools and 17 300 primary school learners, and the secondary school programme reached 12 000 learners and 200 teachers. The interventions were located in Laudium and Atteridgeville. The risk-focused components of these interventions will therefore not be discussed further here. But beyond the formal components of the project, it also included broader resource-focused approaches and adopted an enabling character, both of which require a scrutiny of process. These three approaches are briefly reflected on below.

This multi-disciplinary programme as *risk-focused* programme was:

- an appropriate model to use for a risk-focused intervention aimed at the learners;
- an appropriate model to use for a risk-focused intervention aimed at educators;

- enabling when, through facilitation and model teaching, it proved to be an excellent model for the training and development of educators and the other school staff;
- not necessarily successful in achieving direct outcomes such as changed behaviour of the learners;
- a point of entry for other ecological systems into schools, which led to improved relationships and stronger networks between the school and these services;
- a powerful tool to bring the services systems together, thereby strengthening the interrelationships between the people in the services systems.

This multi-disciplinary programme as *resource-focused* programme:

- was successful in terms of bringing about improved relationships between the people in the services;
- brought together a diverse group of people with different levels of qualifications, from racial and cultural backgrounds, ages, religious backgrounds and language all working as equal partners;
- brought an overlapping of responsibilities, giving some and creating others resulting in more people with a general understanding and ability to assist the other disciplines or services.
- did not succeed in a gender balance, because too few men were involved.

This multi-disciplinary programme as *enabling* programme:

- provided many opportunities for all participants to acquire new skills and knowledge – well beyond knowledge and skills related to child abuse or HIV/AIDS – and to clarify values;
- provided opportunities for participants to broaden their views, to acquire a more holistic view of their own work and the work of others and to see things from a new paradigm.
- built the resilience of most of the participants, learners and adults.

The most important successes of Project Awareness were identified as follows:

- Multiple training, development and skills acquisition opportunities provided;
- Networking systems enabled;
- Ongoing knowledge–sharing;
- Roles and responsibilities were clarified;
- Benchmarking opportunities created;
- Roles release encouraged;

- Paradigm changes effected;
- Values strengthened;
- Access to school improved; and
- Broadened participation and more human resources mobilised.

Project Awareness' ultimate achievement is that (1) it provided additional support for learners (and hence made a contribution to addressing emotional barriers to learning) through strengthening learners' support systems and (2) it enabled all the participants. This was achieved through a two-pronged strategy: At the surface level the aim of the project was to bring together a group of people to address perceived risks to learners through a risk-focused prevention programme. But the project actually operated on a second, deeper layer. On the level, the project developed and enabled the members of the project team and brought about enhanced interaction between the service agencies, between state and communities and between service agencies and schools, learners and teachers.

Factors that were identified as facilitating the success of this multi-disciplinary process included the following:

- Existence and development of national, provincial and regional structures and programmes germane to the project;
- Use of a problem-solving approach;
- A project design that required increased interaction;
- The application of a collaborative planning model; and
- The use of facilitation, multi-disciplinary training teams and model teaching.

Factors that were identified as hampering the success of this multi-disciplinary process included the following:

- Blurred and contesting interpretations of roles and responsibilities;
- Apprehensiveness of some project members to work in townships;
- Challenges posed by the difficulty of aligning provincial, national, metropolitan and city structures;
- Difficulties around getting parents involved;
- Heavy administrative load and lack of administrative support;
- Language and cultural barriers;
- Absence of dedicated training units in some of the participatory services and the issue of professionalism;

- The impact of demarcated budgets on the line function managers' commitment to a multi-disciplinary approach;
- Lack of appropriate policy and low levels of policy implementation; and
- Limitations of existing budgeting and funding structures.

It can be concluded that this multi-disciplinary programme strengthened the various systems by:

- bringing the people in the systems closer;
- improving the services of the school and services systems.

Project Awareness assisted the service providers in the Tshwane region to close the gaps, to provide additional support and protection for the children of the greater Pretoria, to enrich and empower themselves and to change some of their fixed paradigms. It brought togetherness, closeness and a new professionalism that did not exist before. It broke down not only learning barriers, but many other barriers that had been keeping people apart.

In the tables under 5.6.1 below, key findings of the project are reproduced.

Table 5.11 reflects the barriers to learning that were identified during the course of the project. The way in which these barriers were identified is listed. Tables 5.12 to 5.14 assess the impact of different aspects of the project on the project team members, the whole school and the system. These aspects have been divided in (1) strategies, (2) outcomes and (3) contingencies. Contingencies are included to demonstrate how, in a project that is understood to be developmental and enabling, unforeseen constraints and difficulties that may arise during the course of the project (i.e. contingencies) and which may effect the programme adversely, can be responded to in a way that improve the project outcomes.

5.6.1 Tables summarising the key findings of the project

Table 5.11

Barriers to learning as identified and reported on by the team, educators and learners

Barriers to learning	Evidence
<p>Some learners are unprotected</p> <p>See Chapter 1 See Table 5.1 See Section 5.2.1 (:141) See Section 5.2.2 (:147) See Table 5.6 See Section 5.2.3 (:147)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents admitting to their lack of knowledge and skills. • Educators admitting themselves to lack of knowledge and skills concerning protection and support • Few opportunities for learners to develop. • Educators were uninformed on how to identify the at risk learner and the abused learner • Service providers did not know what the others were doing • Service providers did not know each other • The Child Welfare Agency confirmed the newspaper reports on the vast numbers and seriousness of child abuse cases in those areas • Abused learners were not identified by educators (social worker report) because of lack of skills (educators report) • Educators did not report identified cases or were not willing to testify in court (social workers and educators) • Lack of capacity of the service providers (service providers themselves) • Networking systems in Atteridgeville were fragmented (observed, reported). • People in child care services did not know each other or about each other (observed and reported) • Educators did not believe learners when they disclosed abuse (social worker, SAPS, educators) • Parents were not empowered to protect learners (parents, educators, service providers) • Learners lacked skills and knowledge to protect themselves • Teachers themselves were perpetrators especially in terms of verbal and emotional abuse, but also i.t.o. sexual abuse • Lack of quality services from the service providers (educators, learners, parents, observations) • Service providers did not have names or telephone number of other service providers • Service providers did not know who was working in which areas
<p>Lack of basic care for many learners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welfare services and health services provided statistics and mentioned case scenarios • Educators confirmed the number of neglected learners coming to school without the necessary cleanliness, clothes, food, nurturing. • Personally observed the levels of neglect • No protective structures at the schools e.g 'Guardian Angel' or feeding scheme.
<p>Some learners are unsupported</p> <p>Base-line (Visser) and the draft report 5.2.4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools did not have support systems but relied on personal initiative only • Educators had not been sensitised around how to support learners • Social workers did not liaise with educators on the progress of child abuse cases and educators did not understand their role • Parents reported on being unable to fully support learners • Lack of contact between home and school

Barriers to learning	Evidence
Prejudice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many respondents and team members reported on previous perceptions about schools, educators, black learners, townships • Arrogance observed • Some professionals withdrew
Closed Areas. People have never before been to Atteridgeville.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For many participants this was a first experience to go into a township because of fear (participants) • All service providers did not feel at ease going into townships (personal reports) • Some of the participants reported that they will only enter townships if accompanied by others (reported and experienced) • Some professionals did not want to join the group when working in the townships (experienced)
Access to schools a problem for organisations and businesses See 5.2 synopsis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups and individuals reported on how difficult it is to get access to the schools in terms of trying to render assistance. • It was time consuming to negotiate • The ecological systems had no credibility • Educational district offices did not have an open process or system to decide on who would be working with schools • It was a problem for community-based individuals to get permission in town without transport • District officials did not have an open policy on how decisions are made to allow people or groups to work at schools • Schools have different ways of dealing with such matters and that there is no consistency • For community-based interventions the concept of 'ecological' may be too wide to accommodate problems such as transport or telephone fees • Lack of information on processes
Lack of insight in the lives, workplace and the living conditions of other people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports by facilitators • Amazement • Attitude change • Closeness
Learners do not have a positive future perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body language • Classroom discussions • Personal reports from the learners
Lack of training of almost all the service providers on matters of child protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reported by all • Conflicting ideas on what to tell the learners • Conflicting ideas on referring and reporting procedures

Table 5.12

Strategies used to address the barriers

Strategy	Effect on whole school	Effect on project team members	Envisaged effect on service systems
Problem-solving scenario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More people aware • More people involved • Additional support • Improved networking • More people to give inputs 	Each member could: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give valuable inputs • Provide valuable information on specific perspective on topic • Feel appreciated • Learn skills, knowledge • Share skills, knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give valuable inputs • Provide valuable information on specific perspective on topic • Feel appreciated • Learn skills, knowledge • Share skills, knowledge • Pool of support gradually being built
Plan interventions collaboratively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School will be getting a better product than when presented from only one perspective • School will be getting a more integrated training product • School will have facilitators that have a holistic view on all the services and are more informed on various dynamics • Facilitators can answer more questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can identify with problem • Can be accommodated within the operational plans or strategic plans of organisation • Happy to give inputs • Learn a lot from others • Get a better idea about structures, roles and responsibilities • Opportunity to learn and share • Improved insight 	Skills and knowledge later available to system
Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators have a better idea of their own roles in terms of identifying, reporting and supporting (first year intervention) • Educators had better idea about roles and functions of other services • Learners had contact numbers and new where to report • Whole staff more sensitised towards their nurturing role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better understanding of how structures work • Understand the structures and relationships between Departments and agencies/NGOs • Understood practicalities around teachers not having the learners five hours per day, but perhaps 40 minutes per day • More informed choices and improved insight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of services improved because networking has improved • Cross referrals between systems pick up, and gives a feeling of satisfaction

Strategy	Effect on whole school	Effect on project team members	Envisaged effect on service systems
Intervention Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School has more clarity on how to refer learners • New experiences for all • New learning opportunities for all • More sharing opportunities for all • School gets new ideas on possible activities for child protection • School gets opportunity to also lodge grievances and explain frustrations with other service providers • Whole school sensitised in terms of Life Skills.HIV/AIDS, and facilitation as classroom strategy • Schools get opportunity to meet others from other people, other perspectives, knowledge, skills, methods. Learner more enabled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New experiences • Go to place they have never before been to • Do things they have never before done. • Meet new people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools more open because of visit • Systems closer because of working together. Systems strengthened
Team Teaching/model teaching,	<p>Increased interaction between role-players Facilitators benefit personally Build self-esteem Opportunity for benchmarking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn new skills • Get opportunities to practice the skill • More empowered • More enabled 	New skills can be used in the workplace
Compiling training manual for each grade/phase presentation	Schools receive training that has been informed by a few role-players. This mostly leads to an improved product	Working together resulted in sharing of skills, knowledge, seeing each other's work place, sharing materials in a limited way	For every participant that developed in any way, the workplace strengthened
Working in multi-disciplinary groupings in the secondary school phase	By presenting across boundaries of systems, different skills and knowledge are acquired	More empowered, more enabled, more knowledgeable.	A strengthened work place
Two-pronged strategy	School plays bigger role in prevention	Both the learner and the teacher (facilitator benefit	More effective

Table 5.13

Outcomes

Outcomes	Effect on whole school	Effect on project team members	Effect on services system
There was increased interaction between people in systems See 5.5.2	Feeling part of system More free to report Feeling of knowing another person All got insight into office practices of other services More insight regarding management styles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn to know people in other services • Cross referrals easier • More time effective • Less frustration • Personal service 	Employees
Team members reported on the acquiring of new skills See 5.3.3	If services are better, people in the services and served by the services feel better	More enabled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved systems • Networking established • Strengthens system
Through the interaction there was a natural, mostly unintended sharing of knowledge	Learner more enabled	More enabled	Improved system
Team members started sharing own intellectual property in order to compile the training programme and manual	Benefit by means of improved training course	All gain and can use these work sheets and ideas in own work situation	Improved services
Benchmarking	School obtains an improved programme	Awareness of own strengths and weaknesses	Changed paradigms with new perspectives and higher expectations
Team members became enabled, having gained skills, knowledge and experience in a different field See 5.2.1 See 5.2.2 See 5.3.3 Table 5.5 Table 5.4	More people enabled, therefore learners more protected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More and wider experience • Self esteem grows • Feels good, empowered • Students bring theory and practice together • Out of school youth more empowered with increased readiness for career opportunities • Participants more resilient • Participants' performance improved • Participants develop healthy self esteem • Participants feel good about acquired skills, knowledge and experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace benefits • Systems strengthened • Gaps between systems closed • Interrelationships at workplace ensure people that are emotionally well

Outcomes	Effect on whole school	Effect on project Team members	Effect on service systems
Team members reported on observing different levels of professional conduct	People learn from others and improve, leading to improved service to schools Assisted in building trust and respect for other groups	Compares and changes own value system	Enhanced workplace professionalism
Negative attitudes about other races, groups and people changed	Increased emotional wellbeing Less discrimination less	Improved relationships and emotional wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace benefits/Systems closer • Improved interpersonal relationships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building bridges • Enter new areas • Work with other cultures • Entering previously demarcated areas • Work with other religious groups • Metropolitanisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner more supported because of more people and enabled people and improved support systems • Learner more protected because of strengthened systems • Learners more enabled because of own skills, knowledge, support, protection and development opportunities • Learner more resilient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved relations • Improved emotional wellbeing • Improved interpersonal relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service systems become more open, where people have a better understanding of what service is delivered and how
The white team members admitted to enhanced understanding of the plight of the black learner when they compared the resources between previously white and black schools	Increased empathy	Improved relationships	Improved work from employees, because they feel better
Services improved	Child more protected	Team members get opportunity to share newly acquired skills, and knowledge and experience with colleagues, thereby earning more respect and improved self image	Workplace becomes stronger because of empowered employees
A sense of belonging developed between the project team members	Indirect	Team members felt relaxed and supported by knowing the people in the other services, and felt supported	Fewer employees experiencing stress

Outcomes	Effect on whole school	Effect on Team members	Effect on Services
More than one personal need were addressed, e.g. to develop, to manage, to gain respect and be appreciated, to feel good about contribution, to expand horizons	Indirect benefit to school and learners with sustained interventions in time to come	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel emotionally well • Feel contented • Feel motivated to continue work in these regions • Opens doors for more interventions in future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less conflict at work • More employees experience work satisfaction • Increased institutional development
Gradually the different team members started taking on other roles, previously restricted to a particular career or service	Improved support and protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling for the team members. • Paradigm shift. • Increased knowledge, skills, values, changed attitudes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace performs better • Speedier services • Services more personalised
Brought geographical closeness	More openness and increased access of service providers to schools. Increased protection. Increased support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loses fear of townships. • Townships become familiar areas. • More openness. • Feeling of wellbeing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More employees can be deployed in more areas • Less fear and uninformed perceptions
Different programmes presented by different departments touch sides, overlap, or enhance others forming a protective net	Enhanced protection. Losing of possible gaps between programmes and systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convinced that all kinds of interventions will contribute to protection and support of learners. • Feelings of wellbeing because of success. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace performance enhanced also by what other departments are doing • Employees learn best practices from other employees of other departments
Many opportunities for development	Learners and educators enabled. Enhanced resilience of teachers, learners, parents.	Participants enabled. Improved performance. Improved insight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of employees enhances work performance of each organisation and department.
One programme leads to the next See 5.2 and 5.3.3	Ongoing and continuous needs assessment. One programme highlights another need.	Needs identification leads to more focused courses to follow according to need of school or community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More focused service delivery. • Less thumb sucking in terms of programmes offered to schools. • More staff that feel empowered. • Increased health and wellness.

Table 5.14

Contingencies

Contingencies	Effect on project
Funding from provincial office came to a stop, which leads to an improved system of external funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forces team to look for other means • Leads to more experiences • Leads to more empowerment • Leads to improved project, because financial management is more accessible. • Feeling of accomplishment • More empowered employees • Less funding necessary to sustain the programme
Programme became too big which necessitated the mobilisation of more people, which provided increased support and protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge to find more people and stakeholders • The additional people provide new perspectives which are again enriching • Increased interaction because of increased number of people • More people enabled in workplace and community
Some groups had to align their plans to fit into the programme. Some groups had to bring in other groups from other areas to replace them on one occasion which led to other areas trying the same model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This was the only way in which the programme could continue • Marketing for the department as everyone noticed the special effort to make the programme work
Proper coordination on provincial level affected implementation on local level, but led to improved understanding of the role of structures	Difficulty (failure) to involve groups that had not been part of the provincial strategy of encouraging such collaborations.

CHAPTER 6

A SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS OF A SOCIO EDUCATIONAL ANALYSIS OF MULTI-DISCIPLINARY PROGRAMMES TO ADDRESS EMOTIONAL BARRIERS TO LEARNING

The need to develop and grow and to say 'I can' is as much nested in the very essence of being a child, as it is in the very essence of being a grownup. Why would anyone then limit the scope? (Scott)

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This study attempted to illuminate the potential role of multi-disciplinary programmes in addressing emotional barriers to learning from within a socio-educational framework. In Chapter One the South African context, including the profile of the whole community and the environment in which learning has to take place, was sketched. Chapter Two comprised an overview of theoretical understandings of what might constitute barriers to learning and provided a framework of possible approaches, strategies and models to address these. In Chapter Three, a documentary study indicated how international conventions, declarations and treaties that relate to the protection of the child impacted on the South African policy framework and how these directives and recommendations found their way into the South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996 Section 28), thereby legalising the rights of the child. It also highlighted the prospect of decentralisation, which, once fully implemented, will further increase community participation and responsibility in relation to schools and the process of learning. In Chapter Four the research strategy and methodology used in this dissertation was described. The empirical study was based on a case study of a multi-disciplinary project in which 57 people from different child services were involved – if not throughout the four year period, then at least for one or two years during this period. The positive outcomes that were achieved, the achievement of bonus-outcomes that had not been envisaged at the outset, and the difficulties and complexities associated with the project have been explicitly described in Chapter Five.

Project Awareness was therefore described in terms of structural, organisational and procedural components, but with an emphasis on the perceptions, feelings and observations of the people involved. The project has also been observed on a meta-level, and facets of the project that had not been foreseen initially, had not been planned beforehand, and that participants had not even been consciously aware of at the time were illuminated. This assisted in coming to certain conclusions around the inherent potential of a multi-disciplinary programme.

Because this is a qualitative study with an emphasis on process and emotions, it is difficult to reduce the research findings to a narrow set of conclusions. The perspective of the participants about the enabling and developmental benefits that they accrued from their participation is therefore contained in the descriptive part of the chapter itself. There are also many intangible benefits that this researcher tried to capture in that section.

A stated purpose of the research was to produce findings which would contribute towards a model for multi-disciplinary programmes. The dense project description in Chapter 5, which covers the project from its inception to evaluation and which provides not only an overview of process, but links process to the philosophy and theoretical grounding on which such a project is based, is therefore also intended to address this question. A contribution that this research therefore makes is that – based on the thick description of the project and the analysis of the pitfalls, challenges and thinking that steered the project, within the South African context – it will enable others to replicate such a project and to adapt it to suit contextual circumstances.

Hence, this chapter aims to present a synthesis of findings on the role of multi-disciplinary interventions in the protection network of learners. It is in support of a holistic model based on ecological systems theory as a systems-wide strategy to enhance the health and emotional wellbeing of the whole school community, thereby addressing emotional barriers to learning. It should be noted though, that because the research comprised one in-depth case study, the findings emanate from this particular multi-disciplinary programme and can therefore not be generalised.

6.2 CHILD PROTECTION, CHILD ABUSE, AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES: NEW APPROACHES

The argument that framed this study is briefly outlined. An eclectic set of debates – situated in different social spheres, taking place on different levels, commencing at different periods in time, informed by disparate concerns and interests and argued from diverse vantage points – has been applied to the contemporary South African situation in a way that produced synergy of opinion about a number of pressing social questions and appropriate responses to these.

Policy-makers, activists, academics and practitioners have advanced these debates. In terms of their academic location the debates straddle many disciplines, including development studies, psychology, sociology, education, social work, criminology, law and business. The debates incorporate a number of social issues, such as barriers to learning, the role of the child, the position of developing countries, and understandings of child protection. And these debates include both abstract questions: 'What is the nature of the child?' and 'How does one bring about change in society?' to concrete questions about service delivery and appropriate intervention models.

These debates and the way in which they impact on this study are briefly summarised below. They have been divided into three spheres: (1) Rethinking the ambit of child abuse, child protection and learning difficulties; (2) A focus on the importance of emotional health and wellbeing; and (3) Ideas on participatory democracy and development.

6.2.1 Rethinking the ambit of child abuse, child protection and learning difficulties

In the last few decades, locally and internationally, the notions of child abuse, child protection and learning difficulties have been rearticulated and expanded. The shifts that occurred and which were traced in the preceding chapters are briefly recaptured in this section.

One of the debates that shaped this study, is the debate on the nature of the child and society's responsibility towards the child (3.1; 3.2). It was argued that in recent thinking, the responsibility of society towards the child is no longer limited to the idea that the child must be protected, but has been extended to include the idea that the child needs to be developed and enabled (see sections 3.3; 3.4). Similarly, the child is no longer regarded

as a bearer of abstract rights only, but has been refashioned as also a receiver of quality services. Therefore, the abstract rights a child has should be translated into quality services delivered to the child.

Another debate that is important to this study is that of educational achievement. In Chapter Two, it was argued that the old question of why children have learning difficulties has been viewed from a different perspective. The focus is no longer on a narrow set of learning 'disabilities', since the question has been rephrased as follows: What are the issues that hinder the child's ability to achieve optimally in the educational setting? Hence, the idea of learning difficulties has been replaced with the very different and substantially expanded notion of barriers to learning.

As with the shift in emphasis on the society's responsibility towards its children, the understanding of what constitutes child abuse has been challenged. The general idea of child abuse is no longer limited to physical harm, but has been broadened to include harm to the child's developmental state. The focus is no longer exclusively on the action that causes harm to the child, but includes a lack of interaction as a possible cause of harm (WHO 1998:1).

The impact of this changed view on what constitutes child abuse and barriers to learning, has had important implications for the main sectors of the state that focus on service delivery to children, including education, social work, and health. The implication of expanded concepts of child protection, child abuse and learning difficulties is that they have the idea that all of these phenomena are situated on a continuum and are not limited to a set number of actions, factors, or responsibilities. As a result, the focus has shifted from servicing children who have been abused, children with demonstrated learning difficulties and children reported as in specific need of protection to servicing all children to provide them with a broad social safety net. A key strategy that has emerged to cope with this expanded responsibility is the notion of primary prevention.

Schools are well located as places to gain access to large numbers of children. But, access to schools has historically been limited to educators. To fulfil their responsibilities, the social service therefore has to negotiate access to schools. Services aimed at children are fragmented across state systems. But the need to intervene on a primary prevention level therefore gave rise to the idea that a new organisational model had to be found. Interdisciplinary programmes and the decentralisation of services seemed to be the answer to these problems.

6.2.2 A focus on the importance of emotional health and wellbeing

A series of debates that emerged in socio-psychology and from there fed into processes and debates related to child protection and development and barriers to learning, introduced the importance of emotional health and wellbeing as a key factor that determines the way in which individuals respond to adverse circumstances. These debates gave support to the position that there are different ways in which children will respond to external pressures. Thus it is as important to look at how to change and develop the child's ability to respond in an apposite way to external risks, as it is to identify the risks and build awareness around those risks. Based on this kind of thinking, building children's resilience to enable them to play an active role in their own lives therefore needed to become a key aim of primary prevention programmes. This resulted in a shift to think not only about risk-focused interventions, but also to develop resource-focused interventions. Since children are understood to become resilient when they feel supported in their interrelations with others, it was also necessary to start considering parents, peers and community members as part of a primary prevention strategy.

6.2.3 Ideas on participatory democracy and development.

Finally, a series of debates around the problems faced by developing countries and the need to find ways to deepen democracy in such countries have given rise to particular ideas about development. In this kind of thinking, it is stressed that citizens of developing countries of which the resource-base is limited should not be dependent entirely on the state, but should be encouraged to play an active role in their own development and to take initiative. A developmental paradigm also places emphasis on the importance of moving away from posing challenges as threats and citizens as victims. Rather, it is argued, threats need to be reformulated into positive challenges. In addition, debates on participatory democracy, which are informed by a concern to deepen democracy, emphasise the importance of involving people on grassroots level to participate actively in society and to contribute to decision-making on lower levels. Finally, these debates argue that communities are not without resources. From there ideas such as that about the 'good-enough-family' took shape. Hence, developmental thinking envisages an increased role for society.

These three sets of debate led to a kind of synergy developing around ways in which to respond to the challenges posed with regard to child protection and development and concerns about barriers to learning. In particular, these debates seemed to point to intervention models that:

- give primacy to the issue of prevention;
- are holistic, integrated and interdisciplinary;
- depart from a developmental perspective; and
- are focused on enhancing emotional health and wellbeing.

This synergy was evidenced in the way in which these aspects were slowly creeping into policy documents, protocols and treaties, both on international and on national levels. Whilst the new ideas that have emerged have not replaced those that existed before, they do signal the direction that the debate is likely to take and the way in which these issues will be translated and interpreted on the level of implementation.

6.3 ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS MODEL AND MULTI-DISCIPLINARY PROGRAMMES

Academic debates do not take place in isolation and feed into both policy and practice. Many of the ideas that emerged in policy that were reflected on in section 6.2 had their origins in academic scholarship. Yet, the fact that these ideas have become so prominent in the policy arena does not mean that they are also dominant in the academic disciplines from which they emerge. Moreover, even if these ideas are dominant, it is still necessary to engage these approaches critically and decide whether the theoretical approaches that underpin them are educationally sound. Hence, the purpose of the discussion of theoretical models pertaining to barriers to learning in section 2.3, was to identify, through scrutiny of academic work, what are the various theoretical approaches to the questions posed in the study and to identify a theoretical position that would be adopted in the research.

The literature study indicated an ongoing debate between those who support the structural or systems approaches (top-down approaches) making the state responsible for restoring the relationships between the services systems, and those who espouse the more organic or ecological approaches (bottom-up approaches) to address barriers to learning. In the latter case the school, parents and community take responsibility to identify their own needs and to provide the necessary support. The latter also places

emphasis on strengthening school systems by improving the classroom atmosphere, developing school management, promoting human resource development and empowering parents.

The findings of this study indicate that both top-down and bottom-up approaches are necessary to address social and emotional barriers to learning. A socio-educational approach holds that barriers to learning are not to be found in the internal or external factors, but arise from the disharmonious relationships that develop through a complex process of negotiation between these factors. The emphasis should therefore fall on restoring these relationships, thereby addressing social and emotional barriers to learning.

Hence, the position advanced in this study, based on the literature study, is that ecological systems theories offer the most comprehensive explanation of barriers to learning. These theories do not discard the responsibility of the state towards the learners, and do not negate the influence of negative factors in the social world on learning. In addition, these theories also acknowledge the possible effect of trauma and violence on the cognitive functioning and behaviour of the child. These theories add a different perspective, by indicating that those adverse internal or external factors do have an effect on learning, but they disrupt the equilibrium. Furthermore, this model underscored the enabling potential of multi-disciplinary or multi-sectoral programmes that bring together structures in the ecological systems that operate on a meta-level.

6.4 THE SOUTH AFRICAN RESPONSE

It was argued in section 3.4; 3.5; 3.6 that the South African Constitution is underpinned by the notion that it is the state's responsibility to protect its children. However, the Constitution is 'open-ended' since it does not exclude the responsibility of the parents and community. In the first five years of democratic government, the most crucial issues pertaining to the protection of children were addressed by legislation, bringing about incisive systemic changes. As a result of this new legal framework, some of the structural and social problems inherited from the previous dispensation have been addressed.

Given the broad set of rights that are accorded to the child in the Constitution and the constraints the government operates within for South Africa as a developing country, it would be impossible for the government to deliver the required services despite the systemic changes. The involvement of the community, in particular, the family, is

therefore imperative. The government responded to this development by including three new foci in its approach to the protection of children. These are:

1. A focus on introducing enabling and empowering strategies, not only protective ones;
2. The importance of integrated partnerships and multi-disciplinary intervention; and
3. A greater involvement for communities.

If these are read together with key provisions included in the South African Constitution, it demonstrates that the direction that policy in South Africa is taking largely conforms to the new thinking outlined in Section 6.2. The Constitution mentions:

Accessible, integrated and co-ordinated services, focusing on primary, secondary and tertiary prevention, intervention and rehabilitation, based on integrated partnerships and the multi-disciplinary approach, taking into account the particular context of each South African Child' (RSA 1996).

The government has put in place policy and structures that support new practice informed by the need to give primacy to the issue of prevention. Moreover, new policies have adopted a holistic integrated approach using interdisciplinary strategies and focusing on enhancing emotional health and wellbeing. More recent developments include a move towards greater decentralisation, but this process has not yet not completed.

It has also been pointed out that not all new policy bears testimony to the new kind of thinking. Despite the fact that shifts in policy have enabled the establishment of multi-disciplinary programmes, cross-departmental collaboration and the use of enabling and empowering strategies in addition to protective ones, such developments are not always backed up by appropriate structures and regulations.

6.5 THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS MODEL AND ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS APPROACH IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT: A CRITICAL REFLECTION

Chapter One aimed to give a bird's eye view of the current milieu. In particular, it outlined a number of social crises that affect children and threaten the stability of the new democratic order. These include the enormous social consequences of the HIV/AIDS pandemic that result in many households without parental care. The alarming statistics of child abuse and neglect is a further source of concern, as well as the exceptionally high

levels of crime which are reasons for concern. In addition, society is still trying to come to terms with its past, and issues of identity and belonging. The society also has to find ways of dealing with a generation of South Africans who were denied optimal schooling and thus lack formal skills. Therefore the South African scenario is also marked by high levels of unemployment.

Against this background, it should be recognised that a move to devolve responsibilities to communities and to decentralise government services has radical implications. If people are dying, family structures are under pressure, ordinary South Africans lack formal skills and they are out of work, a question arises about why the government would take a direction that will require greater endeavours of the ecological systems and which signals a move backwards by the state? Phrased differently, the question is what are the most important drivers behind the adoption of this model? A number of reasons could be advanced to help explain this shift.

First, it can be argued that this model is necessitated by virtue of the limits of the state. South Africa, as a developing country which embraces neo-liberal economic policy, which puts a cap on government expenditure, does not have the resources to provide all the services required. In the face of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, state resources will come under even more pressure. Hence, the decision to 'bring in' the communities is an emergency plan and signals the state's 'retreat' from some of its responsibilities.

Second, and linked to the first point, is the probability that government has decided to embark on this direction not only because of its concern about financial resources, but also about human resources. It was indicated in Section 1.1.4 and Section 2.2.1.2 that both the number of psychologists and social workers as well as their disposition in terms of culture, language and geographical domicile has resulted in inefficient services to children. Even if all social workers, psychologists and health workers in the government system embrace the principles underpinning an ecological systems model, there still would be too few of them to meet the need. In addition, it was argued that the HIV/AIDS pandemic is affecting professionals too. Thus there is great concern about the number of teachers that are dying. In addition, because AIDS affects family structures, it is envisaged that many children will grow up without parents. As a result, the government has to respond to the reality that people, who would not ordinarily have taken on a particular function, will be required to do so. Teachers will have to stand in for parents, and the professional services will have to take on multiple roles. Hence, the notion of role release and the need to find a strategy to encourage role release could be argued to be

the driver behind the new policy direction. It therefore constitutes a pragmatic response by the authorities to a human resource crisis.

Third, it may be that the government has adopted this model as a window-dressing strategy that is, as a strategy to demonstrate, at least on the level of policy, the preparedness of government to devolve responsibility and real powers to the people. In other words, this strategy would signal that the government subscribes to a particular kind of ethos, and hence demonstrates that it is the opposite of an authoritarian state.

Fourth, it could be that the state introduced the shift in a sincere attempt to deepen democracy, institute participatory democracy through local decision-making, and respond to the problems South Africa face in a pro-active manner.

Fifth, this model may have been adopted because the state regards it as an enabling strategy, which can address multiple problems on a meta-level. This implies a strategy that has on the surface level a single issue or risk as its focus, however, in its implementation, achieves multiple goals. It would mean that government fully embraces a developmental paradigm, and takes seriously the theoretical notion of enablement.

The breakdown of drivers into five neat categories is most probably somewhat reductionist. It is likely that more than one of these underlie the reported shift in direction. Moreover, it is highly probable that it is a combination of all five. The importance is therefore where the emphasis is placed. But if the model is adopted only for the third reason, that is, to window-dress, or for the first reason, that is as an emergency plan, it would be unsuccessful and the consequences disastrous. Moreover, if it fails to take on board and internalise the fourth aspect and fifth aspects, it would be an opportunity lost.

What the above analysis aims to illuminate, is that – whilst the literature study has pointed to the advantages of the ecological systems model and multi-disciplinary programmes in a generic sense – the reasons why the model is adopted do differ from context to context. This point is not only meant to be academic. It is argued that there is a close relation between the reasons why a model is embraced and its chances of success. This is because the reasons for adopting the model will feed into actions to support the model or not. Hence, whilst it had been argued that multi-disciplinary approaches based on the ecological systems model are the most nuanced approach to barriers to learning and have an enabling capacity that is very important in a developmental context, the quality of the theoretical model does not necessarily mean that it is the most appropriate model to

implement in a specific context. A systems model, its limitations despite, is still far better than an ecological systems model implemented for the wrong reasons.

The question therefore needs to be posed about what are the conditions for the implementation of multi-disciplinary approaches based on the ecological systems model to realise its potential. In South Africa, it has been argued that the project will fail if it is merely driven by government's lack of resources or if it is only an attempt to window-dressing, devoid of content and support mechanisms. In that case, the adoption of the model basically translates into the implementation of a 'mock system' that is never really intended to take off.

Ironically, therefore, in order for the ecological systems model to work in South Africa, a return to some of the principles of systems theory is required. Whilst it has been emphasised that the ecological systems model brings together bottom-up and top-down approaches and provides a way for them to meet on the level of the local ecological systems, it is argued here that the success of this model relies on a very strong system at the highest level. This is because the resource-base from below is weak and underdeveloped. For that reason, support for the ecological systems model has to come from the very top level and has to be cascaded down to all the levels, ensuring that the necessary funding is available on all levels, that the policy framework is supportive of multi-disciplinary initiatives for local ecological systems, and that the policy is integrated and that there is an overarching plan that frames the process and ensures that the underlying principles do not get lost. At the same time these higher level systems should enable flexibility in the system and not be prescriptive or controlling, but supportive of decision-making processes on the level of the local ecological systems. .

With the above caveat in mind, it is argued here that the proposed model is indeed very appropriate for the South African context. In a country with a history of division, the use of interactive methods fulfils a double role and is indeed crucial. It helps to cross racial and geographical divides, builds mutual understanding and strengthens the social fabric. But the model also needs to be adapted and moulded to fit the South African context. In particular, the enabling potential of the model must also be employed in its fullest sense to enable this model to contribute to addressing many other concerns, and not only contribute to protecting and developing the child.

South Africa is a land of many differences, with educational needs that vary from the very basic to the very complex. In terms of learning and in terms of education, the needs are as much the needs of adults as the needs of children. The need to develop and grow is as much nested in the very essence of being a child, as it is in the very essence of being a person. But too often in the past has the 'learning period' been looked at as the childhood period; the learning space as the classroom and the school; the learning context as preparing for a career; and the learners as being the children of the land. The multi-disciplinary programme proved all of these assumptions to be wrong.

A broad community development strategy, building not only learner capacity, but also educator capacity, manager capacity and parent capacity in terms of nurturing, support and emotional wellbeing seems to be the way forward. At the same time we need to recognise that the South African setting is not just one setting but multiple settings. Because of the extremes on the spectrum, and vast disparities between rich and poor, the eclectic model for intervention, which makes provision for different kinds and types of interventions, should be adopted. Districts and schools should be allowed, with the necessary guidance, to decide on what they need and on how to plan the interventions. Funding should be given to those that need it most, and can utilise it best. Those systems that need more support should get more support. The district offices should take on the role of supporting the initiatives, monitoring the progress, playing the motivating role, and specifically ensuring proper feedback forums whereby all can learn from all.

The main points argued in this section are therefore the following: Multi-disciplinary programmes based on the ecological systems model as an approach cannot be held as an appropriate approach in a generic sense. It is only appropriate when it is context-specific. Context-specific implies that the model is implemented for sound and responsible reasons, that the conditions for the model to be successful are identified and acted upon, and that the model is moulded and adapted so that it is responsive to local needs and concerns.

In the South African context, it is argued that the model will only be successful if:

- it is not only a 'mock strategy';
- it is supported at highest levels, which means:
 - the integration and alignment of all kinds of policy;
 - support for the model that unlocks its enabling character, which includes allocating appropriate financial resources to the local ecological systems; and
- it is further developed to unleash its broader enabling potential.

6.6 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: THE POTENTIAL OF MULTI-DISCIPLINARY PROGRAMMES BASED ON AN ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS APPROACH

Framed by the above discussion, the contribution of Project Awareness and the findings of this study are concisely summarised. In particular, the possibilities and limitations of this model are discussed and the conditions for its success outlined. Recommendations are also made with regard to specific interventions in the areas of barriers to learning and child protection.

6.6.1 The multi-disciplinary programme/approach

The multi-disciplinary programme or approach as the term is used in this study does not refer to a formal multi-disciplinary structure, in which different disciplines or service agencies come together to take note of the work and risks within the other disciplines. It also does not refer to a formal multi-disciplinary programme through which the service departments share a budget, and once a term or once a year report back on expenditures, successes and challenges. However, this kind of coordinated programme is not excluded.

In this study, the multi-disciplinary approach is understood to be open-ended. It can start with any kind of structure or process or place, but the way in which it develops will eventually determine whether it had been a success on meta-level. This kind of multi-disciplinary programme is truly organic, that is, it is alive. Moreover, it changes and develops; it grows and then suddenly shoots out two new twigs where no-one expected it. It can start almost anywhere, but there is no way in which you can tell where it will end. It requires a certain openness and flexibility that has not been accommodated before. It asks for an openness of a kind to which people in the services systems and the ecological systems have not been accustomed. It also asks for an openness from the higher systems that are propagating this approach, but which they find very difficult to accommodate.

The differences between systems programmes and multi-disciplinary programmes are many, but are captured in the points below:

- Systems programmes are initiated from the higher structures whilst multi-disciplinary programme can start anywhere.

- Systems programmes are hierarchically monitored and evaluated; multi-disciplinary programmes are continuously monitored and evaluated by many different departments or organisations, as the programme is rolling out.
- Systems programmes are top-down; multi-disciplinary programmes operate on a flat structure.
- In systems programmes you are trained by a specialist as a once-off activity; in multi-disciplinary programmes you are continuously developed by the rest of the team while you are continuously developing others.
- In systems programmes there are one or two specialists that all share their knowledge with others, but in multi-disciplinary programmes each participant holds a small part of the whole truth and by sharing that, all the participants start making their own reality.
- Systems programmes have a time frame and a fixed budget, whereas multi-disciplinary programmes are ongoing processes.
- Systems programmes with a narrow set of outcomes can fail to achieve their outcomes, but in the multi-disciplinary programme – whose success does not rely on the achievement of a narrow set of outcomes only – can fail in achieving its programmatic outcomes but still succeed in achieving its overarching, developmental and enabling outcomes.
- Systems programmes are structured; the multi-disciplinary programme develops into many different shapes and sizes.

The research demonstrated that multi-disciplinary programmes:

- are adaptable and multi-faceted;
- offer a variety of development opportunities;
- have the potential to increase protection and support of all participants – from learners to out-of school youth to parents and community members – and are enabling and developmental;
- are based on a paradigm shift, where each person is seen as a resource, a trainee, a partner, and as a co-colleague.

6.6.2 Conditions for multi-disciplinary programmes based on the ecological systems model to realise its potential in the South African context

The literature study, the empirical research and documentary study together argued that instead of debating around the systems approach or the ecological approach, there should be space for both to be implemented on a basis of a continuum of possibilities,

according to the needs of the school and the school community. These two approaches, the top-down and bottom-up approach reflect the two social forms of formality and intimacy (Prinsloo & Du Plessis 1998a:5 Diagram 1.1). It is brought together in the ecological systems model, which favours multi-disciplinary approaches. It implies that the ecological systems will be there to provide support for local initiatives; the higher levels of the state will be responsible for putting the structures, policies and support mechanisms in place, while the community will be there to fill the gaps.

The following findings flow from the research:

- Multi-disciplinary programmes do not replace line function responsibilities, and the latter remain vitally important to the efficient functioning of the system.
- Successful multi-disciplinary programmes require a lot of work and are human resource intensive. This should be accommodated in planning and workload issues. In some respects, multi-disciplinary approaches embedded in the ecological systems approach may be more resource-intensive than systems strategies.
- Even District offices are inaccessible from the local ecological systems, because district office staffs are often away from the office in the field. Hence, decision-making powers must be devolved to more local levels than the district offices.
- Structures need to be created for multi-disciplinary collaboration, in order to avoid friction between departments. Adequate funding must be made available for use on the level of the local ecological systems. If the model is implemented only as a 'mock strategy', people will quickly lose interest. Hence, decentralisation therefore needs to be structured and supported in such a way that it really creates the space for initiatives from below. For example one third of funds should be managed on head office level, another third on district office level, and the last third from schools or school clusters.
- Policy must be integrated and aligned to support initiatives on the ecological systems level.
- The role of service departments needs to be clearly defined. Their primary responsibility should be to ensure that schools and initiatives on the local ecological level do not stagnate, but that a problem-solving strategy, which brings together others, always keeps them in contact with ever expanding groups,
- South Africans should already be made aware of the changing roles of schools, parents, communities and school and community should be pro-active and visionary in their long-term planning.

- In South Africa, with its low skills base and need for role release, the multi-disciplinary approach based on the ecological systems model should be used as an integrated strategy through which to institute lifelong learning. Through this approach, all departments and organisations, including schools, should be offering and creating training opportunities involving people in the systems and bringing together people from the various local ecology systems, thus preparing the latter for work. In order to effect this strategy, the following need to be factored in:
- It has been shown to be difficult to get parents involved in schools and in multi-disciplinary initiatives. One of the reasons that have been advanced to explain this is that incentives are required.
- Because parents cannot be remunerated for their community service to schools, and since the ecological systems model uses the problem-based strategies to address other problems, parents should be brought in to assist schools on various levels. In turn, it must become possible to accredit parents for the skills knowledge and experience they acquired at the school. In this way, the strategy is two-pronged and not only offers enhanced support at the school, but addresses larger educational problems and helps to build a stronger skills-base in the country.
- The above requires making provision for implementing South Africa's Human Resource Development Strategy through the SETA's on this level.
- The out-of-school youth is an important group to target and include as partners with teachers.
- School Governing Bodies should not be regarded as the answer to the problem of getting parents involved, since having eight parents out of a group of 800 on an SGB does not constitute parent involvement.
- The focus of the lifelong learning opportunities that are to be made available through partnerships and programmes that are located in schools and bring in parents should be to create opportunities that run over longer periods (i.e. one year or two years). They should target especially unemployed parents, since those who are employed have access to other development opportunities and do not have adequate time to dedicate to the school.

One of the questions that arises from the research conducted is what is meant by the idea of local ecological systems? For example, are district offices located on 'local' level? It is argued here that the notion of local needs to be more clearly defined, but that it should be at a level below district office level.

6.6.3 Other recommendations

Other recommendations include the following:

- Almost none of the people working in child services have been trained in basic protection, support and development processes and/or procedures. It is therefore recommended that a thorough investigation be conducted on the lack of pre-service and in-service training of all relevant professional staff regarding the handling of child abuse and neglect.
- The training of educators for Life Skills/Life Orientation should be based on more practical work and school-based community interventions where trainees experience how the service providers train and operate.
- The training of teachers, social workers, health workers and police officers should include a practical component where they are exposed to the other child protection systems. For example, trainee educators need to spend a month at social work departments, a month in a police office and a month at welfare where they provide assistance and get exposure.
- Students need to be trained in collaborative approaches and in work ethics within the collaborative framework.
- From a methodological point of view it is recommended that the potential of in-service teacher training be further explored, whereby more departments other than the Department of Education, are involved. \

6.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research reported on here comprised of a qualitative case study of one multi-disciplinary project that operated in Gauteng province, informed by a literature and documentary review. As such, the research findings cannot be universalised, and a replication of this model in other contexts could produce different outcomes. Yet, care was taken to relate research findings to theory. In that regard, the research findings were supported by the literature, which adds weight to the findings. But more research in this area is required to fill in existing gaps and to strengthen the field.

6.8 OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- Further research is required on multi-disciplinary approaches based on the ecological systems model. In particular, a study of how South Africa's Human Resource Development Strategy through the SETAs can be used to unlock its enabling potential and make the schools and educators and the local services systems active partners in accrediting the community.
- A study on the possibility of all formal in-service-training to be conducted during school holidays in order to allow educators and schools to plan their term programmes without interruption.
- The possibility of having different kinds of afternoon programmes at schools, by the churches and religious groups, but also collaborative, interactive forums for educators, parents and service providers.

6.9 CONCLUSION

Realising children's rights through the provision of legal protection, quality services and an enabling environment is central to a meaningful democracy. To achieve this in South Africa, education's role is pivotal.

South Africa needs a model for intervention and support which is different from other countries, because we have a different scenario, different background and we are facing a different future. The educational sector needs to build on the strengths of the community. There are natural caregivers – always have been – in the community. We have to access and use these caregivers. Not only do schools need the parent/caregiver, but the parent/caregiver also needs the school. The role of the school is not only to serve the learner, but to contribute to the uplifting of the total community. According to Duvall and Millar the modern 'family' may rely more on societal support in performing traditional family functions (Prinsloo & Du Plessis 1998a:57), therefore one should rather talk of a function shift (Engelbrecht 1992:30). It is possible to envisage the community playing an ever increasing role in consistent parental/caregiver support and guidance and more support provided by the extended family and friendship or community networks, including teachers. It facilitates meaningful and sustainable cooperation between state and whole school community, provided that the former does not relinquish its responsibilities.

KEY TO THE BIBLIOGRAPHY

ACRWE	see Organisation of African Unity (OAU). African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
AFP	see Alliance Française Press
DoE	see South Africa. Department of Education
DoF	see South Africa. Department of Finance
DoH	see South Africa. Department of Health
DoL	see South Africa. Department of Labour
DSSCD	see South Africa. Department of Social Services and Community Development
DPSA	see South Africa. Department of Public Service and Administration
ELRC	see South Africa. Department of Education. Educational Labour Relations Council
FNB	see First National Bank
GDE	see Gauteng Department of Education
HRDS	see South Africa. Department of Labour. National Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa
NCSNET	see South Africa. Department of Education. National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training
NCRC	see South Africa. National Children's Rights Commission
NPA	see South Africa. National Programme of Action for Children in South Africa
NPIPCA	see South Africa. National Commission of Inquiry into the Prevention of Child Abuse
NSCAN	see National Strategy on Child Abuse and Neglect
NCPS	see National Crime Prevention Strategy
OAU	see Organisation of African Unity.
RSA	see Republic of South Africa
SA TP OSC	see South Africa. The Presidency, the office on the status of the child
SAPA AFP	see South African Press Association
SAPS	see South Africa. South African Police Services
SAPSAC	see South African Professional Society for Abused Children
SASA	see South Africa. South African Schools Act
UN	See United Nations
UNESCO	see United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNCRC	see United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNHCR	see United Nations High Commission on Refugees
UNICEF	see United Nations
UNISA	see University of South Africa
WEF	see United Nations World Education Forum
WHO	see United Nations World Health Organisation
WSD	see United Nations World Summit Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of the Child

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LIST OF ANNEXURES

- Annexure A Administrative documentation from Project Awareness used as resource material
- Annexure B Focus group discussion: Laudium parents
- Annexure C Contribution to paper delivered by participant of Project Awareness: Saaimad. 2000.
- Annexure D Progress report: Nelson Mandela Children's Fund
- Annexure E Feedback from a school principal
- Annexure F Feedback from a learner
- Annexure G Feedback and photo from coordinator of parent group
- Annexure H Article in the news letter of Educational District N3: Lifestyle service
- Annexure J Evaluation report from an external assessor

Project Documents that were used as resource materials

Resources	Date
1. Project Awareness Primary	
Letter to Prof. Herman Conradie (Unisa) on proposed programme	29 August 1997
District Memorandum 98/9 with time tables, service providers, arrangements	9 January 1998
Application to District Director to use Government transport	5 January 1998
Day programme for each of the grades	9 January 1998
Day Programme for Educator Workshops	9 January 1998
List of primary schools and number of learners in every grade per school	1998
List of Schools with total number of learners and educators per school	1998
Final schedule of schools to be visited in 1998	End January
Letter from Pretoria Technikon Drama Department	28 January 1998
Letter from Educational Aid Centre District N3	28 January 1998
Attendance list of meeting that took place end of January for all facilitators	End January
Appeal for Funding	30 January 1998
Terms of Reference	February 1998
Letters to schools: Follow Up Activities after Project Awareness	February 1998
Minutes of meeting for all role players	3 March 1998
Invitation to stakeholders to attend a workshop on facilitation	17 March 1998
Fax from Pretoria Technikon	27 May 1998
Report Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative	5 June 1998
Letter to Financial Officer to pay transport funding into district account	23 June 1998
Letter to St Mary's Outreach	June 1998
Thank you note to NMCF	June 1998
Minutes of meeting	24 June 1998
Summary of Income and Expenditure	16 July 1998
Thank you note to Louisa: Treasurer	20 July 1998
Proposal to Incredible Connection to sponsor the Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative with computers as prizes for Protection Structures at schools	July 1998
District News Letter: Healthy Life Style Service	20 July 1998
Income and Expenditure Report on Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative, including Project Awareness reports of Districts N3 and N4.	July 1998
Report to Office of the DDG: Porject/Task Recap	October 1998
Report on Contribution of Technikon Drama Department	23 October 1998
External report on Project Awareness: District N3 from St Mary's Outreach	October 1998
Feedback Form from team to coordinator	November 1998
Report from N3 to Funder: NMCF	November 1998
List of primary schools to be visited in first term 1999	November 1998
Budget Plans: District N3	1998 – 1999
Budget Plans: District N3 and N4	1998 – 1999
Request for Funding for District N3 to use unused funds of other districts	12 November 1998
Thank you note from NMCF	18 November 1999
Letter to school: Seshegong: Last arrangements before outreach	22 January 1999
Thank you note from Unisa, ASPIS	5 February 1999
Feedback Forms from Primary Schools	First Term 1999
Fax to service providers	31 March 1999
Report to Office of the DDG: Project/Recap	April 1999
Handouts	1999
Letter to Pretoria Technikon	23 April 1999
Project Awareness Secondary Schools	
Agenda of Meeting	18 January 1999
Minutes of Meeting	18 January 1999
List of schools to be visited in second term of 1999	February 1999
Responsibilities of coordinator for each school when making arrangements	March 1999
Time tables for schools	March 1999
Circular 135/99	22 March 1999
Minutes of meeting	March 1999
Programme and time frames of programme with role players and themes	March 1999
Day Programme and content of presentations for secondary schools	March 1999
Process to be followed by service providers when arriving at the school	March 1999
Name and telephone list of all facilitators	March 1999
Request for info on classroom numbers and numbers for boys and girls	March 1999

Planning form for facilitators	March 1999
List to facilitators: What to do and how	March 1999
Map to indicate location of schools	March 1999
Feedback form to be used by learners	April 1999
Resource list of all possible support systems in that area	April 1999
Letter of information to facilitators	17 May 1999
Appeal for a grant to Nelson Mandela Children's Fund	20 May 1999
District Memorandum 230/99: Life Skills Committee and Action Plans	24 June 1999
District Memorandum 233/99	1 July 1999
Fax to School Health Services	4 November 1999
Fax and minutes	8 November 1999
Terms of Reference	1999
Project Outline: Phase 1, Phase 2, Phase 3, Phase 4	
Fax from service provider indicating that their area is restricted	19/11/99
Follow up letter to schools	
District Memorandum 5/2000	7 January 2000
Fax to Service Providers	10 January 2000
Article in District Newsletter (Claws)	January 2000
Workshop invitation and reminder	8 and 11 February
District Memorandum 155/2000	19 May 2000
Fax to service providers about SAIMAD Conference at Tukkie's	19 June 2000
Resource list of service providers with contact numbers and services provided.	
Slides for feedback on feelings and problems, solutions and suggestions	
Programme: Sexuality Education and HIV/AIDS Prevention Courses	January 2000
Manuals for the presentations of these themes	
Certificate given to all facilitators for hard work	
Project Awareness: District N4 : Letter to NMCF	21 August 1988
Report to NMCF on activities with programmes,	15 October 1998
Letter to Mr Crime Stop (SAP)	3 February 1999
Letter to Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative	24 February 1999
Fax from Life Line	18 March 1999
Letter to all the presenters	23 April 1999
Letter to School: Flavius Mareka	28 April 1999
Letter from Pretoria Technikon	30 April 1999
Letter from Pretoria Technikon	11 May 1999
Letter to Pretoria Technikon	12 May 1999
Fax to presenters	16 May 1999
Fax to presenters	10 June 1999
Article in Gauteng News	2000
Preliminary Report on Life Skills by Pretoria University: Faculty of Arts	16 July 1999
Life Skills Questionnaire used by Maretha Visser	1999
Letter to Miss Suliman, Laudium	2 August 1999
Letter from Procter and Gamble	10 August 1999
Project Parenting: District N3	
Acknowledgment of application for funding: NMCF	28 January 2000
Attendance List: Meeting for all facilitators of Project Awareness	1 February 2000
Attendance Register: Course	8 February 2000
Attendance Register/Course	11 February 2000
Letter from Maud Langa, coordinator of parent empowerment in Atteridgeville	16/02/2001
Attendance Register/Meeting	17/04/2000
Contract for funding	15/05/2000
Letter of confirmation of grant from NMCF	3 May 2000
Budget allocations for Project Parenting	
Agenda of first planning meeting	25 May 2000
Attendance list	25 May 2000
Agreement: Project Awareness	2000
Letter of thanks to Nelson Mandela Fund	29 May 2000
Progress Report to the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund and Financial Statement	15 November 2000
District Memorandum to schools in Atteridgeville	18 April 2001
Progress Report to Nelson Mandela Children's Fund	4 May 2001
Suggested Topics for Parent Empowerment	
Letter from Maud Langa, Coordinator of Parent Empowerment in Atteridgeville	18/07/2001
Fax to NMCF	23 July 2001
Acknowledgement of receipt of final progress and financial report: NMCF	24 July 2001

District Memo 309/2001	1 August 2001
Letter from Maud Langa, coordinator of Parent Empowerment in Atteridgeville	10/08/2001
Reminder to submit final report to NMCF	12 September 2001
Acknowledgement of receipt of Auditor's Report	25 September 2001
List of stationery distributed to facilitators	
Photo: Parent group in Laudium	
Feedback on presentations in Laudium	
Programme for first Laudium Group	
Budget Outlay for 6 different parenting groups	
Proposal from group for funding for conducting their own group	
Progress Report to NMCF	20 November 2001
List of themes and facilitators	
List of people used for focus group interviews in Laudium	
District N2: Parenting	
Quarterly Report on Project Parenthood	11 October 2000
Final Report to NMCF N2 and N4 that took over the budget in 2001	22 November 2001
Youth Club"	
Invitation to learners	
Manual by Deidre	
Follow up ideas by facilitators	
Using Drama Strategies: Manual	
Feedback from learners	
Letters to District N1 and N2: Thanking district and staff for involvement	
District Memorandum 239./2000	3 August 2000
Application Form: Healthy Life Style	
Example of shortened proposal	14 January 2001
Letter to Senior Manager: D4: Problems experienced	2 April 2001
Fax to school principal	12 April 2001
District Memorandum Reporting on activities and people involved	18 April 2001
District Memorandum 204/2001	22 May 2001
Article : Pretoria News	June 2001
District Memorandum 157/2002: Questionnaire on Safety and Security	8 April 2002
Fax to schools	25 April 2001
Fax to schools	26 April 2001
Request for Tender Proposals	June 2002
Questionnaire: Peer Victimization for Teachers	18 November 2002
District N3: Life Skills	
Report for the month of April 1998	April 1998
District Memorandum 356/99	22 November 1999
Report by Dr Nelia Louw for Life Skills Launch	2000
District Memorandum 346/99	1 November 1999
Fax from Regionla Network Against Violence and Abuse	18 March 1999
The Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative	
Structures	1999
Structures for GPCPI	
Article : Child Protection Protocol	Healty Life Style
Letter to schools: Incredible Connection for Child Protection	
Letter from Psychologist	17/03/1999
Gauteng Child Protection and Treatment Services	
Action Plan for the implementation of a child abuse and neglect protocol in Greater Pretoria GPCPI	1999 - 2000
Pretoria Launching of Protocol	26 May 1999
Report Pretoria Launch	26 May 1999
Pretoria Launch of Protocol for Pretoria West	31 May 1999
Minutes of the Interim Steering Committee	25 October 1999
Application to Global Initiative on Primary Prevention of Substance Abuse	2000
Minutes of the Interim Steering Committee for Child Protection and Treatment	24 January 2000
Minutes of the Interim Steering Committee	20 March 2000
Minutes of the Interim Steering Committee	15 May 2000
Minutes of the Gauteng Provincial Child Protection and Treatment Committee	17 July 2000
Papers:	
An invitation to a Conference	18,19,20 Aug1999
Department of Social Services Summit: Project Go	16 July 1999

Focus Group Discussions

3 July 2003

Laudium

Parents and educators who were involved in Project Awareness: Parenting

1. How did you feel about the parenting programmes?
2. How do you feel about parent involvement in schools?
3. How do you feel about the particular model that was used, bringing in another specialist every week, and do you have other suggestions?
4. Which kind of attitudes, behaviour or action influenced you positively throughout this period - from the start up to the end?
5. How would you identify the parents for such parenting programmes?
6. Have these courses had any affect on the relationship between you and your children?
7. Do you in any way feel different towards the school or its staff?
8. It is now some time after the courses. Was it possible to retain any of the ideas and implement them?
9. How do you feel about parents running such groups for other parents on a continuous basis?
10. Is there anything that you would like to share with us concerning feelings, ideas, concerns or particular frustrations?

Thank you so much for your time, inputs, ideas, and the openness with which you have discussed this programme.

NEW EXPERIENCES FOR SOME FACILITATORS:

Petra Barkhuizen: Cancer Association of South Africa (CANCA)

INTRODUCTION

I am a social worker working for the Cancer Association. I became involved in this project accidentally, but with very good effect. I received an invitation to attend a meeting of the Greater Pretoria Child Protection Initiative at their district meeting. Project Awareness was discussed as one of the ongoing child protection activities. When they discussed a possible venue for the next meeting, I offered our offices and became an active member of the team.

I must admit, that as a social worker, I felt totally out of place in the beginning when we started going out to the schools. I am, just like many of the other team members, not an educator and although I am used to giving talks to various groups, and although we are all experts in our different fields, we still did not have the experience to teach large groups of learners for a full day. I would like to share some of my experiences with you.

FIRST ENCOUNTERS WITH THE TEAM

It is important to note that prior to the outreach, the team had several occasions to meet each other and to plan the activities. Some of these "meetings" were in large groups, planning and discussing a code of conduct. We also attended a workshop where all of us received one and a half-day training on small group counselling with learners, using drama strategies. This helped us in understanding the concept of NOT PRESENTING, but facilitating. After we had

all been divided into groups – each group dealing with learners in a particular grade and a given topic, we had a few meetings where only that particular group, with the grade manager, gathered to draft a training manual and decide on content and the different activities for the learners to perform. Here I had the opportunity to share my expertise. I joined the group working with the grade 10 learners on drug and substance abuse. I used this opportunity to inform the learners on the physical dangers of substance abuse, especially alcohol and tobacco, which the majority of people do not realise it, is addictive. I used coloured pictures to substantiate this theory. This was also an opportunity to enlighten the learners regarding the various cancers related to substance abuse, as this was the original purpose of my involvement, for this is the mission of the Cancer Association of South Africa.

Our team consisted of people from all cultures. This was not only necessary but also very enriching to hear every one's inputs from their particular perspective. The team manager was specifically sensitive for our misgivings about ourselves and gave wonderful support and assistance as well as practical advice on classroom management. We also received handouts on facilitation and classroom management – but you actually only learn by experience – not by books. In such a set up it is important to make every member feel important in building very strong group cohesion.

One of the problems seemed to be the fact that certain organisations worked only in one particular area. So even if we had enough trained presenters for the grade 10 learners, some facilitators did not turn up at certain schools, because the schools did not fall in their area. This can upset a plan – quite severely. The Department of Health was very accommodating in this respect, and they were even willing to draw presenters from Soshanguve to assist. Then of course there was also the language problem. Some of us are not quite fluent in English, and others could not present in Afrikaans. When we moved into the Pretoria West

multi-cultural schools, we had to draw on new facilitators (fortunately Educational Psychologists) to assist.

AT THE SCHOOLS

Luckily we started with the smaller schools. That is essential because there we could work in pairs or in threes – assisting each other and learning from each other. But when we came to the bigger schools, we were on our own. Fortunately, on most occasions, the class teacher was also present and assisted with the discipline. There were also times when the teacher was not interested at all, and either stood outside smoking – doing exactly what I was telling the learners not to do – or they were in class, marking books.

For many of us it was a first experience to move into the townships and for others (e.g. the Health Care Workers) it was a first experience working with the Afrikaans learners. This obviously opened new visions and was a culturally enriching experience. We all realised how much depended on the principal of the school. In some cases the principal took full responsibility, welcomed us, made us feel at home and treated us with tea and sandwiches during break. At other schools the principal did not even come out to meet us, and did not provide us with tea at all. I don't know how long since you presented a workshop without tea, but your throat does tend to become dry. Luckily we were warned that this might happen, and we all used to pop an apple into our bags in case of an emergency. I was not involved the previous year, but I was told that the teachers were asked not to provide refreshments other than tea, because last year the teachers were so busy preparing the refreshments and even the lunches, that they could not attend the classes.

In many of the black schools we had situations where more than 50% of the learners were much older than the average age for that particular grade – there were men sitting in the classes. This, however, did not have any effect on the

class, as they were eager for this information. The classrooms were often overcrowded – and the planned activities of role-play could hardly be done because of lack of space. Sometimes one facilitator had to manage up to sixty learners. Many of the chairs were broken and the learners had to share desks and chairs. It was good for me to see this and to realise the problems that the teachers in the townships have to deal with.

The “after-break-session” had to be dealt with in a very lively way, because of the learners being tired and nodding off. By then it was usually quite warm and we had to keep them very actively occupied. I also realised for the first time, that the learners of the township schools left the school grounds during break and sometimes returned to school long after the end of break.

In other schools some of us experienced a total lack of structure, of respect, of discipline, of morality. This was frightening, but at the same time, it also motivated us to return to these particular schools to try and render a service – this time not as a multi-disciplinary team, but as an organisation. The Laudium Mental Health Organisation, for instance, will return to a particular school, realising the particular need. Some of the return forms indicated a very strong tendency of learners considering suicide at a particular school. Sometimes the school then asks for additional assistance from an NGO, the department, or the department’s offers to assist with more programmes to combat this tendency.

Although my involvement started incidentally, I am now fully involved with the follow-up visits to schools – being part of the team of which I am very fond. It was a wonderful experience to be involved in Project Awareness. For the first time I realised how difficult it is to be a schoolteacher. It was a privilege to bring these workshops to the learners. If I could have made a difference in only one child’s life, and his future, it was worth it.

PROGRESS REPORT TO THE NELSON MANDELA CHILDREN'S FUND
Previously District N3, now Tswane South –
Atteridgeville and Laudium
4 May 2001

NAME OF PROJECT: PROJECT PARENTHOOD
NAME OF PROJECT MANAGER: Mornay Scott
Telephone Number: 012- 341-6362
Cell phone: 082-558-5221
Fax: 012-341-6844

1. GOALS, AIMS, OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT:

The Project Goal is to prevent Child Abuse by empowering parents. See the first report for the objectives that were set at the beginning.. What follows here, are the objectives that were actually achieved:

The parents who attended the course, reported that they experienced the following:-

- Know themselves, their strengths and weaknesses
- Realised where they came from, what they have learnt from their parents, what they are conveying to their children
- Understand better what child abuse and neglect is
- Understand how they can form an important link in the child protection system
- Recognise some tendencies in themselves and in their families that should be addressed
- Know more about their rights – and how to ask for it, their responsibilities – and how to take them up
- They understand more about assertiveness and have started to use those skills
- Are better equipped to report on a possible child abuse case, by being aware of the terminology, the importance of being exact, the communication skills.
- Are more aware of their own potential as person, as care giver, as involved parent, as support for other parents
- Understand the dynamics of disciplining the child and the reason for doing that.
- Have started with implementing the skills acquired to build the self-esteem of someone else.
- Know when to ask for professional help with family problems – and how to look for other means of support.
- Communication in the home improved when they started using the skills to kick start family discussions.
- Were able to clarify values and attitudes.
- Understand the impact and implications of child a abuse.
- Understand the reporting system, procedures and stakeholders

ACTIVITIES:

The courses were presented.

Two courses completed in Atteridgeville with 40/50 parents per course.

One course completed in Laudium with 30 parents

Another course starting in Laudium on 7 May 2001.

Another two courses starting in Atteridgeville on 2 June.

The course consisted of 12 sessions of two hours each.

A staff member of the service providers NGOs and NPOs facilitated each one of the sessions.

The training sessions were in the form of a workshop.

The parents, who attended at least 8 of the 12 sessions, received a certificate.

(See attached list for the programme in Laudium)

2. NUMBERS REACHED, DATA AND STATISTICS

Venue 1: Edward Phatudi School: 42 parents

Venue 2: Matseke School: 39 parents

Venue 3: Laudium Primary Schools: 30 parents

Venue 4: Laudium Primary School: Not yet sure how many will complete the course
(the only school with a suitable venue for the classes)

Venue 5: Pudhatitshaba Primary Schools: 50 (busy at the moment)

Venue 6: Makwaraneng Primary School Not yet sure

Training 12 x 2 hrs= 24 hrs.

3. IMPACT AND EVALUATION

The feedback was far better than expected. Over and above the fact that the original goals were achieved, there were also added bonuses.

- The parents started small, informal support groups out of their own, because after sharing some experiences over the 12 weeks, they bonded and supported each other.
- The teachers who attended were empowered as to start their own parent empowerment programmes at their schools.
- Some of the parents got used to being at the school once a week, became interested in other activities and one of them was even co-opted on the School Governing Body because of this involvement.
- Some of those parents, who attended, phoned to ask whether they could form part of the next presenting team. They will now be trained on a two-day training, and then be used for training in their communities.
- They are also invited to Life Skills Training for Teachers for further empowerment

4. PROBLEMS AND SUBSEQUENT ADJUSTMENTS

The Department of Education went through a restructuring process, which moved people around and it was difficult to continue. New people had to be introduced and convinced as to the success and need for the programme.

The need for first language speakers to facilitate overshadowed the need for very experienced people to facilitate. We opted for people from the community and assisted them and supported them with the presentation.

We did not keep to the budget allocation 100%. The reason for this is that we realised that the parents will not come to the courses by means of poster advertisements. We needed one-to-one canvassing. To them pay a lot of money for the ads, would not be responsible. We made a few posters for each one of the venues, and used the other money for certificates for the trainees, for the duplication of their handouts and for travelling costs of the facilitators, which we based on R1,00 per kilo. The group in Laudium took very long to get started, but when they eventually did, it worked well.

It was much easier to get the parents in the black community to attend than in the Indian Community. Many of the parents of the Laudium Schools, do not live in that area, which makes attendance more difficult for them to attend.

5. FUTURE PLANS IN LIGHT OF THE ABOVE:

Gradually the school would like to start with ongoing parent empowerment classes at their schools. The schools are aiming at least one such course per year –ongoing. The teachers who are trained and those who have attended the course could continue, but the success of the course lies very much in meeting all the stakeholders, and hearing their point of view.

6. DEVELOPMENT OR MAINTENANCE OF THE ORGANISATION'S CAPACITY.

The Greater Pretoria Child Protection Committee is strengthening. They have now developed into 15 district child protection committees, each committee planning their own strategies. They receive training, they network, and projects like Project Parenting, certainly assists in sustaining the committee. As reported earlier, the parents are actually becoming the trainers in their communities.

7. EVIDENCE OF SUSTAINABILITY

Enclosed, please find the list of stakeholders in Atteridgeville. They have formed a committee. They are planning training and identifying the needs for Atteridgeville. They are jointly planning activities for Child Protection Week. They are encouraging support groups. All committees report back once a month to the bigger committee and there is always something new that the others can learn from.

8. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

As reported in "four" the parents are getting involved. The departments are sharing resources and the communities are benefiting from this.

9. CONCLUSION

We want to thank the Nelson Mandela Fund for assisting us in getting this started. We have already started the same thing in Mamelodi and would like to do the same in Soshanguve. Unfortunately the facilitators do need something for their effort. We have worked out that R4 000 is enough to allow a school to run a parenting workshop for twelve weeks. We will continue to apply for funds in this regard.

M Scott

CHAIRPERSON 23 July 2001

ADDENDUM C**Organisation: THE GREATER PRETORIA CHILD PROTECTION INITIATIVE****Project: PROJECT PARENTING****1. Accounting of Cumulative Expenditures**

Half of the project has been completed, and the other half is presently running.

Budget Description	Approved	Actual	Balance
ADMIN	R 11 880	R 5 742.82	R 6 137,18
1055 Stationery	R 2 280	R1 842,82	R 437,18
1065 Venue	R 4 800	R 3 400	R 1 400,00
1075 Posters	R 4 800	R 500	R 4 300,00 (see *)
PROJECT	R 3 200	R 2 600	R 600
2010 Development of material	R 3 200	R2 600	R 600
SALARY	R 9 600	R6 800	R2 800
300 Facilitators	R 9 600	R6 800	R2 800
TRAVEL	R 4 320	R 3 160	R1 160
500 Transport	R 4 320	R 3 160	R 1 160
TOTAL	R29 000	R18 302,82	R10 697,18

2. FUNDING SOURCES

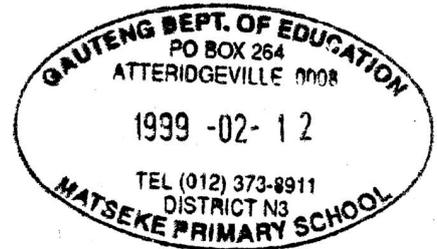
Source	Starting Date	Ending Date	Amount	Region
NMCF	April 2000	April 2001	R29 000	Atteridgeville and Laudium
Dept. Social Services	April 2001	April 2002	R29 000	Mamelodi
SAMCOR	April 2000	December 2000	R6 000	Pretoria
Total			R 64 000	

Matseke J.P School

ANNEXURE E

PO Box 264
Atteridgeville
0008

Tel: 3738911
Thindisa Street



Attention Mornay Scott
GDE N3
Private Bag x 27825
Sunnyside
0132

12 January 1999

Re: Project awareness 09-02-1999

Dear Madam

On behalf of the parents S.G.B staff and learners of Matseke Primary School, we wish to thank you and your TEAM for well informed, thoroughly prepared and highly motivated persons.

Words cannot really express how highly the school thinks of what you and your team did on the 09/02/1999. You made us re-visit our souls, you re-kindled our awareness to some issue we took for granted. We hope to make use of the knowledge and information gained on the above mentioned date.

Please find attached copies of EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT AWARENESS forms, we hope they will assist you in your future planning. Thanks once more.

Yours sincerely

Malatji
Malatji M;j
(Principal)

PROJECT AWARENESS: 2000 FEEDBACK FORM		
SCHOOL Edward Phabudi	FACILITATOR	
REGISTER TEACHER Mr. maredi	DATE 29-02-2009	GRADE 11E
I learnt a lot today Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	I liked the facilitator Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
From now on I am ... not a criminal no more, and don't do violence.		
I want to be a good man in my future.		
I want to suggest that I want to do any thing write in a life, and experienced something in this subject. I thank you a lot ^{the} way you help us.		
I think that the teaching of Life Skills will help this school to solve some of our problems Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		

+) FEEDBACK ON PRESENTERS.

Pi.

PARENTING WORKSHOPS ; LAUDIUM SCHOOLS

REPORT ON 12 SESSIONS

SESSION 1: 31\01\01

FACILITATOR: NELIA LOUW

TOPIC: WHAT IS PARENTING\ SELF AWARENESS

ATTENDANCE: 42

REPORT :

PARENTS FOUND THE TOPIC TO BE INTERESTING AND CHALLENGING. NEW INFORMATION THAT WAS LEARNT WAS RELEVANT TO SOME PEOPLE'S HOME SITUATION. THE USE OF FLIP CHARTS\AND THE O.H.P. WAS EDUCATIONAL. THEY FOUND THE FACILITATOR TO BE\INTERESTING AND EXCELLENT. THIS SESSION WAS\VERY INFORMATIVE. MANY FOUND IT TO BE AN EYE-OPENER.

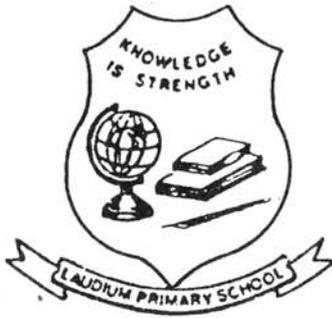
RATING: EXCELLENT.

SESSION 2 : 07\02\01

FACILITATOR: NELIA LOUW

TOPIC: RESPONSIBILITY REGARDING SEXUALITY EDUCATION

ATTENDANCE: 61



Laudium Primary School

Corner 15th Avenue & Carmine Street
 P.O.Box 13149
 Laudium 0037 Telephone (012) 374-4210

⑤

Feedback on parents feedback of course.

Parents were delighted and enthusiastic to attend every session. Many are going to help run the second session. Parents felt empowered due to their limited knowledge of the topics discussed. Topics were relevant and facilitators were dynamic. Parents felt that more people should attend and will spread the word for the second session. At the culmination of the first session parents expressed their excitement and joy in their newfound knowledge.

Goodley.



HEALTH AND EDUCATION

HEALTHY LIFE STYLE SERVICE RENDERED BY
YOUTH AND SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

EUREKA! A wedding!!

After many years of watching each other and visiting each other, it happened!!! The two decided to get married!!! "How come?" you'll ask.

You see, people get married when they need each other, respect each other, trust each other and when they know that together they can achieve much more than on their own. This is exactly what happened in Pretoria. The Department of Education and the Youth and School Health Services in Pretoria, got together and immediately liked what they saw. It wasn't the first visit at all. The Department of Youth and School Health Services have always provided the schools with basic services and they were always ready to come to a school in cases of emergency. But this was different. There was something in the air. Both parties just knew that this was going to lead to something more than just an occasional visit.

You see, both parties were very worried about our youth. Both parties were very worried about our country and our future. Both the parties wanted to protect the learners in our schools against hurt and pain, and at the same time we wanted to protect our country against vicious monsters like HIV/AIDS. We want our youngsters to abstain from sexual behavior patterns which might hurt them, their parents and others involved in such relationships. At the same time both parties realised that our idealism did not prevent the learners from indulging in such behaviour. And then the wedding bells began to "chime". We'll get together, we'll tackle this problem together and we'll provide a service for the youngsters.

The following service will now be rendered on the school premises of the secondary schools.

Advice on Dietary problems (e.g. overweight or other dietary disturbances)
Advice on Skin Care
Counseling for teenage pregnancies or possible teenage pregnancies
Referrals to specialised services
HIV tests
Pregnancy tests
Contraception
Depression

This service will only be rendered to those schools that apply for it. It will start in January 1999. This service will be rendered once a month (or, if the need is there, more often) on a fixed day at a particular school, from 14:00 to 16:00.

The medical staff, who will be rendering this service, are well-trained specialists in this field and they can be trusted to act responsibly. They act according to certain criteria, as prescribed by the Department of Health and agreed to by the Department of Education. All services are rendered together with proper counseling. Abstinence is propagated. For the sexually active child, the consequences are discussed in full and then possible solutions for preventing teenage pregnancies, STD/HIV/AIDS.

We certainly hope that other districts and other provinces will follow the same route and that this "marriage" will prove to convince youngsters to postpone the start of sexual activity; will prevent the birth of babies to teenage mothers; will prevent future chaos and havoc as the HI virus is spreading; will assist youngsters who battle with low self esteem and depression because of skin problems and overweight; will help the young teenager to accept himself/herself for what he/she is instead of trying to look like the models in the magazines; will motivate young learners to follow healthy eating habits and a healthy life style.

Mornay Scott
Family Guidance: District N3

**ST MARY'S DSG, OUTREACH
EVALUATION REPORT
ON
GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION,
DISTRICT N3
CHILD PROTECTION AWARENESS PROGRAMME
IN ATTERIDGEVILLE**

OCTOBER 1998

INTRODUCTION

St Mary's DSG, Outreach was approached by the Auxillary Unit of the Gauteng Department of Education, District N3, to assist with evaluating the Child Protection Project Awareness Programme being implemented in Atteridgeville primary schools in 1998.

As the Whole School Change Project of St Mary's DSG, Outreach works with 16 of the 25 primary schools in Atteridgeville, the team agreed to a summative evaluation using a sample of those schools with which we work.

CHILD PROTECTION AWARENESS PROGRAMME

The Child Protection Awareness Programme makes use of a two-pronged strategy, targeting both learners and educators in the school. In so doing, it provides a platform for holistic change within the school, in line with the practise of whole school change.

The programme's use of experts within the civic structures assisted in raising the Atteridgeville community's awareness of access to these structures. Many of these structures have offices within Atteridgeville, and a comprehensive list of contacts was left with schools for reference.

The programme made full use of a range of facilitation methods and techniques. These included drama, video, storytelling, songs, charts and handouts, and throughout, seem to have encouraged a participatory involvement.

The daily programme is attached as Appendix A

EVALUATION PROCESS

A comprehensive list of intended outcomes was made available to Outreach in order for us to evaluate the impact of the programme. This list is attached as Appendix B.

A sample of schools was contacted for assessment and participants were given a chance to express their views on what impact the programme had on the school. Without exception, the programme was viewed in an extremely positive light, and participants were quick to substantiate their comments.

Here it needs to be stated that the relationship that St Mary's DSG, Outreach has with the sample schools, is such that the participants in the evaluation would feel free to criticise the programme if they felt it was warranted.

Participants were asked probing questions relating to the workshops and their purpose, the facilitation techniques, the ideas raised in the workshops, the handouts, and the extent that participation was encouraged. All aspects of the programme were praised.

Participants from the following schools assisted in the evaluation:

Motsweding	Esikhisini	Kgabo	Banareng
Mahlahla	Thoho-Ya-Ndou	Bathokwa	Pepps

OBSERVATIONS

- *An increased awareness and confidence in the educators in terms of identifying and working with children from abusive homes.*
Several schools cited cases where teachers realised that the reason behind a child's academic or social problems lay in abusive situations in the home. Educators spoke of an increased confidence in identifying these issues and then working with these children. The process of referral and reporting appeared clearer after the workshops.
- *An increased willingness on the part of the pupils to speak about their home situations, including alcohol, drug and physical abuse.*
Educators are convinced that the programme assisted in opening up the channels of communication for the pupils. Certain schools have experienced a marked difference in pupils' willingness to discuss issues at home.
- *Theme materials left by the programme have assisted in linking subjects, and thus furthering the objectives of OBE within the schools.*
Classroom materials were left with teachers, and these themes have assisted in linking subjects and increasing joint lesson planning by teachers.
- *Participatory facilitation style has ensured that the learners remember the material.*
The participation of the pupils in the dramatisation and the songs assisted in ensuring that they remember the vital information. For instance, the *Childline* telephone number was learnt through song, and is continually repeated in the schools.
- *An increased awareness of the responsibility of educators to involve themselves in more than just syllabus teaching.*
Educators spoke of increasingly realising their role in areas such as personal hygiene, road safety, study skills and emotional well-being.
- *The promotion of the school as a whole taking responsibility for addressing areas of concern.*
One school took on the issue of Road Safety by successfully working towards obtaining a pedestrian crossing outside their school gate. This was seen as being due to an increased awareness of the school's responsibility.

CONCERNS

Although the Programme appears to have had a very positive impact on educators and learners, it does not appear to provide for any structured support or follow-up. Reminders in the form of circulars have been sent to schools, and this appears to have assisted to some degree in ensuring that the programme themes remain on the schools' agendas.

However, it is the view of St Mary's DSG, Outreach that any intervention in the schools requires monitoring and clearly defined, regular support. Thus the Programme would do well to initiate follow up *visits* to the school, particularly to assist educators with problems that they may have encountered implementing the programme in their classrooms.

Another area of concern is the difficulty schools have found in contacting the relevant structures for assistance. This was mentioned by only one school, but does need to be taken seriously, if the programme is to be effective.

A further concern voiced was that in one case the presenters for one module failed to arrive. This means that the school did not receive the full training. Although this appears to be an isolated case, it does question the quality of such an intervention.

CONCLUSION

The Child Awareness Protection Programme appears to have been successful in executing the intended outcomes. The participating schools see the programme as having been beneficial to educators and learners, and in some cases the school as a whole, has taken responsibility for furthering the outcomes.

The Programme however needs to look into follow up and support within the schools in a structured and regular way. Although schools benefit from such interactions, educators do experience problems in maintaining the drive within the school. Obviously well functioning schools find this easier to maintain, as the structures within the schools support this. However, dysfunctional and problematic schools require regular feedback and follow up, and this needs to be considered as an additional element for the programme.