

Chapter One

Introduction

1. Background and location of the current study

The current study took place at the Epworth Children's Village in Germiston, a child and youth care centre providing shelter, education, therapy, food and clothing for children between the ages of 4 and 18. The origins of the Epworth Foundation can be traced back to the year 1918, when it was envisioned as a living war memorial. It was to be a tribute to those soldiers who had given their lives in the first world war; that in their honour "...we should take an orphan child to train and educate and send forth fitted for the battle of life in their stead" (Rev. Amos Burnett, cited by Robertson, 2009). The organisation, thus conceived and founded by the Methodist Church, has grown steadily to the present day. It has been ground-breaking among South African institutions, being among the first (at around 1925) to recognise the need for specialised training of matrons and staff. It is also foremost in acknowledging the profound emotional needs of the children, who frequently require psychological intervention (the first clinical psychologist was welcomed among the staff in 1977). The Epworth Children's Village operates in association with the Department of Social Development to ensure the safety and care of children who do not have a family. Most of the children have been exposed to emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse and/or neglect, and have been removed from their homes through the Children's Court in accordance with The Children's Act (Act No. 38 of 2005: Section 150). Fifty children are cared for and the foster placements of a further forty children are supervised.

The Epworth Children's Village receives a modest government subsidy for each child, covering only about one-third of their total costs. Reliance is heavy upon the donations and sponsorship of beneficent individuals, companies and organisations, and also on the Village's continuing affiliation with the Methodist Church. The Village provides the highest possible level of care, which includes psychological and educational assessment and therapy. The majority of the children are, not surprisingly, reported to present with high levels of anger, anxiety, behavioural problems and social difficulties. Volunteers are recruited to provide the residents with additional care and support, and occasionally with organised extramural activities. The sessions of African drumming, comprising the current research project, were presented as such.

2. Personal motivation

I have previously had the opportunity of presenting sessions of music education at the Elsburg Sunshine Centre. These sessions were facilitated in partial fulfilment of the coursework Masters in Music Education at the University of Pretoria. The Elsburg Sunshine Centre is one of the Sunshine Association's four Early Intervention Centres. The Association, in operation since 1976, is a nonprofit organisation catering for young, intellectually and physically challenged children. The aim of the Sunshine Association is to support and strengthen families and communities of children with special needs. The Early Intervention Centres cater for young children (between the ages of 2 and 7 years) presenting a diversity of mental and physical disabilities.

I provided weekly, half-hour sessions of music education for each of the Sunshine Centre's three classes. The sessions continued over a period of eighteen months. My belief, now supported by both research and experience, is that regular sessions of specially designed music education can support the general education and enhance the personal development of these intellectually/developmentally and physically challenged children. The majority of the children showed marked improvement in various areas of development as well as with regard to their musical abilities. Reports from the Centre's practitioners indicated that similar improvement was evident in the children's overall functioning. The broad aims of the music sessions were to enhance the children's capacity for socialisation, improve their fine and gross motor skills and develop their spatial and body awareness. These objectives were pursued through various musical activities such as active listening exercises, musical games, action songs and the playing of various percussion instruments. While the children grasped musical elements such as pulse, rhythm, pitch, dynamics, tempo, tone colour and articulation, they also gained social and developmental skills such as turn-taking, impulse-control, on-task behaviour, physical coordination, sensory awareness and sensory integration.

Furthermore, I have a longstanding interest in childhood development and have completed an Honour's degree in Psychology at the University of South Africa. Together with an undergraduate study in Ethnomusicology at the University of Pretoria, this has motivated me to investigate the specific potential of African drumming to enhance the psychological well-being of children, particularly those between the ages of 6/7 and 11/12 years (the middle childhood stage of development). African drumming has been shown to offer numerous psychological benefits by encouraging social interaction,

building skills that can make a meaningful contribution to society and by promoting a sense of competency in participants (Longhofer & Floersch,1993:3); by facilitating self-expression, non-verbal communication and improved physical, emotional and mental health (Kalani, 2004:12); and by providing an opportunity to creatively channel negative emotions such as anger and frustration (Hull, 1998:199). Drumming is rapidly becoming recognised and utilised as a medium for personal growth and development, for the enhancement of community feeling and for physiological and psychological healing (Friedman, 2000:3)¹. Longhofer and Floersch (1993:3-8) specifically describe the value of community drumming practices originating from Ghana, West Africa, for psychiatric rehabilitation at a mental health centre (as described in greater detail in Chapter Three). Psychotherapist and drumming facilitator Robert Lawrence Friedman (2000:4) confirms that “There is a burgeoning body of scientific literature which points to the drum’s ability to promote well-being.” He continues (2000:6): “Yet much more research is necessary to confirm what many have experienced and studied already – that rhythm in relationship to the body and mind has many benefits – an idea that our society is just beginning to grasp.”

3. Aim of the study

The aim of this research project was to investigate the potential of African drumming to promote the social and emotional well-being of children in a residential place of care. The purpose of the research was threefold. It intended to determine whether weekly sessions of African drumming can (a) reduce anxiety, depression, anger and disruptive behaviour and improve self-concept among the children, (b) enhance self-esteem, pro-social behaviour, enjoyment, concentration and manifestation of musical capacity and (c) be accommodated within and be complementary to the residence’s educational and recreational programme.

¹ While many forms of drumming, with a wide variety of different kinds of percussion instruments, have been shown to be beneficial, the *djembe* was the drum used in this research project.

4. Research questions

The following is an outline of the main research question and the various sub-questions.

4.1 The primary research question

The primary research question is formulated as follows: In which ways and to what extent can sessions of African drumming enhance the emotional and social well-being of children aged 7 to 12 years in a residential place of care?

4.2 The secondary research questions

The secondary research questions can be categorised into quantitative and qualitative areas of investigation.

4.2.1 Quantitative research questions

The research questions with a quantitative focus (with regard to data collection and analysis) are formulated as follows:

4.2.1.1 What is the potential of African drumming to reduce anxiety, depression, anger and disruptive behaviour (as defined and operationalised by the Beck Youth Inventories) among children aged 7 to 12 years in a residential place of care?

4.2.1.2 What contributions could African drumming make to the promotion of the children's self-concept (as defined and operationalised by the Beck Youth Inventories)?

4.2.2 Qualitative research questions

The research questions possessing a qualitative orientation (concerning data collection and analysis) are stated as follows:

4.2.2.1 In which ways and to what extent can African drumming serve to enhance self-esteem, pro-social behaviour, enjoyment, concentration and manifestation of musical capacity among children aged 7 to 12 years in a residential place of care?

4.2.2.2 How do the children experience the sessions of African drumming?

4.2.2.3 What is the possibility that weekly sessions of African drumming could be integrated within and supportive of the residence's general programme and routine?

5. Delimitation of the study area and sample

The project draws upon previous research in the areas of music education, drum circle facilitation, ethnomusicology, music therapy, child psychology, social work and Gestalt play therapy. However, recourse has been taken to these fields only as they relate to African drumming and child development and are thus directly applicable. This study is not primarily concerned with either the music therapy or ethnomusicological aspects of African drumming. Therefore, the neurological effects of rhythmic drumming and/or the vast history and tradition of African music will not represent the principal areas of investigation. Furthermore, the use of African drumming as extensively found within culturally-informed community practices aiming at altered psychological functioning (a significant phenomenon within indigenous African musical, social and spiritual life) does not fall within the scope of this study. The dominant approach to the study is that of music education. Gestalt play therapy is the primary psychological approach from which the therapeutic dimensions of African drumming and drum circles in general are discussed. Supporting evidence from other relevant fields helps to situate the project in its theoretical, practical, historical and cultural contexts.

The study involved sixteen children from the Epworth Children's Village. These were South African children of mixed ethnicity. The group was also mixed in terms of gender (consisting of seven girls and nine boys). The participants ranged between 7 and 12 years of age. This age group falls within the period of middle childhood, which spans from 6/7 to 11/12 years of age. The sixteen children were initially divided into two groups of eight children each according to similarity of age (7-9 years and 9-12 years). Soon after the study commenced, it was decided that fifteen of the participants should be divided into three groups of five children each, and that one child would receive individual sessions. This decision was made for practical and ethical reasons that are discussed in Chapter Four (Research methodology). The children were, however, still grouped according to age and developmental ability.

Age-appropriate activities were designed in accordance with the developmental level of children between the ages of 7 and 12 years. Slight adaptation in preparation and presentation ensured suitability of the workshops for each of the three groups and the individual participant. The age group of 7 to 12 years was selected for reasons relating to the researcher's own previous experience and to developmental characteristics of this period. Concerning the former, many of her piano students over the previous seven years had been within this age group and she found them to be enthusiastic, highly

responsive and exceptionally receptive to musical learning. With regard to developmental characteristics, the period of middle childhood is marked by significant emotional and social development and by critical advancement of the self-concept. It is at this time that children learn strategies for emotional self-regulation (Berk, 2006:404) and gain the cognitive skills necessary for complex emotional and social understanding such as empathy, which underlies the development of increasingly sophisticated social skills (Berk, 2006:408-409).

The sample of the study thus consisted of sixteen South African boys and girls in middle childhood who resided in the Epworth Children's village. The research findings are not generalisable to children outside of this research context. It is, however, believed that the findings are transferable to similarly aged children in comparable settings.

6. Limitations of the study

This study most certainly aimed at enriching the lives of all involved. However, it did not attempt to solve the behavioural or psychological problems of any of the child participants. Nor did it attempt to formulate a specific solution for anxiety, depression, anger or disruptive behaviour, or for the improvement of self-concept (the five constructs assessed by the Beck Youth Inventories, discussed later in the Research Methodology chapter). Rather, this study represented an exploration of *whether*, in *what ways* and/or to *what extent* African drumming can enhance the social and emotional health of children. The sessions did not pretend to provide any form of music therapy, play therapy or psychotherapy. The study was restricted to illustrating that African drumming, as a form of music education, can be complementary to the aforementioned therapies. This study also did not attempt to cover and differentiate between the vast number of African drumming traditions and styles native to the African continent. Rather, African drumming was considered and presented in a generic manner, inclusive of various indigenous principles and practices. In addition, while it is recognised that drumming in the African tradition is intimately related to other forms of musical art (such as dance, drama and visual arts), the study was limited to a focus on the African drum (more specifically, the *djembe*). Please refer to section 12. Notes to the reader for further consideration of the term "African" as it is applied within this study.

7. Value of the study

African drumming could provide social workers, community developers, educators and health-care professionals with an invaluable form of intervention. Unlike the more traditional forms of intervention that rely on (costly) individual treatment (Visser & Moleko, 2006:5), drumming workshops are able to reach large numbers of children at any given time. Group size would be limited primarily by the purpose of the intervention (Friedman, 2000:15, 145) and on the number of instruments and facilitators available. Many of the benefits have proved to be immediate (at least in the short-term) (Gallagher, 1998:31; Longhofer & Floersch, 1993:5). No training is required to create vibrant, meaningful sounds that resonate with the sounds created by others (Stevens & Burt, 1997:177). The drumming experience can open up possibilities for new ways of being (Oaklander, 2006:212) and become the first step towards increased self-trust, an improved ability to take risks and an enhanced capacity for creative self-expression (Friedman, 2000:31). It is also cost effective, requiring a minimum of basic equipment (drums) and facilitators (one or two is sufficient, depending on the size of the group). Furthermore, it should be possible to train existing staff employed at children's homes to facilitate the drumming sessions. The programme would thus be sustainable in the long-term.

There are several adverse circumstances (as well as various possible combinations thereof) which may result in the legal removal of a child from his or her home. As stipulated in Section 150 of The Children's Act (Act No. 38 of 2005), a child is in need of care and protection if he or she has been (a) abandoned or orphaned and is without support, (b) displays uncontrollable behaviour, (c) makes a living by begging or works or lives on the streets, (d) is a substance addict without recourse to treatment, (e) experiences or is exposed to exploitation, (f) is exposed to circumstances severely detrimental to the child's physical, mental or social health, (g) is considered to be at risk (physical, mental or social) if returned to the custody of the parent(s), legal guardian or care-giver, (h) is experiencing physical or mental neglect and/or (i) is suffering maltreatment, abuse or deliberate neglect by the parent(s) or care-giver. Other circumstances requiring investigation which may possibly lead to statutory action involve child-labour activities and children living in child-headed households (The Children's Act No. 38 of 2005: Section 150).

It was mentioned above that a child who is orphaned or abandoned requires statutory care and protection. The dramatic number of people affected by HIV and AIDS in South Africa has greatly contributed, and continues to contribute, to an increase in orphaned children (Mogotlane, Chauke, Van

Rensburg, Human & Kganakga, 2010:24). Despite multiple awareness and prevention efforts, the prevalence of HIV and AIDS in South Africa, and hence the number of orphans, is continuing to escalate (Mogotlane et al, 2010:25). Pembrey (2009) cites a UNAID estimation and states that in 2007 there were 1.4 million South African children orphaned by AIDS; this is in stark contrast to the 780,000 AIDS orphans in 2003. Mogotlane et al (2010:25) state that the death of HIV/AIDS infected parents often leaves their children destitute, and that the extended family and community support systems (themselves financially stretched) become overwhelmed and unable to care for the growing number of orphans. The result, in many instances, is the child-headed household, in which one of the children typically drops out of school to care for younger siblings and possibly an own child (or own children) (Mogotlane et al, 2010:25). Pembrey (2009) emphasises that such children are likely to experience poverty, poor health and little access to education. The result is likely to be a growing demand for residential places of care. It is well established that these children, and especially those institutionalised during the early years, are at risk for increased emotional disturbance and disruptive and anti-social behaviour (Wiik, Loman, Van Ryzin, Armstrong, Essex, Pollak & Gunnar, 2011:56-57; Gribble, 2007:14; Berk, 2006:166; Vorria, Papaligoura, Sarafidou, Kopakaki, Dunn, Van IJzendoorn & Kontopoulou, 2006:1246). It is essential to ensure that the young people leaving these institutions and entering the workforce and society at large are confident and emotionally and educationally competent, prepared to make a meaningful contribution to the country's society and economy.

Music is a natural and spontaneous part of children's lives (Young & Glover, 1998:38, 56, 70, 110, 144; Birkenshaw, 1982:57). The drum is particularly advantageous, requiring no prior knowledge or skill in order to be played (alone or in a group) (Friedman, 2000:41). Perhaps most importantly, drumming is a form of expression, a tool for communication and an instrument of music that is familiar to (and part of the cultural heritage of) many South African children (Friedman, 2000:18). One of the most frequent reasons for the failure of community interventions is resistance on the part of community members (Gilbert, 1995:121). The use of a familiar medium should help increase the acceptance and thus the effectiveness of intervention efforts.

Finally, this research project resulted in the compilation of a coherent four-month drumming programme, designed by the researcher, which could easily be used by other music educationists and non-music specialists alike. The programme draws on the expertise and experience of foremost drum circle facilitators such as Kalani, Arthur Hull and Christine Stevens. The workshops are simply and comprehensively documented (please see Appendix A), complete with step-by-step guidelines,

objectives and useful tips. A minimum amount of previous music training would be necessary for any child-care worker, such as an educationist, social worker, counsellor, etc., to replicate the project. This would maximise the potential for the programme to be repeated in communities of children who are in need of emotional and social enrichment, for instance in schools, after-care centres, residential places of care and shelters. The project has now been tested twice, during the pilot and the actual study, and its appeal and efficiency with youngsters in the middle childhood phase of development has been established.

8. Research methodology

A mixed methods approach was used to investigate the primary and secondary research questions (Ivankova, Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2007:262). Qualitative methods of data collection and analysis were required in addition to quantitative methods in order to adequately explore the potential of African drumming to enhance the emotional and social well-being of the children in this study. Quantitative methods of data collection and analysis did not sufficiently capture the potential of African drumming as an intervention. In retrospect (upon completion of the study), the use of both quantitative and qualitative forms of methodology proved essential to identifying both the benefits and limitations of group drumming as an intervention.

Sixteen children were purposively selected from the Epworth Children's Village to participate in the project. The manner in which the children were grouped and the reasoning behind the allocation of children to their respective groups (and the one individual session) are explicated in Chapter Four, Research methodology. The children were invited to take part in a four-month series of African drumming sessions that would be offered on the premises of the residence. The workshops were presented on a weekly basis and were each forty to fifty minutes in duration. A small portion of each session was spent preparing an item (a piece of drumming music) for the Epworth Children's Village Christmas concert.

Quantitative data collection took the form of requiring each participant to complete a standardised assessment tool before and after the intervention. The measurement tool employed was the Beck Youth Inventories for Children and Adolescents. (Please refer to Chapter Four for more information on this psychological test.) The test consists of five inventories which assess five major dimensions of

emotional and social adaptation, namely, anxiety, depression, anger, disruptive behaviour and self-concept. The test results indicated levels of overall socio-emotional functioning as well as providing separate measurements for each of the aforementioned categories. Statistical analysis was performed on the data thus captured, and comparisons were made on pre-test and post-test measurements.

Qualitative data collection included the video-recording of all workshops presented. The recorded material was systematically observed at regular intervals during the course of and after the series of workshops. (Please see Appendix E for themes used for the focused observations.) Focus groups were conducted with the children themselves at the end of the study, which provided valuable insight into their own perceptions of the workshops. Finally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with relevant staff members upon conclusion of the project in order to investigate the value and effectiveness of the workshops in the context of the Children's Village.

9. Theoretical framework

The researcher hypothesised that sessions of African drumming, aimed at promoting the social and emotional well-being of children, would fit cohesively within the framework provided by Gestalt theory as it is applied within Gestalt play therapy. Gestalt play therapy is a psychotherapeutic technique that integrates the principles of Gestalt therapy within the practice of play therapy (Blom, 2006:19). The Gestalt approach is phenomenological (based on the individual's perceptions of reality) and existential (based on the assumption of continuous growth, development and change). It is also experiential in nature, aiming to enhance the individual's perception of his or her immediate experience (Corey, 2005:192). It views the individual as a holistic entity in perpetual, complex interdependence with his or her environment (Blom, 2006:19). Humanist in principle and process-orientated in practice, the Gestalt approach emphasises genuine, person-to-person interaction as essential to the therapeutic process (Corey, 2005:203). Play therapy is a form of psychotherapy designed to allow children to express themselves both verbally and non-verbally (Blom, 2006:19). Through various forms of play, including projective, expressive, imaginative, relaxation, dramatic and creative play, children are assumed to "play out" their troubles, expressing them in a symbolic manner (Blom, 2006:20; Schoeman, 1996c:65).

In the current study, group sessions of African drumming were used to enhance the socio-emotional well-being of children by facilitating an environment conducive to the above-stated goals of Gestalt therapy, namely, to promote perception and awareness of, and contact with, their internal and external environments. Increased awareness of, and contact with, the self was encouraged through various exercises promoting sensory awareness, emotional awareness and expression, relaxation, the making of self-statements and by generally strengthening the sense of self. Enhanced awareness and contact regarding their social environment was encouraged via games and activities designed to promote acceptance and inclusion, the validation of individuals, the experience of being listened to and heard, a sense of personal agency and, in general, positive interaction and camaraderie amongst the group. Furthermore, drumming was viewed, in one sense, as a form of play (see section 3.4 in Chapter Three). As such, the children were provided with a developmentally appropriate form of intervention. The drum circle offered them a medium of non-verbal communication and expression, allowing them to project their inner realities in a secure and containing environment.

The study is based upon the above theoretical framework, but does not itself aspire to the formation and articulation of new theory. In the view of Hofstee (2006:130-131), theory development represents a distinct type of research. While he does admit that “There are very few higher callings in the academic world than the development of new theories,” he acknowledges the risks involved in attempting this kind of research and does not view the development of theory as a necessary component of all research efforts. However, a new perspective regarding the application of Gestalt theory to the practice of African drumming emerged through the course of the study. It became increasingly evident that sessions of such group drumming could effectively facilitate Gestalt psychological objectives such as promoting one’s experience of the present moment (or “the now,” as it is often called), enhancing one’s sensory and emotional awareness and improving contact with one’s internal and external realities (that is, with one’s self and with one’s social environment). The principle that Gestalt theory could be effectively integrated within group drumming could potentially guide the practice of music educators, drum circle facilitators, music therapists and psychologists by providing them with a practical means of applying Gestalt theory within their work. This could serve to widen the application of Gestalt theory in a variety of related fields.

10. Ethical considerations

Permission was applied for and granted by the management of the Epworth Children's Village for the commencement of this project. (Please see Appendix B for the initial letter of permission and Appendix C for the guardians' letter of informed consent.) As all of the children had been removed from their homes in accordance with The Children's Act (Act No. 38 of 2005: Section 150), it was not necessary to contact the parents or other family members of those involved. Penny-Ann Lundie and Robyn Anne Hill, residential social workers of the Village, were the legal guardians of all the participants. The informed assent of each participant was also obtained. (Please see Appendix D for the letter of informed assent addressed to the participants.) Permission for the video-recording of the workshops was obtained separately. All relevant authorities were consulted in this regard. (Please see Appendices C and D for information regarding the video-recording of workshops, as well as for the separate letters of informed consent and assent from the legal guardians and participants, respectively.)

Strict confidentiality was maintained during each stage of the research project. No one, with the exception of the researcher, the supervisor, co-supervisor and the registered psychologist (where necessary) was allowed access to any of the original research data (e.g. test results and unprocessed video footage) obtained from the research study. Furthermore, within the research report, the children's names were replaced with pseudonyms to ensure that they were not identifiable.

The Epworth Children's Village therapy team was available to provide professional intervention, should this have been necessary at any point during the project. A registered psychologist supervised the administration and scoring of the Beck Youth Inventories. (Please refer to the Research Methodology chapter.)

11. Chapter layout

Immediately following this initial introductory chapter, Chapter Two presents a survey of the literature pertaining to child development during the middle years. The areas of emotional, social and self-concept development are of primary consideration. This chapter commences with a discussion of the harmful effects that residential placement (as well as reasons resulting in such placement) may have upon children's development in these areas. The chapter ends with a concise introduction to several

important principles of Gestalt theory. This field represents the primary psychological framework from which the potential benefits of African drumming are explored. In Chapter Three, literature concerning the importance of music in childhood is reviewed. The therapeutic dimensions of drumming, as well as their application across the health-care continuum, are considered. Finally, the potential benefits of African drumming among children, and especially those who have experienced some form of trauma, are discussed. These benefits are described in the light of supporting principles from Gestalt play theory.

Chapter Four, Research methodology, describes in detail the actions taken within the course of the study. First, the overall research design is described. Next, procedures involved in the different kinds of data collection are explained and substantiated. The Beck Youth Inventories are discussed in depth concerning their validity, reliability and appropriateness to the current study. Methods for scoring and analysis are explicated. Furthermore, limitations of the research findings are stated. The fifth and sixth chapters represent the body of the study, where results concerning the value of the drumming sessions are presented and interpreted. In Chapter Five, the quantitative findings (data gathered through the psychological assessments) are outlined, analyzed and formulated into subconclusions. The qualitative findings (information obtained through the focused observations, focus groups and interviews) are presented and discussed in Chapter Six. Subconclusions based on these findings are formulated and discussed. The seventh and final chapter draws upon the subconclusions mentioned above in order to formulate final conclusions. The overall value of African drumming workshops and their practical fit within residential places of care is elucidated. The potential value and implications of the research outcomes are considered, and recommendations for future research are made.

12. Notes to the reader

A DVD, which can be found at the back of the document, is included as a part of the thesis. It is approximately one hour in duration and consists of short segments of the video footage designed to illustrate the nature of the workshops. All three groups of participants are featured, and several activities and games are demonstrated. It should be kept in mind that the footage was collected primarily for use in the focused observations and that the quality of the recordings was not intended to be of a professional standard. Neither were the included segments edited (they were simply selected and combined, in chronological order, into a continuous sequence). However, the sequence in its

entirety has been post-processed with the addition of a filter serving to blur the footage. An appropriate amount of blurring serves to protect the identity of the children as it prevents their faces from being recognised.

In the video recordings described above, the children's real names may occasionally be heard. This, however, does not make possible the identification of certain individuals. Because pseudonyms were used throughout the thesis (in order to ensure anonymity), the names heard in the recordings do not correspond to any information included in the documentation. This situation was unavoidable, and the researcher felt that it was important to include the DVD despite this apparent inconsistency.

The researcher acknowledges the significance of the following statements, made by Agawu (2003:1): "The term 'African music' covers a vast terrain..." and "Defining 'African' becomes more complicated if the matter of origins is left unqualified." Currently within literature, there are both singular and plural definitions of "African music" (Agawu, 2003:3, 10). The former contends that there is a distinctive African style which clearly distinguishes it from other types of world music, while the latter asserts that there is rather a diversity of African "musics," each informed by its culture of its origin. It is not the intention of the researcher to espouse or propose any particular definition of this term. Rather, she limits herself to recognising the various and culturally rich meanings contained in the term, as well as the potential controversy and confusion which may result from its indiscriminate use. Due to the limited scope of the current study, the term African music, or more specifically, African drumming, is used to describe musical practices largely originating from sub-Saharan Africa. Furthermore, only a single aspect of these traditions (*djembe* drumming) is considered (e.g. vocal practices are not attended to, although African music, and particularly that of South Africa, is distinguished more by an abundance of singing than of drumming) (Jorritsma, 2008:22). This further limits the need to address African music in its complex and diverse entirety.

The researcher, necessarily adopting this broad definition for the purposes of the study, nevertheless agrees with Jorritsma (2008:22) who, in her article "What is 'African music?'" indicates that "Just as we can't reduce Africa to a single country, we also can't reduce African music to a single style or genre" and "...we need to approach each and every music example with a fresh outlook and an open mind." However, she continues and concedes that "...we can determine some very broad stylistic characteristics of African music (such as call and response patterns, cyclical forms, repetition, complex rhythms, integration of performance art forms such as drama, dance and poetry, etc.)..." It is in this

broad sense that the word “African” is used to describe the musical practices informing the current drumming programme. The exercises and activities included in the workshops draw heavily upon traditional African musical practices such as the use of polyrhythm, call and response, imitation, matching, variation and elaboration, layering, soloing with group support, improvisation (an emphasis on in-the-moment creativity), integration of the creative (compositional) and performance aspects of the total musical experience and the intimate relationship between music and the spoken language. Furthermore, Jorritsma (2008:23) argues that it is a misconception that “The only African music worth studying is ‘pure’ African music from traditional African society before the time of colonialism.” She contends that no community exists in isolation and that encounters with other communities will inevitably shape their musical traditions. She concludes that “I (together with many contemporary academics) suggest that we see music as a *living tradition*, one that is constantly changing and adapting to suit present circumstances” (italics in original text) (Jorritsma, 2008:23).

An essentially “African” element of the drumming programme was the use of the drum circle as a metaphor for the community life, belonging and mutual support characteristic of the traditional African village setting. The drum circle (as well as most musical gatherings in traditional societies) is often deeply metaphorical of communal life and this sense of community pervades traditional musical practices. The concepts of interconnectedness, interdependence and holism underpinned the philosophy and musical practices of the programme. Based upon these values and attitudes, the workshops facilitated music-making that was not only an artistic endeavour, but also a social phenomenon; not technique-bound or performance-based, but rather an organic process emerging out of genuine social processes. Finally, it is worth mentioning that the primary motivation for compiling a programme inspired by African musical practices involves an attempt to design an intervention that would, quite literally, resonate with the cultural and social backgrounds of the majority of the children served by the intervention.

13. Definition of terms and concepts

Below are brief definitions and explanations of terms and concepts pertinent to the study. Definitions are the author’s own.

African drumming: The use of indigenous African percussion instruments (in this case the *djembe*) to create original music in accordance with traditional methods and principles of African music-making.

Beck Youth Inventories for Children and Adolescents: This standardised psychological assessment tool, authored by Judith S. and Aaron T. Beck, consists of five separate inventories measuring anxiety, depression, anger, disruptive behaviour and self-concept.

Drum circle facilitation: The presentation of group drumming to facilitate musical, personal and social processes toward a variety of different ends: remedial, health and wellness, therapeutic, community building, recreational, educational or spiritual.

Emotional well-being: The essentially social construct which facilitates a child's capacity for effective emotional regulation and management of negative emotions, healthy self-esteem, capacity for self-motivation, the understanding of one's own emotions and accurate empathy with the emotional states of others.

Gestalt play therapy: The practice of play therapy within the framework of Gestalt theory. A range of play activities are used to enhance the child's capacity for awareness, contact, organismic self-regulation, self-expression and integration.

Gestalt theory: A phenomenological, existential and experiential approach to human growth and development. Humanist in principle and process-orientated in practice, Gestalt theory emphasises the individual as a holistic entity in constant and dynamic interdependence with the environment, and the importance of genuine person-to-person interaction as the context for growth and change.

Middle childhood: The developmental stage generally considered to be between 6 and 12 years of age.

Play therapy: The psychotherapeutic approach drawing upon play as a child's natural medium for contact and communication, thus allowing for both verbal and non-verbal expression through various forms of play (such as projective, expressive, imaginative, relaxation, dramatic and creative play).

Residential care: The legislative placement of children into child and youth care centres when their families, for whatever reasons (e.g. poverty, abuse, neglect, violence), are unable to provide adequate care and support.

Self-concept: The cognitive, emotional and social construct which, by organising self-perceptions and perceptions of the self by others, serves as a framework through which all events are interpreted and thus plays an integral role in emotional and social regulation.

Social well-being: Adequate mastery of social skills, social understanding, perspective-taking, reciprocal role-taking and moral reasoning, which allows children to function effectively as members of society.

Chapter Two

Emotional and social development and the effects of residential placement in middle childhood

1. Middle childhood

Middle childhood is considered to be the stage between 6/7 and 11/12 years of age (Zembar & Blume, 2009:4; Blom & Dhansay, 2006:206; Huston & Ripke, 2006a:1; Kowaleski-Jones & Duncan, 1999:930; Diamond & Hopson, 1998:191; Collins, 1984:1; Minuchin, 1977:1). This period is characterised by many significant developmental transition points within the child's growth (Zembar & Blume, 2009:4; Collins & van Dulmen, 2006:23; Collins, 1984:1), even though, at surface level, development may seem to be less dramatic than that of the preceding infant and early childhood and later adolescent years (Huston & Ripke, 2006a:7; Diamond & Hopson, 1998:191). Major changes occur in the domains of physical, cognitive, emotional and social development (Blom & Dhansay, 2006:206-210; Collins & van Dulmen, 2006:23; Huston & Ripke, 2006a:8-10; Kowaleski-Jones & Duncan, 1999:931). Huesmann, Dubow, Eron and Boxer (2006:62) contest that while earlier models of child development often underestimated the significance of these years, describing them as a period of "latency", they are in fact "...a period critical for the development of important psychosocial functions such as cognitive skill acquisition, social relationship formation, and self-concept consolidation". Children of this age also face several considerable environmental challenges, as they enter formal schooling and experience a dramatically altered role in society (Huston & Ripke, 2006a:10-13).

Middle childhood is a period of transition between early childhood and adolescence (Zembar & Blume, 2009:10) and may represent a critical stage when considering the timing of intervention projects with troubled youngsters or enrichment programmes with impoverished children. Collins (1984:409) speculates that childhood development is more predictive of adolescent and adult outcomes than is early childhood development. Zembar and Blume (2009:12) refer to the latest research conducted by the MacArthur Network on Transitions through Middle Childhood and conclude that "the overall findings demonstrated that patterns of development during middle childhood often predicted later functioning over and above the contribution of early childhood development, with middle childhood development sometimes forecasting adulthood better than adolescence." The findings of the MacArthur

Research Programme are recorded in *Developmental Contexts in Middle Childhood: Bridges to Adolescence and Adulthood* (Huston & Ripke, 2006a). In their work, Huston and Ripke (2006a:2, 2006b:409) posit that although the years of early childhood provide a foundation for later development, the child's experiences in middle childhood can function to maintain, exacerbate, or diminish the positive or negative effects of the earlier years. They continue by emphasising that middle childhood, as preparation for adolescence, signifies a period in which lasting, persistent trends in personality, behaviour and competency are established (Huston & Ripke 2006a:2, 2006b:414; see also Collins & van Dulmen, 2006:23-25, Feinstein & Bynner, 2006:345 and Magnuson, Duncan & Kalil, 2006:151). Huston and Ripke (2006a:7) conclude that this period "...may be a good time to maximise the potential for positive growth and to introduce supports and opportunities that help children along successful pathways to adulthood".

The overview of development provided in this chapter may be considered as fairly general. In their excellent book *South of the Desert: A Teacher Guide to Child Development in Sub-Saharan Africa* (2006), Jackson and Abosi explain that some aspects of development, for example, physical growth, maturation of the senses and certain cognitive and social skills "develop in the same general sequence in African children as they do in children from other parts of the world" (2006:61). Nonetheless, they maintain that environmental factors (physical, cultural and social) influence the manifestation of such development and acknowledge the complex interplay occurring between these elements. In their words, "It is not always possible to separate the genetic or biological differences from differences that arise as a result of differences in culture... to divorce the study of physical development and other variation in the biological state of individuals from the study of enculturation and social process is to miss a cultural dynamic that must be central to more complete explanations of human development" (Jackson & Abosi, 2006:2).

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to provide a comprehensive description of the African psyche and associated patterns of behaviour in terms of cultural and social influences. However, several discussions below attempt to place the development of African children, and particularly the participants of the study, into context (with a particular focus on those factors which may serve to undermine the development of children living in Africa). These are sections 1.3.3 Cultural identity, prejudice and discrimination, section 2. Emotional and social well-being of children within residential care and section 2.3 The effects of prior trauma resulting in removal from the home (specifically 2.3.3 Poverty, 2.3.4 Family stress and 2.3.5 Macro-level factors: Structural violence and social instability).

These sections, as well as the sections concerning middle childhood development more generally, are highly relevant to the current study. While the researcher did not attempt to obtain any information regarding the backgrounds of the participants, it was an accepted fact that most of the children had experienced hardships akin to those discussed in section 2. These discussions on poverty, family stress related to low social economic status (SES), maltreatment, neglect and political oppression are thus relevant to understanding the experiences of the participants. Furthermore, the children portrayed the general characteristics associated with development in the middle years. There was an expected degree of variation concerning differences in age and cognitive capacity (i.e. there was greater variation amongst the participants with learning disorders).

For the purposes of this study, emotional and social development (and relevant underlying cognitive advances) occurring during middle childhood will be the primary consideration. As mentioned, middle childhood is a period of exceptional growth in each of these areas. Fundamental to and profoundly interrelated with these maturational processes is the child's rapidly evolving self-concept. To begin, therefore, a discussion of the self-concept, in terms of both its content and function, and its remarkable development during middle childhood, is important.

1.1 Development of the self-concept

One of the most significant and influential psychological changes a child experiences during middle childhood is that of a dramatically evolving self-concept (Huston & Ripke, 2006a:9; Markus & Nurius, 1984:147). Baron and Byrne describe self-concept as “an organized collection of beliefs and self-perceptions about oneself ... which provides a framework that determines how we process information about ourselves, including our motives, emotional states, self-evaluations, abilities, and much else besides” (2004:162). A more comprehensive definition is provided by Markus and Nurius (1984:147) and Harter (1988:46) who emphasise the intimate and complex interaction between cognition, socialisation and self-concept. Different researchers place varying emphasis on the role of environmental versus cognitive factors; however, it is consistently acknowledged that the self-concept is a multifaceted phenomenon involving all of these components (Markus & Nurius, 1984:158).

1.1.1 The self-concept and cognitive development

Development of the self-concept is closely linked to various aspects of cognitive maturation (Zembar & Blume, 2009:236). Two theories which highlight this connection will be discussed briefly. A

consideration of children's cognitive development during middle childhood is essential, as this period is characterised by intense neurological development. Nuru-Jeter, Sarsour, Jutte and Boyce (2010:61) cite studies reporting that the prefrontal cortex undergoes two growth spurts between the ages of 7 and 13 (the phase of middle childhood). Because the prefrontal cortex is responsible for executive functions of the brain, these stages of growth represent critical periods for the development of self-regulating capacities including selective attention, working memory, reasoning, behaviour and emotional regulation, self-monitoring, impulse-control, information processing and goal-setting (Nuru-Jeter et al, 2010:61). It will be noticed below, within discussions of emotional and social development, that the maturation of a child's self-regulating capacities has important implications for his or her development of emotional and social competencies.

1.1.1.1 Piaget's theory

Berk indicates that major developments in self-concept occur during middle childhood (2006:446). Where the self-concept of the child in the early phase of development is focused on concrete and observable characteristics, the child in the later phase is capable of more abstract descriptions of generalised dispositions, states and competencies (Zembar & Blume, 2009:235; Berk, 2006:446). This is likely to be related to cognitive maturation, as development and reorganisation of emotion is believed to correlate closely with that of cognition (Fischer & Bullock, 1984:106). The development of the self-concept as described above is consistent with Piaget's theory, which posits that from the end of early childhood and throughout the course of middle childhood, the child's cognition undergoes the transformation from preoperational thought (2-6/7 years) to concrete operational thought (6/7-11/12 years) and finally towards preparation for formal operational thought (11/12 years and older) (Zembar & Blume, 2009:160; Berk, 2006:21; Fischer & Bullock, 1984:107). The age group of particular concern to this study is that of 6 to 12 years of age. In terms of Piaget's theory of cognitive development, this period is characterised by concrete operational thought (6/7-11/12 years). The child becomes capable of increasingly abstract, complex and integrated perceptions and understandings of the self and others, and, importantly, of the self as perceived by others (Zembar & Blume, 2009:234-235; Fischer & Bullock, 1984:107; Markus & Nurius, 1984:151). In addition, the emergence of cognitive conservation abilities facilitates the understanding of the self as stable, despite differences in presentation across contexts (Zembar & Blume, 2009:236). According to Piaget, movement into the formal operational stage, with its increased capacity for general abstractions, endows children with an important new ability to form coherent identities (Fischer & Bullock, 1984:107-108).

1.1.1.2 Information processing theories

Information processing theories of cognitive development also suggest that the middle years may be of special significance. From this perspective, the self-concept is conceptualised as a self-schema, an organised set of knowledge structures about the self. Markus and Nurius (1984:159) propose that middle childhood may be a time of exceptionally influential and enduring schema formation, the effects of which may last a lifetime. Because self-schemas are not only informed by past experiences but also direct future tendencies, sound development at this stage may be critical to a child's later emotional adaptation and capacity for self-monitoring and motivation.

1.1.2 The self-concept and psychosocial development

Development of the self-concept in the middle years is greatly influenced by social comparison and by the child's developing sense of self-esteem, competence and individuality as this occurs within his or her social environment (Ripke, Huston & Casey, 2006:261).

1.1.2.1 Erikson's theory

The self-definitions of children in middle childhood are expanded by their rapidly increasing repertoire of skills, behaviours and social roles as they enter the formal education system (Kowaleski-Jones & Duncan, 1999:93; Markus & Nurius, 1984:149). Erikson's theory considers individuals in middle childhood to be faced with the psychosocial task characterised by industry versus inferiority (Zembar & Blume, 2009:230; Berk, 2006:18; Huston & Ripke, 2006a:8; Roopnarine, Cochran & Mounts, 1988:8). Issues of productivity and achievement become central to children's lives, as they realise their own roles in reaching success in their social environments (the family, schoolroom, sports ground, playground, etc.) (Huston & Ripke, 2006a:8; Kowaleski-Jones & Duncan, 1999:931). Successful negotiation of this stage is considered to result in a sense of competence, while a perceived lack of industry may result in feelings of failure and inferiority (Zembar & Blume, 2009:230; Berk, 2006:18; Huston & Ripke, 2006a:8). Thus, achievement in school, sports or hobbies may be particularly important to children in this stage (Huston & Ripke, 2006a:8; Diamond & Hopson, 1998:191-192). A child lacking in such experiences of success may face serious negative consequences with regard to his or her self-concept and "...may face a handicap, not only for acquiring competence in the specific skills, but for being able to participate fully in social activities that include them" (Huston & Ripke, 2006a:8). Kowaleski-Jones and Duncan are in agreement, and allege that "Indeed, one of the potential dangers of middle childhood is that children's sense of personal adequacy is developing and therefore

vulnerable” (1999:931). The mentioned authors go on to warn that feelings of inadequacy at this stage may discourage future efforts to succeed and thus result in an enduring trend of failure and poor self-efficacy.

1.1.2.2 Social-cognitive factors

Clearly, development of the self-concept is closely related to social development, and both are profoundly influenced by cognitive development. Piaget emphasised the cognitive factors of children’s decreasing egocentricity and expanding responsiveness to the views and needs of others (Zembar & Blume, 2009:160, 308; Berk, 2006:446). Markus and Nurius connect these capacities with children’s increasing sensitivity to the opinions of others, especially their peers (1984:149). Gains in empathy and the ability to comprehend the perspectives of others provide children with a greater awareness of their social environment, which becomes an increasingly salient part of their lives. In addition, Berk reports that children in middle childhood have an increased cognitive capacity to consider and compare multiple individuals, including the self, simultaneously (2006:446). She offers this as another possible reason for the frequent social comparisons made by children in the middle years, when they compare themselves in general terms to the rest of some social group. This is further supported by Piaget’s stages of cognitive development, in which he links the concrete operational stage with an increased capacity for social comparison as well as with significant development of the conscience (Fischer & Bullock, 1984:107).

1.1.2.3 Social-environmental factors

The self-concept of the child in middle childhood is influenced by environmental socialisation experiences as well as by advances in social cognition (Harter, 1988:59). Children in the middle years are faced with a greatly expanded social network (e.g. entrance into school and extramural activities) and are exposed to increasing evaluation by peers, teachers and parents. Self-understanding expands to encompass others’ perception of the self (Markus & Nurius, 1984:151). With increased social contact and the awareness of being evaluated by others, children attempt to form an integrated self-identity, one informed both by their own and others’ experience of themselves (Markus & Nurius, 1984:148). At this stage, a child begins to form an ideal self, based on the expectations of others, which he or she uses to evaluate his or her real self. Large discrepancies between the two may have serious negative consequences for the child’s developing self-esteem (Berk, 2006:447). Markus and Nurius (1984:149) propose that “the development of self-concept, then, is marked by a growing appreciation of the self as a social object” and state that “we view self-concept as an essentially social phenomenon.”

1.2 Emotional development

Emotional development is not easily considered apart from social development. Indeed, Shipman, Zeman and Stegall (2001:259) consider emotion to be an essentially interpersonal phenomenon closely tied to social behaviour, and Zembar and Blume describe emotion as a social construct, “a person-environment transaction” (2009:250). However, for the sake of clarity, the two issues will be discussed separately, and important connections will be pointed out.

During the middle childhood years, emotional development includes advances in self-esteem, motivation and emotional self-regulation (Zembar & Blume, 2009:228). Zembar and Blume describe emotional competence as involving the ability to understand one’s own emotions; to accurately empathise with the affective states of others; and to effectively manage one’s own emotional states, especially negative states such as anger or anxiety (2009:251). Healthy emotional adaptation is critical to the development of pro-social behaviour, which is under gradual but intense construction during middle childhood (Zembar & Blume, 2009:313, 324-326). Children who exhibit high levels of empathy and who experience low levels of negative emotionality are more likely to be cooperative and engage in altruistic behaviour (Zembar & Blume, 2009:324).

Healthy development of the self-concept is a central factor with regard to a child’s emotional adaptation in the middle years. The child becomes capable of increasingly abstract, complex and integrated perceptions and understandings of the self and others, which inevitably has emotional consequences (Fischer & Bullock, 1984:107; see also Zembar & Blume, 2009:234, 239). Magnuson et al contend that children’s increasingly differentiated and realistic self-concepts also become less positive, which may result in decreased motivation and self-confidence and impaired psychological well-being (2006:151). According to Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development, a child’s emotional adaptation at this stage depends, in part, on his or her experience of productivity or the lack thereof, leading to feelings of competence or inferiority, respectively (Zembar & Blume, 2009:230; Ripke et al, 2006:261). As mentioned above, feelings of inadequacy at this stage may result in long-term emotional disturbances (Ripke et al, 2006:261). During the middle childhood years, a child requires ample opportunities for industry and achievement in order to maintain emotional wellness (Morris & Kalil, 2006:237-259; Ripke et al, 2006:261; Simpkins, Fredricks, Davis-Kean & Eccles, 2006:283-302).

Also impacting on emotional development in the middle years is the child's expanding social network (Morris & Kalil, 2006:237; Ripke et al, 2006:261). The author referred above to Erikson's belief that concrete operational thought leads to an increase in social comparison. Due to the child's growing capacity for social comparison and self-criticism, as well as an increased sensitivity to evaluation by others (Zembar & Blume, 2009:238), an appropriate, supportive environment is necessary to foster the child's developing self-esteem (Morris & Kalil, 2006:237-259; Ripke et al, 2006:260-282; Simpkins et al, 2006:283-302). As the child grows in the ability for perspective taking and empathy, he or she should be met with positive perceptions of the self by others which can then be integrated with self-perceptions to form a positive sense of self and a high degree of self-worth. Furthermore, healthy emotional adaptation requires realistic expectations of the child by significant others. Appropriate expectations will facilitate the child's construction of an ideal self that has a fair resemblance to the real self, promoting self-acceptance (Zembar & Blume, 2009:243).

1.3 Social development

As children enter middle childhood, they strive to fulfil the important developmental task of becoming effective members of society (Markus & Nurius, 1984:151). Zembar and Blume state that social development in middle childhood includes gains in social skills and social understanding, increased application of moral reasoning and more sophisticated conceptualisation of friendship than previously (2009:304). A fundamental advance in interpersonal understanding involves a shift away from the egocentric thinking of younger children and a steady increase in social perspective-taking (the "understanding of mutual perspectives within a social system") and reciprocal role-taking (the capacity to put oneself "in another's place and reflect on another's intentions and behaviours") (Zembar & Blume, 2009:308-309). As should soon become clear, the self-concept has definite implications for behaviour generally, and for social interaction in particular (Zembar & Blume, 2009:304; Markus & Nurius, 1984:148). Considering once more the development of the self-concept, Markus and Nurius (1984:151-152) suggest four tasks that they deem essential to the development of the self-concept of individuals in middle childhood: "1. Developing a relatively stable and comprehensive understanding of the self; 2. refining one's understanding of how the social world works; 3. developing standards and expectations for one's own behaviour" and "4. developing strategies for controlling or managing one's behaviour." It is interesting to note that only the first of these four tasks is essentially intrapersonal; the others all involve social cognition and behaviour. Self-concept, while impacting on every sphere of a child's life, is heavily implicated in social understanding and interaction.

1.3.1 The self-concept and self-regulation

As alluded to above, Markus and Nurius (1984:149) hold that in middle childhood, the self-concept is increasingly based on a child's perceptions of the reactions of others, and that middle childhood "can thus be seen as a critical period for the development of the social self". Closely related to their developing self-concept, children in middle childhood make remarkable progress in the areas of self-direction and self-regulation (Zembar & Blume, 2009:228; Huston & Ripke, 2006a:9; Ripke et al, 2006:261). While the above paragraphs made reference to the *content* of self-concept, that is, children's understanding of themselves, the following, in part, attempts to delineate the *function* of self-concept, or how it serves to help regulate their behaviour.

"Middle childhood is a period especially significant in shaping both the content and the function of a child's self-concept" (Markus & Nurius, 1984:148). As children begin to integrate self-perceptions with the perceptions of others, they also begin to incorporate the needs and expectations of others (social-system forces) with their personal goals and desires (self-system forces) (Markus and Nurius, 1984:150). Middle childhood is thus a critical period in the socialisation process, as, ideally, children internalise many social norms and values while developing increasingly sophisticated methods of self-control (Pagani, Japel, Girard, Farhat, Cote & Tremblat, 2006:130; Markus and Nurius, 1984:150). Huston and Ripke (2006a:11) concur and point out that "...children in this period are especially susceptible to both pro-social and antisocial group norms". The child's capacity for coregulation develops dramatically and the social and self-systems become increasingly interdependent (Berk, 2006:567; Markus and Nurius, 1984:150).

Throughout middle childhood, children engage in the gradual process of establishing their self-standards and expectations. There is often an attempt to reconcile their own goals with those of their society, in order to facilitate a successful negotiation of interests. These children make remarkable gains in their capacity to organise and monitor their thoughts and behaviour (Ripke et al, 2006:261; Kowaleski-Jones & Duncan, 1999:931). Once again, clear distinctions cannot be made between cognitive, emotional and social development, which are all interrelated and which interact in complex ways. Self-regulation has affective and cognitive components, and it may, for example, be connected to avoidance of negative emotions as well as to increased capacity for perspective-taking, respectively (Markus and Nurius, 1984:163). Shipman et al (2001:250) refer to the regulation of emotionally expressive behaviour in particular, and state that children engage in this regulation process according to

four primary objectives: the management of emotions according to social norms, the avoidance of aversive consequences, the consideration of another's well-being and the protection of their own self-esteem and self-image.

1.3.2 Social competency and peer interaction

Hartup (1984:240) points out that middle childhood is the context of many important changes in peer interaction. He contends that between the ages of 6 and 12 years the peer system becomes a primary concern with children (see also Zembar & Blume, 2009:340-366; Huston & Ripke, 2006b:413). In the opinion of Markus and Nurius (1984:149), middle childhood is the time when individuals are most acutely aware of the opinions and judgements of others. Huston and Ripke are in agreement and understand conformity to be at its highest at around age 12 (2006a:11). This is often overlooked, as adolescence is usually, and rightly so, seen as the period of most active identity formation (Berk, 2006:456). Adolescents are particularly preoccupied with the formation of a stable identity. Erikson described this stage as being characterised by the psychosocial task of identity formation versus identity confusion (Berk, 2006:18). However, Erikson also believed that successful psychosocial outcomes of infancy and childhood are essential to a healthy, integrated identity in adolescence and adulthood (Berk, 2006:456).

Huston & Ripke (2006a:11, 13), Collins and van Dulmen (2006:35-36) and Hartup (1984:260) all contend that inadequate peer relationships in middle childhood are frequently associated with emotional and behavioural disturbances in adolescence and adulthood. Hartup (1984:260) refers to the work of Richman et al and agrees that while social difficulties among younger children do not correlate strongly with such problems in middle childhood, problematic peer interaction occurring in middle childhood is significantly associated with social and personal disturbances later in life (see also Feinstein & Bynner, 2006:327-328, 343-346). Furthermore, delinquent and criminal behaviour at later stages has been linked to social disturbance during middle childhood (Hartup, 1984:261). Hartup (1984:261) suggests that trouble relating to peers during the middle childhood years, evidenced by poor social skills, social rejection, lack of close friendships, etc. may predict later maladjustment. He continues by saying that middle childhood may be a critical stage for the establishment of such antisocial characteristics as negative self-attitudes and alienation.

1.3.3 Cultural identity, prejudice and discrimination

As mentioned above, the middle years of childhood are critical to the way the child understands the self and, importantly, comprehends the self in relation to others. Graves and Graves identify that “It is through this socio-emotional developmental process that children come to understand the complexities of the social contexts in which they exist” (2008:84). As such, middle childhood is a central period in the development of the child’s cultural identity. Graves and Graves go on to discuss the importance of this area of development in children’s lives. They surmise that a child’s sense of racial or ethnic identity influences their positive and/or negative conceptualisations of their own culture, their emotional responses to these conceptualisations, their choice of others with whom to form meaningful relationships, and the extent to which they endorse an egalitarian, multicultural society. A healthy sense of racial or ethnic identity thus plays an essential role in their current and future emotional and social adaptation. Having a healthy, well-developed racial and/or ethnic identity is necessary for children’s understanding of their and others’ cultures and for their successful participation in multicultural society (Graves & Graves, 2008:85).

The preference of children for others in their own groups is the highest at around eight years of age (Jackson & Abosi, 2006:89). Jackson and Abosi (2006:89) state that middle childhood is the stage where former in-group preference has the potential to change into rejection and prejudice towards out-groups. The same authors allege that children in the middle years are internalising perceptions and attitudes towards other groups that may become the foundations of racism, tribalism and sexism (2006:89). Jackson and Abosi go on to explain that this matter has not been well researched by African scholars and that they base their understanding of the issue on work done by researchers in the northern hemisphere. Referring to these findings, Jackson and Abosi (2006:91) suspect that prejudice may be the most prevalent among children in the middle years. They explain that in-group preference and out-group aversion are related to social and cognitive development (which is fairly uniform for children of all races) and that such trends are likely to be similar among children in Southern Africa. As such, it may be exceedingly important, when working with children of this age group, to foster a healthy sense of cultural identity and pride, as well as to instil values of equality, fairness and respect. Graves and Graves concur, holding that racial and ethnic identity are not static phenomena, but are moulded by the social environment in which development occurs (2008:85). Positive socialisation facilitated by families, cultural communities and schools can do much to promote healthy cultural identity and

integration (Blackmon & Vera, 2008:54). Ideally, this endeavour should coincide with children's developing empathy and social consciousness.

Jackson and Abosi briefly discuss the social and psychological outcomes of discrimination in general. They emphasise the plurality of possible outcomes, and use the term "victim/survivor" (in reference to the recipient of discrimination) in order to indicate the continuum of different responses (Jackson & Abosi, 2006:230). Those at the receiving end of discrimination may react passively with feelings of defencelessness or actively with visible agitation. Responses to discrimination are varied and unpredictable, and contain both emotional and cognitive components (Jackson & Abosi, 2006:231). They are multifaceted and influenced by various factors: for example, whether the person being discriminated against has control over the reason for the prejudice and the extent to which he or she has accepted and internalised the stereotype about their group. Where the person has no real or perceived control over the circumstance (as is the case with race, ethnicity and often religion), anger and rebellion would be the most likely response. Greater identification with the stereotypical belief may be associated with diminished self-esteem.

Discrimination is frequently associated with increased rates of stress, anxiety, anger and depression (Jackson & Abosi, 2006:231). Foster (1994:221) notes that the following psychological outcomes are related to racial discrimination: impaired self-concept, distorted identity, reduced self-esteem and acceptance of the out-group (where this is also the dominant group) as being superior to the in-group. This author refers to the latter effects as indirect results of racism, which he distinguishes from direct consequences that are "direct implications of racism on the life opportunities of oppressed children, for instance poor health, nutritional problems, infant mortality rates, poverty, disadvantaged education, limited sporting and recreational training, overcrowding, interpersonal violence and the like" (Foster, 1994:221). It is clear that all areas of a child's development are potentially impaired by this form of institutionalised discrimination.

2. Emotional and social well-being of children within residential care

As revealed from the literature, there are several aspects of the life experience of children placed in residential care that may serve to undermine the emotional and social well-being and self-concepts of such children. First, the institutional setting of residential care itself may exert a negative influence on

children's socio-emotional development. Second, such difficulties may be compounded by the often long and demanding process of placement and relocation. Furthermore, the predicaments associated with residential placement are no doubt aggravated by previous trauma – those initial reasons for legislative removal from the home. These are usually in themselves serious problems impacting negatively upon the child's emotional and social functioning and self-concept. Lastly, there are various macro-level factors, such as structural violence and social poverty and instability, the impact of which cannot be ignored.

2.1 The effects of residential care

Vorria, Papaligoura, Sarafidou, Kopakaki, Dunn, Van IJzendoorn and Kontopoulou (2006:1246) indicate that many areas of a child's development may be jeopardised by institutional placement. They observed that these children indiscriminately formed contacts with available adults and had difficulty forming secure relationships (2006:1246). Even once adopted, children who had spent a significant amount of time in residential care evidenced behaviour problems and poor social adaptation, along with impaired verbal, motor, practical reasoning, writing and drawing abilities (Vorria et al, 2006:1246). Gribble (2007:14) is in agreement, and similarly cites attachment difficulties, physical and developmental delays and language and sensory integration problems. She suggests that such impairments may be the consequence of physical deprivations (such as inadequate heating or cooling, space, nutrition and/or stimulation) and emotional deficiencies (lack of sensitive, consistent care-giving) associated with institutional life (2007:14). She does, however, immediately add that there is great variation among institutions in terms of the kind of material and social support they are able to offer. Institutionalised and post-institutionalised children have higher rates of mental health disorders, including externalising and internalising problems, which escalate with the onset of adolescence (Wiik, Loman, Van Ryzin, Armstrong, Essex, Pollak & Gunnar, 2011:56-57). This population group is particularly prone to difficulties involving inattention, hyperactivity, impulsivity, quasi-autistic features and attachment (Wiik et al, 2011:56). Wiik et al (2011:61) speculate that post-institutionalised children are exceptionally liable to present attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) symptoms during middle childhood when self-regulatory structures are under intense construction.

Institutional life may have serious consequences for the child's developing sense of self. As explained by Lyth, this area of development depends heavily on the presence of appropriate others, relationships and situations within the child's life as models for identification (1995:189). The "good ordinary

family” that provides secure attachment with a primary caretaker(s), suitable interactions with other children and appropriate care settings represents the ideal context for a child’s identification process (Lyth, 1995:189, 191). Lyth (1995:191, 200, 207) contends that a residential institution for children is able to facilitate effective development of a healthy self to the extent to which such conditions are met. This author concludes that the institution (as a whole and as a network of subsystems, all of which are mutually influential), along with its management practices, social culture and dynamics, provides the primary model for the child residents (Lyth, 1995:189-190; see also Canham, 1998:69). Should this model demonstrate fairness, respect, nurturing and responsibility (from executive level through to the workers in direct contact with children) (Lyth, 1995:190-192), residents would be allowed to develop “...a firm sense of identity and of authority and responsibility for the self, attachment possibilities, the growth of a capacity for insight and confrontation with problems” (Lyth, 1995:191). Canham, too, emphasises the role of the institution with regard to children’s identification processes (1998:69). She, however, stresses the residents’ need for an effective model of containment, and equates the success of a children’s home with the extent to which it is able to remain open to, tolerant of and capable of addressing and processing the children’s traumatic experiences and difficult feelings (Canham, 1998:69, 72, 74-75). The researcher agrees to an extent with the conclusions of Lyth and Canham, but adds that there are many other factors (besides the nature of the institution) impinging upon the healthy development of children who have experienced residential placement. Several of these additional aspects will be discussed in the following sections.

Institutional living may hamper effective development of children’s personal boundaries; this is likely to impair the process of identity formation occurring within those boundaries, as well as the social interactions taking place across those boundaries (Lyth, 1995:194). Children who enter institutions may already have a compromised sense of self and poor boundary control (Bradley, 1995:210, Lyth, 1995:194), and will depend upon the institution for facilitation of such development (Canham, 1998:73; Lyth, 1995:194). Once again, the “good ordinary family” would represent the ideal context for such processes, as well as the ideal model for personal boundary formation, and institutions have the onerous mandate of creating a social structure conducive to normal development (Lyth, 1995:194). Lyth posits that this would necessarily include appropriate control over external boundaries (1995:194), clear delineation of the boundaries’ defining subsystems (1995:195) and unambiguous demarcation of roles among management, staff and children (1995:198). A citation from Lyth succinctly expresses a dilemma frequently characterising children’s institutions: “There seems to be something about living in an institution that predisposes people to feel that it is all right to have everything open and public and to

claim right of entry to almost everywhere at almost any time. Nothing could be more different from the ordinary family home ... And nothing could be less helpful to the development of children in institutions” (1995:195).

Institutions all too frequently tolerate intrusions from the (often well-meaning) public and endure the constant, albeit necessary, entries and exits of various therapists, social workers and other health-care professionals (Lyth, 1995:196). Regulation of the children’s personal space may be extremely difficult to achieve; it would, however, be highly advantageous to the resident’s emotional and social adaptation. Clear boundary control would not only model and facilitate effective personal boundaries, but also create a greater sense of belonging to that which lies within the boundary (Lyth, 1995:196). Furthermore, the child should experience secure integration within a fairly small group (no bigger than about twelve children), ideally with a consistent, stable core of staff (Lyth, 1995:197), allowing for attachments between children and assigned, focal care-takers (Lyth, 1995:202).

Unfortunately, meaningful relationships between children and staff are often prevented with an “indiscriminate multiple care-taker system” in which various staff care for many different residents as opposed to being assigned to work with particular children (Lyth, 1995:200; see also Canham, 1998:71). There is often an inadequate ratio between children and care-givers, reducing the amount of individual attention made possible (Gribble, 2007:14). In addition, there is the typically high turnover rate among the staff of such settings (Lyth, 1995:200, 203; see also Canham, 1998:66, 71). Gribble (2007:14) holds that this deficiency of secure attachment is the primary and most devastating deprivation experienced by children in institutions. Maternal deprivation and attachment disorders are alarmingly prevalent within residential settings, and may contribute to dependency, non-compliance, lack of agency and generally undermined social competence (Griffiths, 2003:7).

In fairness, it is to be noted that transitory employment, unsystematic care-taking and lack of integrated units of care may, in part, be related to a highly stressful working environment in which attachment and involvement may prove to be demanding and painful (Canham, 1998:68-69; Lyth, 1995:203, 205). Such a relationship also places care-givers in a position of enormous responsibility and vulnerability as they attempt to meet the child’s emotional needs (Bradley, 1995:214). In order for staff to abandon superficial ways of relating to the children, they would need to operate in stable conditions with sufficient support from both inside and outside the institution (Lyth, 1995:204). A cohesive, supportive work milieu would be beneficial for both children and staff but exceedingly difficult to achieve

considering the lack of permanence among workers (Lyth, 1995:200), as well as the typical financial constraints. Bradley (1995:209) emphasises the common shortage of resources to help support, supervise and sufficiently train care-takers. Care-takers may become confused, overwhelmed and unable to understand or meet the children's needs (Bradley, 1995:215).

2.2 The effects of placement and relocation

Children commonly experience painful and conflicting emotions in response to removal from the home. Where there has been some form of abuse, resulting in extreme fear and anxiety, the child may feel relieved by the removal, while at the same time experience guilt toward this reaction, intense longing for the absent, abusive parent and family (Pagelow, 1984:85) and anger toward those responsible for the placement (Bradley, 1995:210-211). Children usually find such affective polarities confusing and distressing, and they need help to reconcile and integrate their experiences before estrangement of certain parts of the self (and thus fragmentation) occurs (Blom, 2006:39-42).

The child's uncertainty is compounded by the extreme instability that exists in most residential places of care. Ward (2009:1113) confirms that this problem is overwhelmingly prevalent within children's institutions and identifies it as a key predictor of poor welfare outcomes. He identifies it as particularly related to the poor adult outcomes of many children raised within the care system: lower education, greater unemployment and increased contact with the criminal and justice system. Ward continues by explaining that "Constant change can have a major impact not only on children and young people's patterns of attachment and emotional wellbeing and their sense of self-esteem and identity but also on their access to education and health care" (2009:1113, 1117). Concurring, Howing, Wodarski, Kurtz and Gaudin (referring specifically to the related issue of foster care) state that while alternative care is often necessary and is not in itself harmful, multiple placements have been linked to emotional and social difficulties (1993:93-94). These authors confirm that frequent placements were associated with severe aggression, poor ability to adapt to the home environment and poor emotional adaptation (Howing et al, 1993:93-94).

Unfortunately, the care system is characterised by a great deal of placement instability. For example, in an extensive three-and-a-half year study conducted by Ward (2009:1115), it was found that out of the 242 children involved, 41 percent were placed once or twice. About 22 percent underwent more than five placements each, and a significant number of children (just under 5 percent) experienced over ten

placements. There were a total of 965 placements over the course of the study. The duration of all placements had a median of 126 days. More specifically, 17 percent of placements fell short of three months, 57 percent were less than six months and a mere 29 percent were maintained for over one year (Ward, 2009:1115).

Perhaps most alarming is the fact that 85 percent of these placements were within the care system itself, and that the majority of these internal relocations were considered to be “planned transitions,” - “part of the case management process” (Ward, 2009:1115). These transitions far outnumbered those resulting from children absconding or from carers or children requiring termination of a placement. While the breakdown of a placement may be more distressing for all involved, such designed relocations do take a high toll on the child. Ward reports that the majority of planned transitions were “*resource or practice-led*, occasioned by a shortage of suitable placements, a lack of choice or inappropriate planning” (2009:1115) as well as a “shortage of specialist placements” (italics in original text) (2009:1117). In addition to the occurrence of mismanagement, there were, of course, those disruptions brought about by the children’s absconding, emotional and behavioural difficulties and criminal offences. Children presenting such problems were significantly more likely to experience precipitate disruptions initiated by themselves or their carers (evidenced by 17 percent of children in this category). However, such terminations seemed to occur despite the absence of such additional difficulties. Of children 0-9 years, 55 percent who were placed over five times during the study evidenced no such disturbance. Plainly, no children are immune to the disruptive instability that is seemingly inherent within the care system.

Children in the care system are subjected to instability both between placements, as described above, and within placements (such as perpetual changes within the home as residents enter and leave and as staff groups change) (Ward, 2009:1116; Canham, 1998:65-66, 73). Ward describes the frequent change of social workers as “built into the system” (2009:1116), a function of the care-management process. He points out excessively high staff turnover rates, as well as the constant flow of short-term workers (Ward, 2009:1116; see also Canham, 1998:66). Canham (1998:72) adds yet another source of uncertainty for the child residents, stating that she has “...seldom come across a children’s home which felt it was not at risk of closure”.

It seems a sad irony that the care system, created to protect and nurture traumatised youngsters, emulates the pattern of instability, loss and separation so characteristic of their former lives with their

families of origin (Ward, 2009:1117; Canham, 1998:65, 71-72). Their perception of a transient and unpredictable world is repeatedly reinforced. The majority of children entering the care system do so with an already impaired self-concept and severe socio-emotional difficulties. Section 2.3.5 below (Macro-level factors: Structural violence and social instability) describes the uncertainty and chaos pervading the lives of so many youngsters, and outlines the devastating developmental consequences thereof. To have children relive such instability prevents healing and rehabilitation and aggravates the effects of a usually traumatic background (please see section 2.3 below). Such children are in desperate need of a secure and supportive environment which will facilitate reintegration of the self and promote emotional and social resilience. Bradley aptly describes the central role of the substitute caretaker/institution as follows: “Whatever is the context of their separation they [the children] bring with them their inner set of personal experiences and feelings which need to be listened to and accepted by those caring for them in the residential setting if there is to be any possibility of recovery from the original trauma” (1995:211).

2.3 The effects of prior trauma resulting in removal from the home

Children living within institutions have frequently been exposed to some form of trauma, such as abuse, neglect or chronic violence (Griffiths, 2003:4). De Young, Kenardy and Cobham (2011:232) state that trauma experienced during early childhood is especially likely to impact negatively upon development (current and future) and psychological functioning due to young children’s rapid development across many areas of function, their limited coping skills and their almost complete reliance upon the primary care-giver for physical and psychological safety. This is highly comparable to the situation of children in middle childhood. Bradley (1995:210) indicates that, for the majority of children within institutions, their childhood and familial experiences have been such as have severely compromised healthy emotional and social development. This author contends (1995:211-212) that children frequently enter residential care with profound emotional disturbances requiring therapeutic intervention. Ward agrees, similarly reporting a high prevalence of emotional and behavioural disturbances upon entry to the care system, and adds that a disproportionate number of the youngsters had also been cautioned or convicted regarding a legal offence (2009:1114). Such reports of social, emotional and behavioural disturbances are in accordance with accounts from staff of the Epworth Children’s Village.

2.3.1 Maltreatment

Bradley (1995:210) is of the opinion that children in institutions have frequently had experiences of physical, sexual or emotional abuse and/or neglect. She explains that such a child's "inner world" and developmental processes have often been disrupted at an early stage of life. Parents who have been unable to provide emotional containment, reliability and consistency lack the inner resources essential to their children's healthy development of the self (Bradley, 1995:210). Maltreatment represents one of the most damaging manifestations of childhood adversity. It takes various forms, including physical and sexual abuse and neglect, and the frequently more insidious emotional and psychological abuse (Dawes, 1994:177; Levett, 1994:240; Cattanach, 1993: 19-21; Howing et al, 1993:3). Many areas of a child's development are affected by abuse and neglect, including school performance, socio-emotional development, general adaptive functioning (Howing et al, 1993:4-8) and physical wellbeing (Kvalsvig & Connolly, 1994:92; Richter & Griesele, 1994:66). Maltreatment has been associated with hostility, dependence, emotional instability, aggression, withdrawal, feelings of guilt, distress, reduced self-esteem, interpersonal difficulties and/or self-destructive behaviour (Fortin & Chamberland, 1995:278-279). Gil concurs with the above and adds the related constructs of anxiety or fear, depression, psychosomatic complaints, psychopathology, antisocial behaviour and/or sexual problems (1991:7; see also 8-12).

2.3.1.1 A Systemic Overview

Maltreatment is a complex issue, and is almost always the result of many variables interacting at various social levels. Berk (2006:588) provides a social systems explanation for the occurrence of this unfortunate and pervasive phenomenon. This model may be highly applicable in the South African context, characterised as it is by widespread poverty, malnourishment, unemployment, homelessness, interpersonal violence, political violence and oppression (Jackson & Abosi, 2006:145-155, 228-232; Dawes & Donald, 1994:1-27). Berk (2006:588) contends that factors at the individual, family, community and cultural level may contribute to such incidents and the trends thereof. At the individual level, there may be parents who have psychological disturbances, histories of abuse as a child, beliefs in harsh punishment, involvement in alcohol or drugs, and/or who are young, inexperienced and immature. The child may have a difficult temperament, be sickly or mentally or physically disabled (Fortin & Chamberland, 1995:282; Browne, 1988:43). At the family level are factors such as low income, homelessness, marital instability, social isolation, domestic violence, frequent relocation, large families with closely spaced children, overcrowded living conditions, disorganised households and lack

of steady employment. The larger community may contribute with violence, social isolation and a lack of support structures such as public parks, clinics, child-care facilities, recreation centres and churches, while at the cultural level, one may find an acceptance of violence and physical force as a means of solving problems (Berk, 2006:588). This overview is very similar to the ecological conceptualisations described by Emery and Lumann-Billings (1998:126), Fortin and Chamberland (1995:280), Lesnik-Oberstein, Koers and Cohen (1995:36), Browne (1988:45), Polansky, Gaudin, Ammons and Davis (1985:265), Spearly and Lauderdale (1983:92) and Gelles and Strauss (1979:28).

2.3.1.2 The effects of maltreatment in middle childhood

Maltreatment in the middle childhood years is under-researched and under-documented. This is partly because, whereas adolescents with a history of maltreatment may engage in acting-out and/or delinquent behaviour, children in the middle years are less conspicuous and disruptive within society (Howing et al, 1993:6). Maltreated children in the middle years may go unnoticed for several critical years until they, too, usually with the onset of puberty, may become entangled with the juvenile justice system. Adolescent and adult antisocial behaviour correlates significantly with emotional and/or social maladjustment during middle childhood. It is therefore crucial that such problems be identified and intervention applied at this stage.

Maltreatment is strongly associated with two forms of socio-emotional deprivation during the early years: deficient containment and poor attachment. First, abused or neglected infants or children are deprived of a sensitive care-giver whose role it is to understand and contain their intolerable sensations and emotions (tragically, they have often been at the receiving end of others' disturbing emotional states) (Canham, 1998:66-67). They are simultaneously denied an effective model of containment with whom to identify, and are thus left with few internal resources to draw upon in the event of future difficult experiences (Canham, 1998:66-67).

Second is the issue of attachment. The importance of a child's secure attachment to a parent figure is discussed below in 2.3.4.2 Family stress and attachment formation. Children who are deprived of such a relationship can face serious and lasting socio-emotional difficulties; children who are victims of maltreatment frequently face severe forms of this kind of deprivation (Howing et al, 1993:5). As would be expected, emotional and social disturbances are common within this population. Howing et al make the statement that "Indeed, nearly every study of the social and emotional development of abused or neglected young children has found evidence of such difficulties, including withdrawal, aggression,

non-compliance, poor impulse-control, frustration, insensitivity to social situations, lack of empathy and poor peer relationships” (1993:5; see also Fortin & Chamberland, 1995:278-279). Howing et al continue by saying that, although very little research on attachment is devoted to middle childhood, such findings suggest that older children may experience similar difficulties. This notion is supported by the frequent correlation of adolescent antisocial behaviour and a background of maltreatment, with physical abuse representing the strongest association (Howing et al, 1993:6). The middle childhood years are critical in the development of self-concept, self-regulation and social competence. Considering the vital role that secure attachment plays in these areas of maturation, it becomes clear that inadequate parenting, and especially abuse and neglect, may prevent healthy adaptation in these areas.

Where there is insecure or insufficient attachment to a parent figure, one may expect to find an impaired self-concept (Griffiths, 2003:8). This is because the child has never had the warm, accepting relationship that is so essential for the development of a healthy sense of self. Furthermore, Cattanach (1993:17) argues that to be abused or neglected is to have one’s rights ignored, and, in a sense, to become invisible (not to count or not to matter). Such a circumstance is detrimental to development of a healthy sense of self (Cattanach, 1993:17). An additional problem involves the importance of obtaining a sense of industry in the middle childhood stage. The repeated failure that many of these children experience in the scholastic sphere may drastically undermine their sense of competence and diminish any further aspirations. Moreover, middle childhood, representing a time of acute awareness of evaluation by others and an increased capacity for social comparison, may be a difficult period for those children deprived of opportunities to enhance their self-definitions. Their self-esteem may be severely impaired due to their experiences of abuse and/or rejection. As discussed in depth above, a poor sense of self may dramatically hinder a child’s development of empathy, an important task in middle childhood, along with development of conscience and self-regulation. Poor emotional regulation may result in uncontrollable aggression and related conduct problems.

2.3.2 Domestic violence

Domestic violence and child maltreatment are issues related to family stress (see 2.3.4 Family stress below) (Fortin & Chamberland, 1995:281; Farrington, 1986: 131-132; Carroll, 1977:291). However, because of the severity of these particular outcomes, and because many stress-ridden families are not associated with violence or maltreatment, these phenomena are considered separately. Domestic

violence refers to violence and abuse occurring between family (or household) members and includes maltreatment perpetrated by a male against a female, a female against a male or between members of the same sex (Shipway, 2004:1). The violence may be physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial and may be continuous or intermittent in nature (Shipway, 2004:1-2). Family violence appears to be behaviour learned within the family context (Witt, 1987:294), a situation rendering swift, effective intervention enormously important. Pagelow stresses the diversity in the types of and reasons for the occurrence of domestic violence, as well as the dangers of generalising across individuals (1984:73). She does, nevertheless, suggest two underlying social dynamics of families at risk: power imbalances (1984:74-78, 84) and social isolation (1984:78-81). The abuse of power differentials, she stresses, is at the root of most forms of family violence, be it child abuse, woman battering, abuse of the elderly or sibling violence (Pagelow, 1984:75). She goes on to remark that it is frequently the privacy granted to the family setting that leads it to become an institution prone to violence (1984:78). Households with few ties to the community are especially at risk (Pagelow, 1984:79).

Emery and Lumann-Billings (1998:128-129) state that family violence may result in a diversity of negative outcomes for the victims, including physical injuries and psychological damage, such as depression, anxiety, aggression, acute stress disorder and posttraumatic stress disorder. Psychological disturbances may be immediate or delayed, and the effects may endure well into the individual's future and even across generations (Emery & Lumann-Billings, 1998:128-129). Pagelow maintains that "Victims of all types of family violence share a common experience of denigration of self that results in diminished self-esteem" (1984:81). This author also describes the feelings of shame and humiliation, self-blame and guilt, worthlessness and helplessness frequently experienced (Pagelow, 1984:84). Finally, victims of domestic violence commonly become captive within a form of psychological entrapment. Should they feel so trapped within their violent existence that they believe mitigation to be impossible, they then become increasingly powerless within their situation (Pagelow, 1984:85).

2.3.3 Poverty

Poverty, as such, does not represent a reason to remove a child from his or her home. It is, however, often associated with family stress and incidents of severe familial dysfunction. It is important to keep in mind that many families which experience poverty (whether moderate or extreme) are not disposed to violence, maltreatment or deliberate neglect. However, in a developing country such as South Africa

in which socio-economic injustice is rife, and where many children (institutionalised or not) live in poverty, a consideration of the effects of poverty is necessary.

Howing et al (1993:9, 88) report that considerable evidence suggests low SES adversely affects every facet of the school-age child. Nuru-Jeter et al (2010:59) concur, stating that children of a lower SES experience poorer mental and physical health and display impaired social and scholastic functioning in comparison to children of a higher SES. Factors such as low income, poor education and occupations of parents that represent a health or safety risk all have a profoundly negative effect on families and the achievement and adjustment of involved children (Howing et al, 1993:88). Nuru-Jeter et al (2010:61) state that the social stress experienced by low SES families may contribute significantly to the impairments evidenced by their children (please refer to section 2.3.4 Family stress, below). In agreement, Howing et al (1993:89) state that low SES families are frequently characterised by unemployment, parental depression, high levels of stress, poor social support, single parenthood and large family size. Howing et al (1993:88) suggest possible specific outcomes with regard to the children of such families: scholastic difficulties, including regular absenteeism, repetition of grades, disruptive behaviour and meagre educational ambitions and socio-emotional difficulties, including behavioural difficulties at home, delinquency, contact with the legal system, drug and alcohol abuse, aggression, low self-concept, depression, sleep and appetite disturbances and suicidal tendencies.

Spearly and Lauderdale (1983:93) provide a broader ecological perspective of poverty. An ecological perspective is one considering the mutual interaction of person and environment at the levels of the micro-system, meso-system, exo-system and macro-system of society (Zembar and Blume, 2009:22-23; Asp & Garbarino, 1988:169-170). Spearly and Lauderdale emphasise that impoverished communities, in which members are all struggling for their own survival, prevent the formation of informal systems capable of providing emotional and economic support and alleviating stress (1983:93; also Polansky et al, 1985:266). As can be seen from the discussion of family stress below, there is a clear overlap between the circumstances of poverty, domestic unrest and child maltreatment. However, Emry and Lumann-Billings (1988:126) emphasise that there is no simple, cause-and-effect relationship between poverty and abuse.

2.3.4 Family stress

While family stress, in and of itself, does not legitimise the placement of children into institutional care, it frequently contributes to the difficult living conditions associated with the serious forms of family dysfunction discussed above.

2.3.4.1 Stress and overall family dysfunction

Howing et al (1993:85) identify family stress as the factor most strongly and consistently related to maladjustment of the child, including poor scholastic achievement, disruptive behaviour, difficulty relating to family and peers and delinquency. They suggest that a child's achievement and adaptation may be hampered by authoritarian parenting styles, shortage of positive family interaction and stressful family circumstances (Howing et al, 1993:9). Pagani et al (2006:130) offer a strikingly similar profile of the family under stress. These authors associate family adversity with low levels of warmth and acceptance, insufficient support, chronic neglect, poor communication and inadequate problem solving among family members, and they emphasise the negative impact that these characteristics frequently have on children's emotional and social adaptation (Pagani et al, 2006:130-132; see also Fortin & Chamberland, 1995:281). They describe children from such families as suffering from impaired emotion processing and social cognitive capacities, from disruptions of regulatory systems involving stress responses and from unsafe health behaviours (Pagani et al, 2006:130; see also Creedon, 2011:34). Pagani et al, like Howing et al, stress the link between family dysfunction and behaviour problems, including aggression, depression, anxiety, suicidal tendencies and oppositional-defiant and conduct-disordered behaviours (Pagani et al, 2006:130).

Nuru-Jeter et al (2010:61-62) suggest that some of the adverse effects of low SES on child development (discussed above in 2.3.3 Poverty) are due, in part, to the associated family stress. Chronic stress, resulting in continuously heightened levels of the peptide cortisol, causes impaired functioning of the prefrontal cortex and related difficulties with executive cognitive functioning. Nuru-Jeter et al (2010:61) highlight the correlation between chronic social stress and children's deficiencies in memory, attention, language ability, general cognitive functioning and control of one's behaviour. The aggression and conflict frequently correlated with long-term family dysfunction may lead to impaired regulation and expression of emotions and inadequate social skills.

Parental depression is linked to hostile and punitive parenting styles, and is particularly associated with problematic behaviour in the family and classroom (Howing et al, 1993:87). Furthermore, Howing et al recognise stress as a common dynamic in the occurrence of both abuse and neglect (1993:85). In agreement, Justice and Calvert (1985:359) describe stress as a basic factor in child abuse. Family violence, as well as the intergenerational transmission thereof, has also been found to correlate with low family warmth and stressful domestic circumstances (Witt, 1987:294; Carrol, 1977:291; see also Gelles & Straus, 1979:36). Farrington (1986:140) is in agreement regarding the negative impact of stress, but cautions that there are several moderating factors such as economic status and cultural attitude toward the use of physical force. Family violence and child maltreatment, considered above in more detail, represent extreme outcomes of family adversity.

2.3.4.2 Family stress and attachment formation

The serious impact that family adversity may have upon the attachment styles of parents and their children cannot be disregarded. It is well established in the literature that warm, secure attachment with a parent figure is crucial to adaptive emotional and social development and a healthy sense of self (Howing et al, 1993:5). The absence or frequent disruptions of a secure attachment, consistently associated with familial stress, can result in profound and enduring socio-emotional difficulties (Howing et al, 1993:5). For example Berndt (1997:227) states that children lacking in secure attachment may, later in life, go on to experience anxiety, dependence upon others' love, guilt, depression, antisocial behaviour and enduring difficulties in forming meaningful relationships. An anxious-avoidant, anxious-resistant (or insecure-ambivalent) or disorganised-disoriented attachment style frequently sets the trend for a lifetime of intra- and interpersonal difficulties (Berndt, 1997:224, 227).

Berk proposes that a positive parent-child relationship is crucial to the child's development of self-regulatory capacities, including self-control (2006:480). She explains that such an attachment fosters the development of conscience and the internalisation of morals, and is thus an essential component of moral development. A reassuring, responsive and consistent parenting style is necessary for the child's development of empathy, in that it provides for the child's psychological needs as well as models such pro-social behaviour for the child to emulate (Howing et al, 1993:5). Furthermore, a warm, caring relationship is most conducive to the internalisation of norms and values (Berk, 2006:480). Secure attachment with a sensitive, accepting parent figure also plays a critical role in fostering healthy self-esteem (Berk, 2006:451; Howing et al, 1993:5). Finally, children who are securely attached are better

able to resist the negative impact of traumatic incidents (De Young et al, 2011:241). As mentioned above, many children entering institutions have experienced one or another form of trauma. If they are not securely attached (which, due to stressful family circumstances, many are not), they will lack the neurobiological, psychological and social resources to cope effectively with the traumatic experiences (De Young et al, 2011:241-242).

2.3.5 Macro-level factors: Structural violence and social instability

The physical and social environments in which South African children grow up are often precarious (Jackson & Abosi, 2006:154). As the dysfunctional family and the developing child do not exist or function in a vacuum, it is important to consider the broader socio-economic and political context. Macro-level factors interact with unfavourable community, family and individual characteristics with the result, all too often, being the harmful home environments which necessitate statutory intervention. Jackson and Abosi discuss the detrimental effects that instability may have on a child's development, and observe that it often "alters the physical, social-emotional and cognitive development of children in ways that are generally detrimental to their wellbeing" (2006:154). Pavlicevic (1994:4), in agreement, asserts that many South African children, under conditions of systematic repression and social deprivation ("...an extension of the political violence that existed during the years of apartheid"), live with a great deal of uncertainty and unpredictability. This, she contends, has "grave consequences for children's emotional development" and may result in what she calls "desolation within the self." Where there are frequent and unpredictable disruptions to a child's material and social world, there may be a greatly diminished sense of autonomy, personal agency and control, damaged sense of self, a lack of trust in the world around them and impaired self-esteem (Jackson & Abosi, 2006:155-156). Pavlicevic (1994:4) cites all of these outcomes, and adds a diminished ability to form lasting relationships and a sense of dehumanisation and emotional insensitivity.

Furthermore, Jackson and Abosi state that many youngsters experience an irretrievable loss of childhood when they are expected to perform roles (such as caring for and protecting younger siblings, or being a primary breadwinner and finding shelter, food and clothes) or are exposed to traumatic experiences (including incidents of violence, death or prostitution) which they are developmentally ill-equipped to deal with (2006:155-164). They are deprived of normative experiences such as play, schooling and positive peer interaction, and the loss of such opportunities is likely to have far-reaching negative consequences on future development (Jackson & Abosi, 2006:155). The latter is especially

apparent when one considers the phenomenon of child-headed households which are increasingly common in South Africa as young parents succumb to HIV/AIDS related illnesses. Mogotlane, Chauke, Van Rensburg, Human and Kganakga (2010:25) state that this type of family configuration serves to undermine family and community functioning, to hinder child-rearing and healthy child development and to prevent children from having their rights met (such as the right to schooling).

3. Gestalt principles and concepts

The proposal that music, rhythm and in particular African drumming (with its strong awareness- and contact-promoting tendencies) can enhance children's emotional and social development is discussed in Chapter Three. This proposal is supported by Gestalt theory as it is applied within Gestalt play therapy. Prior to the discussion in Chapter Three, however, a cursory introduction to Gestalt theory is offered. The researcher views Gestalt principles and concepts as helpful in understanding child development and functioning. She believes that Gestalt theory is useful in the consideration of healthy development and adaptive functioning as well as undermined development and social and emotional dysfunction. The profound impact which a child's capacity for self-regulation, awareness and contact has upon developmental processes points to the value of Gestalt theory as a foundation for childhood intervention strategies aiming to enhance social and emotional well-being.

3.1 Gestalt theory¹

The Gestalt approach is phenomenological (based on the individual's perceptions of reality) and existential (based on the assumption of continuous growth, development and change). Being an experiential approach to growth and change, it seeks to enhance the client's awareness, perception and experience of the present moment (Corey, 2005:192). The individual is appreciated as a holistic entity; the dynamic configuration of body, mind and emotions can be meaningfully understood only in terms of its ongoing interaction with its ever-changing environment (Blom, 2006:19). It is a process-orientated practice underpinned by humanist principles; authentic contact between the client and therapist (the I-thou relationship) is considered central to the therapeutic process (Corey, 2005:203).

¹ For further reading on Gestalt theory one may refer to Yontef & Jacobs, 2000; Aronstam, 1990 and Clarkson, 1989.

3.2 Important principles of Gestalt theory

Following are brief explanations of several key concepts of Gestalt theory. Gestalt theory and Gestalt therapy are vast fields of research and practice and the following is only an attempt to delineate and clarify salient principles that are relevant to this particular study.

3.2.1 Organismic self-regulation

All children continually experience different needs (Blom, 2006:23-24; Oaklander, 2006:12). These needs must be met for optimal development to occur (Schoeman, 1996a:35). According to Gestalt theory, organismic self-regulation is the process whereby individuals attempt to have their needs satisfied (Blom, 2006:23; Schoeman, 1996a:35). Individuals try to maintain a state of homeostasis, or equilibrium, in an ever-changing environment (Schoeman, 1996a:35). Changes in the child's environment result in new needs that require fulfilment in order for a state of balance to be regained. Until gratification of such needs occurs, the child will experience feelings of discomfort (Blom, 2006:23). A child's physical, cognitive, spiritual, emotional and social requirements are all important to his or her healthy functioning as a gestalt, or unified entity (Blom, 2006:24; Schoeman, 1996a:35). Oaklander refers to this cycle – the emergence and fulfilment of needs, in order to clear the way for new needs to surface – as a critical process of life and growth (2006:13).

Through the process of organismic self-regulation, children constantly strive to have their needs met. With regard to emotional and social development, Oaklander points out that children have a fundamental need for warmth and acceptance (2006:12). Problems in these areas of development may occur when a child is unable, for some reason, to have these needs met (Oaklander, 2006:12). An important objective in Gestalt therapy (and Gestalt play therapy) is to assist children in their capacity to attain (from their internal and external environments) what they require for healthy growth (Blom, 2006:23; Schoeman, 1996a:35). This process usually involves fostering awareness and ownership of the child's sensory experiences, emotions, beliefs, needs and desires (Blom, 2006:23).

3.2.2 Holism

The concept of holism implies that individuals cannot be understood as separate from their environment (Blom, 2006:22). Neither can they be understood as merely the sum of their physical, psychological and spiritual aspects. Rather, people are viewed as holistic entities, functioning as the synergic outcome of all these components. While an individual's behaviour, language, thoughts and

emotions can be distinguished, they cannot be separated (Blom, 2006:22). In order to meaningfully understand the developing child, it is essential that all aspects of his or her being, and the interaction between them, be considered. As discussed directly below, integration of these components is essential for the child to function as a healthy, self-regulating entity (Blom, 2006:22-23).

3.2.3 Integration

According to the Gestalt therapy approach, social and emotional health is the result of personal integration (Blom, 2006:23, 51; Corey, 2005:199, 203; Schoeman, 1996b:56). This refers to integration of the senses, emotions, cognitions and behaviours, in order to conclude unfinished business and reconcile polarities (Blom, 2006:54). Integration can only occur when there is sufficient contact with both the external and internal environments (Blom, 2006:53-54, 91). Lack of contact with one's inner reality may result in a person disowning (and thus becoming alienated from) certain aspects of him- or herself (possibly resulting in fragmentation of the self) (Blom, 2006:92; Corey, 2005:198; Schoeman, 1996c:64). Deficient contact with the external environment may hinder an individual's ability to obtain (from significant others and physical surroundings) what he or she needs for healthy functioning (Schoeman, 1996b:55). Integration is what allows a child to function as an entity capable of self-regulation (Blom, 2006:54), a process dependent on effective contact with the personal and social environment (as discussed above).

3.2.4 Contact

Contact-making is a central component of Gestalt theory. Without it, self-regulation cannot occur. The child's making contact with the internal and external environment is foundational to his or her ability to have needs met and therefore to attain emotional and social well-being. Sometimes, a child may need assistance in developing contact before a satisfactory relationship with the therapist can be achieved. Blom (2006:90) speaks of the necessity of increasing a child's capacity for self-support, which is essential to effective contact and thus prerequisite for the expression of suppressed emotions. This author suggests three elements constituting self-support, namely, sensory and bodily contact-making and strengthening of the self. Blom (2006:90) reminds that contact skills that facilitate adaptive interaction include full use of the five senses of touch, sight, hearing, smell and taste. In addition, children must not only see but *look*, not only hear, but also *listen*. There is thus an emphasis on increased perception and awareness. Other important components of contact include body posture and movement, as well as language and talking (Blom, 2006:90). Oaklander (2006:22) describes contact as

“having the ability to be fully present in a particular situation with all of the aspects of the organism – senses, body, emotional expression, intellect – ready and available for use.” It follows that inadequate contact is frequently the result of poor awareness (Blom, 2006:91; Oaklander, 2006:22-23).

3.2.5 Awareness

Oaklander refers to providing children with many experiences in order to “open the pathways to contact” (2006:22). By this, she is referring to the promotion of their skills for contact-making by expanding their awareness (Oaklander, 2006:22). This is particularly important with regard to a child who has suffered some form of trauma, abuse or neglect. Various kinds of traumatic or disruptive life experiences may serve to undermine a person’s capacity for awareness (Blom, 2006:91; Oaklander, 2006:22). As Oaklander (2006:51) stresses, a child who has suffered some form of trauma may severely “...restrict her senses, inhibit the use of her body, block her emotions, close down her intellect”. Sensory awareness is the basis of all other awareness, and is crucial to healthy development. Promotion of such awareness is in itself seen as therapeutic.

3.2.6 Structure of the personality

Perls (Blom, 2006:42), considered to be the founding father of Gestalt theory and therapy, proposed a five-layer structure of the personality. This conceptualisation is helpful in understanding the ways in which the functioning of an individual can become fragmented. It also provides a useful conceptualisation of how therapeutic intervention can facilitate an individual’s reintegration. The first, or outermost, layer of the personality is referred to as the synthetic or false layer. In this layer, the child functions according to roles and expectations, and not according to the true self (Blom, 2006:42). Self-awareness and contact with one’s own thoughts, feelings or needs is limited. The next layer is the phobic layer, in which the individual becomes aware of the fake, phony nature of the roles he or she is enacting (Blom, 2006:43). Anxiety is often associated with this layer of the personality, as the child becomes aware not only of the roles he or she is playing, but also of the fear that is compelling him or her to maintain those roles.

Next is the impasse layer, characterised by resistance and feelings of confusion and discomfort. In this layer, the child lacks inner resources and the capacity for self-support (Blom, 2006:44). The child will seek external support, but realises that only he or she is in the position to make the desired changes. This layer is marked by internal conflict, with the child desiring to make the necessary changes, but at

the same time seeking to avoid the pain associated with change and growth. The child typically feels “stuck,” unable to move in either direction. The implosive layer follows, in which the child evidences good awareness of the self and of necessary changes, but lacks the energy to take responsibility for and to act on this insight, that is, to break out of the impasse (Blom, 2006:45). Fear of the unknown may add to the child’s sense of immobility. Finally, in the explosive layer, children acquire the energy needed for them to express and act upon their thoughts and feelings and to make the necessary changes (Blom, 2006:45). The energy once used to maintain the synthetic or false layer is mobilised for the expression and fulfilment of the child’s needs, and therefore, for effective self-regulation.

4. Conclusion

Children in the middle years are in the process of gradual yet profound emotional and social development. Important progress occurs in the areas of empathy, emotional understanding, self-esteem, motivation and emotional self-regulation along with gains in social understanding, perspective-taking, reciprocal role-taking, application of moral reasoning and conceptualisation of friendship. These areas of development are intricately related to dramatic maturation of the self-concept, which becomes increasingly abstract, integrated and socially-orientated. Socio-emotional trends established during this stage are often enduring and remain influential throughout adolescence and adulthood, rendering middle childhood a critical phase for effective intervention. Children in residential care may experience unique challenges concerning the above areas of development. Socio-emotional and self-concept development may be impaired on three accounts: unfavourable aspects of institutional life, the disruptive effects of placement and relocation and those initial factors resulting in removal from the home. Gestalt theory is particularly suited to understanding the development and self-regulation of children who have experienced some form of trauma, resulting in impaired emotional and social adaptation and self-concept. Important principles from this discipline were briefly discussed in the third section. Chapter Three discusses in greater detail the potential of African drumming to enhance children’s emotional and social well-being.

Chapter Three

Promoting social and emotional well-being of children in the middle years utilising African drumming

1. Music and children

Music is an integral part of childhood. Birkenshaw (1982:57) persuades that “Both music and singing are as natural as breathing for youngsters”, and Campbell and Scott-Kassner (2006:8) concur, commenting that “Children quite naturally listen, sing, dance, play, and express themselves musically, with little or no previous training”. Children are born with rhythm, regardless of their cultural origin (Skeef, 1999:333; Nichols & Honig, 1997:214; Ostwald, 1990:12). Their earliest vocalisations take the form of rhythmical and melodic cooing and babble (Isbell & Raines, 2003:143; Nichols & Honig, 1997:213), which develops into nursery rhymes and songs, all of which are essential for the development of speech and other forms of communication and hence socialisation (Birkenshaw, 1982:189).

Toddlers enthusiastically produce interesting sounds with different objects and apply their rapidly developing mobility to creatively moving with music (Isbell & Raines, 2003:145; see also Bunt, 1994:96-97). Hughes (1999:201) points out that by age three, children can recognise and begin to sing along to familiar tunes. This author goes on to discuss music as a natural part of children’s behaviour, pointing out that by age three or four, children often sing spontaneously while involved with other play activities (Hughes, 1999:201). Isbell and Raines (2003:145) also describe children’s spontaneous use of music while engaged in everyday activities, and discuss how the preschooler’s increasing fine motor coordination and more proficient use of language enhance their musical endeavours. Throughout the kindergarten years (and the accompanying cognitive and physical development), children are able to learn more complex rhythms and begin exploration on melodic instruments, which during the primary school years may be supported by specialised training (Isbell & Raines, 2003:146-147; also refer to Wigram, Pedersen & Bonde, 2002:55-57, Ostwald, 1990:11-23 and Rogers, 1990:1-9 for more information on musical development during childhood.)

1.1 The importance of music in childhood

Music forms an essential part of children's play behaviour (Campbell & Scott-Kassner, 2006:21). The central role of play within children's lives was discussed in Chapter Two (3.2). Part of what makes music so integral within the childhood years is that children's play often includes a musical factor (Glover & Young, 1999:2; Tarnowski, 1999:27-28; Bunt, 1994:96; Birkenshaw, 1982:189, 57). For example, children love to sing songs, play singing games, invent their own music, play on real or improvised instruments and recite street chants, jump-rope and handclapping rhymes (Campbell & Scott-Kassner, 2006:21-22; Kalani, 2004:16; Isbell & Raines, 2003:154-156; Birkenshaw, 1982:57, 327). Furthermore, music frequently forms a vital accompaniment to children's non-music activities such as saying rhymes, playing games, skipping, jumping and playing hopscotch (Birkenshaw, 1982:9). Frequently, musical play occurs in groups, and music is widely accepted as an exceptionally effective socialising agent (Campbell & Scott-Kassner, 2006:21-22; Isbell & Raines, 2003:147; Hughes, 1999:202-203; Tarnowski, 1999:28).

Music, as a versatile ingredient of play or as a phenomenon in its own right, constitutes an important part of children's cognitive, physical, social and emotional development (Isbell & Raines, 2003:141). Nocker-Ribaupierre and Wolf (2010:155-156, 159) explain that music activities, whether part of classroom learning or children's play, can enhance personality development, the individuation process (the formation of an integrated identity, separate to that of significant others), emotional capacity, intelligence, concentration, creativity, flexibility, endurance, self respect, self-esteem and self-image. Children utilise music as an integral part of their learning experience (Hirt-Mannheimer, 1995:38). There is evidence that the capacity to maintain a steady beat is related to reading ability, cognitive and physical organisation (Snyder, 1996:103). Rhymes and chants aid memorisation, singing games promote development of spatial awareness and clapping and other body percussion assists the conceptualisation of natural and abstract patterns (Skeef, 1999:333). Hirt-Mannheimer adds that music activities aid memorisation, listening skills, concentration, decision-making, patterning, organisation and language development, as well as self-esteem, awareness and expression (1995:39). Listening to and creating music, with or without lyrics, can nurture emotional intelligence by promoting self-awareness, self-management and empathy (Bahman & Maffini, 2008:70, 72). Movement, often closely related to music, represents another important dimension of the child's learning process (Hughes, 1999:203; Birkenshaw, 1982:xiv). Together, these experiences provide children with many opportunities for creative exploration and appropriate socialisation (Birkenshaw, 1982:9).

The importance of music in childhood socialisation is highlighted by Campbell and Scott-Kassner (2006:21) who recommend music as the ideal means of introducing youngsters into the society and culture in which they are immersed. Isbell and Raines (2003:147) recommend musical group work such as singing games and instrumental ensembles to promote social competence as it develops during the primary school years. Nocker-Ribaupierre & Wolf (2010:156-157, 159) emphasise the capacity of music activities to promote cooperation, social competence, self-regulation, emotional regulation, self-awareness, group awareness, social reflection, social flexibility, awareness of mental and affective states, validation of individuals, tolerance, conflict resolution, community feelings and integration (including cultural integration) of all participants. Hughes (1999:202) refers to the belief of Hartley, Frank and Goldenson who state that the most significant social contribution of music concerns children who have been victims of social rejection or neglect. These authors value music-related activities for their capacity to help include such children (who are frequently either aggressive and disruptive or timid and anxious) into the peer group. This view is supported by Hirt-Mannheimer (1995:39) who also highlights that music participation is especially beneficial to special-needs learners and other children who experience difficulty interacting with others. She claims that music effectively provides such children with a bridge, a form of expression, breaking their isolation and connecting them with other children and important adults (Hirt-Mannheimer, 1995:39; see also Elefant, 2010:78). Nocker-Ribaupierre & Wolf (2010:155-156) also emphasise the capacity of music to improve integration and reduce levels of social exclusion.

1.2 The benefits of general music education

Birkenshaw (1982:xiv) proposes that effective music programmes can enhance children's development in various areas (physical, cognitive, emotional and social) and describes the potential of music education to promote coordination, motor sensory skills, auditory perception and listening skills, fluency of speech, oral language, receptive language, inner rhythmic sureness, creativity and social skills. The same author (1982) recommends the use of movement activities (p.9), listening exercises (p.31), singing (p.55), the chanting of rhymes and poems (p.189) and the playing of instruments (p.327) to achieve these developmental objectives. This belief is echoed and supported by the more recent writing of Creedon (2011:34-35), who states that an effective music and arts programme can promote emotional well-being, learning aptitude (including reading), memory and recall, stress reduction and positive social interaction. This author holds that music and arts education can

effectively enhance self-esteem, creative thinking, problem solving and communication skills (Creedon, 2011:36; see also Bauerlein, 2010:42; Nocker-Ribaupierre & Wolfl, 2010:155).

Music has been linked to literary development (Isbell & Raines, 2003:147; Snyder, 1996:103); Biddle and Dolby (1996:1) are of the opinion that music is essential to a balanced education, as it promotes aesthetic awareness, active creativity, social participation, emotional development and integrated learning (see also Chong & Kim, 2010:190-191; Nocker-Ribaupierre & Wolfl, 2010:155; and Snyder, 1996:103-105). Furthermore, Biddle and Dolby believe that a music programme can enhance the general school curriculum by promoting the school ethos; instilling self-control, self-subordination and self-criticism; encouraging communication, teamwork, cooperation and emotional and imaginative involvement; providing students with a sense of responsibility and achievement; enhancing concentration, perseverance, coordination and memory; and enhancing the capacity for appropriate leisure activities (performance, participation and discrimination) (1996:4). Campbell and Scott-Kassner posit that music deserves a central place in the school curriculum, at least throughout the preschool and primary school phases (2006:7, 22). They refer to the work of the eminent Howard Gardner and state that music is foundational to the essential responsibility of educational institutions: to “inculcate desired moral and social behaviours, provide training in civility, and provide fundamental understanding as well as the capacity to reason, interpret, and transfer ideas and processes, thereby facilitating the independent acquisition of new knowledge” (2006:6).

Evidence of the benefits described above could be hoped for as a result of the drumming programme. As several of these benefits, e.g. enhanced literary or language development, were not measured as part of the study, it is not possible to know whether any of these additional advantages were realised.

1.3 The relationship between music education and therapy

It has been well established that general music education can significantly enhance various aspects of childhood development. In particular, music activities have been noted for their potential to foster the emotional and social development of children, promoting the acquisition of both self-regulatory and communicative skills (Campbell & Scott-Kassner, 2006:21; Kalani, 2005; Stone, 2005; Kalani, 2004; Isbell & Raines, 2003; Thorsen, 2002:18; Hughes, 1999:201; Skeef, 1999; Young & Glover, 1998; Clark, 1997; Biddle & Dolby, 1996; Kalandyk, 1996; Greig, 1994; Birkenshaw, 1982; Andress, 1980).

Following is a brief discussion regarding the therapeutic dimensions of music education as discerned by several researchers.

With regard to the potential therapeutic dimensions of education generally, Skeef (1999:335) believes that true education means attaining wholeness, and that wholeness requires healing. Speaking from the perspective of what he terms “African holism,” Skeef describes his own experiences of the capacity of drumming to resolve conflict and prejudice and to restore a balanced, peaceful, self-confident, empowered, reconciliatory and fulfilled disposition in the individuals and groups involved (1999:336). Goll (1994:70) is in agreement and describes the close relationship and commonalities between the disciplines of music education and music therapy, both of which strive to promote integration and wholeness. In this same regard, Greig (1994:7) remarks that in both education and therapy, an inherent task is to improve self-concept, promote empowerment and enhance personal fulfilment. He describes components intrinsic to music activities that render the process conducive to therapeutic outcomes: the provision of a wide range of experiences, enhancing the opportunity for meaningful participation; the possibility for individuals to participate at their own level; the opportunity to experience success and competence; the affirmation and validation of individuality and uniqueness; and the opportunity for self-expression (Greig, 1994:13). He believes that such characteristics promote self-esteem, which, he asserts, is an element central both to the learning process and to emotional and social health (Greig, 1994:7).

Another aspect that may lend music education to psychologically beneficial ends may be a possible focus on process rather than product (Andress, 1980:vii), or at least a balance between activity and achievement (Biddle & Dolby, 1996:5). Biddle and Dolby (1996:5) emphasise the importance of “activity based lessons” which concentrate on what the child can do and which promote direct experience of working with music and sound rather than other, indirect forms of learning. Music activities such as African drumming have a here-and-now focus that emphasises that which is occurring in the present moment (Friedman, 2000:36).

Furthermore, music education fosters an experiential form of learning (Biddle & Dolby, 1996:5). This allows the child to engage in a process of exploration and self-discovery, fostering a sense of responsibility, choice and personal agency (Schoeman, 1996a:36; Schoeman, 1996e:171; Andress, 1980:vii). This in turn may help nurture a healthy self-concept (Oaklander, 2006:27-28; Schoeman, 1996e:171).

Lastly, music activities may possess many of the qualities of play. For example, they are often self-motivated, pleasurable, non-literal (i.e. imaginative and symbolic) and actively engaging for the sake of the enjoyment they provide (Isbell & Raines, 2003:73; Hughes, 1999:2-3). Some of the benefits of childhood play have been described in brief already. In relation to the previous point, Stone (1995:45) claims that “play provides the natural and experiential learning that supports the child’s construction of his own knowledge of the world and his place in it. It significantly affects the development of the whole child”. As will be discussed in greater detail later, play, being a medium through which children live so much of their lives, represents a highly effective way of engaging and relating to children.

1.4 Music as a medium for intervention with children

Having considered the importance of music in childhood, the benefits of general music education and the therapeutic dimensions of music education, it follows that music activities have the potential for strategic application as a form of intervention with children. Because music activities parallel a child’s experience of play upon many levels, music activities represent a developmentally appropriate way of interacting with children. As such, the notion of music as intervention is supported by the principles and practices of Gestalt theory as applied to play therapy and Gestalt play therapy. A brief introduction to the fields of play therapy and Gestalt play therapy (in the light of the principles outlined at the end of Chapter Two) is provided before the psychological benefits of rhythm and drumming are discussed. First, however, a discussion regarding the appropriate length of a therapeutic intervention with children is in order. These considerations, along with pragmatic issues, informed the decision that the current study would consist of sixteen sessions presented over the course of four months.

1.4.1 The appropriate duration of therapy with children

There is little consensus regarding the ideal length of a therapeutic intervention. Various fields and approaches each have their own ideas about what is appropriate. In a managed health care system, the length of therapy may be determined more by funds available in a medical aid scheme than by the individual’s needs. Child-centred therapists hold that the therapeutic process should focus on the child rather than the achievement of any particular outcome (Landreth, 2002:327). The number of sessions is determined by the pace and progress of the child. Axline (1989:119) rightly states that “Therapy cannot be hurried”, and describes the gradual nature of change and growth. However, there is general agreement that it would not be responsible of the therapist to allow therapy to continue for an indefinite period of time (Geldard & Geldard, 2008:145). Geldard and Geldard (2008:145-146) comment that

they usually work with children for a period of two to three months on a weekly basis, although some clients will require significantly fewer sessions. Group work, as opposed to individual therapy, brings in other dimensions impacting on the duration of therapy. Oaklander (2006:182) believes that when working with a group, it takes about four to six weeks of weekly sessions for the members to feel comfortable with one another. This security and group cohesion facilitate other therapeutic processes. Geldard and Geldard (2008:95) contend that eight to ten weeks of weekly sessions represent the “minimum useful period for a group”. Axline (1989:249-250) advises that a set number of sessions is determined at the outset, which can later be extended, if necessary. This allows for planning on the part of the therapist and parents or agencies, enhances attendance and makes it possible for the participants to be better prepared for eventual termination.

Previous research studies comparable to the current study were also used to determine the duration of the programme. The drum circle project conducted by Snow and D’Amico (2010), involving nine at-risk adolescents, extended over a period of twelve weeks and produced positive qualitative results. These authors (2012:16-17) describe positive, significant findings (both qualitative and quantitative) generated by other similar studies including that of Bittman, Dickson and Coddington (2009), whose project with inner-city adolescents lasted six weeks; Bernstein (1999), who conducted an eight-week long project with at-risk high school students; and Blackett and Payne (2005), whose programme with substance abusers extended over a period of seven weeks. Stone (2005) reports on the Whittier Drum Project, which was planned to last for an initial eight weeks, whereafter was the option for extension, should the group so wish. At the participants’ request, the project was continued for a further three months, at which stage a lack of interest resulted in the gradual conclusion of the initiative. The study produced positive, qualitative results. Less successful was Winkleman’s pilot programme at the Phoenix Shanti Group, a treatment facility for HIV positive, substance abuse sufferers. None of these individuals attended the drumming sessions, offered every weekend for more than a year (only “graduates” of the Phoenix programme attended).

Pavlicevic (1994) published significant qualitative results and original findings which had emerged from her three-month “pilot” music therapy programme with children living in the large Johannesburg Township, Alexandra. An education-oriented music therapy project extending over sixteen weeks with twice-weekly sessions was conducted by Chong and Kim (2010). It significantly improved areas of social skills and problem behaviour. Finally, a successful, purely educational programme focusing on West African drumming was presented by McCord (2004) over a period of eight weeks. In the light of

this information, it was decided that a period of four months would be sufficient for the purposes of the current project. As this project was conducted in partial fulfilment of a Doctoral degree, there were also time constraints and other practicalities limiting the study's duration.

1.4.2 Play therapy²

Play therapy is a form of psychotherapy designed to allow children to express themselves both verbally and non-verbally (Kool & Lawver, 2010:20; Blom, 2006:19). Play is an intrinsic part of every child's world, representing a crucial component of children's physical, cognitive, emotional and social development (Bergen & Fromberg, 2009:426; Isbell & Raines, 2003:72; Hughes, 1999:16-25, 170-211; Tarnowski, 1999:28). It is one of the foremost ways in which the many facets of a child's reality are explored and comprehended; through play, meaning is assigned to the people, events and objects that form part of a child's existence (Hugo in the Foreword of Schoeman & van der Merwe, 1996; Andress, 1980:3-4). Children make intensive use of all of their senses as they explore the physical and social world around them. They taste, see, smell, feel and hear their way toward greater understanding of their environment and meaning in their lives (Andress, 1980:3). In order to connect with children, it is vital that one understands this essential element of their existence. Play therapy is based on the principle that children can best be reached, and can best express themselves, through the medium of play, a natural and fundamental part of their lives (Blanco & Ray, 2011:235-236). Through various forms of play, including projective, expressive, imaginative, relaxation, dramatic and creative play, children are assumed to "play out" their troubles, expressing them in a symbolic manner (Kool & Lawver, 2010:20; Blom, 2006:19; Oaklander, 2006:29-30; Schoeman, 1996c:64-66; 68).

Van der Merwe maintains that communication with children, especially within a therapeutic relationship, differs from communication with adults (1996:19). This is particularly true of children who have experienced trauma. Hugo affirms that these children's existence is insecure and uncertain, and one needs to understand the world of a child in order to enter this disordered existence (Hugo in the Foreword of Schoeman & van der Merwe, 1996). Non-verbal expressions (gestures, movements, sound and play actions) become centrally important (van der Merwe, 1996:7). In the words of Blom: "By developing a therapeutic relationship and contact, and according to a specific process, children are

² This cursory introduction mentions only the most essential and relevant principles of the play therapy field. For additional information on play therapy, one may refer, for example, to Axline (1989).

given the opportunity to confirm their sense of self verbally and non-verbally, to express their thoughts and to nurture themselves” (2006:20).

1.4.3 Gestalt play therapy³

Blom holds that many principles of Gestalt theory (as discussed in Chapter Two, section 3. Gestalt principles and concepts) are relevant to work with children and can be applied effectively to the play therapy approach (2006:17). Gestalt play therapy is a psychotherapeutic technique that integrates the principles of Gestalt theory within the practice of play therapy (Blom, 2006:19). Violet Oaklander is considered to be the founder of this field, the development of which was formally initiated by her seminal work *Windows to Our Children*, first published in 1988. In this book, she described her particular methods of applying Gestalt therapy principles to the use of media in play therapy. She would use various kinds of media (toys, clay, paint, sand trays, etc.) to stimulate the child’s use of fantasy. Oaklander assumed that the child’s process in fantasy and play was analogous to his or her process in life, and would thus view play actions as projective processes, and thus deal indirectly with repressed and problematic material. Central techniques (drawing heavily from Gestalt theory) included encouraging the child to engage in dialogue between two polarities (e.g. between two parts of a drawing or between the top dog and under dog); encouraging the child to own and take responsibility for his or her projections; paying careful attention to non-verbal aspects of a child’s communication (body posture, facial expressions, vocal nuances, gestures, breathing, etc.) and assisting the child to address unfinished business that becomes apparent through the child’s play (Geldard & Geldard, 2008:36).

2. Benefits of drumming and rhythm: An overview

Rhythm has been identified as an innate, unifying element among children the world over (Skeef, 1999). In his article, “African drumming: A perfect tool for a more open and inclusive approach to intercultural education and development,” Skeef (1999:332) discusses the potential of rhythm, and particularly African drumming, to empower the individual and enhance community. He describes the capacity of drumming workshops to promote positive interaction, reduce conflict and deconstruct

³ Gestalt play therapy represents a comprehensive approach to working with children, in terms of both its theoretical and practical components. For additional resources on Gestalt play therapy one may refer to Oaklander (2006); Blom (2006); Schoeman & van der Merwe (1996) and Oaklander (1988).

obstacles created through prejudice (Skeef, 1999: 336). This author holds that “the transformative and restorative powers of drumming are fast becoming a major subject of discussion in western medical and educational circles” (Skeef, 1999:334). Friedman (2000:3) is in agreement, stating that the hand drum is “...fast becoming an instrument used by people of every age for personal transformation, psychological and physiological healing, and creating community”.

2.1 The innately restorative potential of rhythm and drumming

As mentioned previously, the primary component of the drumming experience involves rhythm. Berger (2002:112) explains that rhythm is a phenomenon inherent in all natural, cosmic and biological processes and describes the drum as the oldest instrument invented by humankind. Friedman (2000:23), too, speaks of rhythms which govern the universe and of rhythms that order human life: our heartbeat, our breath, our sleeping and our waking. Skeef concurs, stating that “Every living thing has its own rhythm, and everything is held together in a universal dance by some cosmic rhythm” (1999:332; see also Klower, 1997:3-4). Melody, harmony, form and especially rhythm have been programmed into the human being over millennia of evolution, and are now deeply embedded in both brain and biology (Berger, 2002:130; Hodges, 1996:29-61). It is partly for this reason that children are born with a natural capacity for rhythm (Skeef, 1999:332). They do not need to be taught how to be rhythmical; they exhibit a powerful, innate capacity to appreciate and respond to rhythmic stimuli (Upitis, 1985:9). This innate capacity for rhythm makes drumming an exceptionally accessible form of music-making and communication. In the words of Berger (2002:113), drumming is “...a social unifier, requiring no particular ‘training’ in order for it to be experienced and enjoyed in a group”.

This capacity for rhythm is not only an innate but also a necessary part of human functioning. Evans (1986:249) describes the “rhythmic foundations of such already basic processes as attention, memory, language, skilled motor activity, interpersonal interaction, and aesthetic appreciation”. He further explains that disruption of these natural capacities (a condition referred to as dysrhythmia) may result in disorders of learning and behaviour. Rhythmic synchronisation and order thus underlie healthy psychological functioning. Birkenshaw (1982:xiii-xiv, 9) is in agreement and holds that the acquisition of “inner rhythmic sureness” is among the most vital developments of a young child, necessary for all other learning, including reading and writing.

2.2 The psychological benefits of drumming

Gallagher (1998:31) refers to the wide application of drumming as means to enhance psychological well-being. She concludes that “In recent years, drumming and other group percussion activities have become a national phenomenon, with overworked professionals, angered adolescents, even Alzheimer’s patients discovering the astonishing effects”. She goes on to describe the success of drumming as a therapeutic medium with alcohol and drug addicts. Stevens and Burt (1997:175) concur, pointing out that “Drum circles are being used as a therapeutic approach across the mental health care continuum”. They describe the successful application of drumming as therapy with the following clinical populations: adults and adolescents suffering from posttraumatic stress disorder; families with disabled children; patients with severe dementia, including Alzheimer’s type; teenagers with behavioural and substance abuse disorders; and adolescent psychiatric patients with various diagnoses (1997:180-181). Stevens and Burt (1997:181) further describe the use of drumming within anger management and assertiveness training, as well as in health and wellness programmes. As a final example, Longhofer and Floersch describe the potential of African drumming in general, and Dagbama⁴ music in particular, to complement psychiatric rehabilitation efforts (1993:3).

In their article “African Drumming and Psychiatric Rehabilitation” (1993), Longhofer and Floersch offer some insight into the therapeutic value of group drumming. They propose (1993:6) that there is an ideal fit between the outcomes of African drumming and the goals of psychiatric rehabilitation as specified by the International Association of Psychological Rehabilitation, namely, that “an effective social/recreational program offers group experiences that are designed to enhance individuals’ skills and to foster a sense of community and healthy participation in normalising adult activities”. These authors (1993:3) believe that participation in African drumming has the potential to result in feelings of accomplishment, a sense of group identity as well as concerts and performances. These outcomes translate into the psychiatric rehabilitation goals of improved sense of competency, strengthened social support and improved vocational opportunities or meaningful contributions to society (1993:3). Snow and D’Amico, whose work with at-risk children integrates an educational and therapeutic approach, offer another perspective on the therapeutic value of drumming (2010:13-14). They state that the drum circle is an ideal context for experiential learning with at-risk children who are alienated from the school system. It is the view of these authors that the drum circle can facilitate challenge without

⁴ Dagbama music is traditional music of the Dagbama people, who live in the northern region of Ghana, West Africa. Usually played on a double-headed tension drum, this polyrhythmic music emulates aspects of the Dagbama tonal language (Longhofer & Floersch, 1993:4).

frustration and can enhance initiative, responsibility, integrity, dignity, competence, feelings of success and reflection about the learning experience (Snow & D’Amico, 2010:13-14). Such experiential learning promotes improved emotional and psychological functioning as well as more adaptive social and academic behaviour.

Stevens and Burt (1997:175), adding to the above, offer a comprehensive explanation regarding the psychological benefits of group drumming and ascertain that the drum circle possesses several inherently therapeutic elements. First, they emphasise the accessible nature of drumming, which renders the activity inclusive of most people and ensures the experience of success (1997:177). Second, they highlight the aesthetic elements of drumming, which fulfil a basic desire of humans to create and experience beauty (1997:177). Third, drumming can facilitate emotional expression and affective modulation. Feelings relegated to the subconscious find direct expression through this non-verbal medium (1997:178). As a fourth reason, they highlight the physical nature of drumming, which requires psychomotor coordination and thus facilitates the engagement and cooperation of body and mind (1997:178). Stevens and Burt continue and state that drumming, by virtue of its powerful sound and connection to primal archetypes, produces a sense of power (the fifth reason) (1997:179). The sixth reason is related to the third, and states that drumming facilitates communication (Stevens & Burt, 1997:180). “Listening, imitation, and validation are among the many communication skills practiced in the drum circle. Being listened to is highly therapeutic, and when people acquire drums, they can make themselves heard” (Stevens & Burt, 1997:180). The seventh reason refers to the metasocial nature of drumming (Stevens & Burt, 1997:180). Normal social interaction is transcended by the sense of community that is created by a group of people united by a common rhythm. As a final reason, Stevens and Burt note (1997:180) that drumming is a cognitive process, encouraging perception, selective and focused attention, and long and short-term memory.

3. The potential contribution of drumming to enhance the emotional and social well-being of children

The previous section (section 2. Benefits of drumming and rhythm: An overview) presented an overview of the potential benefits of rhythm and drumming in general. The following paragraphs address, more specifically, various psychological benefits with regard to children’s emotional and

social well-being. These benefits and the processes underlying them are discussed in the light of principles from Gestalt play therapy.

3.1 Drumming to enhance communication and social skills

Wigram et al (2002:169) reiterate that when two or more individuals engage in musically expressive behaviour, they are communicating and effectively “talking”; they are establishing contact, a process fundamental to all other development. These authors (2002:173) refer to a model of developing contact through musical activities that was originally formulated by Anne Steen-Moller in 1996. Steen-Moller proposed five levels of contact that develop more-or-less sequentially through musical participation. The first level pertains to the absence of noticeable awareness of the other. Here, the goal is to provide an atmosphere of warmth and safety and thereby encourage the child’s awareness of the outside environment and others in it (Wigram et al, 2002:173). At the second level, this awareness has been established and enhanced through the use of music and sound. There is, however, very limited awareness of the self, and the goal becomes to enhance consciousness of the individual’s musical expressions (Wigram et al, 2002:173). This sets the stage for the third level, wherein the child realises the potential use of musical sounds to influence his or her environment and begins to take the initiative in evoking such reactions. The goal, at this point, is to further encourage the child’s active participation and sense of control, while at the same time promoting his or her awareness of the communicative value of what is happening (Wigram et al, 2002:174).

At the fourth level of contact, the child has a clear sense of the (musical and non-musical) interaction that is taking place, which has effectively evolved into the form of a dialogue. The goal here is to further foster the child’s awareness of the reciprocal communicative potential of such interaction, and to empower him or her to take the initiative in authentic self-expression (Wigram et al, 2002:174). At the fifth and final stage in this model, awareness of the self, the environment and of interactions between the two has been established. Objectives at this stage include nurturing the sense of autonomy and agency that has developed, as well as “further develop[ing] communicative skills such as sensitivity, flexibility, creativity, listening and responding to what you hear etc.” (Wigram et al, 2002:174-175).

Rhythm and drumming facilitate direct, non-verbal connection and communication (Friedman, 2000:21). The drum offers an extensive range of tonal qualities, making it an exceptionally effective

mode of personal expression (Friedman, 2000:20). An array of musical characteristics such as tempo, dynamics, pitch, tone colour, articulation and form are all at the child's disposal, providing him or her with a rich palette for musical and self-expression (Friedman, 2000:22). Skeef (1999:334) describes music as "the ideal communicating force" and Friedman (2000:29) describes the drum as "the ultimate non-verbal communication tool". The latter author reflects that drumming provides a simple yet profound experience of social contact and expression, free from the limitations imposed by verbal communication (Friedman, 2000:29, 30).

Group drumming represents a safe and supportive environment for children to develop emotional and social competencies. It provides them with the opportunity to create unique sounds, which, while reflecting aspects of themselves, will also influence and be influenced by the sounds created by the entire group. A child thus experiences his or her connectedness to, and uniqueness and personal agency within, the rest of the group. A drumming circle has the potential to facilitate many social processes such as following, leading, imitating, taking turns, sharing and other forms of reciprocal interaction and intersubjectivity (Wigram et al, 2002:171, 184-186).

Kalani (2005:5) observed that group drumming activities can enhance social skills such as listening, supporting, sharing and problem solving. He also found that it encourages children to appreciate diversity, promote meaningful social experiences and reduce levels of stress. When drumming in a group, one learns to listen while playing and to hear one's individual part as well as the whole (Friedman, 2000:29). Stone (2005:78) writes that as children drum together, they need to listen to each other and work out how their rhythm fits with that of the group. They engage in complex non-verbal communication and learn to "tune into" others, matching their peers in rhythm, dynamics and tempo (Stone, 2005:78). This author goes on to describe how each child has "the experience of being listened to by others, of having their drumming, their voice, count" (2005:78).

As mentioned in Chapter Two, a child's ability to make contact is considered to be fundamental to his or her psychological well-being. A child's inability to make and sustain good contact, whether it be with peers, authorities or even books, can contribute to many forms of affective, behavioural and learning disorders (Blom, 2006:91). (Please refer to section 3.2 below for a more detailed discussion of contact). African drumming is discussed above in terms of it being a form of non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication is essential to work and communication with children, and is thus a vital aspect of play therapy (Van der Merwe, 1996:7). Play therapy as an intervention is

different from other forms of psychotherapy in that it allows the child to express feelings, communicate thoughts and ideas and narrate events and occurrences, all without the use of words (Blom, 2006:19). Blom (2006:44-45) proposes that music and rhythm are underestimated with regard to their communicative capacity, and that they can assist the child to express or convey that which he or she is attempting to put into words.

As stated by Oaklander (2006:22), “Finding creative, non-threatening ways to reach the child is the task of the therapist.” Drumming represents an ideal context for such egalitarian, empathic, accepting and authentic interaction and may provide the child therapist, social worker or other health-care professional with such an opportunity. Oaklander (2006:21) even uses the concept of rhythm as a metaphor for the contact process, that is, for the joining of the therapist’s process with the child’s process. With regard to the formation of the I-Thou relationship, so central to the Gestalt therapeutic relationship, she asserts the following: “I will accept her [the child client’s] rhythm and, in fact, attempt to join her in that rhythm; I will be present and contactful. In this way our relationship flourishes” (Oaklander, 2006:21). She also states (2006:220) that “The very nature of this music experience meets the requirements for an authentic I-thou relationship...”

3.2 Drumming to enhance awareness and contact with the self

Part of what makes drumming so supportive of personal expression and interpersonal communication is its ability to place individuals in touch with themselves. Winkelman (2003:650) hypothesises that drumming helps produce a sense of connectedness to the self by promoting personal reintegration. Mark Seaman, founder of the organisation Earth Rhythms, believes that “drumming produces a sense of connectedness and community, integrating mind, body and spirit” (cited by Winkelman, 2003:648). Ed Mikenas of the Lurchburg Day Program also speaks of the ability of drumming to connect an individual with his or her “natural self”. He suggests that the African drumming circle provides a positive and structured learning experience that helps participants to establish contact with themselves as well as with the collective consciousness (in Winkelman, 2003:648). Clinical music therapist Barry Bernstein is in agreement and believes that drumming is the healthiest, most accessible and most effective way for humans to connect with themselves (Skeef, 1999:335).

Fundamentally, adaptive contact with others is not possible without adequate contact with the self (Corey, 2005:197). Furthermore, adequate contact with the self cannot occur without sufficient

awareness, which is a person's ability to recognise and accept aspects of his or her inner and outer world as they occur in the here-and-now (Corey, 2005:195-196). The drum has a remarkable capacity to enhance this sense of awareness. Friedman (2000:36) describes drumming as an activity which can bring a person directly into the present moment. In his words, "Hitting the drum is an absolute definitive action ... The drum places an individual in the present and sacred moment. In this way, the drum is very grounding". This contact in the present is facilitated, most basically, by promoting a child's capacity for sensory awareness and perception (Blom, 2006:96); drumming, with its strong sensory components, is able to accomplish this.

Oaklander (2006:221) recommends encouraging the child's awareness of the body and sensory processes involved in the music experience. This increased self-awareness helps bring the child into the here-and-now and places him or her in contact with his or her own external and internal experiences (see also Blom, 2006:52, 91). The music experience provides a form of multi-sensory stimulation, allowing the child to gain greater access to and integration of his or her sensory perceptions (see Blom, 2006:116). African drumming, in particular, emphasises the importance of a vital connection with the self, with the community and with the entire cosmos. This is accomplished through the holistic promotion of physical, sensory, emotional, psychological and spiritual awareness. As individuals become more open to their sensory experience, they are taking an important first step to awareness of the self and, in turn, contact with others (Blom, 2006:90-92; Corey, 2005:197). This process is effectively facilitated by the experience of African drumming, with its strong visual, aural and tactile aspects.

Gestalt theory places inadequate awareness and the resulting lack of contact at the root of most emotional and social disturbance (Corey, 2005:197). Resistance to awareness (and contact) is an individual's defence against a vital experience of the here-and-now and of repressed emotions and cognitions (Oaklander, 2006:23-24; Corey, 2005:207). Considered to be a primary mechanism in problem maintenance, resistance serves to undermine awareness and frequently results in what is known as a contact boundary disturbance. Blom (2006:29) insists that in order for children to be able to increase their capacity for healthy contact-making, and thus engage in effective self-regulation, they need to develop awareness and mastery of their sensory, bodily, emotional and intellectual capacities (which, in turn, foster contact and the ability to express thoughts, ideas and needs). It is possible to deduce that drumming could significantly increase capacity for sensory awareness while at the same

time reducing resistance to such awareness. Indeed, this is made clear by Schoeman's (1996d:95) statement that "Music can also be helpful in going beyond certain defense mechanisms in a fusion of mental and physical awareness".

The notion that African drumming can promote awareness and enhance children's contact functions is further supported by Wigram et al. They (2002:170) refer to the exceptional potential of music to enhance all forms of bodily and sensory awareness. Schoeman comments (1996a:44) that "Music offers the child the opportunity to come into contact with his own body, particularly with the muscles in his body. He learns to release emotions in healthy ways that are more beneficial than internalising those feelings". In agreement, Oaklander (2006:25) considers that "every emotion has a body connection". Blom (2006:92) adds: "If children shut themselves off sensorily in respect of one or more senses, they will find it difficult to come into contact with their repressed emotions". Furthermore, Blom emphasises the importance of auditory stimuli. "Sound ... can be regarded as psychological experiences created in the brain, in response to stimulation ... Children who suppress their sense of hearing deprive themselves of intense sensory observation and emotional contact-making" (2006:92). Schoeman (1996a:44) concurs and explains that "a child who does not have contact with sound will have difficulty in making contact with connected feelings. Feelings and sound are often interrelated". In agreement, Wigram et al (2002:177) refer to the potential of music to "develop the child's understanding and contact with their emotions and feelings". Drumming as a music activity may help to increase sensory perception and foster awareness, and thus improve contact with the self and enhance personal expression with others.

3.3 Drumming to strengthen sense of self

A child needs a healthy sense of self in order to own and express repressed and painful emotions (Oaklander, 2006:27, 50). A strong sense of self also allows the child to engage in self-supportive behaviour and in the formation of adequate contact with the social (as well as the internal) environment. It is essential to healthy development (Blom, 2006:103-104). Strengthening the self is a process that goes hand in hand with promoting awareness and contact. Due to developmental constraints, children are vulnerable to harmful introjects⁵ and to feelings of guilt and shame with regard to traumatic events in their lives (Oaklander, 2006:50; Gil, 1991:6, 20-21). They are therefore prone to

⁵ Introjects are messages from the environment which children, in their natural egocentricity, tend to internalise indiscriminately, regardless of opposing evidence.

compromised self-esteem and fragmentation of the self. Gestalt theory posits that acceptance and integration of all parts of the self are essential to psychological health. A robust sense of self and reintegration of alienated aspects of the personality are fundamental to subsequent healing (Oaklander, 2006:50-51). However, instead of using all of the senses and intellectual faculties in an integrated fashion to explore and make sense of the world around them, children who have experienced trauma tend to inhibit these modalities (Oaklander, 2006:51). While this may serve as a protective mechanism against the traumatic experiences, it becomes maladaptive and prevents further growth and normal development. Thus, the already impaired sense of self of the traumatised child is further hampered unless appropriate intervention strengthens the sense of self, opening up possibilities for awareness and reintegration.

Because children require a certain amount of self-support before they can take possession of, yet alone express, difficult emotions, strengthening the self is frequently an initial aim of therapeutic work. It is the researcher's contention that sessions of African drumming have the potential to enhance children's sense of self in several ways. Oaklander (2006:27) and Blom (2006:106-107) propose that a child's sense of self can be strengthened in the following ways (in addition to the sensory and bodily experiences described above as enhancing awareness): "defining the self, making choices, experiencing mastery, owning projections, the setting of boundaries and limits, having the ability to be playful and use the imagination, experiencing some power and control and contacting one's own aggressive energy". Drumming, as practised in this study, aptly facilitated these kinds of experiences and thus provided an avenue for the bolstering of each participant's sense of self. The following paragraphs are based partly on an outline provided by Oaklander (2006:27-45) and attempt to delineate ways in which these processes were facilitated within the drumming workshop.

3.3.1 Defining the self

Oaklander (2006:27-28) contends that in order to strengthen the child's sense of self, it is necessary to help him or her to know and define that self. The notion that music can contribute to this endeavour is succinctly expressed by Nichols and Honig: "Young children can learn about their own feelings and moods through listening to music, by singing songs, and by expressively moving to music.... Children learn about themselves and their world as they construct and create musical sounds and shapes" (1997:213-214). These authors describe how rhythmic elements of music can facilitate sensory and body awareness and how harmonies can lend a greater sensitivity to and understanding of their own

and others' moods and feelings (1997:214). They further emphasise the potential of music and songs to promote appreciation of diversity (Nichols & Honig, 1997:215). Music can introduce both the languages and stories of their native and other cultures through the singing of folksongs and the experiencing of different sounds, rhythms, harmonies, instrumentation and styles of music.

Oaklander (2006:27-28) recommends music activities as one way in which children can make “self statements” that serve to enhance their personal identities. Each time a statement about the self is articulated (whether musically or verbally), the child increases in self-support (Oaklander, 2006:222). Oaklander regards the music experience (and its dynamic reflection of the child’s process) as able to increase the child’s capacity for self-support by enabling him or her to engage in kinesthetic expression (2006:222). Furthermore, Ruud (1998:31) hypothesises that by being actively involved in music, we are “performing our sense of ourselves, our identities” and metaphorically defining who we are. Music may effectively encode and convey different facets of the self (Ruud, 1998:37), and such musical self-statements may be remarkably expressive. Taking the matter further, Ruud (1998:45) describes how musical experiences may add an existential dimension to one’s identity by facilitating new awareness of undiscovered aspects of the self. An individual may “experience new meaning being added to her identity” which thus “becomes rooted in transpersonal space” (Ruud, 1998:46). Finally, Oaklander reminds us that whatever form a child’s self-statements take, it is above all the respect for and acceptance of his or her expressions that are vital to empowerment of the child (Oaklander, 2006:28).

3.3.2 Making choices

Oaklander (2006:28, 59) recommends providing a child with many opportunities to make decisions as an important way to build a sense of self. Wigram et al (2002:172) point out that music activities offer the participant many opportunities for creativity and choice-making. In agreement, Glover and Young (1999:13) point out that “From the youngest age, teachers can expect and encourage children to work in music in ways which are inventive, imaginative, innovative and responsive. They can foster children’s ability to generate their own purposes and ideas and to become tenacious and increasingly skillful in following these through the stages of experimentation, development and realisation in a communicable form”. Although these ideas originate from the field of music education, they do lend insight into the fact that children of all ages are capable of highly creative and imaginative decision-making. These authors go on to stress the importance of respecting the endeavours of children and thus building their confidence in their own creative capabilities. Furthermore, Glover and Young suggest

that these aspects of children's music-making are especially important during the middle years. They believe that the years from 9 to 11 are critical in children's developing understanding of themselves as creative agents, and in their increasing awareness of their decision-making as influential upon the artistic outcome (Glover & Young, 1999:13).

3.3.3 Experiencing mastery

Oaklander (2006:28-29) emphasises that a child cannot achieve a satisfactory sense of self without having had adequate experiences of mastery. This is an especially important consideration during the middle childhood stage of development, when, according to Erickson's theory (discussed in section 1.1.2.1 of the previous chapter), the experience of industry, mastery and competence (versus lack of industry and feelings of failure and inferiority) are central to a child's healthy development (Zembar & Blume, 2009:230; Berk, 2006:18; Huston & Ripke, 2006a:8). Many of the important mastery experiences during childhood occur through play (Oaklander, 2006:29). There may be detrimental effects upon the development of children who have experienced disruptive, abusive lives, as they frequently forgo many opportunities for normal childhood play, exploration and discovery (Oaklander, 2006:28-29, 57). Oaklander (2006:29) describes how expressive, creative activities may facilitate a child's feeling of mastery, not by assuring some external reward, but because of the child's own feelings of accomplishment. Once again, respect and appreciation for the child's creativity is of utmost importance.

Group drumming may effectively encourage children's sense of mastery. This may, in part, be because of children's intrinsic motivation to engage in musical activities. It may also be due to the accessible nature of drumming as a form of creating music. Stevens and Burt (1997:177) explain that because basic drumming technique is simple, most people can play immediately. Furthermore, due to natural laws of entrainment, it is also easy to play along with the rhythms produced by the group (at least according to the same tempo and pulse) (Stevens & Burt, 1997:177). The result is an almost guaranteed experience of success. Ruud (1998:41) mentions that musical involvement can result in increased recognition and appreciation by others. This is especially significant in the developmental context of middle childhood, where children depend heavily on feedback from others (especially their peers) regarding their overall functioning and performance. It was described in the previous chapter (section 1.3.2 Social competency and peer interaction) how children between the ages of 6 and 12 years are exceptionally aware of peer evaluation and experience a great need for acceptance from the peer group

(Zembar & Blume, 2009:340-366; Huston & Ripke, 2006a:11, 2006b:413; Hartup, 1984:240; Markus and Nurius, 1984:149). Positive experiences of success, praise and acknowledgement are likely to enhance self-esteem and empower the individual to continue in a cycle of high self-worth and efficacy (Ruud, 1998:41).

3.3.4 Owning projections

Oaklander (2006:29-30, 63) considers a child's expressive behaviour to be reflecting, metaphorically, aspects of his or her own life and process. This is congruent with the music therapy concept of "dynamic forms," musical expressions that represent the texture, colour, intensity, mode, etc. of an individual's non-musical experience (Pavlicevic, 1994:5). This parallel is clearly explicated by Wigram et al (2002:39) who state that "Music can be a direct expression of a client's emotions, or a musical representation – symbolic or metaphorical – of spiritual or complicated psychological states and conditions, or the musical expressions can be an analogy to the client's being-in-the-world" (see also Wigram et al, 2002:171). Pavlicevic contends that, in a music group, a child's musical and non-musical behaviours are "received as being an expression of who and how the child is in the world" (1994:5). A child's expressive behaviours, seen thus as projections, can be validated and can serve to confirm the child's uniqueness and significance. Such a non-judgmental, respectful acceptance of the whole child assists in the child's acceptance of him- or herself and thus promotes integration.

A child is said to own his or her projection if he or she is able to recognise and reflect on the personal significance of something which, initially, was only metaphorically expressed through the projective technique (Oaklander, 2006:63). If the child's musical expression is a projection of his or her process and state of being, then owning that projection would involve the child consciously making the link between his or her expressive act and the corresponding internal state. By taking responsibility for the content of projections and making relevant self-statements, the child gains in self-awareness, self-support and sense of self (Oaklander, 2006:63).

Whereas Oaklander (2006:37), in her model of Gestalt play therapy, does encourage a child to own his or her projections, where possible and/or appropriate, this is not to say that the absence of such verbal reflection precludes the possibility of a beneficial outcome. Oaklander asserts that the child's expression of thoughts and feelings is in itself therapeutic (2006:37). The child's reflecting on the projection, perhaps by ascribing meaning(s) to it, represents another level of therapeutic gain; should

the child actually recognise and own facets or characteristics of his or her projection, yet another therapeutic level has been reached (Oaklander, 2006:37). While these latter levels of the projective experience serve to accelerate the process of integration, it is important to note that musical expressions do not require verbal reflection in order to promote integration and be beneficial. This is important, as the therapeutic benefits of music education derive mostly from the first level of the creative, projective experience. That is, the events which emerge from the music educational process are not usually explicitly and verbally reflected upon and connected to the rest of the child's life.

Pavlicevic (1994:8) notes that the two ways of dealing with trauma - direct treatment of problems or creative empowerment - are mutually beneficial but that the numbers of children needing assistance makes the former unfeasible. She concludes that "Where group work is the only reality, there is a pull, rather, towards encouraging and inviting these children to develop inner resources of spontaneity, flexibility, expressiveness and fluidity which, it is hoped, enhance their experience of being alive" (Pavlicevic, 1994:8). Expression through music, and the self-statements embodied therein, allows children's emotions to become more tangible, and enhances their awareness of their feelings and states of being. This increased consciousness of their emotions, as well as the respectful acceptance of expressions thereof, may be in themselves integrating and healing.

3.3.5 The setting of boundaries and limitations

A strong, clear sense of self requires adequate boundaries within which a child can form an integrated identity (Oaklander, 2006:30, 61). In the impoverished and insecure social environment shared by many South African children, boundaries may be ambiguous and unstable and they may experience confusion and anxiety. In the institutional setting specifically, it could be that children experience similar problems with the formation of personal boundaries and the development of an integrated sense of self. Oaklander advocates the setting of clear limits within a therapeutic setting (2006:30, 61). Group music activities may represent an ideal context for children whose personal boundaries are fragile and uncertain. Wigram et al (2002:82) refer to the exceptional capacity of music to provide a "containing" or "holding" therapeutic environment. Pavlicevic contends that music can provide a "therapeutic space" for children's difficult emotions (1994:5), able to "embrace and adjust the level and form of their self-expression" (1994:7). Within the spontaneous creativity and safety of a music group, children's feelings can be shared, accepted and demystified. Spontaneous musical activities can provide

“a context for the texture of these feelings to be embodied, expressed and communicated – they are shared and contained by the group through musical acts during the session” (Pavlicevic, 1994:5).

In support of the concept of music as a boundary-defining phenomenon, Bunt states that “Making music is a complete experience, based in time and space, with a definite feeling of beginning and end” (1994:97). Boundaries of time, place, membership and appropriate behaviour may also liberate children to become more aware and expressive of who they are (Oaklander, 2006:30). Consistent limits and boundaries prevent the child from unnecessary anxiety and provide the secure, stable environment necessary for the management of difficult emotions (Landreth, 2002:250, 254; Harris & Landreth, 2001:28; Oaklander, 1997:301; Sweeney, 1997:106). The use of limitations and permissiveness work together for the safety of the child, a notion aptly expressed by Sweeney: “When children need to express a negative feeling and when they are given a clear and non-punitive limit, the expression of that feeling becomes safe and acceptable” (1997:106). Furthermore, the consistent setting of appropriate limits facilitates development of a child’s capacity for decision-making, self-responsibility, self-control and self-direction (Landreth, 2002:252-253; Harris & Landreth, 2001:28; Sweeney, 1997:107), ideally resulting in self-discipline and the child’s capacity to set his or her own limits and boundaries (Harris & Landreth, 2001:28).

3.3.6 The ability to be playful and use the imagination

Oaklander (2006:31) emphasises that the natural capacity for children to be playful and imaginative is crucial to their healthy sense of self. This is yet another way in which traumatic or disruptive life experiences can hamper normal growth – by suppressing children’s innate tendency toward humour and playfulness (Oaklander, 2006:31). These are critical childhood resources of strength and resilience, and Oaklander highlights the importance of providing such children with opportunities to play (2006:31). They can thus be liberated from harmful inhibitions and proceed with the tasks of normal development.

Kalani (2004:9-11, 15-17, 20) repeatedly stresses that group drumming should be fun and encourages participants to “tune into their playfulness” (Kalani, 2004:9) (please see section 3.4 below regarding drumming as a form of play). While this aspect may seem superfluous and less important than the other benefits proffered, it is, in the light of Oaklander’s statements, central to normal emotional and social adaptation. Glover and Young state that the young child’s musical behaviour is playful and

imaginative, and that “This quality is vital to all musical experience, of whatever kind and at all ages...” (1999:2). They go on to say that this playfulness regarding music is not abandoned in the middle years, but is rather expanded to incorporate greater cognitive and emotional appreciation (Glover & Young, 1999:2).

3.3.7 Experiencing power and control

Oaklander (2006:31-32) describes many children, and especially those who have been in some way marginalised or traumatised, as experiencing a profound and detrimental lack of control over their lives. She discusses the importance of providing children with the self-affirmative experiences of appropriate decision-making. A sense of personal agency, nurtured through sensitive interaction, is vital to a healthy sense of self. Pavlicevic (1994:4) speculates that many South African children, exposed to ongoing and unpredictable political and social violence, experience chronic fear and passive depression, resulting in feelings of helplessness and powerlessness.

Within the drumming group (consistent with the Gestalt play therapy approach), all children are seen as being in a constant and dynamic process of growth and change, powerfully and inherently motivated toward well-being, autonomy, growth and maturity (Landreth, 2002:65; Harris & Landreth, 2001:27; Landreth, 1993:24). The focus is on the child’s strengths and innate drive toward self-actualisation (Thompson & Henderson, 2007:175; Landreth, 2002:9, 65). Landreth aptly describes some of these childhood strengths in his statement that “Children are naturally curious, delight in mastery and accomplishment, and energetically live life in their continual pursuit of discovery of their world and themselves in relation to the world” (2002:65). The respectful, trusting attitude of the therapist returns the power to the child, thereby facilitating the learning of self-responsibility and fostering the attributes of self-esteem, self-respect and self-confidence (Axline, 1989:106; see also Landreth, 2002:91). Responsibility needs to be returned to the child in order to avoid feelings of helplessness and dependency (Glover, 2001:47). All of the above promote a sense of efficacy and mastery within the child, characteristics essential to a strong and healthy sense of self.

Oaklander (2006:28, 58-59) describes fostering personal agency through play by providing children with plenty of choices; it is possible that one may empower children through music activities, by allowing them to take responsibility for their creation. Wigram et al (2002:172) state that musical interaction, and the sense of competence nurtured therein, “leads to choice-making, initiative,

spontaneity, musical independence, confidence, improved self-esteem and creativity”. Schoeman (1996a:44) states that the ability to produce sound provides children with an opportunity to feel that they are in control. “The child must be in contact with himself in order to generate sound” (Schoeman, 1996a:44). In support of this, Wigram et al (2002:170-171) propose that music activities are able to create an awareness of the connection between sounds and the actions that produce them (that is, not only of the environment, but of how one can make an impact upon it) (see also Bunt, 1994:94). Wigram et al (2002:172) further state that music activities offer an ideal creative context for “developing potentials,” in part because they are so intrinsically motivating.

The music group provides various opportunities to instil within children a sense of significance and agency. For example, Pavlicevic describes greeting rituals to open sessions as a highly effective way to acknowledge and validate individual participants (1994:5). She facilitates activities in which the children take turns to express something about themselves; each child receives affirmation when his or her personal/musical gesture is received and reflected back by the group (1994:6). The group setting also allows for the emergence of several roles that may be empowering, such as when a child performs a solo or prominent part of the musical creation (Pavlicevic, 1994:6). Participants can explore and creatively experiment with different ways of being with one another (Pavlicevic, 1994:8). Children in such groups (especially where improvisational music-making is involved) are further empowered by being allowed, within the safety and structure of the music activity, to express and explore feelings and states of being that are usually repressed in other circumstances, e.g. in the classroom or family setting (Pavlicevic, 1994:6).

3.3.8 Contact with one’s aggressive energy

Aggressive energy, not to be confused with the angry, destructive forces of aggression, is the sense of power or vigour enabling children to act with purpose, take initiative and have their needs met. It is vitally important that a child be in touch and comfortable with his or her aggressive energy, as this is the source of strength needed for everyday functioning as well as for self-support in order to own and express difficult thoughts or feelings (Oaklander, 2006:33-34, 65). Children who have suffered some form of trauma frequently have little access to this vital energy and hence experience difficulty with authentic self-expression (Oaklander, 2006:34). Healing and integration are thus prevented. Children’s poor contact with their aggressive energy is often evidenced by the polarities of timidity and hostility. Children lacking access to their aggressive energy may display an excess of aggression, which is often

poorly understood and inappropriately channeled, or they may be timid, anxious and withdrawn (Oaklander, 2006:34). To further complicate matters, children frequently confuse this natural, powerful source of energy with angry, destructive struggles for power (which may, in fact, disguise feelings of vulnerability and powerlessness). This misunderstanding often results in uncertainty and anxiety regarding such feelings (Oaklander, 2006:34). Furthermore, the expression of aggression is not accepted in the school setting, except, perhaps, in a cognitive and verbal capacity (Nocker-Ribaupierre & Wolfl, 2010:152). This is difficult for younger children whose cognitive and verbal abilities are still developing, and, regardless of such capacities, children have a need to channel these feelings on an emotional level.

Oaklander (2006:35) lists energetic drumming among the activities she recommends for acquainting a child with his or her aggressive energy. Pavlicevic (1994:6) maintains that such emotions can be safely experienced and expressed within the support of the group and the structure of the jointly created music. Continuing, Pavlicevic reflects that behaviour (musical and non-musical) of children whose lives have been disrupted and chaotic is often characterised by “boundless, unchannelled energy” (1994:6). Like Oaklander, she contends that this energy needs to emerge through its being spontaneously expressed, while being contained within a secure setting (such as a music group). Nocker-Ribaupierre & Wolfl (2010:158) describe how drumming can allow children to intensely experience aggressive feeling, discover the constructive aspects of aggressive energy (such as assertiveness, power, strength and boundaries) and learn appropriate ways for managing their own and other’s aggression. Friedman (2000:91-95), too, discusses the capacity of drumming to channel and transform anger and frustration into more productive forms of aggressive energy. This author (2000:155) advises “drumming to feel your power,” an exercise designed to create a sense of inner strength through the powerful sounds that one can produce on the drum. As a final example, Stevens and Burt (1997:179) contend that drumming may be an exceptional medium through which to access and enhance this energy. By internalising the powerful sounds produced by the drum and the compelling rhythms that can be created, as well as by experiencing “connections to the primal archetypes through which we experience the power of the past”, one may be empowered to connect with and constructively utilise this source of vitality (Stevens & Burt, 1997:179).

3.4 Drumming as a form of play

Because making music is an activity that is enjoyed by and comes naturally to most children, playing on drums can easily be construed by children as a form of play (Schoeman, 1996a:44). Indeed, Bunt (1994:96) maintains that “Making music with children shares many features with a developmental view of play”. Drumming can facilitate various kinds of play: it can encourage “free-play” through spontaneous musical improvisation, as well as facilitate more structured games and activities (Oaklander, 2006:211; Young & Glover, 1998:144; Schoeman, 1996a:45). Furthermore, percussion activities can engage children in solitary play, in interactive play with the facilitator or in group play with other children (Oaklander, 2006:219; Young & Glover, 1998:147, 162). Each is an important aspect of play behaviour and assists in the development of different cognitive, affective and social skills, while enhancing self- and social understanding (see Berk, 2006:599).

Kalani (2004:9, 11, 16) emphasises that drum circles are a recreational form of music-making whose primary purpose is to provide participants with fun, positive socialisation and personal discovery and expression. He proposes that “playing through music” can foster creativity and authenticity (2004:16-17), as well as encourage pro-social behaviour, problem solving, appreciation of diversity and reduction of stress (Kalani, 2005:5). Some of the benefits of childhood play have been discussed previously (section 3.2 of Chapter Two) and musical play can replicate and even augment several of these advantages (Tarnowski, 1999:26-29). As suggested by Tarnowski (1999:27-28), “musical play consists of activities that allow children to explore, improvise, and create with sound” and can include functional, constructive and dramatic play. She argues (1999:28) that musical play facilitates optimal opportunities to enhance social and emotional well-being (by promoting self-expression, self-esteem and affective regulation) as well as cognitive and physical development. In support of this view, Hughes (1999:201) contends that musical play is exceptionally conducive to social inclusion and positive participation. This author also suggests that creative movement, which frequently accompanies musical activities, represents “an enriching intellectual experience” (1999:180-181) and can also promote effective, sensitive communication and social integration (1999:203-205). Lastly, musical play often involves the use of open-ended play materials (requiring no “correct” method to use) and thus significantly improves creativity (Hughes, 1999:190).

“Play allows a child to communicate when no other forms of communication are possible” (Hughes, 1999:214). Music, too, is a non-verbal medium (Swallow, 2002:44-45; Wigram et al, 2002:39) to

which recourse is taken when other forms of expression are ineffective (for instance, due to the effects of trauma) (Swallow, 2002:50-51; Wigram et al, 2002:169, 171-172, 183). It is possible to infer that music and play may represent an ideal combination for work and/or intervention with children.

Musical play has the potential to facilitate essential processes in healthy functioning, as seen from the perspective of Gestalt play therapy (e.g. promotion of awareness, contact, sense of self and integration). In the chapter “An Innovative Way to Use Music in Therapy” Oaklander describes a simple musical play activity employing small percussion instruments (2006:211, 215). She describes the sensory and bodily awareness, the clear sense of self and the feeling of connection with the other that the activity produces. Her depiction (Oaklander, 2006:212) of the activity aptly portrays the benefits of the exercise:

In Gestalt Therapy terminology we could say that contact in its best sense is taking place. Contact requires having a sense of the self when meeting the other. It involves having good use of the functions of contact: listening, looking, touching, tasting, smelling, moving. Contact requires awareness of the various aspects of the organism: the senses, the body, the emotions, the intellect... The experiences of this music process enhance and strengthen the self and the contact functions. The child experiences a feeling of mastery. Joining with the child’s rhythm as we play our music is probably the most significant part of the process.

African drumming is able to engage a child in many capacities – sensorily, bodily, emotionally and intellectually. The child is provided with a solid basis for awareness and contact while being afforded a sense of mastery and control. Play activities possessing these characteristics can potentially lay the foundation for emotional and social well-being in accordance with Gestalt theory and Gestalt play therapy (Oaklander, 2006: 53-60; Corey, 2005:200; Schoeman, 1996d:95).

4. Conclusion

Music performs many roles in the childhood experience. It assists learning, enhances play and fosters socialisation as well as providing pleasure as an activity engaged in for its own sake. Furthermore, it evidences a remarkable capacity to promote inclusion and integration of children who, for whatever reasons, are marginalised within society. Music in general, and rhythm and drumming in particular, appear to offer significant therapeutic benefits. They demonstrate the capacity to enhance the emotional and social development of children by promoting self-expression, self-esteem, emotional intelligence, positive interaction, successful participation and important social skills.

Music activities can effectively facilitate contact with the child on a non-verbal level. Such contact is non-threatening, direct and authentic. Through musical/personal connection and expression, the child's awareness of self and of others in the social environment is increased. Contact with the self is also promoted as music activities increase a child's sensory awareness. Greater awareness and ownership of difficult thoughts and feelings can also be facilitated as they are embodied and contained by musical expressions. Such expression, however, can only take place once the child has developed sufficient self-support to accept problematic parts of the self. African drumming can assist in strengthening the child's sense of self by supporting objectives as stated by Oaklander (2006:27): defining the self, making choices, experiencing mastery, owning projections, setting boundaries and limitations, being playful and imaginative, experiencing power and control and enhancing contact with one's aggressive energy.

Chapter Four

Methods for exploring the potential benefits of African drumming with children in residential care

1. Introduction

This chapter serves to describe the procedures used to explore the potential benefits of African drumming with regard to the emotional and social well-being of children in residential care. The overall research design and the specific techniques employed to uncover correlations between sessions of drumming and reductions in anxiety, depression, anger and disruptive behaviour and improvement in self-concept are explicated and justified. The methods used to explore the children's own perceptions of the benefits of the workshops is explained and substantiated. Furthermore, the course of action taken to determine whether, and to what extent, such workshops are practicable and advantageous within the residential care setting is considered.

First, the research design in general will be explained and its appropriateness and applicability to the current study established. Each method of the data collection process (namely, psychological assessment, focused observations, focus group discussions with participants and semi-structured interviews with relevant staff members) is mentioned briefly. Following is a detailed discussion of the various, specific aspects of the methodology involved, such as the different forms of data collection, the measuring instrument used and the various kinds of analysis applied. Limitations of the research design and techniques, as they are applied within the current research project, are then identified, followed by a consideration of relevant ethical issues.

2. Research design

A pilot study took place over a period of four weeks preceding the research project. A condensed version of the intervention was presented to two groups of children (one attending a local church and the other a nearby school) of a similar age to those who would be involved in the intervention proper. Participants of the trial workshops were divided into groups consisting of eight members each, and no

assistance was required in conducting any of the sessions. Following the pilot study, the four month series of African drumming commenced at the Epworth Children's Village.

A mixed methods research approach (using both qualitative and quantitative methods) was used in the conducting of this study (Ivankova, Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2007:262). Child wellness and music education represent two vast, complex and multifaceted fields of study. The researcher believed that the overall value of the drumming project would not be adequately reflected by the quantitative methods of data collection alone. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches to data collection and analysis were thus employed to provide a richer description of the potential benefits of African drumming. Ivankova et al (2007:262), referring to the 2002 work of Patton, explain that:

In mixed methods research, the researcher constructs knowledge about real-world issues based on pragmatism, which places more emphasis on finding the answers to research questions than on the methods used. It allows for contextual interpretations, the use of multiple methods and flexibility in choosing the best strategies to address the research questions.

The use of both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis allowed for what Kelly (2006a:287) refers to as methodological triangulation. He states (2006a:287) that "triangulation is labour intensive and often not feasible for smaller research projects". However, the validity of research findings was significantly improved by methodological triangulation, that is, "the use of multiple methods to study a single problem, looking for convergent evidence from different sources" (Kelly, 2006b:380). The importance of methodological triangulation is succinctly described by Graue and Walsh (1998:103): "It is a big world out there, and the little parts of it chosen for study are extremely multifaceted and complex. Getting to understand them requires that one look carefully at them in many ways".

This research was of an exploratory, inductive nature. It was largely open-ended in that the researcher was investigating relatively unexplored and integrated facets of music education, African drumming and child therapy. The aim of the researcher was to explore whether, and to what extent, sessions of African drumming would enhance the children's socio-emotional functioning, and not to assess or evaluate an existing programme previously designed to do so. As such, the study should not be understood as a full undertaking of programme evaluation research. As defined by de Vos, "programme evaluation *assumes the prior existence* of a programme or intervention designed and developed by someone else, perhaps long before the evaluator ever entered the field" (italics in original text) (2011:367). However, aspects from the latter type of research have been borrowed to aid the

understanding of research results in terms of their underlying dynamics, contributing factors and limitations. De Vos (2011:369) was involved in constructing a comprehensive model called Integrated Model of Programme Evaluation (IMPE), which includes the processes of needs assessment, evaluability assessment, programme monitoring, impact assessment, efficiency assessment, utilisation or implementation evaluation and empowerment evaluation. Only certain facets of, for example, programme monitoring, impact assessment and implementation evaluation were utilised in the current study, where appropriate.

Regarding the quantitative component of the research, the participants were assessed using the Beck Youth Inventories before and after the series of drumming workshops. In this quasi-experimental design, the drumming sessions were considered to be the independent variable and the children's emotional and social well-being the dependent variables. Due to both the social-experimental and the open-ended, inductive explorative nature of the study, the research required both empirical and qualitative forms of data collection and analysis (Terre Blanche, Kelly & Durrheim, 2006:272). This research falls into the category of "field/natural experimental designs" (research design number 7) according to Mouton (2008:157). Mouton recommends this research design in instances where (a) a sample will be employed to make inferences about a larger population, (b) the research will take place in a natural setting and (c) practical and ethical constraints prevent participants from being randomly assigned to experimental and control groups.

As part of the qualitative approach to the study, and in an attempt to increase validity and usefulness of the research findings, each session was video-recorded. Each of these recordings, in its entirety, was then systematically observed at regular intervals (of approximately five weeks each) during the course of the project. This method of observation, based on repeated assessment, is comparable to what Leedy and Ormrod (2001:238) refer to as "time series experiments," which they believe are appropriate when practical or ethical restraints prevent random selection and the use of a control group. Furthermore, semi-structured focus group interviews were conducted with the children upon completion of the project. The aim was to gain insight into their personal perceptions of the benefits, value and worth of the workshops. Their comments provided valuable insight into the effectiveness of African drumming as an intervention.

With regard to the secondary aspect of the research (i.e. the potential of the workshops to be successfully integrated within the residence), a qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews

was employed. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with relevant managers and care-givers in the residence upon completion of the research project. Terre Blanche et al (2006:272) state that a qualitative approach to research may be necessary in “situations in which it is difficult to say what the variables are, which ones are important, or how to measure them,” necessitating “open-ended, inductive exploration.”

Following is a brief discussion of each data collection method employed within the research design outlined above. The different methods are justified in terms of their applicability to the current research project. More information regarding the application of the methods and the analysis of the data thus captured is provided under the Methodology section below.

2.1 Quantitative data collection: Psychological assessment

The Beck Youth Inventories for Children and Adolescents (Second Edition, 2005) was the assessment tool utilised to evaluate the children’s progress. Assessment occurred prior to commencement and upon completion of the workshops. Scores obtained from the first set of measurements were compared to those of the follow-up assessments. Kanjee recommends the use of what he refers to as a “personality assessment” instrument where in-depth information concerning one or more dimensions of individual functioning is required (2006:482). Similarly, Greig and Taylor recommend the use of verbal reports such as standardised instruments (especially those they refer to generally as “attitude scales”) as an effective way to gain insight into children’s thoughts, emotions, attitudes and opinions (1999:81). Please see Research instrument (3.1) in the Methodology section (3.) below for a more detailed discussion of the Beck Youth Inventories.

2.2 Qualitative data collection: Focused observations

Each workshop of African drumming was video-recorded. (Please see the letters of informed consent and assent in Appendices B, C and D.) Video-recordings allowed for in-depth, qualitative examination of the children’s musical, social and emotional development (see Graue and Walsh, 1998:109-112). This method of data collection and analysis (in addition to the quantitative forms discussed above) provided valuable insight into the effectiveness and worth of the workshops. Observations of the sessions focused on the children’s self-esteem and self-confidence, pro-social behaviour, enjoyment, concentration, and evidence of musical capacity. (The relevance of these constructs is discussed below

in section 3.3.2.1 Focused observations.) These constructs were assessed via focused observations which took place roughly every five weeks from commencement of the project.

Kelly (2006a:310) defines focused observation as the use of specific, well-directed questions in order to obtain information regarding particular types of behaviour. Delpont and Roestenburg (2011:182) state that observation can be either structured or unstructured. They propose that “In the case of unstructured observation, observers qualitatively observe behaviours by recording narratives or personal accounts of the situations that they have observed” (Delpont & Roestenburg, 2011:182). Similarly, Kelly (2006a:310) states that, like interviews, observations can be more or less structured. At the more structured end of the continuum are the quantitative forms of observation, for example, those using checklists, rating scales, time samples and independent observers (Kelly, 2006a:310). On the other hand, less structured, more naturalistic observational studies fall easily within the qualitative realm of research methodology (Kelly, 2006a:310). It is in the latter capacity that observation was employed in the current study. (Themes for the focused observations are delineated in Appendix E.) This observational process was similar to the “controlled observation” technique described by Greig and Taylor (1999:85) which, while taking place in a basically natural setting (i.e. the drum circle) “still involves spontaneous behaviour but in a situation which to some extent has been manipulated by the observer...” (i.e. the use of specially designed activities and facilitation techniques). A more detail discussion of the implementation of these procedures is offered in the Methodology section below.

2.3 Qualitative data collection: Focus groups and semi-structured interviews

Focus group discussions were conducted with all of the children (divided into small groups) upon completion of the project, in an attempt to understand their perceptions and experiences of the African drumming workshops. (Please see Appendix G for the focus group discussion schedule.) Each focus group session was approximately twenty minutes in duration and was video-recorded. (Please see Appendix F for the letter of assent regarding the conducting and video-recording of the focus groups.)

Furthermore, a qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews was employed to investigate the success of the project as it was presented within the Village. Key staff members were interviewed upon conclusion of the project. (Please see Appendix H for the letters of consent regarding the conducting of these interviews.) Interviews were approximately half an hour in duration and these interviews were not video-recorded. The aim of the interviews was to assess the staff’s perceptions of whether the

workshops were easily integrated within and complementary to the home's general programme and routine. The schedule for the interviews is included in Appendix I.

Nieuwenhuis recommends the use of focus group interviews when one wishes to generate the widest and richest possible pool of information (2007:90). The advantages of focus groups, he explains, include their use of group interaction and dynamics to widen response possibilities, to prompt recall of forgotten aspects and to lessen inhibition and thus encourage the participation of all members (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:90). These notions are similar to the ideas of Greeff (2011:360-361) with regard to the uses and functions of a focus group. With regard to the conducting of interviews, Kelly proposes that this is a more natural form of interaction than requiring individuals to complete a test or questionnaire (2006a:297). He continues and recommends a semi-structured approach (using an interview schedule) in instances where considerable insight and understanding of feelings or experiences are desired (2006a:298). This same author maintains that the conducting of interviews is compatible with an interpretive approach to research, where the experiences, thoughts and feelings of the interviewees are valued and respectfully explored (2006a:297). In his own words, "Interpretive approaches ... try to find out how people really feel about or experience particular things and will therefore try to create an environment of openness and trust within which the interviewee is able to express herself or himself authentically" (2006a:297).

3. Methodology

This section considers in detail the ways in which the above research design and techniques were carried out during the course of this particular project. The Beck Youth Inventories are described in terms of their reliability, validity and appropriateness to the study, and issues such as the various data sources, sampling, the intervention rendered and analysis of the data are described and explained thereafter.

3.1 Research instrument

The Beck Youth Inventories were used as one angle to explore the potential of African drumming to enhance children's emotional and social well-being. This is a standardised test which has been approved by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA). Authored by Judith S. Beck and Aaron T. Beck, it consists of five inventories that can be used separately or in combination. For the

purposes of the current study, they were used in both capacities. The test provides separate measurements for five major aspects of emotional and social functioning: anxiety, depression, anger, disruptive behaviour and self-concept. The Beck Youth Inventories provide a separate profile for each of these dimensions as well as an overall evaluation of emotional and social well-being for each child. Each inventory contains twenty items. Individual inventories take between five and ten minutes to complete; used in combination, the five inventories together take between thirty and fifty minutes.

The Beck Youth Inventories can be used to test for emotional and social impairment in children in both educational and clinical settings, and can be administered to either groups or individuals. For the purposes of the current study, the tests were administered in a small group setting. Designed for children between the ages of 7 and 14, the inventories require a second grade reading ability. Assessment items require child-friendly responses, namely, Likert scale options with 0 = never, 1 = sometimes, 2 = often and 3 = always. The inventories are suited to the purposes of screening, assessment, treatment planning and outcomes assessment for children in treatment (Beck & Beck, 2008). It was in the latter capacity that they were employed in the current study.

According to Beck and Beck (2008:10), the inventories have the following strengths:

- They may be used in combination to obtain a profile of the child's current emotional state.
- Individual inventories are designed to tap core issues and where appropriate reflect criteria pertaining to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Revision* (DSM-IV) for specific disorders.
- They are based on a national standardisation sample stratified by ethnicity and socio-economic status (SES).

Although the test was standardised with a sample of children from the United States, the HPCSA has approved the test for work with South African children.

Scoring is based on a simple procedure of converting raw scores to t scores. The conversion is based on four norm groups, consisting of females aged 7 to 10, males aged 7 to 10, females aged 11 to 14 and males aged 11 to 14. These norm groups made the test appropriate for the group involved in the current study, which included children of mixed gender between the ages of 7 and 12. Raw scores are converted to a common metric with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10.

Alpha coefficients fall into the high range for all five inventories and for all four norm groups. The alpha coefficients for the Depression Inventory range between .904 and .921 for all norm groups. The alpha coefficients for the Anxiety, Anger, Disruptive Behaviour and Self-Concept Inventories are between .864 and .921 for all norm groups. In addition, test-retest studies have shown the Beck Youth Inventories to have good reliability with regard to the same four norm groups.

The Beck Youth Inventories were selected for a variety of reasons. First, it was one of few assessment tools available which would effectively tap into the constructs of emotional and social well-being (in themselves difficult phenomena to measure) and which was also designed specifically for children. Furthermore, it was the only test, relevant to the purposes of this study, which was approved by the HPCSA and which was fairly simple regarding procedures of administration, scoring and analysis. Some projective tests are highly effective in tapping into the inner life of a child, but these require highly specialised training in the above procedures. Thus, while the tool is not designed to measure precisely those dimensions under investigation in the current study (i.e. emotional and social well-being), measuring instead five specific constructs (anxiety, depression, anger, disruptive behaviour and self-concept), it was the most suitable of all the devices available. A potential problem could have arisen in that the Beck Youth Inventories require a second grade reading ability – several of the children selected for the study had only limited reading skills. However, it was decided that the Beck Youth Inventories was the most suitable (actually the only possible) test for the project, provided that certain adaptations were made. Where children had a reading ability lower than that which was required, the tests were administered individually and the test items were carefully read and explained to each child. Where children had a suitable reading ability, they were divided into groups of three for the assessment. (Please refer to section 3.2.1 Sampling, below, for more information regarding the selection of children for the project.)

3.2 Data

Sixteen children within residential care were selected for the research project. They were all in the middle childhood phase of development and exhibited various emotional and social deficits. The group included nine boys and seven girls. All of the boys and all but two of the girls were African children of various ethnic origins. Two girls were white Afrikaans-speaking children. The fact that the researcher was of a different ethnicity to most of the participants was not considered to interfere in any way with the quality of data collected or with the interpretation thereof. Speaking from a similar situation,

Holmes contends that “My ethnicity did not affect my ability to interpret the children’s experiences” and that “I have never experienced a situation where I could not establish rapport with a child because of my ethnicity” (1998:29).

Permission from the management of the Epworth Children’s Village was obtained during the initial stages of preparation (please see Appendix B). This, however, took place only after two initial interviews with important gatekeepers within the Village. During these meetings, the nature and purposes of the research were discussed and the potential benefits to the participating children were emphasised. The researcher also offered to help the participants prepare an item of African drumming for the Village’s annual Christmas concert, as a token of thanks and as a way to give something back to the Village for their assistance with the research. The process of gaining entry into the Village was necessarily gradual and respectful. Graue and Walsh (1998:97) confirm that it can be exceptionally difficult to gain entry to work with children, and especially children who are considered “different” or in need of special care and whose caretakers are naturally very protective and often defensive of outsiders (see also Holmes, 1998:15). Entry was gained more easily due to the fact that the project was presented primarily as a voluntary enrichment programme for exceptionally troubled residents, rather than purely as a research study. Once the sixteen children had been selected, the informed assent of each participant was duly obtained (please refer to Appendix D). It will be noted from Appendices B, C and D that permission to digitally record each workshop was also granted.

3.2.1 Sampling

The following general requirements for potential participants were presented to the Epworth Children’s Village management: that the children are (1) between the ages of 7 and 12 years, (2) mixed in terms of gender, (3) inclusive with regard to race and ethnicity and (4) amongst those residents who do not leave the institution for “out-weekends” and holidays (time spent away from the home with family, relatives or guardians would represent a confounding variable, undermining accuracy of the findings). Thereafter, the residential social workers, educational psychologist and director of volunteer activities consulted together (with the researcher) in order to determine exactly which of the children fitting these criteria should participate in the study. Purposeful selection was employed as the above-mentioned staff selected those children who, in their decision, would benefit most from the drumming workshops. More specifically, those children who presented with higher levels of negative emotionality and behavioural problems were chosen to participate. This type of selection or sampling procedure would

be classified by Durrheim and Painter (2006:139) as “purposive sampling,” as it allows research to tap into the most data rich sources possible. The final sample consisted of nine African boys, five African girls and two Afrikaans-speaking white girls.

Two of the children selected by the social workers and the educational psychologist, Angela and Tiny, were seven years and four months and seven years and six months of age, respectively. They thus fell within the early part of the middle childhood development phase. This was desirable, as the researcher wished to include children across the entire span of middle childhood. As mentioned above, the Beck Youth Inventories require a second grade reading ability. The researcher, hoping to include children at both ends of the middle childhood developmental continuum, did not wish to exclude these younger children on the basis of their reading ability. Furthermore, another child who was selected, Thabo, was eight years and four months old, but also still in grade one. Well into the middle childhood phase of development, he, too, would have to be excluded on the basis of reading ability. Finally, another four children selected for the study presented with learning disabilities and attended schools for children with special needs. Their reading ability was also suspect. Thus, seven out of the sixteen children selected by the staff and management of the Village as most in need of the project would have to be excluded on the basis of inadequate reading ability. As explained above, an HPCSA approved test measuring emotional and social well-being among younger children, which was simple to administer, score and analyze, was simply not available. Nor would it have been desirable to use two different tests for two groups of participating children, as this would prevent comparison across their test scores.

As mentioned above, it was decided that the Beck Youth Inventories would be employed due to positive attributes and the absence of another suitable test. It was also decided that all children selected by the Village as requiring intervention would be included in the study. As mentioned, the seven children with lower reading ability would have the tests read and explained to them by the psychologist administering the tests. The researcher felt that these decisions were further justified by the established fact that children within residential care, whose home life and schooling have often been disrupted and unstable, commonly present with scholastic difficulties such as low reading ability and various learning disorders. As such, this is a dilemma which “goes with the territory” and which is to be anticipated and appropriately and sensitively dealt with by researchers working within this field.

Initially, the sixteen children were divided into two groups of eight participants each. The ideal number of children for instrumental groupwork lies between six and eight participants (Stone, 2005:76-77; Young & Glover, 1998:163). This number of participants was well suited to the various aims of this study (i.e. the facilitation of drumming workshops and the promotion of social and emotional well-being). In instances where the explicit aim is team building, confidence building, relaxation, etc., the size of the group may be larger (Friedman, 2000:32). However, the researcher concurs with the reasoning of Stone (2005:76-77) who states that: “From previous experience, I had learned to keep the classes small. Seven participants per group was a very manageable number (with more students, I would spend the entire class dealing with unwieldy behaviours). I also felt that with such a class size, each student would get the attention he or she needed.” It was decided that the project would commence with eight members per group, which, apart from being an appropriate size, would also ensure an adequate number of participants should a child/children be unable to complete the programme. The allocation of the children into two groups was informed both by their ages and purposively in accordance with other salient criteria at the discretion of the social workers, the psychologist and the director.

After the first two sessions, it was decided that due to the severity of certain children’s emotional and behavioural disturbances, the workshops would be both more manageable for the facilitator and beneficial for the participants if facilitated with smaller groups. Please see the following section for more information pertaining to this decision.

3.2.2 Intervention

The intervention consisted of the series of African drumming workshops, which aimed at enhancing the children’s social and emotional well-being.

3.2.2.1 Procedures at the Epworth Children’s Village

The workshops of African drumming were facilitated every Saturday morning for four consecutive months (July through to November 2010). The decision to conduct the study over four months was informed by several salient factors. It was taken into account that, while the sessions were offered chiefly as music education, the therapeutic potential thereof represented the variable being explored. As such, the study had to be presented over a sufficient period of time, allowing for the emergence of the anticipated social and emotional benefits. Unfortunately, pragmatic issues also had to be considered

when planning the research. (Please refer to Chapter Three, section 1.4.1 The appropriate duration of therapy with children, for a more comprehensive discussion of this matter.)

For the first two workshops, the sixteen participants were divided into two groups of eight children each. Even though a member of staff was usually present to supervise and assist in working with the children, the groups proved to be too large and a great deal of time was wasted while attempting to curb difficult behaviour. This was detrimental to the safe, accepting and comfortable environment that the researcher was striving to establish. Furthermore, as was mentioned above at the beginning of the Research Design section, no such problems were encountered in the pilot study, where eight children were easily managed by the researcher without an aide. After a discussion with relevant caretakers and coordinators, it was decided that due to the children's emotional disturbances, increased individual attention and a smaller, more supportive group setting were in order. The participants were then reallocated to three smaller groups of five children each. One child with profound emotional problems and extremely disruptive behaviour was assigned to individual sessions, the content of which was as similar as possible to that of the group sessions.

The three groups and the individual child participated in identical (or as close as possible) workshops, and the four corresponding sessions were presented one after the other. The sessions were presented in the occupational therapy (OT) building on the Epworth Village premises. The room in which the sessions took place possessed suitable acoustic qualities and was spacious, sunlit and cheerfully decorated. As mentioned, each workshop was usually supervised by a staff member with whom the children were comfortable and who knew and understood each of them. The Epworth Children's Village therapy team were available should any of the children have required professional intervention during or after the sessions of African drumming.

For the first two weeks, each workshop was one hour in duration. Thereafter, the workshops were shortened to a minimum of forty minutes each, but could be longer depending on the concentration and enthusiasm of the participants. This decision was made in the light of the children's waning focus and increase in restless and disruptive behaviour during the later part of the workshops. The youngest group frequently had forty-minute sessions. From one-and-a-half months into the project, a small portion of each workshop (towards the end of each session) was devoted to preparation of the item for the Christmas concert. This resulted in the sessions being between ten to fifteen minutes longer in duration.

The first undertaking was to establish rapport with the participants. Some of the children (most often the younger ones) were friendly, enthusiastic and open to the workshops from the start. On the whole, however, the establishment of a positive, therapeutic relationship with the children was an arduous and sometimes frustrating process. Because of many of the children's prior experiences, their trust and respect needed gradually to be earned and it was of the utmost importance that the researcher had true respect and regard for them. The researcher attempted as far as possible to adopt the attitude endorsed by Graue and Walsh, namely, that of a learner who is grateful to his or her participants for the opportunity of learning from them (1998:99). It must be noted, however, that it was ultimately the medium of the drum circle itself which had the greatest role in breaking barriers, reducing anxiety and connecting participants with one another and with the facilitator/researcher.

3.2.2.2 Overview of the project and philosophical underpinnings

The series of workshops was designed to commence with relatively simple rhythmic activities and to become progressively more challenging. The first half of the series presented an array of highly structured drumming games and exercises designed to promote group cohesion, teamwork, basic drumming and rhythmic skills and musical confidence. These sessions provided the participants with the knowledge and tools they would need for the increasingly improvisational activities scheduled for the second half of the series. The latter part of the series afforded the participants increasing freedom to use their initiative and to explore their own creative ideas. A variety of rhythm-based activities originating from African musical practices formed the foundation of the workshops' content. As such, all of the games and exercises presented were based on techniques and processes inherent to traditional African music-making. The workshops aimed at introducing African musical culture in a way that was accessible, age appropriate and enjoyable, as well as historically informed, accurate and respectful of the cultures whose musical/social practices were being drawing upon.

A few examples of such indigenous African music practices are in order. One technique that informed several activities involves "layering." This is a versatile ensemble practice wherein different pitches, timbres and/or rhythmic patterns are gradually added to (or removed from) the music by different participants (Nzewi, 2004:12; Hull, 1998:142, 168). The volume, texture and tone colour of the music being created are thus altered. Another fundamental practice is often referred to as "call-and-response" and sometimes as "question-and-answer" and occurs when the facilitator or a participant plays a pattern in one rhythmical cycle and the group responds to it in a following cycle (Hull, 1998:162). There are many variations of this activity, depending upon the way in which the group or a group member

decides to respond to the “call” or “question” phrase. Responses can range from a direct imitation of the call, to a sympathetic matching of the question phrase to an elaborately improvised answer to the “call”. One variation allowing for greater creativity in the response is Friedman’s (2000:148) “African Village” exercise.

Also based on African practice and philosophy is the technique referred to as “showcasing.” As explained by Hull (1998:171), showcasing exposes the playing of different individuals or groups of individuals in order to develop their musical independence and confidence in the supportive context of the drum circle. This is similar to Stone’s (2005:77) concept of “soloing” and Friedman’s (2000:147) “improvisational heartbeat rhythm” exercise where each member has the chance to create a solo while receiving the support of the rest of the group who would continue to maintain the pulse, or “heartbeat”. This practice is analogous to the support and interdependence characterising the social practices of traditional African communities, where community values underlie all individual endeavours. Another important rhythmic exercise used was that of free improvisation, which empowered the group to create their own music, for which they could take full ownership and pride (Hull, 1998:137). This kind of in-the-moment music, which is primarily process based (as opposed to performance oriented) is at the heart of indigenous African music-making.

Finally, preparing an item of African drumming for the Epworth Children’s Village Christmas concert served to promote teamwork among the children as they enthusiastically worked together toward a specific, joint objective. Performance (the sharing of musical creations with others) has always been an essential element of music as practised by native Africans. Performance is an important aspect of the total musical experience, and the participants were eager to prepare a piece of drumming that would showcase some of the skills they were learning. As the project progressed, the children took complete ownership of this preparation and became increasingly proud of their piece. The concert took place upon conclusion of the project and served as an appropriate finale to the series of workshops.

3.2.2.3 Drum circle facilitation

The basic format and techniques of drum circle facilitation as suggested by Kalani (2004; 2005), Friedman (2000) and Hull (1998) were used to present the workshops. Amongst the techniques recommended by Hull (1998) are the use of the physical circle (p.131), body language signals (p.129), vocal calls (p.131), the “drum call” (p.134), the orchestration point (p.136), entering and leaving the circle (p.137), “pacing and leading” (p.139) and working with the musical ideas provided by the circle

(p.140). Several of Hull's (1998) drum circle exercises and activities were also drawn upon and adapted for use with the current group, including his "in-the-moment music" (p.52), "call and response" (p.188; see also p.164), "layering in and out" (p.168), "passing the pulse" (p.53) and "passing the solo" (p.84). In addition, many of Kalani's (2004; 2005) drum circle games were utilised successfully to introduce rhythmic, drumming and ensemble playing skills to the children in a manner that was fun and non-technical. All of these techniques, exercises and games facilitated the group's attempt to produce the best possible music that they as individuals and as an ensemble were able to.

Drum circle music is a form of music-making that has been growing rapidly in popularity over the last two-and-a-half decades due to the pioneering and sustained efforts of musicians such as the above-named drummer/facilitators. The remarkable demand for such activities (whether employed for recreation, community building, educational purposes, training and development or health and wellness) is probably due in large part to the accessibility of this form of musical and self-expression (Kalani, 2004:9-10). At the most fundamental level, facilitating a drum circle entails assisting the members to play well together (Kalani, 2004:10). The definition of a drum circle that is most descriptive of and relevant to the current project is the one suggested by Kalani. Kalani (2004:9) insists that "A drum circle is really a *people circle*" (italics from original text) and proposes that "a drum circle is more than just the instruments and the act of drumming; it is also the shared experience of the participants. The drums and the drumming are the vehicles that take the group to its final destination – a place where everyone has a voice and is empowered to use it, and where the creative spirit is shared by everyone in the circle." Seen in this light, the drum circle represents an ideal context in which to unleash human potential by increasing social competence and enhancing awareness, self-concept, self-expression and integration. A more thorough discussion concerning the potential contribution of drumming to emotional and social well-being (particularly that of children) is to be found in section 3. of Chapter Three.

3.2.2.4 The workshops: Structure, processes and objectives

Following is a brief discussion of the overall structure of the workshops conducted in the present study. Each session was opened with a welcoming activity similar to the one used by Pavlicevic (1994:5) in her music sessions with economically and socially deprived African children. Each child has a turn for his or her name to be chanted rhythmically while the syllables are beaten out on the drums. While that child's name is being called out and "played" by the drum circle, he or she moves around the inside of the circle and shakes the hand of each member. Each participant stops playing for a brief moment while

pausing to shake the hand of the member being welcomed into the session. Each member is welcomed into the workshop, after which the facilitator welcomes the entire group as a whole to their particular “African village.” Each of the three groups was named by the group members themselves, and the drum circle was presented as a metaphor for the community life, belonging, support and security characteristic of the traditional African village setting.

After each participant (as well as the facilitator and supervising staff member) had been welcomed into the drum circle, a variety of activities and games were presented. Underlying each exercise was a process informed by Gestalt play therapy objectives and principles such as awareness, contact and experience. These exercises, while presented as rhythmic drum circle activities, possessed social and emotional as well as musical objectives. For example, exercises facilitating free improvisation (for instance see Workshop Seven, exercise 4: “Village Gathering”; Workshop Twelve, exercise 2: “Living and Learning”; Workshop Fifteen, exercise 3: “The Village Cocoon” and Workshop Sixteen, exercise 5: “Ubuntu Beats”) aimed not only at improving musical independence and creativity, but also at enhancing awareness and expression of emotions being experienced. Exercises encouraging maintenance of a steady pulse (for example see Workshop Three, exercise 4: “*Ubuntu* Beats” and Workshop Four, exercise 5: “*Ubuntu* Beats”) were used to promote awareness, relaxation and an improved sense of contact with the self and with others.

Activities facilitating exploration of different timbres, textures, dynamics and tempi not only introduced the participants to basic elements of music, but also served to increase sensory awareness. African drumming possesses visual, auditory, tactile and kinesthetic elements and thus represents a multimodal form of stimulation capable of improving sensory integration. (Please see Workshop Seven, exercise 3: “Together in Weather”; Workshop Eight, exercise 2: “Beneath the Starry Sky”; Workshop Eight, exercise 4: “Grandmother’s Story” and Workshop Nine, exercise 3: “Drum Call”, all of which promoted auditory and tactile awareness. Please see also Workshop Five, exercise 2: “What Goes Around Comes Around”, which promoted kinesthetic awareness and coordination. Finally, please refer to Workshop Five, exercise 3: “Move it or Lose it”; Workshop Six, exercise 3: “Move to the Groove” and Workshop Nine, exercise 4: “Groove to My Moves”. These activities aimed at enhancing visual awareness.)

Activities involving musical and verbal self-statements and affirmations helped strengthen the sense of self and self-esteem of participants (e.g. Workshop Three, exercise 3: “The Web of Life” and

Workshop Two, exercise 5: “Affirmation Circle”). Call-and-response activities, in which each child had the opportunity of presenting a rhythmic phrase to which the group would respond, promoted not only musical independence and creativity but also served to enhance the participants’ sense of agency and feelings of acceptance and validation (e.g. Workshop Ten, exercise 2: “Our Drums Can Talk!” and Workshop Four, exercise 4: “Family Ties”). As a final example, interactive drumming activities based on a variety of social processes (such as imitating, calling, answering, matching, etc.) served not only to enhance musical memory or creativity, but also to enhance effective contact amongst participants and to improve various social competencies. (Please see Workshop Nine, exercise 2. “Interactive Music Making” for an example of such an activity.)

As mentioned above, ten to fifteen minutes at the end of each session were devoted to preparing the item for the Christmas concert (except for the first six weeks). One piece (The *Waka Waka: This Time for Africa*, Shakira, 2010, from the official world cup album, Sony & Fifa) was prepared for the concert, which the children practised in their separate groups until the final rehearsals (at which point the three groups as well as the child assigned to individual sessions joined together). Two groups (and the individual participant) prepared the piece as an all-drum circle. The third group used a variety of small percussion instruments to accompany the drumming. The latter participants learned which instruments to play during certain parts of the piece. (For the purposes of the concert, the piece was performed as both an all-drum piece and as a mixed-percussion piece.) Finally, at the end of each workshop the children and supervising member of staff were all thanked for their participation. A concluding ritual, marking the metaphorical journey back home from the imaginary African Village, ended off each workshop.

3.3 Analysis

Quantitative and qualitative forms of analysis were used in the interpretation of the empirical and qualitative data collected via the aforementioned methods.

3.3.1 Quantitative analysis

Statistical procedures were employed to analyse the quantitative data obtained via the Beck Youth Inventories. The pre-test and post-test measurements for each of the five dimensions (anxiety, depression, anger, disruptive behaviour and self-concept) were compared and the differences analyzed.

Because the data for all five dimensions was found to be normally distributed (according to the Shapiro-Wilk analysis conducted), t tests were used to perform the analysis.

It was considered that school type (attendance of a normal versus a special school) and age group (falling within the first or the second half of the middle childhood stage) could potentially influence test results. In order to identify the potential impact of these factors, Analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical procedures were used to test between the two age groups (younger than 9.5 years and older than 9.5 years) and the two school types. There were eight children within each age group; four children attended a special school and the remaining twelve attended a normal school. Out of the older age group, four children attended a normal school and four attended a special school. However, out of the younger age group, eight attended a normal school and none attended a special school (please see the table below). The small sample size and the imbalance within the data made it necessary to model school type and age group separately in order to realise an effective statistical model for discussion. Thus, age group and school type could not be combined into a single factor for the analysis. Furthermore, the interaction between age group, school type and the five psychological constructs could not be tested in terms of strength or direction.

Table 1. Distribution of participants in terms of age group and school type

	Special school	Normal school
Younger than 9.5 years	0	8
Older than 9.5 years	4	4

3.3.2 Qualitative analysis

Qualitative methods of data analysis were used to interpret information gathered via the focused observations, focus groups and semi-structured interviews.

3.3.2.1 Focused observations

As was mentioned briefly under the section Research Design, the video-recordings of each workshop were systematically observed at three different points during the project. There was some concern that the video-recorder would be a distraction for the children or otherwise interfere with their sessions. However, in accordance with the experience of Graue and Walsh (1998:111), although a hand-held recorder may be disturbing, a camera positioned on a small tripod was significantly less obtrusive. Although the children were obviously aware of its presence, there was no sign of their behaviour being

altered in any way (other than an occasional glance in its direction). The first observation took place five weeks after commencement of the study, and the other two observations took place at five-weekly intervals thereafter. The focused assessments centred around five major areas of social, emotional and musical development, namely, (A) self-esteem and self-confidence, (B) pro-social behaviour, (C) enjoyment, (D) concentration and (E) musical capacity. Each participant was individually observed and assessed with regard to the above five dimensions. These aspects were chosen as they relate to Gestalt concepts such as of awareness, contact, sense of self and mastery.

The self-esteem and self-confidence area (A) considered factors such as risk-taking, independence, initiative and assertiveness. This dimension helped reflect the strength of a child's sense of self, degree of contact with his or her aggressive energy and his or her capacity for self-support (Blom, 2006:90, 103; Oaklander, 2006:33-34). The second dimension, concerning pro-social behaviour (B), assessed social competencies such as turn-taking, following, leading, voluntary engagement, cooperation, team spirit and impulse-control. Pro-social behaviour served to indicate the degree to which the children were able to make and sustain adaptive, meaningful contact with others (Blom, 2006:54, 103-104; Oaklander, 2006:22; see also van der Merwe, 1996:30, 33). It is thus also an indicator of the strength of a child's sense of self (Blom, 2006:104). Section C took account of a participant's level of enjoyment, and considered aspects such as the child's looking forward to the workshops, overt gestures of enjoyment, sense of comfort and relaxation during sessions and the extent to which participation was voluntary, self-motivated and enthusiastic. Positive affect, enjoyment and the child's capacity to have fun (an overall sense of well-being and positive feelings about the self) are reliable indications of a healthy sense of self (Oaklander, 2006:27). The concentration dimension (D) evaluated the participants' capacity to remain focused during workshops. Aspects considered included musical engagement, quality of attention maintained, ability to learn and recall musical motives, capacity for on-task behaviour and capacity for impulse-control. This dimension was included in the observation as it was an effective indicator of a child's ability to sustain awareness, remain fully in the present moment and make contact with his/her internal and external environment (Oaklander, 2006:22-23, 51-52).

Finally, section E attempted to assess the children's musical capacity. It took into account factors such as a participant's sense of rhythm and metre; ability to maintain a pulse; musical memory; creative improvisation; awareness of musical elements such as tempo, dynamics, phrasing and tone colour; exploration and incorporation of the above elements into the child's own playing and the ability of the

participant to match his or her playing to that of the group as a whole. Manifestation of musical capacity formed an important aspect of the observations as it helped the researcher to gauge the children's sense of mastery and competence. Blom (2006:108-109) and Oaklander (2006: 28-29, 57-58) discuss the importance of mastery to a child's sense of self. Furthermore, the children's musical behaviour dynamically reflected their internal and external processes, providing the researcher with another means of observing and understanding their behaviour and self-expression. (Please see Appendix E for the list of themes which served to guide the focused observations.)

3.3.2.2 Focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews

As mentioned above, focus group discussions were used to explore how the children themselves experienced the series of drumming workshops. Greig and Taylor assert that "Listening to the voices of and views of children themselves is one of the most neglected aspects of child developmental research. It has been too long assumed that children have little to add to research that is valid..." (1999:81). The informal discussions were held upon completion of the project and were each roughly twenty minutes in duration. Assessment of the project's success from the perspective of the child-participant was guided by the focus group schedule in Appendix G.

The participants were divided into four sets of three children and one set of four children for the conducting of the focus groups. Graue and Walsh (1998:114) recommend working with children in pairs or triads for a number of important reasons. Firstly, children are more comfortable with their peers than alone with an adult. They also help one another to generate truthful, accurate and meaningful responses to questions posed. Indeed, they often engage in a process of reformulating and rephrasing questions into ones they are better able to understand and answer. Finally, the small group of children will frequently engage in conversations amongst themselves about relevant issues. These discussions tend to be more spontaneous than the answering of a researcher's questions, and thus tend to be more revealing of genuine information and important details (Graue & Walsh, 1998:114). Holmes adds that it is a valuable practice to match discussion techniques with children's ethnicity (1998:24). She states that African American children (and the researcher extends this to South African children of colour) are more comfortable interacting within a group context due to their cultural socialisation (Holmes, 1998:24). Fourteen out of the sixteen children in the current study belonged to the latter group, so this advice was deemed relevant. Holmes also comments that shy, inhibited children are more likely to become involved in a small group setting (1998:23).

Video-recording was used to capture the full content of each focus group, and this significantly aided interpretation of the participants' responses. (Please see Appendix F for the letter of assent with regard to the conducting and recording of the focus groups.) The use of video-recording to capture focus group discussions with children (under appropriate circumstances) is recommended by Graue and Walsh (1998:116-117). These authors explain that video-recording captures facial expressions, postures and gestures, all of which are crucial in the interpretation of the verbal content (1998:117). It is important, however, still to take notes (which are always useful and which show the children that what they are saying is very important to you) and to be attentive to what is said when the video-recorder is turned off (Graue & Walsh, 1998:117). Children, like adults, may be hesitant to say certain things in front of the camera, and critical details may thus go unrecorded.

In order to generate as much meaningful information as possible from the focus group discussions, questions were asked and topics introduced in a format that would encourage children to be as open and truthful as possible. In order to accomplish this, the advice of Graue and Walsh (1998:114-116) was followed. These authors recommend that information be gleaned indirectly; the use of props to stimulate thoughts and ideas; asking hypothetical questions designed to engage children's imaginative capacities and prevent the idea that responses can be "right" or "wrong;" the use of third-person questions that free children from taking complete, personal responsibility for what they say; the use of video-footage (gathered from their workshops) to promote discussion; being attentive to what children say during informal, spontaneous moments of conversation and timing the focus group carefully in order to avoid excessive distraction (Graue & Walsh, 1998:114-116). Developmentally appropriate questions were carefully phrased in order to garner the most accurate and meaningful information possible (Holmes, 1998:22-23). Analysis centred upon whether, and to what extent, the children experienced the workshops as enjoyable, beneficial, meaningful, appropriately compiled and adequately presented. Their ideas and comments were discussed and they were encouraged to make suggestions or recommendations to improve the sessions should such a project be presented in the future.

It has been mentioned above that semi-structured interviews were conducted with relevant members of staff in order to explore their perception of the value and feasibility of the workshops. These interviews took place upon completion of the project and were not video-recorded. Adults tend to be more hesitant to speak openly when being video-recorded than are children. The interviews were conducted with two staff members who were primarily connected with the project: Caroline Motona (coordinator of

volunteer activities) and Penny-Ann Lundie (resident social worker). These interviews were approximately half an hour in duration. Analysis and interpretation of the data thus obtained from the members of staff centred on the following primary aspects: the ease (or difficulty) with which the workshops were incorporated into the Village's weekend routine; whether extra work resulted for certain of the staff; the extent to which the children's behaviour was noticeably and positively influenced by participation in the sessions; the extent to which they perceived the children as looking forward to the sessions; whether they felt that the workshops should have taken place at greater or smaller intervals; and whether they believed that such a project is best presented on a once-off, short-term basis (as was the case in the present study) or whether it would be suitable as a long-term form of intervention. (Please see Appendix I for the relevant interview schedule.)

It is to be noted that the schedules for the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions represented a guideline for the conducting of interviews or focus groups, and were necessarily adapted and modified during the course of the separate interviews or discussions. After each interview or focus group, process notes were made summarising the researcher's thoughts and ideas, as well as interesting incidents and subtle details that were evident.

4. Limitations

Possible limitations of the research results include the relatively short time span over which the sessions were presented. Four months may not be an adequate length of time from which to formulate a conclusion regarding the effectiveness of African drumming as an intervention. Similarly, weekly sessions may not have allowed for adequate contact between the researcher and the participants. The project may not have provided the therapeutic intensiveness required by the children involved.

The researcher found herself to be insufficiently experienced in the field of drum circle facilitation, the format in which the sessions were presented. Drum circle facilitation is itself a highly specialised field of music education and community-building intervention. Becoming an effective drum circle facilitator requires many years of training and experience. Although the researcher had been considerably exposed to this field of music-making, and had previously facilitated other forms of group music events, she had limited experience in the facilitation of drum circle music specifically.

A significant, although expected and limited, degree of absenteeism among the children during the course of the project may further limit credibility of research findings. While initial planning limited the selection of participants to those who remained at the Village for weekends and holidays, it was not possible to foresee or prevent the fact that some children would occasionally be ill or would have a visitor during a Saturday morning. The absence of an individual child would affect not only his or her experience but also that of the other attending members as group dynamics are altered considerably according to group composition.

Related to the above consideration is another involving the presence of the supervising members of staff. Attending staff members were included within the drum circle wherever possible. They participated fully and often played a very supportive role as co-facilitators. However, the member of staff available to attend the workshops depended upon who was working that weekend's shift. Furthermore, the weekend staff would often take it in turns to supervise the workshops. There was thus a continual change in group membership depending upon who was available to join the group for a particular session. As was mentioned above in section 3.2.2, Intervention, the presence of another adult, and especially one familiar with the children, was extremely important, and this variable had thus to be dealt with as best as possible. Despite this continual change in group composition and thus prevailing social dynamics, the assisting members of staff continuously expressed their astonishment at how each group succeeded in becoming a unified social unit (something apparently quite rare within the Village). These sentiments were confirmed in the staff interviews conducted upon completion of the project. The great majority of workshops were enhanced by an enthusiastic, friendly and supportive attendant, who was well-accepted and liked by all the child participants.

It was mentioned above, under 3.1 Research instrument and 3.2.1 Sampling, that the Beck Youth Inventories required a second grade reading ability and that children not in possession of the required reading level would have the test items read and explained to them (individually). A further difficulty may have involved the fact that the test was designed within a western framework and was written in the English language. Even if the test was read and explained to the participants by the English-speaking psychologist, one can still query the extent to which the children fully understood the meaning of the test items. This applies not only to those children lacking the required reading ability, but also to the other black African children who were able to read the tests independently. As such, the validity of the test results may have been threatened by language and culture differences between the test developers and the test takers. In the 2006 study conducted by Meiring, van de Vijver and

Rothmann (involving a locally adapted version of the Fifteen Factor Questionnaire) it was found that internal consistencies were low amongst the black population. This was in spite of the fact that language and cultural issues were resolved and potentially biased items removed. Kanjee and Foxcroft (2009:87-88) conclude: “Consequently, in the domain of personality assessment in particular, in an attempt to find a measure that is appropriate for the different cultures in South Africa, attention is shifting to the development of an indigenous measure.”

Evidently, the study of multicultural psychological assessment represents a vast and highly complex field of enquiry (for more information on this subject, one can refer to Bedell, van Eeden & van Staden, 1999:1-7; Foxcroft, 1997:229-235 and Van Ede, 1996:153-160). Furthermore, it is not only the race or ethnicity of test takers which can negatively impact the accuracy of test results. Foxcroft and Roodt (2009:6) state that “the social, economic, educational and cultural background of an individual can influence his/her performance on a measure to the extent that the results present a distorted picture of the individual”. In agreement, Grieve and Foxcroft describe the potentially negative impact of factors such as schooling, language, culture, home environment, socio-economic status, urbanisation and test wiseness (2009:242-248).

A final limitation regarding the assessment tool was mentioned above in section 3.1 (last paragraph), and involved the use of a test which is not precisely aligned to the objectives of the study. Emotional and social well-being are by nature difficult constructs to define, operationalise and thus, to measure. As a result, there are few tests available which tap, explicitly and directly, into these dimensions. Choosing from the relatively small pool of appropriate tests (fitting the purposes of the study as well as approved by the HPCSA), the Beck Youth Inventories seemed to be the most suitable.

5. Ethical procedures

When undertaking research that directly involves child participants, issues of ethics become of utmost significance (Greig & Taylor, 1999:144-155; Graue & Walsh, 1998:55-69; Holmes, 1998, 24-29). Greig and Taylor emphasise the fact that ethical principles should not merely be incorporated into the research process, but that they should form the very foundation of the research design and the methods employed (1999:145, 153). These authors insist that such values should inform and guide every stage of preparation for the research project and assert that “all professionals undertaking research work with

children should embrace and adhere to the strictest of ethical codes...” (1999:145). A considerable part of the dilemma of involving children in research concerns the existence of unmistakable power differentials (which in this context concerns not only the research/subject imbalance but also the adult/child disparity), necessitating even greater awareness of possible ethical implications arising from one’s actions (Greig & Taylor, 1999:148). Principles of ethics directing work with children include but go well beyond general professional ethics and ethics informing work pertaining to human subjects (Greig & Taylor, 1999:145). The latter are moral issues, which include the ethics of autonomy, beneficence and justice, and should be basic to all actions as fellow human beings and as professionals (Greig & Taylor, 1999:145-146, 149). Research with children (and especially with those who are in some way marginalised or perceived as “different”) demands scrupulous consideration. What follows is thus a discussion of general ethical issues and child-specific considerations relevant to the study.

The research project respected the children’s autonomy. The advice of Greig and Taylor (1999:149) was adhered to in that informed assent was sought from the children themselves as well as informed consent from their legal guardians. (Letters of informed assent addressed to the participants are attached as Appendices D and F). In these letters, and in the child-friendly discussions which accompanied them, the basic aims of the project were described, privacy and confidentiality were assured, and the voluntary nature of their participation and freedom to withdraw at any stage were emphasised. Beneficence and justice were values built into the design of the study. The series of African drumming workshops was presented primarily as a voluntary community project. The research subjects were involved in the project as drum circle participants rather than as the objects of a study. They received the benefits proffered by the sessions while simultaneously assisting the researcher by playing the most vital part in the project. As such, the research process benefited those individuals who had contributed their time and energy to make the research possible. Greig and Taylor (1999:150) refer to such research as therapeutic research and recommend its application wherever possible.

Before commencement of the current project, every effort was made to predict and prevent or circumvent any ethical dilemmas that might be encountered. Greig and Taylor advocate stringent preparation in this regard but warn, reasonably, that “...careful planning can fail, particularly when human subjects are involved. When those human subjects happen to be children the unpredictability factor rises steeply!” (1999:144). The researcher followed careful planning and consulted her supervisor and co-supervisor whenever unforeseen problems arose. All decisions made during the course of the project were guided by the expertise and experience of these supervisors.

Special care was given due to the traumatic backgrounds of the children involved. The workshops were adapted, especially in the initial stages, to suit their particular needs (e.g. smaller groups allowing for a safer, more secure and individualised setting). In the event that professional intervention should be required at any stage of the project, the Epworth Children's Village therapy team were continuously available. Throughout the project, care was taken to tailor activities so that the participants would experience them as challenging but not frustrating, ensuring their experience of success and efficacy wherever possible. The children's mental, emotional and social levels of development were continuously taken into consideration and the sessions were suitably adapted.

Please see Appendices B, C and H for letters of informed consent addressed to the Epworth Children's Village management in general and to Penny-Ann Lundie and Robyn Anne Hill (resident social workers and legal guardians of the child participants) in particular. Please refer to section 3. Methodology for more information with regard to the acquiring of informed consent. As a final consideration, all assessments employing the Beck Youth Inventories were supervised by a registered educational psychologist and that therapeutic intervention was available at all times during testing.

6. Conclusion

A field/natural experimental design was employed to explore the potential emotional and social benefits of African drumming among children within a residential place of care. Due to both the social-experimental and the open-ended, inductive explorative nature of the study, the research required both empirical and qualitative forms of data collection and analysis in order to form conclusions with regard to the research objectives. According to Mouton, "field/natural experimental designs" are appropriate when (a) a sample is employed to make inferences regarding a larger population, (b) the research occurs in a natural setting and (c) practical and ethical constraints prevent the random assignment of participants to experimental and control groups. Purposeful selection was employed in order to include those children who would benefit most from the project (i.e. those residents displaying higher levels of negative emotions and/or behaviour, such as depression, withdrawal, anger and disruptive behaviour).

A quantitative approach employed pre- and post-testing using the Beck Youth Inventories for Children and Adolescents. Although the test was normed for and standardised with a sample of American children, it has been approved by the HPCSA for work with South African children. This device was

used to measure changes in the children's levels of anxiety, depression, anger, disruptive behaviour and self-concept. While these constructs did not exactly match the dimensions under investigation in the study, it was the most suitable test available. Scoring involved a simple procedure of converting raw scores to t scores. Statistical analysis aided the interpretation of this data: t tests were used to compare pre- and post-test scores and ANOVA statistical procedures were employed to test between two age groups (younger or older than 9.5 years) and two school types (normal or special) in order to identify the potential influence of these factors.

Methodological triangulation was employed in an attempt to improve the validity of research findings. In addition to the quantitative method outlined above, qualitative procedures including focused observations, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews provided diverse angles for interpretation. Video-recordings of each workshop were thoroughly and systematically analyzed in an observational procedure based on repeated assessment. Observations focused on the children's self-esteem and self-confidence, pro-social behaviour, enjoyment, concentration, and evidence of musical capacity. Video-recorded focus group discussions were conducted with the children in small groups in order to explore their own perceptions of the drumming workshops. Finally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with relevant members of staff in order to assess the practicability and value of the project as it was presented within the Village.

Chapter Five

Presentation and discussion of quantitative research findings

1. Introduction

The following is a presentation and exploration of the quantitative data obtained from this research project. As was explained in detail in Chapter Four (Methodology), this information was obtained via pre- and post-testing of a group of children employing the Beck Youth Inventories. First, generalised findings pertaining to each of the five dimensions measured by this assessment tool are provided separately in the following order: self-concept, anxiety, depression, anger and disruptive behaviour. Second, each participant's test results are discussed as they relate to that participant individually. A profile of emotional and social functioning (as defined and operationalised by the Beck Youth Inventories) is thus obtained for each child.

Four tables follow that present the descriptive data gathered from the study. The participants are ordered 1 to 15 according to their ages (beginning with the youngest). Mzi was allocated to the 16th position and thus appears at the bottom of all tables because he received individual drumming sessions (as opposed to group sessions) and not due to his age. He was 9 years old at the time of the study, placing him within the youngest quartile of the participants.

As can be seen from the table below, seven of the participants were female and nine were male. Four of the children attended special schools and. The participant's ages ranged from 7 years and 4 months and 12 years, with the average age of nine years and seven months. Please refer also to Table 1. on page 88 in Chapter Four, which shows the distribution of participants in terms of age group and school type.

Table 2. Overall profile of participants

Participant	Name	Gender	Grade	School type	Age
1	Angela	Female	1	Normal	7yrs 4months
2	Tiny	Male	1	Normal	7yrs 6months
3	Thabo	Male	0	Normal	8yrs 4months
4	Princess	Female	1	Normal	8yrs 7months
5	Kabelo	Male	2	Normal	9yrs 1month
6	Marna	Female	2	Normal	9yrs 4months
7	Jabu	Male	1	Normal	9yrs 4months
8	Sipho	Male	3	Normal	9yrs 8months
9	Wonderful	Male	6	Special	9yrs 11months
10	Dezi	Male	2	Special	10yrs
11	Michaela	Female	3	Normal	10yrs 2months
12	Gift	Female	0	Special	10yrs 8months
13	Precious	Female	6	Special	11yrs 2months
14	Meki	Male	4	Normal	11yrs 10months
15	Lucy	Female	5	Normal	12yrs
16	Mzi	Male	2	Normal	9yrs

Table 3 below presents each of the children's pre-test scores for the Beck Youth Inventory.

Table 3. Beck Youth Inventories pre-test scores

Child	Self-concept	Anxiety	Depression	Anger	Disruptive behaviour
Angela	45	53	40	46	33
Tiny	48	47	53	52	64
Thabo	53	38	45	41	40
Princess	36	54	47	53	52
Kabelo	44	38	57	69	37
Marna	57	57	37	43	49
Jabu	49	62	60	70	76
Sipho	56	42	40	35	38
Wonderful	39	39	68	59	44
Dezi	38	45	46	44	45
Michaela	39	61	42	36	49
Gift	28	57	68	65	87
Precious	28	44	39	41	61
Meki	37	51	49	47	39
Lucy	39	52	55	54	71
Mzi	31	38	72	54	61

Table 4 indicates each child's Beck Youth Inventory post-test scores.

Table 4. Beck Youth Inventories post-test scores

Child	Self-concept	Anxiety	Depression	Anger	Disruptive behaviour
Angela	38	58	56	72	76
Tiny	39	54	54	49	60
Thabo	51	55	49	51	41
Princess	31	62	65	65	86
Kabelo	46	46	40	31	50
Marna	60	71	59	35	44
Jabu	43	65	69	74	89
Sipho	58	34	35	34	37
Wonderful	50	45	44	31	37
Dezi	26	42	41	38	38
Michaela	33	66	60	62	78
Gift	47	62	64	65	76
Precious	38	59	45	32	37
Meki	35	55	59	55	44
Lucy	36	56	52	55	61
Mzi	42	62	70	62	71

The differences between pre- and post-test functioning are presented in the fifth table below. With regard to this table, it will be noticed that there are both positive and negative values constituting the differences in scores. Concerning self-concept, higher scores indicate better functioning in this area while lower scores suggest poorer functioning. Accordingly, a positive difference represents improvement while a negative difference implies deterioration in this dimension (i.e. a decrease in the level of self-concept). The opposite is true when considering the other four dimensions, where higher scores reflect greater dysfunction. With regard to these dimensions, a positive difference suggests deterioration in the area being considered (that is, an increase in the undesirable behaviour, attitude or affective state) while a negative value reflects improvement (a lessening of the problematic characteristic).

Table 5. Beck Youth Inventories differences between pre-test and post-test scores

Child	Self-concept	Anxiety	Depression	Anger	Disruptive behaviour
Angela	-7	5	16	26	43
Tiny	-9	7	1	-3	-4
Thabo	-2	17	4	10	1
Princess	-5	8	18	12	34
Kabelo	2	8	-17	-38	13
Marna	3	14	22	-8	-5
Jabu	-6	3	9	4	13
Sipho	2	-8	-5	-1	-1
Wonderful	11	6	-24	-28	-7
Dezi	-12	-3	-5	-6	-7
Michaela	-6	5	18	26	29
Gift	19	5	-4	0	-11
Precious	10	15	6	-9	-24
Meki	-2	4	10	8	5
Lucy	-3	4	-3	1	-10
Mzi	11	24	-2	8	10

2. General discussion of empirical data

The data for all five dimensions was found to be normally distributed (in the light of the Shapiro-Wilk statistic) as all p values were greater than 0.05; t tests were consequently used to analyze the data obtained. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical procedures were used to test between two age groups (younger than or equal to 9.5 years and older than 9.5 years) and two school types (normal and special schools) in order to identify possible influence of these factors on the five psychological dimensions. Due to the small sample size and a related imbalance of the data, age group and school type had to be modelled separately in order to realise an effective statistical model for discussion. Age group and school type could not be combined into a single factor for the analysis; neither could the interaction between Age group and School type be tested. This was because no child fell within the section of data relating to the younger age group within a special-needs school, while eight (half of the sample) of the younger children attended a regular school. (See Table 1. in Chapter Four, which depicts the distribution of participants in terms of age group and school type.)

2.1 Self-concept

As was the case for all dimensions measured, the test for normality indicated that the data could be considered to have a normal distribution. The p value of the test for normality was 0.3186, which was statistically significant at the 5% level of significance. The t test statistic was 0.17 with a p value of 0.8636. Because a one-sided test was postulated, the latter p value was halved before deciding on statistical significance. This result indicated that the difference between the pre- and post-test scores for self-concept was not statistically significant at the 0.05 level of significance. The intervention had not made a statistically significant positive difference among the current sample of children regarding the dimension of self-concept.

When age group was held constant, a p value of 0.0729 was obtained. When this value is compared to the significance level of 0.05, it could be said that there is a tendency for school type to influence the self-concept of children. On the other hand, age group did not appear to have any statistically significant influence on this area of functioning. Calculations produced a p value of 0.3694, which is well above the 5% cut off level.

2.2 Anxiety

The test for normality showed that the scores for this dimension were normally distributed. The p value for the test of normality was 0.3931, indicating normal distribution of the data. The t test statistic was 3.73 with a p value of 0.0020. The difference between the pre- and post-test measurements was thus substantial and statistically significant at the 0.05 level of significance. The large majority of participants (all but two) evidenced an increase in anxiety over the period between the pre-test and the post-test. Caution must be exercised in the interpretation of these results. When one considers the immense amount of trauma and chronic stress experienced by these children, one may wonder as to the scale of intervention necessary for the remediation of the resulting anxiety. More will be said in this regard in the “subconclusions” section below.

Statistical testing revealed no statistically significant relationship between school type and anxiety. When this factor was investigated, a p value of 0.6924 was obtained. Clearly, there is no statistical significance in this result. On the contrary, age group did seem to play a role in the children’s level of anxiety. Statistical testing for the effect of age group and level of anxiety produced a p value of 0.0540, showing a fair degree of statistical significance at the 0.05 level.

2.3 Depression

A p value of 0.6365 for the normality test of this data indicated that the assumption of the data having a normal distribution was satisfied. The t test statistic was 0.86 with a p value of 0.6365, indicating that the difference between pre- and post-test results for depression was not statistically significant at the 5% cut off level. The intervention had not resulted in a statistically significant difference in the pre- and post-test scores.

Testing the effect of school type suggested that there may be a tendency for this factor to influence levels of depression among the children. Statistical testing resulted in a p value of 0.0852, implying a moderate degree of statistical significance, being marginally higher than the 0.05 significance level. No such statistical significance was found when age group was held constant. A p value of 0.2703 suggests no significant statistical relationship exists between age group and levels of depression.

2.4 Anger

The p value for the test of normality of the data was 0.2939, indicating that the assumption that the data was normally distributed held for this set of results. The t score was 0.03 and had a p value of 0.9764. The results were not statistically significant, indicating that the null hypothesis (stating that the intervention had made no difference in this area of functioning) could not be confidently rejected.

There appeared to be no statistically significant relationship among the children between the factor of school type and levels of anger. The t test procedure employed for testing for school type and levels of anger produced a p value of 0.1360, indicating no statistical significance at the 5% level. Similarly, testing for the effect of age group revealed no statistically significant relationship between this factor and the children's levels of anger. Appropriate statistical testing provided a p value of 0.7754.

2.5 Disruptive behaviour

The test for normality of the data showed a p value of 0.2853, signifying that the data was normally distributed. The t score was 1.1 and had a p value of 0.2897, indicating no statistical significance between the outcomes. The intervention had resulted in no significant improvement within the dimension of disruptive behaviour.

When school type was tested for, it became evident that there was a strong statistically significant relationship between this factor and disruptive behaviour. ANOVA procedures provided a p value of 0.0214, which indicates high statistical significance at the 0.05 level. When age group was held constant, there appeared to be a tendency for the children's age to impact upon levels of disruptive behaviour. Relevant calculations resulted in a p value of 0.0663, indicating a possible small level of statistical significance at the 5% cut off.

3. Discussion of empirical data in relation to individual participants

Next, the empirical data gathered via the Beck Youth Inventories is discussed in relation to each individual participant. The pre-test and post-test scores for each child are indicated within the same table in order to facilitate comparison. However, initial tables indicating the clinical ranges of the t scores for each of the five dimensions are provided first.

Table 6. Clinical ranges of t scores for the dimensions of anxiety, depression, anger and disruptive behaviour

t Score	Level of Severity
t = 70+	Extremely elevated
t = 60-69	Moderately elevated
t = 55-59	Mildly elevated
t = <55	Average

The ranges of t scores as outlined above are defined by units of .5 standard deviations. Within the child standardisation sample used to obtain the above information (Beck, Beck, Jolly & Steer, 2005:18-19), fewer than 25 percent of the children obtained t scores above 55. Fewer than 15 percent of the children in this sample obtained t scores higher than 60, and only 5 percent of the sample obtained t scores higher than 70.

Table 7. Clinical ranges of t scores for the dimension of self-concept

t Score	Level of Severity
t = >55	Above average
t = 45-55	Average
t = 40-44	Lower than average
t = <40	Much lower than average

For the self-concept dimension, the t scores are inversely related to the level of severity as lower self-concept indicates poorer emotional and social adaptation. The ranges of t scores as indicated above are defined by units of .5 standard deviations below the mean of 50. T scores higher than 55 were obtained by 34 to 40 percent of participants within the child standardisation sample. T scores lower than 45 were obtained by 24 to 26 percent of the sample and t scores below 40 were obtained by 15 to 17 percent of the sample.

Table 8. Participant 1 (Angela)

Dimension	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores
Self-concept	45: Average	38: Much lower than average
Anxiety	53: Average	58: Mildly elevated
Depression	40: Average	56: Mildly elevated
Anger	46: Average	72: Extremely elevated
Disruptive behaviour	38: Average	76: Extremely elevated

Angela was a 7 year old black African girl. She attended a regular school and was in the first grade. From the above empirical data, it is evident that her emotional and social functioning, as defined and operationalised by the Beck Youth Inventories, deteriorated over the course of the four months during which the project was conducted. Her self-concept score was substantially lower in view of the post-test scores, and anger and disruptive behaviour scores were dramatically higher. Anxiety and, more so depression, were both significantly elevated.

Table 9. Participant 2 (Tiny)

Dimension	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores
Self-concept	48: Average	39: Much lower than average
Anxiety	47: Average	54: Average
Depression	53: Average	54: Average
Anger	52: Average	49: Average
Disruptive behaviour	64: Moderately elevated	60: Moderately elevated

Tiny was a black African boy of 7 years of age. He was in the first grade of a regular school. His levels of anxiety, depression and anger remained within the average range throughout the course of the project, indicating healthy adjustment and stability in these areas. His scores for disruptive behaviour remained within the moderately elevated range, albeit with a small improvement evident at the post-test. On the other hand, his self-concept scores evidenced substantial deterioration, falling just within the much-lower-than-average range at the post-test.

Table 10. Participant 3 (Thabo)

Dimension	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores
Self-concept	53: Average	51: Average
Anxiety	38: Average	55: Mildly elevated
Depression	45: Average	49: Average
Anger	41: Average	51: Average
Disruptive behaviour	40: Average	41: Average

Thabo was an 8 year old black African boy who attended what is known as the grade R (or reception) class of a regular school. His pre- and post-test scores indicate healthy functioning and relative stability with regard to the psychological dimensions of self-concept, depression, anger and disruptive behaviour. It appears that his levels of anger did increase somewhat over the course of the project, but they remained within the average range of functioning. Only his anxiety levels appear to have increased considerably; they, however, still fall just within the mildly-elevated range.

Table 11. Participant 4 (Princess)

Dimension	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores
Self-concept	36: Much lower than average	31: Much lower than average
Anxiety	54: Average	62: Moderately elevated
Depression	47: Average	65: Moderately elevated
Anger	53: Average	65: Moderately elevated
Disruptive behaviour	52: Average	86: extremely elevated

Princess, a black African girl, was 8 years old. She attended a regular school and was in the first grade. It becomes evident, from the quantitative data outlined above, that her emotional and social functioning (as defined and operationalised by the Beck Youth Inventories) deteriorated over the four-month period of the research project. Her self-concept, which was extremely poor at the outset, evidences further deterioration by the time of the post-test. Her levels of anxiety, depression and anger all increased substantially over the four-month period, while her level of disruptive behaviour (which was average upon completion of the pre-test) evidences extreme elevation by the time of the post-test.

Table 12. Participant 5 (Kabelo)

Dimension	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores
Self-concept	44: Lower than average	46: Average
Anxiety	38: Average	46: Average
Depression	57: Mildly elevated	40: Average
Anger	69: Moderately elevated	31: Average
Disruptive behaviour	37: Average	50: Average

Kabelo, a 9 year old black African boy, was attending a second grade class of a regular school. His self-concept scores indicate very slight improvement, which takes him into the average range of this dimension. His level of depression is significantly reduced, and post-test scores indicate functioning well within the average range. Kabelo’s level of anger is even more noticeably reduced, going from the upper end of the moderately-elevated range to well below the average range of functioning. With regard to the dimensions of anxiety and disruptive behaviour, moderate deterioration is evident, but his levels of functioning remain within the average range.

Table 13. Participant 6 (Marna)

Dimension	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores
Self-concept	57: Above average	60: Above average
Anxiety	57: Mildly elevated	71: extremely elevated
Depression	37: Average	59: Mildly elevated
Anger	43: Average	35: Average
Disruptive behaviour	49: Average	44: Average

Marna was a white Afrikaans-speaking girl of 9 years of age. She attended a regular school and was in the second grade. Her self-concept fell within the above-average range at the outset of the study, and remained there until completion of the project, with a slight improvement evident in the post-test. Her levels of depression appear to increase significantly during the course of the project, progressing from average at the pre-test to mildly elevated at the post-test. Her scores for anxiety evidence even greater deterioration. She appears to have moved from the mildly-elevated range to the extremely-elevated range during the four months of the research project. Finally, significant improvement is evident regarding the dimensions of anger and disruptive behaviour, where the scores remain within the average range of functioning.

Table 14. Participant 7 (Jabu)

Dimension	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores
Self-concept	49: Average	43: Lower than average
Anxiety	62: Moderately elevated	65: Moderately elevated
Depression	60: Moderately elevated	69: Moderately elevated
Anger	70: Extremely elevated	74: Extremely elevated
Disruptive behaviour	76: Extremely elevated	89: Extremely elevated

Jabu was a 9 year old black African boy who was in the first grade of a regular school. Pre-test results indicate significant emotional and social maladjustment at the outset of the study. The only exception was his level of self-concept, which fell within the average range of functioning. This, however,

decreased significantly to the lower-than-average range by the time of the post-test. Similar deterioration is evident with regard to all other dimensions. While his levels of anxiety and depression remained within the moderately-elevated range of functioning (according to pre- and post-test scores), significant increases are evident. His level of anger remained within the extremely-elevated range, with a small but significant increase evident at the post-test. His level of disruptive behaviour shows the most extreme deterioration. His pre-test and post-test scores both fall within the extremely-elevated range of functioning, but increase in the t scores suggests extensive impairment in this area.

Table 15. Participant 8 (Sipho)

Dimension	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores
Self-concept	56: Above average	58: Above average
Anxiety	42: Average	34: Average
Depression	40: Average	35: Average
Anger	35: Average	34: Average
Disruptive behaviour	38: Average	37: Average

Sipho was a black African boy. He was 9 years old and attended a third grade class at a regular school. His pre-test scores indicate healthy emotional and social adaptation at the outset of the study, and his post-test scores evidence slight but significant improvement across all five psychological dimensions. His self-concept was initially just above average, and a very slight improvement is evidenced by the post-test score. His levels of anxiety, depression, anger and disruptive behaviour were all well within the average range according to his pre-test scores. Very slight improvements occurred within the anger and disruptive behaviour dimensions, and more pronounced improvement occurred regarding the areas of depression and, even more so, anxiety.

Table 16. Participant 9 (Wonderful)

Dimension	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores
Self-concept	39: Much lower than average	50: Average
Anxiety	39: Average	45: Average
Depression	68: Moderately elevated	44: Average
Anger	59: Mildly elevated	31: Average
Disruptive behaviour	44: Average	37: Average

Wonderful was a black African boy, 9 years of age. He attended a special-needs school, and was allocated to level six within the school's adapted grading system. Pre-test scores indicate poor to average functioning on the various dimensions. Post-test scores (all falling within the average range of functioning) point to significant improvement in all areas of functioning with the exception of anxiety,

which appears to have increased somewhat, although still remaining within the average range. His scores regarding the dimensions of self-concept, depression and anger suggest great improvement in these areas. His scores for disruptive behaviour, while remaining within the average range, indicate a fair degree of improvement over the course of the project.

Table 17. Participant 10 (Dezi)

Dimension	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores
Self-concept	38: Much lower than average	26: Much lower than average
Anxiety	45: Average	42: Average
Depression	46: Average	41: Average
Anger	44: Average	38: Average
Disruptive behaviour	45: Average	38: Average

Dezi was a 9 year old black African boy. He attended a special school and was allocated to the second level of its adapted grading system. His pre-test scores indicate healthy functioning regarding the dimensions of anxiety, depression, anger and disruptive behaviour, all of which fall well within the average range. Post-test scores suggest significant improvement within each of these areas, most notably in the dimensions of disruptive behaviour and anger. His self-concept, however, was markedly poor from the start of the project. Post-test scores for this dimension evidence further, substantial deterioration, placing him even lower within the much-lower-than-average range of functioning.

Table 18. Participant 11 (Michaela)

Dimension	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores
Self-concept	39: Much lower than average	33: Much lower than average
Anxiety	61: Moderately elevated	66: Moderately elevated
Depression	42: Average	60: Moderately elevated
Anger	36: Average	62: Moderately elevated
Disruptive behaviour	49: Average	78: Extremely elevated

Michaela was a white Afrikaans-speaking girl of ten years of age. She attended a regular school and was in the third grade. While her initial levels of depression, anger and disruptive behaviour fell into the normal range according to the pre-test scores, she appears to have experienced considerable anxiety and poor self-esteem from the start of the study. Post-test scores suggest deterioration with regard to all five dimensions of emotional and social well-being (as defined and operationalised by the Beck Youth Inventories). It is evident that her self-esteem (which was very poor to begin with) dropped significantly. Her level of anxiety (which was considerably elevated from the outset), increased

significantly, although remaining within the moderately-elevated range. Her levels of depression and anger appear to have increased substantially, with the post-test scores reaching the moderately-elevated range. Most alarming, however, is the dramatic increase in disruptive behaviour. This area was initially within the average range of functioning, but climbed to the extremely-elevated range over the four months during which the project was conducted.

Table 19. Participant 12 (Gift)

Dimension	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores
Self-concept	28: Much lower than average	47: Average
Anxiety	57: Mildly elevated	62: Moderately elevated
Depression	68: Moderately elevated	64: Moderately elevated
Anger	65: Moderately elevated	65: Moderately elevated
Disruptive behaviour	87: Extremely elevated	76: Extremely elevated

Gift was a ten year old black African girl. She was in grade R at a special-needs school. Her pre-test scores suggest poor overall emotional and social functioning at the outset of the project. Pre-test scores point to an exceptionally underdeveloped self-concept, extremely elevated levels of disruptive behaviour, substantial amounts of depression and anger and a mildly elevated degree of anxiety. Post-test scores reveal a significant improvement in self-concept, which falls within the average range upon conclusion of the study. Anxiety, however, increases significantly while depression and anger remain relatively stable. Her closing level of disruptive behaviour shows significant improvement but remains within the extremely-elevated range of functioning.

Table 20. Participant 13 (Precious)

Dimension	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores
Self-concept	28: Much lower than average	38: Much lower than average
Anxiety	44: Average	59: Mildly elevated
Depression	39: Average	45: Average
Anger	41: Average	32: Average
Disruptive behaviour	61: Moderately elevated	37: Average

Precious was an 11 year old black African girl. She attended a special-needs school and was in the sixth level of its adapted educational programme. Pre-test scores indicate that her self-concept was extremely poor. Moderate levels of disruptive behaviour are also apparent. On the other hand, initial scores reveal that she was well within the average range regarding the dimensions of anxiety, depression and anger. Post-test results point to an improvement in self-concept, although this score

remains in the much-lower-than-average range. A substantial decrease in disruptive behaviour is evident, situating her functioning in this area well within the average range. With regard to the other three dimensions: a significant increase in anxiety is evident; anger, while remaining in the average range, is significantly lower and depression has increased slightly but significantly.

Table 21. Participant 14 (Meki)

Dimension	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores
Self-concept	37: Much lower than average	35: Much lower than average
Anxiety	51: Average	55: Mildly elevated
Depression	49: Average	59: Mildly elevated
Anger	47: Average	55: Mildly elevated
Disruptive behaviour	39: Average	44: Average

Meki was a black African boy of 11 years of age. He attended a fourth grade class at a regular school. From the pre-test scores outlined above, it is apparent that his emotional and social functioning in most of the relevant domains was average at the start of the project. It does appear, however, that his self-concept was exceptionally low. Significant increases in anxiety, anger and especially depression seem to have appeared over the four-month duration of the project. A slight increase in disruptive behaviour is also evident, but the score remains well within the average range. Finally, his self-concept remained in the much-lower-than-average range, dropping by a further two points.

Table 22. Participant 15 (Lucy)

Dimension	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores
Self-concept	39: Much lower than average	36: Much lower than average
Anxiety	52: Average	56: Mildly elevated
Depression	55: Mildly elevated	52: Average
Anger	54: Average	55: Mildly elevated
Disruptive behaviour	71: Extremely elevated	61: Moderately elevated

Lucy, a 12 year old fifth grader at a regular school, was a black African girl. While her pre-test scores suggest that her levels of anxiety and anger fell within the average range and her level of depression was only mildly elevated, possible problem areas include her self-concept and disruptive behaviour. Her score for self-concept falls just within the exceptionally low range, and her level of disruptive behaviour appears to have been remarkably high (falling within the extremely-elevated range of functioning). Post-test scores suggest a slight lessening of depression, placing this dimension within the average range. A significant lessening of disruptive behaviour is also apparent, with the score dropping

by ten points and falling subsequently within the moderately-elevated range. Her self-concept score, however, drops slightly and remains within the much-lower-than-average range. A slight but significant increase in anxiety places this area of functioning within the mildly-elevated range. A very slight increase of one point places her post-test score for anger in the mildly-elevated range.

Table 23. Participant 16 (Mzi)

Dimension	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores
Self-concept	31: Much lower than average	42: Lower than average
Anxiety	38: Average	62: Moderately elevated
Depression	72: Extremely elevated	70: Extremely elevated
Anger	54: Average	62: Moderately elevated
Disruptive behaviour	61: Moderately elevated	71: Extremely elevated

Mzi was a 9 year old black African boy. He was a second grader at a regular school. His pre- and post-test scores reveal a complex profile of emotional and social dysfunction. At the outset of the study, his self-concept score fell almost ten points below the cut-off for the much-lower-than-average range of functioning. Not surprisingly, his depression was extremely elevated. His pre-test results also suggest a substantial degree of disruptive behaviour. Post-test scores suggest that there was one area of improvement but more areas of deterioration. His self-concept score increased considerably, his final score still only falling within the lower-than-average range. His level of anxiety increased dramatically, going from well below the average range to the moderately-elevated range. A substantial increase in the dimension of anger is also evident, with the final score similarly reaching the moderately-elevated range. The post-test score for disruptive behaviour suggests significant deterioration, settling at the extremely-elevated range of functioning. Lastly and significantly, his level of depression remained stable at the extremely-elevated range, suggesting long-term difficulties in this area.

4. Discussion of findings

The following pointers can be drawn from the data gathered. With regard to self-concept, the intervention appears not to have made a statistically significant impact upon this sample of children. However, there is evidence that school type possesses a tendency to influence this psychological construct, although the direction of this influence cannot be inferred.

Levels of anxiety increased significantly over the four month period of the study. However, the reasons for this increase deserve considerable exploration. One possible explanation is offered at the end of this section. It is imperative to note that causality cannot be inferred. In the same way that a positive result could not have been simply and wholly attributed to the drumming intervention, so can a negative result not be seen as in any way “causing” that result. There are multiple dynamic factors in constant and complex interaction that collectively “produce” any single outcome, making cause-and-effect inference impossible. Also with regard to anxiety, calculations indicate that age group has a fairly significant impact on the children’s level of anxiety, although it is not possible to speculate as to the kind of influence exerted.

Levels of depression were not significantly ameliorated by the project’s intervention. Statistical testing indicates that school type may be related to the prevalence of depression, but it does not permit inference regarding which school type is related to a positive or negative outcome (i.e. the direction of the influence). Similarly, the intervention appeared to have had no significant impact on the prevalence of anger amongst the children. Furthermore, this construct appears to be unrelated to either school type or age group.

Finally, data regarding disruptive behaviour indicates no significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores. However, there appears to be a strong interaction between the children’s school type and disruptive behaviour and a mild interaction between their age group and the same construct. It is again, however, not possible to determine the quality of this interaction.

Certain individuals seem to have fared better during the course of the project than did others. It may be speculated that these individuals responded more positively to the intervention than did the others, although this finding is by no means conclusive. The post-test scores of these children evidence improvement across various areas of psychological functioning. Kabelo (participant 5) evidenced a slight gain in self-concept and more considerable gains in the areas of depression and anger, which outweighed his unfortunate increases in anxiety and disruptive behaviour. Siphon (participant 8) evidenced modest but significant improvement across all dimensions, most noticeably in the areas of anxiety and depression. Perhaps the most impressive gains were made by Wonderful (participant 9), whose self-concept was significantly enhanced and whose levels of depression and anger were dramatically reduced. Gift (participant 12) showed slight improvement in level of depression and substantial improvement in the areas of self-concept and disruptive behaviour. Finally, Precious

improved significantly in the areas of self-concept and anger, and even more substantially in the domain of disruptive behaviour. Unfortunately, however, her level of anxiety appears to have increased. It is important to reiterate that no result, whether positive or negative, can be considered as directly resulting from the intervention. Any conclusions are strictly speculative; cause and effect cannot be inferred in the context of human behaviour and functioning where a host of variables cannot be eliminated or controlled.

One final point requires consideration. It was noted above that levels of anxiety increased significantly during the course of the project. While caution should be exercised when making inferences of causality, one can hypothesise that the drumming intervention itself may have had an augmentative effect on the children's levels of anxiety. It was proposed that African drumming could promote the children's awareness of and contact with their feelings. As such, they may have experienced their internal and external environments with new awareness and intensity. It is possible that negative feelings, once effectively suppressed and denied, were brought closer to the surface as the children came into contact with their bodily and sensory modalities, their emotions, thoughts and needs. Inner, probably subconscious, frustration at not being able to engage in healthy organismic self-regulation in order to have these needs met may conceivably have increased their anxiety.

This contention is supported by the Gestalt conceptualisation of the structure of the personality (please refer to Chapter Two section 3.2.6 Structure of the personality). According to this theory, many children, and especially those who have experienced some form of trauma (and thus tend to inhibit the bodily, sensory and intellectual modalities) (Oaklander, 2006:51) operate in the synthetic, or false, layer of the personality (Blom, 2006:42-43). Because they suppress their senses and feelings they are not in full contact with the self and the environment. Drumming, as discussed, enhances sensory and bodily contact, which is linked to increased emotional awareness. The sessions of African drumming may have helped the children move to the second layer of the personality, representing a new level of awareness and contact. This layer is referred to as the phobic layer, the transition to which is typically accompanied by increased anxiety (Blom, 2006:43).

The first step toward integration and well-being is the promotion of the child's capacity for awareness and effective contact, which appears to have been facilitated by the drumming intervention. Where, for some children, this layer of therapeutic intervention may be adequate, the degree of trauma most likely experienced by the children in this study appears to require deeper levels of intervention. It could be

speculated that four months of African drumming was simply not sufficient to counteract the tremendous amount of stress which the children were (in all likelihood) continuing to experience, both as a function of institutional life and of the ongoing trauma of familial dysfunction (as well as possible scholastic, peer and personal difficulties). This may help to explain the lack of significant results obtained in the quantitative component of this project.

5. Conclusion

The African drumming intervention did not appear to have had a statistically significant influence upon the participants in terms of self-concept, depression, anger or disruptive behaviour. Levels of anxiety, however, increased significantly over the four-month duration of the project. A possible explanation for this increase may have involved the children's increased awareness as a result of the drumming sessions. Should the drumming have helped the participants make the transition from the synthetic to the phobic layer of the personality, such an increase in anxiety would have been anticipated. Furthermore, the length and intensity of the intervention may not have been adequate to make a significant impact upon the participants, faced as they were with the instability and uncertainty of institutional life and extreme familial dysfunction/trauma.

ANOVA procedures suggest that school type may have influenced the children's levels of self-concept, depression and disruptive behaviour; similarly, age seemed to interact with both anxiety and disruptive behaviour to produce the observed outcomes. Unfortunately, the small sample size did not allow for inferences to be made with regard to the direction of such influence. Finally, the data collected and the findings presented need to be interpreted with caution. All conclusions are speculative as causality cannot be inferred. Numerous and uncontrollable variables make the establishment of cause and effect relationships impossible. The lives of children in placement are particularly characterised by multiple stressors, disorder and uncertainty, further complicating the interpretation of findings. As suggested above, weekly sessions of African drumming over the course of four months may not have been enough to counteract the many negative influences dominating the lives of these children.

Chapter Six

Presentation and discussion of qualitative research findings

1. Introduction

This chapter consists of a detailed investigation into the qualitative information gathered via two primary methods. First, each workshop was video-recorded and focused observations were performed on the footage thus obtained. Second, semi-structured interviews were conducted with relevant staff members who aided the project's organisation and presentation and focus groups were held with the participants. (For more information relating to data collection and other methodological procedures, please refer to Chapter 4, Methodology.) When considered against the quantitative findings presented in the previous chapter, it is clear that the qualitative findings shed a different light concerning the outcome of the project and provide an alternative angle from which to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention. Before continuing, however, it is necessary to consider the participants' rates of attendance.

2. Rates of attendance

A register of attendance was taken prior to each workshop. Each child's name was called out and checked off on a list after the welcoming activity which opened each session. In this regard, it is important to note that the children were aware, from the outset of the project, that their attendance was appreciated but not compulsory. They were informed that they would face no adverse consequences should they choose not to attend a session(s), and that they were free to discontinue their participation in any session, as well as in the overall project, at any time.

Overall, the participants attended with impressive regularity. Furthermore, once present, they would almost always remain for the entire duration of the workshop. On the relatively few occasions that children were absent, it was due to circumstances beyond their control (a visit by a mentor, or an unexpected weekend spent with a relative or family member). In the Methodology chapter, it was explained that the children selected for the project were amongst those who did not leave the Village for out-weekends. However, it did happen on a rare occasion that a child, who, in the past never, or

very seldom, left the Village, would unexpectedly be taken out for a day or weekend by a family member or relative. This was unforeseeable and beyond the researcher’s control.) Not once was a child absent due to illness. On one occasion, Lucy did not attend a workshop due to a severe bout of anger and depression she was experiencing that morning. She was in group three, and their workshops were presented first. Later that morning, she asked whether she could join one of the younger groups, just for that day, because she had missed her session. She was granted her request, and she participated very contentedly with group two on that day.

The children’s high rate of attendance was apparently due in large part to their internal motivation to be involved in the project. The members of staff reported exceptional willingness from the children to attend the workshops (in contrast to other extra-mural activities which were organised for the residents) (please see section 2.1 Staff interviews, below). The children themselves evidenced consistently high enthusiasm and self-motivation for the sessions of African drumming. The workshops’ positive influence on the children seemed to be cumulative in nature, and consistency in attendance may be important regarding the effectiveness of such a project. The cumulative effect of the workshops is indicated in the individual case studies below. When considering the progress of each child, it becomes apparent that the benefits of each session built on progress made in the previous sessions. Time is essential to making inroads into children’s dysfunctional feelings and behaviour.

Table 24. Participants’ rates of attendance

Participants	Number of sessions missed (out of 16)	Workshops missed - Workshop number:
Angela	2	9 and 12
Tiny	0	
Thabo	0	
Princess	1	14
Kabelo	0	
Marna	3	9, 11 and 12
Jabu	0	
Sipho	3	2, 3 and 8
Wonderful	0	
Dezi	0	
Michaela	3	6, 9 and 10
Gift	3	4, 5 and 8
Precious	0	
Meki	2	12 and 13
Lucy	0	
Mzi	1	1

3. Focused observations

The footage of each drumming session was regularly, carefully and systematically viewed and analyzed. These focused observations assisted the researcher in monitoring the progress of each child throughout the course of the project. The first observation took place six weeks into the project, the second after the next five weeks and the third and final observation occurred after a further six weeks. The focused observations centered on five major domains of functioning: self-esteem and self-confidence, pro-social behaviour, enjoyment, concentration and musical capacity (the significance of these five domains was discussed in Chapter Four, section 3.3.2.1 Focused observations). The findings from the observations will now be discussed as they relate to each participant individually.

Within each group, participants are presented in the order of youngest to oldest. On the whole, group one consisted of the younger children and group three of the older children, while group two was structured primarily according to learning ability and not age (most of these children presented with learning difficulties). Mzi is discussed last, purely because he was assigned to individual rather than group sessions. These groupings reflect the final allocations of each child into one of the three groups, which took place after the second workshop. Please see Chapter Four, Methodology, section 3.2.1 [Sampling] for a detailed discussion of the division of the participants into initially two and then three drumming groups.

3.1 Group one

The following five children participated in the same drumming circle, to be referred to as group one. The children in this group were the youngest participants in the study. Their ages ranged from 7 to 9 years. Angela and Tiny (participants one and two) were both only 7 years of age. Thabo, participant three, who was 8 years old, had many mannerisms and capacities of a younger child. He was still in the reception grade (grade R) of a regular school. In short, the participants in this group were still in the relatively early stages of middle childhood and possessed developmental abilities differing considerably from the children in the other two groups. For the Christmas concert, Angela, Princess and Tiny prepared and performed the primary drumming piece and were thus involved in both the all-drum and the mixed-percussion items. Thabo and Kabelo acted as the time-keepers for the all-percussion piece; their role was to maintain a steady beat on the claves.

3.1.1 Angela

Angela was the youngest participant in the study. She was a bright, highly responsive child and an enthusiastic member of her drumming group. She treated two other research participants (Mzi, who was not in her drumming group, and Princess, who was a fellow drummer) as “brother” and “sister.” Later, the researcher discovered that the reason why these three children felt this special bond was because they had been transferred from the same children’s home prior to their (simultaneous) placement at the Epworth Children’s Village. They thus perceived each other as “family,” with Angela being the youngest “sister.” These dynamics became evident in the drumming circle, where Angela and Princess participated together. They stayed close to one another, perhaps also because they were also the only two girls in the group. Princess’s behaviour toward Angela was encouraging, helpful and protective. Angela, while accepting of this treatment, behaved with a great degree of agency and independence within the group. She was a friendly child and very eager to please (being compliant and cooperative towards both the facilitator and other participants).

Over the first six workshops, Angela showed rapid improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem within the drumming circles. She quickly settled into her group and evidenced a good capacity for taking risks (within the musical/social context), showing initiative and being assertive in a friendly manner. Over the next five workshops she became increasingly sure of herself, but was always quietly confident rather than overtly self-assured. By the third and final observation (upon completion of the project), she was taking risks with much enjoyment and playfulness. She showed a great sense of personal agency, willingness to take the initiative and a well-developed capacity for self-assertion.

After the first six workshops, it was clear that Angela was a consistently friendly child with well-developed social skills. Not only was she highly cooperative, adept at taking turns and willing to fulfil a following role, but she was also keen in her efforts to lead the group in various activities. Her engagement with the group was always enthusiastic and her behaviour self-controlled, which made her participation pleasurable to both the other members and the facilitator. Over the next five sessions, further overall progress was noticed. She was increasingly eager to fulfil a leading role, which she did with a determined, quiet confidence. She was also a great team-player, quick to comprehend the joint objective of each activity and to work towards it wholeheartedly. By the final observation, these qualities were highly visible. Angela was exceptionally considerate towards her fellow drummers. Her social flexibility made her an exceptionally effective member of the group.

It was clear from the start of the project that Angela enjoyed the drumming workshops. She always approached the drumming room with excitement and appeared comfortable and happy during the sessions. By the second observation, she clearly looked forward to the sessions each week and was openly expressing her enjoyment of them. Her participation was becoming increasingly enthusiastic and motivated. Angela's enjoyment of the workshops continued to increase throughout the course of the study. During the final stages of the project, she was remarkably relaxed during the sessions, evidenced by her spontaneously moving, dancing and singing along to the music that was being made. While she had always very much enjoyed the drumming experience, her burgeoning repertoire of musical skills added greatly to her enjoyment. She reveled in her new-found competencies and her smiles, laughter and playful musical behaviour evidenced her delight.

By the first observation, there was clear evidence of Angela's good capacity for concentration. She was able to remain focused throughout the duration of a workshop, attending carefully to the activity at hand. She had no difficulty whatsoever with impulse-control. She was also increasingly able to resist being distracted by intruding influences (such as the boys' occasionally disruptive behaviour). Rhythmic patterns were easily learned and recalled, an ability related in part to her well-developed concentration. She could also pay sustained attention to the musical aspects of any particular activity. As time went on, she became increasingly aware of the musical elements of the various exercises. This was evidenced by her ability to listen to and accurately match the music made by the rest of the group, or boldly to explore the different elements in her own improvisational playing. By the second observation, overall improvement was evident in all of the above areas, and she was exceptionally capable of learning more complex rhythmic and melodic motives. The final observation suggested that Angela was not only aware, but increasingly appreciative of, the musical aspects of the various activities and games. She had an excellent concentration span and a matching ability to remember musical information. She determinedly focused her attention on a relevant activity and was very seldom distracted.

Angela evidenced her musical capacity from the start of the project. The first observation indicated a sure sense of rhythm and metre and a strong sense of pulse. Her ability to improvise creatively was fairly good, but improvement was to be made over the following weeks as she honed her skills and gained confidence in using them. By the second observation, her sense of rhythm, metre and pulse were excellent. She was an exceptionally good listener, and increasingly able to integrate what she heard into her own playing (variations of tempo, dynamics, tone colour, etc.). Her ability to improvise musically

was thus enhanced. Furthermore, her sense of empathy allowed her to match her playing to the musical expression of the other children. The final observation pointed to exceptional development in each of the above areas. Angela displayed particularly notable improvement with regard to her ability to improvise. She was increasingly creative and playful in her efforts, and her musical expression had, in general, become more flexible.

3.1.2 Tiny

The second youngest participant in the study was Tiny. His diminutive size made him appear even younger than he actually was. He was the biological brother of Siphon, who was in the drumming group consisting of older children (group three). Tiny appeared to be emotionally fragile. He could be very cheerful one moment, angry and frustrated the next and then extremely tearful thereafter. His mood states would often change rapidly and without warning. He had a low tolerance for frustration, whether it concerned his interaction with others or the learning of new competencies. He appeared to have very little capacity for verbal self-expression, or indeed for any other form of expression, except for becoming withdrawn and dysphoric. In the drum circle he was frequently a keen participant, although this could seldom be sustained throughout an entire session. The drum circle activities could at times prove somewhat challenging for Tiny, leading to a degree of frustration when he did not grasp a new skill immediately. The facilitator was careful always to sufficiently support Tiny in his efforts, and as a result, his frustration was kept to a minimum. It is important to note, however, that these same activities, once mastered, afforded Tiny a sense of mastery that resulted in absolute delight. He was well liked by the other children, who, while not able to understand his erratic emotions, would often try to comfort him when he was in despair.

Tiny lacked confidence when he initially entered the project. He was clearly unsure of himself and looked to what the others were doing for guidance and reassurance. This began to change slowly but steadily over the first few workshops. He seemed to enjoy the supportive environment that allowed him to participate in whichever way he was most comfortable and in which all of his efforts were accepted and appreciated. By the first observation, he was less inhibited and more willing to experiment within the musical/social environment. He was still, however, unable to be appropriately assertive with the other children, a weakness which interfered with successful peer interaction and emotional regulation. Tiny evidenced unprecedented progress over the next five weeks. He became far more confident and able to take initiative, try out new kinds of musical and social behaviour and generally act with more independence. He was also interacting more effectively with the other children. By the final

observation, Tiny appeared to resort to some of his previous shy habits. This was arguably because of the added emphasis of preparing a piece for the Christmas concert, the prospect of which he may have found exciting but also daunting.

By the first observation it was clear that Tiny evidenced a good degree of pro-social behaviour. He was usually friendly with the other children, cooperative and compliant regarding the joint goals of the group and willing to share and take turns. He was sometimes prone, however, to becoming distracted. Thus, while he would willingly assume a following role, he would occasionally appear to become absent minded, as if in a “world of his own.” Although shy, he was capable of leading the group in a simple activity, which was an exercise more likely to hold his attention. The next five weeks saw improvement in all of the above areas. He was able to follow the rest of the group in an activity far more attentively and his engagement with the rest of the group became livelier and bolder.

Tiny always appeared to look forward to the workshops, although his enjoyment during the first few weeks was dampened somewhat by shyness and occasional dysphoria. As these two difficulties became less prominent, he began to derive far more pleasure from the sessions. By the second observation, he was noticeably more relaxed and frequently showed his pleasure with laughter and smiles. He continued to show modest improvement throughout the course of the project, although he was still apt to become tired and tearful at times. On the whole, he seemed mostly happy and contented during the sessions, sensitive to his social environment and keen to engage and share his joy with his peers.

Tiny’s tendency to become preoccupied and lost in his own thoughts took a toll on his efforts to focus. It seemed that dealing with his social environment was challenging enough on its own, and it was unclear to what extent he was attending to the musical aspects of the activities. Remarkably, he had little trouble memorising various rhythmic patterns. By the second observation, Tiny appeared to feel more settled with the group and seemed to find it easier to pay attention; impulse-control was similarly enhanced. His behaviour was increasingly marked by enthusiasm and focus, and he would often become intensely engaged with what he was doing. He was also gaining in musical awareness and appreciation, as though he had more psychological energy to spare for the actual activities (over and above functioning within the group setting). The third observation revealed a child with a remarkable ability to concentrate, to stay focused and on-task, to memorise rhythmic patterns and sequences and to avoid being distracted, all notwithstanding of his occasional moments of despondence.

Tiny possessed a sure sense of rhythm, metre and pulse from the start of the project. These natural abilities continued to develop and by the end of the project he demonstrated remarkable skill in these areas. As mentioned above, his musical memory was more than adequate to start with and it continued to improve steadily throughout the course of the project. His initial attempts at improvisation alternated between being somewhat rigid to fairly chaotic. As he began to develop a functional awareness of the various musical elements, he was increasingly able to incorporate them into his own playing. By the end of the project he was able to improvise a good deal more creatively, although he continued to need some prompting. He tried hard to join in with and contribute to the endeavours of the group, and one of his musical strengths lay in his sensitivity and empathy towards the others.

3.1.3 Thabo

Thabo was 8 years old, but, like Tiny, he was remarkably small for his age. He usually appeared very cheerful during the drum sessions, but also had something of a mischievous streak. He looked forward to and greatly enjoyed the sessions, but often seemed quite occupied with chatting, giggling and playfully interacting with the other two boys (Tiny and Kabelo). He was a friendly child and well-liked by the boys. The girls (even Angela), however, tended to find his behaviour childish, “silly” and annoying.

Thabo appeared quite shy, preferring to interact with the two boys rather than with the entire group. He relied on these peers for affirmation and reassurance, rather than acting with independence. He thus seldom took initiative, instead waited for one of his bolder peers to send out the cue. He frequently covered his lack of confidence with silly, “clowning” behaviour, which his male peers found extremely entertaining. However, Thabo had difficulty expressing negative emotions and being assertive with his fellow participants. If misunderstood or discontented with regard to some matter, he would become angry and frustrated, cry, sulk and otherwise make his dejection known to everyone around him. By the second observation, Thabo was gaining in confidence and becoming more self-assured. He seemed more trusting of the peers in his group and as a result was friendlier and less liable to angry outbursts. The final observation revealed notable improvement with regard to independence, a new-found willingness to take risks in the supportive musical/social environment and a friendlier, less defensive approach to disagreements.

The first observation revealed a reasonably cooperative child who generally functioned well in the group setting. He was adept at taking turns and interacted positively with his fellow drummers (under

most circumstances). As would be expected, he preferred being in a following to a leading role, and was usually superbly enthusiastic when supporting and contributing to the shared objectives of his drumming circle. By the second observation, he was increasingly proactive in his attempts to engage the group in a positive manner. He was better able to lead the group in various exercises and was still compliant and attentive when someone else was in the lead. Overall progress was evident by the end of the project. He was a very considerate member of his group, highly conscientious and enthusiastic in his efforts to follow and cooperate with the group's efforts, keen to make his own contribution and much better able to take a leading position.

Thabo always looked forward to the drumming workshops. He arrived happy and excited and expressed his enjoyment with giggles and smiles throughout each session. His participation was usually voluntary and enthusiastic, although his efforts were occasionally tainted with shyness or distinct nervous energy. Noticeable improvement was evident by the second observation, by which time he had greater confidence and was visibly more relaxed and comfortable with the entire group. The third observation revealed that Thabo was exceptionally comfortable in the drumming circle and was considerably less prone to being upset or aggravated by one of his peers.

Thabo had some difficulty concentrating during the first stages of the project. He was only able to remain focused on a single task for a short period of time, after which his attention would need to be redirected swiftly in a new and interesting direction. He was easily distracted by extraneous stimuli and struggled somewhat to control impulses. He seemed only vaguely aware of the musical aspects of the sessions, being far more concerned with the social ones. He had a modest ability to learn and recall rhythmic motives. Slow and steady improvement was evident between the first and second observations. He became much more aware of and better able to listen to the musical happenings around him. Partly because of this, he could learn rhythmic patterns more easily. While still easily distracted, he was able to concentrate for longer periods on a given activity. This, in turn, served to enhance his capacity for focused, on-task behaviour. The most noticeable progress occurred during the final stages of the project. His concentration span improved dramatically, he was far less distracted by minor, irrelevant incidents and he was able to focus with determination on a particular task for a reasonable length of time. His auditory awareness and musical memory benefited, as would be expected, from these developments.

Thabo had a naturally good sense of rhythm and metre and was always able to hold a steady pulse. In the beginning, his efforts were in general somewhat haphazard and disorganised, hindering his capacity to learn and recall rhythmic patterns and motives. He was largely unable to improvise, his attempts at which were always inhibited, monotonous and rigid. By the second observation, he had a remarkably good sense of rhythm and pulse. There was clear improvement in his ability to master new rhythms and to recognise and respond to changes in tempo, dynamics and pitch. Enhanced confidence within the group fostered more creative attempts at improvisation, but these were still rather shaky and uncertain. He was nevertheless an eager and courteous team-player, with the added benefit of greater attentiveness. Toward the end of the project, Thabo had made substantial progress with regard to manifesting his musical capacities: he was a rhythmically sure member of the drum circle, was developing an excellent awareness of the different elements of the musical experience, and was more adventurous with regard to creative improvisation.

3.1.4 Princess

Princess was a sweet-natured, intelligent and socially adept young girl. Not only did she behave as a caring older sister toward Angela, she also seemed to assume a protective, “motherly” role toward the other children in the group, particularly if one of them happened to be in distress. She was friendly and respectful toward the facilitator as well as kind toward the other children (although she would occasionally become irritated by the boys’ “childish” and silly behaviour). She took it upon herself to settle the little feuds that would regularly arise among the boys, and always took great pains to ensure that everyone was treated fairly. The facilitator was frequently astounded by the maturity of her behaviour and grateful to have her in the group. She was well-liked and respected by the others and a wholehearted and eager participant in the drum circle, who mastered all activities easily and quickly. She seldom lost interest or became bored with an activity, and she was patient with those who took a little longer to learn the necessary skills or grasp the procedures and objectives of an exercise.

Princess had a good sense of personal agency, giving her the freedom to take the initiative where it was beneficial for herself as well as appropriate and helpful for the rest of the group. Her security and quiet self-assurance further afforded her the freedom to engage in playful and creative experimentation and exploration with the musical medium. Her capacity for appropriate self-assertive behaviour was well developed. By the second observation, her ability to take risks and to try out new forms of behaviour within the musical/social environment had become increasingly creative and skilled. She reveled in her swift mastery of the activities and displayed an exceptional sense of self-efficacy. By the end of the

project, Princess was confident in her new-found musical competencies. This added sense of mastery further enhanced her ability to skilfully, appropriately and tactfully manage a variety of different social situations.

Princess had developed an array of social competencies that was exceptional for a child of her years. Her advanced level of empathy, which afforded her insight into relatively complex social situations, partly accounted for her sophisticated level of social understanding and skill. She had mastered the basic social skills of self-control, sharing and taking turns. She was a supportive, cooperative follower and a natural leader. Not only did she apply herself toward the group's shared goals, she also played a key role in strengthening the group's sense of cohesion and team spirit. Princess continued to develop in these areas throughout the project. In between the first and second observations, the five children in the group had become increasingly integrated into a unified, cohesive team. This further brought out her outstanding natural leadership qualities. Towards the end of the project it became obvious that she had grown (personally and socially) with the group, becoming increasingly adept at ensemble work and enjoying the opportunity to fulfil a leading role.

Princess looked forward to each workshop as though this was *her* time of the week in which she could be herself and could stand out and be recognised for her efforts. Her participation was always completely self-motivated and she became progressively more comfortable and relaxed within the sessions. As she gained in musical understanding and skill, her enthusiasm for the workshops increased appreciably. The drumming group became more established, her sense of belonging seemed to deepen and she appeared to settle contentedly into her special social and musical role within the group.

Princess had a remarkable ability to concentrate. Her focus, when applied to a particular task, was unwavering. She was not easily distracted and was even able to ignore the boys' ongoing antics. Furthermore, she was usually fully aware of the musical stimuli that surrounded her and was able to learn and recall rhythmic patterns with ease. Her musical memory and overall ability to concentrate proved to be on par with that of many of the older children. Her focus, on-task behaviour and impulse-control were further enhanced with domain-specific practice (i.e. practice with music and drumming) until she was able to keep pace with the group of older children as they practised their piece for the Christmas concert.

From the outset of the project, Princess was in possession of a sure sense of rhythm and metre and the ability to maintain a steady pulse, a remarkable musical memory and a sound awareness of musical stimuli. She displayed an excellent comprehension of pitch, dynamics and tempo, and was able to apply these in her own music with ease. Her ability to improvise creatively and utilise her musical understanding within her own original musical creations was perhaps what most set her apart from the other members of her group (Angela was also very competent in this area but just needed more time to develop this particular skill). Princess's advanced sense of empathy and social/musical sensitivity allowed her to match her own playing superbly with that of the others. Over the course of the workshops, she became exceptionally adept at memorising longer, more complex rhythmic and melodic motives. Her improvisation became progressively more creative and adventurous and her basic awareness of the different elements of music developed into a keen appreciation for the expressive capacities of music.

3.1.5 Kabelo

Kabelo had the most subdued nature of the three boys in the group. He usually appeared quite cheerful, but was considerably less boisterous than Tiny and Thabo. He seemed to be happy and contented, not constantly in need of the approval and attention of his peers. His demeanour was friendly, although somewhat cautious and thoughtful. Occasionally, he would seem to be in a world of his own, quietly and intently doing his own thing. He was an intelligent and capable child, although sometimes, especially initially, not keeping pace with the rest of the group due to his lack of sustained attention. He was almost always friendly and respectful toward his fellow peers and the facilitator.

As implied above, Kabelo was quiet and introverted, tendencies which were most pronounced in the early stages of the project. While not necessarily shy, he seemed somewhat inhibited, lethargic and not that interested in making his own mark on the joint musical products of the group. He seemed to lack self-assuredness; he generally tended to avoid "the spotlight," usually choosing to follow the lead of the other children. By the fourth or fifth session, when group cohesion was better established and the children were increasingly accustomed to "the swing of things", he appeared to be more relaxed and settled. Modest but important improvement was evident regarding his confidence within the group and his ability to participate proactively. Over approximately the following five weeks (leading up to the second observation), good progress was made with regard to his feeling more comfortable and confident in the workshops. A quiet sense of independence emerged, and, although he generally preferred to remain in the background of social and musical activity, he occasionally evidenced his

potential to take initiative. He seemed especially to benefit from activities in which he had the opportunity to fulfil a solo or leading role. The validation which he received from his fellow drummers was invaluable in liberating his personal and musical independence. Furthermore, improvisational activities provided him with a much-needed opportunity to relinquish his cautiousness and mobilise his creative energy (somewhat stifled by his tentative approach toward activities and social interaction). Because he was not inclined to take a position as the focus of attention, he seldom had the opportunity to practise and demonstrate assertive behaviour; he was genuinely “easy going” and was never the cause of the squabbles that occasionally arose among the boys. This behaviour indicated quiet self-assurance and a corresponding positive attitude toward his peers. Dramatic improvement in all of the above areas took place during the final stages of the project. A sure sense of personal agency had developed, resulting in substantial gains in confidence and independence (these were always of the quiet type, and never the boisterous, audacious kind).

From the outset until the first observation, Kabelo demonstrated an adequate range of effective social skills. He was adept at taking turns and was in general a cooperative group member. He had a good capacity for self-control and was a willing follower (please see below, where his ability to concentrate is discussed, for an explanation of his initial limitations in these areas). He was somewhat reluctant to fulfil a leading role, and his engagement with the other children was rather reticent. By the second observation, there was notable improvement in the way he interacted with the others. With increased confidence had come greater sociability and an enhanced capacity for leading group activities. Similarly, with greater focus (see below) came a much improved awareness of what was happening around him in his social and musical environment. At this stage he contributed conscientiously to shared objectives. Once again, the most remarkable progress was noted by the final observation. He enthusiastically and attentively followed the leading of another, and, with some prompting and support, was also capable of competently and self-assuredly leading various activities. He was substantially more interactive, although still usually quieter than the others. He had developed into an excellent team-worker, and was a great deal friendlier and less restrained than he had been during the earlier stages of the project.

The first observation revealed that Kabelo did enjoy the workshops, but that his expression of his enjoyment was repressed by his tendency to be reserved. Furthermore, his apparent lack of awareness of the external environment (his impaired ability to function in the present moment) meant that he derived limited pleasure from the experience. While his participation in the workshops was always

voluntary, he smiled only occasionally during the sessions. He required encouragement at times to participate more actively and fully, and it often appeared that he was low on energy. Over the next five weeks, his enjoyment (and his expression thereof) improved considerably. There was a greater frequency of smiles and friendly interactions with his peers. Toward the end of the project, Kabelo was visibly happy and contented during sessions. He joined in wholeheartedly with the activities and his sincere (although still somewhat quiet) enthusiasm contributed valuably to the team spirit of the group.

As alluded to above, Kabelo appeared to have some difficulty concentrating during the early stages of the project. He was easily distracted, prone to being impulsive and oftentimes needed reminding and encouraging to stay on task. Furthermore, he had some difficulty memorising fairly simple rhythmic patterns as quickly and spontaneously as most of the other group members. Such motives could be successfully learned if his full attention was obtained and held for a sufficient amount of time. Kabelo appeared to be preoccupied and absent minded rather than unable to focus; there were moments when he did demonstrate a good capacity for focused attention. This was confirmed, especially toward the end of the project. By the second observation, he evidenced a greater overall awareness and improved ability to focus. He paid more attention to the musical aspects of the workshops. There were still occasionally moments when he appeared to be in a world of his own; his focus was best when he was given a special task or role to perform, if an activity especially interested him or when he was involved in a paired activity. His moments of inattention and struggles with impulse-control decreased until, by the third observation, they were largely a thing of the past. He appeared to be more centred, settled and capable of operating in the present. He was seldom distracted, could stay on-task for sufficient periods of time, could learn rhythms with ease and was generally more “in tune” with his social and musical environment.

The first observation indicated that Kabelo had a good sense of rhythm, metre and pulse. His preoccupied, distractible state of mind severely limited his ability to improvise creatively. As mentioned above, his musical memory was similarly impaired. Being a naturally cooperative child, he was usually able to match and integrate his playing to that of the rest of the group. Unfortunately, this ability was sometimes undermined by concentration lapses. Understandably, he demonstrated limited musical and social awareness. Over the five weeks preceding the second observation, he evidenced modest but significant progress. Most importantly, he made his contribution to the group’s music with greater confidence. He was largely unable to explore the various elements of music in his own playing, which was still tentative and reticent at times. During the final workshops in the series, appreciable

improvement was evident. He demonstrated a remarkable rhythmic sureness and a substantially improved musical memory. Greater awareness of variations in pitch, tempo, dynamics and tone colour, as well as of the music being created by the rest of the group, enabled him to work far more effectively with the group. Finally, greater confidence, combined with much improved in-the-present-moment awareness and functioning, afforded Kabelo the freedom he needed for free, creative improvisation.

3.2 Group two

The following five children participated in the drumming circle referred to as group two. Marna, at 9 years of age, was the youngest child. Wonderful and Dezi (participants nine and ten respectively) were both very close to their tenth birthdays. Gift was more than halfway through her tenth year and Precious was already eleven. All of these children attended special-needs schools except for Marna. She is considered in greater depth in the section immediately below. Concerning the Christmas concert, this group accompanied the drumming of the others with various small percussion instruments. They therefore prepared for and performed in only the mixed-percussion item. Due to the learning disorders presented by most of them, they required the constant guidance of the facilitator, both during practices and the concert itself.

3.2.1 Marna

Marna was a quiet, very shy second grader. She was always very conscientious in her efforts and keen to please the facilitator. Her disposition was usually happy and friendly, but she was inclined to be nervous around both adults and peers. Her overall uncertainty was accurately reflected in the music she created, characterised by a decided lack of rhythmic sureness. Often, especially in the early stages, she seemed to want to “cling” to the facilitator. This was generally not possible due to the demands of the other more confident (and sometimes audacious) group members. Furthermore, this kind of behaviour would not have been desirable or profitable for her in terms of her own personal growth. Ultimately, Marna coped (and eventually flourished) within the group, fitted in well with the others and participated with considerable eagerness.

During the first few weeks of the project, Marna, while enjoying the workshops, seemed unsure of herself. Her behaviour was characterised by uncertainty, indecision and moderate amounts of anxiety. Clearly, she took the workshops far more seriously than did the others, most of whom (and rightly so) perceived the weekly Saturday sessions as an extension of “playtime.” She seemed to feel insecure

around the other children and sought safety by staying close to the facilitator. Modest improvement was evident by the first observation. She had made small but important gains in the areas of confidence and independence. She displayed very little assertive behaviour; she was consistently soft spoken, always staying out of everyone's way. Over the next five weeks or so, her progress was more marked. She was gaining in a quiet, completely unobtrusive form of self-confidence. She appeared to feel more relaxed and secure within the drum circle environment. One or two occasions even allowed her to demonstrate that she could be effectively assertive if it was sufficiently required of her (behaviour usually prompted by the mischievous antics of the boys in the group). The last phase of the project revealed a girl with a burgeoning sense of quiet confidence. While she still had moments of inhibition, there were also instances of impressive risk-taking and display of initiative. Furthermore, she clearly enjoyed her new-found confidence and the validation consistently provided by the group.

Marna was always obliging and cooperative. She was consistently friendly and enjoyed making her (often uncertain) contribution to the group. Her engagement with the others, although positive, was usually passive (i.e. she received and returned pro-social gestures, rather than initiating them). Taking turns, sharing and being a considerate follower during activities were well-established social skills. At first, she was inhibited and reticent when filling a leading role, but was always willing to try. By the second observation, she actually began to enjoy the experience of leading her peers in their music-making. While always more comfortable in a following position, her inhibition lessened throughout the project and she seemed increasingly to take pleasure and derive a sense of pride and satisfaction in her emerging, proactive, leadership abilities.

Marna had a quiet, yet unmistakable, manner of expressing her enjoyment of the sessions. Silently she would smile and wordlessly convey the satisfaction and pleasure she was deriving. Her eagerness to participate was evident from the moment she scurried soundlessly into the drumming room at the beginning of each session. Furthermore, her self-motivation was consistent throughout the duration of the project. While her participation was reserved (more so in the early stages), it was also remarkably enthusiastic. She displayed an intent interest in everything that the group did, making her contribution as eager and conscientious as it was timid. Her curiosity and fascination with the music, the different instruments and the various activities made her one of the most rewarding children to work with, even though (as will become evident below) her rhythmical abilities were as limited as her confidence.

Marna consistently exhibited a good capacity for focused attention and had no difficulty with impulse-control or remaining on-task. However, her introverted tendencies occasionally contributed to a kind of absent mindedness, and she could be inclined to be in a “world of her own,” especially when not directly and actively engaged. This was not often, though, as her keen interest and conscientious participation rendered her remarkably focused. She paid unbroken attention to both the musical and non-musical (e.g. verbal, interpersonal) aspects of the workshops. Despite her concentrated efforts, she struggled with the learning and memorisation of simple rhythmic motives. It was not possible to attribute this to either general learning difficulties or to more specific, music related difficulties (although Marna had been described to the researcher by one of the practitioners as a “slow learner”). Gradually, with plenty of practice, she was able to learn various simple rhythmic patterns more easily.

It was mentioned above that Marna was rhythmically unsure. During the first few sessions, she manifested a complete lack of a sense of pulse. She struggled to join the group in playing the “heartbeat” rhythm (exercise 4 in Workshop Three), and did not seem to know quite when to hit the next beat. While the other children intuitively “knew” how to maintain a pulse, she appeared to have to think about how to play the notes and relied heavily upon trying to follow the others. This was especially apparent in the “relationship heartbeat” activity (exercise 5 in Workshop Four) in which she and one other child attempted to maintain a pulse together (what was meant to be an entrainment exercise became one of intense concentration and “keeping up” for Marna). Interestingly, while never rhythmically brilliant, her ability to maintain a pulse was not static, but rather fluctuated from day to day. There were occasions when she was better able to keep a steady beat, corresponding with the days she appeared to be feeling more settled and less anxious.

Marna’s general rhythmic uncertainty also impacted on her capacity to improvise creatively. Creative freedom is not possible without a supportive, underlying structure (rhythm and metre). For this reason, even once she had gained the courage to improvise more adventurously, she continued to demonstrate incoherence and disorganisation in her creative endeavours. Marna also struggled to learn and reproduce rhythmic patterns. Sometimes her reproduction would resemble that of the original, obscured only by extreme rhythmic uncertainty. It was therefore hard to tell whether the difficulty lay in the learning and memorising process or merely in the rhythmic reproduction of motives. On the other hand, Marna was an excellent listener, displaying a good awareness and sensitive understanding of the different musical elements. She could easily differentiate between loud and soft, fast and slow and high

and low pitched music, as well as between “happy,” “sad,” “angry” and “scared” musical expression. Furthermore, she was able to incorporate these characteristics accurately within her own playing.

3.2.2 Wonderful

Wonderful was a quiet, soft-spoken youngster with a friendly, cheerful, somewhat shy disposition. He often appeared to be lethargic, although happy and contented.

Wonderful was generally docile and lacking in confidence. This was especially evident during the first two sessions in which the groups were larger. From the third session, when the group size was reduced, he immediately began to participate more actively. However, he still preferred to remain in the background, seldom generating new ideas or initiating activities. While he gradually participated more actively and enthusiastically, he still seemed to lack a sense of personal agency within the group. There seemed to be two primary reasons for this: a lack of confidence and a lack of focused awareness of the here-and-now (the second factor is discussed below). He seemed contented just to go along with what the others were doing, seemingly unaware of his own potential for creativity and autonomy. Marked improvement in these areas became evident about two-thirds of the way into the project. As he became increasingly self-assured, he was more able to behave with independence within the group.

Wonderful was not as socially adept as some of his peers. His introversion perhaps hampered this aspect of development. While he lacked sophisticated social skills, his naturally gentle, friendly nature made him an agreeable and welcome member of the group. He was generally considerate toward the other children, which made turn-taking and sharing a natural part of his social behaviour. However, he tended to have some difficulties with impulse-control. He would sometimes play out of turn or at inappropriate times purely out of impulse and with no intention of being rude or “difficult.” For approximately the first two months, Wonderful needed a good deal of encouragement before he was willing to fill a leading role. This, too, improved gradually. He clearly preferred joining in and following over leading, and he was always highly compliant and cooperative when filling these roles (except for his occasional impulsive moments). While he was consistently friendly, his interaction with his peers was usually in a passive mode. As he began to feel more comfortable and less timid, he started to engage more actively with his fellow drummers and contribute more enthusiastically and confidently toward group endeavours.

Wonderful always looked forward to the workshops. He bounded into the drumming room each Saturday and smiled almost constantly throughout the workshops (except for the first two workshops, where he seemed intimidated by the novelty of the event and the size of the group). He became increasingly comfortable in the workshop setting as the weeks went by. His lively enthusiasm meant that his participation was always voluntary and self-motivated. This was consistently the case throughout the project, although he seemed ever more care-free and uninhibited during the final stages.

Wonderful struggled to concentrate, giving the impression of being absent minded or preoccupied. His enthusiasm was unfortunately not always directed to the task at hand and, as mentioned above, he could act impulsively. He was able to focus for short periods of time when directly engaged by the facilitator, but was apt to start daydreaming when required to participate in ways that were not particularly interesting to him. Wonderful was easily distracted by extraneous stimuli (for example, the grass in his shoe or the gardener he could see through the window). At times, he struggled to follow instructions, especially during earlier stages of the project, when he was particularly prone to be distractible and impulsive. Fortunately, drumming seemed to have a grounding effect on him. He typically became more settled and attentive after about ten to fifteen minutes into each session. Similarly, each month that passed saw him become more focused and composed, thus more capable of staying on-task. It appeared to the researcher that prolonged periods of continuous drumming (as opposed to shorter, more sporadic periods of playing required by some of the games and activities) helped to ground him in the present moment. During such moments, he was noticeably more alert and responsive. Gradually, he was able to remain in this “grounded” state for longer periods. Over time, he was also better able to make sustained, meaningful contact with the others. These developments appeared to contribute to a stronger sense of self, which, in the researcher’s opinion, is what helped facilitate his increasingly self-directed and self-motivated behaviour toward the final stages of the project.

Wonderful had a great deal of musical potential, obscured during the first few sessions by his lack of focus. His musical capacity was thus prevented from being fully manifest during the early stages. He could maintain a pulse – the more settled and centered he was feeling, the steadier his pulse. His sense of rhythm and pulse improved dramatically over the course of the project. Initially, he had difficulty memorising simple rhythmic patterns. This improved gradually with practice and he eventually found it easier to learn and reproduce various motives. His lack of musical and social confidence and autonomy during the first stages of the programme made it difficult for him to engage in improvisation. For at least the first half of the project his attempts were extremely tentative and rigid in nature (i.e. he would

produce one short motive and repeat it). Simultaneous to his gradual development of personal agency, his playing became more flexible and adventurous. Finally, not only did the drumming serve to expand and strengthen his general awareness, but this increased awareness, in turn, helped improve the quality of his playing. He was better able to incorporate various expressive elements (for instance, variations of tempo and timbre) into his music. Furthermore, his growing capacity to attend to the playing of others allowed him to contribute far more effectively to the joint endeavours of the group (in the earlier stages of the project, he seemed to play without really listening to what was going on in the social or tonal space around him).

3.2.3 Dezi

Like Wonderful, Dezi was quiet, soft natured and docile. His small, bony frame made it difficult to believe that he was actually ten years old (his appearance suggested no more than six or seven years of age). He had big brown eyes that protruded in an exaggerated fashion above his prominent cheek bones. During the initial testing session, he neither smiled nor spoke to the facilitator or psychologist. While some of the children seemed to be enjoying the break from routine and the special attention that the testing process provided, Dezi displayed an undeniable wariness of the unfamiliar individuals. It was a pleasant surprise when, at the first workshop, Dezi emerged as a friendly and enthusiastic participant. Not only did the *djembe* appear to become a natural extension of his being, it also seemed to serve as a protective object through which he could relate to the group indirectly.

Dezi was introverted and shy, clearly lacking in confidence. This was evident in the way he spoke, moved, walked and sat. Naturally, his process and way of being was reflected in the way he drummed. However, the drum seemed to afford him a sense of safety and freedom, and there were moments in which he would completely “let go,” playing in a care-free and spontaneous manner. This was not an unexpected show of boldness or bravado; on the contrary, he appeared to forget about the rest of the group, seemingly unaware that they were still present. For approximately the first two-thirds of the project, Dezi displayed very little independence. He followed, fitted in and went along, often quite enthusiastically, seeming content to participate in this way. His behaviour seemed devoid of risk-taking, initiative or assertiveness. It was with interest that the researcher observed a change in about the final third of the programme. Dezi began, in his own quiet way, to exhibit signs of playful and innocent “cheekiness” or mischievousness. For example, he would good-naturedly tease one of his peers or even the facilitator, pretend to “disobey” an instruction or play something silly on the drum. This age-appropriate behaviour came as a pleasant surprise, as his behaviour had always been characterised by

an intensity and seriousness ill-fitting for a ten year old child. Slowly, his demeanour became less inhibited and more child-like, and the other children and staff responded positively to this gradual transformation.

On the whole, during roughly the first two-thirds of the project, Dezi could be characterised as socially withdrawn or reticent. He was a compliant follower and a cooperative team-player, but hesitant to lead the group in any activities. His turn-taking and sharing skills were impeccable throughout. While Dezi was affable towards his fellow drummers, he seldom initiated interaction with any of his peers. Change in this area became evident well into the project: he began to make uncertain, floundering efforts to engage with the others. In the form of silly antics, these could be seen as important initial attempts at more active engagement. Dezi would always need support and a great deal of prompting to fill a leadership or solo role, but he did become an increasingly involved, active group member.

Dezi loved to drum. Even if he seemed inhibited or reserved among the other children, actually playing the drum was the one aspect of the workshops that he consistently enjoyed. He was highly self-motivated, always eager to play and never appearing bored, restless or apathetic. At times, he would get so involved in his playing that he would close his eyes and move to the beat, without reserve or awareness of who might be watching. As the project progressed, Dezi became noticeably more relaxed and even increasingly playful and light-hearted during the sessions.

Dezi's ability to concentrate was good from the start of the project. He possessed a well-developed capacity for self-regulation (including impulse-control), was seldom distracted and managed to stay focused on particular activities for extended periods of time. He was very much engaged with the musical aspects of the sessions: mostly unperturbed by irrelevant stimuli, he was able to shut out the external world and become wholly involved with the music surrounding him. He needed sufficient time and practice when learning rhythmic patterns, but usually succeeded in the end. This seemed to be a trend with most of the children. Learning and memorising rhythmic patterns was not a familiar, regular part of the children's normal educational activities and they thus struggled to learn their first few rhythms, but were progressively able to learn new, increasingly complex rhythms with greater efficiency.

Relatively speaking (given his social, economic and cognitive challenges), Dezi demonstrated a great deal of musicality. From the first session, he was able to maintain a stable pulse. This he was able to do

successfully in both the group “heartbeat rhythm” exercise and in the “relationship-heartbeat rhythm” exercise (exercises 4 and 5 in Workshops Three and Four, respectively). His sense of pulse, rhythm and metre improved throughout the project until he was eventually able to participate effectively in the rather challenging activity “Let’s all play our drum” in Workshop Twelve (exercise 3). He had an accurate grasp of the basic musical elements and could apply these with sensitivity to his own playing. Furthermore, despite his initial inhibition, Dezi was able to improvise in a way that was fluid and spontaneous. His efforts became progressively more creative and inventive. Finally, Dezi was a sensitive and considerate ensemble player, and was always able to match his playing successfully with that of the group.

3.2.4 Gift

Gift was a generally cheerful and lively child. Beneath the unkempt hair that usually stood up straight at opposing angles and the haphazard attire resulting from second-hand, mismatched items of clothing, lay a spirited and feisty young personality. She was full of character, possessing a sense of determination and daring (at times bordering on mild defiance) which epitomised the willfulness and resilience often associated with youngsters forced to grow up too quickly.

Gift seemed to have a basic sense of “street-wiseness” and self-reliability which allowed her to behave in a way that was self-assured and confident. She functioned with a good degree of independence within the group situation and was proactive in her musical and social endeavours. Given the supportive and appropriately permissive context of the workshops, she was increasingly willing to experiment with the musical tools at her disposal. This she did with impressive creativity. She was friendly and confident in her interactions, and was capable of being skilfully assertive when she felt it necessary. Although she functioned at a high level of autonomy throughout, she delighted in the process of mastering new skills. The heightened sense of competency (self-efficacy) afforded her a new kind of self-confidence and strengthened her self-esteem in a way she seemed to experience as very rewarding and satisfying.

Gift exhibited well-developed social skills from start to finish. She was proficient in all the basic pro-social behaviours such as taking turns and sharing and displayed an excellent degree of self-control. Her interaction with her peers was always positive and agreeable, and she exhibited flexibility in the social roles she was able to fill. For example, Gift was willing to follow the leading of another, whether this meant following the facilitator or one of her peers. She was also a good team-player. She joined in

actively and enthusiastically with the joint efforts of the group, frequently helping, encouraging and supporting her peers. Furthermore, she was increasingly disposed to leading or guiding her fellow drummers. According to some of the staff, this was new behaviour for Gift, who, while generally self-assured, was unlikely to engage her peers in this manner. The researcher attributed this phenomenon, in part, to social dynamics operating within this particular group. Most of the members (Marna, Wonderful and Dezi, described above) were very timid in nature, and Precious (described below) required a certain degree of guidance. This opened up a space for Gift to take up a position of leadership. Indeed, she was almost compelled into such a role by the dynamics at play. Although this was not a familiar role for her, she grew into it gradually, developed increasingly effective leadership skills and appeared really to enjoy this new social experience.

During the initial stage of the project, Gift was prone to bouts of moodiness. These unexpected moments of sulkiness (apparently the result of stressful external situations) were fortunately always short-lived, and after three or four weeks disappeared altogether. Consistently thereafter, her demeanour was one of focus and contentment. She evidenced her enjoyment through wholehearted participation, smiles and laughter. She looked forward to each session, and was highly disappointed when she unfortunately missed one due to a visit from her mentor (the Village has a successful mentorship programme in place).

Gift was highly capable of sustained and focused concentration and displayed no difficulties whatsoever with impulsive behaviour. She often became deeply involved in what she was doing and was seldom distracted, having little difficulty staying on-task. She followed and remembered instructions easily, often taking it upon herself to explain them to her peers.

From the first workshop, Gift demonstrated good overall musical capacity and a sure sense of rhythm and pulse. This, together with her confident playing, frequently made her the musical “anchor.” Her playing was typically energetic and vigorous, occasionally even forceful. Regardless, she worked well with the group, able both to match them empathically and to lead them when appropriate. Gift was an attentive listener and developed a good awareness of musical elements, which she enjoyed exploring in her playing. She memorised rhythmic patterns easily, so long as they did not exceed two measures in duration and the recall was immediate (such as in a call-and-response exercise) rather than delayed (such as learning rhythmic sequences over several weeks). She enjoyed improvisational activities, which afforded her the opportunity to express, unhindered, her independence and individuality. Her

attempts were relatively coherent, as her playing usually fell into regular measures with four beats to the bar and with evenly spaced accents. Her improvisational playing suggested that she enjoyed exploring her own musicality and the tonal qualities of the *djembe*, and group improvisational activities reflected her capacity for musical and social flexibility.

3.2.5 Precious

The final member of group two to be considered was Precious. Although biologically she was the oldest of the children in this group, she possessed the greatest intellectual challenges of all participants. Nevertheless, she was a high functioning child in many respects. As will become evident in the paragraphs that follow, she had a remarkably effective set of social skills, which allowed her to function well within the group. In addition, her affable, outgoing and cheerful personality, together with her relentless determination and ceaseless optimism, made her a well-liked and valued group member.

During the early stages of the project, one could tell that Precious was unaccustomed to participating in certain group activities. Because she struggled to comprehend and follow verbal instructions, they often dismissed her as “slow” and she would stand to one side watching them. To be more accurate, she did not actually stand and watch them; rather, she bounced around, smiling, laughing and cheering them on in her uncontrollable eagerness to join in. Thus, during the first workshop, she was uncertain to what extent she was expected to participate. As a result, she appeared to lack the self-confidence necessary to join in. However, drum circle activities are by nature inclusive, requiring little verbal explanation before someone is able to participate. Furthermore, there is no “right” or “wrong” way to join in; each member can participate in a manner that is right for him or her. An experience of success is thereby ensured for each individual. A little coaxing from the facilitator, together with the natural appeal and allure of the drumming activities themselves, was all the encouragement Precious needed to join in wholeheartedly. Once fully included, she displayed a remarkable degree of agency and participated with purpose and self-determination. With her efforts consistently accepted and valued by the group, Precious became self-assured, boldly able to take initiative, and adventurous and spontaneous in her creative endeavours. She also evidenced an increasing capacity for effective and appropriate self-assertion.

Precious was a highly sociable and friendly child, always eager to please both adults and peers. The drum circle appeared to offer her an ideal opportunity to practise social skills, including assertive

behaviour, which, at first, she seemed to lack (she gradually became less tolerant of occasional teasing and exclusion). At the start, her ability to take turns was hindered by insufficient impulse-control (which would cause her to play out of turn). Because this was a fundamental skill extensively practised in all the workshops, dramatic improvement was noticeable across the three observations. She became increasingly aware of her tendency to play on impulse and thus better able to think through her actions. She was clearly trying very hard to master this skill. Flexibility was evident in her participation style. She was a contented, considerate follower and a wholehearted team-player. She also delighted in the positive attention and affirmation afforded her when filling a leading role. She was warm and outgoing in her interactions, intuitively and sensitively responding to the various social situations that arose.

That Precious enjoyed the workshops was undeniable. She did not experience the social reticence evident in some of the others, and as a result expressed her joyful excitement without inhibition. Her enthusiasm in the sessions was often contagious. She played a major role in setting the group's emotional tone, helping to create an atmosphere of light-hearted playfulness, goodwill and fun. Of all the children, she appeared to be the most relaxed and at peace, seldom anxious or preoccupied. She appeared to function consistently in the "here-and-now," conceivably enriching her musical and social experiences.

Given her intellectual challenges, Precious's concentration was remarkably good. Her natural enthusiasm, coupled with the basically motivating nature of music- and rhythm-based activities, allowed her to focus long enough to adequately master each exercise. Precious focused best when activities were structured into short, varied, simple-to-follow and highly engaging "sub-actions" (which is the case with all youngsters, but more imperative when working children such as Precious). While her attention was usually focused on the "here-and-now," which particular aspect of the "here-and-now" she chose to attend to was another matter. Something seemingly unimportant or irrelevant could at times completely absorb her attention (she was prone to acting impulsively) and it was with difficulty that her focus was redirected to the task at hand. As she became more comfortable with her fellow drummers and more familiar with the workshop setting, there were naturally fewer novelties or uncertainties to divert her attention. As with Wonderful, moments of sustained drumming had a significant "grounding" effect on her, both long and short-term. This became increasingly apparent during approximately the last half of the project.

Precious revealed remarkable rhythmic sureness, being able to maintain a stable beat with ease and confidence. Interestingly, the various “heartbeat” activities induced unanticipated levels of concentration. During a particular performance of the “relationship-heartbeat rhythm” activity (exercise 5 of Workshop Four), she and her partner were able to maintain a pulse for over seven minutes, before becoming bored and ending the exercise. She also had a good sense of metre, able to play in either 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4 time (provided there was sufficient support from the facilitator and the group). She was as capable as her peers of learning rhythms, just needing additional time and repetition. Her improvisational style was characterised by rigidity. While she was able to produce a unique rhythmic pattern, she would resort to repeating it indefinitely. She could play fast/slow, loud/ soft, high/low, etc. in response to the facilitator, peer or group (successfully matching her, his or their musical expression). However, she was largely unable to integrate these elements creatively into her own improvisations. Finally, Precious displayed a satisfactory ability to play together with the others. Occasionally, she needed reminding to listen more attentively to what they were doing (e.g. due to impulse or lapse of concentration she was prone to playing louder or faster than the others).

3.3 Group three

The five children to be considered in this section were grouped according to both age and learning speed and capacity. Jabu and Sipho were younger than most of the children in the previous group, but, because they were exceptionally intelligent children who learned quickly, they were placed in group three. In some respects, this was the most challenging group to work with. For example, there was considerable variation regarding the children’s ages. Two of the participants, Meki and Lucy, were approaching/entering adolescence. That they at times appeared more “moody,” irritable and/or indifferent than the others was therefore no coincidence and not that surprising. On the other hand, Jabu (nine years) and Michaela (ten years) were far more child-like in their attitudes and behaviour. Sipho, who was just under ten years old, was remarkably mature for his age. He evidenced the seriousness (and occasionally the moodiness) more typical of an older child. Perhaps being the older brother of Tiny (in group one) had heightened this sense of protectiveness and responsibility. Overall, this was a diverse cluster of children that would gradually develop into an exceptionally cohesive and collaborative drumming ensemble. With regard to the concert, all the members of this group learned and performed the primary drumming piece, and thus participated in both the all-drum and mixed-percussion items.

3.3.1 Jabu

Jabu was gregarious and warmhearted with a winning smile; the youngest in the group. As a newcomer to the Village (having been transferred from another children's home), he was still in the process of settling in and getting to know the other children. The more established residents were also in the initial stages of becoming accustomed to and accepting Jabu. His friendly and easy-going temperament served him well as he acclimatised to his new, somewhat unfriendly environment. He was bright, but often hid this fact with silly, "clowning" antics designed to get the others to like and accept him. Occasionally these tactics "backfired," irritating rather than impressing certain individuals. Lucy (see below), for example, found his antics annoying and childish. On the whole, though, his perpetually lively and animated disposition made him a well-liked and valued group member.

Jabu evidenced an excellent sense of personal agency, whether it was a trait inherently his, or one honed for the sake of survival. Regardless, it was one of his greatest assets in negotiating and defining his position within the group (and, undoubtedly, within the Village). In the beginning, his confidence and self-assurance were appropriately tempered due to the fact that he was still respectfully reviewing and becoming familiar with his new social environment. Jabu was not afraid to try something new and different. He clearly enjoyed being inventive and doing things differently. His creative ventures were typically executed with great spontaneity, and were, at times, not very well-calculated. The result was usually very humorous and entertaining for the rest of the group. With regard to assertive behaviour, Jabu was friendly, respectful and generally expressed himself well. He did not, however, enjoy confrontation, and tended to make light of potentially hostile situations.

Outgoing and sociable by nature, Jabu possessed many well-developed social skills. He was amiable and courteous in his interactions with his peers and with the facilitator. He worked cooperatively with his fellow drummers; only turn-taking could at times prove challenging as he was prone to occasional impulsiveness. Over the weeks and months, considerable improvement regarding impulse-control was evident. He became an increasingly active and attentive listener, which, in turn, assisted him in appropriate musical and social interaction. Jabu was a natural team-player, enthusiastically and actively collaborating with his peers as they worked toward group objectives. He was a willing follower, hindered only by (occasional) impulsive tendencies (especially during the early stages). Above all, Jabu enjoyed assuming a leading/facilitating position and guiding the others in their music-making. And because of his amusing and captivating mannerisms, the group, in turn, enjoyed following him.

That Jabu enjoyed the workshops was indisputable. He was the first to arrive each Saturday morning, and the last to leave (it was sometimes difficult encouraging him to go back to his “house”). He appeared to relish each moment of the sessions, from the initial welcoming activity through to the final closing. At times, his enthusiasm appeared to be unbounded, contributing to the occasional lapses in impulse-control. Throughout the course of the project, however, he seemed better able to harness this energy and to direct it more effectively. Finally, as solidarity developed within the group as a whole, and as Jabu was increasingly accepted amongst his peers, he became progressively more relaxed and settled. This, in turn, helped him further to contain and focus his positive energy.

Jabu was bright with great potential for focused attention. Of the five in this group, he and Siphon (considered below) were the most engaged with the musical (as opposed to just the social) aspects. He took a little more time than the others in learning new rhythmic patterns, but was able to muster great determination and concentration and always succeeded in the end. During approximately the first month, he was somewhat prone to becoming distracted and behaving impulsively. Not yet settled into the group and his enthusiasm not yet contained, he would occasionally fail to listen to what the group was playing. The first observation records significant progress in this regard. The second and third observations evidence dramatic advancement in his capacity for attentive listening and focused participation, corresponding with his decline in impulsive behaviour.

Jabu displayed a high capacity for musical learning, and was imbued with a natural sense of rhythm. He was rhythmically sure, able to keep a stable beat while the rest of the group improvised around the pulse he provided. When he played, his rhythmical movements revealed that he not only heard the beat, but that he *felt* it, physically, in his body. He also demonstrated an intense awareness of other musical elements, and one could observe the changes in his facial expressions and body posture as he went, for example, from loud to soft, high to low or fast to slow playing, or as he experimented with different types of articulation or tone colour. Frequently he would close his eyes, apparently in an attempt to block out external distractions and enhance his concentration on the musical expression. This was especially noticeable in his later attempts at improvisation, in which he enjoyed experimenting with different modes of playing. He always enjoyed improvisational exercises, whether they were solo or group orientated. The first observation revealed a rather rigid style of improvisation. He would create one pattern and repeat it several times before producing another pattern, which he would then also repeat. However, the second observation revealed playing that was far more explorative and experimental, although somewhat chaotic and disorganised. By the third observation, his improvisation

was confident, creative and mostly coherent. He was also increasingly able, with time and practice, to learn and memorise rhythmic motives. Finally, Jabu was competent in matching his musical expression with that of the group (particularly in the later stages, when he was more settled and attentive).

3.3.2 Sipho

Sipho was the second youngest child in group three, the biological brother of Tiny in group one. Exceptionally intelligent, Sipho displayed the maturity of a much older child. He frequently became serious and pensive, characteristics that could also lead one to overestimate his age. Quiet, thoughtful and reserved, it seemed as though, in some respects, he could not be any more dissimilar to Jabu, described above. However, in their musical aptitude, the two boys were well matched. Both had a natural capacity for musical learning, although, naturally, their playing styles were as unique as their personalities.

One's first impression was likely to be of Sipho as a quietly self-confident child. He appeared self-assured, composed and collected. He functioned with a great deal of independence, but was not overly concerned with exerting his influence on the group. Content to forego the spotlight, he did not seem to need or want additional attention or approval from his peers. An occasional nod or smile of approval from the facilitator, however, was always welcome, as Sipho was a conscientious child who wanted to "get things right." Because of this conscientiousness, his general behaviour as well as his playing in the early stages of the project could be described as careful or "safe" as opposed to daring or adventurous. Thus, although generally confident, Sipho was initially inhibited in spontaneous creative and/or emotional expression. Gradually he came to realise that there was no "right" or "wrong" way to behave/perform and he became increasingly creative in his playing and social interactions. It was as though his expectations of the workshops were coloured by his experiences of the classroom (centered on rules, reward and punishment), and it took some time to convince him otherwise. Ultimately, Sipho benefited from an atmosphere of supportive acceptance and permissiveness (at no stage did he attempt to test or challenge the existing boundaries), and he was freed and empowered to function with greater initiative and spontaneity.

It was evident from the first session that Sipho possessed exceptionally well-developed social skills. Somewhat reserved by nature, his were not the flamboyant social charms displayed by some children. He was quietly respectful and considerate toward staff and peers and had no difficulty whatsoever with turn-taking. He alternated easily between following, collaborative and leading roles. He evidenced an

outstanding capacity to lead the others in a way that was friendly and helpful rather than domineering or “pushy”. Throughout the duration of the project, he became increasingly involved and actively engaged with the other group members. This is the area of functioning in which the drumming appeared to make the biggest impact on his social behaviour. He became progressively more liberated, spontaneous and playful in his interactions with his peers, where he had, initially, appeared excessively serious and reticent.

During the initial few sessions, Siphso displayed a positive attitude toward the drumming activities through his keen interest and undivided attention. As he became more relaxed and less inhibited, his playful tendencies became more apparent. He began to enjoy the workshops more as he realised that emphasis was on group process and musical exploration rather than on “getting things right,” as he would put it. It is the conclusion of the facilitator/researcher that one of the unique benefits of the drumming workshops was that they taught and allowed children to *play*. This is a rare, invaluable opportunity in the lives of children dominated by excessive hardship, in addition to the growing amount of work and responsibility generally experienced. Gradually, Siphso became more light-hearted and carefree, utilising sessions as opportunities for playfulness and personal expression. He was consistently self-motivated when it came to attending and participating.

Siphso exhibited consistently outstanding concentration and focus. He was capable of concentrating for extended periods and could remain on-task for the entire time required to master or complete an activity or exercise. He reveled in the experience of mastering new skills and this, in part, helped him to remain attentive throughout each workshop. Unlike most of the others, Siphso was not distracted by extraneous stimuli, not prone to impulsive behaviour, nor disturbed by the occasional antics or clamour of his peers. Also related to his good concentration was his heightened awareness of both social and musical aspects of the sessions and the ease with which he memorised rhythmic motives.

Siphso evidenced an excellent sense of rhythm, metre and pulse and was always capable of maintaining a stable beat. This was apparent from the very first session. It was also clear from the outset that he demonstrated a keen awareness of tone colour, timbre and phrasing (the more subtle qualities of music-making), able to incorporate them with sensitivity into his own playing. Also immediately apparent was his capacity to learn and memorise rhythmic patterns. Furthermore, he was an ideal ensemble player, able to match and appropriately interact (socially and musically) with his fellow drummers. The area in which significant improvement was noticeable was that of improvisation. During approximately the

first third of the project, his improvisation was neat and coherent but very controlled. His sure sense of rhythm and metre ensured that his playing fitted into bars of equal length, marked by appropriately spaced accents. However, there was a decided lack of freedom and spontaneity, not surprising when one considers his general behaviour at that stage. Following the first observation, his playing gained steadily in fluidity and flexibility. Toward the end of the project, improvisation was less a cognitive exercise, but rather a creative and expressive endeavour (at times even tinged with playfulness and humour).

3.3.3 Michaela

Michaela was a bright, lively and gregarious, occasionally even audacious, little girl. Her build was exceedingly slight, her eyes were sharp and alert and her straight, shoulder-length hair was always tousled around her face. She gave the impression of being “street-wise” and independent, and displayed a confidence that bordered, at times, on being “cheeky” or “forward”. As with so many children raised in an institutional setting, one could not help but wonder to what extent this stubborn self-assurance was a tool learned for survival, serving to conceal and protect a vulnerable child with a host of fears and insecurities. She seemed to be naturally outgoing and sociable, and was usually friendly with adults and peers. She was, however, considerably influenced by Lucy (considered below). When Lucy was not present, Michaela was more acquiescent and forthcoming. When Lucy was around, Michaela would sometimes pair up with her and adopt a measure of her “moodiness” and defiance. On the whole, however, Michaela was a welcome group member due to her good humour, animated disposition and sprightly interaction with her peers.

As suggested above, Michaela displayed a high level of self-confidence. She functioned with a great deal of independence and self-assurance. She was proactive and adventurous from the start, always eager to try something new or to find new and different ways to perform a previous activity or game. Often, she found herself quite naturally in a position of influence or leadership, making suggestions for the others to follow (her fellow drummers responded positively to her “upbeat” approach). She delighted in taking risks, both socially and musically, a tendency which seemed embedded in her personality. Furthermore, she had no difficulty asserting herself, and was able to communicate her thoughts and feelings with openness and clarity. It is not for the researcher to make assumptions regarding the origins and purposes of Michaela’s inflated display of self-confidence. Nevertheless, it is safe to conclude that the drum circle was a safe environment for her to experience herself as an independent entity and boldly to express her personal agency.

Michaela was socially adept. She had a great sense of democracy when it came to taking turns or sharing, and frequently took it upon herself to ensure that each member was fairly treated. Her outgoing, engaging personality guaranteed her a good following and she reveled in the affirmation thus obtained. She was also content to join in and work toward group objectives; she collaborated actively and contributed meaningfully toward the joint efforts. Following while other children led was her least preferred role. While capable of being an attentive and responsive follower, she occasionally lost interest and became bored. Overall, Michaela was a highly involved member of the group who engaged positively and actively with the others. During approximately the first half of the project, she was prone to inadvertently dominating with her uninhibited gregariousness. However, as the months passed, Michaela became increasingly settled and her interaction became remarkably more accommodating of the others. Generally in command of her own behaviour, experiencing little difficulty with impulse-control, there were instances when she became quite unruly, clearly influenced by the frequently rebellious behaviour of Lucy (please see below).

It is the researcher's belief that Michaela found the workshops enjoyable for several reasons. They provided a highly social environment where she was free to interact with her peers in ways which best suited her personality (within reasonable and protective boundaries). A second related reason was the opportunity to practise her leadership skills in a supportive environment where her efforts were positively received and consistently affirmed. Finally, the drum circle offered a social context that was accepting of a wide range of behaviours which, typically, are not tolerated in a regular classroom (e.g. self-expression, emotional catharsis and spontaneous social interaction). Children typically enjoy experiencing freedom to be themselves within an accepting, structured and safe environment. This is especially true of children such as Michaela who constantly need to restrain themselves in order to fit into everyday situations.

Capable of long periods of focused attention, Michaela occasionally became distracted, but this was not the result of an inability to focus. There were two primary reasons for her distractibility during workshops. First, there was Lucy, a source of endless amusement for Michaela. Second, and most importantly, feelings of boredom would encourage Michaela to find something other than the activity at hand to keep her amused. This occurred particularly when she was filling a following, supportive or other background role. Michaela required constant challenge and stimulation in order to keep her focused and attentive, and any lull in the activity could result in her becoming restless and prone to distraction and impulsive behaviour. This was seldom a dilemma in the drum circle setting, which was

either fast-paced and energetic or meditative and absorbing (making it ideal for children requiring intense stimulation). However, “boring” moments were inevitable (transitions between activities, another child requiring assistance, playing a supportive beat, etc.), and these could prove challenging for Michaela and, in turn, for the facilitator.

Michaela possessed an innate aptitude for musical learning. She was rhythmically sure, displayed a solid grasp of the basic musical elements and memorised rhythmic phrases and sequences with ease. She thus effectively demonstrated her innate musical capacities. Her social tendencies were accurately reflected within her ensemble playing. Ensemble playing, in turn, by transforming these abstract tendencies into something more tangible (sound), helped her to become more aware of the effects of these tendencies. For example (in the early stages of the project), her extraverted style of interacting would occasionally result in her dominating the acoustic space. Children often struggle to realise the impact of their behaviour on their social environment (due to the abstract nature of this concept). This was true for Michaela. However, once this impact was converted to sound, it became clear to her how her playing (social/musical interaction) was cluttering the social/musical environment. Having her behaviour reflected back to her in sound helped her to regulate the way in which she interacted. By the second observation, it was clear that Michaela was listening to her interaction within the group, and her interaction had become remarkably less domineering. She was listening to and providing sufficient space for what the others were “saying” musically. Finally, Michaela had a natural capacity for improvisation. Her first attempts were highly adventurous and creative, but were also somewhat chaotic and disorganised. The facilitator accepted this unrestrained playing as a reflection of her process. Interestingly, over the four months of the project, her improvisation became increasingly orderly and coherent, as though she had internalised and incorporated some of the structure provided by the workshops.

3.3.4 Meki

Meki was the second oldest child in group three (just four months younger than Lucy). He was an intelligent and agreeable youngster, quieter and more introverted than most of his peers. He was fast approaching adolescence (a fact which his self-consciousness and occasional apathy, “moodiness” and indifference bore witness to). Meki perhaps displayed the greatest degree of improvement over the course of the project with regard to functioning in the group.

At the outset of the project, Meki displayed low levels of self-confidence. This was evident in the way he spoke (with soft, rapid, almost inaudible mumbles), the way he struggled to maintain eye contact (preferring to look at the floor) and in his body posture (he walked with his shoulders slouched forward and sat slumped in his chair, head bent over his chest). He seemed painfully aware of the tattered condition of his clothes and shoes. Being the self-conscious pre-adolescent that he was, he would attempt to conceal his social anxiety and uncertainty with exaggerated displays of apathy and indifference. For instance, he would be stubbornly reluctant to participate in activities. His usual excuse was that he was “tired” or that “he didn’t feel like it”. Sitting slumped in his chair with his arms folded across his chest he effectively avoided exposure to possible embarrassment. However, he did appear to be genuinely lethargic and listless a lot of the time, an emotional and physical state reminiscent of childhood depression. While the facilitator gently encouraged Meki to join in more fully, his behaviour was accepted as reflecting his current process or way of being and he was not coerced into participating in any other way. Meki evidenced low levels of personal agency and had little inclination to take initiative within the workshops. However, after the first observation, significant changes occurred in his social behaviour. He began to show more interest in activities and participated more actively with little prompting from the facilitator. By the third observation he had lost most of his inhibition and was participating with unprecedented agency and self-assurance. Consistent acceptance from the group and facilitator and the realisation that judgment and evaluation had no place within the drum circle helped free him from excessive and immobilising self-consciousness.

Meki evidenced poor social functioning for roughly the first third of the project. During this period, much of his participation was reluctant and passive. He displayed various kinds of “difficult” behaviour which disturbed the flow of the activities. For example, during turn-taking activities, he would refuse to take his turn. Alternatively, he would express indifference toward the group by “playing around” and “doing his own thing” when it was not his turn. It was impossible to tell whether his difficult behaviour had the purpose of hiding his own insecurities or of seeking additional attention from the facilitator and/or group. He was frequently uncooperative when required to follow a fellow drummer who was in a leading role, and he was equally reluctant to occupy a leading position himself. He was largely uninterested and unengaged when required to work toward a common objective. However, surprising improvement was once again evident by the second observation. Perhaps feeling less insecure, he relinquished much of his self-consciousness and began to engage more with his peers. He quite literally “gave up” being “difficult” and uncooperative; the suddenness of this change confirmed the facilitator’s notion that these undesirable traits had existed to serve a specific purpose. They

disappeared from his behaviour as soon as they were, for whatever reason, no longer required to help him cope. He started to contribute meaningfully toward the group's endeavours. During the last phase, Meki became surprisingly outgoing and friendly, far more involved with the others and applying himself thoroughly and enthusiastically to each activity.

Initially, Meki appeared reluctant to attend sessions. Typically, he would saunter into the room and nonchalantly slump into a chair. He would then watch the others play, joining in as and when he saw fit. Repeatedly, he made quite a show of how bored and uninterested he was. Expressed through a fake and/or inflated yawn, his efforts were only partially convincing. He often appeared tired, bored and listless, but at no stage did he express a wish to be excused from the workshops. Gradually, he began to participate more willingly. He appeared far more relaxed and settled, was consistently willing to join in and he smiled and laughed along with the others. The more involved he became, the more he enjoyed the workshops. The facilitator was pleased to observe how the other members accommodated and encouraged these developments.

During the early stages of the project, Meki's lack of interest undermined his ability and willingness to concentrate. At times it was clear that he did not want to engage in an activity (i.e. did not want to stay on-task). At other times, he appeared genuinely self-conscious and preoccupied with the way he appeared to others. Regardless, it was plain to see that Meki was an intelligent boy who was able to pay attention when he so desired. This was confirmed once he became actively involved. He displayed a good concentration span, excellent self-control and the ability to ignore intruding stimuli (potential distractions).

Initially, Meki's playing was exceedingly tentative and inhibited. He seemed uncertain and was hesitant to play (especially exposed, solo passages). When he did play, it was softly and cautiously. He attempted to disguise this uncertainty with indifference. Meki made little effort to collaborate with his fellow drummers. His playing, while not necessarily disruptive, was halfhearted and made little contribution to the overall music. Despite all of the above, it was still evident that Meki had a natural sense of rhythm. He also possessed an excellent memory for rhythmic patterns and sequences of patterns. These musical capacities became increasingly apparent as he grew in self-confidence and abandoned the negative attitudes that severely restricted his sense of agency. He relished the experience of success that was increasingly his. By the second observation, he was able to improvise with

considerable creativity (improvisation was nearly impossible before), and he became a willing and active ensemble member.

3.3.5 Lucy

Lucy was the oldest of the third group and at twelve years of age, she was experiencing the full onset of adolescence. She was frequently irritable and “moody,” as well as highly self-conscious of her behaviour and appearance (she, too, was well aware of the shabbiness of her attire, judging from remarks passed between her and her peers). In addition to the difficulties typically associated with adolescence, Lucy suffered from high levels of anger and frustration. The facilitator was informed that the latter were due to unfortunate life events and undesirable current circumstances. These problems exacerbated (and were exacerbated by) the unavoidable challenges of puberty. Altogether, Lucy presented an array of emotional and behavioural difficulties; it was a challenge to integrate her within the drum circle.

Lucy maintained an impenetrable front of self-assurance. However, despite her unwavering air of self-confidence, she was clearly self-conscious and uncertain of herself. Like Meki, she disguised her uncertainty with exaggerated displays of apathy and indifference. Because drumming was new and unfamiliar to her, she was especially reluctant to participate in any way which could lead to possible embarrassment. At first, she blatantly refused to perform a solo or leading role, preferring to remain as inconspicuous as possible. Even when participating in full-group activities (when she did choose to join in), she would first watch the others - making certain that she knew exactly what was expected of her - before joining in. This desire to be inconspicuous and to “blend in” was limited to her behaviour while drumming (where there was the risk of “messing up” and appearing incompetent). Socially, she was seldom inconspicuous. She used every possible opportunity to flaunt her outward self-assurance with an attitude of defiance and rebelliousness. Recognising the hurt and insecurity underlying her outward displays, the facilitator responded gently but firmly to Lucy’s acting-out. Progress was slow in coming. Only after the second observation was Lucy able to participate with true independence. By this time she had mastered many skills and techniques in her playing of the *djembe*, and she clearly enjoyed (even showing off) this new-found and much-needed competence.

Lucy’s negative attitudes impacted negatively upon her social behaviour. She was aloof and distant in her dealings with her peers, who, in return, did not easily engage with her. Interestingly, she was at the same time quite popular amongst the other children, who found her bold acts of defiance entertaining

and who stood in awe of the way in which she asserted herself in the face of authorities. In fact, Lucy possessed good social skills; her frequent anger and dysphoria just prevented her from putting them into practice. There were times when she was in a more agreeable mood, when she interacted quite positively with her peers. However, these moments were transitory, rare and unpredictable. During the first stages of the project, she was largely stubborn and uncooperative, making it difficult for her to engage in the teamwork required. Toward the facilitator, she appeared wary and rebellious, and months were spent building a relationship based on trust and understanding. She had apparently assumed that the facilitator would be a harsh and authoritarian figure, and was caught off guard when she was responded to with care and acceptance (her usual mode of interacting proved ineffective). She had been disarmed, and this was a crucial first step to the successful negotiation of a meaningful relationship.

There were instances when Lucy chose to participate fully. At least once in every session, she identified an activity which she could use to ventilate some of her angry feelings. These were moments when she was free to play as loudly and aggressively as she possibly could. While the assisting member of staff initially wanted to stop her (the resulting cacophony may have offended sensitive ears), the facilitator prevented Lucy from being disturbed. Lucy would often become so involved in her playing that minutes would go by before she stopped (probably out of physical fatigue). Her posture, facial expressions and body movements all expressed the intensity of the feelings she was releasing. Sometimes it seemed as though she was “attacking” her listeners with the sounds she made. She always seemed satisfied after she had finished, as though she had conveyed and expressed something that was important to her. There were also many call-and-response or matching exercises, in which the other children were required to match her playing, thus affirming the messages she sent out.

Gradual and modest improvement was evident by the second, and especially the third, observation. During the second third of the project, noticeable improvement had occurred in her overall affective state. However, she was still prone to angry outbursts and defiant, disruptive behaviour. By the third observation, she began to appear slightly calmer during the workshops. Nevertheless, she continued, invariably, to find opportunities to express her aggressive energy. She did still suffer from bouts of anger and dysphoria, but these were becoming the exception rather than the norm (at least, during the workshops). During these later stages of the project, her behaviour toward her peers was also less defensive. She began to engage with them more positively and spontaneously. She particularly enjoyed preparing for the Christmas concert. Because she knew the piece better than most of her peers, the facilitator encouraged her to take a leadership position, together with Siphon, and to assist the others in

their preparation and final performance of their item. This appeared to increase her self-confidence, and by the time of the concert, Lucy had become a fully integrated member of the group.

As was revealed in the later part of the project, Lucy had a good capacity for focused attention. Her concentration during the earlier stages had been impaired by excessive anger, frustration and a related unwillingness to engage in the activities. During this first period, Lucy had been highly distractible and restless, which hindered her ability to focus for any length of time. However, during the final stages of the project, her concentration improved significantly. She was always somewhat distractible, but there were also good moments of sustained focus, particularly when she really enjoyed a particular activity.

Lucy had a strong sense of rhythm and pulse, apparent from the very beginning, despite her unwillingness to engage cooperatively. Her ability to memorise rhythmic passages was exceptionally good and became increasingly evident as she began to apply herself more. With regard to improvisation, it seemed she almost always used this to express her feelings of anger and frustration. While not very creative, it appeared that the improvisational activities were effectively serving their purpose for Lucy: emotional expression and catharsis. Throughout the project, her general playing style could be characterised as fast, loud and energetic. She had no inclination to explore other modes and styles of playing. This gave the impression that she was rigid and inflexible in her affective expression. Alternatively, her current need to express angry feelings may have been so great that it overwhelmed other forms of expression. These aspects could have been explored further had more time been available. On the whole (especially toward the end), Lucy mastered many drumming skills and techniques quickly and easily and revealed good overall musical capacity. The resulting sense of self-efficacy may have been essential to strengthening her self-confidence.

3.4 Mzi

Mzi was allocated to individual sessions of African drumming. This was due to the extreme nature of his emotional and behavioural difficulties. Although these sessions were “individual,” many social dynamics were evident in the sessions as he learned to interact appropriately with the facilitator. Concerning his participation in the Christmas concert, he learned the drumming piece and, ultimately, was successfully integrated into both the all-drum and mixed-percussion groups.

During the second workshop (in which Mzi participated with the group), he quickly became extremely defiant and highly oppositional toward the facilitator. Directly after the welcoming exercise, he began

to tease, irritate and otherwise provoke the other children. He took every opportunity to face the camcorder, pull angry faces at it and mutter angrily but inaudibly under his breath. The facilitator addressed this inappropriate behaviour gently but firmly, expressing acceptance of the child yet denouncing the behaviour. First, Mzi was warned of a potential time-out, should he continue to disturb the workshop. He accepted the cautioning, stated that he would cooperate, but reverted to his old behaviour within minutes. When asked to leave the circle for five minutes of time-out, he sat at the metal table at the back of the room, banging on it aggressively (albeit in rhythm) in accordance with what the group was playing. The facilitator wanted to keep the child in the drumming room where she could supervise him. At this stage, however, she realised it would be necessary to have him return to his house for a period of time-out. Mzi refused to be accompanied by the assisting staff member back to his house for ten minutes of time-out. As the assistant attempted to take his hand, Mzi leapt away and began careening around the drumming room. Ferociously, he ran around and around the room, tripping over the *djembes* and almost knocking over the camcorder and its tripod. The assistant caught hold of him, at which stage he dropped flat to the ground, trying to escape her grip. Shortly thereafter, Mzi was firmly escorted back to his house, where he remained for the duration of the session. The facilitator then successfully completed the workshop with the remaining children.

The other children seemed accustomed to Mzi's unmanageable behaviour, and were neither upset nor surprised by the incident. Nevertheless, it was decided that no future workshop would be disturbed in this manner. After consulting with staff members who worked regularly with Mzi, it was confirmed that he presented with long-term and pervasive behavioural difficulties. While Mzi, with hard work and patience, could possibly be integrated within the workshops, there was no telling how long this process could take. The facilitator did not wish to prevent the other children from benefiting from the project indefinitely. The matter was discussed with Mzi, who initially resisted being separated from the group. However, when he realised that this was his only option if he wished to remain in the project, he agreed. The researcher's two supervisors were consulted, the necessary arrangements were made and Mzi was assigned to individual sessions (of roughly thirty minutes each) from the following Saturday.

Where possible, the facilitator engaged Mzi in the same activities and exercises that the three groups participated in. However, many of these were based on group work and thus not suitable for individual sessions. The workshops thus had to be adapted considerably for individual work with Mzi. During the project, Mzi mastered the basic techniques of playing the *djembes* and learned a great number of different rhythms and rhythm sequences. Improvisational activities constituted a large part of the

workshops, developing his creative and expressive skills. He also developed a firm grasp of the different elements of music. Finally, the facilitator worked with Mzi in learning the drumming piece that would be presented for the Christmas concert. This was the same piece being learned by group three and most of the children in group one and served as an incentive for him to join with the other children for the concert.

Mzi responded well to the individualised setting. He was highly motivated to attend his sessions and enjoyed them tremendously. Mzi was extremely confident in his playing of the *djembe*, as in his overall behaviour. He took initiative and the facilitator, to a certain extent, allowed him to guide the sessions. This was in keeping with the understanding that children choose activities that satisfy particular needs which they have at particular moments in time. The facilitator did, however, contain Mzi's exploration and creativity within explicit and protective boundaries. (He had a great deal of personal agency, to the extent which he could appear audacious or "forward.") He functioned exceptionally well within the limitations provided, and seemed to feel contained, safe and supported.

Mzi was consistently respectful toward the facilitator and generally cooperative regarding the activities she engaged him in. His primary difficulty involved impulse-control, which made turn-taking and similar types of interaction difficult for him. However, significant improvement was evident over the course of the project. He particularly enjoyed exchanging roles with the facilitator, so that during the first round of an activity he would perform one role (either leading, following, supporting, soloing, etc.) and during the second round he would perform the other role (in a democratic trade-off with the facilitator). Overall, his ability to take turns, listen, share and generally interact appropriately with the facilitator improved greatly over time. This was reflected musically by his increasing adeptness at matching, imitating and call-and-response type activities.

Mzi was an exceptionally intelligent child. However, he had a poor attention span and struggled to remain focused for an extended period of time. He was highly distractible, particularly during the initial stages when his impulse-control was at its weakest. The first three sessions were of only twenty minutes duration. Gradually, the sessions increased in length as Mzi became more settled within and familiar with the structure of the sessions. His keen interest also played a key role in his increasing ability to remain focused on a particular activity until the point of completion or mastery. By approximately halfway through the project (as well as for the remainder of the project), his sessions were thirty minutes long. His interest in and enjoyment of the sessions increased further as his musical

competence developed. This was a rapid process as he was a fast learner with a great deal of musical aptitude. It was clear that he revelled in the sense of mastery and competence afforded him by his successful experiences in the various activities. He frequently remarked, with a great deal of satisfaction, that he was “good at this.”

As a final note on Mzi’s progress, it should be emphasised that, by the end of the project, he was ready to join the groups for the concert performance. At the final practice, Mzi was reintegrated with his peers. Somewhat shyly, he was welcomed by everyone into the session. Although at first he seemed to feel self-conscious and out of place, these feelings vanished the moment he began to drum with the others. He knew the music well and participated with confidence. The practice was successful and resulted in great camaraderie amongst the children. The concert took place the following Saturday. Mzi was an enthusiastic member of the ensemble and the performance was truly a tribute to cooperative teamwork.

4. Interviews and focus group discussions

Semi-structured interviews and focus groups were conducted with the relevant staff members and child participants, respectively. The focus groups were held with small groups of three or four children each and were video-recorded. On the other hand, the staff interviews were conducted individually and were not video-recorded. (Please refer to Chapter Four, Methodology, for more detail.)

4.1 Staff interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the two members of staff who were most involved with the drumming project. Rose was the coordinator of volunteer activities at the Epworth Children’s Village and oversaw arrangements for the project from beginning to end. Her insights were helpful from an administrative and organisational point of view. She had a thorough knowledge of each of the children (in terms of background and current situation), but did not work closely with them on a daily basis. The staff who assisted with the workshops kept her informed as to how the project was progressing and how the children were responding. Johanna, on the other hand, was involved in the children’s everyday care and thus had close and sustained contact with them. In addition, she frequently assisted the facilitator in presenting the workshops, giving her in-depth understanding of the

workshops themselves and the quality of the children's participation. Together, Rose and Johanna provided a valuable overview of the project as perceived by the staff and management of the Village. Both Rose and Johanna believed that the African drumming project fitted well within the general education and recreational programme of the Village. Rose explained that Epworth, as an organisation, aimed to provide residents with the widest possible array of experiences (in addition to school and therapy), including sports, art and culture. She explained that the residents did not often have the opportunity to attend extra-mural activities, due to restrictions of finance, time and transport. Johanna gave a different perspective, and explained that the workshops aided development in important and relevant areas of functioning. For example, she stated that many of the children did not listen adequately, whether to each other, to the teachers at school or to the staff at the Village. She recognised that the workshops provided ample practice for active listening. She went on to describe how the sessions assisted the children with appropriate interaction, taking turns and sharing, appropriately fitting into a group and working together with others - skills which addressed salient deficits experienced by many of the children. She also stated that the workshops allowed the children to develop skills and to feel good at something. Intermittently, she mentioned the individual (as opposed to the social) benefits of the workshops. She stated that they gave the participants the opportunity to improve their physical coordination, creativity and attention span and the ability to listen and focus.

Both Rose and Johanna stated that the workshops in no way disrupted the organisation or schedule of the Village. Rose added that presenting the workshops on Saturdays was ideal, when there were no scheduled events and the children frequently became bored. Most weekend activities (such as a birthday party or a visit from a mentor) were flexible and could be scheduled around the session (which was only about forty-five minutes). Johanna recognised the fact that the workshops were presented consistently – beginning punctually at the same time every Saturday morning. This, she stated, made it easy to accommodate and plan around the workshops, should this have (occasionally) been necessary.

Rose and Johanna spoke enthusiastically about the way the children enjoyed and looked forward to the workshops as the high point of each weekend, spoken about with much excitement during the week. Johanna emphasised that none of the participants ever needed to be persuaded or coerced to attend the sessions (with the exception of Lucy's reluctance at the beginning of the project). As the one workshop was being conducted, the next group was ready and waiting for their turn. Rose made reference to other occasional organised activities and described the children's resistance and lack of cooperation regarding their attendance. She was pleased to see the children so self-motivated to attend the

workshops. Johanna stressed that this kind of extra activity was especially important for those children with nowhere to go for weekends or holidays, as it gave them something to look forward to.

Johanna emphasised that she was most impressed as to how the children interacted during the sessions. Recognising that many who had been selected to participate suffered from high levels of anger, she emphasised the capacity of the drum circle to regulate the children's emotional and social functioning. She described how their level of cooperation, as well as the absence of anger and tension, had repeatedly astonished her. She said that many of the staff members who had assisted in the workshops echoed her sentiments, saying that the behaviour of certain individuals was scarcely recognisable during the sessions. The facilitator/interviewer explained that she was not familiar with the children outside of the drum circle setting. Neither had she enquired as to their backgrounds or psychological and emotional states. As such, she was unaware of the behavioural differences apparent during the sessions. She thus asked if Johanna would mind providing examples of such occurrences. Johanna stated that as a group, many of the participants would be characterised as angry and aggressive. She noted that Siphon (one of the most cooperative and polite members during the workshops) was usually very angry and stubborn and did not interact easily with his peers. She said that his younger brother, Tiny, also experienced high levels of anger and depression. In confidence, she explained that their mother had abandoned them the previous year, she never visited and she did not allow the children to phone or contact her in any way. She stated that the way they fitted in with their respective groups was remarkable.

Johanna went on to explain that Mzi, with his extreme behavioural problems, presented a huge dilemma. His school teachers frequently complained of his unmanageable behaviour, and he was constantly being detained or suspended from school. Apparently, in the beginning of the project, the staff found it difficult to believe that he was cooperating and working effectively with the facilitator. They had wanted to take turns to supervise his sessions, in order to "see this for themselves." Johanna noted that Gift had "come out of her shell" and that Precious was participating far more actively than she did in most group situations. Many staff members commented on how good it was to see Precious participating alongside her peers with such self-assurance. Furthermore, Precious was treated more as an equal by her peers when they were drumming together than at most other times.

Johanna spoke about Princess as withdrawn and sometimes angry. The way she positioned herself within the group as a helpful and supportive member was a great surprise to the staff. Lucy was

mentioned by both Rose and Johanna, who described her as usually either sullen and “sulky” or outspoken and “cocky.” They explained that a great deal of pain and anger lay beneath this behaviour. She had no family, sponsor or mentor who came to visit her. She was constantly in trouble at school and felt as though no one in the world outside of the Village cared for her. In the beginning she had resented being placed in a group of younger children; it was a pleasant surprise when she really began to enjoy the workshops. Johanna commented on the respect with which she treated the facilitator, stating that Lucy had serious difficulty relating to teachers and those in authority. Finally, Johanna described Jabu as typically being highly disruptive and “uncontrollable,” traits hardly noticeable during the workshops. After this interview with Johanna, the researcher began to feel as though (or perhaps, to realise that) she scarcely knew the children who had attended her workshops (for four months). She felt completely unfamiliar with the children as they had been described to her, as though they were complete strangers.

Rose and Johanna were then asked whether they had witnessed any changes in the children’s behaviour outside of the sessions. They both spoke about how impressed they were with the children’s behaviour during the concert. They marveled at how the facilitator sat amongst the audience and mostly left the children to perform on their own, which they did exceptionally well. Rose said that she had been astounded with the independence and pride with which the participants took their place on the outdoor “stage” and performed their item with minimal assistance. In addition to the concert experience, Johanna confirmed that the children usually seemed happier, calmer and more settled immediately following the sessions. She also mentioned that Gift had gained considerable independence and was much less “babyish” than she had been. She attributed these changes, in part, to the workshops, which she believed had encouraged Gift to act more independently, of her own will. Rose said that she was unable to answer this question, as she was not in sufficient, regular contact with the children.

On the whole, however, it seemed that the children’s positive behavioural changes within the sessions did not generalise to their behaviour in other contexts. Johanna mentioned that many of the children were facing serious difficulties with their families and home environments. Some experienced extreme anger at the absent, rejecting, neglecting or abusive parent(s) and at their circumstances. Other children had no family or relatives to visit, and they were teased by those children who did go home (or to relatives) for “out weekends” or holidays. Johanna went on to say that many of the children were experiencing problems at school, whether with the academic work, with the teachers and authorities

and/or with their peers. These issues contributed to the children's ongoing anger, stress and unhappiness.

Rose and Johanna were then asked, during their separate interviews, whether the project added to their or other staff's workload in any way. Both responded in the negative. Rose stated that according to the feedback she received from the staff, the children's enthusiasm for the drumming was contagious and the staff became equally interested and keen to participate. Johanna said that in the beginning the staff were very curious to see what the drumming involved. Throughout the project they took turns to assist with the workshops, but rather than experiencing this as work, they were glad to have the opportunity to be involved. The staff enjoyed supervising and assisting with the sessions, both to have the opportunity to play on the drums and to watch the children's positive interaction. Finally, Rose added that because the workshops were presented on the Village premises, there were no dilemmas regarding transportation of the children. She also mentioned that the project was well-organised with effective, continuous communication between the facilitator and the Village (it presented no extra trouble).

Next, the interviewees were asked whether they felt that the sessions should have been presented more or less frequently. Rose found once a week ideal. She stated that consistent, regular presentation of the workshops was key to their effectiveness. Furthermore, she stated that the workshops were ideally presented as weekend activities, and would not recommend additional sessions being added during the school week. Johanna also believed that the workshops were best presented on a weekly basis. She explained that the children's weekday schedules were very busy, filled with homework and sessions of therapy. On the other hand, should the workshops be presented less than once a week, she believed that momentum and continuity would be compromised. Finally, both Rose and Johanna stated without hesitation that the workshops of African drumming could be presented as a long-term project or voluntary programme. Johanna stressed the difficulty of ensuring that the children are appropriately occupied during weekends, and that the project was a valuable source of stimulation. Rose maintained that African drumming was an ideal activity to be presented on a permanent basis. She discussed the fact that because the drum is easy to play, either individually or in a group, the drum circle is accessible to anyone wishing to join. This flexibility made it ideal for long-term implementation; as new children joined the Village, they could be integrated into drum circles with ease. This is an important consideration where children are continuously leaving and entering the organisation.

4.2 Participant focus groups

Focus group discussions were useful for exploring participants' thoughts and sentiments concerning the workshops. Due to considerable overlap in the contents of the separate dialogues, the children's views and ideas will be combined into a single discussion.

Participants were unanimous in expressing their enjoyment of the workshops. When asked what they most enjoyed about the project, most referred to preparing for the Christmas concert. Because the concert had taken place only two weeks prior to the focus groups, it was still understandably in the forefront of their thoughts. However, learning the *Waka Waka* piece had clearly been the highlight of their project (not surprising given the huge popularity of the song throughout the soccer world cup year 2010). Several children also expressed their enjoyment of learning to play drums and "all other kinds of instruments," indicating that the acquisition of new skills also seemed to be important and rewarding to them. The participants stated enthusiastically that they would like to participate in such a project in future. On a related point, they were asked whether they experienced the project as being too short, too long or just right. All of the participants in their separate groups stated that it had been far too short. When asked how long, in terms of months or years, they would have liked the workshops to continue, one heartfelt answer was "forever."

Participants were then questioned as to what they had learned or gained from the workshops. Typical answers included learning about rhythms (the heartbeat rhythm was particularly popular), games, the various musical elements (loud and soft, fast and slow and high and low), improvisation or "free play" and the *Waka Waka*. Some of the older children made reference to social competencies such as working together, listening to one another. As a separate question they were asked whether, and if so, how, the drumming had helped them get along better. Several participants mentioned the following skills: waiting for one's turn, not talking or playing when someone else is talking or playing, listening to what everyone is playing so that the result is not merely noise (but rather music), generally "having manners," helping others when they are struggling, "not getting into fights" (the avoidance or appropriate management of conflict), being patient and tolerant and "having fun." While the latter is not, strictly speaking, a social competency, it is an essential ingredient to healthy, adaptive social interaction, especially amongst children.

The researcher/facilitator enquired as to how participants experienced the level of difficulty of the workshops. Most responded that the activities were “not difficult” and two children responded with “medium” and “in between” (which can safely be translated into “moderately challenging”). To clarify this point, the researcher further asked if they had found the activities too easy or too difficult - whether they had at any stage become bored and irritated or, alternatively, frustrated and fed up. The overall response suggested that they experienced some of the activities as quite easy and others as more challenging.

The facilitator asked the participants to describe how the drumming made them feel, both during and after sessions. The younger children replied with one-word statements such as “happy,” “nice,” “excited” and “sharp” (the latter is popular slang commonly used among the native Africans, which can roughly be translated as “great” or “okay”). The older participants were better able to articulate their feelings and described how the drumming had helped them to feel more relaxed, forget about their problems and just have fun with their friends. While these may not be significant therapeutic objectives, their importance cannot be overemphasised, amongst all children and particularly within this population group.

The participants were asked for their opinions about having the “aunties” join them for the workshops (the residents of the Village refer to each staff member as “Aunty,” and this question referred to the members of staff who supervised and assisted with each workshop). Apparently, the children liked having the “aunties” participate; they enjoyed their company and got to know them in a different way. When asked about the size of the groups, the younger participants all agreed that the small groups of five each was ideal. Most of the children in group three (consisting of the older participants) stated that they would prefer a bigger group. A small group, they said, could get a bit boring. They referred to the large, combined group that performed for the concert, and agreed that more participants made it much more fun and interesting.

5. Conclusion

The use of qualitative forms of data collection and analysis provided a different and valuable perspective on the benefits of African drumming. Focused observations provided evidence that the workshops significantly improved the quality of the children’s interaction. Impulse-control was one

capacity consistently improved. This, in turn, (especially amongst the younger children) aided turn-taking and on-task behaviour. The ability of many of the children to listen actively was significantly enhanced, promoting increased personal and social awareness. This enhanced awareness of the self and others within the social environment, in turn, nurtured better contact. The children's improved capacity for intra- and interpersonal contact was evidenced by more effective expression of the self and communication within the group (usually the non-verbal kind). Finally, the participants also seemed to act and interact with more confidence and agency throughout the duration of the project. This may have been the result of the secure, supportive and accepting environment provided by the drum circle.

The staff interviews suggested that while the children's behaviour was significantly improved during the sessions, these improvements did not generalise to their behaviour in other contexts. This may, in part, be the result of the multiple other hardships and challenges experienced by the participants. However, these interviews revealed the extent of the children's enjoyment of the workshops, an aspect of the project's success that should not be overlooked. Most importantly, staff interviews confirmed that workshops of African drumming, as presented in the current study, could be incorporated as an ongoing recreational and educational programme for the Village children. Such integration would be highly feasible and provide a valuable and relevant service to the residents. The extent of the children's enjoyment of the workshops was further confirmed by the participant focus groups. These discussions suggested that the project had been a positive and meaningful experience. The children, too, agreed that such a project would be optimally presented as a long-term endeavour.

While the quantitative and qualitative findings have been presented and discussed in separate chapters (Chapters Five and Six, respectively) for the sake of clarity, each type of finding should be considered and understood in the light of the other. The demographic and background information provided for each child, found in Chapter Five, offers a context for understanding the more in-depth discussions presented in the current chapter. Similarly, the detailed descriptions found in the current chapter portray the behaviour of the participants as observed within the workshops, and thus offer a valuable framework from which to interpret the empirical findings. It is believed that such an approach allows for the most complete picture regarding the value and utility of African drumming within the residential care setting.

Chapter Seven

Findings, conclusions and recommendations

1. Summary of findings

This opening section presents a synopsis of the main findings arrived at through the course of the research study. These findings were made possible via both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. Quantitative findings will be discussed first, followed by a review of the qualitative outcomes.

1.1 Findings from quantitative data

Quantitative findings were obtained via pre- and post-testing using the Beck Youth Inventories. For each of the five dimensions measured by this assessment tool (anxiety, depression, anger, disruptive behaviour and self-concept), the p value for the test for normality was statistically significant at the 5% level. The data could therefore be considered to have a normal distribution and, as a result, t tests were used for the analysis. Unfortunately, findings from the t tests conducted largely failed to reach significance and the results were inconclusive. For all but one dimension (anxiety), the p values for the t test statistics were not significant at the 0.05 level of significance. According to these calculations, the intervention had not significantly altered the participants' self-concepts or changed their levels of depression, anger or disruptive behaviour. While the findings regarding anxiety were significant, the t tests suggested that all but two children had experienced increased levels of anxiety over the course of the project.

It was postulated in Chapter Five (section 4. Discussion of findings) that a possible explanation for the children's increased anxiety might involve the greater awareness and contact promoted by the sessions of African drumming. In terms of Gestalt theory, progression from the false or synthetic layer of the personality to the phobic layer is typically accompanied by greater levels of anxiety. This increase in anxiety, as well as the lack of significant, conclusive findings in general, may be due to the severity of the trauma most likely experienced by the majority of children in the Village. Four months of weekly sessions may have been insufficient as an intervention to counteract the ongoing effects of the participants' negative life experiences, past and present. On the other hand, the validity of the test

results may have been compromised by linguistic and cultural issues with regard to testing via the Beck Youth Inventories.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical procedures were used in an attempt to identify the possible influence that age and school type could have had upon the participants' scores across the various psychological dimensions. Each participant was allocated to one of two school types (normal or special) and to one of two age groups (9.5 years and younger or older than 9.5 years). ANOVA procedures suggested a moderate tendency for school type to influence self-concept (calculations resulting in a p value of 0.0729), a definite tendency for age group to influence level of anxiety (p value of 0.0540) and a modest tendency for school type to influence depression (p value 0.0852). ANOVA procedures indicated a robust, statistically significant relationship between school type and disruptive behaviour (p value of 0.0214) and a moderately significant relationship between age group and the same construct (p value of 0.0663). Apparently, anger was moderated by neither school type nor age group. It is not possible to infer the direction of the influence exerted by the variables school type or age group (e.g. it is not possible to speculate which type of school, whether a special or a normal school, makes a child susceptible to higher or lower levels of disruptive behaviour); results only show that there is a relationship between these variables.

1.2 Findings from qualitative data

Qualitative findings were obtained via focused observations (performed upon video-recordings of each session) as well as semi-structured interviews and focus groups (conducted with the relevant staff members and children, respectively). In order to formulate distinct findings from the information thus gathered, dominant themes were extracted from the detailed reports provided in the previous chapter (Chapter Six). Information gathered from the focused observations, semi-structured interviews and focus groups are combined into a single discussion of the emotional and social benefits proffered by the sessions of African drumming. Emotional and social dimensions of functioning are difficult to divide into discrete categories. While this distinction has been made in order to preserve clarity, areas of overlap will be pointed out as necessary. Although cognitive functioning was not a primary focus of this study, this dimension will be discussed briefly as cognition underlies and greatly influences emotional and social functioning. Musical capacity is also mentioned, as the learning and development of musical skills has the potential to contribute to children's sense of mastery and competence.

Furthermore, musical developments frequently parallel and highlight the changes occurring in the other areas of children's functioning.

Most of the improvements discussed below relate either directly or indirectly to the fundamental Gestalt objectives as they apply within Gestalt play therapy, which can be described as enhancing the child's awareness, improving the contact functions, bolstering his or her sense of self, facilitating adaptive organismic self-regulation and, ultimately, promoting personal integration (please refer to section 3. of Chapter Two). Positive affect and the capacity for playfulness are associated with a healthy sense of self, as are self-motivation, self-confidence and self-efficacy, all indicators of personal agency. Improved personal agency (and particularly self-efficacy) are also connected to the Gestalt play therapy objectives of experiencing mastery, making choices, defining the self and having a sense of power and control (please see section 3.3 of Chapter Three). Effective self-expression suggests improved contact with the self and others, while better emotional regulation may indicate the child's increasing ability to deal adaptively with his or her emotions, especially the negative ones. Positive social interaction points to healthy contact (with both the child's internal and external realities), while social flexibility, a sense of personal agency and the ability to adopt both leadership and collaborative roles all reflect a child's capacity for healthy contact. Finally, inclusion, regulation of social interaction, appropriate permissiveness and the establishment of limits and boundaries are necessary conditions of a therapeutic environment, particularly within the context of Gestalt play therapy (please refer to sections 3.3.5 and 3.4 of Chapter Three).

It is important to note that, while the quantitative findings explicated above are taken to represent the children's behaviour and functioning in a generalised, stable and long term manner, the qualitative findings discussed below cannot be presumed to be descriptive of any behaviour other than that which took place during the workshops themselves. An exception may be the children's functioning as described during the staff interviews and participant focus groups. Comments made in the latter context may be taken as representative of the children's general, day-to-day functioning outside of the sessions.

1.2.1 Emotional functioning

Emotionally, the participants functioned more adaptively in several important ways during the workshops. This evaluation is based upon the opinion of staff members who worked with the participating children on a daily basis and who witnessed their behaviour during sessions (as they supervised and aided facilitation of the workshops). This appraisal is also based upon comparison of

the children's behaviour and functioning as they progressed throughout the project. Improvements in emotional adaptation were cumulative in nature, with enhanced emotional functioning becoming increasingly apparent with each successive workshop. Significant areas of such improvement are outlined and briefly discussed below. The order in which they are listed is determined primarily by sequential logic and not by rating of importance.

1.2.1.1 Positive affect

Possibly the most outstanding observation was the children's enjoyment of the sessions. This enjoyment of the workshops and their anticipation of the weekly sessions were emphasised in both the staff interviews and participant focus groups. The pleasure and satisfaction which the participants derived from the workshops was also consistently a highlight of the focused observations. While "having fun" is not typically cited as a therapeutic outcome, it is a vital part of child development and is certainly fundamental to a child's emotional well-being. Not only did the workshops promote feelings of enjoyment and enthusiasm, they also helped nurture the much-needed capacity for relaxation. Many participants were increasingly relaxed, calm and comfortable throughout the duration of the project.

1.2.1.2 Playfulness

Closely related to enhancing the positive affect of children is nurturing their natural propensity to play. While this may seem obvious, excessive hardships and undue responsibilities can serve to undermine children's innate capacity to engage in carefree, light-hearted play, essential to normal development. Many of the children in the study naturally related drumming to other forms of play, and their approach to the sessions was predominantly playful. For these children, the sessions served to support, nurture and build upon the play experience. A few of the children, however, needed encouragement, time and the establishment of safe, trusting relationships before they were able to engage in playful, child-like behaviour. The drum circle, welcoming, supportive and non-threatening, provided these children with optimal opportunities for spontaneous, creative and carefree play. The workshops were highly effective in reducing tension and the children could be seen playing their drums, moving, singing and dancing with increasing abandon during the sessions.

1.2.1.3 Self-motivation

The self-motivation of the participants was clearly evidenced by their high rates of attendance. Responses from the staff interviews corroborated the fact that the children were exceptionally willing

to attend the sessions. Their enthusiastic, voluntary participation was in part due to the naturally appealing and intrinsically motivating nature of music- and rhythm-based activities. Related to this internal motivation was the noticeably improved tolerance for frustration evidenced by several participants. Several youngsters who, typically, would quickly become frustrated, disheartened and be prone to giving up after a short struggle, were gradually more able to patiently persevere if their first efforts were not met with immediate success.

1.2.1.4 Catharsis

Some participants, more than others (consciously or unconsciously), took advantage of the opportunity to express and release their negative feelings such as anxiety and anger. Lucy was a case in point, clearly conveying her feelings of anger and frustration, while simultaneously discharging some of their negative effects through the act of pounding on the drum. Lucy, a young adolescent who suffered from frequent angry outbursts, was effectively placed in touch with her aggressive energy and was provided with a dynamic channel for its expression.

1.2.1.5 Self-expression

Each participant, whether aware of it or not, engaged in dynamic self-expression through the act of drumming. Many of the participants boldly expressed their sense of agency or independence, while others communicated their need to feel supported by the group. Some participants conveyed their inhibition and withdrawal, while others, their inner disorganisation and confusion. Regardless of the content of their expression, they all engaged in converting aspects of their process into sound, rendering affective states more tangible and that much closer to the child's awareness. Such transformed messages allowed the child effectively to communicate statements about the self (his or her way of being at particular moments in time). Furthermore, such self-statements made by the child were consistently validated by others in the drum circle, affording each participant the experience of being heard. As a result of these musical/social communication processes, the sense of self of each child was gradually strengthened.

1.2.1.6 Self-confidence

One of the most important and pervasive themes identified by the structured observations involved the steadily increasing self-confidence evidenced by a number of participants. Several children, who had initially displayed inhibited, withdrawn behaviour, were gradually able to make significant gains in confidence and self-assuredness. These participants (as well as other children who were only outwardly

sure of themselves) were increasingly able to function with genuine independence within the supportive and empowering setting of the drum circle.

1.2.1.7 Self-efficacy

Another dominant theme (related to the previous point) which arose involved an increased sense of self-efficacy. The majority of participants enjoyed not only the “fun,” social aspects of the workshops, but also revelled in the challenging process of learning and developing new skills. As they gained mastery over various playing techniques, expressive techniques, group music-making skills and increasingly complex rhythms, they developed a new sense of competence which bolstered their self-confidence in a way they seemed to experience as truly satisfying and rewarding.

1.2.1.8 Emotional regulation

Like awareness (discussed below), emotional regulation is a somewhat vague concept, difficult to define or identify in any clear, straightforward manner. The drumming workshops appeared to help facilitate emotional regulation amongst the participants. This statement is only tentative as the inner dynamics contributing to improved emotional functioning are not directly observable and cannot be attributed to specific aspects of the workshops. It is thus cautiously suggested that emotional regulation (or at least certain facets thereof) was enhanced by the drumming activities, as evidenced by reduced levels of anger, depression and anxiety amongst the participants for the duration of the workshops. It seemed that various drum circle activities (by virtue, at least in part, of their containing, supportive, expressive or cathartic properties) assisted the children in adjusting their affective states to more positive ends. The moods of several children, which were initially quite volatile and unpredictable, gradually became more stable throughout the study. The drumming activities, facilitative of positive social interaction, also assisted the children in adapting/regulating their feelings/emotions toward one another (this will be discussed in the following section, which deals with social behaviour). For most participants, these improvements were gradual and cumulative, increasingly noticeable as the project progressed. For others, more immediate improvement was observed, although it is possible that such short-term changes were simply the result of increased positive affect (a different construct altogether, discussed above).

1.2.1.9 Awareness

Awareness is not an easy construct to operationalise or to assess/measure via either observation or quantitative assessment. It is an abstract concept difficult to recognise and discern with accuracy or

certainty within the behaviour of individuals. The researcher recognises the limitations faced when making inferences regarding the presence of such a trait, but believes that certain related characteristics can provide valuable clues. Several characteristics, which are associated with and indicative of awareness, but which more easily lend themselves to observation, include the capacity to be present-centred, to function in the here-and-now and to appear grounded or centred. Several of the children seemed more grounded and settled in the present moment, less preoccupied, absent-minded, distracted or “in a world of their own,” both as each session progressed and as the project as a whole progressed. A substantial number of participants were increasingly perceptive and attentive to (i.e. aware of) their sensory, social and musical environments and thus better able to respond to and engage meaningfully with both. Apparently, increased awareness had enhanced their contact functions, discussed below (section 1.2.2.2 Contact).

1.2.1.10 Sense of self

As was emphasised in Chapter 2, sense of self is a complex, multifaceted construct possessing cognitive, emotional and social components. For this reason, it is placed at the end of section 1.2.1 Emotional functioning, serving as a bridge to the following section, 1.2.2 Social functioning. This seems appropriate as awareness strengthens sense of self in the same way that these two traits strengthen contact functions (see 1.2.2.2 Contact below). Like the above two concepts, it evades simple definition, operationalisation or direct observation. In effect, the degree to which a child possesses a healthy sense of self can only be inferred by the degree to which other more tangible, perceptible and measurable characteristics are present. A strong sense of self is evidenced by healthy awareness of the self and others (as described above), the capacity for personal agency (including the ability to engage in self-motivated and self-directed behaviour), the capacity for authentic self-expression and the ability to make sustained, meaningful contact with others (see 1.2.2.2 Contact below). The drumming workshops enhanced each of these aspects of the children’s emotional/social behaviour, leading the researcher to conclude that the children’s sense of self was enhanced (at least to the extent that the current definition of the construct is employed).

1.2.2 Social functioning

The following are dominant themes which emerged regarding the children’s social behaviour as it was observed throughout the course of the project. As with the previous section (1.2.1 Emotional functioning), these evaluations were made in accordance with the focused observations, participant focus groups and staff interviews (especially the latter, where the observations and opinions of staff

members were explored). Improvement within each area was determined in the light of staff accounts of behavioural change, as well as according to change within the children's interaction throughout the course of the project.

1.2.2.1 Positive social interaction

The current study provides additional support for the widely accepted notion that group drumming can promote positive social experiences. Findings from this study highlight possible mechanisms involved in this process. Most basically, sessions of group drumming nurtured friendliness and camaraderie amongst the participants (as well as between participants and facilitators). This is probably closely related to the general increase in positive affect. Stated generally, positive attitudes such as tolerance, acceptance and mutual support are promoted. Participants are drawn into active engagement with one another, as opposed to more passive forms of interaction (evident amongst several participants in the earlier stages of the project).

1.2.2.2 Contact

It was mentioned above that the drumming activities promoted social interaction. Contact is a related, yet different (in many ways broader and more encompassing) concept. It has as much to do with the (inner) characteristics of individuals as it does with the (outer) social environment. It is intimately related to awareness (discussed above), regarding both awareness of the self and awareness of others. Contact is the basic construct forming the foundation of any meaningful interaction, including rhythmic or musical interaction. The workshops not only promoted social activity (the outer motions of connection), but also enhanced the inner quality of the contact established. This was evident, albeit indirectly, through the spontaneity of the children's self-expression, the intensity of the engagement formed and the sustained nature of the contact.

1.2.2.3 Social flexibility

The workshops served to enhance the children's capacity to adapt to various social roles. Activities were facilitated which provided opportunities for the participants to lead (engage in "conducting" roles), to follow (either the facilitator or a peer) and to work cooperatively toward joint goals. They were increasingly able to fill leading, following and collaborative positions, and to alternate between these roles with ease. Furthermore, they seemed more accommodating of their peers as they shared and exchanged roles. Usually, depending upon the specific composition of a group (in terms of individual temperaments and aptitudes), a stable constellation of social patterns becomes established. The

resulting social dynamics and stable patterns of interaction typically mean that, for example, one member assumes the role of leader, another of the “clown” while yet others may be relegated to unobtrusive, conforming roles. Because these patterns of interaction are typically stable, certain members tend to become “stuck” in certain roles. What the workshops did was to allow every member to explore and experiment with different roles. In the drum circle setting, the children were supportive of their peers and encouraged one another to try out different, unfamiliar roles (e.g. typically boisterous children were affably “shushed” when a typically quieter child was trying to take the lead, while the efforts of introverted, withdrawn children were patiently encouraged and cheered on). It was perhaps the absence of competition and rivalry, as well as the sense of equality and acceptance characterising the drum circle, which fostered this mutual benevolence.

1.2.2.4 Personal agency

Many children displayed improved levels of independence (both musical and social) within the group drumming setting. It could reasonably be conjectured that the experience of having their “voices” (musical self-statements) heard and validated was an empowering one for the participants, serving to mobilise their creativity and individuality. Each child was allowed to participate in a way that was right and appropriate for him or her, and every effort was valued and accepted. In such a supportive environment, the participants were liberated to explore and express their individuality and independence. Over the weeks and months, they became more proactive in their engagement with one another, taking more risks in the musical/social environment. Their social and musical behaviour became gradually more characterised by initiative and internal motivation.

1.2.2.5 Leadership skills

Related to the capacity for personal agency is the ability to hold a position of leadership. The workshops included a variety of activities which afforded participants the opportunity to lead or guide their fellow drummers in their musical endeavours. In the supportive environment of the drum circle the participants were consistently encouraged in their efforts and steadily became more confident in the role of leader/facilitator. Each participant was recognised for his or her efforts, and the experience of being acknowledged was important to developing sense of self. The opportunity to lead was equally important for the typically gregarious children (who received much needed positive and constructive acknowledgement and affirmation) and for the more withdrawn, introverted children (who were allowed to explore an unfamiliar role, practise being assertive and receive due recognition). Throughout the course of the project, the participants became more comfortable with and adept at

“conducting” their peers; they became progressively more creative and adventurous in their efforts. Finally, the task of leading their groups not only nurtured feelings of confidence, self-efficacy and self-esteem; it also effectively cemented their knowledge of whatever concept or skill was being practised in any given activity.

1.2.2.6 Teamwork skills

Almost every game and activity included in the workshops required high levels of teamwork from the participants. If the children failed to cooperate, the activity would be virtually impossible to perform. Owing to the intrinsically motivating nature of music-/rhythm-based activities in general, the children were naturally motivated to work together to achieve the desired outcome. The satisfaction inherent in achieving the final product compelled the participants to remarkable degrees of collaboration, resulting in high levels of group unity and coherence or “team spirit.” This sense of solidarity frequently inspired unprecedented displays of helpfulness, mutual support, democracy (fairness, sharing, turn-taking, etc.) and the desire to make a contribution. With regard to long-term goals, such as preparation of the “Waka Waka” for the Christmas concert, the children demonstrated an impressive degree of commitment to the “team” (the drumming group). Furthermore, accomplishment of joint objectives often required that the participants be socially flexible, able to adapt to whatever position the group required of them at a particular point in time (whether that meant taking a solo or remaining in the background, for example). Personal preferences (regarding style of interaction) were necessarily put aside in favour of the final musical product.

1.2.2.7 Inclusion

Importantly, the drumming workshops promoted the inclusion of all participants. The children were grouped as carefully as possible according to age and developmental ability, but they possessed different rates and styles of learning, which was especially evident in group two where there was a high prevalence of learning disorders. The drum circle activities were consistently effective in including all participants, regardless of how intellectually or musically gifted or challenged they were. Most activities or games offered the participants a certain degree of freedom with regard to how they could participate. Each child could thus be fully involved at all times, in a way that best suited his or her temperament and/or learning aptitude. An example of this was the mixed-percussion “Waka Waka” item the children prepared for the concert. Each child was fully involved: those children who struggled to learn the principal drumming arrangement contributed meaningfully by keeping the pulse with sets of claves or by adding colour and texture to the arrangement by accompanying the drummers with a

variety of small percussion instruments. By allowing every child to participate in a way that was right for him or her, and then accepting and appreciating his or her efforts, the workshops fostered a sense of belonging. The benefits of such an inclusive environment were most striking in the case of Precious. A member of group two with significant cognitive delays, Precious revelled in the (rare) experience of being fully included with her peers in each activity.

1.2.2.8 Regulation of social interaction

Not only did the drumming activities encourage pro-social interaction, they also appeared to organise and regulate that interaction. This was probably due, in part, to the containing, organising nature of drum circle activities and due to the containing or “holding” nature of the drum circle setting itself. The activities and games provided clear boundaries and guidelines within which the participants could order their activity and interaction (see 1.2.2.10 Limits and boundaries below). It is interesting to note that the activities often allowed the group to self-regulate, minimising the need for intervention from the facilitator. In this way, the drum circle and activities themselves frequently acted as the primary “facilitator.” Activities promoted empathy, tolerance and mutual consideration as the members “tuned in” with or got into “the groove” with one another. Furthermore, the drumming medium tended to make tangible (or at least audible) the children’s patterns of interaction. Being able to hear themselves dominating the acoustic and social space (or, alternatively being “drowned out” and thus musically/socially ineffectual) brought about a new dimension of self and social awareness. This awareness often led to spontaneous adjustment in individuals’ style of musical and social interaction. Difficulties with impulse-control were similarly reduced; hearing the full effect of a beat played out of turn often motivated impulsive participants to pay closer attention to their actions and to the actions of others.

1.2.2.9 Appropriate permissiveness

Within appropriate boundaries and limitations, the children were granted a fitting degree of freedom to be themselves. The guidelines implemented were not overly restrictive, as excessive rules would have dampened the children’s spontaneity and creativity. Furthermore, overly rigid regulations would have prevented authentic self-expression, severely limiting potential therapeutic benefits. Appropriate permissiveness, on the other hand, helped foster the children’s individuality and personal agency while simultaneously instilling a sense of self-responsibility. The drumming workshops provided the participants with a rare and much needed opportunity to be carefree, uninhibited and even boisterous, all within the safe and secure setting of the drum circle. They were free from undue restraints and self-

consciousness and were empowered to participate with initiative and spontaneity. Several children, whose playing (and general demeanour) had been excessively careful, inhibited and “safe,” became far more daring and adventurous, both musically and socially. Usually shy, withdrawn children may have benefited from the drum as a protective object through which they could relate to the group indirectly. Regardless of the dynamics involved, the drum circle freed the participants to explore and experiment with novel ways of behaving and interacting with one another.

1.2.2.10 Limits and boundaries

Simple, clear and consistently enforced (yet not overly restrictive) limits and boundaries were the factors which made possible a protective and supportive sense of containment. These limits and boundaries created the safe, secure and stable environment necessary for the participants to engage in free self-expression, to explore their sense of agency and to establish solidarity as a group. Without these vital components, any degree of permissiveness would have resulted in chaos rather than creativity. Indeed, it was the children’s freedom of expression, their sense of safety (even the safety to challenge the boundaries) and the spontaneity (as opposed to impulsivity) of their interaction which attested to the effectiveness of the limitations established. Appropriate boundaries helped to harness unbounded energy and to direct it constructively. As previously mentioned, the regulating nature of the activities and the physical setting of the circle both played important roles in establishing respected and effective boundaries.

1.2.3 Cognitive functioning

Firstly, many participants evidenced significant improvement in terms of their ability to concentrate. Gradually, as their capacity for focused attention improved, they were less easily distracted by extraneous stimuli. In this regard, both sustained and selective attention were enhanced (in other words, they were increasingly able to remain focused for extended periods of time, as well as able to stay focused on the particular task at hand, respectively). Several important benefits were related to the advances in concentration. Basically, participants became better able to listen attentively. Awareness of auditory stimuli improved as active listening was practised. Not surprisingly, participants found it progressively easier to understand, remember and follow instructions. Most children also demonstrated improved memory, both for verbal statements and for increasingly complex rhythmic patterns and phrases. With practice, most participants gradually became more adept at learning new techniques, and then incorporating them into their own playing. For example, they could apply drumming techniques

and integrate musical elements (such as tempo or timbre) into their improvisations. Finally, creativity was substantially enhanced; the participants became more adventurous and experimental in their music making and were increasingly willing to try new things or to perform old activities in novel ways.

1.2.4 Musical capacity

The majority of children made impressive musical progress during the course of the project. Furthermore, and most importantly, many of them experienced the acquisition and development of musical skills with great satisfaction and a healthy sense of pride. Their sense of competence was thus effectively enhanced. Confidence, efficacy, self-esteem, sense of agency and leadership qualities were all apparently promoted, to varying degrees, as the children mastered several diverse aspects of African drumming. Generally, the participants' sense of pulse improved significantly. Most of the children became more rhythmically sure throughout the duration of the project. Another of the most outstanding developments displayed by many children was a steadily increasing capacity to improvise. Where the children's style of improvisation had initially been rigid and monotonous, it gradually became more fluid and spontaneous. On the other hand, improvisation that had been chaotic and disorganised to begin with became increasingly orderly, regulated by an improved sense of pulse, rhythm and metre. With improved confidence and capacity for improvisation, the quality of children's solos improved. Their capacity for ensemble work was also enhanced as they developed the ability to match one another's playing and to integrate their individual contributions within the overall group composition. Finally, virtually all the children became increasingly adept at learning new rhythms and sequences of rhythms.

1.3 Integration of quantitative and qualitative findings

While the quantitative and qualitative findings were presented and discussed in separate chapters (that is, Chapters Five and Six respectively), it must be noted that this was done only for the purposes of organisation and clarity. As mentioned in Chapter Six, section 5. Conclusion, all the findings must necessarily be considered as representing different aspects of a single (but multifaceted) phenomenon. The two chapters represent different angles from which the research subject was explored. All angles need to be viewed as jointly comprising the greater whole, which will allow for the emergence of a unified, complete understanding of the research outcomes. Similarly, research questions and answers were outlined separately, but should each be considered in the light of the other. The following paragraph offers a brief, integrated discussion of the qualitative and quantitative findings.

The significant, positive findings generated by the qualitative methods of data collection and analysis contrast with the inconclusive, and in some respects, negative, results obtained from the quantitative methods employed. This discrepancy is considered in section 5. Conclusions, below. In short, quantitative methods may not, in isolation, have been able to adequately capture the potential of African drumming to enhance children's emotional and social well-being. Qualitative methods were necessary for a more complete and meaningful investigation of this phenomena. While inconclusive and subject to the limitations discussed in section 2. Discussion of problems, below, the quantitative findings did add value to the study. They indicated that while the workshops were able to enhance the children's emotional and social functioning for the duration of the sessions, they were not sufficient to produce long-lasting and pervasive improvements. Taken together, these findings point to the capacity of African drumming to enhance the children's affective functioning and social interaction, at least in the short term, but suggest that additional forms of intervention may be necessary to effectively ameliorate the effects of severe trauma, especially when the drumming programme is of a limited duration.

2. Discussion of problems

In Chapter Four, section 4. Limitations, it was explained that some of the children selected for participation in the project did not possess the reading ability required by the Beck Youth Inventories (a grade two reading level). Please see this section as well as sections 3.1 Research instrument and 3.2.1 Sampling in the same chapter for a complete explanation regarding why this assessment tool was selected, why these children were included and the manner in which the difficulty was managed. To reiterate briefly, participants with an inadequate reading ability had the tests read and explained to them individually. Nevertheless, because the assessment tool was written and administered in English, language difficulties and the resulting potential for misunderstandings may have interfered with test performance. This would have negatively influenced the validity of test results. A similar problem may have arisen with those children who did possess the required second grade reading ability; while they were able to read the tests for themselves, none of the participants were answering in their native language. Once again, language difficulties may have prevented a full understanding of the test items, undermining accuracy of their responses.

A related problem is discussed below in section 5. Suggestions for further research. Briefly, quantitative research with diverse cultural groups presents great challenges for researchers in South Africa (as well as for those in many other countries, due to the rapid process of globalisation). The scarcity of indigenous or locally adapted and/or translated psychological measures jeopardises attempts to conduct meaningful empirical research with the majority of South Africa's population. Cultural and linguistic factors make appropriate and fair assessment exceedingly difficult, limiting the validity of quantitative investigation. A further problem impinging upon the quantitative research component of this study was the lack of appropriate assessment practitioners to facilitate the assessment process. Ideally, practitioners should be familiar with the language and cultural background of the testees, able to administer the test in the preferred language of the test-takers, and capable of taking various cultural and social factors into account when scoring and interpreting test results. This matter, too, is discussed further in section 5. below. A final issue was related to the measurement tool used. This involved the use of a test designed to assess five particular psychological constructs (namely, anxiety, depression, anger, disruptive behaviour and self-concept) in a study dealing with the more general dimensions of emotional and social well-being. Please refer once again to sections 3.1 and 4. of Chapter Four, in which the difficulties of finding a measuring device appropriate to the purposes of the study are explicated.

Other factors which may have undermined the efficacy of the research include the limited time span over which the project was presented (four months), limited contact between researcher and participants (one session per week) and continuous shifting of group composition due to the lack of a permanent workshop assistant. As the different assistants joined the sessions, they would inevitably influence the group dynamics. Ideally, group composition should remain as stable as possible in order for group coherence to be established. With regard to the current study, where staff of the Village shared the responsibility of assisting with the sessions, stability of group membership was, to some extent, compromised. Also regarding the latter limitation, the absence of such an assistant further meant that there was no one present to continuously observe each workshop (in addition to the researcher/facilitator). An appropriate co-facilitator would have been able to provide a valuable second-opinion of the children's behaviour, effectively enhancing the validity of the qualitative data analysis and findings.

3. Answering the research questions

The following is an outline of the primary research question, the five secondary questions and the answers gathered through the research study.

3.1 The primary research question

The primary research question was formulated as follows: In which ways and to what extent can sessions of African drumming enhance the emotional and social well-being of children aged 7 to 12 years in a residential place of care?

Sessions of African drumming were able to enhance the emotional and social well-being of the children significantly, but only for the duration of the sessions and perhaps for a very limited period immediately following the sessions. Focused observations evidenced increasingly adaptive emotional and social functioning during the sessions, and such improvement was consistent and cumulative throughout the course of the project. The interviews with the members of staff revealed a similar picture: the children functioned better, both individually and as a group, during the sessions than they did at most other times (i.e. during homework or recreational sessions or other organised activities). According to the staff interviews and participant focus groups, the children looked forward to their drumming session each week and were more relaxed and in a better mood directly after the workshops. However, the improvements evidenced during the workshops failed to generalise across other contexts of the children's lives.

That the emotional and social improvements did not generalise or transfer to the children's everyday behaviour and functioning is supported by the lack of positive results from the psychological testing. While the drumming workshops exerted a positive influence on the emotional and social functioning of the children involved, the impact was not sufficient to make a noticeable difference to the children's overall functioning (or to reflect significantly on the psychological assessment measure).

3.2 The secondary research questions

The secondary research questions were presented as stated below.

3.2.1 Quantitative research questions

The research questions with a quantitative focus were formulated as follows, with the answers provided immediately after each question:

3.2.1.1 What is the potential of African drumming to reduce anxiety, depression, anger and disruptive behaviour (as defined and operationalised by the Beck Youth Inventories) among children aged 7 to 12 years in a residential place of care?

Results obtained from the Beck Youth Inventories showed that the workshops of African drumming were unable to reduce significantly the children's levels of depression, anger or disruptive behaviour. Furthermore, levels of anxiety increased according to the test scores.

3.2.1.2 What contributions could African drumming make to the promotion of the children's self-concept (as defined and operationalised by the Beck Youth Inventories)?

According to pre- and post-testing with the Beck Youth Inventories, the African drumming programme did not impact significantly upon the self-concept of participants.

3.2.2 Qualitative research questions

The three research questions possessing a qualitative orientation are stated below. They are followed by the answers arrived at through the research conducted:

3.2.2.1 In which ways and to what extent can African drumming serve to enhance self-esteem, pro-social behaviour, enjoyment, concentration and manifestations of musical capacity among children aged 7 to 12 years in a residential place of care?

Focused observations indicated that the children's self-esteem, pro-social behaviour, concentration and demonstrated musical capacity increased substantially during the workshops. However, in the light of the interviews with relevant staff members (as well as the quantitative findings presented above), these changes did not appear to generalise or transfer to other contexts of the children's functioning.

Perhaps the most outstanding observation was the great enjoyment which the children evidenced during the workshops. That sessions of African drumming could provide direct, short-term enhancement of children's emotional and social functioning is a valuable finding in its own right, especially within the residential care setting where emotional and social health are often compromised and the residents require as much nurturing as possible.

3.2.2.2 How do the children experience the sessions of African drumming?

During the focus group discussions, the children unanimously confirmed their immense enjoyment and appreciation of the workshops. In the light of the children's discussion, they had clearly experienced the programme as highly meaningful, both in terms of the chance to engage in fun, playful activities with their fellow residents and as an opportunity to play the drums and other instruments, thus learning and mastering new skills. They particularly enjoyed the group experience of preparing a piece for the Village's Christmas concert.

3.2.2.3 What is the possibility that weekly sessions of African drumming could be integrated within and supportive of the residence's general programme and routine?

Weekly sessions of African drumming are ideally suited for integration within the Epworth Children's Village. The workshops provided optimal recreational and educational opportunities for the residents. Both the staff and participants who were involved in the project asserted that such a project would be successful as a permanent part of the residence's recreational offerings.

4. Summary of contributions

The research study served to strengthen the growing conviction (evident in both academic and popular literature) that rhythm-based activities, and African drumming in particular, can offer numerous social and emotional advantages to participants, especially children in middle childhood. It also helped highlight the relevance and importance of using qualitative methodology, particularly in socially-orientated research contexts. (Both these points are explicated below under section 5. Conclusions). Furthermore, the project provided sixteen children with the opportunity to engage in a programme of African drumming, an opportunity they otherwise would have been unlikely to have had. Findings

revealed that the participants benefited from the project, even though the results were not pervasive or lasting, while the children themselves indicated the pleasure and enjoyment they derived from the workshops.

Additionally, the research project resulted in the composition of a complete four-month (sixteen workshop) drumming programme. The clear and simple documentation of each session could assist with the replication and sustainability of such an intervention in the future. The programme could easily be presented within other communities of children as it requires a minimum amount of training on the part of the facilitator and no previous training on the part of the participants. The programme is sustainable and cost-effective, requiring only *djembes* and willing facilitators. The number of children who could potentially be reached through such an intervention is limited only by the availability of those resources. This intervention potentially offers numerous benefits in addition to the aforementioned psychological ones, such as placing individuals back in touch with their rich cultural heritage through traditional music-making, dancing, folksongs and folktales.

The study generated a novel perspective regarding the integration of Gestalt theory within the practice of African drumming. The emerging principle holds that group sessions of African drumming are able to promote Gestalt play therapy objectives such as enhancing the child's experience of "the here-and-now," increasing sensory and emotional awareness, promoting the child's ability to make contact with the self and others, providing the child with experiences of mastery and, on the whole, strengthening his or her sense of self. As such, the study presents a means and a format for the application of Gestalt theory within the work of music educators, drum circle facilitators, music therapists and psychologists. It also presents an effective and versatile means of presenting Gestalt play therapy to a number of children simultaneously.

5. Conclusions

This study generated supportive qualitative evidence regarding the potential benefits of African drumming. The project helped confirm the notion that this form of rhythm-based intervention can enhance the emotional and social well-being of children, at least in the short-term. While not necessarily a therapeutic procedure, African drumming is used within traditional communities, and

shows definite potential beyond such communities, too, of being able to improve general emotional and social well-being and to strengthen sense of self.

The project provided clear qualitative evidence regarding the suitability of African drumming as an intervention within the Epworth Children's Village. The project proved to be in line with the values and philosophies of the Village, and it fitted exceptionally well within the educational and recreational programme provided for the residents. There was sufficient evidence that such an intervention could successfully and beneficially be integrated within the Village's weekend routine on an on-going basis. While this finding cannot be generalised to other residential places of care, it can be reasonably inferred that such an intervention could be effectively incorporated within other comparable settings.

The results generated from the Beck Youth Inventories were valuable and necessary (despite the abovementioned limitations), indicating that the intervention was not sufficient to enhance the emotional and social well-being of children in a lasting, enduring manner. The current study also highlighted the pressing need for psychological assessment tools that are culturally and linguistically appropriate for various population and language groups. The need for tailored administration procedures when working with diverse cultural groups (and especially with children belonging to these groups) was also accentuated.

While the results obtained from the Beck Youth Inventories were not conclusive, they were valuable in helping to highlight the specific areas or contexts in which drumming workshops could be employed most effectively. It is significant that levels of anxiety apparently increased during the period between the pre- and post-test. This increase may have been related to the capacity of drumming to enhance the participants' emotional, body and sensory awareness and to promote their contact functions. It thus appears that drumming sessions may be a valuable tool during the early stages of intervention with children, when therapeutic objectives involve enhancing awareness and contact and facilitating self-expression. However, additional forms of treatment may become necessary for effective remediation of social and emotional difficulties, especially where the drumming intervention is of a limited duration.

The study also confirmed the value of qualitative research when working in the areas of music education and the social sciences. Qualitative methods of data collection and analysis proved to be necessary in addition to quantitative methods, to allow for a satisfactory exploration of the potential of African drumming to enhance the emotional and social well-being of the children in this study. While

the positive influence upon the children's emotional and social behaviour was not pervasive or enduring, these (qualitative) methods highlighted the potential of drumming as an intervention. The insights afforded by the focused observations, interviews and focus groups revealed the value of African drumming in a way not reflected by the purely quantitative measurements. The children's enjoyment of the workshops, as well as the positive (albeit transitory) influence of the drum circle activities upon their affective functioning and social interaction, was highlighted.

6. Recommendations for further research

Similar studies, but with longer periods of intervention, are needed to further explore the potential benefits of African drumming. Presented as a long-term intervention programme, African drumming would be a valuable area of exploration. Similarly, a more intensive programme allowing for a greater degree of contact between the facilitator and participants (more frequent sessions) would provide additional insight into the effectiveness of drumming as an intervention. A related suggestion involves not only the more extensive and intensive application of the drumming intervention, but also the addition of other forms of therapy. This will allow for a more thorough investigation of the potential of drumming, alone or as part of a treatment plan, to counteract the negative effects of childhood trauma.

Should a similar research project be undertaken in the future, it would be highly advisable that the researcher recruit an assistant or co-facilitator to aid presentation of the sessions. One suitably qualified individual should be contracted to be available for every session and for the entire duration of the project. The necessity of a co-facilitator varies as a function of the nature of the participants. Children who are psychologically and/or behaviourally unstable or fragile often require a greater degree of external regulation and containment.

There is a growing body of literature, anecdotal and academic, which supports the effectiveness of African drumming and other, similar rhythm-based activities for enhancing psychological well-being. However, there is still relatively little objective evidence to support these ideas and practices. Perhaps this is because this particular field of enquiry (involving music education and the social sciences) lends itself more easily to in-depth, qualitative investigation. However, "new" treatment options are more readily accepted once they are backed by empirical, quantitative research evidence, and it is important that data of this kind is generated. While quantitative research plays an essential role in health care

developments (to endorse or sanction legitimate modes of treatment within the managed-care system), it faces a significant challenge in multi-cultural South Africa. This challenge involves the adaptation/translation of existing psychological measures or the development of indigenous measures that are culturally and linguistically appropriate for individuals of all racial and ethnic groups. Often, American or European assessment tools have been used on African populations with little consideration of their suitability for these diverse social groups. Even when tests are translated, issues of test bias are still pertinent due to cultural and other background issues. In addition to test adaptation and development, appropriate norms and cut-off points would necessarily be established for the different social groups. Methods of scoring and interpretation would also have to take into account factors such as socio-economic status, level and quality of education, urbanisation, etc., all of which could possibly impact on test performance.

Until such locally relevant psychological measures are available, it is going to be exceedingly difficult to conduct convincing quantitative research with local South African population groups. This applies especially to research with children, where there are great variations concerning education, verbal ability, urbanisation and language proficiency (concerning which language, e.g. mother-tongue, English or some mixed dialect, the child is most accustomed to). The struggle will not end, however, with appropriate measures and normative information. The entire assessment practice will need to be tailored to each unique context, ensuring that tests are administered in the individual's preferred language by a practitioner who is familiar with the testee's cultural and social background. In order to bring together expertise in assessment, proficiency in the testee's preferred language and familiarity with their cultural/social backgrounds, a team approach is likely to be required for valid, meaningful quantitative research using psychological measures.

There is a need for comparable research with the potential of expanding upon the generaliseability of the findings. For instance, similar projects may be conducted with different age groups, for varying durations of time and in alternative settings. This relates closely to the next point. While the generation of new theory was not an aim of the current study, it is hoped that future research will contribute to the body of theory informing the field of music education. There is a tendency for this field to borrow theory and concepts from other related fields, including those of music, education and psychology. The researcher believes that this study may serve to instigate other research more focused on the development of broad, generalisable theoretical principles.