

**A COMMUNITY-BASED MODEL OF SUPERVISION FOR CHILD AND  
YOUTH CARE WORKERS EMPLOYED IN THE ISIBINDI MODEL OF CARE  
IN SOUTH AFRICA**

**by**

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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that this report is my own work. It is a dissertation of limited scope presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the MTech: Child and Youth Care at the University of South Africa. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

.....

**Kathleen June Scott**

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## **ABSTRACT**

South African child and youth care programmes have been challenged to transform to address the needs of vulnerable and/or orphaned young people affected and/or infected by HIV/AIDS. The Isibindi programme was designed by the National Association of Child Care Workers to respond to this challenge to provide viable community child and youth care programmes.

Supervision of staff plays a critical part in child and youth care programmes. This study explores the model of supervision being implemented in the Isibindi programme, identifies the elements of this model and stipulates which of these need to be strengthened for effective and efficient services.

The research findings indicate that the Isibindi model of supervision reflects the practice of child and youth care services being delivered in the programme. Common child and youth care elements were identified as being essential to the efficient delivery of this model of supervision.

## **KEY CONCEPTS**

Community-based; supervision; child and youth care workers; Isibindi model

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The programme researched in this study is a community-based one in which professional child and youth care workers play the central role in services offered to the community. Hence there is a need to review the literature where community-based work is the focus to ascertain what models of supervision are being used for effective service delivery.

The South African Minister of Social Development at the time of writing, Zola Skweyiya, in a media statement in November 2007, stressed the need for community-care based organisations to provide services to orphans and vulnerable children (Skweyiya, 2007). He indicated that at that time there were 1 700 home community-based care organisations in the country. However, none are the same as the Isibindi programme where the focus is on the delivery of professional child and youth care work services to vulnerable and at risk young people and their families.

A debate by the Goedgedacht Forum for Social Relief on 24 November 2001 looked at the emerging crisis of orphans and vulnerable children and what the strategic response to this phenomenon should be. Barter, in his article on strengthening community capacity (2003), suggests that “if we are to move child and youth care services into the community paradigm it means that new practices and new methods of service delivery are required. We need to be innovative in our approaches”.

This would seem to be the case with the Isibindi model. This model was developed and researched by the National Association of Child Care Workers (NACCW) as a cost-effective community-based model for caring for the needs of vulnerable children (2005). A description of the model is given by Allsopp and Thumbadoo (2002) as follows: “Community child and youth care workers



take basic child care services to the homes of such families and often provide the only adult support in child-headed households. They are also responsible for networking basic resources and service to families like health care, access to documents, funeral arrangements, spiritual support and grief work, income generating projects, admission and attendance at schools, housing and food security, advocacy and legal support.”

At the time of doing this research there were 60 Isibindi sites situated in various rural areas in all nine provinces of South Africa. At each site there is a team of 13 child and youth care workers employed by a local non-profit or community-based organisation. The team of 13 has a manager and two supervisors who each supervise five child and youth care workers. The manager also plays a role in supervision in that he/she supervises the two supervisors.

In looking at what form of supervision is required in order to achieve this standard of service delivery, this study took into account the characteristics that supervision should demonstrate in a child and youth care context and then enquired into the manner in which these were being applied in this community-based child and youth care programme.

South African child and youth care programmes have been challenged to transform; to reach out into the community and to address the very critical needs of those vulnerable and/or orphaned young people affected and/or infected by the HIV/AIDS crisis in our country. The Child Gauge Report (Children’s Institute, 2008:67) indicates that in 2006 there were 3 768 000 orphans living in South Africa. Research undertaken by the HSRC in 2005 predicted that by the year 2010 we would have 11.2 million orphans in South Africa. It is not possible for all of these young people to be accommodated in residential care settings. It is also doubtful as to whether this would be in their best interests. The Isibindi programme was designed to respond to this challenge to provide viable community child and youth care programmes as an alternative to residential care services.

## **1.2 FORMULATION OF RESEARCH PROBLEM**

At present in South Africa there is an emphasis on developing and designing effective and efficient community-based social service programmes due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the country (Sloth-Nielsen, 2004:6-8). The researcher is of the opinion that the Children's Act 38 of 2005 has a strong focus on prevention and early intervention work with young people and their families (South Africa, 2005:29-30). The development of effective community-based programmes for children and youth would be one of the ways in which early intervention work could be implemented.

The theoretical review of the aspects of supervision and the form which supervision should take shows clearly that supervision is a critical part of any child and youth care programme – as suggested by Hughes and Pengelly (1997:3), who describe supervision as a “microcosm of how an organisation responds to its environment”, including its service users. Thus staff supervision is the means of developing and controlling the quality of service. Supervision for child and youth care workers is regarded as an essential requirement in the Code of Ethics for North American Child and Youth Care Professionals (Mattingly, 2001). The concept of supervision being critical in a programme is supported by Anglin (2002:104) in his grounded theory study of group homes. This study found that an attentive and competent supervisor was one of the core and consistent elements that contributed to a well-functioning programme. It was further found that the supervisor was the most significant person in any of the programmes, and it was found that the supervisor could “create a team and a good team made a good programme” (Anglin, 2002:92).

The form that supervision takes appears to depend on the context, the design of the programme and services offered in the programme. Garfat (2005) suggests that supervisors need to understand the different issues involved in outreach work. It is presupposed that supervisors in community work would therefore also need to know the different issues involved in this work.

The Isibindi model comprises a community-based child and youth care programme which has a strong element of supervision as an essential component of the programme.

This research aimed *to explore the model of supervision that is being implemented in the Isibindi programme*. The researcher intended to clarify and identify the essential aspects of this model of supervision. She hoped then that the recommendations would assist the child and youth care field in broadening its understanding of what makes effective supervision in a community-based child and youth care programme.

Thus the questions explored were:

- What is the model of supervision in the Isibindi programme?
- What are the elements of this model?
- Which of these elements need to be strengthened?

### **1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF STUDY**

#### **1.3.1 Research aim**

The aim of this research was to explore the model of supervision being implemented in the Isibindi programme to enhance the understanding of supervision in community-based programmes.

#### **1.3.2 Research objectives**

To achieve the aim of this research the following objectives were formulated:

- (a) To explore the model of supervision that is being implemented in the Isibindi programme
- (b) To identify what elements of this model of supervision are helpful
- (c) To identify what elements are required to strengthen the existing model of supervision being used in the Isibindi model of community child and youth care work.

### **1.3.3 Key theoretical questions**

The key theoretical questions to be answered in this study were:

- What is child and youth care supervision?
- What models of supervision are used in child and youth care work?
- What are the different elements of child and youth care supervision?
- What are the particular elements of supervision required for a community child and youth care context?
- Are any of these elements more critical than others?

## **1.4 LITERATURE STUDY AND KEY CONCEPTS**

### **1.4.1 Literature study**

The researcher consulted a variety of literature sources pertaining to the themes of this study, such as supervision, child and youth care work and supervision, models of supervision, elements of supervision, training of supervisors and experiences of supervision. The sources that were consulted as part of literature review include books, legislative documents, research documents, journal articles and the internet.

### **1.4.2 Key concepts**

The following key concepts will be defined here: supervision, child and youth care work and the Isibindi model.

#### *1.4.2.1 Supervision*

A preliminary review of the literature shows that there are many definitions of supervision. Hughes and Pengelly (1997:3, 6) describe supervision as a microcosm of how an agency responds to its environment, which would include the clients. It is defined as a means of developing and controlling the quality of service. In so doing, the needs and rights of the staff must be attended to so that the best is elicited from them. Supervision in residential

care can be described as a “view from the outside” or the “process in which professionals reflect on their work”, and so is defined as “the process of professional reflection or the reflection process about how a service occupation is carried out” (Kobolt, 1999). Garfat (2003) has suggested that supervisory interactions should be an opportunity to help workers learn about the *doing* of their work through experiencing a similar process in the relationship with their supervisor. He suggests that where there is incongruence between the programme approach to child and youth care, and what the worker experiences in relationship with the supervisor, then “confusion walks through the door and practice suffers”.

The definition of supervision that this research was based on is as follows: Supervision is a “goal directed contractual, interpersonal relationship which has jurisdiction over all aspects of a supervisee’s job responsibilities, performance and organisational interpersonal functioning” (NACCW, 1998:5).

#### 1.4.2.2 *Child and youth care work*

A review of the literature indicates that there are various definitions of child and youth care work. Most of the definitions point to working with young people in their context and using the everyday happenings as the vehicle to build a relationship with the young person. It is through this relationship that the child and youth care worker helps the young person to grow and develop.

Mattingly (2001:4) defines child and youth care as practice which “focuses on infants, children, and adolescents, including those with special needs, within the context of the family, the community, and the life span. The developmental ecological perspective emphasizes the interaction between persons and their physical and social environments, including cultural and political settings. Professional practitioners promote the optimal development of children, youth, and their families in a variety of settings, such as early care and education, community-based child and youth development programs, parent education and family support, school-based programs, community mental health, group homes, residential and treatment, psychiatric centers, rehabilitation programs,

pediatric health care, and juvenile justice programs. Child and youth care practice includes assessing client and program needs, designing and implementing programs and planned environments, integrating developmental, preventive, and therapeutic requirements into the life space, contributing to the development of knowledge and practice, and participating in systems interventions through direct care, supervision, administration, teaching, research, consultation, and advocacy”.

De Kock (1999:31) defines child and youth care work as “care that includes the physical, emotional and educational care of the child, within the life space of the child, in various situations, whether in the school, community or institution relationship”.

Garfat (2002) states that the “use of daily life events as they are occurring is one of the characteristics that distinguishes child and youth care practice from other forms of helping”.

This study used the following definition of child and youth care work by Anglin (2001:10): “work with children and youth, as whole persons, in order to promote their social competence and healthy development, by participating in and using their day-to-day environments and life experiences, and through the development of therapeutic relationships, most importantly the relationship with the particular child or youth who is the focus of attention.”

#### 1.4.2.3 *The Isibindi model*

Phelan (2009) defines the Isibindi model as “an innovative, effective, and locally directed child and youth care intervention that trains indigenous adults to work with child-headed households and families affected by the AIDS pandemic”.

This study uses the following description of the Isibindi model by NACCW (2009): “Isibindi is a child and youth care model of care which deploys trained community-based child and youth care workers in their own communities to

provide developmental support to children and families rendered vulnerable as a result of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.”

## **1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN**

### **1.5.1 Research methodology**

The researcher decided to use a qualitative research approach. This decision was made after examining the differences between the quantitative and qualitative approaches to research. One of the differences is that quantitative research uses a hypothesis to test a theory, whereas in qualitative research meaning is captured and discovered once the researcher becomes immersed in the data (Neuman, 2000:122). Qualitative research is defined by De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, Poggenpoel, Schurink and Schurink (1998:240) as a “multiperspective approach to social interaction, aimed at making sense of, interpreting or reconstructing this interaction in terms of the meanings that subjects attach to it”.

As the programme researched is part of the organisation in which the researcher is employed, the qualitative approach was most suitable, since the qualitative researcher is always a part of what is being studied (Tolich & Davidson, 1999:185). The research took on an exploratory descriptive nature as the issue of supervision in a community child and youth care model of care is a relatively new issue in this country and there is very little written about it (Neuman, 2000:21). It is hoped that this exploratory research will result in further research when more information is gathered to know enough to “design and execute a second, more systematic and extensive study” (Neuman, 2000:21).

A phenomenological orientation was used as the researcher relied on interpretive information and tried to make meaning of the situation. According to Byrne (2001), phenomenological researchers hope to gain understanding of the essential “truths” (i.e. essences) of the lived experience. The importance of the context was highlighted in this research, as according to the

phenomenological approach, a person is not separate from or independent of his/her world (Welman & Kruger, 1999:189).

The research was descriptive as it intended to present a picture of the specific nature of the supervision model in the Isibindi programme of community child and youth care in South Africa. The focus of this research involved asking “how”, “who” and “what”– which meant that the issue was described and explored. It was further proposed to use a targeted sampling procedure (Neuman, 2001:215), in that the participants who were interviewed were employed at different Isibindi sites as the managers, the supervisors and/or the supervisees at the sites.

The sites were contacted about the research and permission was obtained from the programme director and one of the senior mentors for the researcher to contact the sites, and visit and interview selected staff of the Isibindi projects. In this way the research examined situations that “arise in the natural flow of social life” (Neuman, 2000:122).

### **1.5.2 Target population and sampling**

Welman and Kruger (1999:122) state that the target population is that population to which the researcher would like to generalise the results of the research. Hence a sample of child and youth care workers from different Isibindi projects was selected. The sample of participants from the different projects included experienced and less experienced child and youth care workers, two of whom were supervisees at one project, six supervisors from five projects and one manager from one project. These were selected mainly from the five Isibindi projects in the Eastern Cape as there was a common thread among these supervisors and the manager in that they had all attended the training by NACCW in consultative supervision. Four child and youth workers were selected from the Isibindi site in the Western Cape – these were the two supervisors at the project and two of the supervisees who agreed to be part of this research. They were invited to tell their stories about what they do, their experiences of supervision – what helps and what does



not. They were asked to talk about what practices work or do not work for them.

The sampling method used for this research was non-probability sampling. The specific technique of purposive sampling was used. This is a form of sampling where the sample is based on the judgement of the researcher as to which subjects best fit the criteria of the research (answers.com). This meant that specific individuals were carefully selected by the researcher in consultation with the Isibindi management pertaining to the specific subject of supervision in a community child and youth care model. Purposive sampling was used to “identify particular types of cases for in-depth investigation” (Neuman, 2000:198). De Vos et al. (1998:198) state that purposive sampling is “based entirely on the judgement of the researcher”.

According to Trochim (2006), purposive sampling “means that the researcher samples with a purpose in mind and would usually have one or more specific predefined groups being sought”.

The researcher used the supervisors and supervisees at the Isibindi sites as the potential sample. Trochim says that purposive sampling “can be very useful for situations where you need to reach a targeted sample quickly and where sampling for proportionality is not the primary concern”.

Another factor which influenced the number of participants was the use of data saturation. In qualitative research, according to Siegle (n.d.), “researchers continue to collect data until they reach a point of **data saturation**. Data saturation occurs when the researcher is no longer hearing or seeing new information. Unlike quantitative researchers who wait until the end of the study to analyze their data, qualitative researchers analyze their data throughout their study”. The researcher found that data saturation occurred after interviewing the nine participants.

### 1.5.3 Data collection method

The data collection technique that was used for this research was a semi-structured personal interview. Thus the researcher had face-to-face or telephone interviews with the selected sample of nine child and youth care workers. The advantage of face-to-face interviews, says Neuman (2000:272-273), is the high response rate and the length of the interview. Such interviews are also flexible, and the interviewer can control the sequence of questions as well as introduce probing questions. The context can also be considered and observed. Four face-to-face interviews were held with supervisors and supervisees at a site in the Western Cape.

The disadvantage of face-to face interviews in this instance was the cost of the interviews, in that the interviewer required transport and accommodation. The researcher decided to use more telephone interviews as the preferred data collection technique. Telephone calls can also be flexible and allow for probing questions. They also allowed the participants to choose when and where they could be interviewed. Another advantage was that the researcher knew many of the child and youth care workers and hence was able to ask more probing questions. Due to the researcher's familiarity with the model, she was aware of the context of each site and considered that in the analysis of the responses. The use of an unstructured interview allowed the schedule to be a guideline for the interviewer, and contained questions and themes important to the research (De Vos et al., 1998:299). Although the interviewer could ask the questions in any order, the schedule did ensure that all the relevant themes were covered in the interview.

The researcher designed a schedule of semi-structured questions which included introductory questions to assist the participants in starting to talk during the interview. Questions such as *"tell me about your experience as a supervisor in a community child and youth care programme"* and *"tell me about your role as a supervisor in a community child and youth care programme"* were used. These were followed by a list of recurrent themes relating to supervision in child and youth care work in a community setting

such as *“what methods of supervision do you use?”* and *“tell me about the training that you had as a supervisor in a community child and youth care programme”*. The researcher also used some generic prompts for the interviews (Tolich & Davidson, 1999:108-109) such as *“mmm”* and *“okay”*. These questions, themes and prompts were generated from her own knowledge, and the literature search on supervision.

De Vos et al. (1998:304) state that the “objective of unstructured interviewing is to develop, reformulate and expand hypotheses with a view to contributing to the more systematic accumulation of knowledge about social phenomena”.

Thus the researcher hopes to have contributed to the knowledge of child and youth care work, with particular reference to the type of supervision required in a community child and youth care model.

#### **1.5.4 Data analysis**

The data was analysed according to a descriptive and thematic technique. This allowed the researcher to relate the themes to those which are important in the literature on supervision in child and youth care work. This analysis also enabled the researcher to highlight those differences in the situation facing South African child and youth care workers in a community-based programme. Tolich and Davidson (1999:155) talk about the drafting of themes which then enables patterns to be found, as well as the ideas that may explain the patterns.

It was necessary for the researcher to organise themes that emerged by going through the written notes taken during the interviews and listening to and transcribing the recorded conversations. Neuman (2000:441) states that qualitative analysis needs more effort by the researcher to read and reread the data notes, then to reflect on what has been read and to make comparisons based on logic and judgement. It also allows the researcher to go back to the subject and check and recheck what was said. The researcher needed to ensure that the study was credible in that the descriptions were

accurate and that other child and youth care workers in the other Isibindi sites would recognise and agree with the experiences (De Vos et al., 1998:349). The findings should also be applicable to other contexts, settings or other groups. In other words, the findings should be able to be generalised to a larger population (De Vos et al., 1998:349). It is recognised that with the small sample of nine subjects the generalisation of the research is limited.

It is suggested by De Vos et al. (1998:352) that data analysis is conducted at the same time as the data collection, and that the researcher should be able to use strategies such as analysis, induction, synthesis, bracketing and intuiting to identify themes, categories and subcategories. There should be an attitude of flexibility and logical reasoning.

### **1.5.5 Validity and trustworthiness**

According to Tolich and Davidson (1999:33 – 34), reliability is not the goal of qualitative research but rather to “provide a precise (or valid) description of what people said or did in the research location”. This was the case in this research as it was vital to hear from the participants themselves about the effective types of supervision. In order to ensure validity, triangulation – the use of multiple sources of information, methods and techniques – was used. Hence the child and youth care workers were interviewed, the researcher used reflective listening (a communication technique used to check understanding of what has been said) in the interviews to verify what she had heard and the various reports by the supervisors, as well as any previous research reports of the Isibindi programmes, were viewed.

### **1.5.6 Ethical considerations**

Neuman (2000:90) explains that research can be conducted in an unethical manner due to the researcher taking shortcuts through pressure of the research or by being unaware of possible ethical issues. The researcher is employed in the organisation (NACCW) that has developed and is monitoring and supporting the Isibindi sites. It was thus essential that the researcher be

aware of the various ethical aspects of this proposed research such as voluntary participation, ensuring confidentiality, informed consent, publication of the findings, decision-making and the principle of do no harm (De Vos et al., 1998:24–35). The researcher needed to be accountable for the positive and negative consequences of any decisions resulting from this research (De Vos et al., 1998:23). She also needed to be aware of the various ethical principles or guidelines which served as standards to enable her to evaluate her own conduct during this research (De Vos et al., 1998:24).

As the national training manager in the organisation the researcher was aware of power issues which could have arisen and which could have given rise to questions on the credibility of the research (Neuman, 2000:376). The researcher thus used a gatekeeper such as the senior mentor of the Isibindi projects to introduce her role as researcher. This was then followed by a personal discussion with each potential participant, where the aims of the research were explained and assurance of confidentiality was given. The participant was given the opportunity to agree or disagree to taking part in the research. If the participant agreed, then an appointment for the interview was set up at a suitable time and place.

## **1.6 DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY**

The focus of this study was to interview child and youth care workers employed at various Isibindi sites in South Africa. Due to logistical constraints such as a limited budget, the researcher confined the study to a limited number of participants at six different Isibindi sites, five of which are situated in the Eastern Cape and one in the Western Cape. The limited number of nine participants was seen as acceptable as this is an exploratory study.

Although the medium of communication (English) was not the first language of the participants, the questions were phrased to be clear and unambiguous. A pilot testing of the questions also enabled the researcher to ensure that the participants would be able to understand the questions.

## **1.7 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN THE RESEARCH**

The logistical restraints referred to previously resulted in the researcher not being able to conduct face-to face interviews with all the participants. Hence the researcher ensured that participants were comfortable with the telephone interviews. An appointment was made with the participants first and at a time best suited to them, to ensure that they were comfortable and private.

The matter of language needed to be addressed as most of the participants did not have English as their first language. The researcher needed to ensure that terms and concepts were fully understood, and that she listened to and understood what people were saying. The technique of reflective listening was used extensively in the interviews.

Relevant literature pertaining to supervision in community child and youth care programmes such as the Isibindi programme was limited. The researcher attempted to review a variety of literature sources pertaining to supervision in the child and youth care field and particularly those not specifically contextualised in residential care.

Relevant literature in the form of books and journal articles on the child and youth care field are limited in South Africa and resulted in the researcher relying on internet resources, particularly the CYC-Net website, which is a scientific reliable resource. The researcher struggled to find the latest editions of books and hence relied on those available at the local libraries.

## **1.8 PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH REPORT**

Chapter 1 introduced the reader to the background of the research, research aims and objectives, research methodology, ethics and the framework of the research study.

The next chapter, chapter 2, focuses on the description of the research methodology used as well as the research process.

Chapter 3 captures how the data was analysed, the themes and subthemes that emerged and the findings from the field research.

Chapter 4 outlines the literature review of the themes and subthemes that emerged from the field research.

Chapter 5 outlines the conclusions and recommendations of the research.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter the researcher focused on the research methodology followed in this study. The choice of methodology is discussed and a description is given of the selection process and the participants. The processes of data collection and analysis are explained. Issues pertaining to validity, trustworthiness and ethics are also discussed.

#### **2.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

##### **2.2.1 Qualitative research**

This research used a qualitative approach which is defined by De Vos et al. (1998:240) as a “multiperspective approach to social interaction, aimed at making sense of, interpreting or reconstructing this interaction in terms of the meanings that subjects attach to it”.

Tolich and Davidson (1999:3–5) describe qualitative research as fieldwork which uses inductive generation of data and unstructured interviewing of people.

This decision to use a qualitative approach was made after examining the differences between quantitative and qualitative research. One of the differences is that quantitative research tests hypotheses whereas in qualitative research meaning is captured and discovered once the researcher becomes immersed in the data (Neuman, 2000:122). Qualitative research was required in this study as the questions to be explored did not require the researcher to ask questions such as “how many times” but rather to explore



qualities and to understand characteristics (Tolich & Davidson, 1999:7). Garfat (1998:30) states that a qualitative approach “seeks to understand rather than to know”. This research has aimed to explore and understand the model of supervision being used in the Isibindi programmes.

The programme researched is a part of the organisation in which the researcher is employed. Given this, the qualitative approach was most suitable as, according to Tolich and Davidson (1999:185), the qualitative researcher is always a part of what is being studied.

The research took on an exploratory descriptive nature as the issue of supervision in a community-based child and youth care model is a new issue in this country and there is very little written about it (Neuman, 2000:21). Garfat (1998:30) explains that a qualitative approach is best suited to situations where there is limited information.

A phenomenological orientation was used in the research as the researcher relied on interpretive information and tried to make meaning of the situation. According to Byrne (2001), “phenomenological researchers hope to gain understanding of the essential ‘truths’ (i.e. essences) of the lived experience”. Phenomenologists believe that truth and understanding of life can emerge from people's life experiences.

The researcher attempted to understand the model of supervision through exploring the life experiences of the participants as supervisors and supervisees in the Isibindi programme. The importance of the context was highlighted in this research, as according to the phenomenological approach, a person is not separate from or independent of his/her world (Welman & Kruger, 1999:189). The elements of the context which were considered were the researcher's relationship with the participants, the selection of the participants, the physical context of the interviews, as well as the authority of the researcher due to her position in the organisation in relation to the participants.

The researcher relied on interpretive information and tried to make meaning of the situation. The importance of the context was highlighted in this research (Neuman, 2000:122). The researcher used an inductive logic approach to “move from data collection to the developing of formal theory” (Tolich & Davidson, 1999:32). This approach was used since the concept of supervision has been a long-standing passion of the researcher, provoking an urge to understand the model of supervision in the Isibindi programme and identify characteristics present that appear to make it an effective approach in the context of community child and youth care work. Hence the researcher attempted to focus on the quality of the supervision being delivered in the Isibindi programme.

The researcher hopes that this research will result in further research as more information will have been gathered to know enough to “design and execute a second, more systematic and extensive study” (Neuman, 2000:21). The research is descriptive, as it presents a picture of the specific needs for supervision in the Isibindi model of community child and youth care in South Africa. The focus of this research involved asking “how”, “who” and “what”, which means that the issues are described and explored.

The researcher used a deliberate selection of participants in that the participants who were interviewed were employed at six different Isibindi sites and were the managers and/or the supervisors or supervisees at these sites. This deliberate selection then led to the researcher and the participants examining situations about which the participants had both knowledge and experience. Garfat (1998:40) quotes Lindsey saying that the most important concern is for “subjects to be knowledgeable about the topic under study ... [and to] have experiential knowledge”. All of the participants had knowledge about supervision and practical experience in either being a supervisor or a supervisee.

The researcher gathered information from the participants first-hand which meant that information was gathered by having direct contact with the nine participants (Tolich & Davidson, 1999:6). The information gathered was used

to understand some of the characteristics in the supervision model of the Isibindi programme.

### **2.2.2 Population group and sampling**

A population is defined by Welman and Kruger (1999:47) as “the study object which may be individuals, groups, organisations, human products and events or the conditions to which they are exposed”.

The population selected for this research consisted of child and youth care workers employed as managers, supervisors and/or supervisees at the various Isibindi sites in South Africa. They had all received training by the NACCW in consultative supervision and were either supervising staff or being supervised by their supervisor or manager.

Permission to do this research was obtained from the programme director and one of the senior mentors of the six Isibindi sites. These two people were thus the gatekeepers for the researcher and facilitated access to the participants (Tolich & Davidson, 1999:94). All nine participants were contacted by telephone before the research took place, and were invited to be part of the research. On agreement, an appointment was made with them as to when and where the researcher could meet with them or contact them by telephone to explore and discuss the concept of supervision in the Isibindi programme.

The participants were invited to tell their stories about what they need in terms of supervision, what helps them to accomplish their work more effectively and what does not help in this regard. Themes pertaining to child and youth care supervision were built for them about what practices are effective or are not for them.

The sampling method for this research was in the form of non-probability sampling. Welman and Kruger (1999:62) state that the advantage of non-probability samples “is that they are less complicated and more economical – in terms of time and money”. The specific technique of purposive sampling or

deliberate selection of the nine participants was used due to their experience and position in the Isibindi programme. This meant that specific individuals were carefully selected and linked to the subject of supervision in a community-based child and youth care model. Purposive sampling is used to “identify particular types of cases for in-depth investigation” (Neuman, 2000:198). De Vos et al. (1998:198) state that purposive sampling is “based entirely on the judgement of the researcher”. According to Trochim (2006), “purposive sampling means that the researcher samples with a *purpose* in mind and would usually have one or more specific predefined groups that is being sought”. In this study the researcher had the supervisors and supervisees at the Isibindi sites as the potential sample and the predefined group.

The researcher needed to be aware of the concept of reflexivity which, Tolich and Davidson (1999:37) say, means that one is always part of the social world one is studying. Hence individuals have their own knowledge and understanding of the experiences being explored and seeking to be understood. Given that the researcher is employed by the organisation that is responsible for the Isibindi programme, and has been involved in the training of supervisors in this programme, she consciously attempted to reflect upon questions being asked and why and how this process was being undertaken.

### **2.2.3 Data collection method**

The data collection technique used for this research was that of a semi-structured personal interview. Lindlof and Taylor (2002:195) define a semi-structured interview as being “flexible, allowing new questions to be brought up during the interview as a result of what the interviewee says. The interviewer in a semi-structured interview generally has a framework of themes to be explored. However, the specific topic or topics that the interviewer wants to explore during the interview should usually be thought about well in advance ... Interview guides help researchers to focus an interview on the topics at hand without constraining them to a particular

format. This freedom can help interviewers to tailor their questions to the interview context/situation and to the people they are interviewing”.

Welman and Kruger (1999:167) are of the opinion that semi-structured interviews should be considered when “the topics are of a very sensitive nature; the respondents come from divergent backgrounds and experienced and expert interviewers are available for conducting the interviews”.

In considering this, the researcher is of the opinion that these criteria were not applicable here, but rather that such a structure allowed for the researcher to ask probing questions and to ask for elaboration when answers were unclear or incomplete (Welman & Kruger, 1999:167).

The researcher had face-to-face or telephone interviews with the selected sample of nine child and youth care workers. The advantage of a face-to-face interview is the fact that generally the responses obtained are of a high quality (Welman & Kruger, 1999:164). The researcher recognises that it would have been more advantageous to have had face-to face interviews with all nine participants as, according to Neuman (2000:272-273), there is a high response rate with such interviews. They are also flexible and the interviewer can control the sequence of questions as well as being able to introduce probing questions. The context can also be considered and observed.

However, telephone interviews were used as the preferred data collection technique for five of the participants. The cost and speed of the telephone interview is cited as an advantage of this method by Welman and Kruger (1999:166), and this aspect certainly assisted the researcher to finalise her research. Although Welman and Kruger (1999:165) suggest that generally telephone interviews are shorter than face-to-face ones, the researcher attempted to have telephone conversations with participants lasting at least 45 to 60 minutes per participant. All of the interviews were tape recorded, with the permission of each participant. The researcher also took notes during each interview. All interviews were flexible and allowed for probing questions. Garfat (1998:47) discusses how interviews move quickly from questioning into

conversations. The researcher experienced this phenomenon as well, and found particularly with the five telephone interviews that the dialogue was more like a conversation than an interview.

The researcher knew many of the participants, and was, as a result, able to ask more probing questions. Due to the Isibindi model being associated with the researcher's work, the context such as the environment, the structure of the staff team, the training that the supervisors had undergone and the expectations of them as supervisors was understood and was considered in the analysis of the responses.

The unstructured interview allowed for the schedule to act as a guideline for the researcher, and contained questions and themes that were important to the research (De Vos et al., 1998:299). The researcher asked the questions in a different order in the different interviews, but using the schedule ensured that all the relevant themes were covered in the interviews. The initial questions were phrased as follows:

- Tell me about your experiences as a community child and youth care worker/tell me about your experiences as a supervisor in a child and youth care community programme.
- Tell me about your role/function in a community child and youth care work team.
- Tell me about the supervision you receive/give in conducting your work in the community.
- From your experiences as a supervisor/supervisee what would you like to change?
- How frequently do you have supervision? Is this enough? Who sets the frequency?
- Tell me about the training you have had as a supervisor in a community child and youth care team/as a community child and youth care worker.

The semi-structured interview schedule was finalised after a pilot interview was completed and the validity of the questions was assessed. The questions were reformulated to the following:

- Tell me about your experiences as a community child and youth care worker/tell me about your experiences as a supervisor in an Isibindi programme.
- Tell me about your role/function in an Isibindi team.
- Tell me about the supervision you receive/give in conducting your work in the community.
- How frequently do you have supervision? Is this enough? Who sets the frequency? Tell me how you structure your supervision in an Isibindi programme.
- Tell me about the training you have had as a supervisor in an Isibindi programme/as a community child and youth care worker.
- From your experiences as a supervisor/supervisee what would you like to change?

In addition, the questions were not fixed but rather were suggestions of things to ask about supervision which evolved from one interview to the next as more knowledge was gained (Tolich & Davidson, 1999:108). Questions were more open-ended than closed to encourage more than one-word responses (Tolich & Davidson, 1999:109). The researcher attempted where possible to encourage the participants to talk about their own experience in a chronological contrast (Tolich & Davidson, 1999:110). This meant that the researcher encouraged the participants to consider their supervisory experiences from the start of their employment as a supervisor at Isibindi until the present time. Direct questions were used by the researcher when it appeared that the participants had not addressed all the themes in the guidelines. This usually occurred towards the end of the interview (Tolich & Davidson, 1999:116-117).

The design of the schedule of semi-structured questions was such that it included introductory questions to help the participants start talking. These were followed by a list of recurrent themes relating to supervision in child and youth care work in a community setting. The researcher used generic prompts for the interviews (Tolich & Davidson, 1999:108-109) such as “Mmm”, “Ok” and “And?”. These questions, themes and prompts were generated from the researcher’s own knowledge and the literature search on supervision.

According to De Vos et al. (1998:301–305), there are five phases in the process of unstructured interviewing. These are preparing for the interview, becoming acquainted, establishing a contractual relationship, establishing a relationship of trust and terminating the unstructured interview. These phases were followed by the researcher with each participant. The questions were phrased in such a manner that they allowed the participants to set the agenda, which is a clear difference between qualitative and quantitative research (Tolich & Davidson, 1999:33). Wherever possible, the principle of letting the participants speak for themselves guided the research (Tolich & Davidson, 1999:60).

All participants were spoken to before the interview took place and their consent was given to interview them. At this stage the participants were prepared and a contract agreed to with regard to their participation. Consent to participate in research is an essential principle in any research and must be upheld at all times (Tolich & Davidson, 1999:72). Confidentiality was assured – particularly as the researcher is employed in the organisation that manages the Isibindi programme. The purpose of the research was explained once again in the interview and a reminder was provided again at the end of the interview.

De Vos et al. (1998:304) explain that the “objective of unstructured interviewing is to develop, reformulate and expand hypotheses with a view to contributing to the more systematic accumulation of knowledge about a social phenomenon”.

Thus the researcher hopes to contribute to the knowledge of child and youth care work with particular reference to the type of supervision required in a community child and youth care model.

The researcher found that after the seventh interview no new data emerged and so decided to stop interviewing after the ninth interview. This factor of not hearing or seeing new data is known as data saturation, as explained by



Siegle (n.d). In qualitative research the researcher continues to collect data until no new data emerges.

#### **2.2.4 Data analysis**

The data has been analysed according to a descriptive and thematic technique. Drafting themes allows the researcher to search for patterns in the data and also for ideas which may explain the patterns (Bernard as quoted by Tolich & Davidson, 1999:155).

This method of analysis has allowed the researcher to relate the themes to those which are important in the literature on supervision in child and youth care work and to highlight any differences in the Isibindi programme.

It is suggested by De Vos et al. (1998:352) that data analysis is conducted at the same time as the data collection, and that the researcher should be able to use strategies such as analysis induction, synthesis, bracketing and intuiting to identify themes, categories and subcategories. There should be an attitude of flexibility and logical reasoning.

The transcribed interviews were forwarded by the researcher to her supervisor, who worked through them. After discussion with the researcher, a 95% agreement was reached pertaining to the identified themes and subthemes.

#### **2.2.5 Validity and trustworthiness**

Validity of research is important as this will indicate whether the study has measured what was intended from the start and will reflect on the truthfulness of the results (Active Campaign, 2009). If the researcher ignores factors which influence the validity of the research he/she is putting the trustworthiness of the research at risk.

According to Tolich and Davidson (1999:33-34), reliability is not the goal of qualitative research but rather the goal is to “provide a precise (or valid) description of what people said or did in the research location” (Tolich & Davidson, 1999:34). This was the case in this research as it was vital to hear from the child and youth care workers themselves about the effective types of supervision.

According to Johnson as quoted by Pulkkinen (2003), there are three types of validity which should be considered to ensure trustworthiness of the research. There is descriptive validity which refers to the accuracy of the reporting by the researcher, then there is interpretive validity which refers to the accuracy of understanding and reporting on the views/thoughts/experiences of the participants, and thirdly there is theoretical validity which refers to the fit of a theory to the data. The researcher attempted to ensure descriptive validity by having a tape recording of all the interviews and then by transcribing them herself rather than having the possibility of misunderstanding of what was said. Also the researcher attempted to ensure interpretive validity by questioning and using reflective listening with the participants to ensure that she understood what was being said.

However, in order to ensure validity, triangulation was used. This is the use of multiple sources of information, methods and techniques. Hence the participants were interviewed, the researcher used reflective listening in the interviews to verify what she had heard and the various reports by the supervisors were viewed as were any previous research reports of the pilot programmes. Another strategy used by the researcher was reflexivity where she tried to reflect critically on her own biases and thoughts pertaining to the subject of supervision.

The independent assessment of the themes and subthemes from the transcribed interviews by the supervisor also contributed to the trustworthiness of this study.

## 2.3 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher is employed in the organisation which has developed and is monitoring and supporting the Isibindi sites. It was thus essential that the researcher be aware of the various ethical aspects of this research such as voluntary participation, ensuring confidentiality, informed consent, publication of the findings, decision-making and the principle of do no harm (De Vos et al., 1998:24-35). The researcher needed to be accountable for the positive and negative consequences of any decisions resulting from this research (De Vos et al., 1998:23). She also needed to be aware of the various ethical principles or guidelines which served as standards and enabled her to evaluate her own conduct during this research (De Vos et al., 1998:24).

As the national training manager in the organisation the researcher was aware of power issues which may have arisen and which may have given rise to questioning the credibility of the research (Neuman, 2000:376). The researcher thus used gatekeepers such as the programme director and one of the senior mentors of the Isibindi staff to introduce her role as researcher. This was then followed by a personal discussion with each potential participant where the aims of the research were explained and assurance of confidentiality was given. The participant was given the opportunity to agree or disagree to taking part in the research. Here the principle of voluntary participation was followed. The researcher was aware that the fact of her position in the organisation and her prior relationship with some of the participants could possibly impact on their decision to take part and so pre-empted this with a discussion around her role as the researcher being separate from her role as the training manager. If the participant agreed, then an appointment was set up with them as to a suitable time and place for the interview. Once again at the beginning of each interview the purpose of the research was explained and the participant was given the opportunity to ask questions and to withdraw from the interview. Here the principle of informed consent was upheld as each participant was given the opportunity to query and explore what was being asked of them before their agreement to

participate was reached. A letter explaining the research was given to the four face-to-face participants before they met with the researcher – this was completed and given to the researcher at the interview (see Appendix B). As this was not done with the five telephone interviews, the researcher ensured that a telephone conversation was held with each one two or three days before the interview was held. The participants then set the date and time for the interview according to their requirements and in keeping with where they would feel comfortable. The researcher assured the participants of confidentiality and answered questions when they arose during the interview. At the conclusion of each interview the purpose of the research was summarised and confidentiality again assured.

The researcher was aware of the need to do no harm and so tried to ensure that questions and discussions with the participants did not leave them feeling injured in any way. This was particularly needed when one of the participants began talking about the challenges of supervising people older than herself and how difficult this was for her. The researcher needed to remain sensitive and used her judgement as to how far to proceed with this discussion.

The publication of the findings was discussed with each participant. Each was assured of their remaining anonymous in the publication and that only their discussion and information would be used. The possibility of future decisions being made with regard to supervision in the Isibindi programme as a result of the research was discussed and explored with the participants. Once again, they were each assured of confidentiality in this regard.

## **2.4 REFLECTION ON THE RESEARCH PROCESS**

On reflection, the researcher is satisfied that the methodology chosen was the correct one. The qualitative approach allowed for the researcher to explore and to understand the model of supervision in the Isibindi programme. The researcher tried to make meaning of the model of supervision being used in the Isibindi programme and understand what elements are essential to ensure

effectiveness of this model of supervision in a community child and youth care programme such as Isibindi.

The approach was appropriate as the researcher is part of the Isibindi programme, and a qualitative approach assumes that the researcher is part of what is being studied. However, being part of the organisation, and being in a managerial role presented the researcher with possible complexities and concerns pertaining to ethical considerations. The researcher was aware that there could have been power and consent issues with the participants and tried to address these as much as possible. Thus the researcher felt some tension around this aspect of the research and would in such a situation in future consider another approach to ensure the validity of the research.

In reflecting on the use of face-to-face interviews versus telephone interviews, the researcher is of the opinion that she had higher quality interviews with the participants over the telephone. This seemed to be linked to the fact that telephone participants appeared more relaxed and spoke more freely. This may be attributed to the participants being shielded from the researcher and the tape recorder, allowing for more freedom and relaxation on the part of the participant. The face-to-face interviews were held in an office environment and anonymity was possibly not assured. The researcher realises the need to check the physical context thoroughly in further research processes.

The semi-structured interview schedule was helpful and assisted in starting the conversation and guiding the process for the researcher. All of the interviews resulted in the researcher conversing with the participants on the subject of supervision. Most of the participants became quite self-reflective and identified many of their own concerns and achievements in relation to their work in their Isibindi programme. The conversations were personal and considered, and each participant appeared to take the process seriously. The researcher was humbled by the commitment displayed by participants towards children and youth. All of the participants linked the discussion to the delivery of improved services to the young people with whom they work.

## **2.5 CONCLUSION**

This research used a qualitative approach to explore and understand the supervision model being used in the Isibindi programme. The nature of the research was one of exploration and description particularly due to the limited information on this topic.

The phenomenological orientation was used in order to try and make meaning of the model of supervision and to understand its various elements.

The researcher used deliberate selection of the nine participants and had direct contact with them. They were selected through a non-probability sampling process to ensure that they would have knowledge about the subject matter and be able to engage critically with it.

A semi-structured interview schedule was designed and used for this research. This allowed for the researcher to ask open-ended and probing questions and acted as a guide to the interview process. The researcher interviewed nine participants – four in a face-to-face interview and five in telephone interviews. All the interviews were tape recorded and the researcher took written notes in each interview.

The researcher transcribed the nine interviews herself, and then analysed the data captured through the formation of themes and subthemes.

The need for validity of the research was recognised by the researcher and attempts to ensure the trustworthiness of the process were made. Triangulation of various sources of information was used as one of the strategies to ensure validity.

Ethical considerations were made regarding confidentiality, informed consent, voluntary participation, do no harm, publication and decision-making. The

researcher was very aware of these considerations due to her position as training manager in the organisation and the resulting possibility of a power imbalance in the research with the participants.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Data analysis is a complex process which involves going backwards and forwards between data, and in the end making meaning of this data. According to Wong (2008), “qualitative data is often subjective, rich, and consists of in-depth information normally presented in the form of words. Analysing qualitative data entails reading a large amount of transcripts looking for similarities or differences, and subsequently finding themes and developing categories”.

Tolich and Davidson (1999:112-114) say that themes represent the theoretical interest of the research. The researcher thus attempted to draft various themes from the data gathered from the participants by going through the written notes taken during the interviews, and listening to and transcribing the recorded conversations. Neuman (2000:441) states that qualitative analysis needs more effort by the researcher to read and reread the data, then to reflect on what has been read and to make comparisons based on logic and judgement. It also allows the researcher to go back to the subject and check and recheck what was said. The researcher needed to ensure that the study was credible in that the descriptions were accurate, and that other child and youth care workers in the other Isibindi sites would be able to recognise and agree with the experiences (De Vos et al., 1998:349). The findings should also be applicable to other contexts, settings or other groups. In other words, the findings should be able to be generalised to a larger population (De Vos et al., 1998:349). It is recognised that with the small sample of nine subjects, generalisation of the research is limited.



## **3.2 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS**

The research was conducted with nine participants. All of the participants were employed as child and youth care workers at six different Isibindi sites. Four of the participants were from a site in the Western Cape and the remaining five were from five different sites in the Eastern Cape.

All nine participants were female and varied in age from 31 to 46 years old. Two managers or supervisors were interviewed, as were five supervisors and two supervisees. The two managers were responsible for managing the total project which included supervising the supervisors in the project. Four of the participants were accredited trainers as well as supervisors. All of the seven supervisors managed and were responsible for individual families as well and five of the participants were also responsible for managing other programmes at the Isibindi site.

## **3.3 RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **3.3.1 Overview of the themes and subthemes**

The researcher began the process of analysis by capturing the data. Each of the interviews was recorded and these were transcribed by the researcher herself. This allowed for the researcher to become immersed in the data. As the researcher went back and forth between the recordings, the written notes and the transcriptions, she began to identify different themes which emerged (Garfat, 1998:64-65). The researcher then began to identify common themes across all the participants as well as various subthemes within the common themes.

The data collection resulted in the researcher discovering four main themes each including some subthemes. These are as follows:

- 3.3.1.1 *Methods of supervision*
  - Consultative supervision
  - Online supervision
  - Group supervision
  - Peer supervision
  
- 3.3.1.2 *Importance of training*
  - Consultative supervision training
  - Accredited training
  - Self-development/knowledge
  - Attending of workshops
  
- 3.3.1.3 *Experience of supervision*
  - Challenges - threat to other child and youth care workers
  - Growing and learning
  - Being a role model
  - Motivation
  
- 3.3.1.4 *Elements of supervision*
  - Planned - purpose and goals, use of agendas
  - Flexible
  - Doing with*
  - Holding people accountable
  - Giving support and encouragement
  - Empowerment of others
  - Using life space work
  - Communication skills

### **3.3.2 Discussion of themes and subthemes**

#### *3.3.2.1 Methods used in the delivery of supervision*

The participants all described various methods of supervision which they used in the Isibindi programme. The methods described included consultative

supervision, online supervision, group supervision and peer supervision. It would seem that these different methods are seen as complementary and are all used. The responses of the participants indicate the different methods and the complementary factor of the methods as follows:

*“Because I have nine cycw [child and youth care workers] I am ensuring that in the month I did on-line supervision with one cycw and other cycw and also I am ensuring that I am doing the consultative supervision with all cycw so that they can get that support...”*

*“Ok – I started as a supervisor in 2007 – it was June until now – I supervise the cycw – I use different types of supervision – which is the consultative supervision, on-line supervision, group supervision and peer supervision.”*

*“Consultative supervision is the formal supervision, I can say..... during the discussion it is when I pick up any challenges with the family – so from consultative supervision this is when we go to on-line supervision ... In on-line supervision I go straight to the family with the cycw ... The group supervision – sit down and come together and we evaluate everything about the family and the performance of the team and the tasks on the time sheet – I give the supervisees a chance to give the feedback to the supervisor.”*

*“Now peer supervision – now I give a chance to the team members to lead the supervision and ask questions.”*

*“I also give support – I do the supervision with the cycws and with their supervisors. I do individual supervision - I do consultative supervision with the cycws – I give them feedback to different cycws how they are doing individually, how is she progressing or is she on the same place she was when she first started ... I also do on-line supervision because I have to know the families – I have to know the people that we are working with – all the families that the cycws are working with.”*

*“I do on-line and also consultative supervision. On-line supervision I do mostly when the cycws need me – when they ask for it – or when I see that maybe the cycw, according to her report is struggling to go to the families – then I request on-line supervision and then you go and do on-line supervision. And also consultative supervision – especially during the month end – when I am doing the paper work – I do consultative supervision – I ask them to come and do consultative supervision if there is a need.”*

The concept of different methods of supervision in a child and youth care programme is supported by Ward (n.d.), who states that “people need a whole spectrum of support and supervision opportunities which include both the formal planned sessions, the peer support of group meetings and the ‘on-the-spot’ support ...”.

The description of the different methods of supervision being delivered in a complementary manner is supported by Gannon (2003), who asserts that “supervision should be available both on the floor where and when one is working and also on a regular basis to examine and reflect”.

#### *3.3.2.2 The importance of training*

The importance and value of training for the supervisors was identified as a theme by the researcher. All of the participants identified the value of training for themselves as supervisors. Four subthemes were identified in the interviews: consultative supervision training, accredited training, self-development and attending workshops.

- *Consultative supervision training*

The common training that all supervisors – seven of the participants – had received was consultative supervision. This is four-day training offered by the NACCW where the focus is on the training of supervisors in the child and youth care field. The training was developed and designed by the NACCW in 1998. The participants commented about their experience of the training as follows:

*“The training helped me a lot – at first it was difficult to be with cycws who did not meet the minimum standards – it helped me to build my confidence when I am doing my work – because I am young I felt that maybe people will not listen to me – it helped me to forget about my age and concentrate on doing my work – it lift my self-esteem. Now I am a new person – I am trying to do my work so that the cycws can see I am a leader – I am leading them and need them to be with me on work – to work according to the minimum standards of the NACCW – to do the work the way it must be done. So it has really, really boosted my confidence – I am doing my work now fine but at first it was not easy.”*

*“Consultative supervision – this helped me a lot because I was first employed as a cycw I don’t know anything about supervision. So consultative supervision helped me to know how to do consultative – how to develop others in their work – understand that supervision has a purpose and a goal.”*

*“Trained to consultative supervision in Durban last year. Learnt a lot – I was not aware that I was supposed to give the supervisee a chance to come with an agenda. I was also not aware that when you have the supervision with someone you are not only supposed to focus only on the negative – you also have to highlight the strengths and achievements – another thing before I received the training in consultative supervision I did not feel comfortable to even go alone to the families without the cycw – to ask what is the cycw doing in the*

*family and what time did she come to the family – I attend the consultative supervision and decided that this is not the good way of doing things ...”*

*“I learnt a lot – even the styles of leading people which is supervising people – to listen to people - give them a chance to make suggestions – don’t make decisions for them in order for them to respect the decisions they have to take part in making the decision.”*

*“We are doing the FETC and also attend the Consultative Supervision training - we now know that we are on the right track – supervision is not only about work we also have to know about feelings - the cycw and ours.”*

The two supervisees both indicated that this same training had had a positive effect on the supervisors.

*“Supervisors went to Durban for training – this seems to help them – they meet with other supervisors and also went to see another site and this helped them to know what to do. They have a passion for their work and are concerned about the community – are role models to us.”*

The value and importance of training supervisors is supported by Borders (2001) when she states in her discussion on what constitutes a “good” supervisor that “all benefit from training experiences in which they focus on supervision knowledge and skills, reflect on their role and responsibilities, and receive input from others about their work as supervisors”.

Garfat and Anglin (1996:18-21), in their discussion on what makes learning relevant, support the need for training: “training is essential to the delivery of a quality service, the support of staff, the assurance of objectivity in practice, the prevention of institutional abuse, the continued growth of the field and the transferability of skills and knowledge.”

- *Accredited training*

Four of the nine participants were also accredited trainers for the NACCW – they all commented about the value of the accredited training offered by the NACCW and the impact of their being a trainer on their supervision. The comments indicate this as follows:

*“The training that helps me a lot – also I am a trainer for NACCW – the training of people in all those modules it reminds me of everything again and again – when training the group I also grow – it develops myself by reading and explaining everything to the learners - am I on track?”*

*“Ja – even the accredited training – it has played a big role – there is the self awareness – know your triggers – I love self awareness – you have to know you self first – you can then come to the team and if you know yourself you will be able to work with the people – you will be able to control your anger – control your feelings – control your behaviour – so self awareness is the best for me. Even the behaviour management – module 13 – when you supervise people you have to know how to handle their behaviour – also when you do not know the background of the person you will start judging the person – training on module 7 the lifespan development – the context it plays a big role in understanding the young person’s development also the adult’s – there are some people in the conflict cycle – sometimes you have to use cultural understanding to develop that person.”*

*“It seems to me that the training that the NACCW gives us as supervisors help us to be equipped because most of the things we have done in the modules – I can be able to explain it through the training guides – I can explain the assessments to the other cycw which was difficult for them to understand – able to know what I am doing now.”*

*“This helped me a lot to train – learn to speak English – learn to clarify things more when you train and also you learn to do child and youth care work in the right way – you are learning every day when you do training. Even if you did not know something before now when you train it starts to become clear – you also do things differently –”*

The need for supervisors to have knowledge and understanding of child and youth care practice is supported by Phelan (2009) where he states that a supervisor should be able to ‘articulate’ the theory of child and youth care.

- *Self-development*

Most of the participants also referred to the need for self-development as a supervisor. This characteristic appears to be another common thread in relation to the way in which the participants supervise in the Isibindi programme. Some of the participants referred to knowing oneself or the importance of developing oneself. The following comments refer to the need for self-development and awareness of self, both for the supervisor and the supervisees:

*“I am also improving my skills – it also encourages me to learn, I have gone to the library so that I can read books.”*

*“It is also a very motivational process when you are a supervisor – because you become a new person.....*

*Because you are not doing things like you usually did before – you are not being the person that you were before – you are trying to keep things on track – how to manage people – how to manage child and youth care workers – how to deal with issues that is supervision - how to support child and youth care workers.”*

*“... it develops myself by reading and explaining everything to the learners - am I on track? Also by having supervision with my supervisor because she advise me when I am tired sometimes and want someone*



*to supervise me and to encourage me to do everything – also supports me in everything that I am doing – we have consultative supervision.”*

*“... there is the self awareness – know your triggers – I love self awareness - you have to know you self first – you can then come to the team and if you know yourself you will be able to work with the people – you will be able to control your anger – control your feelings – control your behaviour – so self awareness is the best for me.”*

*“Because we need to ensure that they are on track every day and that they are caring for themselves in order to care for the children that they work with.”*

Liberatore (1981) supports the notion of self-development and indicates that training should challenge child and youth care workers to look at themselves in order to know where they need to change and grow. He explains that “becoming an effective child care worker is a developmental process involving the whole person”. Anglin (1992), in his discussion on the development of staff, states that self-awareness, the sense of self and development of self are central to the educational process in child and youth care.

- *Attending workshops*

Participants referred to attending workshops and leadership seminars and how these impacted on their supervision as follows:

*“Also things are changing and as supervisors we also go to the community gatherings/workshops – then when we understand we come back and report – I will tell them what happened at the gathering/workshop – what we were taught there by our mentors – how are we supposed to be working. They do understand now.”*

*“I have been having trainings that I am attending in Durban – after each and every training when I am coming back I do the report to all the*

*cycw so that I am not only the person who knows about the disability – everything that I am learning there I am coming back and report it to the cycws.”*

*“Consultative supervision cannot be done once for supervisors but at least yearly – so that you can get more knowledge about supervision – I did consultative supervision in 2007 – maybe we can meet as supervisors for workshops it will help us a lot so that we can know what we are doing in our work is fine.”*

*“I attend workshops – and when I am coming back I share what I have learnt at the workshops.”*

*“Also things are changing and as supervisors we also go to the community gatherings/workshops – then when we understand we come back and report – I will tell them what happened at the gathering/workshop – what we were taught there by our mentors – how are we supposed to be working. They do understand now.”*

Further support for the value and importance of training for supervisors and their ongoing development can be found in Phelan (2009), who discusses what makes a competent supervisor, and identifies the need for a supervisor to be able to articulate and implement the theory of child and youth care work – which would require training and experience in this work. Secondly, a competent supervisor should know what his/her own beliefs are around change and how to assist others to change.

Scott (2005) supports the idea of supervisors being competent and having knowledge and skills. Supervisors in the Isibindi model should “fully understand the child and youth care profession, and are qualified child and youth care professionals. They should understand the characteristics of a child and youth care approach to working with young people and/or their families as well as be able to demonstrate these characteristics in their child and youth care supervisory practice”.

### 3.3.2.3 *The experiences of being a supervisor*

A third theme that emerged in the interviews was the various experiences of the participants in the role of supervisor. Experiences referred to included supervision being a challenge, feeling that supervision was a threat to some of the child and youth care workers, the experience of the supervisor growing and learning, the need to be a role model and the need to remain motivated. Comments from participants support these experiences as follows:

*“... they must know that supervision is when they will encourage, they will support – they will encourage more training and better learning for the cycws – they will also have to be a role model for the cycws – they learn from us.”*

*“Being a supervisor is challenging – at the same time I have learnt a lot – teach me a lot of new things – working with people is something! Sometimes you explain something to the workers and discuss with them and then at the end of the day they say they don’t know – this is difficult. But as a cycw I have learnt from the cycw – others have more experience than I have – can give me advice – it is important to listen to them – can give you suggestions.”*

*“Feel threatened – some have more experience they have been working for 7 years – But now as the time goes on I have no negative feelings – know I am a supervisor – give support and learn from them – they also learn from me – give each other feedback.”*

*“So they do not understand that I am not a policeman – I am helping to ensure that the work is done effectively with the families.”*

*“Yes okay – what I am going to tell you about my experiences in supervision – as a supervisor I experience that it is important in order to*

*help others you should know yourself so that you can be able to help others”.*

*“On Thursdays we motivate them by speaking the motivational words-”*

*“Also experience that in order for your work to be effective you need to support and guide so that each and everyone can be able to express his/her ideas – and encourage each cycw so that by your guiding her/him – you give her motivation – power to do things better.”*

*“But as a cycw I have learnt from the cycw - others have more experience than I have – can give me advice – it is important to listen to them – can give you suggestions.”*

*“We find out that as a supervisor it helps to be in control – because there are conflicts sometimes that are happening with cycw.....”*

*“Supervision is helping someone to develop – it really works – you can’t develop unless you have support – must be encouraged and know when doing well. Treat everyone equal – not to favour anyone.”*

*“– it is not easy to supervise – because sometimes you have to explain what is supervision about – it is about support, it is about encouragement - but to other people you are going to spy on them – you are going to see what they are doing in the community. Supervision is lots of work.”*

*“Being a supervisor – you meet a lot of challenges - you supervise different people – you do not always agree on certain things – you also have to be humble so that you can agree just for the sake of the family that you are working with. Also you work with different cycws - some do not want to do cycw but is after the money – so when you confront the person you are not always liked by the cycws because you are doing corrective work – you are correcting what they are doing wrong.”*

*“Another experience I had was that at first it was not easy for me to supervise older people than me – because they have that thing that I am young – I can’t tell them what to do – they are not realising that I am not telling them what to do but working with them along the way – to make sure that we are doing our work according to the minimum standards.”*

*“It is challenging – it is very much challenging – because I have to make sure that all the families are being serviced effectively – I also have the safe parks now – we have four safe parks – I have to make sure that those safe parks are being well kept – and that children are playing – and that there are cycws in all those safe parks. I supervise everything every day ...”*

*“Another challenge is the cycw wanting to know why we went with someone else and not them. We have to make sure we include everyone in decisions and so encourage them to all participate. Another challenge is that we do not have an office where we can do the formal individual supervision – other sites have an office.”*

*“Another challenge is the M & E – we need to verify the time sheets every day and not just once a week.”*

The challenges of being a supervisor are pointed out by Mitchell (2007). These challenges are identified as being linked to personal supervision, administration, education and supportive supervision. Digney (2007) cautions that a supervisor should be on the alert for signs of conflict in an effort to minimise the threats to the supervisory relationship. Bradley and Gould (2002) discuss the fact of supervisee resistance as a common occurrence, and state that this resistance occurs because of the dynamics of the supervision process – and that resistance is an appropriate response to supervision. Another aspect of the experience of supervision is the parallel process which occurs where supervisees may not be able to verbalise their feelings and so

instead communicate these feelings in supervision through their responses to supervision (Mann-Feder, 2002). The need for supervisors to grow and learn and to be role models is reinforced by Phelan (1990), who identifies the three stages of development of a child and youth care worker as well as the supervisory needs at each stage.

#### 3.3.2.4 *The elements of supervision*

Various elements of supervision were consistently identified and described by the participants. These elements seem to be congruent with the child and youth care approach and mirror many of the characteristics of such an approach. The elements are as follows:

- *Planned/intentionality of action*

All of the participants described the supervisory process as a planned and purposeful one. They all spoke of the need to supervise according to a plan. The use of agendas in supervision was mentioned by all nine participants. There was also mention of the expectation of their supervisees to plan their work with the young people and families. There was a clear thread in all the interviews relating to supervision being planned, purposeful and goal directed – this relates to the characteristic of child and youth care work having intentionality of action. Comments by the participants pertaining to intentionality of action are as follows:

*“... firstly it helped me to see that the work is done with a purpose to the families – I have to ask the cycw to have a plan for the families – to have a purpose – why is she visiting the family.”*

*“I start off when we are at the safe park at the office – I ask the cycws to give me their plan for the week – we do our plan weekly – I should know where the cycw is every week – I have the plan –”*

*“We come with an agenda – what we are going to talk about according to her work, according to what I know – I ask her to give me whatever she wants to talk about – so that we can draw up an agenda – we will talk about her things that she wrote down and we will talk – I will give advice and feedback about the work that she has done –”*

*“–we have meetings every Thursday and every Tuesday we do administration work.”*

*“In Consultative Supervision we discuss the challenges of the family and when we do the Consultative the cycw comes with his/her agenda and I come with my own agenda. Discuss what he/she wants to discuss and I can discuss what I need to discuss with him/her.”*

*“We need to draw up the agenda when we have supervision - the group does this together and when we do individual supervision the cycw has his/her agenda and the supervisor has hers.”*

*“In on-line supervision we prepare the cycw and the family - this is planned visits.”*

*“This is held once a week with the project manager – there is an agenda – we have a meeting where we all report back on our families - are encouraged by everyone –”*

Delano (2001) supports the need for an agenda and urges supervisees to take an agenda to supervision and “to contract the ‘one-third’ model with” their supervisor. This means that the supervision time will be spent as one third looking at what the supervisee wants to discuss, one third discussing what the supervisor wishes to talk about and the remainder of the time being left for critical issues. He goes on to advise supervisees to ensure that their agendas are delivered to their supervisor a day before the supervision, so that both parties can plan accordingly. Brown and Bourne (1996) describe formal

supervision as a planned, arranged event and infer the need for agendas in such a meeting.

- *Flexibility of approach*

Seven of the participants referred to the need to be flexible in their approach to supervision as seen in the following comments:

*“ - they have to observe – maybe when they observe that whatever they came for has happened because this thing – something that crops up – now they work in the moment – don’t think of the plan because you had a plan, if there is something that needs urgent attention do it – then can report that I have done this and this – I am not going to judge them for not sticking to the plan.”*

*“On-line supervision I do mostly when the cycws need me – when they ask for it – or when I see that maybe the cycw, according to her report is struggling to go to the families – then I request on-line supervision and then you go and do on-line supervision.”*

*“Well being a supervisor it is important to be flexible – to allow change to the cycw – whenever something changes – if the plan changes – you have to work with that...”*

*“Also during the week anyone who has a challenge can call me for doing consultative supervision.”*

*“... discuss what he/she wants to discuss and I can discuss what I need to discuss with him/her. So if there is something that he/she did not write or I did not write we can still discuss it.”*

*“This can also happen if the cycw requests it or if the supervisor sees the need to pick something up with the cycw on his/her own .... Sometimes there are urgent issues and crises after hours and then the*



*cycw come and call us from our houses to come with them to the families.”*

*“Okay – consultative supervision I have it on a weekly basis; online depends – can be daily depending on the challenges in the family ...”*

Michael (2005) supports the need for the element of flexibility and states that just as the child and youth care worker should be working flexibly with young people, so should the supervisor be flexible in their approach to the supervisee. McManus (2009) discusses her experience as a student and what she learnt from her supervisor. She identifies one of the skills she learnt as flexibility and says that this was role modelled to her by her supervisor who was flexible in supervision around time, formats and venue of the supervision. This taught her to be more flexible with her clients and other colleagues.

- *Doing with (not FOR or TO)*

All the supervisors who participated in the interviews spoke clearly about going with their supervisees to do their online supervision and working with them to support and guide them in their work with their families. The following comments speak to the *doing with*:

*“When we do the online to the family – we do the online to the family with the cycw.”*

*“To me supervision is someone who is the leader – so that everything we do is perfect in our work – I also think that it is someone who shows others the way of how to do things – and I also think that supervision is to give support and guidance.”*

*“When we get there they introduce me to the family – and after that we do the work activity with the cycw, the child and the family –”*

*“I have to involve the supervisors – they report back to me – then we will go with the cycw and do on-line supervision with the family and with the cycw.”*

*“In on-line supervision I go straight to the family with the cycw – what is the cycw supposed to be doing with the family – give support – ensure that the cycw is working in the right way –”*

*“When we do the on-line supervision we plan the time to meet with the cycws – so we can go to the families – with the cycws. When we get there they introduce me to the family – and after that we do the work activity with the cycw, the child and the family – I observe the work that the cycw does – I involve myself in those activities that the cycw is doing.”*

*“So if they are doing on-line supervision I ask can I go with you to the families so that I can see your supervisee and also their families – I go with the supervisor and the cycw to the families that she has chosen...”*

*“I have to promise them that I am there for them all the time whenever they need me ... I also go with them whenever they need my assistance ... go with the cycw and also the supervisor of the cycw – so that she does not have to think I am doing her job – we go together to the families ... we do with them – I don’t go and supervise and tell people what to do – so that the family can see how to do things – we do with them and we expect them to do these things when we are gone.”*

*“We also meet with the cycw in the community – this is on-line supervision – we go with the cycw – when he/she requests us to – if they are struggling with something in the family – but the supervisor makes sure that she visits with every cycw between Mondays – Thursdays.”*

The two supervisees who were interviewed experienced the online supervision as being done TO and not WITH them as evident in this comment:

*“Comes from the on-line supervision where we go to the families – a supervisor just sits and says nothing – looks at what we are doing -”*

Phelan (2009) discusses the concept of the wounded healer and the need for the child and youth care worker to “do with others” in their life space rather than “doing to” or “doing for”. He states that “when the worker is able to do things with the other, a mutuality has been established where both people are consciously choosing to join each other in the in-between place ... The CYC practitioner is now capable of being both fully present for the other and also self-reflective. They are both able to be present in the moment and open to new possibilities”.

Garfat (2008) suggests that not *doing with*, but merely watching others is not helpful, and that by doing nothing supervisors will possibly get nothing. This supports the feeling of the supervisees whose supervisors went with them to the families but did not *do with* them as described by other participants.

Michael (2005) supports the element of *doing with* in her discussion on life space supervision where she states that “life-space supervision can help workers to make this transition and see how theory can be practically applied. While experiencing the supervisor’s intense involvement in their everyday work life, the worker learns how to engage in the life space of young people. In experiencing it, they learn it. If a child and youth care approach to supervision is to be effective, then the supervisor must be able to model the actions, orientation and attitude they wish to see workers adopt with children, youth and their families”.

- *Accountability*

All of the participants constantly emphasised the principle of accountability expected of them as supervisors or supervisees and of their expectations of the supervisees or supervisors. They defined their role in terms of the expectations of them to be accountable as supervisors both in their practice and their administrative roles. It would seem that this principle is an essential

element of the model of supervision in the Isibindi model and one which is clearly understood and practised by the supervisors. The supervisors see their role as ensuring that their supervisees are being accountable and they themselves are modelling accountability to their supervisees.

*“I am doing on line supervision whereby I am visiting the families of the cycw to ensure that the cycw are providing the good service to the families that they work with...”*

*“Discuss firstly we do the administration – calculate the time sheet of the cycw – after calculating the time sheet I will check if the daily activities correspond with the daily narrative of the cycw.”*

*“I use this supervision in order to make sure that the workers are on the right track.”*

*“I am helping to ensure that the work is done effectively with the families.”*

*“My role as a supervisor is to do administration in my work – and also hold the accountability of the work.”*

*“To ensure that we are giving services that are good to the family – I also think that my function as a supervisor is also to motivate/to encourage the cycws that are under my supervision – and also to have confidentiality – they know when they share something with me I should keep that ... I make sure that most of my time is spent to ensure that each and every cycw understand what he/she is doing.”*

*“I also ask the family how the cycw is doing his/her work so that they can express what they feel about what they are doing as a cycw.”*

*“I attend workshops – and when I am coming back I share what I have learnt at the workshops.”*

*“...we are flexible and can help each other but must be sure of confidentiality – if not can cause communication breakdown – this is always sorted out in the group.”*

*“Because we need to ensure that they are on track every day and that they are caring for themselves in order to care for the children that they work with.”*

*“Changes have happened with the admin – must now be done every day and supervisors have to assess and then sign our work – we have to show that we follow a plan of action with the families.”*

*“...but the supervisor makes sure that she visits with every cycw between Mondays –Thursdays.”*

The element of being held accountable in child and youth care work is supported by Gannon (2001) who maintains that we are all accountable to the families and young people with whom we work, and hence we should all be prepared to answer the question “why are you doing that?”. He continues by stating that being held accountable assists us in our skills development and personal growth. Hudson (1994) describes supervision as incorporating the elements of accountability, development and support. He explains that accountability is where the supervisor is accountable for the supervisee’s work and where he/she checks that this work is being done.

- *Empowerment*

Another element which appears to be intrinsic to the model of supervision in Isibindi would be that of empowerment of others. The participants explained how the child and youth care workers are taught skills and advised on how to do tasks.

*“On Thursdays we motivate them by speaking the motivational words – some of the cycw do this thing of motivational words so that they would develop and not depend on the management so that when we are not there they can then motivate others in the foster care – also develop the skill to lead the meetings – develop the skills and develop.”*

*“Supervisor does not take the task and do the task but rather advise the cycw how to do the task.”*

*“ ... don’t make decisions for them in order for them to respect the decisions they have to take part in making the decision.”*

*“I ask her to give me whatever she wants to talk about – so that we can draw up an agenda - we will talk about her things that she wrote down and we will talk - I will give advice and feedback about the work that she has done – and also it is very important to praise her for work done well.”*

*“Also about the challenges that are in the families I give them the cycw the task to do so that they can develop the cycw by not doing it myself so that the cycw know what we support there – grow cycw.”*

*“We do not solve problem ourselves as supervisors – we call the cycw and ask both sides of the story and after discussing with the cycw their story they also come up with the solution to their conflict – they can know that they do solve their problem not saying that the person did this and this - because if I can say that they will have the conflict after they have left – If they solve the conflict on their own they will ensure that we do sort it – because like Restorative Justice – they will use this and will know that they solved their problem on their own.”*

Empowerment as an element of effective supervision is identified by Gilberg and Charles (2007) in their discussion of what makes great supervision. One of the elements that they identify is encouraging autonomy. They state that

“supervisors who encourage autonomy in their staff provide them with frameworks and questions that tease out the choices and the trade-offs in a given situation”.

Burnison (2007) describes what makes good supervision and suggests that when supervision is done skilfully, it enhances the effectiveness and continued development of child and youth care workers, who in turn do better work with children and youth.

- *Use of daily life events as a focus for intervention*

All participants indicated that they do online supervision as one of the methods of supervision in the Isibindi programme. The description of the online supervision is using the daily life events of the supervisee in their work with families as the focus for the supervisory intervention. The following comments refer to the use of the daily life events:

*“I go with the cycw and also the supervisor of the cycw – so that she does not have to think I am doing her job – we go together to the families - we talk about everything in the family so that we know what to expect when we get there – when we are there we talk – she introduces us to the family – then we talk whatever we need to talk about – we do whatever we need to do – if maybe there is a problem with hygiene we show them how it should look – we do it with them – we show them how to put things – how to put things in a safe place so that everything can be clean – we do it with them and then we tell them that every time we come we need to see that they do whatever we have shown you what to do – we do with them – I don’t go and supervise and tell people what to do – so that the family can see how to do things – we do with them and we expect them to do these things when we are gone”*

*“When we do the on-line supervision we plan the time to meet with the cycws – so we can go to the families – with the cycws. When we get*

*there they introduce me to the family – and after that we do the work activity with the cycw, the child and the family – I observe the work that the cycw does – I involve myself in those activities that the cycw is doing. – I also ask the family how the cycw is doing his/her work so that they can express what they feel about what they are doing as a cycw.”*

*“When we do the online to the family - we do the online to the family with the cycw.”*

*“In on-line supervision I go straight to the family with the cycw – what is the cycw supposed to be doing with the family – give support – ensure that the cycw is working in the right way.”*

*“I learnt a lot – even the styles of leading people which is supervising people – to listen to people – give them a chance to make suggestions – don’t make decisions for them in order for them to respect the decisions they have to take part in making the decision.”*

Michael (2005) supports the need for the supervisor to be in the life space of the worker in the following definition of life space supervision: “life-space supervision is supervision which takes place in the working-space of the worker, which is the life-space of the children. It is a process in which the supervisor is present in the worker’s life-space as a support and coach observing, modelling, teaching, and intervening as necessary. Thus, just as the effective child and youth care worker is present in the living space of the child, so the effective supervisor is present in the working space of the child and youth care worker.”

- *Giving support and encouragement*

All the participants spoke about supervision entailing their giving support and encouragement to the supervisees, as well as the supervisees stating that they receive support and encouragement from their supervisors. The following comments support this element:



*“Also support the cyc and their families and advise the cycw about the challenges that are in the families.”*

*“Also about the challenges that are in the families I give them the cycw the task to do so that they can develop the cycw by not doing it myself so that the cycw know what we support there – grow cycw.”*

*“After that we discuss the things that I am going to support the cycw on – the challenges of the families and what the cycw achieved in the family – I praise the cycw so that she can know that she is doing well – and tell her/him where she can develop – but being positive to the cycw.”*

*“I use this supervision in order to make sure that the workers are on the right track and also to provide support to the workers ...”*

*“To me supervision is someone who is the leader – so that everything we do is perfect in our work – I also think that it is someone who shows others the way of how to do things – and I also think that supervision is to give support and guidance.”*

*“I also motivate and encourage them in all that they do – I support and guide them – they can come to me with anytime they have a challenge or a problem – I also encourage them in the education component to finish our modules – all of us.”*

*“... because sometimes you have to explain what is supervision about – it is about support, it is about encouragement ...”*

*“I have to promise them that I am there for them all the time whenever they need me – and also I have to praise and encourage them so that they can know that they are doing their work.”*

*“Supervision is two-way – not to tell you what to do but advise you – professional supervision ensures that you are on the right track – you get feedback about your developmental areas – you need to develop and grow and this helps you to grow – positive feedback for strengths and areas of growth.”*

The importance of a supervisor being supportive and encouraging is highlighted by Stein (2005) as one of the ten principles of effective management of staff. He talks about the need for supervisors to highlight the strengths and accomplishments of staff rather than focusing on the weaknesses. He states that by doing this the staff member will feel recognised and appreciated. Hudson (1994) also talks of support as one of the elements of supervision and suggests that supervision needs to help the supervisee understand their situations and give them support in order to deal with the stresses of the work.

- *Communication skills*

Another common element mentioned by all participants was the need to be able to use communication skills effectively – one of which is to be able to give and receive feedback as a supervisor. Another communication skill is being able to confront others effectively. Some of them found this a challenge, whilst others mentioned it as part of their role as a supervisor. Some of the comments are as follows:

*“The group supervision –sit down and come together and we evaluate everything about the family and the performance of the team and the tasks on the time sheet – I give the supervisees a chance to give the feedback to the supervisor.”*

*“... know I am a supervisor – give support and learn from them – they also learn from me – give each other feedback.”*

*“I also experience that even me that I should accept feedback and also give people/person which I supervise the positive feedback so that they do not take feedback that is something that is negative but something that change him/her.”*

*“... and also I have to give them feedback – because it is very important to give feedback to the workers so that they know whether they are going forward or backwards in their work.”*

*“We then do what we normally do – supervisor watches or helps – no feedback given then – after supervision we get the feedback – how did you do.”*

*“I learnt about the confrontation/communication skills – you learn to confront – you don’t just talk anyhow – you must try to do this at the right place and the right time when you are a supervisor.”*

*“... know I am a supervisor – give support and learn from them – they also learn from me – give each other feedback.”*

*“... they will also have to be a role model for the cycws – they learn from us – need to be comfortable and earn respect – correct the wrong things – give feedback – which can be either positive or negative – in the consultative supervision – very important to confront – need to know how to do this, where to do this and when to do this.”*

The importance of a supervisor having good communication skills is supported by Murray (2005), who identifies good communication skills as one of the elements of supervision that makes a good supervisor. She describes how she benefited from a supervisor who could really listen to her and communicate openly with her. She also speaks about how this same supervisor enabled her to start thinking reflectively through good communication.

### **3.4 CONCLUSION**

The process of coding the data collected and searching for common themes was experienced as “searching for gold” (Tolich & Davidson, 1999:140). The researcher found herself going back and forth when transcribing the interviews and in reflection found that doing this herself allowed for an immersion into the collected data.

The researcher found herself with a very large amount of data which then required sifting through in order to make some sense and meaning of it. Thus what is presented in this research is in no way all the possible findings from the data collected, but rather what constituted meaning to the researcher in terms of the research questions being asked.

The researcher found herself coding and analysing from the first interviews and so began to “fine-tune” her data collection (Tolich & Davidson, 1999:140). This allowed the researcher to begin identifying themes and subthemes at an early stage of the research process. However, the researcher also tried to refrain from limiting participants to these themes so as to allow for a thorough exploration of the overall topic of supervision.

The themes that emerged have been categorised into four major themes, each with some subthemes. These themes were identified as the methods of supervision which included consultative, online supervision, group and peer supervision, the importance of training, the experience of supervision and the elements of supervision. The researcher found that in most of the themes all nine participants made some reference to the theme, and so a common thread for these themes was evident as can be seen in the various quotes under each of the themes in this chapter. Most of the participants concurred with one another in the data collected. However, in one of the subthemes (doing with) there were two supervisees who experienced this element as directly opposite to the supervisors and spoke about “doing to”.

The researcher was encouraged to find that there is literature support for all the main themes and most of the subthemes.

The researcher does recognise, however, that the possibility of researcher bias may be present in the way in which the themes were identified because the researcher in qualitative research is always part of “the topic/ people he/she is studying and it is in the interaction between the researcher and researched that the knowledge is created. So the researcher bias enters into the picture even if the researcher tries to stay out of it” (Mehra, 2002).

In this study the researcher was part of the organisation and has been involved in some of the training of the participants. The researcher also has a passion for the topic of supervision in child and youth care work and so she has tried to portray the reality of the participants and not her reality. The researcher asked questions in the discussion of the findings such as “so what?” and “what does this mean?” in order to explore and understand the reality of the participants and in so doing hoped to present the findings as credible and valid.

The next chapter focuses on the literature review done by the researcher pertaining to supervision and supervision in child and youth care, specifically in the Isibindi programme.

## CHAPTER 4

### SUPERVISION IN CHILD AND YOUTH CARE WORK – A LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus of this research was supervision of child and youth care workers in a community child and youth care programme, known as Isibindi. The research aimed to explore and understand what model of supervision is being used in the Isibindi programme and what elements make it effective as a model. Thus there is a need to first understand how supervision is defined and understood in the literature and then to compare this with the findings of this research.

#### 4.2 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF SUPERVISION

Supervision is defined by the *Cambridge advanced learners dictionary* (2009) as “when someone watches a person or activity and makes certain that everything is done correctly, safely etc.”. This implies that supervision may be *done to* someone and that an element of accountability is required. The literature on supervision across the different social service professions portrays varied definitions of supervision, all of which seem to allude to supervision being a *doing-with* process rather than a *doing-to* process together with the need to be accountable.

Kadushin (1992) defines social work supervision as a “cluster of functions -- administrative, educational and supportive -- performed within the context of a positive relationship by a person (supervisor) to whom authority has been delegated to direct, coordinate, enhance and evaluate the on-the-job performance of the supervisee(s) for whose work s/he is held accountable. The ultimate objective of supervision is to deliver to clients the best possible service, in accordance with agency policies and procedures. Inextricably tied

to this objective is a second objective of professional development and growth of the supervisee”.

Brown and Bourne (1996:13) define social work supervision as “a person-centred activity that places as much importance on the supervisor, relationship, feelings and staff development as on task implementation, regulation and control functions”.

Counsellor supervision is defined by Bradley and Kottler (2001) as “a process in which an experienced person (supervisor) with appropriate training and experience mentors and teaches a subordinate (supervisee). It is a process of professional and personal development in which the supervisor challenges, stimulates and encourages a counsellor to reach higher levels of competence.”

The NACCW (1998:5) defines supervision as “a goal directed contractual, interpersonal relationship which has jurisdiction over all aspects of a supervisee’s job responsibilities, performance and organisational interpersonal functioning”.

Maier (1987:195-198) talks about supervision in child and youth care work as having three areas of responsibility. He identifies the first as being to assist child and youth care workers to fulfil their work tasks competently. The second he notes as being for supervisors to provide “hurdling help” where they will help the worker in how to accomplish a task before they have actually learned how to master it. The third area is defined as assisting child and youth care workers to “become more effective in their work through an enrichment of skill and knowledge repertoire”.

Phelan (1990:140) defines supervision as a “process of motivating staff to continue to develop their professional expertise. The overall goal is to provide a better service to clients and also to increase worker satisfaction and prevent turnover”.

Garfat (2003) has suggested that supervisory interactions should be an opportunity to help workers learn about the “doing” of their work through experiencing a similar process in the relationship with their supervisor. He suggests where the approach to the programmatic work and the experience in the supervisory relationship is incongruent, then the worker becomes confused and very often the practice of child and youth care work will suffer.

In analysing the data gathered in this research, the majority of the participants described supervision as a process where they were *doing tasks with* the supervisee in order to hold them accountable. The need for supervisors to ensure that work was done according to the required minimum standards was a common thread with all participants. The participants all described their supervision as being a planned and agreed upon process which implies some form of contractual agreement between the supervisor and the supervisee.

It can be concluded then that the understanding of supervision by these participants is in accordance with many of the definitions of supervision and in particular with the aforementioned child and youth care work definitions by Maier, Garfat and Phelan and that of the NACCW – rather than being understood rigidly in accordance with only one of the definitions. This broad understanding of supervision by the participants could then impact on how they supervise in practice and so inform the model of supervision in the Isibindi programme.

### **4.3 A MODEL FOR SUPERVISION**

In discussing models of supervision Leddick (2001) states that a model develops from the systematic manner in which the supervision is applied. He identifies three models of supervision – developmental, integrated and orientation specific.

In *developmental* models of supervision the concept of one’s continual growth is the central focus. So the supervisor’s behaviour would change in response to the growth and development of the supervisee as would the supervisory



relationship. Phelan (1990:137-139) describes a developmental model of supervision in which he identifies three stages of development of a child and youth care worker in which there would be different supervisory strategies required in each stage. Magnuson and Burger (2008) discuss the concept of a developmental supervision model and define it as supervision which “aims to encourage the personal growth of the worker and to improve his/her practice competence”. This supervision has five components which organise the work setting so that there is then symmetry between the supervisor-worker relationship and the worker-young person relationship.

*Integrated* models of supervision involve the integration of various theories into the supervisory practice which would then result in the supervisor taking on different roles such as teacher, counsellor and consultant. Anglin (1992) describes an integrated model of supervision using the knowledge, skills and self (KSS) model designed by Frances Ricks in 1989.

*Orientation* specific models of supervision entail the supervisor taking on a specific psychotherapeutic orientation in the delivery of the supervisory services. An example of this would be the client-centred therapeutic approach developed by Carl Rogers. Juhnke and Culbreth (2001) describe an orientation-specific model of supervision in addiction work – they suggest that supervision in the field of addictions is a specialised area of work and that there are specific skills and knowledge required for the supervision to be effective.

After the analysis of these three models of supervision Leddick concluded that any model of supervision should attend to a safe supervisory relationship, task-directed structure, methods addressing a variety of learning styles, multiple supervisory roles and communication skills enhancing listening, analysing and evaluating. It is recommended that models grow, change and transform with experience and insight.

Michael (2005) identifies a *life space* supervision model where the supervisor would model the actions, orientations and attitudes they wish to see the

workers adopt with the young people with whom they work. Garfat (2003) suggests that the form that supervision takes would be modelled after the form that helping takes in the programme concerned. So if the child and youth care workers are required to meet with families every two weeks, the supervisor might then arrange supervision every two weeks. Thus some aspects of the form of supervision often parallel the form of practice. Therefore, where the child and youth care workers use everyday events as they are occurring, and being with the families/young people as they live their lives and intervening as the living is occurring, then the supervisor should be doing the same. This would mean that the supervisor is present when the child and youth care worker is intervening with the youth and families.

In analysing the data collected in this research it would appear that the supervision model described by the participants is a combination of an integrated model delivered in the life space of the supervisees and with a clear child and youth care approach. The participants described various roles which they take on such as teaching through their role modelling, consulting in their one-to-one formal sessions, supporting and encouraging, as well as confronting when necessary. These roles can be easily identified in the different methods of supervision described by each of the participants, namely consultative, online, group and peer supervision. Online supervision is clearly delivered in the life space of the supervisees and is characterised by the element of *doing with* each other rather than the supervisor *doing to*. Consultative supervision is more formal but is characterised by being planned and purposeful and having an agenda which both supervisor and supervisee contribute towards. Group and peer supervision are both characterised by the elements of giving support and encouragement as well as empowerment of others.

These characteristics have been identified as some of the characteristics of a child and youth care approach to working with youth and their families at risk (Garfat & McElwee, 2004:15). The conclusion could then be made that the model of supervision in Isibindi compares to Garfat's suggestion that the model of supervision should take on the form of practice in the programme.

This conclusion concurs with Scott's suggestion (2005) that the Isibindi model of supervision should ensure that the supervisors are community based and not office bound, that they fully understand the child and youth care profession and are qualified child and youth care professionals. They should understand the characteristics of a child and youth care approach to working with young people and/or their families as well as be able to demonstrate these characteristics in their child and youth care supervisory practice. This would require the supervisors to have certain knowledge and skills.

#### **4.4 NEED FOR KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS AS A SUPERVISOR**

The above conclusions about the understanding of supervision and the model of supervision that is practised in the Isibindi programme assume that the supervisor will have certain knowledge and skills in order to perform his/her job effectively. All of the participants in this research indicated that they had received training in consultative supervision, as well as other relevant child and youth care courses, and all spoke about the value of this training. They all mentioned their involvement in ongoing workshops and the need for self-development and knowledge. Five of the participants were also registered trainers and were involved in training child and youth care workers in accredited training. The question to ask is whether this training is an essential aspect of the model of supervision being delivered in the Isibindi programme. What is required of the supervisor in order to be effective and efficient in her supervision of others?

Phelan (2009) states that "the CYC supervisor must have a theory of CYC practice that he/she can articulate and implement within the staff group. Implicit in this first ingredient is the necessity for the supervisor to have both CYC training and experience".

This then supports the fact that all the supervisor participants had been trained in the accredited child and youth care training – Further Education and Training Certificate: Child and Youth Care Work.

Borders (2001) says that supervisors should be trained in supervision knowledge and skills as well as know their roles and responsibilities and should receive input from others about their work as a supervisor. Anglin (1992) states that the knowledge areas required for staff development should not just be taught but done so “in conjunction with the exploration of self and the development of skill”. This refers to the KSS model for staff development and includes the need for staff to receive training in theory and practice as well as encouraging self-reflection and awareness.

Mitchell (2007) discusses the need for preparation of new supervisors and states that “on-line child care skills do not adequately prepare one to deal with the transition to a new set of expectations — indeed, a whole new 'mind-set' in terms of relationship issues, and the responsibility which comes with the supervisory role”. Hence she argues that new supervisors need preparation and skills to cope with the new expectations of them.

Maier (1987:195-196) states that “supervision serves to assist child/youth care workers to become more effective in their work through an enrichment of skill and knowledge repertoire”. He asserts that it is the supervisors who then become the trainers or teachers of their supervisees – and who need to be able to think what it is that the supervisee needs to learn in the next supervisory session. The supervisor needs to know what the supervisee needs to know and to learn.

Diamond (1998), in his discussion on staff development, quotes Hawkins and Shohet who state that “social workers, counsellors and therapists, etc. are best able to facilitate others to learn if they are supported in constantly learning and developing themselves. An organisation that is learning and developing right from the top of the organisation to the bottom is far more likely to be meeting the needs of the clients, because it is also meeting the needs of the staff”.

An article on new supervisors suggests that often supervisors are promoted without any training for the new job and struggle to do what is expected of

them, becoming confused and uncertain and feeling inadequate. Hence the need to ensure that training is given (Punished for hard work ..., 2005). Phelan (1990:132-141) discusses the functions of supervision and points out that many of the tasks require managerial training but that over and above that is the need for supervisors to have “achieved a high level of competence in their own child care professional development”. Supervisors who do not have this competence will make little impact on their supervisees. Supervisors need to know how to problem solve, be able to demonstrate practice and assist supervisees to think more broadly and deeply about their challenges with the young people. Supervisors need to be aware of the developmental stages of staff, and in understanding these be able to assist staff to grow and change as professionals.

Garfat and Anglin (1996:18-21), in their discussion on relevant learning, state that training “is seen as essential to the delivery of quality service, the support of staff, the assurance of objectivity in practice, the prevention of institutional abuse, the continued growth of the field and the transferability of skills and knowledge”.

They continue to unpack the differences between training and education and define these as “education being a learning activity with the focus on the acquisition of knowledge or conceptual abilities whilst training is a learning activity with a focus on the skill development of the worker”.

In analysing the responses from the participants in this research in line with the literature on the need for training, it can be concluded that the training of the Isibindi supervisors has added value to the model in that the supervisors have been prepared for their new roles and responsibilities. It would appear that there is recognition of the need for the supervisors to have both education in supervision as well as ongoing training (workshops). The need for this training to be integrated and explored in conjunction with self-awareness and self-development was evident in all the responses of the participants. The participants linked this self-awareness to their experience of being a supervisor in the programme.

## 4.5 EXPERIENCE OF SUPERVISION

The participants all referred to their experience of supervision as changed once they had completed the consultative supervision training. The experience of being a supervisor varied from being challenging to rewarding.

Digney (2007) describes his experience of being a supervisor and how he learnt to use humour appropriately within the supervisory relationship. He explains that “the supervision process does not only occur in the formal structured sessions, it is an ongoing process that occurs in the context of a relationship. It has many definitions and means different things to different people”.

Brown and Bourne (1996) discuss what occurs when the supervisor is committed to the supervision as opposed to when the supervisor shows a casual attitude to supervision. The attitude of the supervisor will impact on how the supervisee experiences the supervision. Carver (2007) writes about her experiences as a supervisor of youth care workers. She found this to be a challenge, and needed to remember that “in order to feel safe in a relationship, one must challenge the other person, but yet in order to challenge one must first feel safe”. Her experience as a supervisor has meant working with individuals as a whole and not just in relation to the work performance. Hence she states that a lot of time is spent on self-awareness in supervisory sessions.

Bradley and Gould (2002) discuss the experience of supervisee resistance and assert that this is a normal reaction to the challenge of change that occurs in supervision. This resistance is often acted out as defensive behaviour by the supervisee and can be experienced by the supervisor as annoying and disruptive. The supervisor needs to understand these dynamics and learn to manage the anxiety behind the resistance.

Delano (2005) discusses the experience of confrontation for the supervisor, and explores the need for the supervisor to be able to do this in a constructive manner. He recognises the challenges of confrontation but is confident that the supervisor who learns to confront in a “constructive manner that does not damage the self-esteem of the Child and Youth Care worker” will encourage the worker to reflect on their work. Constructive confrontation also models for the worker something that they can copy in their other relationships and increases the worker feeling of being safe to make judgements that will not result in their being belittled.

Dye (2001) explores the importance of the supervisory relationship and how conflict in this relationship can be experienced by the supervisor. He suggests that the ability to relate is one of the most important skills for a supervisor.

Garfat (2008) talks about people learning what they experience and links this to supervisors as role models doing nothing with the workers and consequently the child and youth care workers doing nothing with the children. Garfat suggests that how the supervisors understand their role and how they then implement this in practice will result in the workers' experience of supervision and their resultant response.

In comparing the responses of the participants about their experiences as supervisors to the above literature, it would appear that the challenges of supervision are common. It would seem that supervision is a challenging task and requires supervisors to be role models and be ready to grow and learn themselves. The participants described clearly the expectation of them to role model child and youth care work to their supervisees. It would seem that the participants understood the need to hold people accountable to deliver effective service to the young people and their families – despite the challenges of doing this. In understanding these experiences of the supervisors one can question what support there is for the supervisors themselves. How do they remain motivated and encouraged to continue in their role as supervisors?

In reflecting on the above it would appear that there are elements of the supervision in the Isibindi programme that may hold the structure of the supervisory services together and so result in an effective model of supervision for the Isibindi programme.

#### **4.6 ELEMENTS OF SUPERVISION**

The participants identified various common elements which appear to be part of the structure of the model of supervision in Isibindi. These elements were identified in relation to supervision being a planned process, being flexible, a process that involved *doing with*, a process of holding people accountable yet ensuring that they are given support/encouragement, working towards the empowerment of others and using good communication skills in interactions with others. Online supervision is described by all the participants as work being done in the life space of the supervisee where the daily life events are used as the focus for intervention.

Some of these elements are characteristics of a child and youth care approach as identified by Garfat and McElwee (2004:14-21). Others are frequently used principles related to the manner in which child and youth care workers work with young people at risk.

Child and youth care work is done intentionally and purposively, and is planned according to reflection on what is required. Brown and Bourne (1996) discuss supervision as being *a planned event* which takes place both as a specific event and in the day-to-day work of the supervisee and supervisor. Hilton (2005) also asserts that supervision has a plan and a purpose, and encourages supervisors to ensure that the aim of the supervision and its structure are clearly understood. The NACCW (1998:5) defines consultative supervision as a “*goal directed contractual ... relationship*”.

Child and youth care work is about *doing with* other people. It is about being with others in all aspects of their lives in such a way that we treat them as



partners (Garfat & McElwee, 2004:18). This *doing with* can be described in supervision as doing life space work. It results in the supervisor using “the natural opportunities provided by being with the worker in their work environment as the focus for intervening with the worker. By using the daily life events of the worker, the supervisor can assess the worker’s level of functioning, growth and developmental areas, because she will have seen the worker in the context of the child’s world” (Michael, 2007).

One of the elements of life space supervision is identified as working alongside where “the supervisor may work ‘alongside’ the worker. For example, the worker and supervisor agree that they will intervene with the child jointly and each play a specific role which has been predetermined” (Michael, 2005).

Child and youth care workers make *use of daily life events* as they occur so that people can be helped to live their lives differently because they have experienced being different in the moment, and so can be different in other moments (Garfat & McElwee, 2004:16). Likewise, supervisors in Isibindi are making use of the daily life events of the supervisees by coming alongside them in their work and using “moments” to help the supervisee experience themselves differently – and so be able to work differently in the next moments. Burnison (2007) talks about her experiences of being supervised and states that as supervisors “sometimes we are present with them in the moment when a critical incident occurs ... we may be more actively involved, working alongside staff, together figuring out what it is we need to do. There might also be opportunities for us to show how we would handle a situation”.

Another common element identified by all participants was the need to be *accountable*. Gannon (2001) postulates that all child and youth care workers should be accountable in what and why they do something, so that the question of “why?” should be acceptable to all. He suggests that this question will assist growth and development in one’s work as a child and youth care worker. Being able to tolerate the question “why?” allows for the expression of accountability in the profession. Brown and Bourne (1996) discuss the

principle of accountability in supervision and suggest that accountability could be seen as a multifaceted process in which the supervisor is accountable to the profession, the families and young people, the organisation and to themselves. Hudson (1994) explains that accountability in supervision means that the supervisor is accountable for the supervisee's work, and has to check whether what is being done is in line with the philosophy of the organisation and in accordance with each young person's care plan.

The element of being *flexible* as a supervisor was clearly described by all the participants and is supported by Michael (2005) where she describes the different learning styles, and then suggests that just as the child and youth care worker needs to be flexible in the approach to young people, so too should the supervisor be flexible in the approach to the different supervisees, taking into account their different styles of learning. McManus (2009) discusses what made her practicum successful, and identifies the principle of flexibility as being one of the skills that she learnt. She refers particularly to her supervisor allowing for flexibility in the supervisory process and so allowed for plans to be changed according to the needs of the client. Gilbert and Charles (2007) suggest that flexibility is one of the attributes which make great supervisors. They describe this as supervisors not assuming that there is only one way of doing something, but allowing their supervisees to explore creative ways of working with the young people and families.

The principle of supervision being an *empowering* process of others was also identified by most of the participants. This often linked to the fact that supervision is *done with* supervisees in order to *support and encourage growth and development*. Gilbert and Charles (2007) suggest that great supervisors are able to give back the power given to them to their supervisees, yet at the same time can ensure that a quality service is delivered to the young people and their families in the programme. "Great supervisors find ways to put the power they have been given in the hands of those whom it affects." This is affirmed by Michael (2005) who states that the supervisor being in the life space of the supervisee will allow for opportunities to enable the supervisee to grow and develop. Gannon (1994) describes

empowerment as “giving others real opportunities to take control over their lives and to be responsible for their action”. Phelan (2009) discusses what occurs when the child and youth care practitioner is able to *do with* others. This could be compared to the supervisors in the Isibindi programme who consciously see themselves as *doing with* and then in the supervisor-supervisee relationship “a mutuality has been established where both people are consciously choosing to join each other in the in-between place. This is when significant change is possible, where the person being helped allows himself to engage in a give and take relationship and the analogue free space dynamic can be created. The CYC practitioner is now capable of being both fully present for the other and also self-reflective. They are both able to be present in the moment and open to new possibilities. The worker clearly focuses on the needs of the other, but also experiences this growth of hope, competence and freedom from the past. Wounded helpers absorb this energy even as they arrange it for the other person. Even non-wounded workers grow tremendously as they reach this stage of practitioner development”.

The use of good *communication skills* was mentioned by most of the participants in this research as a skill that they required and that appears to assist them in their supervision of others. Ing (1990:145-146) identifies communication skills as one of the factors which impact on this process. She states that “interpersonal skills such as genuineness, warmth, empathy, conflict resolution, active listening are all included as communication skills”. She continues and says that communication skills together with self and role factors combine to “create a pattern of verbal and non-verbal communication which will influence the events that occur in supervision”. Burnison (2007) identifies good communication skills as one of the characteristics that make an effective supervisor – she refers to a supervisor who knows how to listen and to ask questions. Murray (2005) says that what assisted her in supervision was having “a very skilled supervisor with a true gift of listening and openly communicating. She was an honest person who was willing and able to give open, honest feedback on my professional performance as she saw it. Not only that, but she enabled me to communicate, to examine my own

performance, and to come up with suggestions as to how I could develop professionally”.

In analysing these different elements of supervision identified by the participants in this research it appears that each one is highlighted and supported by various authors as some of the elements of effective and successful supervision. These elements are also identified by different authors as characteristics and styles of a child and youth care approach.

#### **4.7 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter the researcher focused on gaining some understanding of how supervision is understood and implemented in the Isibindi programme by comparing the data obtained in the research with the voice of current literature on the subject of supervision. The researcher then attempted to ascertain whether the understanding of supervision is linked to how supervision is delivered and to what elements make up the delivery of the supervision. This meant exploring and understanding the models of supervision, and the elements that make up these models – and then comparing these possible answers to what data was gathered from the research.

The review of the literature shows clearly that there are various definitions and understandings of the process of supervision. The common meaning of supervision is one of watching people and/or activities to ensure that every task is completed correctly. This meaning does imply that the supervision is *done to* someone. The helping professions such as social work, psychology and child and youth care work define and understand supervision as a process which is *done with* someone.

The understanding of supervision within the child and youth care literature is one of an enabling process which will grow and develop someone else. This compares positively to the participants’ understanding and description of the supervision that is delivered in the Isibindi programme. It would appear that the understanding of supervision in Isibindi is linked closely to many of the

descriptions of supervision by various authors in the child and youth care literature. The understanding of supervision by the participants in the research was clearly linked to supervision as a process that is *done with* someone to ensure that the work done is in line with what is expected of them.

The literature regarding specific models of supervision suggests that there are different types of models of supervision and that the model used in a programme would depend on the context and work being delivered in the programme and would change and transform in accordance with the needs of the particular programme. This notion is supported by various child and youth care authors who suggest that the model of supervision delivered in child and youth care should reflect the practice of the services being delivered in the programme. A model of life space supervision has been defined by Michael (2005), who describes how supervision is offered in the life space of the supervisee. This description of supervision seems to fit closely to the model of supervision as described by the participants in this research, particularly their description of online supervision. The model of supervision being delivered in the Isibindi programme thus has a child and youth care emphasis and appears to reflect the child and youth care practice of the programme. Consequently, the supervisors are supervising in a manner that is similar to how the supervisees should be working with the young people and families in the programme.

The literature on supervision supports the fact that supervisors require specialised knowledge and skills in order to deliver an effective and quality service. The knowledge and skills identified as necessary for supervisors include management knowledge and skills, knowledge about child and youth care practice, supervisory roles and responsibilities, relationship-building and self-awareness and development. The participants in this research all stated that the training they had received and were still receiving had benefited them and assisted them in their role of being a supervisor. It would appear that the need for supervisors to be trained and prepared for the role is understood in the Isibindi programme and a requirement for effective service delivery.

Many of the participants described their experience of being a supervisor as challenging for various reasons. This view is supported in the literature where it is suggested that supervisors will be challenged. The need for supervisors to be accountable and responsible often results in supervisees being resistant to supervision. The participants in this research identified the need for them to be accountable and to hold others accountable as a major role in their supervisory tasks.

The participants all identified various elements of their supervision as the factors that described how and what they do as supervisors. These elements, such as *doing with*, use of daily life events, accountability, flexibility, empowering through support and encouragement of growth and development and communication skills, are all identified in the child and youth care literature as elements of supervision. These elements are described as those factors which make supervision effective and efficient. These elements are also identified in the literature as being some of the characteristics of a child and youth care approach (Garfat & McElwee, 2004). It does appear that the elements identified by the participants in this research are supported in the child and youth care literature and regarded as particular characteristics of a child and youth care approach to working with young people and their families.

The analysis has clearly shown that the understanding of supervision in the Isibindi programme, the model of supervision being delivered, the experiences of being a supervisor, the training and skills required as a supervisor and the elements of the supervisory process are all identified, defined and supported in the child and youth care literature.

The conclusions and recommendations from this analysis are discussed in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The researcher started out this research with some questions about the model of supervision in the Isibindi programme in mind. The research objective was to explore, in a qualitative manner, the model of supervision in Isibindi programmes to answer questions such as: What model of supervision is being used in Isibindi programmes? What elements help to make this model effective? And what elements would help to strengthen the model?

The researcher developed a semi-structured interview schedule to aid the interview process. The questions helped the researcher and participants to keep focus but also allowed for a conversation to be had rather than a question/answer interview. The researcher attempted to explore the different aspects of supervision with the participants. From the start she began to identify various themes about supervision that began to emerge and so adapted the questions accordingly. The researcher tape recorded the interviews and wrote notes on all nine and then transcribed the interviews herself. This process of transcribing was experienced as rich and valuable by the researcher, and enabled her to check and double-check what had been said and heard.

Once all the interviews had been transcribed and checked, the researcher identified and coded themes. These various themes were explored in the context of existing literature pertaining to supervision in child and youth care work.

The researcher then queried whether the research objectives had been met through this qualitative process. The objectives were to explore the model of supervision in the Isibindi programme as well as the elements of the model

and to identify whether any elements are required to strengthen the existing model of supervision.

The researcher also queried whether the research method had been appropriate for this study. The exploratory interviews with the nine participants did indeed result in rich data collection. The participants were eager to talk about their experiences and role as supervisors and were considered in their responses. The researcher also reflected on the problems encountered in the research process such as logistical constraints resulting in fewer face-to-face interviews, possible language barriers and limited research literature. In reflection the telephone interviews proved to be richer in data collection than the face-to-face interviews. The language barriers were identified and information checked with participants to ensure full understanding. The literature did not prove to be as limited as was thought and more than enough support for the review was found in the existing literature, although much of the literature was found on the internet, particularly through the CYC-Net site.

## **5.2 CONCLUSIONS**

The research has provided a description of what the participants say they are doing in their role as supervisors in the Isibindi programme. The limited number of participants means that this research cannot be generalised to Isibindi as a whole, but rather gives a picture of what participants believe they are achieving.

There was a discrepancy between what the supervisors/managers said they were doing and how the supervisees experienced their supervision.

In the analysis of this description of supervision four main themes were identified in the data transcription: methods of supervision, the importance of training, the experience of supervision and the elements of supervision. Each of these themes had subthemes identified as part of the main theme. The analysis of these themes has shown the following:



- *The model of supervision* being used by the participants in Isibindi appears to be linked to the broad understanding of supervision and to the integrated form of the supervision services delivered in the programme. The centrality of the use of the life space of the supervisee appears to have impacted strongly on how supervision is delivered in the programme. All of the participants identified different methods or ways of delivering supervision, and the one which appeared to be frequently and intentionally used was online supervision. This method of supervision is strongly supported as a characteristic that defines how child and youth care workers *do* their work. Much of the literature explored supported the notion of supervision being done in the life space of the supervisees. The other methods of supervision are all regarded as acceptable methods of supervision, but what was clear here was the way in which these methods were delivered. Again the data analysis suggests that these methods were delivered in a child and youth care manner where meetings are planned, intentionality is clear and the value of *doing with* is highly regarded. The elements of flexibility and accountability were clearly understood within the need to supervise from a support and encouragement of growth and development ethos so as to empower the supervisee. It must be noted that the two supervisees did not experience their supervision in this manner, but rather as something being done *to* them and not *with* them.
- The importance of the supervisor having had specific training was clearly identified from the data analysis and supported in the literature review. *Ongoing training and education* was seen as important for the supervisors, and assisted many of them to stay motivated and to develop themselves. Linked to the training was the need for self-development, and a clear understanding of one's self in all aspects. The literature debates the notion of a supervisor being born versus being taught and it would seem that it is a matter of both/and and not either/or. Hence it seems that increased knowledge in a variety of areas and increased skills are necessary for supervisors to be more effective and competent in the supervisory process.

- The *experience of supervision* as a challenging and learning opportunity was identified in the data analysis and supported in the literature review. Supervision is regarded commonly as a process that demands much, and requires a person to be self-aware and prepared to grow and learn. The elements of accountability for others and oneself, as well being able to be flexible, add to the complexity and challenge of supervision. The need for supervisors to have support themselves is the question that the researcher poses – what holds the supervisor in this process and how are they supported in this challenging experience?
- Various common threads or *elements of supervision* were identified in the data analysis, and each was supported in the literature. Most of these elements are found as established ways of doing and “being with others” in child and youth care work (Garfat & McElwee, 2004:16). This again points to the model of supervision in the Isibindi programme being designed to ‘mirror’ the child and youth care services being offered to the young people and their families in the Isibindi programme. The elements identified include intentionality, flexibility, accountability, *doing with*, empowering, use of daily life events and communication skills.

### **5.2.1 The model of supervision in the Isibindi programme**

The analysis of the data compared to the literature points to the description of the model of supervision by these participants in Isibindi being formed and delivered according to the manner in which child and youth care services are delivered to the young people and their families. The model described by the participants has elements of different known models such as the integrated model as identified by Leddick (2001), as well as the life space supervision model described by Michael (2005). The concept of supervision taking on the same form of practice as that in the programme is supported by Garfat (2003), and links with the recommendations regarding supervision in the Isibindi model made by Scott (2005). The understanding of supervision by the participants appears to be an all-inclusive one so that the model and methods

delivered can be adjusted according to the need of the programme. Just as the child and youth care workers in Isibindi are community based, so too are the supervisors.

The data analysis indicates that these supervisors use a life space approach as well as a developmental strength-based approach to their supervision and have incorporated particular values or principles from these approaches into how they deliver the supervision at their Isibindi site. Just as the child and youth care workers use various methodologies and approaches to deliver their services to the young people and families, so do the supervisors. Some of the common ones would be individual work, group work, life space work, counselling, assessing and planning. The services in Isibindi are delivered by trained child and youth care workers and the supervisors are also trained as child and youth care workers and as supervisors. Ongoing training and self-development are encouraged for the child and youth care workers, and the analysis showed clearly that the supervisors are involved in ongoing training and workshops which all have a strong focus on self-development and self-awareness.

### **5.2.2 Elements of this model**

The data analysis identified common elements which support the delivery of supervision in the Isibindi programme. These elements have been identified as follows:

- i. Supervision is *planned, purposeful and has a goal*.
- ii. Supervision is *flexible* in that times, places and/or methods can be changed according to the need of the supervisee, and what is happening in that moment
- iii. Supervision is seen as a task that supervisors and supervisees *do with* one another rather than *do to/for*.
- iv. The principle of *accountability* was described by all participants – this would be the supervisor's accountability to the programme as well as holding the supervisees accountable in their work.

- v. The supervision is characterised by being a *supportive and encouraging process* which links to the developmental strength-based approach used in the programme.
- vi. Supervision takes place primarily in the *daily life events* of the supervisee and hence is delivered in the *life space* of the supervisee, which links to the model of life space supervision.
- vii. The need for supervisors to have strong *communication skills* was also identified as a common element of the supervision being delivered in Isibindi programmes.

The literature review indicated that these elements are very much those which are consistently seen across child and youth care programmes, and some have been described by various authors and theorists as those characteristics which make child and youth care work unique. This would apply particularly to using the daily life events and working in the life space of the supervisee.

### **5.2.3 Elements required to strengthen this model of supervision**

During the research the researcher asked all the participants what they would change in their supervision. The common suggestions from the participants can be identified as the need for *ongoing training and education of the supervisor*. The literature supported the fact that supervision is a challenging task and requires much of the supervisor.

Gilberg and Charles (2007) discuss the need for supervisors to be willing to learn in order to encourage their supervisees to learn.

As the researcher processed the data and analysed the findings whilst comparing what is identified and described in the literature, it seemed to her that the element of support for the supervisors is critical. It is commonly acknowledged that supervision is a challenging, complex task and that a supervisor is required to hold others accountable to deliver an effective service to the young people and their families in the programme. In order to achieve this, and to continue to remain effective and efficient in the different

tasks, the supervisor requires ongoing training and education. The need for supervision and the supervisor to be flexible can be seen as critical for this model of supervision, as working in the life space and daily events of the supervisee would necessarily mean that supervision is delivered “in the moment”, resulting in the supervision being focused on what is happening “right now, in the moment between the supervisee and her families, between supervisor and supervisee, between the world and the programme” (Garfat & McElwee, 2004:19).

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.3.1 Recommendations pertaining to the qualitative research process**

The researcher is aware that this was a limited exploratory research process, and that the findings may not necessarily be applicable across all the Isibindi programmes or all community-based child and youth care programmes.

This research was limited in the number of participants and this may have affected the validity of the research. It is thus recommended that this research be replicated with a larger population group and a wider spread of participants. The researcher regards this as critical in order to validate the findings of this research and so to improve the services being offered to young people in community-based programmes such as the Isibindi programme.

#### **5.3.2 Recommendations pertaining to the research findings**

##### *5.3.2.1 Review of the content of training for supervisors*

*“Training and development professionals should promote the use of training evaluation and research to improve training and development activities. Training and development professionals should adhere to principles of best practice in evaluation and research” (Curry, 2005).*

*“Training and development professionals have the responsibility to share information with colleagues to promote best practice as well as add to the*

*knowledge base of training and development in human services” (Curry, 2005).*

The ongoing need for supervisors to seek and receive training and education was expressed by all the participants and supported in the literature review. The participants all indicated that they had benefited from the consultative supervision training given to them by the NACCW. However, there was a request for this training to be updated and ongoing.

The researcher thus recommends that the NACCW review the content of the present training material used for the consultative supervision training. All the participants referred to this training as being central to their knowledge and skill as a supervisor. The content of this training should be updated to include:

- An understanding of supervision as outlined in this research
- A description of the different models of supervision as outlined in this research
- An understanding of where and how the model used in Isibindi is applied in practice in Isibindi programmes and in other community-based child and youth care programmes
- An understanding of the different elements of supervision used in Isibindi and how they are applied in practice by a supervisor

#### *5.3.2.2 Ensuring support structures for all supervisors*

*“and without agency support, it will be difficult to sustain the focus required to be a competent CYC supervisor running a useful, effective program with capable staff” (Phelan, 2009).*

The researcher recommends that support structures for the supervisors be established. The research clearly showed that the supervisors experience their role as challenging and complex, and this perception is supported in the literature and seen as expected. The model of supervision is one which encourages the supervisor to be supportive of their supervisees. So, too, the

organisation should be supportive of the supervisors. The support structures should ensure the following:

- Encouragement and motivation for the supervisor
- Accountability of the supervisor to the programme, clients and organisation
- Developmental plan for the supervisor
- Monitoring and evaluation of the supervisory services being delivered by the supervisor
- Ongoing review of the model of supervision being delivered and adjustment of methodologies where required in the best interests of young people being served

#### **5.4 SUMMARY**

The research objective was to explore, in a qualitative manner, the model of supervision in Isibindi programmes and to answer questions such as what model of supervision is being delivered in the programme.

The research can be seen as a description of what the participants say they are doing in their role as supervisors in the Isibindi programme. The limited number of participants means that this research cannot be generalised to the Isibindi programme as a whole, but rather gives a picture of what the participants believe they are achieving. It must be noted that there was a discrepancy between what the supervisors/managers said they were doing and how the two supervisees experienced their supervision.

The analysis of the data identified various themes which were then explored in the context of existing literature pertaining to supervision in child and youth care work. Four main themes were identified in the data transcription: methods of supervision, the importance of training, the experience of supervision and the elements of supervision.

The centrality of the use of the life space of the supervisee appears to have impacted strongly on how supervision is delivered in the Isibindi programme.

The common method of supervision was identified as online supervision. This method of supervision is strongly supported as a characteristic that defines how child and youth care workers *do* their work. This points to the model of supervision in the Isibindi programme being designed to 'mirror' the child and youth care services offered to the young people and their families in the Isibindi programme.

*Ongoing training and education* was seen as important for the supervisors, and assisted many of them to stay motivated and to develop themselves.

The common elements that have been identified are supervision as *planned, purposeful and having a goal, being flexible, accountability* and being a *supportive and encouraging process*; supervision takes place primarily in the *daily life events* of the supervisee and hence is delivered in the *life space* of the supervisee; strong *communication skills* as well as the need for *ongoing training and education of the supervisor*.

It is recognised that this was a limited exploratory research process, and that the findings may not necessarily be applicable across all the Isibindi programmes or all community-based child and youth care programmes. However, the researcher does recommend that the content of the training for supervisors in the Isibindi programme be reviewed and further that support structures for all supervisors in the programme be established.



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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX A**

#### **Questions for interviews**

1. Tell me about your experiences as a community child and youth care worker/tell me about your experiences as a supervisor in an Isibindi programme
2. Tell me about your role/function in an Isibindi team
3. Tell me about the supervision you receive/give in conducting your work in the community
4. How frequently do you have supervision? Is this enough? Who sets the frequency? Tell me how you structure your supervision in an Isibindi programme
5. Tell me about the training you have had as a supervisor in an Isibindi programme/as a community child and youth care worker.
6. From your experiences as a supervisor/supervisee what would you like to change

## APPENDIX B

### LETTER OF APPROVAL

Dear Participant

#### INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH ON SUPERVISION IN THE ISIBINDI PROJECT

I am in the process of studying towards my Master's in Child and Youth Care through UNISA. As part of this process I am researching the form/type of supervision required for the Child and Youth Care Workers in a community child and youth care programme such as Isibindi.

Community child and youth care work is a fairly new context for child and youth care in South Africa and as such little is known or documented about the forms of supervision taking place in community settings, or what types of supervision are considered to be most effective..

The research that I am doing has been approved by the NACCW and is seen as providing useful information for the organization and for training.

The research requires that I talk with at least 3 child and youth care workers from 3 different Isibindi sites. As part of the **Hout Bay** site it would be greatly appreciated if you would consent to participate in this research.

The following is ensured:

- a. All information obtained from any participant will only be used for the purpose of this research.
- b. The identity of all participants will remain confidential and no name will be mentioned in the study.
- c. Participation in this research will have no affect on any employment of the participant in the Isibindi project and my role with the participants will be as the researcher and not as an NACCW employee.

- d. The participant is free to withdraw from this research at any time and with no negative consequences.
- e. A copy of the full research will be made available to the 3 Isibindi sites which participated in the research as well as to the NACCW.

It would be appreciated if you would sign the attached consent form, giving your consent to be involved in this research.

You are free to contact me at 021 7626076 should there be any further questions requiring clarification. Alternatively you may contact Zeni Thumbadoo, the Deputy Director of NACW and also the Manager for the National Isibindi projects for further confirmation of this research.

The confirmation of the date and time of interview will be made telephonically through your Project Manager and once you have consented to participate.

Thanking you

Kathy Scott

Researcher for this study.

## APPENDIX C

### CONSENT FORM

#### Consent form

I ..... hereby give my consent to being involved in the research being conducted at ..... Isibindi site.

I am aware of that the research is about the form/type of supervision in a project such as Isibindi.

I have read and understood the conditions involved in my participation in this research.

.....  
Signature of participant

.....  
Date signed.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEW**

#### **Transcription of interview with Z - 250709 1430**

**K. Tell me about your experience as a supervisor in the Isibindi programme.**

Z. I started supervising in 2003 – it is not easy to supervise – because sometimes you have to explain what is supervision about – it is about support, it is about encouragement - but to other people you are going to spy on them – you are going to see what they are doing in the community. Supervision is lots of work

**K. Okay**

Z. Supervision is about growth – because you learn most of the things in the families you learn different cultures in families – if you have your own culture you learn to go the family that is referred to you that is doing different things so you learn from those families.

**K. Mmmm**

Z. It is also about support – the cycws do not know what to do always so you are going to support and help - what is it all about, what is cyc – if you see that it is going wrong, you talk to them so that they can do the right thing -

**K. Okay – I just want to clarify when you started supervising**

Z. I started in 2003 with home-based care and then in 2005 I started with Isibindi

**K. Tell me some of the differences between the supervision in home-based care and supervision in Isibindi**

Z. The difference was that we were just doing home-based care – we were helping people ourselves physically we didn't have training – when I started child care I was trained to work with the child – if you are not trained to do something you don't know that you are doing it very well or what I am doing – you just help - in child and youth care you are doing therapeutic help you must see the outcome of the work that has been done.

**K. Thanks Z – please tell some more about being a supervisor**

Z. Being a supervisor – you meet a lot of challenges - you supervise different people – you do not always agree on certain things – you also have to be



humble so that you can agree just for the sake of the family that you are working with. Also you work with different cycws - some do not want to do cycw but is after the money – so when you confront the person you are not always liked by the cycws because you are doing corrective work – you are correcting what they are doing wrong

**K. Mmmm – so you are saying it is not an easy job?**

Z. No it is not an easy job.

**K. So what are the good/positive things about being a supervisor?**

Z. The good things are that you learn new things – you learn to meet new people because as a supervisor you are trusted to go to the resources that are available in your community – and you learn to sit down with the people above you and learn to talk with them – there is a way to talk, where to go when you want something – the way to talk to those people and also your appearance that will say how you as a supervisor are presenting yourself – to the stakeholders in the community

**K. Okay – now tell me something about your role as a supervisor**

Z. My role is I am the project manager now – I also have 7 cycws in the partnering organisation – also advocating for families with the stakeholders around Kokstad – so if families have no clothes to wear I go to different shops and ask for the second-hand clothing – I go to supermarkets and tell them what is Isibindi, what are we doing in the community and what are the problems that we come across in our community. So I present the families there – I talk about the work that we are doing to help these families. I go to different meetings

**K. Okay – what else?**

Z. I attend workshops – and when I am coming back I share what I have learnt at the workshops.

**K. Okay – anything else?**

Z. I also give support – I do the supervision with the cycws and with their supervisors. I do individual supervision - I do consultative supervision with the cycws – I give them feedback to different cycws how they are doing individually, how is she progressing or is she on the same place she was when she first started. I am also advocating for our partnering organisation

with different programmes – there is sometimes misunderstanding about the programmes so I advocate for the cycw

**K. Do you only do consultative supervision?**

Z. I also do on-line supervision because I have to know the families – I have to know the people that we are working with – all the families that the cycws are working with.

**K. So just to check – you are the project manager and you do consultative and on-line supervision with the cycws and the supervisors?**

Z. Yes

**K. Okay – tell me now how you conduct/structure your supervision?**

Z. Okay I do a plan – I take the plan – I start it by taking the plan of the supervisor – so that I can see what are they going to do this week – so I plan according to my supervisor. So if they are doing on-line supervision I ask can I go with you to the families so that I can see your supervisee and also their families – so I plan according to that – if they have something to do I also have my plan so I want to see whether you go to the communities, I want to see the plan of the supervisor – so that I can engage myself to her supervision and also I plan mine so that I can tell the supervisor that this week I want to supervise you and your supervisee – I go with the supervisor and the cycw to the families that she has chosen so that if I come across any challenges I could ask the cycw whether her supervisor knows about this challenge and how long has the challenge been there and what has been done about it

**K. Mmm – so how often do you see your supervisors?**

Z. I see the one twice a month and the other twice a month for on-line

**K. So you see them both twice a month – and consultative?**

Z. My consultative is every Friday – I start with a meeting with both supervisors – I get some feedback on what is happening in the community - what challenges did they come across – what things must we talk about with the cycws. So also when I have done supervision to the supervisor I am coming to the office so that on Fridays I can tell her and come to an understanding this is what I picked up, the challenges, or this is what I come across in the on-line supervision.

**K. Now can you tell me about the training you have had as a supervisor in Isibindi**

Z. Oh, I had supervision training - I was on the supervisor's training in Durban

-

**K. Okay**

Z. Yes – I was also on the training of trainers workshop in Durban.

**K. Okay – tell me some more about this training**

Z. This helped me a lot to train – learn to speak English – learn to clarify things more when you train and also you learn to do child and youth care work in the right way – you are learning every day when you do training.

**K. Yes**

Z. Even if you did not know something before now when you train it starts to become clear – you also do things differently – I am also improving my skills – it also encourages me to learn, I have gone to the library so that I can read books

**K. Mmm ... and the supervision training?**

Z. I learnt about the confrontation/communication skills – you learn to confront – you don't just talk anyhow – you must try to do this at the right place and the right time when you are a supervisor. It is also a very motivational process when you are a supervisor – because you become a new person.

**K. Why do you become a new person?**

Z. Because you are not doing things like you usually did before – you are not being the person that you were before – you are trying to keep things on track – how to manage people - how to manage child and youth care workers – how to deal with issues that is supervision - how to support child and youth care workers

**K. Okay – so what I heard you say was that being a trainer is helpful to you and that the training in supervision has helped you as a supervisor?**

Z. Yes that is right

**K. Okay Z from your experience as a supervisor what would you like to change and why?**

Z. Okay I think that I would like to change the work of the Project Manager – that maybe she has only 1 family because I have my own families that I work with so I don't have time to go to the families and also to supervise - so I

depend on my supervisors for the work that must be done – so if I can change the work to be lighter work by not having to go to the families - I know what must be done, I have that experience now.

**K. How many families do you have to deal with now?**

Z. I have 6 children from 2 families – I don't always get to them and so ask the child and youth care worker who stays closer to me to help me with these families

**K. Okay - anything else you would like to change?**

Z. No - it is going right - we need to supervise the work is done properly.

**K. Thank you - anything else you want to say about supervision?**

Z. Supervision is good – we are different people in our community - it is different in our supervision because I am there and I am hearing the challenges of the families unlike the other person who comes into the community to help. You are identified when you are Isibindi because you have an outcome – you make promises and you keep the promises. Supervision also helps people to grow, also to learn new things – you are learning in supervision – you also learn from other people – learn from the child and youth care workers because they are there in the community - I listen to their stories, I listen to their achievements, I listen to their challenges and I make sure that I attend to their challenges. It is also encouraging - because you receive feedback from the community on how are you doing – how are you working with them – you also receive feedback from the children that you work with and also from the stakeholders that you are working with – because we have a monthly meeting with our stakeholders around Kokstad where we report what we have done this month - also the achievements - also where we are stuck as the child and youth care workers, the supervisors and the project managers – so it is a platform where I can come with my achievements, coming with my challenges to the stakeholders. Being a supervisor helps me a lot - I have a lot of experience working with different people, working with my stakeholders – also working with children and families.

**K. Thanks so much Z. (Reminded her of the purpose of the interview again and what was happening – assured confidentiality.)**