A LIFE SKILLS PROGRAMME FOR LEARNERS IN THE SENIOR PHASE: A SOCIAL WORK PERSPECTIVE

by

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to ALL the Grade 7 learners of the Masingita Primary School.

ABSTRACT
A LIFE SKILLS PROGRAMME FOR LEARNERS IN THE SENIOR PHASE: A SOCIAL WORK PERSPECTIVE

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Life skills education and training programmes, which offer skills to help people cope with everyday life, have in recent years become a highly popular method of intervention and prevention in social work. It is a proactive method and supports the developmental approach of social welfare.

The research entailed the development, implementation and evaluation of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme. The intervention research model was employed as foundation for the design and development of the programme and the ecological perspective as the theoretical framework. The study highlighted the school as an appropriate context within which to improve the life skills of learners. The main goal of the study was to develop and implement a personal and interpersonal life skills programme for Grade 7 learners in the senior phase of a school, and to evaluate whether participation in the life skills programme would lead to personal growth (self-empowerment) and social competence and thus contribute to the optimal social functioning of children in the classroom, school, family and community (capacity building). A descriptive design with a quasi-experiment, the one-group pre-test-post-test experiment, was used in this study. A non-parametric statistical test was utilized because the data was measured on an ordinal scale (Wilcoxon signed-rank test).

The Life Skills Programme was implemented over twelve sessions, lasting about one-and-a-half hours, held twice weekly over a period of six weeks. Using experiential learning within the groupwork method, the programme was subsequently implemented with Grade 7 learners at a traditional black primary school in Pretoria and their ages varied from approximately 12 to 16 years. Forty learners constituted the sample in the study and a non-probability sampling procedure was used. In the school context it is expected that the social worker will include all learners in the classroom (classroom intervention). The sample was divided in six smaller groups with 5 to 7 learners in each group.

The study found that the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme had a statistically highly significant effect (all items = p value ≤ 0.01) on the personal and interpersonal life skills development of the Grade 7 learners in the senior phase of the General Education and Training Band in the particular primary school. It is recommended that this intervention programme be implemented and facilitated by a social worker who is part of the multidisciplinary education support personnel.

ABSTRAK

'N LEWENSVAARDIGHEIDSPROGRAM VIR LEERDERS IN DIE SENIOR FASE: 'N MAATSKAPLIKE WERK PERSPEKTIEF

deur

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Lewensvaardigheidsonderwys en –opleidingsprogramme wat vaardighede aanbied om mense te help om die alledaagse lewe beter te kan hanteer, het in die afgelope tyd baie populêr as intervensie en voorkomingsmetode in Maatskaplike Werk geword. Dit is ‘n proaktiewe metode en ondersteun die ontwikkelingsbenadering in maatskaplike ontwikkeling.

Die intervensie navorsingsmodel is as grondslag gebruik vir die ontwikkeling, implementering en evaluering van ‘n lewensvaardigheidsprogram. Die ekologiese perspektief is as teoretiese raamwerk gebruik. In die studie word die skool as die gepaste konteks beskou en gebruik om die vaardighede van leerders te ontwikkeling en verbeter. Die doelstelling was om ‘n persoonlike en interpersoonlike lewensvaardigheidsprogram vir Graad 7 leerders in die senior fase van ‘n skool te ontwikkel, te implementeer en te evalueer of deelname aan die program aanleiding gee tot persoonlike groei (selfbemagtiging) en sosiale bekwaamheid en derhalwe bydra tot optimale sosiale funksionering van leerders in die klaskamer, skool, gesin en gemeenskap (kapasiteitsbou). ‘n Beskrywende navorsingsontwerp is gevolg met ‘n kwasi-eksperiment, die eengroep voor- en natoets eksperiment. ‘n Nie-parametriese statistiese toets is gebruik vir die data analise (Wilcoxon-toets vir simmetrie) en ook frekwensie-analise.

Die Lewensvaardigheidsprogram is oor ses weke, twee keer per week en sessies wat ongeveer negentig minute geduur het, aangebied. Ervaringsleer binne die groepwerk metode is in die program gebruik en veertig Graad 7 leerders (ongeveer 12 tot 16 jaar) van ‘n tradisionele swart primêre skool naby Pretoria was deel van die steekproef. ‘n Nie-waarskynlikheids- of gerieflikheidsteekproef is gebruik. Binne die skoolkonteks word daar van die maatskaplike werker verwag dat al die leerders in die klas betrek sal word by ‘n intervensieprogram (klas-intervensie). Die steekproef van 40 leerders is in ses kleiner groepe van 5 tot 7 leerders verdeel.

Met die studie is bevind dat die Persoonlike en Interpersoonlike Lewensvaardigheidsprogram ‘n statisties hoogs betekenisvolle invloed het (al die items se p waarde = ≤ 0.01) op die persoonlike en interpersoonlike lewensvaardigheidsontwikkeling van die Graad 7 leerders in die senior fase van die spesifieke primêre skool. Dit word aanbeveel dat die intervensieprogram geïmplementeer en gefasiliteer word deur maatskaplike werkers wie ook deel uitmaak van die mulitdissiplinêre opvoedkundige ondersteuningspersoneel.

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KEY WORDS

Life orientation

Life skills education

Personal and interpersonal life skills

Intervention research

Senior phase learner (adolescent)

Outcomes-based education

Experiential learning

Groupwork

Facilitation

Facilitation media

SLEUTELWOORDE

Lewensoriëntering

Lewensvaardigheidsopvoeding

Persoonlike en interpersoonlike lewensvaardighede

Intervensie navorsing

Senior fase leerder (adolessent)

Uitkomsgebaseerde onderwys

Ervaringsleer

Groepwerk

Fasilitering

Fasiliteringsmedia

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION, STATEMENT OF PROBLEM AND GOAL OF STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

As South Africa moves forward into the 21st century, the long-term vision is for all South Africans to seek a society in which sound welfare, health, education and other services are available to all and that these aims will be realised in a competitive, rapidly growing economy (GEAR, 1996:1).

Social work has a responsibility to respond to the context in which it is practised. The transitional political process in South Africa, along with changing economic, social and environmental realities, has compelled social work educators and practitioners to develop skills, strategies and techniques to respond to the many challenges facing the profession (Ramphal & Moonilall, 1993). It is the researcher's opinion that social workers need to contribute to the process of reconstruction and development by engaging in processes to develop increasing personal and interpersonal power so that individuals or collectives (groups) can improve their life situation. In fact, all professions need to contribute to the process of reconstruction and development in South Africa. The care and development of children should be the foundation of social relations and the starting point of strategies to develop human resources. The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)(1994) rightly calls for empowerment and capacity building at all levels, including schools.

Social work services should be directed at releasing people's potential for growth and adaptive functioning, and increasing the responsiveness of environments to people's capacities, aspirations and needs (Germain, 1982:20). Social Work has as policy the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) outlining the principles, guidelines, recommendations and programmes for developmental social welfare in South Africa. In the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997:7), all citizens *"are called upon to participate in the development of an equitable, people-centred, democratic and appropriate social welfare system. The goal of*

developmental social welfare is a humane, peaceful, just and caring society which will uphold welfare rights, facilitate the meeting of basic human needs, release people's creative energies, help them achieve their aspirations, build human capacity and self-reliance, and participate fully in all spheres of social, economic and political life." Consequently, the focus of social work practice should be on giving positive, ample support to developmental and preventive approaches.

The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) has a new policy approach based on social development. Lombard (1996:163) states that strategies for implementing social development link the residual-institutional models of welfare to a developmental model. This approach is generally regarded as a paradigm shift from the existing approaches. This new paradigm incorporates the following vision and mission into social welfare:

- Vision: "*A welfare system which facilitates the development of human capacity and self-reliance within a caring and enabling socio-economic environment*."
- Mission: "*To serve and build a self-reliant nation in partnership with all stakeholders through an integrated social welfare system which maximizes its existing potential, and which is equitable sustainable, accessible, people-centred and developmental*" (White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997:15).

The developmental approach appealed to the researcher, who was formerly a social worker and now practises as a psychologist and educator, because of the long-accepted need for interventions that promote social welfare in proactive and positive ways.

The above-mentioned statements indicate that welfare cannot function effectively in isolation from other sectors influencing the well-being of the nation, for example education, health and housing. One of the national goals of the developmental social welfare strategy is: "*To promote social development intrasectorally both within the welfare departments and in collaboration with other Government departments and non-governmental stakeholders*" (White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997:15).

Social development is a process of planned social change designed to promote people's welfare in conjunction with a dynamic process of economic development (Midgley, 1995:25). The ultimate objective of social development is to bring about sustained improvement in the

well-being of the individual, family, community and society at large. The reduction or eradication of mass poverty, inequality and conditions of underdevelopment is a widely accepted indicator of social progress. The dimensions of social development are social welfare; health; education; housing; urban and rural development; and land reform (White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997:96). Lombard (1996:163) advocates a social developmental approach which includes helping individuals, groups and communities, but in a different way, namely by developing human resources (including capacity building and empowerment) and, where possible, by facilitating and enhancing economic development.

1.2 MOTIVATION FOR THE CHOICE OF THE STUDY

Society pays a high price when children and young people lack social and emotional competence. Social competence refers to the ability to establish acceptable and productive relationships with other people. It has been linked with many areas of success in adulthood, such as vocational competence, active involvement and participation in community development, marital satisfaction and parenting socially adjusted children. A strong and growing body of research also links intrapersonal and interpersonal functioning in childhood and adolescence to a wide variety of life outcomes, including academic functioning, social functioning, school dropout, teen pregnancy, juvenile delinquency and mental health problems (Bruene-Butler, Hampson, Elias, Clabby & Schuyler, 1997:239-240).

It is of particular relevance for the social work profession to focus on personal and interpersonal life skills as these are the most fundamental building blocks influencing the child's and youth's total functioning and behaviour (Briggs, 1995:280). The following statement is therefore appropriate: "*The Department of Welfare will negotiate with the Department of Education about the implementation of social support and development services including life skills training programmes which could be run throughout the school-going years and could be incorporate into the curriculum. This training should include personal relationship skills, education regarding sexuality and substance abuse, and other appropriate programmes. It should be aimed at teaching interpersonal skills, the development of the self-esteem, and decision-making and problem-solving skills"* (White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997: 62).

This collaboration between the Departments of Social Welfare and Education could support the attainment of the following vision for South Africa, as stated in the document for Lifelong Learning through a National Curriculum Framework (1997): "*A prosperous, truly united, democratic and internationally competitive country with literate, creative and critical citizens leading productive, self-fulfilled lives in a country free of violence, discrimination and prejudice*" (Department of Education, 1997:1). Since it is recognised that partnerships between different ministries will be important for the purposes of co-operation and cost-sharing (ANC, 1994:35), the concerns of education support services in Education should be brought together with those of Health and Welfare under the national Reconstruction and Development Programme. This would facilitate sufficient resourcing for the massive health and welfare task facing education support services (Lazarus & Donald, 1995:48-49). According to Kotzé (1994:35), the mere provision of education is not enough to achieve specific educational objectives. Education should be supplemented by support services such as school social work, school guidance and counselling, specialised education, school health and school psychology. The researcher has always had a special interest in school social work and the fact that it is acknowledged as one of the essential education support services that should develop and promote the social work profession and needs further investigation.

The debate on education in South Africa has gone through various phases in recent years. Lately it has shifted to acknowledge the importance of education support services as an integral component of the curriculum. It is realised that school social work, school guidance and counselling, specialised education, school health and school psychology services constitute important elements of education. Based on these assumptions, the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI, 1992) emphasised the necessity of support services in education. The NEPI principles state that an integrated approach should be followed in which the promotive or developmental aspects of support services should be an integral part of the general curriculum (Kotzé, 1994:36). However, although there may be overlapping between some of these support services, each of them should also perform a particular function in education.

Primary prevention seeks to prevent problematic stress and maladaption and to promote adaptive functioning and positive development. Life skills education and training are part of a developmental approach and therefore also a form of primary prevention. Central to the life

skills philosophy is the concept of self-empowerment and a belief that skills can be learned, modified and improved as the person develops and adjusts to life's challenges (Hopson & Scally, 1986). There is also a conviction that all children and the youth need to be prepared for life at all levels – physically, emotionally, spiritually, intellectually and socially – if South Africa is to have a self-reliant rainbow nation, maximise its existing potential and contribute to a caring and developmental society. The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997:61) states: *"Social welfare personnel should foster self-reliance and promote the personal growth and social competence of families and children through capacity-building and empowerment programmes."*

Current demands in South Africa for rapid and significant change require productive and efficient welfare programmes. Careful programme development and evaluation are essential for effective ongoing planning to ensure that programmes meet the challenge to build new capacities for growth and development for all South Africans, especially children.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Approaches to primary prevention seek to reduce the sources of stress in individuals and in their social and physical environments, while simultaneously building the services to growth-promoting experiences (compare Hoffmann, 1990). If social workers could use professional knowledge and skills to develop people's potential and prevent problems from arising, then many individuals would be spared destructive experiences (compare Thackeray, Farley & Skidmore, 1994). A greater understanding of human behaviour, interrelationships and social phenomena is called for to anticipate problems before they occur.

The need for developmental programmes aimed at primary prevention in the school setting has important implications for the practice of school social work. In emphasising the important developmental and preventive roles that social workers can play in schools, Sancho (1994) asserts that the ultimate objective of school social work is prevention. The potential of school social work and the school context should be recognised in endeavours to promote skills for living among communities in South Africa. The fact that school social work is recognised as one of the education support services is very important for the profession. Livingstone (1990)

stresses the need to view schools in the wider context of the society in which they operate. Livingstone (1990) highlights the mutual goals of school social work and education. Both are deeply concerned with the maximum development of children. Both stress that the growth of each individual should be fostered so as to fulfil his/her potential. Both are concerned with the physical and emotional education and social conditions of the child. Social workers and educators (teachers) should therefore mobilise their efforts to help children attain their goals.

Life skills education and training programmes, which offer skills to help people cope with everyday life, have in recent years become a highly popular method of intervention and prevention in social work. It is a proactive method and supports the developmental approach of social welfare. Unfortunately, the researcher believes that the popularity of the method has not been linked to careful programme development and evaluation, in order to assess whether the stated objectives or outcomes of the specific life skills programmes have actually been achieved. The Consultative Paper No 1 on Special Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (Department of Education, 1999:61) states that learning programmes and materials for life skills education should be developed by appropriately trained personnel.

A multidisciplinary and intersectoral approach should be taken to ensure a holistic, integrated and comprehensive approach which involves education support personnel. This requires an interdisciplinary approach involving social work, education and other support services. Teamwork and professional co-operation among the different professions are essential for success. The literature emphasises that the social worker should be familiarised with the school as a social institution where the central concerns are teaching and learning (Kotzé, 1994:38).

Kotzé (1994:38) states that the school social worker might be faced with professional biases from the teaching profession and scepticism from the authorities, and adds: "*This problem could be addressed by creating an educational orientation and environment that will not only accept new members into the educational team, but that would emphasise the importance of support services in the school. This will require an integrated and interdisciplinary approach. This approach has the potential to address many of the problems that schools experience currently and which may become worse in the near future*" (Kotzé, 1994:49).

Life skills education has been formally included in all school curricula since 1996, but real efforts have to be made to make life skills education more accessible. Life skills programmes should be designed to promote the vision of Curriculum 2005 and to enable the facilitators (social workers) to implement an outcomes-based educational approach. The social worker can be an initiator of life skills education and his/her work may become the model on which further life skills education is based. This is important not only for South Africa, but also for the rest of the world. There is a universal interest in and need for life skills education (Rooth, 1997:2). As school social work is part of the proposed model of education support services, as set out in Lazarus and Donald (1995), it has been regarded as an essential support service to education.

Rooth (1997:28) believes that the importance of life skills education in the primary school cannot be stressed enough. life skills education in the primary school is developmental, promotive and preventive. Children who have access to life skills education will learn the skills they need to cope with the problems of growing up. It is difficult to begin life skills education at secondary school if the important groundwork has not been done at primary school. Life skills development is a lifelong process.

Primary school children, or rather children in the General Education and Training Band (pre-school; foundation phase; intermediate and senior phase), can become more self-empowered by learning life skills. Social workers, teachers, psychologists and parents could be modelling growth-oriented values, and helping children become more aware of their inner and external worth, by giving them information and by helping them to develop goals and commitments. They could also work at changing the schools and other institutions into empowering rather than depowering places to live and work (compare Hopson & Scally, 1986:79).

The focus on the development, implemention and evaluation of a personal and interpersonal life skills programme for children in primary schools (Grade 7 of the senior phase) should promote the principle of caring for one another's well-being and should foster a spirit of mutual support.

The following were concerns for the researcher and call for investigation:

- There are no guidelines for the social worker to develop/design life skills programmes for senior phase learners, although this would promote the vision of Curriculum 2005.
- There are no guidelines for the social worker to implement or present a life skills programme for the senior phase learners, based on an outcomes-based educational approach.
- Social workers present various life skills programmes at different primary and secondary schools without evaluating or assessing the effectiveness of the programmes.

The main problem investigated in this study was formulated in the following question:
How should a personal and interpersonal life skills programme be developed, implemented and evaluated to have an effect on the personal growth and social functioning of learners in the senior phase of the General Education and Training Band?

1.4 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main goal of the study was to develop and implement a personal and interpersonal life skills programme for Grade 7 learners in the senior phase of a traditionally African school, and to evaluate whether participation in the life skills programme would lead to personal growth (self-empowerment) and social competence and thus contribute to the optimal social functioning of children in the classroom, school, family and community (capacity building).

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- To do a literature study so as to review the content of the existing life skills programmes in different disciplines. These programmes are being developed and implemented at national and international levels.
- To do a literature study on the adolescent which reflect the learner in the senior phase of the General Education and Training Band.
- To formulate and administer a questionnaire to help learners to assess (rate) their personal and interpersonal life skills before and after the programme.

- To devise appropriate modules as subsets of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme for learners attending a primary school (a traditionally black school).
- To implement the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme by making use of facilitation, group work, experiential learning and continuity.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Life Skills Programme by determining whether it
  - contributed to the learner's self-knowledge, knowledge of feelings, thinking, actions, needs, responsibilities, feelings of self-worth, positive attitudes towards the self (enhancement of self-concept and self-reliance: personal).
  - contributed to the learner's knowledge and understanding of his/her family, school, friends, community; developed more effective communication, problem-solving and conflict management skills (empowerment, capacity-building) and in addition had an impact on the learner's participation in the classroom, school and community (interpersonal).
- To determine the strengths and weaknesses of the programme with a view to making recommendations on improving it. To this end, a questionnaire was formulated and administered to evaluate the Life Skills Programme.
- To provide guidelines for social workers on developing, implementing and evaluating life skills programmes for children and the youth.

1.5 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR THE STUDY

Hypotheses are tentative, concrete and testable statements about relations among variables. A hypothesis which is suggested as an answer to a problem, has to be tested empirically before it can be accepted and incorporated into a theory (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:37).

In view of the preceding statement of the problem, this research is directed further by the following overarching hypothesis:

> **The Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme has a statistically significant influence on the personal and interpersonal development of the Grade 7 learners in the senior phase of the General Education and Training Band**.

Through a personal and interpersonal life skills programme, children's self-reliance can be fostered and personal growth and social competence promoted. The Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme is therefore a capacity-building and self-empowerment programme.

The following questions guided the study:

- How have existing personal and interpersonal life skills programmes been developed?
- Were the minimum standards for the outcomes of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme being achieved?
- How much did the participants (learners in Grade 7) change during their participation in the Life Skills Programme?
- Was the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme effective in equipping children with personal and interpersonal skills and would it be appropriate for children (learners) from disadvantaged areas?
- How could the Life Skills Programme be further developed/adapted to increase its effectiveness?

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The ecological perspective is closely linked to the primary prevention perspective, as both these approaches focus on people and their interaction with the environment. The ecological perspective, developmental approach (intervention) and primary prevention focus on creating opportunities for positive social participation and skills to develop and promote successful relationships (compare Astor, 1995; Fraser, 1996). The researcher believes that interventions should be developmental and not focused on problems.

The ecological perspective was viewed as an appropriate framework within which to contextualise this study. This approach emphasises the multiple contextual influences on human behaviour and the concept of reciprocity between the individual and the environment (Lombard, 1992:14-15). Applying the ecological perspective therefore ensures that a situation cannot be viewed in a fragmented way but instead is seen as a whole with which the social worker has to deal. The ecosystem theory provides enough scope, not only to take into

account the various levels on which people function, but also to make provision for these by means of an integrated approach to service. The latter implies the existence of a free flow between people's levels of functioning with the purpose of helping individuals, groups and communities to improve and maintain their social functioning (Lombard, 1992:18-19). McKendrick (1990) views the person-in-transaction-with-the-environment stance as being the most useful and relevant approach for the South African social worker. One of the distinguishing features of social work is its focus on the "wholeness" and the totality of the person-in-situation gestalt (Thackeray, et al., 1994). The holistic, dynamic view of the reciprocal exchanges between people and environments moves away from simplistic, linear cause-and-effect explanations (McKendrick, 1990). The primary value of the ecological system is, therefore, that it helps social workers to focus on the totality of man and his/her environment, irrespective of whether they are using casework, group or community work (Lombard, 1992:19).

Whittaker, Schinke & Gilchrist (1986:482-483) view the environment as a set of *"nested concentric structures"*, each influencing the other and ultimately the developing child. These structures may be viewed as contexts or systems that do not function in isolation. In the ecological model, interventions may be targeted at micro, meso, exo and/or macrosystemic levels, depending on where the deficits are experienced. Therefore, if deficits occur at a microsystemic level, intervention will accordingly aim at the school, family or child. Intervention at the mesosystemic level will focus on strengthening the partnerships between the school and the family. Exosystemic interventions will target neighbours, social agencies, businesses and the community at large. Macrosystemic interventions will focus on identifying dysfunctional policies and work at the broader level of national values, legislation and policies (Kasiram, 1995:65-66).

Therefore the ecological perspective accommodates a broad spectrum of problems or needs and provides a suitable framework for understanding the concepts of personal (self-concept/self-confidence) and interpersonal (relationships with friends, family members, community members) and the reciprocal processes between people and their environment. Kasiram (1995: 66-68) regards the school as a real-life ecological unit which is an obvious venue for the practice of an ecological approach to building partnerships among subsystems, with the aim of the joint prevention and solving of problems.

The researcher support the view of Whittaker, et al., (1986) who outline the value of this paradigm in designing service programmes for children, youth and families, namely by –

- building supportive, nurturing environments for people through various forms of environmental helping which are designed to increase social support;
- improving competence in dealing with proximate and distal environments through the teaching of specific life skills, such as social skills for adolescents, family living skills and conflict resolution skills.

This all-encompassing focus of the ecological perspective increases the likelihood that social work programmes in schools will be valued as essential support services.

1.7 RESEARCH APPROACH

De Vos, Schurink and Strydom (1998:15) states that the direction of the research process and the research methodology are determined by the researcher's choice between a quantitative or qualitative, or combined quantitative-qualitative approach. For Mouton and Marais (1990:155-156) the quantitative approach is a more highly formalised as well as a more explicitly controlled approach to research in the social sciences, in other words, with a more precisely defined range which, in terms of the methods used, is relatively close to the physical sciences.

The present study employed combinations of the quantitative and qualitative approaches. De Vos (1998:359) asserts that the concept of "triangulation" is sometimes used to designate a conscious combination of quantitative and qualitative methodology. Grinnell (1997:523) states that triangulation is a common method to establish the trustworthiness of qualitative data. Triangulation was used in this study, mainly to make use of multiple methods of data collection with a view to increasing the reliability of observations.

Unfortunately, due to constraints of space and the limitations on a mini master's dissertation, only the quantitative approach and data collection method can be reported here. However, this dissertation will be followed up by further research reports and articles in scientific journals.

1.8 TYPE OF RESEARCH

The current study employed intervention research. The researcher used one of five related traditions that are particularly useful in conducting intervention research, namely experimental social innovation. The paradigm of experimental social innovation uses quasi-experimental designs to evaluate the effects of treatment programmes and other innovations designed to address social problems (Rothman & Thomas, 1994:25-26).

According to De Vos (1998:365), intervention research is attempted when something new is created and then evaluated. She states: "…*it is a new technology or intervention, an innovation, while programme evaluation as 'mere' 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*" (De Vos, 1998:365). In the current study the researcher designed and developed, implemented and eventually evaluated the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme (new intervention), for African (black) primary school children (Grade 7) in a disadvantaged milieu. The following phases and selected activities of intervention design and development (D&D) were used:

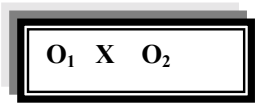
1. Problem analysis and project planning
2. Information gathering and synthesis
3. Design
4. Early development and pilot testing
5. Evaluation and advanced development
6. Dissemination (De Vos, 1998:385; Rothman & Thomas, 1994:10-11;28).

This study was targeted at addressing the application of research in practice. This is in keeping with Grinnell (1988:66) who states that the majority of social work research is applied, in other words, it addresses immediate concerns, developmental aspects or problems facing the professional in practice, and interventions should be made.

1.9 RESEARCH DESIGN

A descriptive design with a quasi-experiment, the one-group pre-test-post-test experiment, was used in this study. The quasi-experimental design is characterised by a single sample of participants who are exposed to some or other treatment or experimental intervention (to which they would not have been subjected in the normal course of events) (Huysamen, 1994:51). The one-group pre-test-post-test design is also referred to as a before-and-after design because it includes a pre-test of the dependent variable, which can be used as a basis of comparison with the post-test results. The researcher therefore used what Grinnell and Williams (1990:160) refer to as a descriptive pre-test and post-test design.

The research design can be represented as follows:



Where:

O_1 = First measurement of the dependent variable

X = Independent variable, the intervention (Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme)

O_2 = Second measurement of the dependent variable

(Grinnell, 1997:288-289).

The one-group pre-test design, in which the pre-test (questionnaire for learners to rate from 0 to 3 their personal and interpersonal life skills) preceded the introduction of the independent variable (Life Skills Programme). A post-test (questionnaire for learners to rate from 0 to 3 their personal and interpersonal life skills) followed it and could be used to determine precisely how the independent variable affected the Grade 7 learners in a primary school. The Wilcoxon test for symmetry or the signed rank test was used to test the statistical significance of the Life Skills Programme (Steyn, Smit, Du Toit & Strasheim, 1994:15).

To extend the evaluation of the effectiveness of the Life Skills Programme (contents and media used), a questionnaire was compiled by the researcher and completed by the

participants (Grade 7 learners/ senior phase learners). A frequency analysis and distributions were done on the data. The design for the present study is presented diagrammatically below:

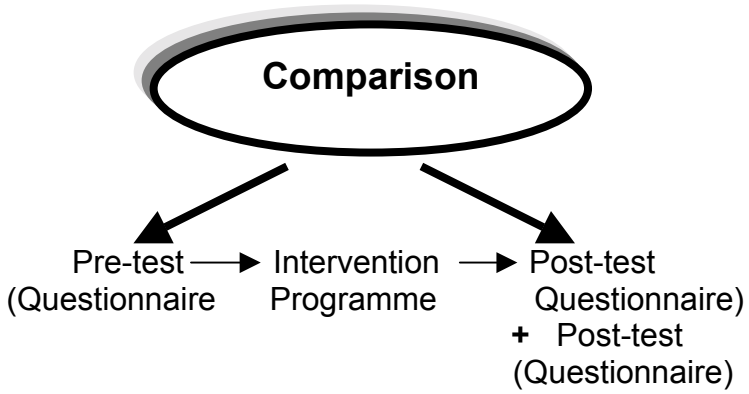


FIGURE 1.1 RESEARCH DESIGN FOR THE STUDY

The pre-test (questionnaire where learners had to rate their personal and interpersonal life skills on an ordinal scale of 0 to 3) was administered. The Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme was implemented. The post-test (questionnaire where learners had to rate their personal and interpersonal life skills on an ordinal scale of 0 to 3) was administered. Lastly, a questionnaire on the evaluation of the programme (usefulness; importance of different modules for participants; methods used; usefulness for personal and interpersonal growth and social competence; most important life skills learnt) was administered.

1.10 PILOT STUDY

1.10.1 Literature study

A literature study was conducted on approaches to life skills, national and international life skills programmes for children and the youth, the components of life skills education and its facilitation, and the developmental characteristics, developmental tasks and needs in late childhood and early adolescence from a multicultural perspective.

1.10.2 Consultation with experts

The following experts on the subject were consulted:

- Ms Edna Rooth, Director of the Life Skills Education Project at the University of Cape Town – expert on life skills education and training. The purpose was to get her ideas on developing life skills programmes for learners in the senior phase.
- Mrs Sara S. Lekgethla, Principal of the Primary School, Mamelodi East, where the research project was undertaken as she knows the history and traditions of the school very well.
- Dr Hermie Boraine, Department of Statistics, University of Pretoria – expert on statistics, who was consulted on the statistical methods used.
- Dr Mike J. van der Linde, Computer Networking and User Support Services, University of Pretoria – expert on computer networking and user support services, who was consulted on the graphics and charts used to represent the statistics.

1.10.3 Feasibility of the study and ethical aspects

The study was undertaken with minimal financial implications because the Faculties of Education and Humanities at the University of Pretoria, where the researcher is employed, are involved in several community service projects at primary and secondary schools in Mamelodi, a township near Pretoria.

The reasearcher obtained informed written concent from the Department of Education, the principal of the school, the school governing board, teachers and parents of participants involved regarding all possible information on the goal of the study, the procedures followed during the study, the possible advantages and disadvantages of the study and the credibility of the researcher. The researcher did all in her power to ensure that the participants in the study were protected from physical or emotional harm, discomfort, or danger that might arise due to research procedures. All participants were assured that any data collected from or about them will be held in confidence. All participants in the study had the right to withdraw from the study or to request that data collected about them not be used. Participants and their parents had the knowledge and gave written consent that photos may be taken at the beginning of the implementation of the Life Skills Programme, during the HIV/AIDS awareness day and at the termination of the programme.

1.10.4 Pilot study of questionnaires and programme

Rothman and Thomas (1994:36) state that during the early development and pilot testing phase, a primitive design is evolved into a form that can be evaluated under field conditions. This phase includes the important operations of developing a preliminary intervention, conducting a pilot test and applying design criteria to the preliminary intervention concept. Rothman and Thomas (1994:36) add that pilot tests are designed to determine whether the intervention will work.

In the current study, a pilot study was conducted by designing and applying a personal and interpersonal life skills programme to a group of eight African Grade 7 learners. These Grade 7 learners were not part of the sample for the main study. The pre-test (questionnaire) and post-test (questionnaire) were designed and administered. The learners (children) and teachers were interviewed. Where shortcomings were found in the programme and questionnaires, they were adapted or redesigned.

1.11 DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH POPULATION, SAMPLING METHOD AND LIMITATIONS

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:85) state that the entire group of people who are the object of research and about whom the researcher wants to determine some characteristics, is called the population. In this study the population is all the Grade 7 learners in primary schools or children in the senior phase of the General Education and Training Band (GET) in South Africa.

In the present study a non-probability sample was used, namely an accidental or availability sample. According to Huysamen (1994:44), an accidental sample is the most convenient collection of subjects who are available for research purposes. The limitation of the non-probability sample is that it makes generalisation of the research results risky (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:95).

The sample under study was all the Grade 7 (learners) at a Primary School in Mamelodi East. It is a traditionally black primary school and the learners' mother tongue is mainly Tsonga. Owing to the pressing need for life skills education, the principal and teachers of the Primary School requested that all the Grade 7 learners (learners) should be included in the programme. The staff of the school did not approve of the idea of random sampling or having a comparison group (the experimental group and control group). This would also be against the key principles guiding curriculum development for Curriculum 2005. There were 40 learners in the only Grade 7 class and their ages varied from approximately 12 to 16 years.

The sample size (n=40) limits its representativeness of the population from which it was drawn (Marlow, 1993). This factor further limits the generalizability of the study. This was not a major concern as the evaluation was undertaken with a view to developing and improving programme effectiveness within a particular context. It must be noted that the sample was selected in order to obtain in-depth information. This was adequately achieved in this study.

The study did not include a control group against which to judge programme outcomes. However, as pointed out by Fitz-Gibbon and Morris (1987), the lack of a control group where programme implementation is being monitored, is not a serious problem. Furthermore, the use of the triangulation method which encompassed multiple methods of data gathering and analysis minimized this problem. Cross checks between data gathered using different instruments enabled the researcher to validate the information obtained

1.12 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

This section contains definitions of the essential concepts used in this study.

1.12.1 Senior phase and senior phase learners

Curriculum 2005 is a new education curriculum driving the process of education transformation in South Africa. Curriculum 2005 is an outcomes-based curriculum with a special emphasis on integration of the eight learning areas, namely Arts and Culture;

Economic and Management Sciences; Human and Social Sciences; Language, Literacy and Communication; Life Orientation; Mathematics, Mathematical Literacy and Mathematical Sciences; Natural Sciences and Technology. Besides changes in education, Curriculum 2005 has also resulted in structural and organisational changes. These changes are partly due to the fact that all Education and Training, and hence Curriculum 2005, form part of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The NQF is a mechanism for integrating Education and Training (Department of Education, 1997) and is mandated by the South African Qualifications Act (RSA, Act no. 85 of 1995).

The whole spectrum of Education and Training (i.e. not merely schools) is divided into three bands:

- The General Education and Training Band (GET): Grades 1 - 9
- The Further Education and Training Band (FET): Grades 10 - 12
- The Higher Education and Training Band (HET)

The General Education and Training Band (GET) comprises the following:

- Foundation phase (Grades 1, 2 and 3)
- Intermediate phase (Grades 4, 5 and 6)
- Senior phase (Grades 7, 8 and 9) (Department of Education, 1997:4, 11).

The term learner refers to all learners, ranging from early childhood education through to adult education. The terms 'pupils' or 'students' at school and higher education levels are therefore replaced by the term 'learners' (Department of Education, 1997:xviii).

The focus of this study is on the Grade 7 learners in the senior phase. Grade 7 learners are in their final year of the primary school. The developmental characteristics and developmental tasks of these young people (learners) will be discussed in Chapter Two.

1.12.2 Life skills

Life skills are essential skills that make life easier, and increase the possibility that individuals will realise their potential and become productive members of society (Rooth, 1997:6).

Rooth (1997:6) states that life skills refer to the skills necessary for successful living and learning. As children develop more life skills, the possibility is greater that they will be able to deal with problems, and even prevent some of them. As children develop life skills, they will have more opportunities for living the way they choose to live. Life skills help people to know what to do, how to do it, and when it is appropriate to do something. Life skills are the capabilities for behaving in a certain way that are beneficial to capacity building and successful living (Rooth, 1997:6).

Powell (1995:24) gives the following definition: "Life skills *are the life-coping skills consonant with the developmental tasks of the basic human development processes, namely those skills necessary to perform tasks for a given age and sex in the following areas of human development: psychosocial, physical-sexual, vocational, cognitive, moral, ego, and emotional*."

Nelson-Jones (1993:10) states: "*Life skills are personally responsible sequences of self-helping choices in specific psychological skills areas conducive to mental wellness. People require a repertoire of life skills according to their developmental tasks and specific problems of living*."

From these definitions it can be stated that life skills involve many important areas of human functioning and that the accomplishment of developmental tasks in late childhood and early adolescence (senior phase) depends on mastery of the life skills appropriate to the developmental stage and task.

Thus, life skills may be defined broadly as not only the skills but also the insight, awareness, knowledge, values, attitudes and qualities that are necessary to empower individuals and their communities to cope and engage successfully with life and its challenges in South African society.

1.12.3 Life skills education and training

Life skills education, Education for living, Life Orientation or the New Guidance replaces the previous Guidance and Health Education formats in the school. Rooth (1997:10) proposes

that life skills education is interchangeable with Education for living, Life Orientation and New Guidance.

Life skills education is the process of giving learners (in this instance children) the opportunities to develop and practise all the necessary life skills (Rooth, 1997:10).

It includes training in skills that will enhance social, emotional and psychological functioning, for example assertiveness training, conflict resolution, problem solving (White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997:95).

Life skills education and training in the present study deal with the preventive, promotive and developmental aspects of personal and interpersonal (social) skills. Such life skills programmes can be developed, facilitated and evaluated by social workers in the school context.

1.12.4 Programme and learning programme

Koontz, O'Donnell and Weihrich (1980:168-169) define programmes as: *"…a complex of goals, policies, procedures, rules, task assignments, steps to be taken, resources to be employed, and other elements necessary to carry out a given course of action; they are ordinarily supported by necessary capital and operating budgets… A primary program may call for many derivative programs…Thus one seldom finds that a program of any importance in enterprise planning stands by itself. It is usually a part of a complex system of programs, depending upon some and affecting others."*

The Department of Education's policy document for the senior phase (Grades 7 to 9) (1997:17) states that a learning programme is the vehicle through which the curriculum is implemented at various learning sites, such as schools. They are the sets of learning activities which will involve the learner in working towards the achievement of one or more specific outcomes. A learning programme includes critical outcomes; specific outcomes; assessment criteria; range statements; performance indicators and notional time. These elements will be discussed in Chapter 3 to provide guidelines for the social worker on the development of a life skills programme.

1.12.5 Life skills helping

Life skills helping is a people-centred approach to assisting clients and others to develop self-helping skills. It focuses on the problems and potentials of people in general. It takes psychological wellness, rather than psychological disturbance, as its starting point. Life skills helping aims at shifting the balance of clients' skills, strengths and weaknesses more in the direction of strengths (Nelson-Jones,1993:31).

In the current study the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme will be people-centred so that learners can be empowered to help themselves.

1.12.6 Self-reliance

Self-reliance refers to the perceptions of personal capabilities, perceptions of personal significance, perceptions of personal power or influence over life; intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, systemic skills and judgmental skills (Glenn & Nelsen, 1989:48-49). In the current study a self-reliant child is likely to prove to be a successful, productive, capable human being when he/she possesses the following:

- Strong perceptions of personal capabilities. "I am capable."
- Strong perceptions of significance in primary relationships. "I contribute in meaningful ways and I am genuinely needed."
- Strong perceptions of personal power or influence over life. "I can influence what happens to me."
- Strong intrapersonal skills. The ability to understand personal emotions, to use that understanding to develop self-discipline and self-control, and to learn from experience.
- Strong interpersonal skills. The ability to work with others and develop friendships through communication, co-operation, negotiation, sharing, empathising and listening.
- Strong systemic skills. The ability to respond to the limits and consequences of everyday life with responsibility, adaptability, flexibility and integrity.
- Strong judgemental skills. The ability to use wisdom and evaluate situations according to appropriate values (Glenn & Nelsen, 1989:49-50).

1.12.7 Capacity building

The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997:92) describes capacity-building as: "*The development of skills for the promotion and building of organisations. There are different levels of capacity-building: upgrading of skills; review and improvement of methods used to promote organisational development; planning and organisational evaluation; revision of organisational goals and objectives; and organisational restructuring. Also refers to the development of a learning organisation capable of a continuous self-development process. Generally used to refer to skills development in a wide range of areas, such as specialist knowledge and skills, popular education and training (e.g. life skills) and social competence promotion*."

Capacity building is defined as a process which empowers people to become involved in the different initiatives of reconstruction and to participate efficiently in these (COSATU in IDASA, 1993:11).

In the present study, capacity building refers to the growth and development of people. It is also a process which assists in empowering people to become involved in the different initiatives of reconstruction in their schools and communities. Capacity building is a most important aspect, and a basic underlying theme, of life skills development.

1.12.8 Empowerment

Hopson & Scally (1981:53) declare that “power” means the ability to influence intentionally what happens to the individual in relation to other people and the physical world. To “empower” is to get in touch or help someone else get in touch with these abilities, such as powerfulness, helpfulness, self-empowerment.

The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997:93) describes empowerment as: "*The process of increasing personal, interpersonal and political power to enable individuals or collectives to improve their life situation. It requires the full participation of people in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of decisions determining the functioning and well-being of the society.*"

Rooth (1998:54) states that empowerment may be regarded as a process which enables people to gain control over their lives and centre on the idea of control. According to Rooth (1998:54), empowerment enables people to –

- believe in themselves,
- take control of their lives,
- feel in charge of what is happening to them and around them,
- feel motivated and confident about facing the challenges of life,
- achieve their optimal potential,
- become involved in political change,
- participate, and
- take ownership and control through collective political action.

Self-empowerment is a process, not an end state. One does not become “self-empowered”, but behaves in a more empowered way. The more empowered a person is, the more fulfilling his or her life will become.

1.13 CONTENTS OF RESEARCH REPORT

This chapter contains an introduction to the present study. The chapter is an orientation to the contextual and theoretical frameworks guiding the study, the statement of the problem and the aim and outcomes of the study, the research methodology employed and definitions of essential concepts. The remainder of this dissertation is divided into the following four chapters: **Chapter 2** consists of a literature survey of life skills education and training and the developmental characteristics and developmental tasks of learners in the senior phase of school. **Chapter 3** focuses on the design and development of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme (intervention research). **Chapter 4** gives specific details of the research design, the implementation and the evaluation of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme. It also contains a detailed account of the actual findings and interpretations of the research study. **Chapter 5** outlines the major conclusions drawn and the recommendations emanating from the study.

CHAPTER 2
LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND THE SENIOR PHASE LEARNER

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The majority of children in South Africa do not have the opportunity to learn life skills from their families. Poverty, migratory labour, poor or no housing and long distances from the workplace are a few of the destructive forces that have affected the family life of black South Africans over many decades (Viljoen, 1994:91). It is the school, rather than their parents, that is now responsible for helping these children to develop and learn life skills.

The development of a curriculum for life skills education should be understood in the overall context of the development of education support services, namely social work, school health, specialised education, vocational and general guidance and counselling, and psychological services. The life skills curriculum is also underpinned by the principle of service integration: that is emphasising the need to view issues of development as interrelated. This principle requires an interdisciplinary / sectoral approach to curriculum development and implementation, including all the above-mentioned education support services (De Jong, Ganie, Lazarus & Prinsloo, 1995:92-93). Service agencies near to the school are regarded as part of the community and therefore as members of the Outcomes-Based Education team (Department of Education, 1999:13-16).

Tshiwula (1995) points out that because social workers have the training, knowledge and experience in working with individuals, groups and communities, they are in a position to provide meaningful direction to the work done in schools. The social worker is an important link between the school, the learner, the family and the community. Since the social worker takes part in strategies for intervention, prevention and development, he/she can contribute to developing life skills programmes that will foster the personal and interpersonal development of learners. Life skills training should include skills in developing self-awareness, communication and assertiveness skills, skills in interpersonal relationships and problem

solving (McKendrick & Hoffmann, 1990; Tshiwula, 1995). In a broader sense, Tshiwula (1995) recommends that schools should ask social workers to run context-specific programmes which could help to prevent problems such as truancy, vandalism, substance abuse and juvenile delinquency. The researcher also believes that social workers ought to be involved in developmental programmes, such as developing and implementing various life skills programmes. In addition, Delva-Tauili'ili (1995:86) stresses the important roles of social work in encouraging sensitivity to the individual's cultural and social experiences, and in preparing teachers and students to meet the needs of an increasingly multicultural school population. Social workers should actively develop interventions that include the entire school system.

2.2 LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Life skills education is a concept which originated in thinking about training and education. This kind of education covers the skills and competencies that an individual needs for sustaining and enriching life and also the kind of behaviour-based learning that the individual needs for coping with predictable developmental tasks (Schmidt, Brown & Waycott, 1988:13; Swann, 1981:350; Adkins, 1984:53-54; Pickworth, 1989:105). The central reason for including life skills education in the school curriculum is that an interventional, preventive and developmental approach to equipping schoolchildren (learners) in the senior phase with coping skills will help them to deal effectively with predictable developmental tasks and an ever-changing world (Curriculum 2005).

Life skills comprise particular attitudes, knowledge and skills (Nelson-Jones, 1991) which enable the individual to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life (Division of Mental Health WHO, 1993). Nelson-Jones (1992:232) recommends that specific life skills should be regarded as comprising three dimensions: attitude, knowledge and skill.

- **Attitude:** An appropriate attitude to any skill is that one should assume personal responsibility for acquiring, maintaining, using and developing it. One may lose some or all of a life skill if one fails to work at using and developing it. A personally responsible attitude is the motivational or “wanting to do it” dimension of a life skill.

- **Knowledge**: Any life skill involves knowing how to make the right choices. People who have been exposed to good models may have this kind of knowledge, albeit implicitly rather than explicitly. Though they may not be able to say why, they know which choices are correct, for example for being a good speaker. People with shortcomings in certain areas of skills may require the relevant knowledge to be clearly articulated or "spelled out", so that this can guide their actions. This is the "knowing how to do it" dimension of a life skill.
- **Skill**: The skill dimension entails putting attitude and knowledge into practice. In appropriate circumstances, one translate one's "wanting to do it" and "knowing how to do it" into "actually doing it" (Nelson-Jones, 1992:232).

Life skills are indispensable to the process of empowering individuals to engage in and cope successfully with life and its challenges. This is seen as imperative in societies which are still developing, such as South Africa (De Jong, et al., 1995:93). The development of life skills promotes psychosocial competence. Life skills education enhances an individual's coping resources by promoting personal and interpersonal (social) competence and confidence (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 1999:96).

2.2.1 Aims of life skills education and training

Central to the life skills philosophy are the concept of self-empowerment and a belief that skills can be learnt, modified and improved as a person develops and adjusts to life's challenges. There is also the conviction that all young people should be prepared for life at all levels – physically, emotionally, cognitively and socially – if society is to consist of mentally healthy and balanced individuals capable of contributing to a strong nation (Brownell, Craig, de Haas, Harris & Ntshangase, 1996:1).

Since empowerment is central to the vision of life skills, it is important to discuss what is entailed by operating in a self-empowered way. Hopson and Scally (1981:57) state that operating in a self-empowered way entails –

- being able to look at oneself objectively and believe that one is open to change;
- having the skills to change some aspects of oneself and the world in which one lives;

- being able to use one's feelings to recognise where there is a discrepancy between what is and what one would like it to be;
- being able to specify desired outcomes and the actions required to achieve them;
- being able to act – to implement plans of action;
- living each day aware of one's power to assess, reassess, influence and self-direct;
- enabling others to gain the power to take charge of their lives and influence the different arenas of their lives.

Underlying the whole concept is the belief that, no matter what, there is always an alternative and the individual can choose. Self-empowerment means believing this, and having the ability to identify the alternatives in any situation, so that one can choose on the basis of one's values, priorities and commitments. None of the alternatives in some situations may be desirable, but it is the knowledge that there is always a choice that heralds the beginning of self-empowered thinking.

Hopson and Scally (1981:58) offer an operational definition of self-empowerment. They state that to become more self-empowered, one needs awareness, goals, values, life skills and information (knowledge):

- **Awareness**: Self: knowing one's strengths, limitations, values, prejudices, potential.
  Other people: being sensitive to other people – their moods, values, weaknesses, strengths, prejudices, potential.
  Systems: realising that everyone lives in networks, groups, organisations and social structures.
- **Goals**: One knows why one is behaving in a certain way, in other words one has a goal. Outcomes are more specific. Goals need to be one's own, arrived at freely from an examination of the alternatives in the context of one's personal value system. This kind of goal would also qualify as a commitment. Therefore goals should have specified outcomes and be one's own commitments.
- **Values:** A belief becomes a value only if all the following criteria are met: it must be chosen freely, chosen from among alternatives, chosen after due reflection, prized and cherished, publicly affirmed, acted upon and be part of a pattern of repeated actions.

- **Life skills**: The crucial generalised skills that will help one become more self-empowered are: skills for learning, relating, working and playing, and for developing oneself and others.
- **Knowledge**: A person without information is a person without power. To become more self-empowered, individuals need information about themselves, others and the world in which they live. An uninformed person is open to manipulation at a microlevel or macrolevel (Hopson & Scally, 1981:58-73).

Rooth (1997:11) states that acquiring life skills makes capacity building a reality. Capacity building refers to the growth and development of people. It is also a process which assists in empowering people to become involved in various initiatives for reconstruction in their communities. Capacity building is a most important aspect, and a basic underlying theme, of life skills education.

Life skills education aims at assisting learners to meet the demands for more effective responses to the challenges of coping with life. By offering learners the opportunities to develop the skills they need for coping successfully with life and any problems, life skills education aims at assisting these learners to become empowered and eventually to build their capacity (Rooth, 1997:12).

Life skills education is aimed at encouraging learners to explore and develop the skills necessary for successful living and learning. The more coping skills that learners have, the better their chances of an improved quality of life and better social functioning (compare Rooth, 1997:12).

2.2.2 International models of life skills

There are taxonomies of generic life skills for categorising and arranging a wide range of life skills. Barrie Hopson and Mike Scally of the Counselling and Career Development Unit, Leeds University, use an analytical approach to categorising life skills. They revised the model of life skills that they had originally developed in 1980. In the revised model (Hopson & Scally, 1986:16) they identify four categories of life skills: learning, relating, working and playing, developing self and others. Table 2.1 (on page 30) lists the life skills falling into these four

TABLE 2.1

REVISED CLASSIFICATION OF LIFE SKILLS ACCORDING TO HOPSON AND SCALLY (1986)

SKILLS OF LEARNING	SKILLS OF RELATING	SKILLS OF WORKING AND PLAYING	SKILLS OF DEVELOPING SELF AND OTHERS
• Literacy • Numeracy • Information-seeking • Learning from experience • Using whole-brain approaches • Computer literacy • Study Skills	• Making, keeping and ending relationships • Communication • Assertiveness • Being an effective member of a group • Conflict management • Giving and receiving feedback • Parenting • Influencing	• Career management • Time management • Money management • Entrepreneurship • Choosing and using leisure options • Preparation for retirement • Seeking and keeping a job • Managing unemployment • Home management • Setting objectives and action planning	• Being positive about yourself • Creative problem-solving • Decision-making • Stress management • Transition management • Managing sexuality • Maintaining physical well-being • Making the most of the present • Pro-activity • Managing negative emotions • Discovering interests, values and skills • Discovering what makes us do the things we do • Developing the spiritual self • Helping others • Developing the political self

(Hopson & Scally, 1986:15)

categories. David Brooks, professor of counselling and guidance at Syracuse University, uses an empirical approach to classify life skills. Using the results of a national Delphi study, Brooks in conjunction with developmental psychology theorists (Erikson, 1963; Havighurst, 1972; Kohlberg, 1973), classified over 300 life skills descriptors into four generic categories. Table 2.2 (on page 32) shows the four categories together with the definition that Gazda, Childers and Brooks (1987) give for each category.

Each of these categories has a comprehensive list of descriptors for each of three stages of life: childhood, adolescence and adulthood. Normative age ranges are provided for the descriptors, indicating the approximate age at which the skill is usually acquired. Life skills develop in and apply to the contexts of home and family, school, work and the community. This comprehensive taxonomy of life skills is the first classification of life skills in terms of a developmental rationale to appear in the literature (see Gazda & Brooks, 1985:1-10; Gazda, et al., 1987).

Although the exact nature and description of life skills are likely to differ across social and cultural contexts, an analysis of the life skills field suggests that a core set of skills is integral to the initiatives to promote social functioning, health and well-being. This set of skills includes the following:

- Decision making
- Problem solving
- Creative thinking
- Critical thinking
- Effective communication
- Interpersonal relating
- Self-awareness
- Ability to empathise
- Coping with emotions
- Coping with stress (Division of Health WHO, 1993).

Judging by these two international models of life skills, the conclusion can be drawn that the specific needs to be addressed in Life skills education are communication, interpersonal

relationships, problem solving, decision making and the development of a positive self-concept in the adolescent.

TABLE 2.2: LIFE SKILLS CLASSIFICATION ACCORDING TO GAZDA, CHILDERS AND BROOKS (1987)

❑ **Interpersonal communication and human relations skills** **Skills necessary for –** ➢ **effective communication, both verbal and non-verbal, with others, leading to ease in establishing relationships;** ➢ **small and large group and community membership and participation;** ➢ **management of interpersonal intimacy;** ➢ **clear expression of ideas and opinions;** ➢ **giving and receiving feedback.**
❑ **Problem-solving and decision-making skills** **Skills necessary for –** ➢ **information seeking;** ➢ **information assessment and analysis;** ➢ **problem identification, solution, implementation and evaluation;** ➢ **goal setting;** ➢ **systematic planning and forecasting;** ➢ **time management;** ➢ **critical thinking;** ➢ **conflict resolution.**
❑ **Physical fitness and health maintenance skills** **Skills necessary for –** ➢ **motor development and co-ordination; nutritional maintenance;** ➢ **weight control;** ➢ **physical fitness;** ➢ **athletics participation;** ➢ **understanding the physiological aspects of sexuality;** ➢ **stress management;** ➢ **selection and practice of leisure activities.**
❑ **Identity development / purpose in life skills** **Skills and awareness necessary for –** ➢ **ongoing development of personal identity and emotional awareness, including self-monitoring, maintenance of self-esteem;** ➢ **manipulating and accommodating to one's environment;** ➢ **sex-role development;** ➢ **developing meaning of life;** ➢ **clarifying morals and values.**

(Gazda, Childers & Brooks, 1987: Appendices D, E, F & G).

2.2.3 Principles for a life skills curriculum and the development of programmes

According to De Jong, et al. (1995:95-96) a life skills curriculum, and therefore the development of programmes, should be guided by, developed from, and evaluated against the following principles:

- Non-discrimination which is a commitment to a non-racial and non-sexist society, and non-discrimination against those with special needs
- An awareness of and respect for diversity, reflected in the curriculum that has a commitment to non-discrimination yet remains flexible, non-prescriptive and relevant to the particular needs of individuals and local contexts. In particular, the curriculum should be committed to the development of an authentic South African framework for understanding life and the development of life skills
- Democratic values and practice, including the involvement of all relevant sectors (learners, teachers, parents, community leaders) in the development and, where appropriate, implementation of life skills programmes
- An awareness and the implementation of human rights and responsibilities in a democratic society
- A multidisciplinary / sectoral approach, involving all the resources of education support services (social work, vocational and general guidance and counselling, specialised education, school health and psychological services), in curriculum and service development and implementation
- The developmental needs of children and adolescents and the assessment of these needs in terms of emotional, social, cognitive and physical domains (i.e. a holistic understanding)
- An awareness of contextual demands and trends, including environmental and global issues
- The development of a national identity and reconciliation, through which inequalities in curriculum resources and practices will be addressed
- The separation and integration of education support services in the general curriculum, as reflected in a balanced combination of the life skills programmes being offered as a separate core subject and also integrated into the general curriculum

- A facilitative approach to teaching, where the primary approach to teaching is based upon acknowledging and drawing on the existing competencies and resources of learners as well as of the broader community.

The above principles should primarily govern what is taught in life skills education and developed in life skills programmes.

2.2.4 Life skills curriculum and programmes for the South African school context

In 1993 Vermaak conducted a needs assessment of the life skills that should be taught to adolescents in a multicultural school and society, namely South Africa. Table 2.3 (on page 35) lists the identified needs for life skills education in South Africa. Vermaak (1993:28; 50-61) recommends that the needs listed in this table should be used as criteria for evaluating the contents of the life skills programmes that would be taught in schools in the multicultural society of South Africa.

In *Curriculum Frameworks for the General Phase of Education,* De Jong, et al*.,* (1995:91-106) propose general guidelines for a life skills curriculum framework. The authors refer to the attitudes, skills and knowledge areas that reflect the scope of life skills. It should be noted that the categorisation of “attitudes, skills and knowledge" is used for ease of discussion and does indicate aspects that should be developed in an integrated manner in practice.

Life skills include the following:

- The development of **qualities and attitudes** relating to, for example:
  - Social responsibility / community commitment / *ubuntu*
  - Confidence / assertiveness
  - Sensitivity to others and to the environment
  - Self-awareness and reflectiveness
  - Creativity
  - Health promotion and the maintenance of wellness.

TABLE 2.3

SOUTH AFRICAN NEEDS FOR LIFESKILLS EDUCATION (VERMAAK, 1993:29)

COMMUNICATION SKILLS	RELATION SKILLS	MANAGEMENT AND DECISION MAKING SKILLS	SKILLS FOR A HEALTHY LIFE STYLE	SKILLS FOR DEVELOPING A VALUE SYSTEM	SKILLS FOR IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT
• Listening skills • Verbal communication • The ability to say NO • To understand other people's viewpoint • Campaign of human rights	• Building of relationships • Dealing with conflict • Reducing of prejudices • Avoidance of stereotyping • Dealing with stress • Respect for self and other • Self control • Self confidence • Building and keeping friendships • Action/behaviour in cross cultural relationships • Relation with opposite sex	• Time management • Development of study methods • Career planning • Entrepreneurship • Punctuality • Decision making • Loyalty • Teamwork and –building • Problem identification and solving	• Establishment of values and norms • Respect and appreciation of values • Tolerance for other values • Knowledge and understanding of democratic rights	• Establishment of values and norms • Respect and appreciation of values • Tolerance for other values • Knowledge and understanding of democratic rights	• Self-knowledge • Self-respect • Self-identity • Self-confidence

- The development of particular **strategies / skills / competencies**, for example:
  - Goal setting and decision making
  - Problem solving
  - Various levels of thinking (including critical / discriminatory / discerning skills and the cognitive subskills that underlie them)
  - Conflict management
  - Networking
  - Communication
  - Teamwork / groupwork
  - Learning / study skills and strategies, including learning from experience
  - Research / information processing
  - Stress management
  - Time management
  - Crisis management.

- A focus on particular **areas** (or knowledge), such as:
  - General health promotion and primary health care
  - Substance use and abuse
  - Mortality education (dealing with death, loss and grief)
  - Sexuality (including HIV, AIDS) education
  - Work (including employment, unemployment, entrepreneurship)
  - Career and vocational education
  - Economic education
  - Citizen education (including legal / human rights, peace education / education for democracy)
  - Dealing with oppression / prejudice (including racism, sexism and other gender issues, and violence - gangsterism, abuse of children and adults, particularly of women) (De Jong, et al*.,* 1995:94-95).

De Jong, et al*.,* (1995:99-100) stress the following as broad and fundamental areas of concern in life skills education in the context of South African schools:

- **Health education**, for example primary health, nutrition, substance abuse and first aid

- **Personal and interpersonal development**, for example self-awareness, communication, relationships, problem solving and conflict management
- **Citizenship education**, for example legal rights, democratic skills, challenging discrimination, peace education and participation in civil society
- **Environmental education**, for example environmental issues and responsibilities
- **Work and career education**, for example connecting personal abilities with work and career requirements or opportunities
- **Study**, for example strategies for learning, study skills, subject choice and options for further study
- **Sexuality education**, for example physical development, relationships, contraception, HIV, AIDS and sexual abuse
- **Economic education**, for example budgeting, banking and the management of personal finances.

The fundamental areas in life skills education are very important to social workers so that relevant developmental programmes can be developed and implemented in South African schools.

2.2.5 The practice of life skills education and training

The overall outcome of life skills education and training is empowerment and capacity building. Skills, insight, awareness, knowledge, values, attitudes and qualities are necessary to empower individuals, families and their communities to cope with and engage successfully in life and its challenges in South African society. In the challenging context of the transformation and reconstruction of education, life skills education and training is committed, at all levels of education, to empower South African individuals, families, groups and their communities to cope with and engage successfully in life and its challenges.

The process of life skills education and training begins long before the first session and extends far beyond the last session. Morganett (1994:1-9) notes that in general, the following steps are not only the foundation of the group counselling experience, but also apply to facilitating life skills education in schools.

Step 1: Conduct a needs assessment to determine the important themes and topics

Step 2: Compile a written proposal with a description and rationale, learning outcomes, procedures (methods, techniques) and evaluation

Step 3: Advertise the group

Step 4: Obtain consent from parent/guardian

Step 5: Conduct a pre-group interview

Step 6: Select group members according to general selection guidelines

Step 7: Administer pre-test

Step 8: Conduct sessions

Step 9: Administer post-test

Step 10: Conduct post-group follow-up and evaluation (Morganett, 1994:1-9).

Nelson-Jones (1992:232-233) states that life skills training groups have the same four stages as counselling groups, namely preparatory, initial, working and ending. He adds: "*Many of the facilitator skills for group counselling are similar to, if not the same as, the trainer skills for life skills training*" (Nelson-Jones, 1992:232-233). The four stages of life skills training and the skills needed by the trainer or facilitator are briefly discussed below (Nelson-Jones, 1992:233-246):

- **Stage 1: Preparatory stage skills**

  Preparatory considerations are the following: the number of trainers / facilitators; clientele; group size; duration of group and frequency and length of sessions; location, physical setting and facilities. An important skill for this stage is the ability to design a life skills programme.

- **Stage 2: Initial stage skills**

  Skills for facilitating the initial stage include: structuring, encouraging participation, encouraging responsibility and empathic responding; and further facilitation skills such as questioning, confronting, disclosing and summarising, “breaking the ice” exercises and also collecting baseline data and encouraging self-assessment through questionnaires, self-observation, ratings by others and by trainers.

- **Stage 3: Working-stage skills**

  The aim is to impart both knowledge and "how to do it" information. The guidelines that should be followed are: have manageable goals; communicate goals clearly; break the task down and clearly identify each step; be mindful of opportunities to intersperse presentation with rehearsal and practice; use verbal, vocal and body language in public speaking skills; use modelling; use audiovisual aids; prepare a handout; use checking skills and build in homework to transfer skills to outside settings. Using and designing exercises and games are important for promoting learning by doing.

- **Stage 4: Ending-stage skills**

  The most important task is to consolidate self-help skills. To this end, trainees must have access to a skills manual or handouts. Ways of consolidating self-help skills at the end of a programme include having the trainees do the following: make an accurate assessment of their resources and shortcomings in the skills area; develop plans of action for maintaining, using and developing their skills; review their understanding of the skills; and attend one or more follow-up sessions.

In Nelson-Jones's (1992:249) outline for the designing of a life skills training programme on how to make friends, he recommends that the trainer should formulate and write down the following items: the overall goal of the programme; the operationalisation of the overall goal into objectives; and a session-by-session outline of the programme, for example by using the headings: Session, Objectives and Training methods; and should also outline the homework.

Larson and Cook (1985:18) reviewed the more systematic and influential life skills training programmes in the fields of education and mental health. They found that these programmes had the following characteristics in common:

- Clients and learners (students) participate actively in the learning process
- There is a focus on specific behaviours (internal and external) and the mastery and maintenance of such behaviours
- The programmes are based on the established learning principles of modelling, observing, discriminating, reinforcing and generalising
- Each programme includes didactic and experiential emphases
- The programmes are highly structured

- Goals are clear
- Progress is monitored
- Mystification is minimised.

To this can be added that groupwork is the one method dominant in all the programmes (Schmidt, et al, 1988:18).

As empowerment is central to the vision of life skills, De Jong, et al. (1995:104) state that the approach used in facilitating the learning of life skills should reflect the following:

- Drawing upon the experiences of the learners when facilitating experiential learning
- Co-operative learning where appropriate
- Problem-centred learning which relates to the contextual demands placed on participants
- Self-initiated and participatory learning where learners are encouraged to take an active role in their learning processes, and the facilitator (for example a social worker) is considered to be a learner, and the learner is a facilitator too
- An open, flexible and non-threatening yet challenging attitude in the facilitator
- A multidisciplinary and sectoral approach that utilises the expertise of relevant fields and develops partnerships to enhance the development of skills and knowledge.

There is a wide range of teaching and learning methods and locations that could be utilised in an overall life skills programme, for example:

- Self-reflective exercises
- Work and community experience, where learners are placed in work and community settings
- Peer tutoring and peer learning where learners teach, support and learn from one another
- Simulation exercises
- Role-playing
- Debates
- Excursions and visits to places of interest
- Projects, such as community outreach (De Jong, et al., 1995:104).

2.2.5.1 Guidelines for the facilitator

Hopson and Scally (1981:108) give the following guidelines to a facilitator, for example a social worker or teacher who wants to start a life skills programme:

- Decide which of the skills in the life skills models will be the most appropriate skills to start the programme
- Decide whether the programme will fit most naturally into the work that the facilitator is already doing or whether it will require a series of separate sessions
- Give thought to how the facilitator can introduce the idea of skill development to the learners
- Study relevant resources, become familiar with the teaching materials one may wish to use, identify where they might fit in, and begin fostering the learners' commitment to the approach.

2.2.5.2 Stages of life skills teaching and training

Hopson and Scally (1981:109) recommend that the stages of life skills teaching and learning should include the following:

- Developing an awareness in the facilitator (social worker) and the child / adolescent of the skills each already has and what other skills each would like to develop
- Identifying the skills that individuals or groups wish to work on first. Learning is more effective if the learners have expressed a desire to develop a skill, considered the consequences and recognised the advantages of doing so
- Assessing the material or resources that will help to develop the skill on which people wish to work
- Analysing and understanding the components of each skill – each skill will be more easily learned if it can be understood and practised in identifiable, simple stages
- Practising the component parts, getting feedback about performance, and reviewing progress
- Practising further, and reinforcing, recognising and supporting progress and effort
- Using the skill in real-life situations
- Achieving a sufficiently high level of skill to enable one to teach that skill to someone else.

In the end, the effectiveness of life skills teaching or facilitating will depend upon the skills of individual facilitators (social workers, teachers) and, what is more important, on the active participation of the children / adolescents (learning by doing).

The social worker wishing to develop or supplement life skills education efforts in school settings should have a clear idea of the “how to” methods for facilitating the learning of life skills in a more systematic and appropriate manner.

2.2.6 The components of life skills education

Edna Rooth, director of the Life Skills Project at the University of Cape Town, has developed a model for life skills education in South African schools (1997). She refers to the components of life skills education, namely facilitation, groupwork, experiential learning and continuity. In the present research, a schematic representation of these components is shown in Figure 2.1, as designed by the researcher. These components will subsequently be discussed.

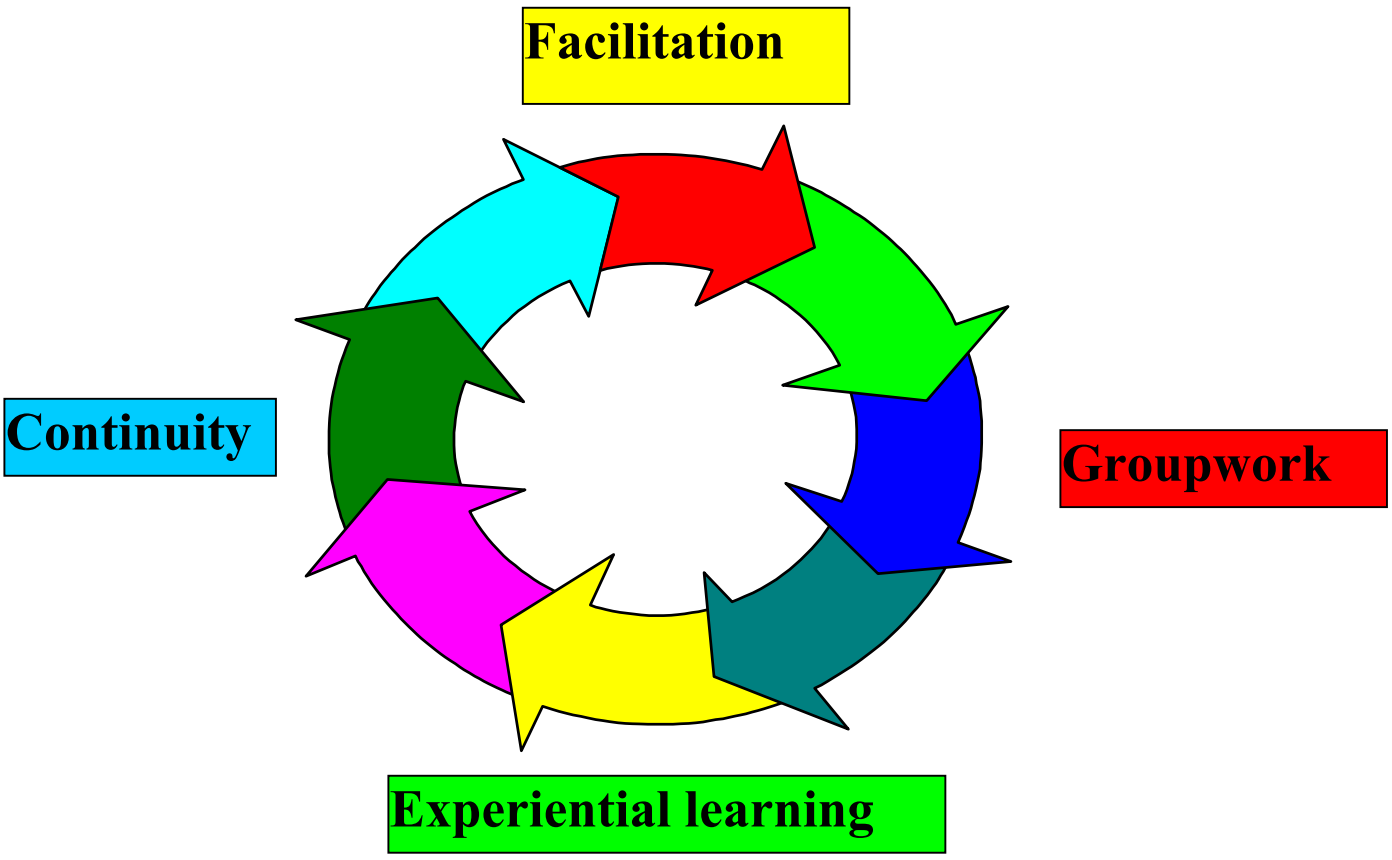


FIGURE 2.1:COMPONENTS OF LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION.

2.2.6.1 Facilitation

Facilitation is the approach that is used in life skills education. The facilitator creates an environment conducive to learning. To this end, the facilitator provides the structure and resources, as well as the appropriate media, questions and activities, that encourage learners to explore, experiment, discover and learn. To facilitate means to give a hand, to help and to enable learners to develop skills, giving learners the freedom and responsibility to become involved in their own growth and encouraging them to help themselves. The role of the facilitator comprises the following:

- **Introduction**: To introduce the topic and set the scene for the session
- **Groups and active involvement**: To divide the class into groups and involve them in an activity around the theme of the session
- **Report back**: To organise a report-back session after the group activity is over and to ensure that each group gets a chance to be heard
- **Summary and focus on learning**: To have the learners verbalise the learning that was generated in the group discussions or activities. The facilitator can provide some input, give relevant facts, share feelings, challenge learners to think further, consider alternative viewpoints and make them aware that there are many different solutions to problems. Information or fact worksheets could be handed out to the learners
- **Reflection**: The facilitator needs to get the learners to reflect on what the topic or theme means for them, how they feel about their learning and what they have discovered about themselves
- **Tasks or homework**: It is recommended that to ensure continuity and progression, the learners should be given tasks for the week. The learners need to be able to practise and use the skill (Rooth, 1997:107-110).

The paradigm shift that the social worker has to make from helper to facilitator is intrinsic to the successful implementation of the life skills education model. Learners or participants in groups become more empowered, instead of disempowered, when the social worker facilitates instead of merely directing (Rooth, 1998:49).

2.2.6.2 Groupwork

Groupwork is the method that is mainly, but not exclusively, used in life skills education. Learners work in groups and discuss, share and learn in a group context. Democratic group interaction and co-operation are promoted as part of the development of general skills. Glassman and Kates (1990) note that social workers played an important part in the development of democratic practices in group processes.

Rooth (1997:110) believes that experiential learning is most successful in the context of groupwork. There are times for individual reflection and discovery, but these are usually the outcomes of some kind of group interaction. The methods of groupwork are experiential and promote the empowerment of the learners in the group. Rooth (1997:110) states that practically all lessons in life skills education are based on groupwork. To ensure the success of groupwork, learners should sit facing one another in circles or semicircles. The size of the group may vary from between three to seven learners. Rooth (1997:120) recommends that when learners do not work very well in groups, these learners should play specific roles, such as a time-keeper, note-keeper or scribe, co-ordinator, mediator or encourager. The underlying credo for groupwork should be: none of us is as smart as all of us (Rooth, 1995:6).

Corey and Corey (1992:314-315) and Jacobs, Harvill and Masson (1994:6) note that groups come closer to replicating real life because people live in an environment composed of other people. By living in a group, a person learns a self-concept and how to behave in a variety of social situations. A group also provides an opportunity to make helpful commitments or contracts. Peers are an important part of adolescent experience and the researcher believes that groupwork would be an appropriate method of implementing the Life Skills Programme in the present study. The whole learner group (all learners in the classroom) is regarded as a collection of subgroups of various sizes and composition. To use groupwork in the classroom is to use a common aspect of everyday life in a developmental way. The main focus should be on the preventive and developmental aspects of life skills education, and be aimed at a broader target. The target is to facilitate large groups of learners in the classroom by dividing them into smaller groups of five to eight learners. This does not mean that all one-to-one intervention should be abandoned, as there will always be a need for this in practice. There will always be children who need special help.

Konopka (1993:30) defines groupwork as follows: "*Social groupwork is a method of social work which helps individuals to enhance their social functioning through purposeful group experiences and to cope more effectively with their personal group and community problems*." This definition makes a number of basic points: groupwork is a method of social work; it helps individuals with their social functioning; it is purposeful; and it is concerned with coping at personal, group and community levels. However, the emphasis is the rather traditional one of helping the individual with a problem. Contemporary groupwork emphasises action and influence as well as reaction, adaptation and development. The definition becomes more comprehensive if the researcher adds that groupwork provides a context in which individuals develop, support and help one another; it is a method of developing, supporting, and helping groups as well as individuals; and it can enable individuals and groups to influence, change and prevent personal, group, school and community problems.

Brown (1992:20-27) notes that there are different “mainstream" models of social groupwork, among which the social goals / social action / self-directed models and empowerment models are appropriate for the present study. The first two models, namely social goals / social action, are examples of developmental groupwork. The self-directed model strongly emphasises empowerment as the core principle and defines and conceptualises the role of the social worker as a “facilitator” rather than a “leader” (Brown, 1992:25). Brown (1992:25) adds that in the past decade, increasing attention has been given to group models which have empowerment at heart. There is an obvious overlap with the social goal models, particularly with the self-directed model, but whereas social goal models have been derived mostly from the youth and the community, there is another source of the conceptualisation of empowerment groups that has been derived from the response to the oppression of women, black people and other vulnerable or disadvantaged groups (Brown, 1992:25).
Groupwork is inherently concerned with giving children (learners) the opportunities to develop skills, to cope with problems and to meet life's challenges successfully.

Hopson and Scally (1981:112) state that small groups in the classroom refer to the whole student (learner) group as a collection of subgroups of varying size and composition, and that this collection of subgroups has a great potential for learning. The collection is carefully structured (designed and planned) and calls for skilled, sensitive management by the social worker or teacher or person taking responsibility for the learning event. Hopson and Scally

(1981:112) add that they "… *believe that well prepared and well managed small group sessions have great potential for participants to learn about themselves and others, whether or not that is the primary objective of the group. Whatever the task or purpose of the group, there will be a bonus of learning simply from having to act and interact with one another, and we would like to make that bonus available to students as they develop specific life skills*". Generally, social workers, as part of their professional training, are well versed in the skills required for groupwork. They have to work toward making changes where and when these changes are feasible, and will assist large groups of learners (as a collection of subgroups) in developing life skills.

2.2.6.3 Experiential learning

Rooth (1997:75) avers that experiential learning is the learning theory or philosophy that is best suited to life skills education, since it allows for learner participation and empowerment. Experiential learning is a process of learning from direct experience and reflecting on what has been learnt. Reflection is a central part of experiential learning as it is the way to give meaning to, consolidate and internalise learning.

The following are some important aspects of experiential learning:

- **Existing experience**: All learners come into a class / group, with experience which should be respected, acknowledged and used. Experiential learning focuses on building on the learners' existing strengths and knowledge. The starting point is always what the learners know, feel and think, which serves as a basis from which the facilitator can proceed
- **Feelings**: An awareness and expression of feelings and thoughts are essential to learning. Sharing helps the learners, because their feelings become clearer when they discuss them with other learners and they may also accept and express these feelings more easily
- **Personal development**: The development of self-knowledge is an essential life skill which is often neglected in academic subjects. Besides self-awareness, experiential learning encourages the development of responsibility, co-operation, creativity, positive self-esteem, questioning, initiative and functional responses to challenges. In addition, experiential leaning promotes skills such as communication, assertiveness, decision making, flexibility, problem solving and networking

- **Practice**: Learners are encouraged to become actively involved in practising skills, so that they can do instead of just know. Experiential learning is a dynamic, active process that allows learners to experiment with different types of behaviours
- **Learner involvement**: By involving learners directly in learning, they will own the process and feel part of the learning event
- **Taking responsibility**: Experiential learning promotes control and responsibility at various levels. It teaches the learners that they have an internal locus of control and the power to change (compare Rooth, 1997:77-80; Weil & McGill, 1993:25-36).

There are many models and ways of using experiential learning. The researcher has used Rooth's (1997:82-102) practical model because it works well in the school context. The steps in the model, not always necessarily implemented in this order, will be briefly discussed and schematically represented in Figure 2.2 on page 48. The schematic representation is the researcher's own interpretation of Rooth's model.

- **Awareness of the self and skill**: Learners have to focus on their personal awareness and an awareness of a skill, or lack of a skill, or awareness of a need to improve a skill. The researcher prefers to use sensory activities, for example seeing, hearing (listening to music), smelling (breathing in and out) and touching, to promote personal awareness.
- **Motivation (the sense and meaning)**: If learners are motivated to acquire a skill, learning becomes far more self-directed and successful.
- **Analysis**: **(the components of the skills)** An analysis of the skills entails looking at what the skills mean, what is needed to develop them and what obstructs their development. It is always useful to start by using the experience, knowledge and skills that the learners already have.
- **Practice**: The learners must have the opportunity to practise their skills. The learners can experiment and practise by using various media (drama, discussion) in the life skills education class and in their own time outside the classroom.
- **Reflection**: Reflection is a way to consolidate and internalise learning, and to promote the development and extension of skills. Without reflection, experiential learning will be superficial, and not necessarily enduring. Reflection means the act of thinking about an event or experience and its relationship to the learner. The facilitator should ensure that reflection leads learners to think about what the session meant for them at a personal

level. Sometimes learners complain that it takes too much time and energy to reflect. They would much rather continue with the activity as they usually have so much fun. However, activities without reflection (introduced at almost any moment), are not useful learning opportunities. Ways to let learners reflect could include keeping a journal on a weekly basis, using reflection worksheets, asking questions and keeping a record.

2.2.6.4 Continuity

Continuity is the way to ensure that there is a link, a logical sequence and follow-up. Continuity reinforces the acquisition of skills and helps with the development of life skills programmes. Each life skills session is like a piece of a puzzle and it is important to fit all the pieces of the puzzle together. Progression and outcome achievement are enhanced by continuity (Rooth, 1997:76; 125-127).

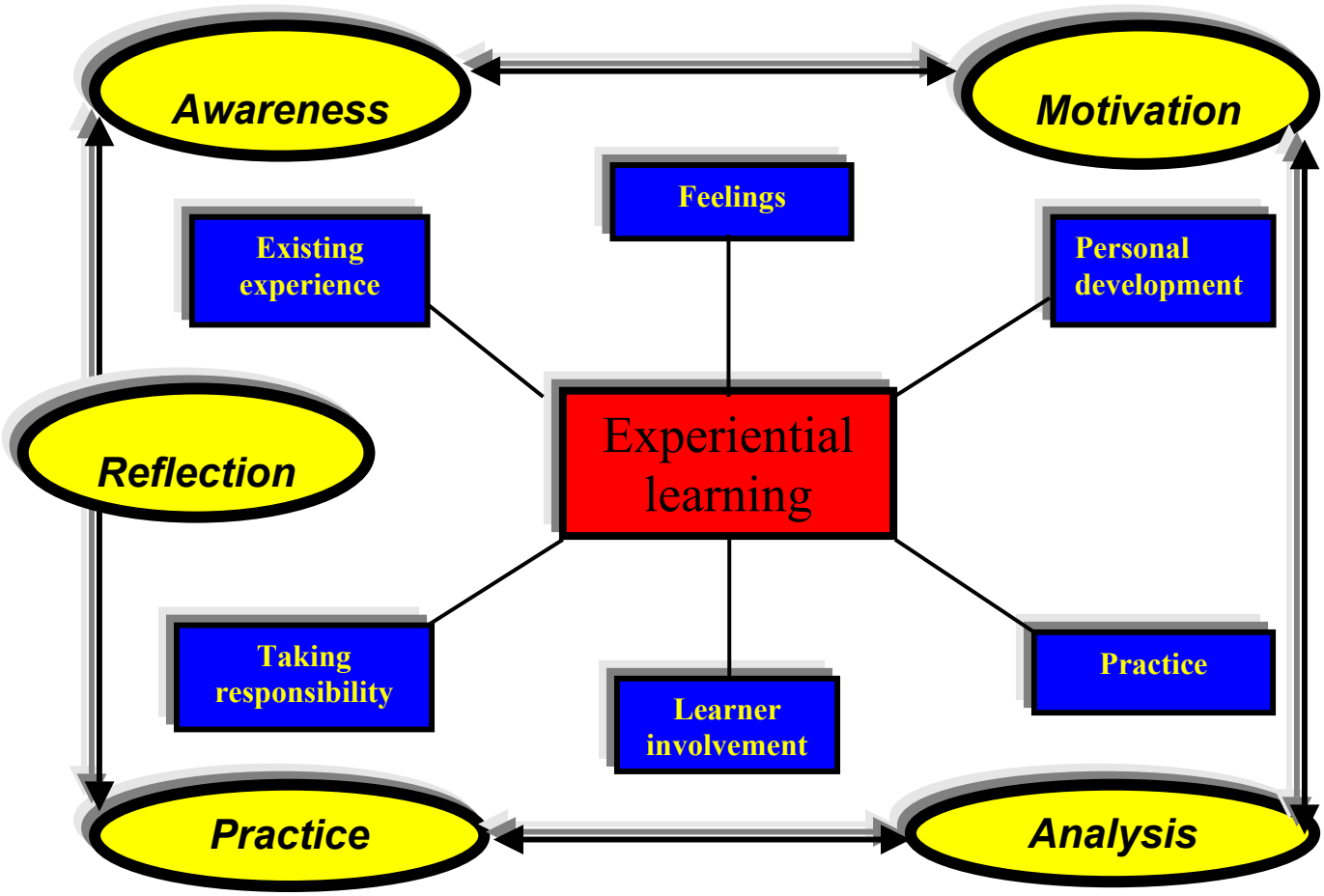


FIGURE 2.2: THE PROCESS OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

2.2.7 Facilitation media for life skills education

The social worker, as the facilitator of life skills education, has to decide which media are the best for realising experiential learning in groupwork.

The media selected for facilitating the learning of life skills involve learners at a personal and group level. The media described below are interactive, participatory and help to make life skills education a practical and successful reality in class:

- Sensory contact and activities (touch, sight, sound, smell, taste and these relate to Gestalt therapy)
- Games and “ice-breakers” help to make the life skills education class fun. Learners learn more when they are enjoying themselves
- Role-playing is a valuable medium. It is important to consider warming up, debriefing, containment, choice and planning before using role-playing. Situations, first-liners, mimes, songs and props are useful aids in role-playing
- Drama, socio-drama and puppets
- Story telling, fantasy, metaphor and imagination lead to skills development at many levels
- Relaxation exercises and movement help to energise learners and should often be included
- Music is an essential aid and leads to learner involvement
- Drawings, clay, collage, seeds and junk heaps are all useful media for involving learners in activities
- Worksheets, the learners’ own exercise books and making posters for the classroom help learners to relate information to their lives
- Exercises and skills practice are essential. Skills cannot be developed and sustained unless they are practised
- Pictures from magazines and newspapers
- Brainstorming allows everybody to share ideas
- Group discussions enable the learners to share ideas
- Panels allow learners to air their views
- “Buzz” groups are great for getting learners to talk to one another
- “Buzzing” helps students relate the topic to their own experience

- Debates help learners to think, air their views and listen to different viewpoints
- Case studies allow the detailed analysis of relevant problems
- Making the rounds gives an opportunity to hear what everybody thinks
- Demonstration or input is valuable and occurs when the social worker (facilitator) gives information and advice, and adds to learners' knowledge
- Research projects help learners to discover facts and find answers
- Task groups are great for group activities that require research beyond the school grounds, for example community service
- Open space gives large groups the opportunity to work together. Learners are given a great deal of responsibility and freedom
- Rehearsing occurs when learners rehearse for the roles they think they will be expected to play and they worry that they may not say the “right” thing and perform “properly”
- Modelling
- Peer tutoring

  (compare Hopson & Scally, 1981:142-147; Rooth, 1997:130-182; Schoeman & van der Merwe, 1996:41-56; 77-96; 128-136; Corey, 1995:309-317).

2.2.8 Summary

Life skills education and training is an expanding field of research. The reasons for the growth of life skills education and training include the following:

- It has a **developmental** emphasis. The target of life skills education and training in an ideal world would be to train everyone in the skills required to meet each task at every stage of their lifespan. Such education and training have a developmental rather than a remedial or rehabilitative emphasis
- It has a **preventive** emphasis. Developmental life skills education and training also have a preventive emphasis, for example the focus could be on the personal education of **all** learners in a way that would anticipate their developmental needs
- **Problems with living are widespread**. The world is full of the “walking wounded” – taking into account the statistics on marital breakdown in South Africa and the influence of divorce on the children involved. Moreover, many people in South Africa do not function optimally in most of the developmental tasks

- Pressures are increasing for **helper accountability**. Some social workers argue that their cost-effectiveness is much greater if they actively engage in developmental and preventive interventions, such as life skills education and training, instead of waiting in their offices for clients who need remedial help. Social workers seek ways to make an impact on as many people as possible.

The present study has as main goal to develop and implement a personal and interpersonal life skills programme for Grade 7 learners. So far the focus of this chapter has been on life skills education and training and now the discussion will be on the people for whom the programme will be developed, namely the senior phase learner.

2.3 THE DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE ON HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

The development of theories based on developmental psychology and the testing of these theories through research provide valuable information about the needs and functioning of individuals throughout their lifespan. Developmental phases or life periods are the periods, taking place in specific stages of the individual's life, when his/her physical, cognitive (intellectual), affective (emotional), social, moral and religious abilities develop. The specific stage or period of time has distinctive features which are identifiable and predictable in a person's development. This implies that a specific behaviour pattern is regarded as characteristic of a particular phase of life.

The assumptions of developmental psychology (Gerdes, Ochse, Stander & van Ede, 1988; Havighurst, 1972; Hurlock, 1988:22-45) applicable to the present study are as follows:

- Biological growth and learning interact and this interaction results in the progressive increase in and modification of the individual's behavioural repertoire.
- This process occurs over time; and life can be viewed as definable, sequential stages of increasing competence.
- Each stage of development is characterised by definable tasks and skills which should be learned.
- There are critical or sensitive periods for many developmental tasks. These are points or stages during which the individual is maximally receptive to specific stimuli. These stages

may be of finite duration, during which certain experiences must occur if the individual is to assimilate them or there may be a period of increased efficiency for the individual to acquire experience. Havighurst (1972:7) refers to the "*teachable moment*" that occurs when the individual is biologically ready, when society requires the achievement of a certain task, and the individual is ready to achieve it.

- Each stage is based on the potential accumulation of experience in prior stages. A later stage of development will be handicapped if the tasks or skills appropriate to a preceding stage have not been mastered.
- Psychological adjustment consists of adequately learning and coping with the developmental tasks that are appropriate for a given stage of life.

Most theories of child development refer to age bands (ages between which a child is seen as “in” a particular stage) as approximate “indications” of when each stage is most apparent. It is when these are interpreted as fixed or absolute in some sense that difficulties arise. In particular, they often need to be seen as relative to a social context. To gain the most value from theories of stages, one has to understand individual people in relation to their social context, to their resolution of the previous stages, and to the development of their potential in relation to the stage(s) to come. Development is a continuous process, where each stage builds on the stage(s) before it, from conception to death (Donald et al., 1999:52-53).

Therefore a social worker's understanding of development should include insight into his/her own development, and how this interacts with the development of the children (learners) with whom he/she is working. This insight can only come from understanding that development is a lifelong process, and that adults, in relation to their social context, also go through developmental stages based on earlier stages.

The present study included learners in Grade 7 of the senior phase of the General Education and Training Band (GET). This is the final year of primary school. These children (learners) are in the developmental stage of late childhood to early adolescence. The ages of the learners included in the study varied from 12 to 16 years, due to progressive mainstreaming, and therefore the study focuses on the adolescent.

2.3.1 The senior phase learner: the adolescent

Adolescence has been defined in different ways. It can be regarded as the stage when young people have outgrown their child stage, but have not become adult enough to be considered adults. It is the period that follows childhood and precedes adulthood. It starts when the young person enters puberty, or the time of puberty (pre-adolescence) around the age of 12 years, and it continues until the young person reaches physical, mental, social and emotional adulthood (at the age of about 18-20 years).

Adolescence is the time in which the individual re-evaluates and discovers new aspects about him/herself, adapts his/her self-image and gains a new perception of his/her identity due to the discovery of his/her new self. Adolescence is characterised by moving away from the child's body, life perceptions and behaviour patterns.

In the study of the adolescent, the focus is on the interrelationship between physical, cognitive, emotional (affective), social, and moral and religious development in a social context. The development of the whole person (learner) is promoted (holistic perspective).

2.3.2 Developmental characteristics of the senior phase learner (adolescent)

The developmental characteristics of the senior phase learner (adolescent) include the physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and religious and moral development and will subsequently be discussed.

2.3.2.1 Physical development

After a period of prolonged, gradual change, adolescence brings relatively rapid and dramatic growth which propels the person out of the childhood years into physical adulthood. There are five areas of physical growth in which accelerated growth can be noticed, namely height, mass, shoulder and hip measurements and muscle power.

Sexual maturity is accompanied by the appearance of the secondary gender characteristics that emphasise the differences in the physical appearance of boys and girls. This is also a sign of the start of the reproduction capability of men and women.

The physical needs of the adolescent are as follows:

- Understanding the endocrinological factors (hormonal changes) in development
- Coping with the variations in the intensity and duration of growth spurts
- Sexual maturation, for example menstruation (compare Rice, 1991; Shaffer, 1993: Gouws & Kruger, 1994:15-43).

2.3.2.2 Cognitive development

Cognition is described as the intellectual process that comes into operation when knowledge is acquired and used. It concerns knowing, observing, imagining. During adolescence, young people for the first time get involved in and are touched by abstract ideas, such as freedom and truth, instead of merely by specific people, activities and things. Young people are not concerned only with what *is* (reality), but also with what *can* or *should* be (potentiality).

Adolescents are able to think scientifically. Jean Piaget claims that they can now make deductions, suggest interpretations and develop hypotheses, and their thinking becomes flexible (the formal-operational phase of cognitive development) (Gouws & Kruger, 1994:46-55). They can carry out formal actions linked to abstract thinking, and evaluate their own thoughts as well as those of others. This leads to introspection and acceptance of the role model of adults. They develop a theoretical approach to the world and to things, a function involving the child's objective judgement of reality. Abstract theoretical thoughts develop with a view to developing intellectual schemes for solving problems.

Piaget admits that the social environment may accelerate or delay the start of formal operations. In fact, it has been found that compared with their more fortunate counterparts, fewer adolescents who have been exposed to economic deprivation achieve formal thinking; and that some never reach this level of cognitive thinking (Rice, 1991:185).

The following are typical of adolescents who display formally operating thinking:

- They make choices between numerous alternatives or variables that cannot be understood simultaneously, therefore they deal with many more elements and possibilities immediately

- They think of thinking, are capable of proportional logic and begin to distinguish the real from the possible
- They have a greater capacity for thought and can therefore formulate problems and hypotheses, figure out solutions, evaluate experience and reconsider values
- They are capable of hypothetical-deductive reasoning (possibilities based on initial assumptions) as well as empirical-inductive reasoning (generalising from facts)
- They can project themselves into the future, with an adult understanding of time
- As a result of this cognitive development, these adolescents feel comfortable when they reason, assess, evaluate, make comparisons, extrapolate into the future and transfer knowledge (Rice, 1991: 185-190).

Mwamwenda (1995:115) states that the Piagetian studies carried out in North, West, East and South Africa, involving the concepts of the conservation of quantity, weight, volume and number, transitive inference and class inclusion, confirm that Piaget's theory can be validated cross-culturally. There is a general developmental trend, so that the older the child, the better his/her performance. It has been shown that overall the performance of African children is comparable with that of Western children, both qualitatively and quantitatively. Mwamwenda (1995:115) notes that in a number of cases, it has been observed that dialogue with testees is disadvantageous to African children whose cultures do not facilitate or encourage intensive discussion between an adult and a child.

Adolescents' cognitive needs therefore include –

- being challenged at a more abstract and analytical level of thinking;
- developing introspection;
- solving problems and making decisions.

2.3.2.3 Emotional development

The self-concept is a conscious, cognitive perception and valuation of oneself. It is an acknowledgement that one is unique, special and a person in one’s own right, and this implies a consciousness of who and what one is (Rice, 1991:198).

When the adolescent has formulated a self-concept, the value he/she places on him/herself should be examined first – this will be his/her feeling of self-worth. Psychological maladjustment and emotional disturbance occur when the self he/she is in relation to others differs from what he/she desires to be.

The adolescent's self-concept and feeling of self-worth have a tremendous influence on his/her affective development during adolescence.

The adolescent's psychological and physiological changes are often traumatic. The parents' expectations of adult behaviour are more demanding, they no longer make all the decisions, and there is strong pressure from the peer group and the teachers. Adolescence is a period of heightened emotionality. Some youngsters find the readjustments easy; others are bewildered and upset by their emotional volatility.

During adolescence, every adolescent undergoes several physical changes that concern his/her build, sex drive and reproductive ability. In the midst of all these changes (new body shape, feelings and roles) the adolescent's task is to acquire an identity, and he/she passes from being a child to being a young person. The danger of all these changes is the possibility of an identity crisis and that the adolescent may not know who he/she is and where he/she wants to go. During this phase, it is important for the adolescent to be sure of his/her identity and to be aware of the other identity choices he/she could make (Thomas, 1992:171) (compare Gouws & Kruger, 1994:83-108).

The emotional needs of the adolescent include –

- identity formation (who am I?);
- positive self-concept;
- independence;
- a sense of belonging.

2.3.2.4 Social development

Adolescence is the beginning of the process of emancipation, as the central part played by the family is now to a large extent taken over by the peer group. Adolescents spend more time away

from home than with the family. They undergo a disorganisation in themselves, which produces many types of behaviour that adults misunderstand. Adolescents may even display many of the annoying habits of their childhood years. The habits that have been instilled in them were formed because their parents insisted on such behaviour, not because these habits sprang from the adolescents' own inner desires; therefore adolescents now cast off these habits, as their parents are being replaced by other models of authority.

The development of the adolescent's personality is also largely determined by his/her association with his/her peer group. While adolescents are "hanging out" with and talking to members of their peer group, they get a chance to make a place for themselves. The peer group accepts or rejects adolescents for what they are and can do, not for any other reason.

Social acceptance is extremely important to adolescents, because they fear loneliness – which they experience as a symbol of exclusion or rejection. Conformity to their group makes them socially acceptable, so they fall in with the group's style of clothing, hairstyle and other forms of behaviour, even if parents and other adults disapprove.

The peer group concentrates on fulfilling the needs of the adolescent who lives under changing physiological and developmental pressure. The more athletically built the boy and the prettier the girl, the more easily they will be accepted by their age group. Acceptance by peers undoubtedly strengthens the adolescent's self-image (compare Hurlock, 1988:430; Gouws & Kruger, 1994:110-128). The social needs of the adolescent include –

- conformity to peer culture;
- the development of social relationships.

2.3.2.5 Religious and moral development

Adolescents have a real desire to think for themselves, and as religion comprises a personal encounter with truth, this should be welcomed rather than opposed. Adolescence is not really a period of increasing religious activity, rather one of decision. When they reach the age where they leave school, most young people have already made up their minds whether they will accept or reject a specific religion. The structure of the adolescents' prayers changes; their prayers become more altruistic. Confession and pleas for forgiveness display a certain

appropriateness; the church is seen as a way of changing someone into a better person, both spiritually and morally. Negative attitudes towards religion increase during adolescence; yet adolescents have a real desire for spiritual truth, even though they are highly critical of religion and often feel disillusioned with it (Hurlock, 1988:390).

Moral development is the degree to which a person internalises and acts in accordance with the values (e.g. honesty, respect) which make up his/her moral code of conduct (customs, manners, behavioural patterns that meet the standards of society). Ethics is the science of morals. Adolescents understand the difference between right and wrong, and they will internalise the values that they perceive as having merit.

The moral values of the childhood years no longer satisfy the adolescent. New and additional moral values must be learnt, such as those arising from heterosexual relationships, the use of alcohol and other drugs, and people's use of cars. Adolescents confront problems where they have to make their own decisions (and this is especially difficult if they come from an authoritarian home where decisions were made for them). They must be able to maintain themselves in the face of more and stricter rules, regulations and obligations than in their childhood days; they are confronted by conflicting values – pressure from the peer group and from gender, socio-economic, racial and religious groups.

2.3.3 The self and the development of the self-concept (personal)

Self-concept is generally defined as a multifaceted construct organised into the categories of beliefs one maintains about the self. Self-concept consists of the cognitive dimensions of self-perception, whereas self-esteem comprises the affective (emotional) dimensions associated with global feelings of self-worth. Self-esteem is therefore the evaluative and affective dimension of self-concept. Self-esteem is also referred to as self-worth or self-image (Santrock, 1992:357).

There are several components of self-concept, each relating to different aspects of the person, depending on the individual’s maturity and interests. For example, the self-concept of the senior phase learner might contain separate categories for self-concept in the areas of the social (peer and adult relations), physical (appearance and ability), academic (Maths, English,

Science) and emotional self-concept. In each of these areas of the self-concept, the learner groups information about the self, obtained from interactions with significant others and the environment. The self-concept may change over a period of time, depending on the individual's experiences.

The accuracy and completeness of the self-concept are thought to increase with age. Although a young child may have a simplistic impression of "I am good at maths," the more mature child is better able to specify various strengths and weaknesses and might say: "I am good in algebra, but I have trouble with geometry." The accuracy and specificity of the self-concept are important for healthy functioning. A learner who has an accurate self-concept is able to take appropriate risks, to identify areas where assistance is needed, to make realistic predictions about the chances of success or failure, and to utilise problem-solving strategies to resolve difficulties (Ingram, 1998:22) (compare Santrock, 1992:355-356). Simply stated, the more information one has about one's skills, the better one can assess a task and successfully apply one's abilities.

Personality is a person's unique totality structure (as he/she appears to others) in interaction with his/her environment. It is the unique pattern of an individual's psychic traits at a given time that make his/her behaviour predictable to some extent**.** The core of the personality is the self-concept. The term self-concept therefore involves a collection of perceptions, feelings and attitudes which a person entertains about him/herself, especially as regards the assessment of his/her own characteristics, abilities and behaviour. Weiten (1992:652) defines self-concept as "*a collection of beliefs about one's own nature, unique qualities, and typical behavior*". Self-concept is what a person believes about him/herself. Every child has many separate but related beliefs about the self (system of beliefs; collection of beliefs).

Pretorius (1998:158-159) states that the child's self-concept is characterised by the following essentials:

- **Stability.** The multitude of beliefs about the self are not all equally meaningful. Some beliefs deal with the essence of the self – they are basic beliefs about the self which are stable. Others are less central and meaningful and are therefore less stable. Purkey (1970:9) states: "*Closely held beliefs about oneself are difficult to change*."
- **Value**. Every belief in the system of beliefs about the self has a positive or negative value.

- **Generation**. The system of beliefs about the self generates success and failures. If an individual fails in an important, highly valued ability, this lowers his/her self-assessment of other, less relevant abilities. Success therefore raises the individual's self-evaluation of less relevant skills.
- **Uniqueness**. No two persons form identical systems of beliefs about the self. It is this uniqueness and diversity which often hampers communication between people, because no two people perceive themselves or the world in the same way, and they find it difficult to agree about their experiences.
- **Dynamics**. Every individual constantly endeavours to maintain, protect and enhance the self – it is the motivation underlying the individual's behaviour; it is a personal, inner motivation. For the social worker and for the child, this attempt to enhance the self-concept is the given, basic, dynamic incentive to self-actualisation.
- **Point of departure**. The self is the basic frame of reference and the central core of the individual. The self is the product of the individual's experiences (especially social experiences) but it also generates new experiences for the individual. People and things are meaningful or meaningless, important or unimportant, attractive or unattractive, valuable or worthless in terms of their relation to the self. People give meaning to the world in terms of how they perceive themselves.

2.3.4 The self and culture

Culture is to society what memory is to the person. It specifies designs for living that have proven effective in the past, ways of dealing with social situations, and ways of thinking about the self and social behaviour that have been reinforced in the past. It includes systems of symbols that facilitate interaction: the rules of the game of life that have been shown to "work" in the past (Triandis, 1989:511-512).

In a study on the self and social behaviour in differing cultural contexts, Triandis (1989) reports that the self is an active agent that promotes the differential sampling (sampling information that is self-relevant more frequently than information that is not self-relevant), processing and evaluation of information from the environment, and consequently leads to differences in social behaviour. Triandis (1989:507) states that one major distinction among aspects of the self is between the private, public and collective self. The p*rivate self* refers to

cognitions involving the person's traits, states, or behaviours, for example: "I am introverted," "I am honest." The *public self* refers to cognitions concerning the generalised views of others about the self, such as: "People think that I am introverted" or "People think I will buy X". The *collective self* refers to cognitions concerning a view of the self that is found in some collectives, such as the family, co-workers or tribe, for example: "My family thinks I am introverted" or "My tribe believe I travel too much." In other words, the private self is an assessment of the self by the self. The public self corresponds to an assessment of the self by the generalised other. The collective self corresponds to an assessment of the self by a specific reference group (Triandis, 1989:507).

The above-mentioned distinctions give rise to the dimension of individualism-collectivism. Individualists give priority to personal goals in preference to the goals of collectives. By contrast, collectives either make no distinctions between personal and collective goals, or if they do make such distinctions, they subordinate their personal goals to the collective goals. Collectives tend to be concerned about the effects that their actions have on members of their in-groups, tend to share resources with the in-group members, feel interdependent with and involved in the lives of in-group members (Triandis, 1989:509).

Kotzé (1993:xiii) elaborates on the dimension of individualism-collectivism by referring to individualistic consciousness and collective consciousness, and states: "*Neither blacks nor whites have yet come close to a profound understanding and appreciation of the untapped value of what may be called collective consciousness, the basic set of world views or perceptions of black people (as opposed to whites, individualistic consciousness)*."

Kotzé (1993:2) believes that black people in South Africa may be understood fruitfully in terms of the context of being "black". That is, while acknowledging that black people are not a monolithic body of human beings, there appears to be sufficient sense in translating a common dimension of perception overriding the differences in language, tradition, education, occupation and creed. This perceptual characteristic, which is derived from common experience or collective consciousness, contrasts with its opposite pole, individualistic consciousness, which is generally operative in the context of being "white". Collective consciousness would be incomprehensible if interpreted with the intellectual tools formed by individualistic consciousness, and vice versa, of course (Kotzé, 1993:2). Collective

consciousness has to be understood in terms of experience, for people think and behave in a certain way, largely as a result of their experience. In other words, people who differ in experience will also differ in the ways that they react to the same situation because they interpret the meaning of the situation differently.

Kotzé (1993:4) claims that children in townships or rural areas generally grow up under circumstances of profound material deprivation and acute insecurity. Because parents are unable to provide adequately for the needs of their children, these children are forced to survive physically, emotionally and socially, largely independent of their parents. To this end, they learn to form strong social bonds through which they may find food, a place to sleep and often clothes as well. They learn very early in life that no single individual is able to provide for one's needs; that survival as an individual, or even as a single nuclear family, is impossible; that a collection of individuals (a group) has to be organised into enduring ties which collectively provide the best chances for survival; that in a world without material security their physical and emotional survival can be ensured only in co-operative action. These children develop social maturity as early as 5 to 6 years of age.

Social strategies in childhood breed corresponding social practices in adult life, and in this way childhood experiences eventually also contribute to child-rearing practices which in turn anticipate and therefore reinforce the need for collective strategies.

Collective consciousness is laid down at two totally different, but mutually reinforcing levels. Firstly, during infancy and the toddler stage when children are protected by, and very dependent on, adults. Secondly, from the end of the toddler stage onwards, when children are forced into collective interdependence (which, paradoxically, requires them to be independent). During the first critical phase of their life, therefore, they are taught dependence on people. During the second phase they are forced into dependence on others. People in whom collective consciousness is as powerfully created as described here, may suffer greatly in a societal system dominated by individualistic consciousness (Kotzé, 1993:5-6).

To conclude the discussion on consciousness or perception, the following:

- Collective consciousness is not a form of knowledge that people are aware of, or that they use in a situation at given moments or in certain circumstances. People are normally

completely unaware of the perceptual style they use when operating in the world of people and things – it is an all-inclusive, omnipresent, subconscious world view.

- Collective consciousness and individualistic consciousness are not two discrete types of perception. They represent the opposite poles in a continuum. Although no one is completely without the characteristics of either collective or individualistic consciousness – and although no one is either completely socially minded or completely private – people tend to be either more collective or more individualistic in their consciousness.
- Perception, as well as the values underlying it, is not a matter of whim but a functional and effective way of coping with experience. Individualistic consciousness is a pragmatic way of coping with conditions of affluence and a futuristic outlook on life, whereas collective consciousness is a functional adaptation to deprivation (Kotzé, 1993:6-7).

All these aspects should be taken into consideration in order to understand learners in the senior school in their social context and to develop appropriate life skills programmes.

2.3.5 Developmental tasks of the senior phase learner: the adolescent

The concept of "*developmental task*" was proposed by Havighurst in 1948, who defines a developmental task as "*a task which arises at or about a certain period in the life of an individual, successful achievement of which leads to his happiness and to success with later tasks, while failure leads to unhappiness in the individual, disapproval by the society, and difficulty with later tasks*" (Havighurst, 1972:2).

Havighurst (1972) proposes a number of developmental tasks for each of the following life stages: infancy and early childhood, middle childhood, adolescence, early adulthood, middle age and later maturity. The developmental tasks arise from three primary sources, namely: physical maturation; cultural pressures (the expectations of society); and individual aspirations or values. Research has confirmed the relevance of Havighurst's developmental tasks for American and European adolescents. Burns (1988) added further evidence of their universality in a study which found the tasks to be relevant for South African adolescents.

The adolescent‘s developmental tasks are as follows (Havighurst, 1972:43-82; Pretorius, 1994:113-122):

- The acquisition / forming of identity (the basic development task).
- The actualisation of new and more adult relationships with peer groups of both sexes and own sex.
- The achievement of the following, for the adolescent's social development:
  - Becoming an acceptable member of one or more peer groups
  - Establishing and maintaining friendships with both sexes
  - Making a date with a girl/boy and managing the social situation with ease
  - Adapting to the peer group in the school, environment and community
  - Developing social skills, e.g. handling conflict, making decisions.
- Fulfilment of the male/female social role:

  - The boy must accept that he is becoming a man and the girl must accept that she is becoming a woman (later mother). The adolescent must learn what manliness/ womanliness implies and what will be expected of him/her in the future.
- Acceptance of the body and its purposeful use (adult sexual characteristics and adult corporality) and also:
  - Acceptance of the "new" changed body
  - Acceptance (as normal) of physical differences between the self and the peer group (same sex and opposite sex)
  - Having an understanding of the meaning of puberty changes and a healthy anticipation of maturity as a man/woman
  - Caring for the body – health, optimal development and acceptance by others
  - Acquiring the physical abilities required for different leisure, social and family situations
  - Reorganising the self-concept and accepting one's own appearance resulting from physical changes.
- Establishing emotional independence from parents and other adults:
  - The adolescent must learn to be independent and to decide for him/herself
  - Two factors that may cause conflict are the generation gap due to rapid social changes and the adolescent's view that the parents are "old-fashioned" .
- Preparing for marriage and family life (positive conduct regarding family life and children) includes the following aspects:
  - The adolescent must enjoy the responsibilities and privileges of being a family member
  - He/she must develop satisfactory I-you relationships – going out with a girl/boy, courting and becoming involved

- Preparing for a career and financial independence includes:
  - Acquiring basic knowledge and abilities
  - Gaining clarity about his/her own sex role and future roles (at work/home)
  - Considering possible professions, own interests and other possibilities for preparing for a profession (also further education)
- Acquiring a value system and ideology (i.e. a human, life and world view – coupled with acquiring an own identity)
- Striving to achieve socially responsible behaviour requires the following of the adolescent:
  - Accepting social responsibilities and community connectedness
  - Acquiring an adult sense of values and ethical control
  - Effective handling of discouragement and depression and forming a positive self-concept
  - Learning to communicate skillfully
  - Acquiring the methods to solve problems

  (Havighurst, 1972:43-82; Pretorius, 1994:113-122).

In summary, the primary developmental tasks facing adolescents are as follows:

- Managing the transition from childhood to adulthood
- Achieving independence
- Adjusting to sexual maturation
- Establishing relationships with their peers
- Developing a philosophy of life and sense of meaning and direction
- Establishing a set of morals and standards.

2.4 CONCLUSION

The development and implementation of a life skills curriculum fall into the overall context of the development of education support services, namely social work, school health, specialised education, vocational and general guidance and counselling, and psychological services. The principle of service integration emphasises the need to view issues of development as interrelated. This principle necessitates an interdisciplinary / sectoral approach to curriculum development and implementation, including all the above-mentioned education support services. The present study focuses on the role of social work, as part of

education support services, in developing and implementing a life skills programme for the senior phase learner in the final year of primary school.

In the senior phase, learners should be given the means to acquire, develop and apply a range of more advanced knowledge, understanding and skills. Breadth, depth, access and entitlement are particularly important to ensure that learners are given a sound basis from which to take advantage of choices in the Further Education and Training (FET) phase. Learners should know enough about the nature of the options to ensure that they make informed decisions about future choices. Learners in this phase are becoming more independent and clearer about their own interests.

The phase suggests that the essence of the curriculum in the Senior Phase is transitional, to inform the learners' choices and to enable them to become independent. The Senior Phase is intended to bridge the gap between consolidation and extension in the Intermediate Phase and choices in the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase.

Many changes occur in learners from the ages of 12 to 15 years. This is the last stage of childhood (adolescence) before they reach adulthood. They mature physically, sexually, cognitively, emotionally and socially in an independent manner. Furthermore the learners develop abstract thought. They concentrate on thinking in abstract terms, hypothesise and use lateral reasoning. At this level, thought processes really begin to become sophisticated and with appropriate support, the learner can analyse events and gain some understanding of probability, correlations, combinations, propositional reasoning and other higher-level cognitive skills.

At this age, learners also have the ability to perform controlled experimentation, keeping all but one factor constant. They have the ability to hypothesise variables before experimentation, to reverse the direction between reality and possibility. They can also use interpropositional operations, combining propositions by conjunction, disjunction, negation and implication.

It is important during this phase to get the learners to focus on critical and creative thinking skills, to develop their attitudes and understand their role in society. The learners also

become aware of new aspects of themselves that influence the development of their self-concept. Adolescents continually anticipate other people's reactions to their appearance and behaviour. Peer influence plays a major role in their social development. The development of a positive feeling of self-worth is paramount during this stage.

Moral development is inextricably intertwined with cognitive and social development. Adolescents' capacity for abstract thinking influences their moral judgement and decisions. They still concentrate on social responsibilities, but are moving towards independent morality.

Adolescents also believe that one must be sensitive about infringing the rights of others (peers) and violating the rules of their peers. They also respect the values and attitudes of others (peers), but rely heavily on their own intellect and values when making personal decisions (compare Department of Education, 1997:24-25).

It is important to note that the primary developmental needs and tasks of the adolescent in the senior phase should be related to the needs and tasks associated with the previous phases, and be contextually sensitive to the diverse cultures of the South African school population.

CHAPTER 3
INTERVENTION RESEARCH: DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE LIFE SKILLS PROGRAMME

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Designing and implementing a life skills programme is only part of a larger developmental process. It is equally important to secure long-term support and resources for life skills education, and to engage, from the outset, all of the education support services and potential community services that would have a role to play in the process of life skills programme development. Implementing a life skills programme will require the introduction of facilitation methods and strategies that may be new to social workers, and the success of the programme will depend largely on the availability of in-service training, as well as efforts to include training in participatory learning methods and strategies at universities.

Chapter 1 mentions that the current study is intervention research and that the phases and selected activities of intervention design and development (D&D) according to Rothman and Thomas (1994:25-43) are used. One important aim of intervention research is to create the means to improve the health and well-being of community life. Figure 3.1 outlines critical operations or activities in each phase of the intervention research process and is followed by a discussion of how this was applied to the present study. Although the phases are outlined vertically, they often merge in practice as the investigator responds to opportunities and challenges in the shifting context of applied research. Each phase has distinctive activities that need to be carried out in order to complete the work of that phase. Although performed in a stepwise sequence, some or many of the activities associated with each phase continue after the introduction of the next phase. Phases 1 to 4 will be discussed in this chapter and will conclude by presenting an outline of the themes covered in the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme. In order to give the reader a holistic perspective of Rothman and Thomas's (1994) intervention research, Phases 5 and 6 will be briefly discussed in this chapter, and in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively.

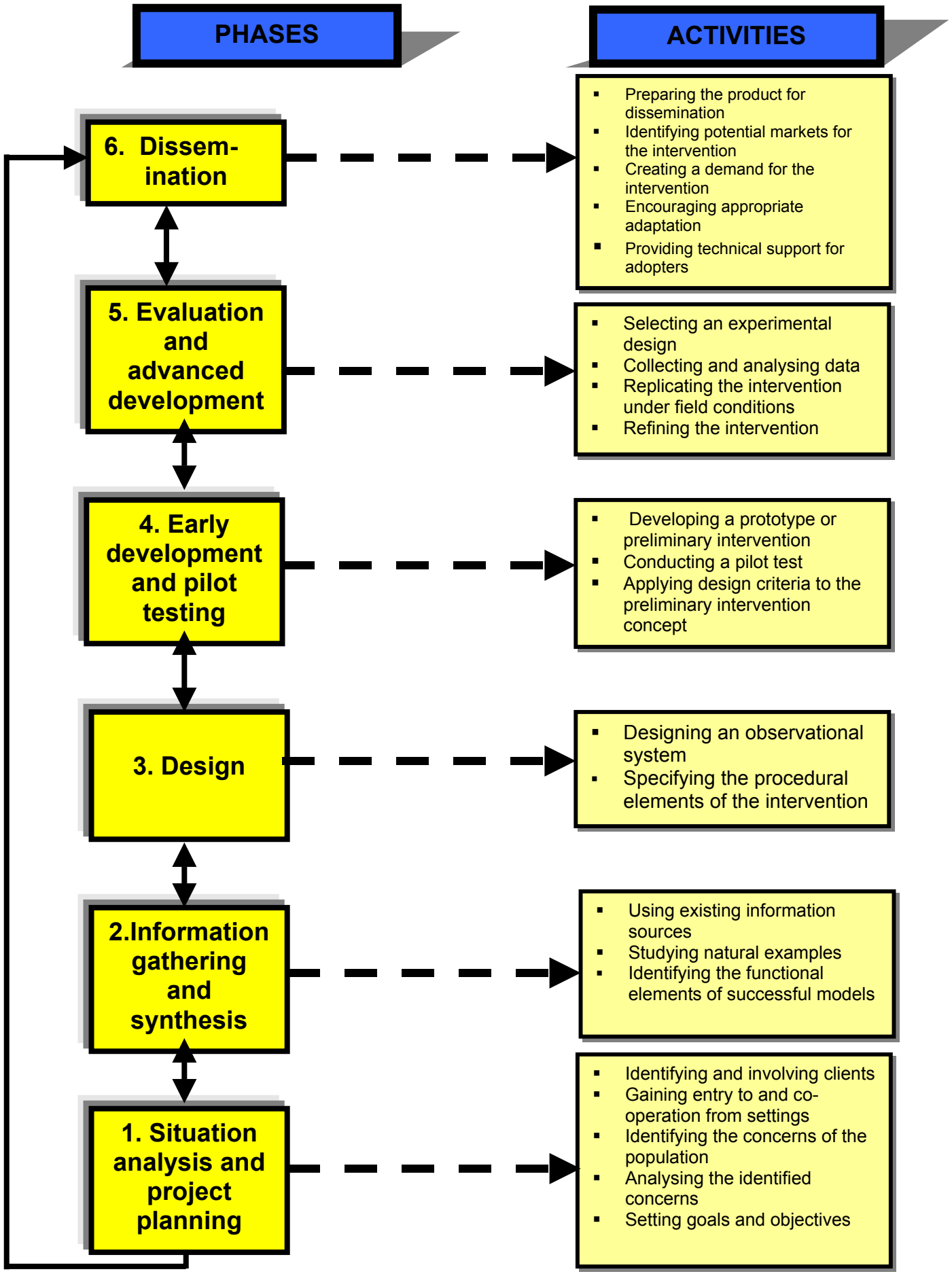


FIGURE 3.1: PHASES AND ACTIVITIES OF INTERVENTION RESEARCH
(Adapted from Rothman & Thomas, 1994:28)

3.2 PHASE 1: SITUATION ANALYSIS AND PROJECT PLANNING

Rothman and Thomas (1994:25-43) start intervention research, namely the Design and Development Process, with problem analysis and project planning. In view of the developmental perspective of this study, the researcher preferred to reformulate this phase into Situation Analysis and Project Planning. The several activities critical to the phase and how they were implemented in the study will be discussed next. Each activity involves collaboration between the researcher and clients, helping to gain the co-operation and support necessary for conducting the intervention research.

Curriculum 2005 is the new education curriculum that is driving education transformation in South Africa (Department of Education, 1997). Curriculum 2005 is an outcomes-based curriculum and everyone who is involved in school services and school support services is expected to have the knowledge and skills to implement the outcomes-based approach.

Life skills education is a fundamental division of the Learning Area Life Orientation. Life Orientation is fundamental in empowering learners to live meaningful lives in a society that demands rapid transformation. It is an integral part of education, training and development. It is central to the holistic unfolding of the learners, caring for their intellectual, physical, personal, social, spiritual and emotional growth, and for the way these facets work together. It locates its vision of individual growth in the quest for a free, democratic and stable society, for quality of life in the community and for a productive economy (Department of Education, 1997:LO-2).

3.2.1 Identifying and involving principal, teachers and learners at the primary school

The University of Pretoria is involved in several community service projects at primary and secondary schools in Mamelodi, a township near Pretoria. The principal of a primary school in Mamelodi East and the teacher responsible for the Learning Area: Life Orientation requested the Faculties of Education and Humanities at University of Pretoria to assist and support them with the needs and problems they encountered in the school and community. In collaboration with the teachers involved, the researcher identified the specific target and goal of the

intervention, namely to develop and implement a personal and interpersonal life skills programme for Grade 7 learners in the senior phase of a traditionally African school, and to evaluate whether participation in the life skills programme leads to personal growth (self-empowerment) and social competence and thus contributes to the optimal social functioning of children in the classroom, school, family and community (capacity building).

3.2.2 Gaining entry to and co-operation from the primary school

The researcher formed a collaborative relationship with representatives of the school (principal, school governing board and teachers) by involving them in analysing the school's situation, identifying their and the learners' learning needs, planning the project and implementing selected interventions. Rothman and Thomas (1994:29) state that collaboration helps provide a sense of ownership of the investigation and by working together with those who can facilitate access, researchers gain the co-operation and support they need for conducting intervention research. As a sign of courtesy and commitment, a letter was sent to the principal of the school (see Appendix A); the school guidance teacher, who is also the teacher responsible for the Learning Area (Life Orientation) (see Appendix B) and the parents of the learners to gain their permission and consent (see Appendix C).

3.2.3 Identifying the concerns of the school personnel and learners

The personnel of the primary school first identified a need for a life skills programme. The researcher used formal and informal contacts (meetings) with the personnel of the primary school in order to identify their concerns. The researcher consulted the key informants, such as the members of the school governing board and professionals from the education support services in the district. During meetings with the principal and teachers, Curriculum 2005 (Department of Education, 1997) for the Learning Area, Life Orientation was used as a guideline and compared with the list of topics or themes identified by the teachers. These themes were not in any particular order nor were they prioritised. A decision was made to compile a questionnaire to determine the needs of Grade 7 learners for life skills education (Appendix D). Grade 7 learners were requested to indicate the topics or themes they would be interested in or that were most needed for learners in their school. Then they were

requested to rank twelve themes in the order of importance that the themes had for each of them. They were also invited to add any other themes (not listed) of importance to them.

3.2.4 Analysing identified needs (problems)

The researcher and guardian teacher for Grade 7 analysed the curriculum for Life Orientation (Department of Education, 1997), and the themes listed by the personnel of the primary school. A frequency analysis was done on the needs assessment questionnaire for Grade 7 learners (n=40). According to the frequency analysis, the following themes were identified as the most important for the Grade 7 learners:

- Myself /me (Personal)
- My family and me
- My friends and school
- My community and me
- Effective communication
- Dating, relationships and sex education
- Problem solving (stress / crisis management)
- Conflict resolution (anger management)
- Understanding conflict, violence. Abuse and peace (peace-making skills)
- Dealing with divorce in the family
- Death: Grieving and growing
- Dealing with alcohol and drugs

3.2.5 Setting critical and specific outcomes

It is generally agreed that when learning takes place, learners acquire skills, attitudes, and knowledge of concepts or processes that they did not have previously. These end products of the learning process are called "outcomes". When people decide before learning takes place what these end products must be, and then write them down as statements to develop learning programmes, the system is "outcomes-based".

There are different levels of outcomes. Outcome statements can be specific or general. Obviously the more specific an outcome statement is, the easier it is to determine if a learner

has attained it or not. However, if all the outcome statements were defined in great detail, a holistic sense of capability would be lost. Therefore the school social worker should have a sound knowledge of outcomes-based education, critical and specific outcomes.

There are seven **Critical Outcomes**. These express the intended results of Education and Training as a whole and are therefore the broadest outcomes. SAQA (the South African Qualifications Authority) approved and adopted the following outcomes after much discussion and debate:

1. Identify and solve problems in which responses show that responsible decisions using critical and creative thinking have been made.
2. Work effectively with others as members of a team, group, organisation and community.
3. Organise and manage oneself and one's activities responsibly and effectively.
4. Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information.
5. Communicate effectively using visual, mathematical and/or language skills in the modes of oral and/or written presentation.
6. Use science and technology effectively and critically, showing responsibility towards the environment and the health of others.
7. Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems in which problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation (Department of Education, 1997).

In addition, it was agreed that all learners should become aware of the importance of the following:

- Reflecting on and exploring a variety of strategies to learn more effectively.
- Participating as a responsible citizen in the life of local, national and global communities.
- Being culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts.
- Exploring education and career opportunities.
- Developing entrepreneurial opportunities.

The Critical Outcomes (7 plus the added 5, i.e. 12) should guide classroom methodology, the selection of content and the rationales for teaching and learning. This implies that the social worker should also use the Critical Outcomes as ultimate guidelines for the design and development of a life skills programme.

Specific outcomes have been derived from the Learning Areas. They refer to the specification of what learners are able to do at the end of a learning experience. This includes skills, knowledge and values that inform the demonstration of the achievement of an outcome or a set of outcomes. In each Learning Area, for example, and more specifically in relation to the current study of Life Orientation, it was found that a set of specific outcomes described what learners would be able to do at all levels of learning (Department of Education, 1997:21). According to the policy document for the Senior Phase (Grades 7 to 9), learning programme designers will be allowed to select and cluster certain outcomes for inclusion in learning programmes. Explanatory notes follow certain specific outcomes. These notes are included to assist the reader to understand the purpose and intention of the outcome (Department of Education, 1997:21-22). Assessment criteria are also briefly mentioned and should be taken into consideration when assessing the learners and also the effectiveness of a programme.

The following specific outcomes (SO), explanatory notes and assessment criteria were also used for designing and implementing the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme for Grade 7 learners:

- SO1: Understand and accept themselves as unique and worthwhile human beings.
  Life Orientation is instrumental in promoting a meaningful lifestyle for each learner. This specific outcome aims at developing respect for the self, which includes a positive self-concept and self-actualisation. This will be attained by –
  - promoting the individual's own worth, dignity and rights as a unique individual;
  - examining how the physical and social environment affect personal development and growth;
  - exploring the role of social, cultural and national perspectives in shaping personal attitudes and values; and
  - understanding the integrated nature of the whole person.

  Assessment criteria: The learners should demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which their own cultural traditions have shaped them; demonstrate an appreciation of their own uniqueness and that of others; display objective assessments of their abilities and attitudes; and demonstrate an analysis of the integrated nature of the whole person (Department of Education, 1997:LO-7-8).
- SO2: Use skills and display attitudes and values that improve relationships in family,

groups and community.

Assessment criteria: They should demonstrate a critical analysis of various relationships in families, friends and groups; and of the qualities of relationships and communication (Department of Education, 1997:LO-9).

- SO3: Respect the rights of people to hold personal beliefs and values.

  Assessment criteria: Learners should demonstrate a knowledge of and respect for people's rights to hold different beliefs and values; illustrate the interaction between value and belief systems; demonstrate a comprehension of the relationship between national unity and cultural diversity in South Africa; evaluate the role of values and beliefs in socialisation (Department of Education, 1997:LO-10).

- SO4: Demonstrate value and respect for human rights as reflected in *Ubuntu* and other philosophies.

  These Specific Outcomes are based on the conviction that a strong human rights culture should form the basis of South African society in general and the educational environment in particular. Therefore, these Specific Outcomes seek to develop an understanding of the principles of a respect for human rights and their relevance to life. They are aimed at developing in learners the values, consciousness and competencies that are required for effective participation as responsible citizens of a democratic society.

  Assessment criteria: Learners display evidence of human rights, values and practices; analyse the history of the struggle for human rights; display and practise an understanding of the relationships between rights and responsibilities; analyse the practice of *Ubuntu*, in the context of South African diversity; appraise the work of individuals, groups, private and public institutions with regard to human rights (Department of Education, 1997:LO-11-12).

- SO5: Practise acquired life and decision-making skills.

  The development and acquisition of life skills form the essence of Life Orientation. Learners have to be equipped with, understand and be able to use life skills. The development of information-gathering strategies should form part of this facet. Life skills *per se* are taught and learned, although the learner is expected to use these skills on a wider basis, especially in coping with real-life situations. The acquisition of knowledge and skills that can balance risk and safety in the individual's experiences, environment and

social relationships are crucial to this facet.

Assessment criteria: Learners demonstrate the ability to take responsibility for themselves and others; demonstrate the acceptance of responsibility for their own choices in terms of personal and community well-being; demonstrate the responsibility to promote safety awareness, the management of life changes, stress management and conflict resolution; display the effective accessing and use of resources (Department of Education, 1997:LO-13).

- SO6: Assess career and other opportunities and set goals that will enable learners to make the best use of their potential and talents.

  It has become imperative for education and the world of work to co-operate closely in order to prepare the learners adequately for their future working lives and lifelong learning prospects.

  Assessment criteria: Learners demonstrate an ability to research the resources for career opportunities; analyse the requirements for careers and opportunities; evaluate first-hand experience in the workplace; demonstrate career planning and career-pathing processes and procedures; demonstrate the ability to present themselves; demonstrate an understanding that career choices are informed by personal and cultural values; identify role models; demonstrate a knowledge of their own skills, ability, interests and personality; display job-seeking skills (Department of Education, 1997:LO-14-15).
- SO7: Demonstrate the values and attitudes necessary for a healthy and balanced lifestyle.

  Assessment criteria: Learners appraise various lifestyles in terms of a healthy and balanced approach; demonstrate knowledge and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and Aids; demonstrate that they can set goals for a healthy and balanced lifestyle (Department of Education, 1997:LO-16-17).
- SO8: Evaluate and participate in activities that demonstrate effective human movement and development.

  There can be no doubt that South Africa's prosperity depends upon the health and well-being of its population, especially as there is ample evidence that there are significant social and health-related problems among our people. Many of these problems are associated with the lifestyles that individuals adopt, particularly

regarding diet, physical activity, alcohol and substance abuse, sexual activity and a number of other high-risk behaviours.

All learners should be provided with a sound knowledge of the benefits of healthy living and a safe way of living (Department of Education, 1997:LO-5-6).

Assessment criteria: Learners should demonstrate an appraisal of movement concepts and movement skills; demonstrate that they possess a repertoire of movements that involve manipulation and object control; demonstrate the recognition of strengths and development needs (Department of Education, 1997:LO-18-19).

The Critical Outcomes (CO=12) and Specific Outcomes (SO=8) should guide the methodology used for implementing the life skills programme, the selection of content and the rationale for facilitating learning in the life skills programme. The assessment criteria should be taken into consideration when assessing the effectiveness of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme.

3.3 PHASE 2: INFORMATION GATHERING AND SYNTHESIS

Rothman and Thomas (1994:31-32) state that when planning an intervention research project, it is essential to discover what others have done to understand and address the problem. The key activities of this phase are: using the existing information sources, studying natural examples and identifying the functional elements of successful models. Chapter 2 of this study gives an explanation of the execution of activities in this phase. Although the activities are not specifically named as those of Rothman and Thomas (1994:32-33), they were used as a framework in the compilation of Chapter Two. Extensive reviews were done of the literature on life skills education and training and the learner in the senior phase (adolescent) in the General Education and Training (GET) band. The model of Edna Rooth (1997) for Life Skills Education with the components facilitation, groupwork, experiential learning and continuity, was used as the foundation for the current study.

3.4 PHASE 3: DESIGN

The phases of design, early development and pilot testing are intertwined and the activities are difficult to separate. According to Rothman and Thomas (1994:33-34), two products result from intervention research:

- The research data that may demonstrate relationships between the intervention and the behaviours or outcomes that define the problem of interest
- The intervention which may include a strategy, technique or programme; informational or training materials; environmental design variables; motivational system; a new or modified policy; or other procedures.

In this study the researcher at one level designed an intervention, the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme for Grade 7 learners, and on another level designed the model and tools to implement the programme.

The two important activities during this phase are –

- designing an observational system; and
- specifying the procedural elements of the intervention (Rothman & Thomas, 1994:34-36).

The main goal of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme is formulated in Chapter One. Critical and Specific Outcomes have been formulated above in this chapter. In the pilot study and main study, an independent observer from education support services made direct observations. The trained observer attended all the sessions of the pilot study and main study. The researcher designed a questionnaire for learners for self-monitoring and self-reporting (Appendix G: Participant session-by-session evaluation). Each learner completed this questionnaire after each session.

The life skills programme for the pilot study was implemented over two weeks for ten one-hourly sessions held once a day.

To summarise the design and development of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme, the researcher had to take the following into consideration:

- Extensive reviews of the literature on life skills education and training and the learner in the senior phase (adolescent) in the General Education and Training (GET) band
- The model of Edna Rooth (1997) for Life Skills Education consisting of the components facilitation, groupwork, experiential learning and continuity
- Promoting the vision of Curriculum 2005 and enabling social workers to implement the principles of outcomes-based education easily and effectively in a range of situations
- The need to meet the specific requirements of Curriculum 2005 as the major area of concern in outcomes-based education: Critical Outcomes, Specific Outcomes and assessment criteria. Although the performance indicators and range statements are not discussed in this study owing to the limited scope of a mini dissertation, they were used as a framework and guideline for the design and development of the programme.

3.5 PHASE 4: EARLY DEVELOPMENT AND PILOT TESTING

According to Rothman and Thomas (1994:36-37) a primitive design is evolved to a form that can be evaluated under field conditions during the phase of early development and pilot testing. This phase includes the important activities of developing a prototype or preliminary intervention, conducting a pilot test and applying design criteria to the preliminary intervention concept. Rothman and Thomas (1994:36) state: "*Pilot tests are implemented in settings convenient for the researchers and somewhat similar to ones in which the intervention will be used.*"

The preliminary intervention procedures are selected and specified at this stage of the design process. In the current study, a pilot study was conducted by designing and applying a prototype of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme to a group of eight Grade 7 learners. These Grade 7 learners were not part of the sample for the main study. The groupwork method, in keeping with the ecological paradigm, was used in the implementation of the programme. Learners had a workbook in which to do written activities and paste handouts. A pre-test (questionnaire) and post-test (questionnaire) were designed and administered to the learners. The learners, teachers and objective observer were interviewed

about the design of the programme, the model used and the learners' workbooks. Where shortcomings were found in the programme and questionnaires, they were adapted or redesigned. Feedback from the initial pilot test suggested that the programme showed some effects with supportive transactions, but might be shortened and simplified to meet the time demands and learning outcomes of the learners.

After conducting the early development of the life skills programme and the pilot study, 12 relevant themes were identified that should be included in the final programme:

- Developing self-awareness, self-knowledge of self and sensory contact (SELF)
- My family and me
- My school and me
- Dating, interpersonal relationships and HIV/AIDS education
- My community and me
- Needs, rights and responsibilities
- Rainbow nation, first impressions and stereotyping
- Effective communication
- Problem solving
- Conflict resolution
- Death: Grieving and growing
- Where do I go for help /counselling?

In addition to the fact that the programme should meet the specific requirements of Curriculum 2005 (Critical Outcomes, Specific Outcomes and assessment criteria), there are two important mechanisms for implementing the programme:

- Phase organisers. These help to highlight areas of importance and encourage a holistic approach. They cut across learning areas and reflect the critical outcomes. All learning programmes should represent learning activities from all five of the phase organisers. These phase organisers are: Communication; Personal Development and Empowerment; Culture and Society; Environment; and Economy and Development.
- Programme organisers. These are subsets of phase organisers. Phase organisers are too broad and generic to be used for designing learning programmes. So, for each phase organiser, there may be several different programme organisers. This helps to focus on the key areas of content and concepts that a learning programme will cover.

Programme organisers also link all 8 learning areas (Department of Education, 1997:25-31).

In the present study the learning area is Life Orientation, the phase organiser is Personal Development and Empowerment and the programme organiser is Personal and Interpersonal Development.

The Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme is presented in Appendix E. Table 3.1 (on page 83) outlines the themes covered in the programme. Various sources were used as a framework for compiling the programme and the researcher endeavoured to improve it and add innovative ideas by consulting, after each session, the guidance teacher and the objective observer, and also by examining the evaluation questionnaire completed by the learners after each session (Appendix G).

3.6 PHASE 5: EVALUATION AND ADVANCED DEVELOPMENT

Rothman and Thomas (1994:37) believe that the use of pilot tests and field replications to test and refine the intervention distinguishes intervention research from programme evaluation. There are four major operations or activities in the evaluation and advanced development phase: selecting an experimental design, collecting and analysing data, replicating the intervention under field conditions and refining the intervention (Rothman & Thomas 1994:37-39).

The evaluation and advanced development as well as the major operations will be discussed in the next chapter because of their importance to the present study.

TABLE 3.1: OUTLINE OF THE PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL LIFE SKILLS PROGRAMME

Phase organisers:	**Personal Development and Empowerment**
Programme organiser:	**Personal and Interpersonal Development**
Programme presenter:	
Guidance teacher:	
Objective observer:	
Learners:	**Grade 7**
Duration:	**±15 Sessions, ± 1½ hour per session (Tuesdays and Wednesdays 12:00 - 13:30)**
GOAL:	**PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**
Session	**THEME**
Session: Introduction	**Building relationships. Questionnaire on needs assessment for learners.**
Session: Introduction	**Pre-test: Baseline assessment: Questionnaire for participants/learners Programme orientation; Knowledge of the South African context and why we want to develop our life skills; Building relationships**
Session 1	**Life skills Developing self-awareness, self-knowledge and sensory contact (SELF)**
Session 2	**My family and me**
Session 3	**My school, friends and me**
Session 4	**Dating and interpersonal relationships**
Session 5	**My community and me**
Session 6	**Needs, rights and responsibilities**
Session 7	**Rainbow nation, first impressions and stereotyping**
Session 8	**Effective communication**
Session 9	**Problem solving**
Session 10	**Conflict resolution**
Session 11	**Death: Grieving and growing**
Session 12	**Where do I go for help /counselling?**
Final session	**Evaluation of the programme. Post-test: Questionnaire for participants/learners Week after termination: Evaluation**

3.7 PHASE 6: DISSEMINATION

After the intervention (in this study the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme) has been field-tested and evaluated, it is ready to be disseminated to schools and community organisations and other target audiences. The following activities make the process of dissemination and adaptation more successful:

- Preparing the product for dissemination
- Identifying potential markets for the intervention
- Creating a demand for the intervention
- Encouraging appropriate adaptation
- Providing technical support for adopters (Rothman & Thomas 1994:39-43).

Phase 6 of the intervention research process will be discussed in the final chapter of the study.

3.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter described the model of intervention research proposed by Rothman and Thomas (1994). The model attempts to enhance the understanding of community and school conditions and in particular, the effectiveness of interventions intended to improve them. It is an interactive model, assuming a dynamic interplay between clients, researchers and the eventual purchasers and users of interventions. Collaboration between researchers and clients in all phases – from identifying community problems to adapting the innovation in context – helps to assure more effective products in the intervention research paradigm.

In Chapter 3 the following phases and activities in this study were discussed:

- Situation analysis and project planning
  - Identifying and involving the principal, school governing board, teachers and learners at the primary school
  - Gaining entry to and co-operation from the primary school
  - Identifying the concerns of the school personnel and learners
  - Analysing the identified needs

- Setting critical and specific outcomes

- Information gathering and synthesis: These refer to the activities described in Chapter 2 and used as foundation the model of Edna Rooth (1997) Life Skills Education.
- Design, early development and pilot testing of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme: The preliminary intervention procedures were tested in practice on a group of eight Grade 7 learners, using the groupwork method in keeping with the ecological paradigm in the implementation of the programme.

The next chapter gives specific details of the experimental design, the data collection and data analysis. The focus is on the evaluation and advanced development of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme.

CHAPTER 4
EVALUATION AND ADVANCED DEVELOPMENT OF THE PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL LIFE SKILLS PROGRAMME

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter encompasses phase four of the intervention research model, namely the evaluation and advanced development. This includes selecting an experimental design, collecting and analysing data, replicating the intervention under field conditions and refining the intervention (Rothman & Thomas, 1994:37-39). The analysis, interpretation and discussion of the results are presented in this chapter. The nature of the study lends itself to the joint presentation of the data analysis and the discussion of the findings. This approach enabled the researcher to establish the links between the research processes, the data gathered and the findings in relation to the purpose of the study.

Large amounts of descriptive data were generated through the research process since this study encompassed programme development, programme implementation, pilot testing and the evaluation of programme outcomes within the model of intervention research developed by Rothman and Thomas (1994). For presentation and discussion it was necessary to select data that were particularly relevant to the purpose and objectives of the study.

Evaluation in intervention research is empirical inquiry directed at determining the effects of the intervention, including its effectiveness. Although there is typically some evaluation of aspects of the intervention at most points of the design and development process, the major emphasis is on systematic outcome evaluation in the phase of evaluation and advanced development. As an integral part of the innovation process, evaluation should be redesigned and developed further. Satisfactory results in evaluation generally provide a basis for progressing to the subsequent phase of dissemination (Rothman & Thomas, 1994: 267).

Advanced development presupposes that initial design and pilot testing have been carried out during the intervention and that which has been learned in the earlier trial use is sufficiently

positive to justify the more systematic appraisal of intervention outcomes. Trail use provides occasions for developmental testing in which an innovation is systematically tested, revised or redesigned. Advanced development therefore involves further developmental testing of the intervention. Such testing provides for the replicated use of interventions that do not need to be revised when they are utilised in essentially the same way as they were designed to be used. As the process of development progresses, the practitioner-researcher moves from one innovation to another innovation and from case to case until most of the interventions in the domain of design and development have been implemented successfully without needing major alterations or redesign. If performed appropriately, the additional developmental testing of the intervention should extend the depth of development and thus enhance its developmental validity (Rothman & Thomas 1994:268).

4.2 THE EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN

The present study employed a non-probability sampling procedure, namely that the probability of inclusion in the sample would involve the convenience and availability of the participants. Marlow (1993) adds that non-probability sampling has been frequently employed in social work research and in evaluating social work practice. With non-probability sampling, there is limited support for the claim that the sample is representative of the population from which it is drawn (Gabor, 1993; Patton, 1990). However, this was not a major concern of the present study since its aim was to design, develop and improve programme effectiveness in a specific context.

The sample being studied comprised all the Grade 7 learners at a primary school in Mamelodi. There were 40 learners in the only Grade 7 class and their ages varied from approximately 12 to 16 years. The sample was divided in six smaller groups with 5 to 7 learners in each group (consisting of a more or less equal number of girls and boys) to implement the groupwork method. The groupwork method, in keeping with the ecological paradigm (as discussed in Chapter One), has a dual focus, namely on the individual and on society (and is discussed in paragraph 4.5 below).

The participants varied slightly from one subgroup to another (referred to as small groups) and from session to session. Demographic details were noted during the orientation and in the sixth and final session. These details are presented in Table 4.1

TABLE 4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

N = 40

CHARACTERISTICS	NO. OF PARTICIPANTS
GENDER:	
Males	18
Females	22
AGES:	
12 years	9
13 years	12
14 years	10
15 years	8
16 years	1

Table 4.1 indicates that the sample consisted of more females than males. In keeping with the objectives of the study, the sample constituted adolescents with an age range from 12-16 years. Of relevance are the adolescent developmental phase and its higher risk of emotional and social problems. Adolescents are increasingly being seen as an appropriate population at risk for primary prevention programmes to enable them to meet the developmental demands of this period, as mentioned in Chapter Two.

As stated in Chapter One, a descriptive design with a quasi-experiment, the one-group pre-test-post-test experiment, was used in this study. The one-group pre-test-post-test design is also referred to as a before-after design because it includes a pre-test of the dependent variable, which can be used as a basis of comparison for the post-test results. The researcher therefore used what Grinnell & Williams (1990:160) refer to as a descriptive pre-test and post-test design. In this study a self-administered pre-test and post-test questionnaire was utilised.

The one-group pre-test design, in which the pre-test (Participant pre-test and post-test questionnaire) (Appendix F) preceded the introduction of the independent variable (the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme) can be used to determine precisely how the independent variable affects a particular group. A post-test (Participant pre-test and post-

test questionnaire) (Appendix F) followed it and could be used to determine precisely how the independent variable affected the Grade 7 learners in a primary school.

To summarise the experiment: The pre-test (questionnaire where learners had to rate their personal and interpersonal life skills on an ordinal scale of 0 to 3) was administered (Appendix F). The Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme was implemented (Appendix E). The post-test (questionnaire where learners had to rate their personal and interpersonal life skills on an ordinal scale of 0 to 3) was administered (Appendix F). There was also a session-by-session evaluation questionnaire to be completed by learners in order to improve the effectiveness of the programme continuously (Appendix G). Lastly, a questionnaire on the evaluation of the programme (usefulness; importance of different modules for participants; methods used; usefulness for personal and interpersonal growth and social competence; most important life skills learnt) was administered (Participant retrospective evaluation questionnaire, Appendix H).

As this was a non-probability or non-randomised sampling method, it is recognised that generalisation should be done with caution, as the sample may not necessarily be representative of early adolescents in general. Therefore it should be stated that any significant findings would be significant for this particular group of learners.

4.3 DATA COLLECTION

This phase of the intervention research process centred on data collection and involved the development and implementation of the research instruments. Several data-gathering instruments were used to measure the impact that the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme might have had on participants but owing to the limited scope of a mini master's dissertation, the researcher will report on using the self-administered pre-test and post-test questionnaires (Participant pre-test and post-test questionnaire) (Appendix F) as the main method of data collection. Additional to this was the Participant session-by-session evaluation questionnaire (Appendix G) and the Participant retrospective evaluation questionnaire (Appendix H).

4.3.1 Participant pre-test and post-test questionnaire (Appendix F)

The pre-test measures provided a baseline for gauging the changes in participant responses (Pietrzak, Ramler, Renner, Ford & Gilbert, 1990). Furthermore, in keeping with the objectives of the study, the research design helped to ascertain whether minimum standards of programme outcome had been achieved and the extent to which participants changed during their participation in the programme (Marlow, 1993). Fitz-Gibbon and Morris (1987) state that, depending on the nature of the study, the absence of a comparison group for judging outcomes may be problematic. However, these authors add that this design was suitable in studies that focused on monitoring programme implementation. As programme design and implementation were objectives of the study, the design was regarded as appropriate. The choice of design ought to be viewed against the total triangulation of the methodology in this study. This instrument, Participant pre-test and post-test questionnaire, was one of several data-gathering instruments used to measure the impact that the programme might have had on the participants.

The questionnaire consisted of two sections of statements about personal and interpersonal life skills. The participants were asked to read the sentence and put a thick (√) at the number that showed how they rated their life skills. Therefore the participants had to rate or assess their life skills on an ordinal scale from 0 to 3 (0= no need for improvement; 1= slight need for improvement; 2= moderate need for improvement and 3= much need for improvement). Jordon, Franklin and Corcoran (l993) indicate that self-ratings are helpful because individuals can evaluate their own thoughts, behaviour and feelings accurately, provided that they are self-aware and willing to be truthful. This questionnaire was also in line with guidelines on outcomes-based assessment with the focus on self-assessment (Department of Education, 2002). Some of the statements relate to what Patton (1987) describes as “feeling” questions, which are aimed at understanding the emotional responses of people to their experiences and thoughts. Other statements can be described as experience/behaviour questions, which are aimed at eliciting descriptions of the experiences, behaviours, actions and activities of persons in the face of certain situations. The choice of these statements was in keeping with the views of Ely, Anzul, Friedman, Garner and Steinmetz (1991) who stress the necessity for researchers to be absolutely clear about what specifically they want to measure. In compiling the instrument, the researcher

kept in mind the learning outcomes of the Life Skills Programme. The literature review in Chapter Two was also used as a framework for developing the instrument and also taking into consideration that the learners in outcomes-based education should be able to assess themselves (also compare Morganett, 1994; Division of Mental Health WHO, 1994; Department of Education, 1999). All the items of the questionnaires are learning outcomes as formulated for the themes (sessions) of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme. The researcher views the pre-test as relating to the baseline assessment in outcomes-based education. Baseline assessment is used at the beginning of a new set of learning activities (in this study the Life Skills Programme). Baseline assessment is carried out so as to find out what the learners already know and can demonstrate, so that a decision can be taken on what level of demands should be built into the learning experience plan (Department of Education, 2002).

This instrument was administrated individually, in this way giving the facilitator and objective observer a good deal of control in explaining the purposes of the questions and responses. The instrument was tested in terms of its face and content validity among a small random sample of Grade 7 learners attending three primary schools in Pretoria and also during the pilot study. The instrument was then modified in accordance with the problems encountered during its trial use. The Participant pre-test and post-test questionnaire was administered during the orientation session and then a week after the termination of the programme.

4.3.2 Participant session-by-session evaluation questionnaire (Appendix G)

This questionnaire required seven responses from the participants. The questionnaire was made up of the following:

- Four open-ended questions.
- One question requiring a yes/no answer and an explanation of the response.
- Two interval scales.

Data required from this sample were guided by the research questions generated during the conceptual phase of the study, as outlined in Chapter One. All questions related to the participants' experience of the programme and were completed by each participant. Careful

thought and consideration were given to questionnaire construction. According to Bailey (1982:113), the key word in questionnaire construction is "relevance". When constructing questionnaires, researchers should bear in mind the goals of the study as well as the relevance of the question to the individual respondent. Cognisance was also taken of the level of understanding of the participants. Attempts were therefore made to state questions as clearly and as simply as possible and to avoid ambiguities and double-barrelled questions (Marlow, 1993; Patton, 1987). Care was also taken to ensure that the questions were short and that unnecessary questions were avoided.

The use of open-ended questions served specific purposes in this study, as discussed by several authors. Open-ended questions provide a way of collecting qualitative data in which respondents can answer in ways that accurately reflect their views, that is, they are not forced to give an answer which falls in the researcher's categories (Marlow, 1993; Mindel, 1993). This allows respondents to give information freely or give responses that the researcher may not have anticipated (King, Morris & Fitz-Gibbon, 1987). In supporting this statement, Ely, et al. (1991:66) add, "open-ended questioning can unearth valuable information that tight questions do not allow". The advantage is that respondents give their own words, thoughts and insights in answering the questions. Marlow (1993) cautions that respondents may be intimidated, threatened or put off by open-ended questions. This limitation was overcome by the facilitator who explained clearly to the participants that the questionnaire was being utilised to measure aspects of the programme, and was not a reflection of the participants' academic abilities. The structured questions included in the instrument was a prerequisite for providing the open-ended explanation that was required.

The instrument also consisted of two interval scales, which listed variables on a continuum from one extreme to the other. At the last question participants had the following instruction: *Please circle on the following scale the number which best describes how useful you thought today's session was in terms of helping you to know and understand…* and then the theme of each session was added. The response categories on the continuum were ordered in equal intervals and assigned numbers (Jordan, et al., 1993). Here again, care was taken to ensure that the scales were simple enough for participants to interpret and to respond to easily. Marlow (1993) highlights the usefulness of these scales: in instances where the

variables are not clear-cut and cannot be contained in one question or item, they may instead be composed of a number of different dimensions or factors. The questionnaire utilised in the present study was also in line with guidelines for outcomes-based assessment with the focus on self-assessment (Department of Education, 2002).

4.3.3 Participant retrospective evaluation questionnaire (Appendix H)

Retrospective evaluation was undertaken a week after the termination of the programme and a day after the post-test. A final evaluation questionnaire was developed to obtain the feelings and opinions of participants about their experiences of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme. A written explanation of the purpose of the questionnaire was included in the instrument, because the participants had a right to know why they were being questioned (King, et al., 1987).

The instrument consisted of eight structured questions and two open-ended questions. A structured question is one that gives the respondents a certain number of categories to respond to as answers (Bailey, 1982; Marlow, 1993; Mindel, 1993). The advantage of structured or closed-ended questions is that the answers are standard and can be compared from person to person, and there is no need for time-consuming coding procedures such as those involved with open-ended questions (Bailey, 1982; Mindel, 1993). Because choices are provided, respondents are less apt to leave certain questions blank or to choose a "do not know" response (Mindel, 1993:230). Respondents are often clearer about the meaning of the question, that is, a respondent who is often unsure about the meaning of the question can often tell from the answer categories what kind of answer is expected (Bailey, 1982).

Structured questions are useful when specific categories are available for measuring the respondents' replies and when there is a clear conceptual framework into which the respondents' replies will logically fit. The purpose of the questionnaire used for this study was to obtain information about the respondents' experiences of the different aspects of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme, that is, the usefulness of the themes of the programme; the most important themes for each learner and also the most important life skills learned, the different methods used, an evaluation of the effectiveness of each theme and whether the learner would recommend this programme for learners in other schools.

4.4 DATA ANALYSIS

A non-parametric statistical test was utilised for the present study, because the data were measured on an ordinal scale. As non-parametric tests are generally designed for the analysis of nominal or ordinal level data, they are often ideally suited for use in social work research (Weinbach & Grinnell Jr, 1998: 114).

Although the virtues of non-parametric tests have been much debated, those who favour using non-parametric tests argue that they have most of the virtues of traditional parametric tests, without the possible distortions that may arise if assumptions are violated. However, one disadvantage is that non-parametric methods tend to focus exclusively on null hypothesis testing. The goal of model fitting, obtaining confidence intervals and so forth is set aside in favour of tests of significance (Lockhart, 1997:554). This did not prove to be a handicap in the present research study, as hypothesis testing was exactly what the researcher wanted to do. The null hypothesis for the study was: There is no improvement in the participants' pre-test and post-test questionnaire scores. The alternative hypothesis was: There is an improvement in the participants' pre-test and post-test questionnaire scores.

The Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used in this research (Daniel & Terrell, 1995:723; Weinbach & Grinnell Jr, 1998:221-222). This is a well-established non-parametric procedure that is often used for one-sample cases. The test is useful to the behavioural scientist because it enables the researcher to make the judgement of "greater than" between the two values of any pair, as well as between any two "difference scores" arising from any two pairs (Siegel & Castellan, 1988:87). Whereas the sign test uses information only about the direction of the differences within pairs, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test gives more weight to a pair that shows a large difference between the two conditions than to a pair which shows a small difference (Siegel & Castellan, 1988:87; Runyon, Haber & Coleman, 1994:310-311). The Wilcoxon signed-rank test was chosen because the study employed two paired samples and it yielded difference scores, which could be ranked in order of absolute magnitude (Siegel & Castellan, 1988:90). This test determines whether or not the data imply that the population distribution of scaled responses is the same for the group in the before testing as

in the after testing. The differences are ranked according to their absolute values from smallest to largest; and whenever the rank sums for negative and positive differences depart considerably from their expected values, the hypothesis of no difference is rejected. Substantial departures indicate a difference from the expected value and provide evidence that differences exist (Jarrett & Kraft, 1998:607; Lockhart, 1997:555; Steyn, Smit, Du Toit & Strasheim, 1994:15).

The data obtained from the Participant Session-by-session Evaluation Questionnaire (Appendix G) was used as a qualitative method of data collection so as to improve the intervention programme.

To extend the evaluation of the effectiveness of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme (contents and media used), an evaluation questionnaire was compiled by the researcher and completed by the participants (Grade 7 learners/ senior phase learners). A frequency analysis was done on these data, as summarised in Tables 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6.

4.4.1 Findings of the investigation

- **Personal life skills: Participant Pre-test and Post-test Questionnaire, Table 4.2 and Figure 4.1**

Forty participants completed the pre-test and post-test. It should be noted that although the researcher distinguishes between the Personal and Interpersonal sections of the Life Skills Programme, they are inseparable. It is only for scientific reasons that the researcher distinguishes between these sections. The improvement from the pre-test to the post-test scores for the different items was calculated for each learner. The mean improvement scores for the whole group and both genders are given in Table 4.2 and Figure 4.1.

The Grade 7 learners (girls/females, boys/males and total group) had an overall gain in the points they scored, an improvement ranging between 0 and 3 points. The total increase in all the items of the Personal Life Skills Programme was highly significant (as indicated by the signed-rank test of Wilcoxon) for the girls, boys and total group ($p \leq 0,01$). The girls showed a greater improvement in their personal life skills than the boys. The following 3 items of the

Personal Life Skills Programme indicated the greatest improvement for the girls: Knowing myself (Item 1); Knowing my actions and acknowledging the importance of my feelings (Items 4 and 9) and My feelings (Item 2). The items indicating the lowest improvement (although still highly significant) were: Need to build positive attitudes toward myself (Item 11) and To influence what happens to me (Item 12) (see Table 4.2 and Figure 4.1).

The following three items of the Personal Life Skills Programme indicated the highest improvement for the boys: Knowing myself (Item 1); Knowing my actions (Item 4) and Sharing personal information (Item 8). The items indicating the lowest improvement (although still highly significant) were: Awareness of my wants and wishes (Item 7), and To influence what happens to me (Item 12) (see Table 4.2 and Figure 4.1).

As regards the total group, the following three items of the Personal Life Skills Programme indicated the highest improvement: Knowing myself (Item 1); Knowing my actions (Item 4) and Knowing my thinking (Item 3) (see Table 4.2 and Figure 4.1). The following two items showed the lowest improvement (although still highly significant): Need to build positive attitudes toward myself (Item 11); and To influence what happens to me (Item 12) (see Table 4.2 and Figure 4.1).

TABLE 4.2: PERSONAL LIFE SKILLS: MEAN IMPROVEMENT SCORES

Item	Female	Male	Total
1: Knowing myself	2,06	1,91	1,97
2: My feelings	1,83	1,32	1,55
3: My thinking	1,72	1,55	1,63
4: My actions	2,00	1,73	1,85
5: My likes and dislikes	1,44	1,59	1,53
6: My characteristics	1,50	1,50	1,50
7: My wants and wishes	1,61	0,77	1,15
8: Sharing information	1,39	1,64	1,53
9: Acknowledge feelings	2,00	1,09	1,50
10: Personal capabilities	1,67	1,45	1,55
11: Positive attitudes	1,06	1,09	1,08
12: Influence me	1,28	1,00	1,13
13: Contribute in ways	1,61	1,14	1,35
14: Feel needed	1,56	1,09	1,30
15: Needs, rights, responsibilities	1,72	1,32	1,50
16: Take responsibility	1,39	1,32	1,35
17: Improve self-concept	1,67	1,41	1,53
18: Express feelings	1,28	1,27	1,28

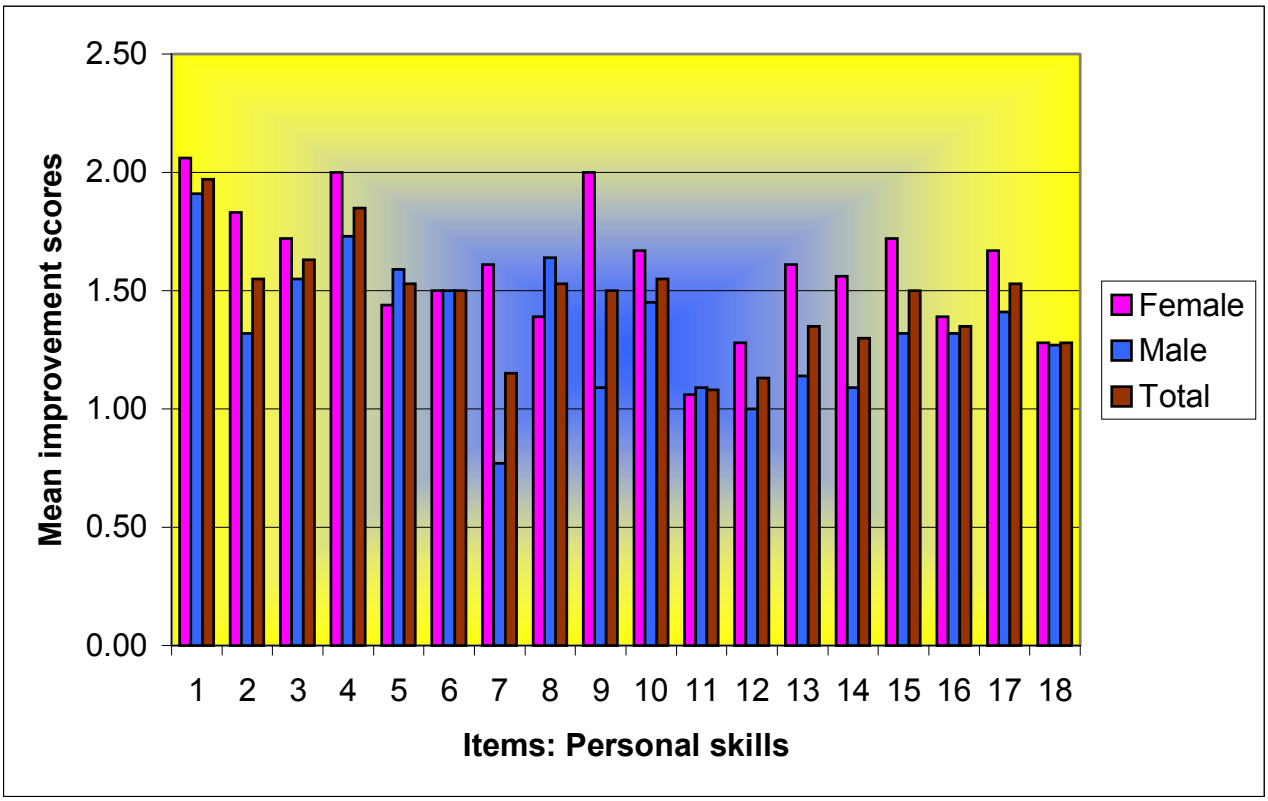


FIGURE 4.1 PERSONAL LIFE SKILLS: FEMALES, MALES AND TOTAL GROUP

- **Interpersonal life skills: Participant Pre-test and Post-test Questionnaire, Table 4.3 and Figure 4.2**

The improvement from the pre-test to the post-test scores for the different items was calculated for each learner. The mean improvement scores for the whole group and each gender are given in Table 4.3 and Figure 4.2.The Grade 7 learners (girls/females, boys/males and total group) had an overall gain in points, an improvement ranging between 0 and 3 points. The total increase in all the items of the Interpersonal Life Skills Programme was highly significant (as indicated by the signed-rank test of Wilcoxon) for the girls, boys and total group ($p \leq 0,01$). The girls indicated more improvement on their interpersonal life skills than the boys. The following three items of the Interpersonal Life Skills Programme indicated the highest improvement for the girls: To know how to date and develop relationships with the opposite sex (Item 24); Know how to start and develop relationships (Items 22 and 23) and To know and understand my school and To know and understand my friends (Items 20 and

21). The item with the lowest improvement (although still highly significant) was: To know where I can go for help/guidance/counselling (Item 37) (see Table 4.3 and Figure 4.2).

The following three items of the Interpersonal Life Skills Programme indicated the highest improvement for the boys: To be able to be a good speaker (Item 31); Developing relationships (Item 23); and To know and understand my family and To know and understand our rainbow nation (Items 19 and 27). The items indicating the lowest improvement (although still highly significant) were: To know how to date and develop relationships with the opposite sex (Item 24) and To know how can I contribute to developing my school and community (Item 26) (see Table 4.3 and Figure 4.2).

As regards the total group, the following three items of the Interpersonal Life Skills Programme indicated the highest improvement: Developing relationships and To be able to be a good speaker (Items 23 and 31); Starting to build relationships (Item 22) and To know and understand my school (Item 20). The following item had the lowest improvement (although still highly significant): To know how can I contribute to developing my school and community (Item 26) (see Table 4.3 and Figure 4.2).

TABLE 4.3 INTERPERSONAL LIFE SKILLS: MEAN IMPROVEMENT SCORES

Item			
	Female	**Male**	**Total**
19: My family	1,72	1,59	1,65
20: My school	1,89	1,55	1,70
21: My friends	1,89	1,41	1,63
22: Starting relationships	1,94	1,55	1,72
23: Developing relationships	1,94	1,68	1,80
24: Dating and opposite gender	2,33	1,14	1,67
25: My community	1,89	1,36	1,60
26: Contribute: School and Community	1,44	1,18	1,30
27: Rainbow nation	1,56	1,59	1,58
28: Differences in people	1,44	1,50	1,47
29: Effective communication	1,78	1,32	1,53
30: Listener	1,56	1,32	1,42
31: Speaker	1,89	1,73	1,80
32: Solve problems	1,72	1,36	1,53
33: Share, communicate, trust people	1,50	1,36	1,42
34: Managing conflict	1,44	1,36	1,40
35: Managing anger	1,72	1,41	1,55
36: Death and grieving	1,67	1,45	1,55
37: Guidance /counselling	1,33	1,36	1,35

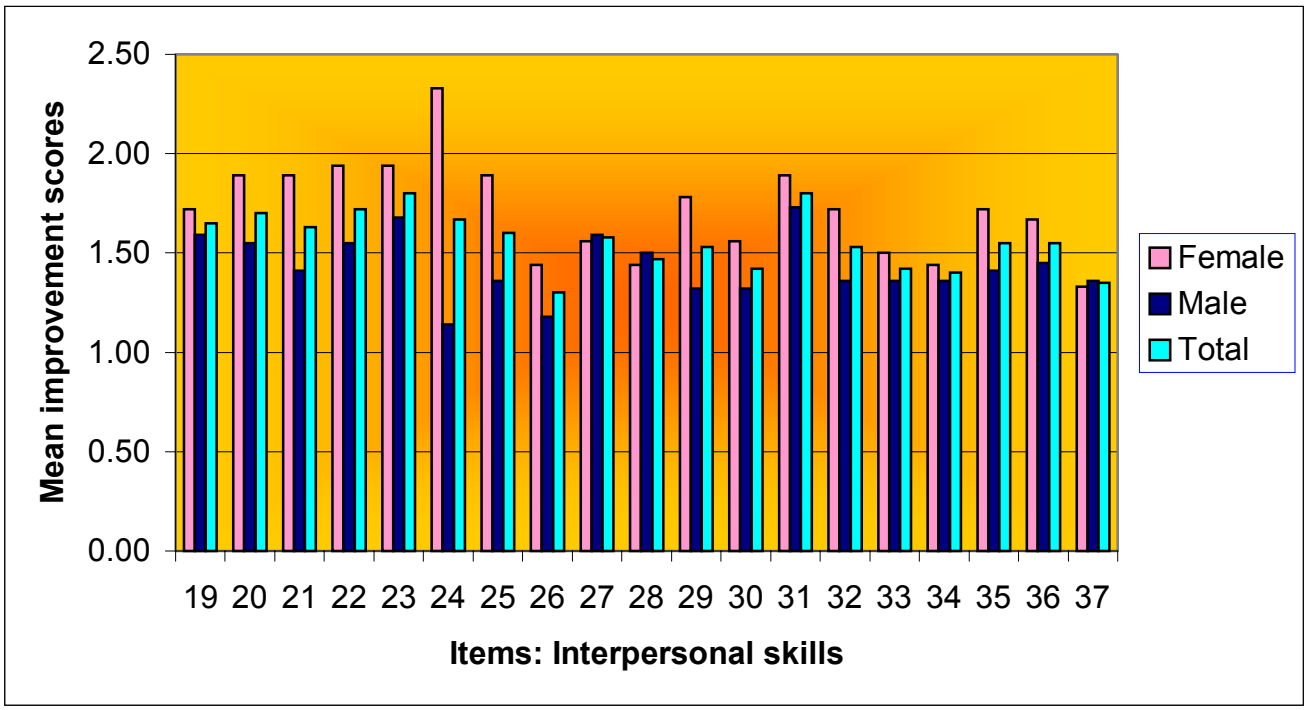


FIGURE 4.2 INTERPERSONAL LIFE SKILLS: FEMALES, MALES AND TOTAL GROUP

□ **Participants' retrospective evaluation questionnaire, Tables 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6.**

This section provides an analysis and discussion of the data obtained from the questionnaires, which assessed participants' retrospective evaluation of all the sessions (the whole programme) (Appendix H) and of the total group (females and males together). The purpose was to obtain the participants' overall impressions and recommendations regarding the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme. These findings were compared with the findings of the session-by-session evaluations. Supplementary data were also obtained from the evaluation reports given by the objective observer and the guidance teacher. Their reports were submitted after the completion of the programme. As advocated by Bryman (1990), Cheetham, Fuller, McIvor and Petch (1992), Harrison (1994) and Patton (1987), an analysis of information derived from different sources allowed for checks across the data gathered and enhanced the validity of the findings.

Table 4.4 provides a summary of the extent to which the themes used during programme implementation were useful to the participants.

TABLE 4.4: USEFULNESS OF THEMES FOR PARTICIPANTS (N=40)

THEMES	RESPONSES			
	YES	%	NO	%
1. Me (Self-knowledge)	39	98	1	2
2. My family and me	33	83	7	17
3. My school, friends and me	33	83	7	17
4. Dating and relationships with opposite sex	23	58	17	42
5. My community and me	37	93	3	7
6. Needs, rights and responsibilities	33	83	7	17
7. Rainbow nation, first impressions and stereotyping	32	80	8	20
8. Effective communication	34	85	6	15
9. Problem solving	31	78	9	22
10. Conflict and conflict resolution	29	73	11	27
11. Death: Grieving and growing	27	68	13	32
12. Where can I go for help?	32	80	8	20

Table 4.4 indicates that 98% of the participants stated that Theme One of the programme: Developing self-awareness and self-knowledge (personality, thoughts, feelings, behaviour, capabilities, self-concept) was the most useful to them (Theme 1). These responses indicated that the overall learning outcomes of the programme were achieved. These data are congruent with the data obtained from the pre-test and post test (see Table 4.2 and Figure 4.1). Regarding Theme 5: My community and me, 93% of the learners indicated that the session was useful to them. From the findings shown in Table 4.4, 85% of the learners indicated that Theme 8: Effective communication, was useful to them. As regards Themes 2 (My family and me); 3 (Me, my school and friends) and 6 (Needs, rights and responsibilities), 83% of the participants indicated that these themes or sessions were useful to them. These data are congruent with the data obtained from the participants' session-by-session evaluations and were further confirmed by the objective observer's and guidance teacher's observations and reports. These responses indicated that the overall learning outcomes of the programme were achieved.

In response to the question asking the participants to select the six themes that were most important to them, they indicated the following in order of priority: Self-knowledge; Me and my family; Me and my school and friends; Effective communication; Rainbow nation, first impressions and stereotyping; and Needs, rights and responsibilities.

Table 4.5 provides a summary of the extent to which the methods or media of facilitation used during the programme implementation were useful to the participants.

TABLE 4.5: USEFULNESS OF FACILITATION METHODS FOR PARTICIPANTS (N=40)

METHODS USED	YES	%	NO	%
1. General discussions	29	73	11	17
2. Group discussions	29	73	11	17
3. Role playing	21	53	19	47
4. Drama	28	70	12	30
5. Exercises in workbook	26	60	14	40
6. Case study	22	55	18	45
7. Music and movement	24	60	16	40
8. Drawings	24	60	16	40
9. Clay	28	70	12	30
10. Seeds	22	55	18	45
11. Pictures from magazines, news papers and handouts	29	73	11	17
12. Pictures and notes/ handouts for own books (pasting)	28	70	12	30
13. Making posters for the classroom	28	70	12	30
14. Sensory activities (taste, smell, see, hear, touch)	26	60	14	40

Table 4.5 indicates that the use of general discussions in the large group, discussions in the small or sub-groups (5 to 7 learners) and pictures selected form magazines, newspapers and handouts about the theme (session) as facilitation methods, received the greatest support from the participants (73% for Items 1, 2 and 11). Seventy per cent of the participants indicated that they also supported the following methods or media of facilitation used during the implementation of the programme: Drama; the use of clay to make objects (for example build their own school or community); Pictures and notes (worksheets) for their workbook and the making of posters for the classroom (Items 4, 9, 12 and 13). The participants indicated a lower preference for role playing (Item 3 = 53%) and the use of different seeds to create pictures (Item 10 = 55%).

Table 4.6 on page 104 outlines the participants' responses to the question about the ways in which the programme helped and supported them. The categories listed formed the basic outcomes of the programme.

The majority of the responses indicated that the overall outcomes of the programme were achieved, since the participants indicated that the various aspects of the programme were beneficial for them. Table 4.6 reflects that the learners had learned to be become good listeners which means that they had learned to listen to other group members in the large and small groups. There was a 100% affirmative response to the question (Item 18: To be able to be a good listener). A cross-check with the responses to the Participant Session-by-session

Questionnaire indicated that they had learned the importance of considering different points of view and listening to both sides of an issue in a given situation. To quote one participant: "*The most useful part of today's session was learning to listen to both sides of something before you make comments because you might say bad things before, and realise that you were wrong*." The overall high response rate to this question may perhaps be attributed to the facilitator's preparedness and willingness to engage participants continuously in the programme.

The majority of the participants (95%) indicated that the programme had helped them to gain a better knowledge of the history and heritage of their school (Item11). Table 4.6 indicates that 93% of the participants felt that the following items in the programme had helped them: To build positive attitudes towards myself (Item 6); To know and understand my family (Item 10); To know and understand my community (Item 14); and To develop friendships through communication (Item 17).

Table 4.6 reflects that 28% of the participants had learned how to date and build relationships with the opposite sex; 42% thought they had not learned how and 30% of the participants were unsure (Item 13). The data provided here are congruent with the data obtained from the Pre-test and Post-test Questionnaire, the participants' session-by-session evaluations and also the responses reflected in Table 4.4 where 58% of the learners indicated in what way the theme or session had been useful to them (Item 4).

A 95% affirmative response was obtained to the question on whether the participants thought that other learners would benefit from programmes of this nature. This response clearly reflected the positive attitudes of participants toward the programme and their feelings that they had benefited from the participation.

Of the learners, 88 per cent (N=35) indicated in response to Question 7 that they had learned during the implementation of the programme what personal and interpersonal life skills entailed.

As regards the question on what were the most important life skills that the participants had learned, they indicated the following in order of priority: Rainbow nation, first impressions and stereotyping; Effective communication; and Needs, rights and responsibilities.

TABLE 4.6: WAYS IN WHICH THE PROGRAMME HELPED PARTICIPANTS (N=40)

LESSONS LEARNED	YES	%	NO	%	NOT SURE	%
ME (Personal)						
1. To know and understand myself (feelings, thinking, behaviour)	35	88	2	5	3	7
2. To know my personal capabilities	26	65	12	30	2	5
3. To personally grow during the programme	27	68	8	20	5	12
4. To gain feelings of self-worth	27	68	5	12	8	20
5. To better / improve my self-concept	31	78	4	10	5	12
6. To build positive attitudes towards myself	37	93	1	2	2	5
7. To contribute in meaningful ways and I am genuinely needed	25	63	6	15	9	22
8. To influence what happens to me	33	83	4	10	3	7
9. To take responsibility for myself	30	75	4	10	6	15
OTHER PEOPLE (INTERPERSONAL)						
10. To know and understand my family	37	93	1	2	2	5
11. To know and understand my school	38	95	0	0	2	5
12. To know and understand my friends	34	89	1	2	3	8
13. To know and understand dating and relations with the opposite sex	11	28	17	42	12	30
14. To know and understand my community	37	93	2	5	1	2
15. To know and understand our rainbow nation, first impressions and stereotyping	33	83	2	5	5	12
16. To appreciate differences in people	31	78	5	12	4	10
17. To develop friendships through communication	37	93	2	5	1	2
18. To be able to be a good listener	**40**	**100**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
19. To be able to give an "I message"	32	80	4	10	4	10
20. To understand the importance of communication in problem solving	32	80	4	10	4	10
21. To be able to share, communicate, listen and trust other people (co-operation)	33	83	3	7	4	10
22. To handle problem solving more confidently	28	70	7	18	2	1`2
23. To understand the importance of communication in resolving conflicts	32	80	3	7	5	13
24. To be able to use the steps in conflict resolution and handle it with confidence	28	70	5	12	7	18
25. To be able to understand the meaning of death and grieving	31	78	5	12	4	10
26. To know and understand the stages of grief	32	80	4	10	4	10
27. To be able to deal with a grieving person	28	70	6	15	6	15
28. To know where I could go for help when in need	36	90	0	0	4	10

4.4.2 Discussion of the results

The study was designed to test the hypothesis that Grade 7 learners who participated in an intervention programme would exhibit more personal growth (personal life skills) and social competence and thus contributes to the optimal social functioning of the learners in the classroom, school, family and community (interpersonal life skills). The findings of the investigation indicated that the null hypothesis should be rejected because the improvement in the pre-test post-test questionnaire scores was highly significant (all items = p value $\leq 0{,}01$). Therefore, the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme had a statistically highly significant effect on the personal and interpersonal life skills development of the Grade 7 learners in the senior phase of the General Education and Training Band in this particular primary school.

These findings were consistent with the information obtained from the participants' retrospective evaluation of the programme and the participants' session-by-session evaluations. However, caution should be exercised in generalising the findings and conclusions from the statistical tests to a wider population. The first exposure of the learners or participants to the first life skills programme ever presented at their school might have influenced their responses. As mentioned elsewhere in this chapter, there was no control or comparison group against which to judge the outcomes of the programme. Furthermore, the nature of the study may have introduced a bias toward what the participants regarded as favourable. They may have developed positive responses in accordance with perceived expectations. It should be noted that the participants had been involved in a needs assessment regarding life skills and they identified the priority of the themes. The learners therefore took ownership of the programme. In this way, one of the basic community development principles, namely getting the community involved and let them take ownership of the programme, could be explained and illustrated.

Efforts to secure the interests of parents by requesting their co-operation and support may have contributed to the positive attitude that the participants had towards the programme. This is consistent with the experiences of Sathiparsad (1997), Delva-Tauili'ili (1995) and Whittingtong and Morgan (1990) who found that family support and awareness of a programme secured their ongoing involvement. Commitment to the programme may have

been further reinforced by the fact that the programme was sanctioned by the principal, school governing body and teachers at the school, and that the programme also formed part of the Learning Area: Life Orientation.

4.5 REPLICATING THE INTERVENTION UNDER FIELD CONDITIONS

The Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme in this study was implemented over twelve sessions lasting about one-and-a-half hours each, held twice weekly over a period of six weeks. In addition there were three other sessions: two orientation sessions at the beginning and a termination session at the end of the programme. As suggested by Corey and Corey (1992), time was set aside at the end of each session to enable participants to complete the evaluation questionnaires. It should be noted that during the termination session (session 15), the facilitator engaged the participants in the process of summarising and reflecting on the lessons they had learned during the previous sessions, followed by the overall evaluation of the programme. As mentioned above, the programme was implemented in a large group (40 learners in the classroom), which was divided into 6 smaller groups consisting of 5 to 7 learners. The researcher considered the groupwork method as the appropriate method because it was in keeping with the ecological paradigm (discussed in Chapter One). The researcher used the definition of groupwork given by Thackeray, et al.,(1994:73) as a frame of reference because a personal and interpersonal life skills programme was implemented: "…*a method of working with people in groups for the enhancement of social functioning and for the achievement of socially desirable goals. Groupwork is based on the knowledge of people's needs for each other and their interdependence. Groupwork is a method of reducing or eliminating roadblocks to social interaction and for accomplishing socially desirable purposes*".

In keeping with this definition, Drower (1993) stresses the need to use groups to address the connection between the individual and the social context. Breton (cited in Drower, 1993) draws attention to the fact that coping and finding fulfilment in a changing world requires awareness that one's own self-interest is linked to the welfare of the larger ecological system.

The value base of groupwork is of special significance in South Africa. Values of co-operation, non-discrimination, individual initiative, self-determination and mutual decision-making are key

ingredients to successful human relations (Drower, 1993). In this study, the group itself constituted a context for understanding human relations, respecting diversity, enhancing communication and solving problems. In commenting on the adolescent phase, Sewpaul (1993) argues that empowerment is essential for individual growth and development and to contribute to heightened feelings of self-esteem, efficacy and control. Empowerment involves consciousness-raising through constructive dialogue and praxis. The small group context provides opportunities for such dialogue. As pointed out by Sewpaul (1993), consciousness-raising through dialogue does not necessarily resolve all conflict or produce group consensus, but it does enhance participation and mutual respect, which are the basic objectives of any group process.

Drawing on the work of Wodarski, Sancho (1994) argues that a group context allows adolescents to practise their skills with several partners, to provide feedback and encouragement to one another and to learn from a variety of peer models. The strength of the group learning approach lies in its ability to capitalise on peer influence and peer reinforcement, which are potent variables in the acquisition, alteration and maintenance of behaviour. Furthermore, knowledge imparted in a group context is more likely to come under the control of group norms and beliefs, thus increasing the likelihood that such information will be generalised to other settings (Sancho, 1994).

Groupwork as method was therefore considered relevant and enlightening because social workers are used to working with small group contexts (8-12 participants, according to Corey & Corey 1992:319-320). Moreover in the school context it is expected that the social worker will include all learners in the classroom and the number of learners may vary from 28–50. These learners could be divided into smaller groups and the groupwork method could be implemented as illustrated by this study.

The Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme was implemented according to the outline given in Table 3.1 (on page 82). The programme was continuously improved by analysing the data from the evaluation questionnaires. The observations made by the guidance teacher and the objective observer were used to provide the researcher with a holistic view of the evaluation and advanced development of the intervention research model.

In this study, observation merely served to confirm or refute the data obtained by the simultaneous use of other data-gathering methods.

4.6 REFINING THE INTERVENTION

Rothman and Thomas (1994:39) state that errors are instructive and that the results of full field-testing can be used for resolving any problems with the measurement system and intervention. Adaptations to the language, content and intervention methods may produce desired behavioural changes and outcomes for the full range of intended beneficiaries. Repeated tinkering with the intervention helps to ensure that the programme will reliably produce the intended effects. In this study these activities were implemented but there is always room for development and improvement.

The items in the pre-test post-test questionnaire, which were ranked the lowest for significance, should be linked to the themes of the sessions, and be adjusted and improved in the Interpersonal section of the Life Skills Programme.

4.7 CONCLUSION

Chapter 4 presented the implementation of Phase Five of the intervention research model: Evaluation and Advanced Development (Rothman & Thomas, 1994). The activities discussed in this chapter were: the experimental design, data collection by means of three instruments (questionnaires); data analysis; replicating the intervention under field conditions; and refining the intervention. The research findings and the discussion and interpretation of the data were presented. Data gathered from different sources were presented and discussed. The patterns that emerged from the data confirmed the important issues raised in the literature regarding the development, implementation and evaluation of the Life Skills Programme. Having analysed, interpreted and discussed the data, the final chapter will focus on consolidating the major findings of the study, drawing conclusions and making recommendations based on these findings.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND DISSEMINATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The development and implementation of a life skills curriculum fall in the overall context of the development of education support services, namely social work, school health, specialised education, vocational and general guidance and counselling, and psychological services. The principle of service integration emphasises the need to view issues of development as interrelated. This principle necessitates an interdisciplinary/sectoral approach to curriculum development and implementation, including all of the above-mentioned education support services. The present study focuses on the role of social work, as part of education support services, in developing and implementing a life skills programme for the senior phase learner in the final year of primary school.

Life skills education and training is an expanding field of research. The reasons for the growth of life skills education and training include the following: it has a developmental and preventive emphasis; problems with living are widespread and pressures are increasing for helper accountability.

As school social work is part of the proposed model of education support services, as set out in Lazarus and Donald (1995), it has been regarded as an essential support service to education. In proposing a model for school social work in South Africa, Kotzé (1995:192) states that an interdisciplinary team approach is an important principle. What seems to be a critical issue is an overarching policy vision, an orientation to education, which would provide provision for support services and models of how these services should be structured in the school (Lazarus & Donald, 1995). Kotzé (1995:193) is of the opinion that the role of school social work in contemporary South Africa is quite clear. Because the country is in a process of transition from an unequal and racially divided society, education will be the key factor to help realise the vision of an integrated and united society.

School social work can play a pivotal role in this regard and the practice models, the traditional clinical model and the community-school model can be applied in the South African context. The community-school model focuses on problems in school-community relations and the impact of these on the school (Kotzé, 1995:193). The school cannot and does not operate in isolation from its community. From a social developmental perspective, the researcher recommends that problems (deficiency orientation) should be replaced by assets (asset-based approach) in the school-community relationship. The focus should be on the skills, competencies, strengths and development of the school and community. This relates to the ecological framework discussed in Chapter One.

School social workers frequently face the problem that they see only the problematic learners who are referred to them by other school officials. The vast number of learners and a surprisingly large number of teachers know nothing about what a school social worker does or is capable of doing. This raises the question whether learners who are academically proficient, reasonably behaved, and have acceptable attendance records should be denied social work services just because they are not referred for them. One could also argue whether such exclusion from these services is fair to their parents who are taxpayers. This is why this study was conducted, namely to develop and implement a personal and interpersonal life skills programme for Grade 7 learners in the senior phase of a traditionally African school, and to evaluate whether participation in the life skills programme would lead to personal growth (self-empowerment) and social competence and thus contribute to the optimal social functioning of children in the classroom, school, family and community (capacity building).

The field of school social work has almost universally come to use an ecological perspective as its main theoretical framework. Within this framework, school social workers view the problems or rather the assets found in the school as related to the ways that learners, parents, staff, and community members interact with one another. Solutions to problems and the development (strengthening) of assets ought, consequently, to be found in altering these interactions, rather than in seeking change in any one set of participants. The researcher supports the statement of Garvin and Tropman (1992:307): "*The school is an open living system whose members are engaged in ongoing transactions and interactions with each other and significant others in the community. Productive exchanges develop the competence*

and self-esteem necessary to promote the desired learning and growth to all persons in the school organization: pupils, parents, teachers and administrators."

According to Garvin and Tropman (1992:309), school social workers can perform four categories of tasks:

- Crisis resolution
- The solving of identified problems
- The development of personal and interpersonal coping skills among all groups in schools
- Early identification and service delivery to populations at risk (essentially an approach to prevention).

With this study, *A Life Skills Programme for learners in the senior phase: a Social Work perspective*, the researcher implemented the last two categories of school social work as stated by Garvin and Tropman (1992:309).

To summarise: as a foundation for the study, the researcher wished to focus on the role in practice of the school social worker in the education support services. The ecological perspective was used as a theoretical framework in the developmental approach (intervention) in social welfare. An ecological perspective leads the social worker to make a situational assessment which addresses the transaction of individuals with the environment. Key questions to guide the social worker in the process are the following: What conditions in the individual, in the environment and in their transaction may need development? What networks of services, what support systems, might enable the individual or group to cope, to develop skills, to form satisfactory personal and interpersonal relations and to experience some level of success in the community and family environment? The answers will depend upon individual needs, competencies and capacities. Individual survival, affiliation and achievement depend on the sum total of what individuals may be experiencing in their living situation, at school and in the community (Allen-Meares, Washington & Welsh, 1986:12)

5.2 MAJOR CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

The dilemma of school social work in South Africa is that it does not have a tradition or a career structure like that in medical social work. In this respect one may face professional biases from the teaching profession and scepticism from the authorities. This problem could be addressed by creating an education orientation and environment that would not only accept new members into the educational team, but also emphasise the importance of support services in the school. This would require an integrated and interdisciplinary approach.

The researcher supports the suggestion by Kotzé (1995) that school social work should be structured in the education department operating under the administrative jurisdiction of the principals. This should not only facilitate integration into the school, but would also provide an important communication channel to the education authorities at a higher level. In this way school social work would be integrated into the school system and operate on the same basis as social work in other settings, such as medical social work in the hospital, psychiatric social work in psychiatric institutions and industrial social work in the workplace (Kotzé, 1995:194).

In this section, the major findings of the study are synthesised and presented within the framework of the research question that was generated during the conceptual phase of the study.

The study aimed at answering the following research question: How should a personal and interpersonal life skills programme be developed, implemented and evaluated to have an effect on the personal growth and social functioning of learners in the senior phase of the General Education and Training Band? The Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme was developed and designed by conducting intervention research (Rothman & Thomas, 1994). With the implementation of the intervention research model the main goal of the study was attained, namely to develop and implement a personal and interpersonal life skills programme for Grade 7 learners in the senior phase of a traditionally African school, and to evaluate whether participation in the life skills programme would lead to personal growth (self-empowerment) and social competence and thus contribute to the optimal social functioning of children in the classroom, school, family and community (capacity building).

The intervention model of Rothman and Thomas (1994) was implemented and the phases and activities followed in this study through which the research question was answered, and the main goal and objectives attained:

- Situation analysis and project planning
  - Identifying and involving the principal, school governing board, teachers and learners at the primary school
  - Gaining entry to and co-operation from the primary school
  - Identifying the concerns of the school personnel and learners
  - Analysing the identified needs
  - Setting critical and specific outcomes for the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme
- Information gathering and synthesis. These refer to the activities described in Chapter 2. Life skills education and training and the following with relevance to the themes were discussed: international life skills models, the life skills curriculum and programmes for the South African school context, the practice of life skills education and training with guidelines for the facilitator (social worker) and stages in life skills education; the components of life skills education: facilitation, group work, experiential learning and continuity; and the facilitation media. The model of Edna Rooth (1997) on Life Skills Education was used as the foundation for the study and the facilitation media were implemented. In this way, one of the objectives of doing a literature study was attained, namely to review the content of the existing life skills programmes in different disciplines. A literature study was done on the learner in the senior phase of the General Education and Training Band, as this was the definition of the participants in the study.
- The design, early development and pilot testing of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme in Chapter 3. The preliminary intervention procedures were tested in practice on a group of eight Grade 7 learners, using the groupwork method in keeping with the ecological paradigm in the implementation of the programme.
- Evaluation and Advanced Development. The activities were discussed in Chapter 4: the experimental design, data collection by means of three instruments (questionnaires); data analysis; replicating the intervention under field conditions and refining the intervention.

The study also attained the following objectives:

- The Participant Pre-test and Post-test Questionnaire was designed and administered to help learners to assess (rate) their personal and interpersonal life skills before and after undergoing the programme (Chapter 4). This questionnaire was also used to determine the effectiveness of the Life Skills Programme.

  The effectiveness of the Life Skills Programme was evaluated by determining whether it –

  - contributed to the learner's self-knowledge, knowledge of feelings, thinking, actions, needs, responsibilities, feelings of self-worth, positive attitudes towards the self (enhancement of self-concept and self-reliance: personal);
  - contributed to the learner's knowledge and understanding of his/her family, school, friends, community; developed more effective communication, problem-solving and conflict management skills (empowerment) and in addition had an impact on the learner's participation in the classroom, school and community (capacity building).

  The study was designed to test the hypothesis that Grade 7 learners who participated in an intervention programme (classroom intervention) would exhibit more personal growth (personal life skills) and social competence than those who had not participated, and would therefore contribute to the optimal social functioning of the learners in the classroom, school, family and community (interpersonal life skills). The findings of the investigation indicated that improvement in the pre-test post-test questionnaire scores was highly significant (all items = p value $\leq$ 0,01). Therefore, the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme had a statistically highly significant effect on the personal and interpersonal life skills development of the Grade 7 learners in the senior phase of the General Education and Training Band in this particular primary school. Therefore, through the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme, a learner's self-reliance can be fostered and personal growth and social competence promoted. The Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme is therefore a self-empowered and capacity building programme.

- Appropriate modules or themes were developed as subsets of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme for learners attending a primary school (Chapter 3). The themes are: Developing self-awareness, self-knowledge and sensory contact (SELF); My family and me; My school, friends and me; Dating and interpersonal relationships; My community and me; Needs, rights and responsibilities; Rainbow nation, first impressions and stereotyping; Effective communication; Problem solving; Conflict resolution; Death: Grieving and growing; and Where do I go for help/counselling? (See Table 3.1 on page 82).

- The strengths and weaknesses of the programme with a view to making recommendations on improving it were determined as discussed in Chapter 4. Programme evaluation helps to identify factors inhibiting better programme performance and provides evaluators with guidelines relating to further development and adaptation of programmes (Patton, 1987; Rubin & Babbie, 2001). Programme adaptation may be necessary to narrow the gap between programme outcomes and programme impact. In this study, the data provided clear guidelines for further adaptation of the Life Skills Programme.

  The participant retrospective evaluation questionnaire was formulated and administered to evaluate the Life Skills Programme. Ninety-eight per cent of the participants stated that Theme One of the programme: Developing self-awareness and self-knowledge (personality, thoughts, feelings, behaviour, capabilities, self-concept) was the most useful to them (Theme 1). These responses indicated that the overall learning outcomes of the programme were achieved. These data are congruent with the data obtained from the pre-test and post-test (see Table 4.2 and Figure 4.1 on pages 95-96). Regarding Theme 5: My community and me, 93% of the learners indicated that the session was useful to them. The findings shown in Table 4.4 (on page 99) are that 85% of the learners indicated that Theme 8: Effective communication, was useful to them. As regards Themes 2 (My family and me); 3 (Me, my school and friends) and 6 (Needs, rights and responsibilities), 83% of the participants indicated that these themes or sessions were useful to them. These data are congruent with the data obtained from the participants' session-by-session evaluations and were further confirmed by the objective observer's and guidance teacher's observations and reports. These responses indicated that the overall learning outcomes of the programme were achieved.

The theme on Dating and interpersonal relationships (relations with the opposite sex) should be adapted. Only 28% of the participants had learned how to date and build relationships with the opposite sex; 42% thought they had not learned how and 30% of the participants were unsure. The data provided here are congruent with the data obtained from the Pre-test and Post-test Questionnaire and from the participants' session-by-session evaluations. More content, discussions and exercises should be added and the method of facilitation should be changed. Learners' comments and recommendations should be taken into consideration when adapting this theme in the programme.

The researcher adapted and adjusted Rooth's model of life skills education (1997), consisting of facilitation, groupwork, experiential learning and continuity, for the implementation of the programme. Table 5.1 gives an outline of each of the sessions.

TABLE 5.1 SESSION OUTLINE FOR THE LIFE SKILLS PROGRAMME

THEME							
Phase Organiser:			**Programme Organiser:**				
SO = Specific outcomes							
SO1	SO2	SO3	SO4	SO5	SO6	SO7	SO8
LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)							
RESOURCES							
ICE-BREAKER AND SENSORY ACTIVITY □ **Sensory activity** □ **Beginning: Self-awareness: My senses: smell, hear, taste, touch and see.**							
ACTIVITY – EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (PROCESS)							
DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK							
REMARKS / COMMENTS / REFLECTION							
SELFNURTURING							
RESOURCES USED FOR PREPARATION							

Various facilitation media or methods were used. Table 4.5 (on page 100) indicates that facilitation methods which used general discussions in the large group, discussions in the small or subgroups (5 to 7 learners) and pictures selected from magazines, newspapers and handouts about the theme (session), received the greatest support from nearly two-thirds (73%) of the participants. Most (70%) of the participants indicated that they also

supported the following methods or media of facilitation used during the implementation of the programme: drama; the use of clay to make objects (for example to build their own school or community); pictures and notes (worksheets) for their workbook, and making posters for the classroom. The participants indicated a lower preference for role-playing (53%) and the use of different seeds as a facilitation medium for creating pictures (55%). The reasons for this lower preference could be that learners were not emotionally ready for role playing. The seeds were an inappropriate method for the experiential learning activity, since the learners indicated in the session-by-session evaluation that seeds were food and should be planted, not be wasted on making pictures.

The programme was implemented in a large group (40 learners in the classroom), which was divided into six smaller groups consisting of five to seven learners. The researcher regarded the groupwork method as the most appropriate method as it was in keeping with the ecological paradigm. Groupwork is therefore considered a relevant and enlightening method because social workers are accustomed to working in the context of small group (8-12 participants, according to Corey & Corey 1992:319-320). Moreover in the school context it is expected that the social worker will include all learners in the classroom and the number of learners may vary from 28–50 (classroom intervention). These learners could be divided into smaller groups and the groupwork method could be implemented as illustrated in this study.

A secondary goal that this study attained although the researcher had not formulated it as such, was to give the social worker greater visibility and to make him/her and the services that can be rendered more accessible to learners, teachers and parents. This study gave the social worker (researcher) an opportunity to enter the school and classroom and to introduce herself to all learners, allowing the learners and the school personnel to see and experience more clearly what a school social worker can do.

- This study could serve as a guideline for social workers on developing, implementing and evaluating life skills programmes for children and the youth.

Life skills education is a fundamental division of the Learning Area Life Orientation. Life Orientation is fundamental in empowering learners to live meaningful lives in a society that

demands rapid transformation. It is an integral part of education, training and development. Some social workers argue that their cost-effectiveness would be far greater if they actively engaged in developmental and preventive interventions, such as life skills education and training, instead of waiting in their offices for clients who need remedial help. Life skills programmes are interventions, and interventions in turn are actions that are intended to carry out a plan for service.

The overall response to the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme in this study was positive and the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme had a statistically highly significant effect on the personal and interpersonal life skills development of the Grade 7 learners in the senior phase of the General Education and Training Band in this particular primary school. Data analysis revealed that the learning outcomes of each session and of the programme as a whole, were achieved. The themes covered in the programme were relevant and helped to improve the personal and interpersonal life skills of these Grade 7 learners. The participants were comfortable with the group work (large and smaller groups) and also the media of facilitation.

Data analysis further revealed that the skills learnt during the sessions were being implemented outside the groups and the classroom setting, for example in other classroom settings and with peers, siblings, teachers and parents. It can therefore be concluded that the life skills programme has the potential to have a wider impact as it is likely that the lessons or skills learnt could be generalised and transferred to the home and to other settings in the community.

As indicated elsewhere, the researcher cannot make categorical statements about the effectiveness of the programme in broader contexts. The reliability and validity of the research would have been further enhanced if control groups had been used, if standardised questionnaires and instruments could have been administered, if feedback from the teachers and parents could have been obtained, and if the study had incorporated a longitudinal component. However, the triangulated research method adopted in this study does strongly support the positive effects of the programme and the fact that the Life Skills Programme had

a statistically highly significant effect (improvement) on the personal and interpersonal life skills development of these Grade 7 learners. This is also reflected in the participants' suggestions that the programme should be implemented on an ongoing basis at all schools.

5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher should be aware of the strengths and limitations of the method/s chosen in producing valid and reliable data and how this would affect the study and the generalisations that could and could not be made from the findings. Below is a discussion of the possible limitations in the design and methodology of this particular study.

- **Sample size**

The small sample size limits its representation of the population from which it was drawn (Marlow, 1993). This factor further limits the generalisability of the study's findings. However, as pointed out elsewhere, this was not a major concern as the development and evaluation were undertaken with a view to improving the programme's effectiveness in a particular context. It should be noted that the sample was selected in order to obtain in-depth information, and that this goal was adequately achieved in this study.

- **Possible researcher bias**

As the researcher developed the programme in this study, what is referred to by Rubin and Babbie (2001: 539) as "the politics of programme evaluation" may have surfaced. This means that the researcher may have tried to design the research or to interpret its findings in ways that were likely to make the programme look good (Rubin & Babbie, 2001). Being aware of this possibility, the researcher consciously maintained an objective stance and presented the data obtained from participants as accurately as possible.

- **Participant responses**

Participants may have responded favourably to questions about the programme in an attempt to please the facilitator. The feedback from the participants and the objective observer confirmed that there was a fairly good relationship between the participants and the facilitator throughout the programme. It is therefore possible that the participants may have been

reluctant to give any negative reports about the programme. Furthermore, the participants could have responded in a certain manner, as they knew that they were participating in the study. Marlow (1993:133) refers to this as “reactive effects" which may result in a distortion of outcomes. However, it is difficult to overcome reactive effects in any research design because it is unethical to engage in research without obtaining the participants' consent (Marlow, 1993).

- **Reliability and validity of research instruments**

The data-gathering instruments could have been limited in their capacity to obtain information that reflected the actual reality of situations during the study. In using evaluation questionnaires, differences in the interpretation of the questions may occur (Bailey, 1982; Mindel, 1993). As explained elsewhere in this study, to ensure consistency in the data gathering process, the facilitator explained and clarified each question to the participants.

- **Limitations in the methodology**

As mentioned in Chapter 4 the study did not include a control group as a norm for judging the programme outcomes. However, as Fitz-Gibbon and Morris (1987) point out, the lack of a control group where programme implementation is being monitored, is not a serious problem. Furthermore, the use of the triangulation method, which encompassed multiple methods of data gathering and analysis, minimised this problem. Cross-checks between the data gathered by means of different instruments enabled the researcher to validate the information obtained.

- **Limitations in data analysis**

It is possible that there may have been limitations on the way in which data analysis was undertaken. This in turn may have affected the conclusions reached in this study. This limitation was minimised by the fact that the researcher returned to the data several times to ensure that the discussion accurately reflected the data.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS AND DISSEMINATION

Emanating from the findings and the conclusions drawn in this study, a few recommendations are made:

- Social work has much to offer to preventive programmes for youth and family development. The personnel implementing such programmes should be professionally trained, preferably in social work, because the broad, value-based approaches in this field of study better equip this professionals than other professionals to provide the tools and perspectives to increase personnel effectiveness. New, broader theoretical paradigms and the growing body of knowledge about effective approaches and programmes for the development of the youth provide unprecedented opportunities for social work to make a significant difference in the lives of young people.

- Education support personnel (social workers, health workers, educators and psychologists) should provide services that focus on and involve the "whole school" or place of learning and the community. In this regard, training and professional development programmes should shift their focus away from a "deficit", problem-oriented philosophy of intervention, towards one in which support services focus on assets such as strengths, competencies and development. Courses should also offer an interpretative approach to inter-sectoral work, empowerment, capacity building, diversity, human rights, community development and institution-based team building and support.

- In-service courses should be designed in a collaborative manner between the institutions and organisations that are responsible for the training and professional development of educators and education support personnel teams, such as therapists, social workers, nurses and psychologists. Such courses should contribute to the development of appropriate education support services rather than specific expertise. These courses should also focus on the sharing of critical skills, knowledge and values among team members and the utilisation of community resources, including parents and community-based organisations such as those for people with disabilities. Ongoing accredited in-service training and development in life skills education would contribute towards developing and maintaining the facilitative approach.

- Given the principles of a multidisciplinary/sectoral approach and separation and service integration it is evident that the potential range of life skills trainers is wide and varied. Central to this, though, should be the team approach which constitutes a life skills co-

ordinator and all the life skills trainers or educators who participate in the school's life skills programme. Every school should have a life skills co-ordinator. The team could consist of health workers, social workers and community workers, non-governmental organisation personnel, teachers, education support specialists, business enterprises, community leaders, parents and possible learners. However, the team of life skills trainers/educators would have to be co-ordinated to provide a cohesive curriculum guided by common principles.

- Interdisciplinary collaboration: School social workers should collaborate with other professionals for two basic reasons: to exchange information and to co-ordinate services. An exchange of professional information is one way of increasing knowledge in areas that may not be familiar to the social worker, and of providing the means for professionals to help one another keep abreast of new information. Collaboration provides an opportunity to combine the input from various disciplines and to exchange points of expertise. Such collaborative efforts reduce professional isolation, help to build positive working relationships, and make services more comprehensive and effective. As interventions are focused on primary prevention and are designed to maximise interdisciplinary approaches, social workers should collaborate with teachers, clergy, police, health professionals and members of other services.

- Building networks. In addressing any of the challenges discussed in this study it is critical that the social worker should see him/herself as part of a team or "network" of other people. This network may consist of colleagues in the social worker's own organisation or from other organisations; teachers, principals, members of the school governing board, parents and other members of the community; and members of the helping professions such as doctors, nurses and psychologists. The social worker should be actively involved in building networks.

- Future life skills programmes should focus firstly on asking adolescents what kind of developmental challenges they would like help with to enable them to cope with these challenges. Secondly, adolescents should be asked to spell out specifically what coping life skills they would like to practise. Including adolescents in this way would

help them to take ownership of the programme. Life skills programmes should also be presented for parents and interested community members.

- Programme evaluation should be integrated in all the programmes presented at schools. Programme evaluation measures the effectiveness of the programme and on this basis, guidelines could be provided for programme planning and decision making.

- The curriculum for life skills should be based on developmental principles so that appropriate life skills are facilitated at the appropriate life and career developmental stage, for the following reasons. Life skills education is a fundamental division of the Learning Area Life Orientation. Life Orientation empowers learners to live meaningful lives in a society that demands rapid transformation. It is an integral part of education, training and development. The accomplishment of developmental tasks depends on the learner's mastery of the coping behaviours or life skills appropriate to the current developmental stage and associated developmental tasks. There are generally certain age ranges when certain life skills are optimally learned (compare Havighurst, 1972; Hurlock, 1978). By acquiring the relevant life skills during the appropriate stage of development, the individual achieves optimal functioning.

It is recommended for future group and class intervention programmes for Grade 7 learners of the senior phase of the General Education and Training Band that –

- as in the current study, a whole class should be selected for the Life Skills Programme as opposed to learners from different Grade 7 classes. If a whole class is selected this should, to a certain extent, increase the attendance rate. Irregular attendance at classes, learners dropping out of school and absenteeism are problems irrespective of the learning area. These problems are definitely more prevalent in some schools than in others;
- ideally, every Grade 7 learner in a school should be part of the programme. This would also intensify the effect of the programme, as all the learners would be involved in doing the same thing. It would also be better to implement the programme thoroughly in fewer schools than to implement the programme in many schools but with a low intensity;

- each of the themes in the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme could be divided into four to six sessions. This would mean that each of the themes could be extended to become a programme consisting of four to six sessions, giving the learners more opportunity to practise the life skills;
- a larger sample representative of the population should be used, so that generalisations to the greater population could be made with greater confidence;
- long-term follow-up evaluations should be made, in order to promote positive short-term programme outcomes that would endure; and in support of this,
- long-term follow-up sessions should be scheduled in order to promote positive developmental gains;
- the personal and interpersonal effects of the intervention programme for adolescents should be evaluated in greater depth;
- the intervention programme should also be evaluated with learners of different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds;
- prior to the implementation of the programme the facilitator should make a presentation to all the staff/personnel informing them about the programme, the critical and in particular the specific outcomes. The school as a whole should support the project and give the facilitators the backing and encouragement they need. The school governing board and parents should also be informed and give their consent;
- future programmes should include more learning in a service context. The learners should conduct or perhaps get involved in a community development project in order to practise their life skills.

It is also recommended that the final phase of the intervention research model of Rothman and Thomas (1994:39-43), namely dissemination, should be implemented. After the intervention (in this study the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme) has been field tested and evaluated, it is ready to be disseminated to schools and other target audiences. The following activities make the process of dissemination and adaptation more successful:

- Preparing the product for dissemination: In preparing the intervention for dissemination, issues emerge such as choosing a brand name, establishing a price and setting standards for using the intervention (De Vos, 1998:339). The primary school in the current study requested that the name of the life skills programme should be the *Masingita Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme.* By establishing guidelines for using the intervention programme correctly, the researcher would provide the basis for maintaining the integrity of the product. The researcher could do this by insisting that users should be trained before the programme was implemented. A training course held over three consecutive days would be required. Programme material such as the manual, workbook for learners, evaluation forms and questionnaires would be issued to trainees only. Any educational institution that has purchased one copy of the mentioned publications may make duplicate copies for use exclusively within that institution.
- Identifying potential markets for the intervention. The potential adopters of the intervention programme are social workers, teachers, psychologists, health workers and community developers.
- Creating a demand for the intervention. Disseminators (in this case the researcher) would have to convince potential purchasers that they would really benefit from the intervention. The strategies that could be used in marketing the intervention programme include modelling and advertising, for example presenting papers at conferences and holding workshops.
- Encouraging appropriate adaptation for specific target groups and contexts. Elements of intervention, such as the content and format of an educational programme, could be modified or deleted and new elements added.
- Providing technical support for adopters. De Vos (1998: 402) states that intervention researchers and programme staff, as the innovation's designers and implementers, are the primary knowledge experts concerning the intervention. Adopters might require support personnel from the research or programme team to assist with troubleshooting or adapting the intervention to meet their specific needs. The researcher's technical support would mainly consist of the training course for social workers and the programme material, such as the training manual and workbook for learners, as well as the various questionnaires, evaluation questionnaires and other supportive resources for the use of trainees.

5.5 IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

It is recommended that, when further preventive programmes are developed and implemented, the evaluation component should be included to ensure that the prevention efforts have the desired effects. This is consistent with the White Paper on Social Welfare (1997) which views evaluation as an ongoing process to determine the appropriateness and economic viability of social welfare programmes.

A longitudinal study is recommended to ascertain the long-term effect of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme. In addition, studies similar to those conducted by Gentry and Benenson (1993), Schmitz (1994) and Sliedrecht (1995) which included feedback from parents and teachers on the behaviour of the participants, could be beneficial in providing further information on the effects of the programme.

Further research by multidisciplinary teams should be conducted in life skills education and training, and researchers should continue to gather and analyse data that would evaluate the effectiveness of life skills programmes.

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APPENDIX A

22 June ….

The Principal
Primary School
P.O. Box 195
R
M
0122

Dear Mrs L,

PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL LIFESKILLS PROGRAMME FOR GRADE 7 LEARNERS

Thank you for allowing me to implement the Personal and Interpersonal Life skills programme wiith Grade 7 learners at your school. It is hoped that the learners and the teacher will benefit mutually from the programme. I wish to confirm the programme as discussed with you and mrs Eunice M (Guidance teacher) during our meetings. Enclosed is an outline of the programme (dates; time and sessions) for your information. Should you require further clarification, please contact me.

I look forward to working in your school and especially with the Grade 7 learners.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully

C J G Bender
Programme presenter
University of Pretoria
Tel and fax: (021) 420-3331
Cell: 082-557

APPENDIX B

22 June ….

The Guidance Teacher
Primary School
P.O. Box 195
R
M
0122

Dear Mrs Mu,

PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL LIFESKILLS PROGRAMME FOR GRADE 7 LEARNERS

Thank you for allowing me to implement the Personal and Interpersonal Life skills programme with grade seven learners (pupils) at your school. It is hoped that the learners and all involved will benefit mutually from the programme. I wish to confirm the programme as discussed during our meetings. Enclosed is an outline of the programme (dates; time and sessions) for your information. Should you require further clarification, please contact me.

I look forward to working with you and the grade 7 learners.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully

C J G Bender
Programme presenter
University of Pretoria
Tel and fax: (012) 420-3331
Cell: 082-557

APPENDIX C

20 July ….

Dear Parent / Guardian,

PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL LIFESKILLS PROGRAMME FOR GRADE 7 LEARNERS

Your permission is requested for your child _____, to participate in a Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme. The Life Skills Programme will involve 15 sessions and will run from __July to __ October. Each session will be about 90 minutes and will take place during the school day.

The purpose of the Life Skills Programme is to teach learners coping skills and to empower them for living. The learner will have the opportunity to learn new skills and behaviours that may help their personal and interpersonal development Topics covered during the programme include understanding myself, my family, friends, school and community; effective communication; problem solving, conflict resolution; our rainbow nation; dealing with death and grieving, and where do I go for help.

A lecturer from the University of Pretoria, will lead the programme at school. Sometimes your child will be given homework as part of the programme. Your support and encouragement in this regard will be appreciated.

You are invited to a parents' meeting where the programme will be presented to you. Please complete the tear-off form and send it back to school with your child.

Thank you.
.
Yours faithfully

C J G Bender
Programme presenter
University of Pretoria
Tel and fax: (012) 420-3331

By signing this form I give my informed consent for my child to participate in the Life Skills Programme:

Parent /Guardian_____ Date: _____
Parent /Guardian_____ Date: _____

I, _____ parent(s) of_____
would like to attend the Parents' meeting on : August at :
Venue: M Primary School.

_____ _____
Signature Date

APPENDIX D
NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNERS

Dear Learner,

Sometimes we all need help to learn how to be better learners/students or how to know ourselves better, being in control of our anger, getting along with others, or how to deal with problems like alcoholism or drug abuse, divorce or single parenting in the family. Below is a list of some of these topics.

Please tell us what topics you would be interested in or that you think we need to discuss in your school (especially for the Grade 7's) to help you and your friends. Put a ✓ check mark in front of those you think we should discuss. Then, according to IMPORTANCE for you, select TWELVE (12) topics and number it from 1 to 12.

If you have any other ideas / topics, please add them.

Thank you

_____ Feeling better about yourself (knowing yourself, my feelings, ideas)
_____ Me and my family (getting along with parents, brothers, sisters, other family members)
_____ Meeting, making and keeping friends
_____ My friends and school (getting along with teachers and improved school climate)
_____ Me and my community (learning the value of helping and caring for others)
_____ Service learning (Project/Team building) (doing something for my school and community)
_____ Communication (learning peacemaking skills and assertion skills)
_____ Stress management skills (how to handle my worries)
_____ Learning better ways of dealing with angry feelings
_____ Understanding other people (cultural differences)
_____ Leadership skills (learning to maker better decisions)
_____ Dating, relationships, sex, pregnancy, AIDS
_____The coping process (coping with problems and where can I go for help/counseling)
_____ Dealing with divorce in the family
_____ Dealing with single parenting in the family
_____ Dealing with abuse and violence in the family
_____ Dealing with death of a person or pet
_____ School survival and success
_____ Dealing with alcohol and drugs
_____ Understanding social responsibilities (good 'citizenship) (me, others, school, community)
_____ Transition to high school/ secondary school
_____ Study and test-taking skills
_____ Other _____
_____ Other _____

Comments:

_____
_____
_____

APPENDIX E

Personal and Interpersonal Life skills Programme

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. **INTRODUCTION**

Life skills programmes aim to foster positive behaviours across this range of psycho-social skills, and to change unacceptable behaviours learned early in life, which may translate into inappropriate and risky behaviour at a later stage of life. Life skills programmes are one way of helping children and youth as well as facilitators such as social workers, teachers and psychologists, to respond to situations requiring decisions which may affect their lives. Such skills are best learned through experiential activities which are learner-centered and designed to help young people gain information, examine attitudes and practise skills. Therefore life skills education programmes promote positive health choices, taking informed decisions, practising healthy behaviours and recognising and avoiding risky situations and behaviours.

Life skills programmes provide a variety of exercises and activities in which learners do something and then process the experience together, generalising about what they learned and ideally, after much practice in the programme, attempt to apply it to future real life situations. Life skills therefore help young people to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life and to respond appropriately to the difficulties they encounter leter on. They help learners to become socially and psychologically competent and to function confidently and competently with themselves, with other people and with the community.

The Masingita Personal and Interprsonal Programme is a life skills programme and includes the following themes: Developing self-awareness, self-knowledge of self and sensory contact (SELF); My family and me; My school and me; Dating, interpersonal relationships and HIV/Aids education; My community and me; Needs, rights and responsibilities; Rainbow nation, first impressions and stereotyping; Effective communication; Problem solving; Conflict resolution; Death: Grieving and growing; and Where do I go for help?

The Life Skills Education model used for implementing the programme has the following components: **facilitation, group work, experiential learning, reflection and continuity**.

- **Facilitation:** Involves creating an environment conducive to learning, experimentation, exploration and growth. Facilitating is a process of sharing, of giving and receiving, the mutual growth of all concerned.
- **Group work:** Active participation in groups is encouraged in order to facilitate the learning of new skills, the developing of new attitudes and the gaining of new knowledge about groups. The credo that "none of us is as smart as all of us" should be the underlying reality of group work.
- **Experiential learning:** The main focus is on experiential learning – on building on existing strengths and on the life experiences of the learners. Experiential learning is participatory, and is a shared activity where everyone has something to teach and something to learn, and then reflecting on what has been learned.
- **Reflection:** The meaning of experience is not necessarily obvious – it is subject to interpretation and critical reflection. Learners have to be given the opportunity to observe, recapture and re-evaluate their experience. A method of assisting learners to reflect is to provide reflection worksheets at the end of each session.
- **Continuity:** This is the way to ensure that there is a link, a logical sequence and follow-up. Continuity reinforces the acquisition of skills and helps with the development of life skills programmes. Each life skills session is like a piece of a puzzle and it is important to fit all the pieces of the puzzle together.

2. PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

2.1 Critical outcomes

Critical outcomes express the intended results of Education and Training as a whole and are therefore the broadest outcomes:

1. Identify and solve problems in which responses show that responsible decisions using critical and creative thinking have been made.
2. Work effectively with others as members of a team, group, organisation and community.
3. Organise and manage oneself and one's activities responsibly and effectively.
4. Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information.
5. Communicate effectively using visual, mathematical and/or language skills in the modes of oral and/or written presentation.
6. Use science and technology effectively and critically, showing responsibility towards the environment and the health of others.
7. Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems, and that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation (Department of Education, 1997).

In addition, it was agreed that all learners should become aware of the importance of the following:

- Reflecting on and exploring a variety of strategies to learn more effectively.
- Participating as a responsible citizen in the life of local, national and global communities.
- Being culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts.
- Exploring education and career opportunities.
- Developing entrepreneurial opportunities.

2.2 Specific outcomes

The following specific outcomes (SO) were used for designing and implementing the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme:

- SO1: Understand and accept themselves as unique and worthwhile human beings.
- Life Orientation is instrumental in promoting a meaningful lifestyle for each learner. This specific outcome aims at developing respect for the self, which includes a positive self-concept and self-actualisation. This will be attained by –
  - promoting the individual's own worth, dignity and rights as a unique individual;

- examining how the physical and social environment affects personal development and growth;
- exploring the role of social, cultural and national perspectives in shaping personal attitudes and values; and
- understanding the integrated nature of the whole person.

- SO2: Use skills and display attitudes and values that improve relationships in family, groups and community.
- SO3: Respect the rights of people to hold personal beliefs and values.
- SO4: Demonstrate value and respect for human rights as reflected in *Ubuntu* and other philosophies.
- SO5: Practise acquired life skills and decision-making skills.
- SO6: Assess career and other opportunities and set goals that will enable them to make the best use of their potential and talents.
- SO7: Demonstrate the values and attitudes necessary for a healthy and balanced life style.
- SO8: Evaluate and participate in activities that demonstrate effective human movement and development.

3. AIM OF THE PROGRAMME

The aim of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme for Grade 7 learners in the senior phase of the GED is to foster positive behaviours across the range of psycho-social skills, and to change unacceptable behaviours learned early in life, which may translate into inappropriate and risky behaviour at a later stage of life. Therefore the main aim of the programme is that the intervention (programme) should lead to personal growth (self-empowerment) and social competence, and contribute to the optimal social functioning of children in the classroom, school, family and community (capacity building).

4. GENERAL FORMAT OF SESSIONS

The facilitator should prepare the group session content, structure and resources in advance. Each session should include the following aspects:

- **Ice-breakers**: A gentle ice-breaker leading the learners into the theme of the session.

- **Self-awareness** (connecting to self by sensory activities): Smell, hear, taste, feel, see. An opportunity for learners to connect with their relationship to the theme.
- **Activity(-ies)** (experiential learning): Structuring an activity, which allows for an in-depth exploration of the topic. The activity should involve all learners at a personal and experiential level. The activity may be individual or can be done in a group (consisting of 5 to 7 learners) or in a large group context (class).
- **Discussion and feedback**: Sharing with others. Giving learners the space and opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings in small and large group.
- **Reflect**: Allocating time for reflection and consolidation.
- **Self-nurturing**: Learners can do something that they really enjoy, for example having something to eat and drink.
- **Handouts (notes)**. Questionnaires on the topic. Notes to analyse and/or summarise the theme.

5. SET GROUND RULES / GROUP NORMS FOR EACH SESSION

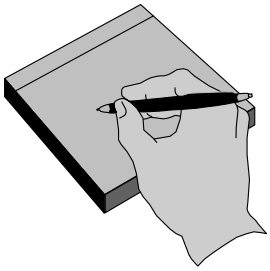
The facilitator in conjunction with all learners has to set a few ground rules. This is the one time that the facilitator is advised to be directive or exercise authority. The following ground rules should be set:

- Everyone must be given an equal opportunity to speak and participate. When a learner speaks, everyone else listens.
- Speak for yourself: "I statements".
- Take responsibility for yourself.
- Give your personal reactions, rather than the interpretations of others.
- Ask as few questions as possible and state your reasons(s) for asking.
- When you address someone, look directly at him/her instead of at the board or out of the window.
- Conversely, when someone addresses you, be aware of the effect the person has on you and let him/her know how you feel about his/her statement to you.
- Be aware of your body language as well as of that of others.
- Respect other people's wishes for space or to be left alone.
- Come to sessions on time and note that no one may be absent from sessions.
- Learners must agree to keep the group's activities and discussions confidential.

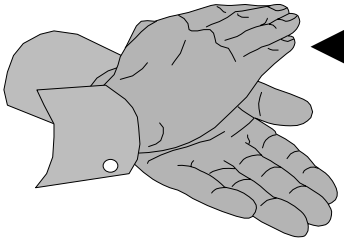
6. GIVE LEARNERS ROLES IN THE GROUP

In order to involve all learners in the small groups (6 groups with 5 to 7 learners), each member has to play a role. The following roles should be written on cards and be handed out to the learners at the beginning of each session: Time-keeper; Note-keeper; Leader; Co-ordinator; Mediator; Encourager and Snack manager:

Time-keeper

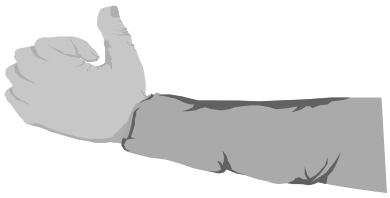


Note-keeper



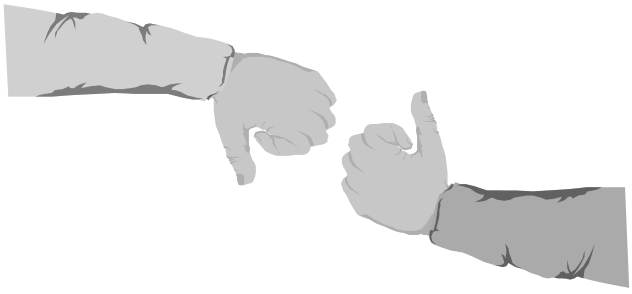
Co-ordinator

Leader



Encourager

Snack manager



Mediator

PROGRAMME

ORIENTATION SESSION: KNOWLEDGE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT AND WHY WE WANT TO DEVELOP LIFE SKILLS

LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)

1. To introduce learners to the large and smaller group experience and help them begin to get acquainted with and feel comfortable in the setting.
2. To establish the ground rules and discuss the issue of confidentiality.
3. To discuss the South African context and the need to develop life skills and prepare learners for the sessions ahead.
4. To facilitate learners' becoming aware and experiencing that the large group and smaller group are a safe environment for sharing ideas, feelings and behaviours.

SOME DEFINITIONS TO GUIDE THE INTRODUCTORY DISCUSSION

- **LEARNING AREA: LIFE ORIENTATION AND LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION**

Life skills education, Education for living, Life Orientation or the New Guidance replaces the previous Guidance and Health Education formats in the school.

Life skills education deals with preventive methods to promote and develop aspects of personal and interpersonal (social) skills. Such life skills programmes can be developed, facilitated and evaluated by social workers in the school context.

- **LIFE SKILLS**

Life skills are essential skills that make life easier, and increase the possibility that individuals will realise their potential and become productive members of society (Rooth, 1997:6).

Life skills are also the insight, awareness, knowledge, values, attitudes and qualities that are necessary to empower individuals and their communities to cope and engage successfully with life and its challenges in South African society.

- **PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL**

Personal is the “inner me” – the aspects of ourselves which we project and expose to the people with whom we interact in social contexts. These aspects include the qualities and interests, ways of communicating and responding, skills and talents that we use in our social worlds. Personal also includes the self-concept, what each person thinks of him/herself and the person’s true self – our true abilities, values and beliefs.

Interpersonal refers to others and me: family, friends and at school, community and society.

RESOURCES

Chart paper and coloured pens, or blackboard and chalk.
Exercise books for learners to compile a Learner’s Book.

ACTIVITIES

- Discuss in general the South African context: use a world map to locate Africa, South Africa, Pretoria, Mamelodi, our community and our school. Discuss in smaller groups the assets and then needs of our country and community. Pass out the Handout: Ecological system and discuss. Ask question and discuss “Where do I as a learner belong?”
- Ask the learners what life skills are. Have them give examples.
- Explain the process of brainstorming

  A brainstorm is a "storm" of ideas. The ideas are like raindrops in a rainstorm. The idea of brainstorming is to encourage people to come up with as many different ideas as possible. For brainstorming to be effective, you must
  - offer every idea that you can think of;
  - not criticise any idea; and
  - think of as many ideas as possible within the time limit given.
- Ask the learners to brainstorm all the words they can think of when they hear the words LIFE SKILLS. List these words within the time limit given.
- After brainstorming, ask learners to identify words on the list that relate to themes or topics for a life skills programme.
- After discussing the definitions, the learners should compile a poster in their small groups (6 groups with 5 to 7 learners) (experiential learning and groupwork). See handout: Life skills and photo.
- Conclude the activity by setting the stage for the following sessions: the format, time and venue and the ground rules

SELF-NURTURING

Learners had snacks.

RESOURCES USED FOR PREPARATION

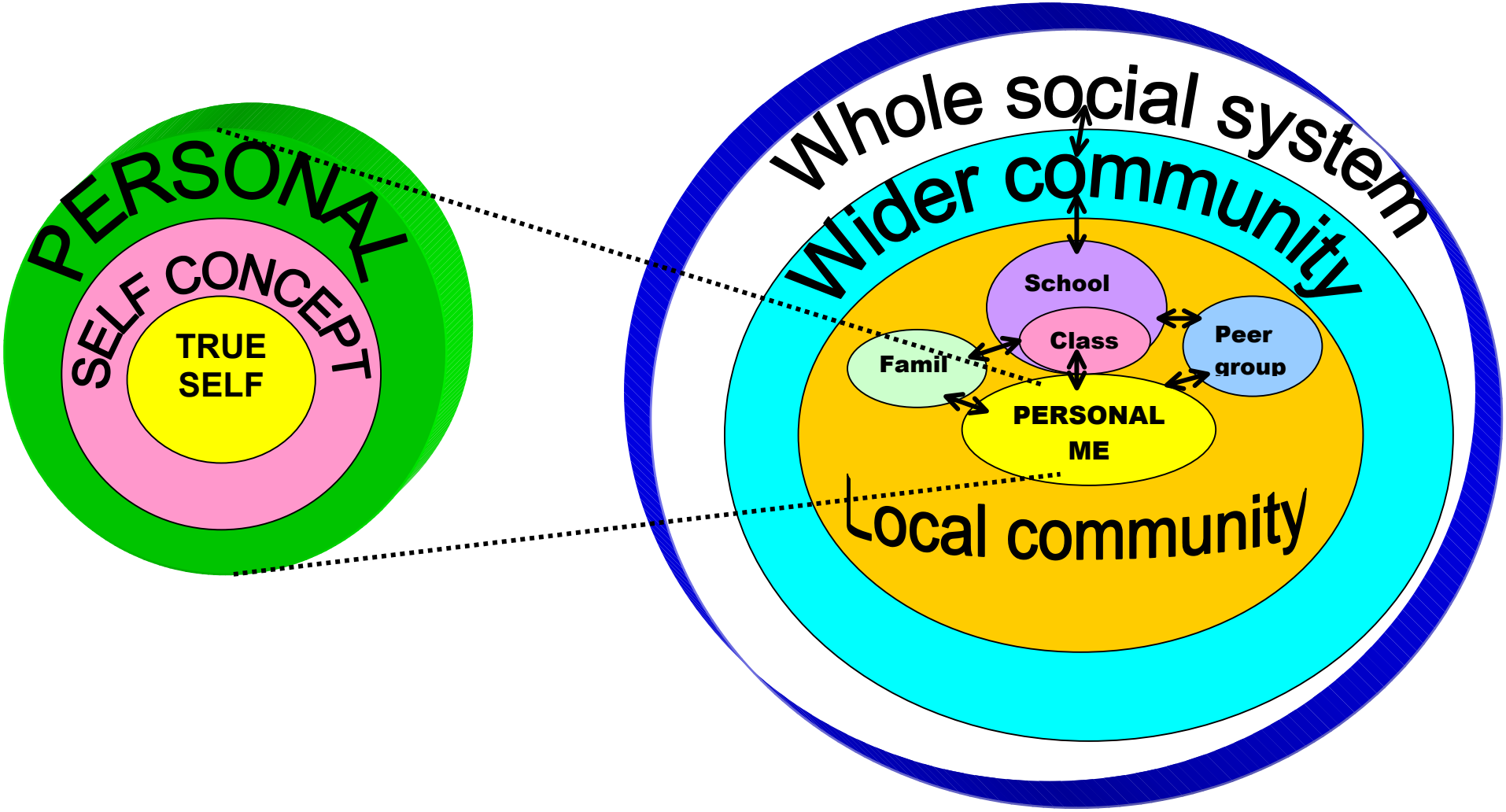
This theme: Life skills, is based on information obtained from the following resources:
Jordaan and Steyn (1999)
Konopka (1993)
Kotzé (1993)
Morganett (1994)
Nelson-Jones (1991), (1992), (1993).
Rooth (1995), (1997)

PHOTO OF SESSION

Photo 1: Facilitator and Grade 7 learners in the classroom

(with permission)

Handout 1: Ecological system



Handout 2: Life skills

NB

- For happily living and learning (successfully)

Life skills

Any skill which enables a person to interact meaningfully and happily with the environment and with other people.

Competencies needed for successfully living and participation in school and

EXAMPLES

- Personal
- Interpersonal
- Home
- Community

MASINGITA PROGRAMME

1. Self (Personal)
2. My family and me
3. My school, friends and me
4. Dating and relationships
5. My community and me
6. Needs, Rights and Responsibilities
7. Rainbow nation
8. Communication
9. Problem solving

THEME 1: Developing self-awareness, self-knowledge and sensory contact (SELF)

Phase Organiser: Personal development and empowerment Communication				**Programme Organiser:** This is me, this is you			
SO1 X	**SO2**	**SO3**	**SO4**	**SO5**	**SO6**	**SO7**	**SO8**

SO = Specific outcomes

LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)
Learners should be able to –

1. understand and accept themselves as unique and worthy human beings: Get to know yourself: your body, emotions, mind and spirit;
2. use the opportunity to share their ideas about who they are **–** what their likes and dislikes are;
3. understand that people have different personality characteristics, physical appearances, feelings and different strengths and weaknesses and be able to identify them, as well as understand that these differences are okay;
4. identify and understand their own feelings and the feelings of other people;
5. learn that sharing feelings is an important part of healthy, lasting relationships and feeling good about yourself; and
6. engage in co-operative learning activities in order to increase their sense of self-worth and confidence.

RESOURCES

Exercise books for learners to compile a Learner's Workbook.
Labels for name tags.
Pictures of animals or toy animals.
Handouts for Learner's Workbook: Personal information sheet: Me: My likes and dislikes; personality characteristics – to fill in; Feeling Faces Chart (copies.)
Paper / Scissors / Glue / Crayons / Markers / Fibre pens.
Assorted magazines and newspapers (especially those with pictures of children and adults (e.g. ministers and sports heroes) performing various activities: school activities, playing outside, being involved in sport, helping with household tasks, being involved in a job; doing homework, and so on).

ICE-BREAKER AND SENSORY ACTIVITY

- **Sensory activity**
  Learners have to feel and identify different objects, for example: materials and seeds.
- **Beginning: Self-awareness:** My senses: smell, hear, taste, touch and see.

ACTIVITIES

- Pass out the crayons or markers and previously made name tags with adhesive on the back, instructing learners to write their names and surnames on the tags and stick them on.
- Tell the learners that to help them get acquainted, you would like them to choose a picture of an animal or toy animal who will introduce them to the group. Alternatives: Let the learners add an adjective to the names e.g. Jolly Joseph; Beautiful Bridgett; Laughs Lawrence OR let them sing their name in different tones.
- Model what you want the learners to do by choosing something to "speak" for you. Share your name, favourite food, a sport that you like and what you want to learn from the group and the programme.

- After each learner has had a turn to share this information, discuss the basic rules for the group, giving learners some examples:
  * Everyone gets a chance to talk
  * No hitting or fighting in groups
  * Take turns

  Ask learners' input to help them develop "ownership". List the ground rules on a paper/board so everyone can see and put on the noticeboard to be available for every session.

- Next go over the confidentiality rule and its limits. For example, you may say:
  "When we say something is confidential, that means what we say is private. You may talk about your own thoughts, feelings and actions, but you may not share anything that others in the group talk about."

ACTIVITIES– EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (PROCESS) AND DISCUSSION

- Distribute an exercise book to each learner and ask the learner write his/her name down (vertically) on the first page, e.g.:
  M
  O
  S (shy)
  E (enthusiastic)
  S

  Next to the first of any other letter, write down a characteristic. Let learners share some of the characteristics with other learners in their particular specific group. Go around the groups and encourage those who have the same characteristics to address one another directly and say: "I connect with you_____."

- Learners fill in the personal information sheet (name, surname, home address, date of birth; sport that you like and dislike, such as best sport that you like and worst that you do not like; favourite food, what you like and do not like; animals that you like and do not like. What do you enjoy doing that is special for you? Who is your best friend? Do you have illnesses and have you been in hospital? Family: names and ages of father, mother, brother and sisters). After the session, the learners have to write down their own physical and personality characteristics.

- Distribute a copy of the Feeling Faces Cart (Handout) to everyone. Explain that feelings are a special part of us that help us understand other people and ourselves. Some feelings make us feel warm and fuzzy, like love, affection, joy and happiness. Other feelings make us feel cold and prickly, like fear, sadness or anger. Feelings are not good or bad, and it is important to recognise them and be able to share our feelings as part of who we are.

- Go around the circle, letting the learners pick out a few feelings from the chart. After each learner has shared a feeling, ask the others if they have ever felt that way. Encourage those who feel the same way to address one another directly and say: "I connect with you_____. I felt that way when _____ happened." This will help the learners to identify their feelings better as well as when certain situations are likely to arise.

- Learners page through a magazine and find a picture of someone who illustrates some feelings, thoughts and behaviour or action. Learners should show the picture to the other learners in their group and describe the person's characteristics (personality, his/her likes and dislikes; strengths and weaknesses; thoughts, feelings and behaviour). Learners should be able to project their own thoughts, feelings and behaviour on the picture (projection – learners have to develop and take ownership). Then learners also make a “ME” collage from the pictures they selected from the magazines and newspapers.

DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK

Discuss the following questions: "What did you learn from your group (small/subgroup) today? What was it like to feel part of a group?"

REMARKS / COMMENTS / REFLECTION

Give the learners the time and opportunity to reflect on their personality characteristics, likes, dislikes, wants and wishes, thoughts, feelings and behaviour.
Participants are given time to complete the session-by-session questionnaire.

SELF-NURTURING

Snacks

RESOURCES USED FOR PREPARATION

This theme is based on information obtained from the following resources:
Brownell, Craig, de Haas, Harris & Ntshangase (1996)
Morganett (1994)
Nelson-Jones (1991), (1992), (1993)
Pitt, Rhode & Marshall (1999)
Rooth (1995), (1997)

Handout 3: Personal information

Name and Surname:_____

Date of birth:_____

Age:_____

Address: _____

Number:_____

Best sport that I like

_____

_____

Sport I do not like

_____

_____

Best food that I like

_____

_____

Food I do not like

_____

_____

Best TV programme that I like

_____

TV programme I do not like

_____

Animal(s) that I like

_____

_____

Animal(s) that I do not like

_____

_____

What do you enjoy doing (special for yourself)?

_____

_____

Who is your best friend(s)?

_____

Do you have any illnesses? Yes / No

Have you been in hospital?_ Yes / No

MY FAMILY

Father's name:_____ Age:_____

Mother's name:_____ Age:_____

Are your parents Married / Divorced /Staying separate

Brother(s)' name: :_____ Age:_____

_____ Age: _____

Sister(s)' name:_____ Age:_____

_____ Age:_____

ME

Characteristics:

Physical

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Emotional (feelings):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

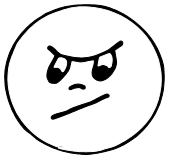
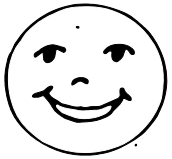
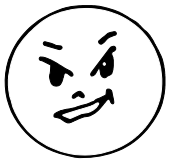
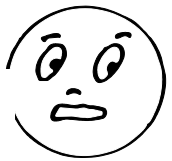
_____

Personality:_____

_____

Handout 4

Feeling Faces Chart

	HAPPY	SAD	ANGRY	AFRAID
LOW	 Cheerful Glad Pleased Amused Relieved	 Resigned Blue Gloomy Ignored	 Annoyed Ruffled Cross	Tense Anxious Nervous Puzzled
MEDIUM	 Delighted Excited	 Dejected Defeated	 Irritated Hostile Biting	 Fearful Shaky Jittery
HIGH	 Jubilant Overjoyed	 Miserable Helpless Worthless Depressed	 Furious Hateful	 Panicked Horrified Desperate

(Adapted from Morganett, 1994)

THEME 2: My Family and me

Phase Organiser: onal development and empowerment Communication				**Programme Organiser:** This is me, this is my family			
SO1 X	**SO2** X	**SO3**	**SO4**	**SO5**	**SO6**	**SO7**	**SO8**

SO = Specific outcomes

LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)
Learners should be able to –

1. establish the norm of reviewing what happened during the previous session. They should be given an opportunity to discuss anything they still have questions about;
2. know and understand where I come from and belong (my family);
3. know and understand family structures, importance of and functions of the family; and
4. gain self-knowledge about: "My feelings and thinking about my family, my wants and wishes, my role and function in my family."

RESOURCES
Exercise books for learners to compile Learner's Workbook.
Assorted magazines and newspapers.
Paper / Scissors / Glue.
Handout: Family structures.

ICE-BREAKER AND SENSORY ACTIVITY

- **Sensory activity**

  Learners have to smell and identify different objects for example: materials, seeds and food.

- **Beginning: Self-awareness: My senses: smell, hear, taste, touch and see.**

ACTIVITY – EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (PROCESS)

- Introduce the topic of My Family and me (refer back to the ecological system as discussed during the orientation session).
- Class (whole group): Brainstorming on the importance and functions of the family:

The importance of the family

- Families are present in all known human societies
- Closest and most important of human groups
- A child's first social encounter
- The child's first exposure to love and security
- The child's first opportunity to learn to –
  - trust
  - interact
  - care
  - love
  - communicate
- Family disruption can affect a child's ability to learn
- Will affect the child's future relationships
- Several causes of family disruption, such as:

- Alcohol/drug abuse
- Financial difficulties / poverty
- Poor communication.

The functions of the family

- To provide an emotionally supportive environment for
  - adults
  - children
  - includes care, support, love and security.
- To provide for the physical needs of family members
- To provide economic security
- To socialise the young

- Discuss in small or subgroups: My position, functions, tasks and responsibilities in the family.
- Discuss in large group (all learners in classroom): The different kinds of family structures and then in small or subgroups identify My family structure and where I belong and how I think and feel about my family situation (Handout for discussion and activity).

Family structures

- Parent-controlled family: here either the father or the mother has (or both together have) the most authority. One of the parents is in charge and what that parent says is obeyed.
- Democratic family: each member of the family has some say in family rules and in making decisions. The family discusses issues and each family member can state his or her position. Parents do sometimes have the final say.
- "Let things happen" family: there are few rules in this family and its members mostly do as they please. There is little discipline and few decisions are made.

Give learners time to reflect on their family and then discuss the following questions:

- Which one of these three types is most like your family?
- Describe who is "in charge" and how decisions are made.
- How are rules made and who decides what should happen if rules are broken?
- Does your family have any strong beliefs (religious, political, etc.)?
- How do these beliefs influence your family life?
- How do family members' jobs affect the family?

- At the end, ask one person from each subgroup to report on their findings / discussions to the whole group (up to 2-3 minutes each to do this).
- Summarise the findings / discussions, using as guidelines the questions that had to be answered.

DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK

Discussion about the importance, functions and structures of the family.
Large group (class) and subgroup discussion.
Participants are given time to complete the session-by-session questionnaire.

REMARKS / COMMENTS / REFLECTION

Give the learners the time and opportunity to reflect.

Learners had the opportunity to share information about their families. The learners are also requested to make a "Family collage" in the workbook, using pictures from magazines.

SELF-NURTURING

Snacks

RESOURCES USED FOR PREPARATION

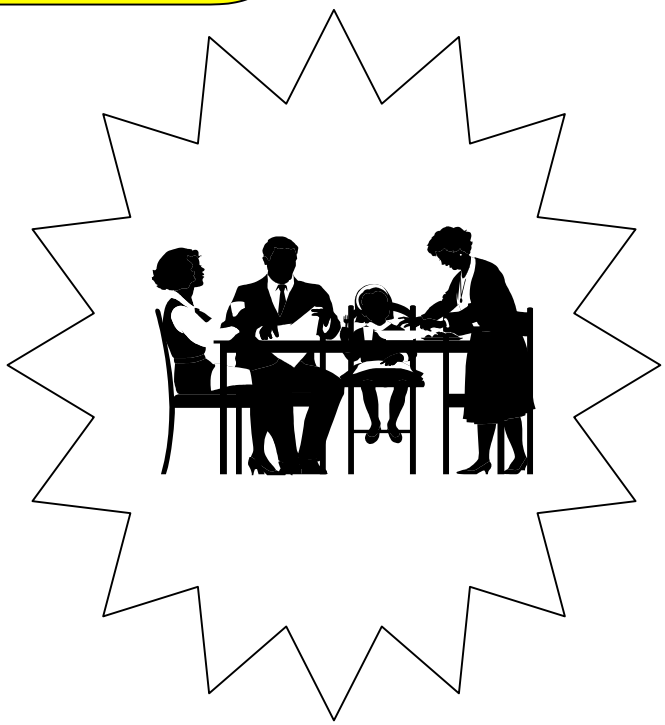
This theme is based on information obtained from the following sources:

Brownell, Craig, de Haas, Harris & Ntshangase (1996)

Nelson-Jones (1991), (1992), (1993)

Handout 5:

Different kinds of Family Structures



Parent controlled family

- Father / Mother has most authority
- One of parents is in

Democratic family

- Each member has some say in family rules and in making decisions
- Family discusses

The "let things just happen" family

- Few rules
- Members mostly do as they please

THEME 3: My school, my friends and me

Phase Organiser: Personal development and empowerment Communication				**Programme Organiser:** This is me, this is you			
SO1 X	**SO2** X	**SO3**	**SO4** X	**SO5** X	**SO6**	**SO7** X	**SO8**

SO = Specific outcomes

LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)
Learners should be able to –

1. establish the norm of reviewing what happened during the previous session. They should be given an opportunity to discuss anything they still have questions about;
2. tell people about their school: Name, Structure, Rules, Discipline, Number of learners; Colours and clothes; School song, badge and slogan;
3. do a research project on a small scale;
4. know who are involved with the school: School Governing Body, Parents, Principal, Teachers and learners;
5. negotiate and network with peers;
6. engage learners in co-operative learning activities in order to increase their sense of self-worth and confidence; and
7. promote recognition that we are all part of a larger world.

RESOURCES
Material to make poster.
Handout: Topic for research.
Paper / Scissors / Glue / Crayons / Markers/ Fibre pens to create School poster.

ICE-BREAKER AND SENSORY ACTIVITY

- **Sensory activity**
  Learners had to listen to and identify different musical instruments, such as an African drum, bells.
- **Beginning: Self-awareness: My senses: smell, hear, taste, touch and see.**

ACTIVITY – EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (PROCESS)

- Introduce the topic by referring to the ecological system (display the figure) and focus on the school.
- Each subgroup receives an assignment on a topic about the school. The assignment is a research project and the learners have to do a literature study and conduct interviews with the principal, members of the school governing body (SGB), community leaders, teachers, and learners in the school.

  The topics are the following.
  1. Name of school (the meaning)
  2. History of the school
  3. How many learners (pupils) there are in the school (in each grade): Grade 1 to 7
  4. Rules of school and discipline; Code of Conduct
  5. Model or picture of the school. Learners had to select their own materials and make a model of the school for display
  6. School clothes (make drawings)
  7. School colours
  8. School song
  9. School language / medium of instruction
  10. School subjects /learning areas in syllabi
  11. School badge (school slogan)

- Each subgroup has to do a presentation on its topic. The subgroups have to network and negotiate to gather information so that they can create a school poster (including all the topics) that can be displayed at the entrance of the school, at the principal's office, in their classroom and any other selected places.
- At the end, ask one person from each group to report on their findings / discussions to the whole group (allow up to 2-3 minutes each to do this).
- Summarise the findings / discussions using the topics that had to be discussed as guidelines.

DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK

Discussion and presentations on the 11 topics about the school. Presentations by subgroups. Learners acknowledged that their school did not have a code of conduct and a committee was established that would work on this issue and involve all Grade 7 learners in partnership with the teachers.

REMARKS / COMMENTS / REFLECTION

Give the learners the time and opportunity to reflect on what they have learned in the groups.
Participants are given time to complete the session-by-session questionnaire.

SELF-NURTURING

All learners had lunch together at the playgrounds.

RESOURCES USED FOR PREPARATION

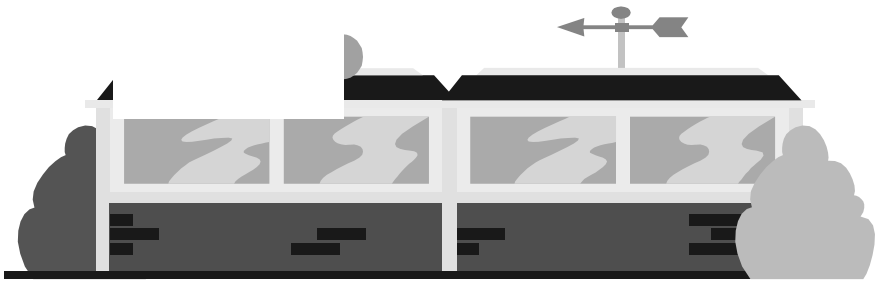
This theme is based on information obtained from the following sources:
Brownell, Craig, de Haas, Harris & Ntshangase (1996)
Morganett (1994)
Nelson-Jones (1991), (1992), (1993)

Handout 6: Research project and school poster

Masingita Primary school

1. Name of school (the meaning)
2. History of the school
3. How many learners (pupils) in the school:
- **Grade 1:**
- **Grade 2:**
- **Grade 3:**
- **Grade 4:**
- **Grade 5:**
- **Grade 6:**
- **Grade 7:**

4. Rules of school and discipline (Code of conduct)
5. Model of the school
6. School clothes (make drawings)
7. School colours
8. School song
9. School language / medium of teaching
10. School subjects / learning area and syllabi
11. School badge (school slogan).



THEME 4: Dating and interpersonal relationships

Phase Organiser: Personal development and empowerment Communication				**Programme Organiser:** Healthy relationships			
SO1 X	**SO2** X	**SO3**	**SO4**	**SO5**	**SO6**	**SO7** X	**SO8**

SO = Specific outcomes

LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)
Learners should be able to –

1. establish the norm of reviewing what happened during the previous session. They should be given an opportunity to discuss anything they still have questions about;
2. clarify the concept of friendship and acknowledge why relationships are so vital to us;
3. demonstrate the Four-way rule of friendships;
4. know and demonstrate that relationships do not simply happen but that they are developed and need to be made to work; and
5. become more aware of their own skills in making, maintaining and ending relationships.

RESOURCES
Hand out: Worksheets: How to build friendships and relationships; Dating (questions to answer and discuss).
Paper / Scissors / Glue / Crayons / Markers / Fibre pens.

ICE-BREAKER AND SENSORY ACTIVITY

- **Sensory activity**

  Learners have to look at pictures and identify different objects of relationships

- **Beginning: Self-awareness: My senses: smell, hear, taste, touch and see.**

ACTIVITY – EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (PROCESS)

- Introduce topic by using pictures of different relationships.
- **Friendship**: Brainstorm in small groups the concept of friendship and write the words down. Then learners have to write down the personality characteristics of their best friend, for example, honest, caring, friendly, plays fair, sticks up for me, sharing.
- Discuss what learners think are their own best two or three friendship skills or what their best friend would say their strengths are. Each group is given feedback and four aspects are identified as the most important in relationships: Be caring; be interested, be tolerant and be yourself, be sincere. Discuss each of these rules in small and large groups. Learners have to complete a worksheet in their groups on how they are going to carry this out.
- **Dating:** Brainstorm on the concept of dating, write down and give feedback. Learners in groups did a role play on (each group had a topic): Asking my boy/girl friend to accompany me to a party, movie, friend's house, shopping centre, family party, school function, social activity at the community centre.

  Worksheet: Each learner has to complete a worksheet on questions about dating. After completion, their answers are discussed in the small groups and then a reporter from each group gives feedback on the group's answers.
- At the end, ask one person from each group to report on their findings / discussions to the whole group (allow up to 2-3 minutes each to do this).
- Summarise the findings / discussions.

DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK

Discussion on friendships, relationships and dating.
Presentations by subgroups.
Participants are given time to complete the session-by-session questionnaire.

REMARKS / COMMENTS / REFLECTION

Give the learners the time and opportunity to reflect.
Some of the learners did not perform the role playing as well as the others did. This is a reflection of the learners' uneasiness about the topic of dating and relationships with the opposite sex.

SELF-NURTURING

Snacks.

RESOURCES USED FOR PREPARATION

This theme is based on information obtained from the following sources:
Brownell, Craig, de Haas, Harris & Ntshangase (1996)
Morganett (1994)
Nelson-Jones (1991), (1992), (1993)

Handout 6: Worksheet 1: Friendships and relationships

HOW TO BUILD FRIENDSHIPS AND RELATIONSHIPS

THE FOUR WAY RULE	HOW ARE YOU GOING TO CARRY THIS OUT?
Be caring Show consideration for others. See their problem from their point of view.	
Be interested Show an interest in others, in their person, activities, families, problems, clothes, belongings and whatever they value. Make them feel they are important.	
Be tolerant Be tolerant of others. Respect the differences in their culture, age, manner, language, appearance and gender, and accept them as they are. Be forgiving.	
Be yourself, be sincere Be sincere, honest and open. Be yourself towards them.	

(Adapted from Lindhard & Dlamini, 1990).

Handout 7: Worksheet 2: *Dating*

1. Should you have a boyfriend/girlfriend at your age?
   (a) What do I think?

_____
_____
because _____
_____
   (b) What does your mom/dad/special adult friend think?

_____
_____
because
_____
_____

2. What is the right age for someone to go on their first date?
   (a) What do I think? _____
_____
because
_____
_____
   (b) What does your mom/dad/special adult friend think?_____
_____
because_____
_____

3. Where should you go on your first date?
   (a) What do I think? _____
_____
because_____
_____
   (b) What does your mom/dad/special adult friend -think? _____
_____
because_____
_____

4. Do you need to go out with many people before you find someone to marry?
   (a) What do I think? _____
_____
because_____
_____
   (b) What does your mom/dad/special adult friend think? _____
_____
because_____
_____

5. Does sex have to be part of a relationship with the opposite sex?
   (a) What do I think? _____
_____
because_____
_____
   (b) What does your mom/dad/special adult friend think? _____
_____
because_____
_____

THEME 5: My community and me

Phase Organiser: Personal development and empowerment Communication Environment				**Programme Organiser:** Healthy relationships			
SO1 X	**SO2** X	**SO3**	**SO4** X	**SO5** X	**SO6**	**SO7** X	**SO8**

SO = Specific outcomes

LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)
Learners should be able to –

1. establish the norm of reviewing what happened during the previous session. They should be given an opportunity to discuss anything they still have questions about;
2. engage in co-operative learning activities in order to increase their sense of self-worth and confidence;
3. promote recognition that we are all part of a larger world – family, my school, community, society, and me;
4. define and illustrate the concept: Community;
5. identify the various components of a community; and
6. identify their own community and their position in the community and to know what a needs assessment and a community development project are.

RESOURCES
Material to make poster.
Clay for community model.
Pictures or community components.

ICE-BREAKER AND SENSORY ACTIVITY

- **Sensory activity**
  Learners have to smell and feel the clay.
- **Beginning: Self-awareness: My senses: smell, hear, taste, touch and see.**

ACTIVITY – EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (PROCESS)

- Introduce the topic by referring to the ecological system (display the figure) and focus on the community.
- Each subgroup has to define “community”, in written format, and select a picture(s) to illustrate their definition and give feedback to the large group. The definitions are consolidated on one sheet of paper (A1) and pictures are added to make a poster for the classroom.
- Activity in subgroups: Each group is given clay and the assignment to create their own community (model) and introduce a community development project (after an assessment of the community’s needs). Then the learners have to present and introduce their community and the community development project to the other groups.

DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK
Discussion and presentations on the different communities and development projects. The implementation of the community development projects should be discussed with the principal, teachers and parents.
As a result of this session, the school staff and learners planned and organised an HIV/ Aids Awareness Day. Parents and community members were invited. Staff members of community services were involved in the compilation and presentation of the programme. See photos.

REMARKS / COMMENTS / REFLECTION

Give the learners the time and opportunity to reflect on their community and community development project.
Participants are given the time to complete the session-by-session questionnaire.

SELF-NURTURING

School staff and learners can have lunch together at the playgrounds.

RESOURCES USED FOR PREPARATION

This theme is based on information obtained from the following sources:
Brownell, Craig, de Haas, Harris & Ntshangase (1996)
Morganett (1994)
Nelson-Jones (1991), (1992), (1993)

PHOTOS OF HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY

(with permission from the primary school)

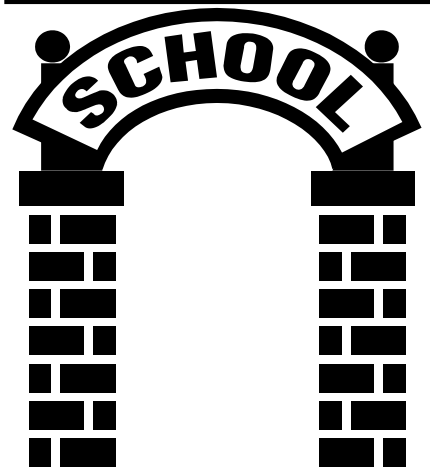
Handout 8: Community

☐ **The locality, the immediate area surrounding the school.**

Community

School community: **principal, teachers, learners, clerk...**
People visiting the school
Important members of community
People and community institutions which help people
Leaders of the community
Important functions of the shopkeepers, the doctors etc in the community.
NEEDS IN THE COMMUNITY?

☐ **Embraces those people who are involved with a specific school, either directly or indirectly - teachers, learners, parents, governors, local residents, buying and selling (shops); and social services (health, housing)**



THEME 6: Needs, Rights and Responsibilities

Phase Organiser: Personal development and empowerment Culture and society				**Programme Organiser:** Building the rainbow nation			
SO1 X	**SO2** X	**SO3**	**SO4**	**SO5** X	**SO6** X	**SO7** X	**SO8**

SO = Specific outcomes

LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)
Learners should be able to –

7. establish the norm of reviewing what happened during the previous session. They should be given an opportunity to discuss anything they still have questions about;
8. know, understand and identify their human needs;
9. know and demonstrate their knowledge of their responsibilities for themselves, family / others, school and community; and
10. identify the relations between needs and rights and responsibilities.

RESOURCES
Exercise book: Learner's Workbook .
Questionnaire: *I am responsible.*
Handouts and worksheets: Chocolate-Strawberry-Vanilla Responsibilities; My responsibilities.
Paper / Scissors / Glue / Crayons / Markers / Fibre pens to create poster.

ICE-BREAKER AND SENSORY ACTIVITY

- **Sensory activity**
  Learners have to taste and identify a selection of objects: sweet, sour, bitter and salty.
- **Beginning: Self-awareness: My senses: smell, hear, taste, touch and see.**

ACTIVITY – EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (PROCESS)

- The Grade 7 learners had discussions and activities on the South African Bill of Rights in another Learning Area and this session was an extension of that area, but with the focus on My needs and especially My responsibilities. Refer to their previous discussion and introduce the focus of the session.
- Class: Discussion on the concept of "Needs" and examples of individual, family / others and community needs (concept relates to previous session). Main focus: Physical (bodily) needs; Intellectual (learning) needs; Social needs and Emotional (feeling) needs (refer to the Feeling Faces Chart). Discussion in subgroups after learners have identified their own physical, intellectual, social and emotional needs.
- Define responsibility in the academic sense. In subgroups, present summary to class (large group).
- Chocolate-Strawberry-Vanilla Responsibilities Handout: Discussion in subgroups regarding responsibilities towards teachers / family / others, school, community and myself – like having three "flavours". Feedback from each group (presentation).
- Individual activity and then group discussion: Give each learner a copy of the My Responsibilities Chart (Handout). Have them work on filling in what their responsibilities are in the three areas and on deciding how they feel about each one.
- Give each learner a copy of the questionnaire "I am responsible". Have them work on completing the questionnaire and paste it in their workbook.
- At the end, ask one person from each subgroup to report on the subgroup's findings / discussions to the whole group (allow up to 2-3 minutes each to do this).
- Summarise the findings / discussions.

DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK
Discussion and presentation on needs, rights and responsibilities.
Presentations by subgroups.

REMARKS / COMMENTS / REFLECTION

Each learner should complete the questionnaire on “I am responsible”. Participants are given time to complete the session-by-session questionnaire.

SELF-NURTURING

Ice cream: vanilla, strawberry and chocolate.

RESOURCES USED FOR PREPARATION

This theme is based on information obtained from the following sources:
Rosenthall & Quinn (1990)
Morganett (1994)

Handout 9: Worksheet example: My responsibilities

Instructions: *Write down what responsibilities you have in each area. Draw a face on the line beside each one to show how you feel about it.*

☺ = I like it.

😐 = It's OK.

☹ = I don't like it.

My responsibilities to myself

1. *Clean my room.* ☹
2. *Do my homework.* ☹
3. *Feed my dog, To-to.* ☺
4. _____

My responsibilities to others

1. *Watch my baby sister.* ☹
2. *Walk home with my brother.* ☺
3. *Listen to my other sister read.* ☹
4. _____

My responsibilities at school

1. *Clean the classroom.* ☺
2. *Keep my desk neat.* ☹
3. *Pay for my schoolbook* ☺
4. _____

My responsibilities in my community

1. *Caring for the elderly.* ☹
2. *Helping people in need.* ☹
3. _____
4. _____

(Adapted from Morganett, 1994)

Handout 9: WORKSHEET 1: My Responsibilities Chart

Instructions: *Write down what responsibilities you have in each area. Draw a face on the line beside each one to show how you feel about it.*

☺ = I like it.

😐 = It's OK.

☹ = I don't like it.

My responsibilities to myself

1. _____ _____
2. _____ _____
3. _____ _____
4. _____ _____

My responsibilities to others

1. _____ _____
2. _____ _____
3. _____ _____
4. _____ _____

My responsibilities at school

1. _____ _____
2. _____ _____
3. _____ _____
4. _____ _____

My responsibilities in my community

1. _____ _____
2. _____ _____
3. _____ _____
4. _____ _____

(Adapted from Morganett, 1994)

QUESTIONNAIRE: I am Responsible.

Name: _____ Date:_____

Instructions: Read each sentence. Put a circle (0) around the number that shows what you think and feel right now.

1= Strongly agree 2= Agree somewhat 3 = Agree 4 = Disagree somewhat 5 = Strongly disagree

1. I am a responsible person.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
2. I know what my responsibilities are.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
3. I don't know if I am responsible.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
4. When I act responsibly, I feel good about myself.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
5. Sometimes I think I can't meet all my responsibilities.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
6. I get upset when other people are not responsible.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
7. Some responsibilities take longer than others.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
8. My first responsibility is to myself.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
9. I know how to set goals for myself.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
10. I feel good about being responsible.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

(Adapted from Morganett, 1994)

Chocolate-Strawberry-Vanilla Responsibilities

Handout 10

Self

Others

School

THEME 7: Rainbow nation, First impressions and Stereotyping

Phase Organiser: Personal development and empowerment Culture and society				**Programme Organiser:** Building the rainbow nation			
SO1 X	**SO2** X	**SO3**	**SO4** X	**SO5**	**SO6**	**SO7** X	**SO8**

SO = Specific outcomes

LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)
Learners should be able to –

1. establish the norm of reviewing what happened during the previous session. They should be given an opportunity to discuss anything they still have questions about;
2. engage in co-operative learning activities in order to increase their sense of self-worth and confidence;
3. promote recognition that we are all part of a larger world – family, my school, community, society, and me;
4. understand these parts of a larger world better (family, school, community, society).
5. understand that South Africa has a rainbow nation and that people are different and that these differences should be respected;
6. develop an awareness of differences and the effects of "labelling"; and
7. understand how labelling and stereotypes influence their attitudes and actions.

RESOURCES
Exercise book: Learner's Workbook.
Materials for poster.
Handouts: Rainbow nation and First impressions and Stereotyping for Learner's Workbook.
Paper / Scissors / Glue / Crayons / Markers / Fibre pens.

ICE-BREAKER AND SENSORY ACTIVITY

- **Sensory activity**
  Learners have to listen, smell, taste, look and touch and identify different traditional objects.
- **Beginning: Self-awareness: My senses: smell, hear, taste, touch and see.**

ACTIVITY – EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (PROCESS)

- Introduce the topic by showing pictures of South Africa and the different cultural groups.
- Brainstorm the concept of a multi-cultural nation. Then discuss in subgroups: Different cultural groups in South Africa, What do we know about the likes and dislikes, beliefs, etc. of the different groups (Rainbow nation). Learners in subgroups select pictures from magazines and / or draw their own pictures and make a poster about the South Africa Rainbow nation. Each subgroup presents its poster to the whole class.
- Labelling and stereotyping: Using the posters as examples, the learners in their subgroups have to label people, for example as "big-mouth; grouch, an idiot, a racist". This can lead to a broader discussion on group stereotypes and how these affect people's attitudes, behaviours and relationships.

Discuss in subgroups and report back on: "What is a stereotype?"

DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK

Discussion and presentations by subgroups.

After discussion, learners should focus on “Looking at ourselves”: What are my first impressions of people; what kind of people do I get on well with?

Worksheet to be completed in Learner’s Workbook.

REMARKS / COMMENTS / REFLECTION

Give the learners the time and opportunity to reflect.

Participants are given time to complete the session-by-session questionnaire.

SELF-NURTURING

Traditional food supplied by learners.

RESOURCES USED FOR PREPARATION

This theme is based on information obtained from the following sources:

Morganett (1994)

Nelson-Jones (1991), (1992), (1993)

Rooth (1995)

Handout 11: Rainbow nation

Handout 12 and Worksheet

First Impressions

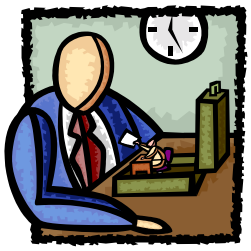
1

2

3

Write down what you think each person is like.

7



6

5

4

What is stereotyping?

- ☐ What makes you dislike someone?
- ☐ Do you have a different attitude to different groups e.g. men, women?
- ☐ Do you try to understand things you don't like?

THEME 8: Effective communication

Phase Organisers: Personal development and empowerment Communication				**Programme Organiser:** Building the rainbow nation			
SO1 X	**SO2** X	**SO3** X	**SO4** X	**SO5** X	**SO6**	**SO7** X	**SO8**

SO = Specific outcomes

LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)

Learners should be able to –

1. establish the norm of reviewing what happened during the previous session. They should be given an opportunity to discuss anything they still have questions about;
2. recognise the important role that interpersonal communication plays in their lives;
3. identify the factors that will contribute to effective face-to-face communication, the skills of sending and receiving interpersonal messages;
4. be a good listener;
5. be a good speaker – learn the skills to communicate effectively; and
6. demonstrate effective communication skills.

RESOURCES

Exercise book: Learner's Workbook
Materials for poster: Flip chart paper
Handouts: Communication; Attitudes that help communication; Good and poor listening; I-You message
Paper / Scissors / Glue / Crayons / Markers / Fibre pens

ICE-BREAKER AND SENSORY ACTIVITY

- **Sensory activity**
  Learners have to listen to different tones of voice.
- **Beginning: Self-awareness: My senses: smell, hear, taste, touch and see.**

ACTIVITY – EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (PROCESS)

- Have the word COMMUNICATION written in large letters on the blackboard as the learners enter. Ask for comments on what the word means to different people – get different reactions and meanings and use these as an introduction to the following:
  "A great deal of our lives is taken up with COMMUNICATION. We are influenced in many ways by the communication systems we call the MEDIA – newspapers, radio, television, etc. In addition, we spend a lot of time in contact with other people. Each of those contacts is likely to involve communication – for example, an exchange of ideas, information, opinions and feelings. A great deal of this communication takes place without the individuals being very conscious of what is going on between them. If the communication is good the people will benefit, if it is not so good they could end up having problems. Communicating with others is such a big part of our lives that it is important to become aware of what is involved and to develop the skills to make the communication effective, so that we can take charge of ourselves and the situations in which we are involved."
  Give each learner a handout: Communication to discuss "a sender", "a receiver" and "a purpose / message".
- Divide the whole group into small subgroups (5 to 7), and ask them to brainstorm the attitudes that help communication – make a list (see handout on the summary of attitudes which help communication, which was collected from each subgroup).
- Ask the subgroups to think now about good and poor listening skills and to list them. Collect the lists and combine them into one list (Handout: Good and poor listening skills).
- Again in small groups: Discuss the "I – You Message" and practise the formula. Handout: "I – You message".

- At the end, ask one person from each subgroup to report on the subgroup's findings / discussions to the whole group (up to 2-3 minutes each to do this).
- Summarise the findings / discussions: Components of communication; Attitudes which help communication; Good and poor listening skills; I-You message.

DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK

Give the learners an opportunity to practise "good listening skills" and "I – You messages" in groups (role playing and drama).
Allow learners in groups to make a poster on Communication for the class (optional).

REMARKS / COMMENTS / REFLECTION

Give the learners the time and opportunity to reflect.
Participants are given time to complete the session-by-session questionnaire.

SELF-NURTURING

All learners have lunch together on playgrounds and practise their communication skills.

RESOURCES USED FOR PREPARATION

This theme is based on information obtained from the following sources:
Hopson & Scally (1986)
Morganett (1994)
Nelson-Jones (1991), (1992), (1993)

Communication

Speaker

- Honest
- Open
- Express feelings
- Say clearly what you want to say.

Message

Listener

Listener

- Hear
- Remember
- Pay attention
- How things are said.
- What is meant?
- What is asked for?

Message

Speaker

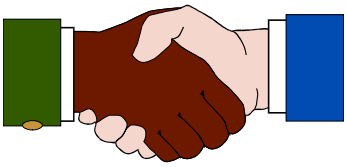
With our words, actions, gestures and expressions, we communicate what we feel, what we want and what we need.

Communication is an important tool in "opening the door" to form trusting, respectful relationships with people.

Handout 14

Attitudes which help communication

Respect: Treating other people with consideration; polite greetings, honesty and being non-judgmental.



Warmth: shown with the tone of voice, facial expressions, gestures and words.

Empathy: ability to understand another person's point of view i.e. to see the world as another sees it. To understand someone's feelings and thoughts.

TALK clearly to convey your feelings, wants and needs.

LISTEN actively to ensure that you understand what is being said

Handout 15

Good and Poor Listening

Good listening

- **Keeping eye contact**
- **Facing partner, nodding and smiling if appropriate**
- **Not interrupting unnecessarily**
- **Asking relevant questions**
- **Restating certain words / sentences for clarity**

Poor listening

- **Looking away**
- **Looking bored**
- **Interrupting**
- **Looking at your watch**
- **Laughing inappropriately**
- **Asking a question that has nothing to do with what the speaker is saying.**

Questions for discussion in groups

- **What can happen when you don't listen to someone?**
- **How can you show someone you are listening?**
- **How do you feel when someone listens to you?**
- **How do you feel when someone does not listen to you?**

Handout 16

I YOU **I YOU**

I - YOU MESSAGE

"I Message" formula

I feel_____ (state your feeling)

when you_____ (state what the person has done or is doing that is causing you to feel this way)

because _____(explain the effect that the person's action is having on you)

and I would like you to _____ (clarify what you would like the person to do to rectify the situation).

Example of an "I message":

I felt *upset*
when *you were not working and discussing with the other group members*
because *now I can not see how creative you are*
and I would like you to *participate in the group and enjoy it.*

THEME 9: Problem solving

Phase Organiser: Personal development and empowerment				**Programme Organiser:** Making decisions and solving problems			
SO1 X	**SO2** X	**SO3**	**SO4** X	**SO5** X	**SO6**	**SO7** X	**SO8**

SO = Specific outcomes

LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)

Learners should be able to –

1. establish the norm of reviewing what happened during the previous session. They should be given an opportunity to discuss anything they still have questions about;
2. identify the problem, know and apply the steps of problem solving;
3. identify the important decisions so that they can spend the necessary time and energy on making the right decisions; and
4. identify feelings during the decision-making / problem-solving process (get to know your own feelings and how to handle them).

RESOURCES

Exercise book: Learner's Workbook.
Handouts: Copies of "Identify the problem"; Decision-making / Problem-solving process; Feeling Faces Chart.

ICE-BREAKER AND SENSORY ACTIVITY

- **Sensory activity**
  Learners have to touch and feel different seeds and decide which they would like to use for building a self-selected topic or picture.
- **Beginning: Self-awareness: My senses: smell, hear, taste, touch and see.**

ACTIVITY – EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (PROCESS)

- Introduce the topic of problem definition and why it is important to understand what the problem is before working on solutions. Then introduce the fact that decision making is linked with problem solving. Every day we have to make decisions. Some decisions are small and not too difficult to make, but other decisions are important and need more time and attention.
- Divide the whole group into small subgroups (5 to 7), and ask them to "Identify the problem" from the handout. Each subgroup can discuss a different case study from the handout and answer the following questions:
  1. What is the problem in the story?
  2. For whom is the situation a problem?
  3. What decision should be made?
  4. What important information may influence the decision?
  5. What are the possible ways to solve the problem?
  6. What are the possible results of each of the solutions?
  7. What is each person feeling? (using the Feeling Faces Chart)
- At the end, ask one person from each subgroup to report on the subgroup's findings / discussions to the whole group (allow up to 2-3 minutes each to do this).
- Brainstorm in subgroups and then discuss (whole group) the steps of problem solving and decision making and creating a handout.
- Summarise the findings / discussions using the questions that had to be answered as guidelines.

DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK

Give the learners an opportunity to practise their decision-making and problem-solving knowledge and skills. The session was summarised as: *My problems, my decisions, and my solutions.* Then, What should I do first? Take action. During the process, what are my feelings and how do I cope?

REMARKS / COMMENTS / REFLECTION

Give the learners the time and opportunity to reflect. Learners have to work on their own by writing down, in any order, all the problems (big and small) they have to solve. Then they have to rearrange the list, starting with the problem that is so important that it needs to be solved first, then the second, and so on. Apply the problem-solving and decision-making steps. Once a learner has decided what to do, the solution should be tried out. Then, one or two weeks later, the learners should think (reflect) on "What are my strengths in decision making and problem solving? Where do I need to improve?"

Participants are given the time to complete the session-by-session questionnaire.

SELF-NURTURING

All learners had lunch together on playgrounds and practise their decision-making and problem-solving skills.

RESOURCES USED FOR PREPARATION

This theme is based on information obtained from the following sources:

Hopson & Scally (1986)

Nelson-Jones (1991), (1992), (1993)

HANDOUT 17

Identify the problem and make a decision

1. Grace wins big
   Grace is about your age. Last week she won R500 in a TV competition. She does not have a savings account and her mother finds it difficult to have money to buy food and clothes.

2. Zandi left her new pen on her desk when she went to lunch. When she came back to class, her pen was gone. She sees John with a pen and complains to the teacher that he has taken the pen that was hers. John calls Zandi a liar and they start arguing.

3. On reading his report card, Vusi sees that he has done badly in reading and mathematics. He knows that his parents will be angry when they see it. During lunch break, Vusi's friend Tabo teases Amil about his new haircut. Vusi slaps Tabo and a fight starts.

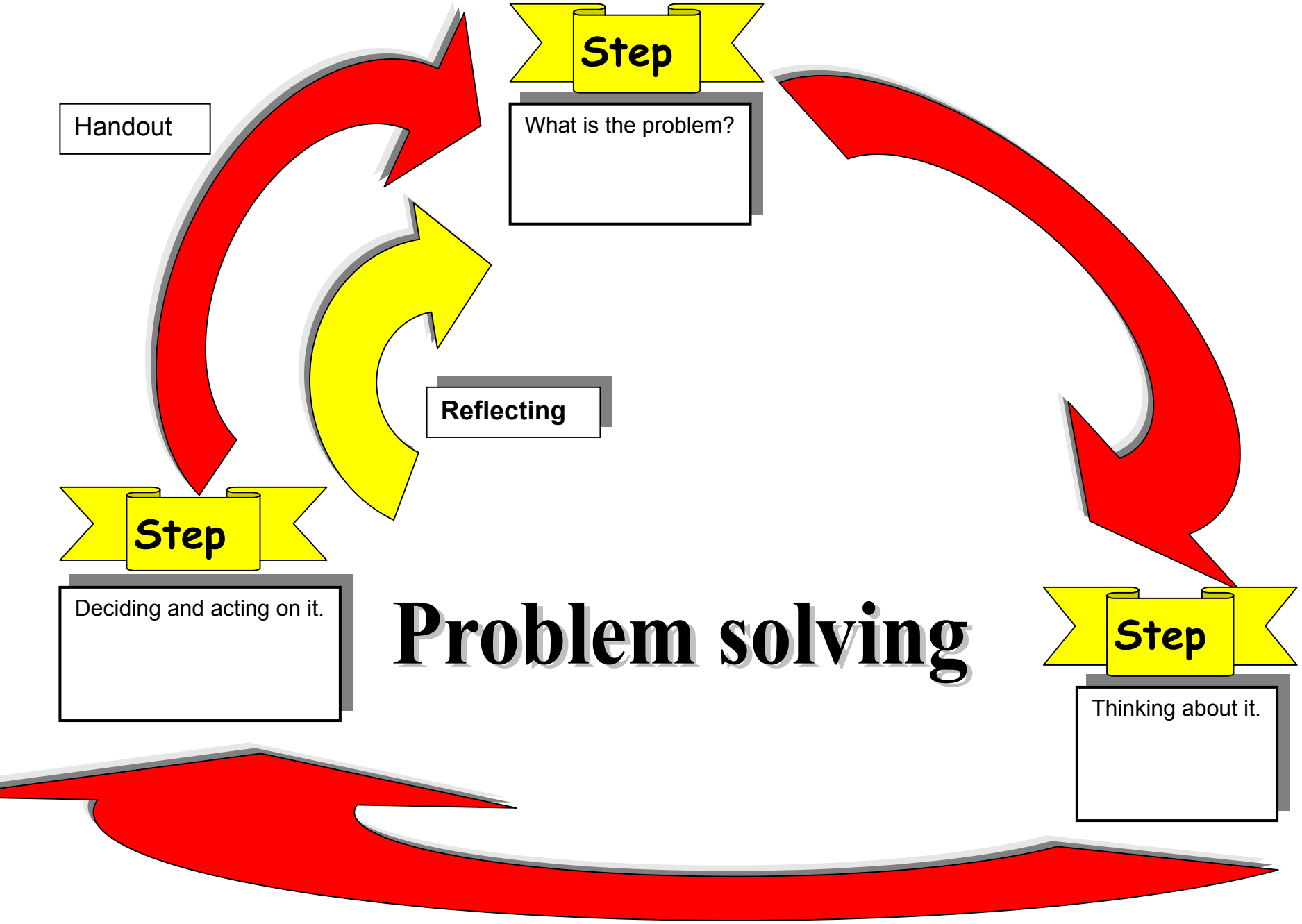
4. Alice borrowed Meena's new umbrella and tore a hole in it. Alice was so embarrassed that she just left the umbrells on Meena's chair and decided to avoid her until she could save enough money to buy a new one. Meena was hurt because Alice didn't apologise to her and because Alice stopped talking to her. Meena didn't need a new umbrella because her mother said she could mend the torn one.

5. Primrose is walking behind Constance and Thandizwe carrying her lunch tray. Constance and Thandizwe are playing around and Constance accidently bumps into Primrose, spilling the lunch all over Primrose's clothes. Primrose insists that Constance pushed her on purpose.

6. Smoking and Sipho
   Some of the popular boys in Sipho's class have started to smoke cigarettes. They have asked him if he wants to join them behind the toilets for a smoke at break time.

Questions:

8. What is the problem in the story?
9. For whom is the situation a problem?
10. What decision should be made?
11. Important information that may influence the decision?
12. What are the possible ways to solve the problem?
13. What are the possible results of each of the solutions
14. How is each person feeling?


Handout
Step
What is the problem?
Reflecting
Step
Deciding and acting on it.
Problem solving
Step
Thinking about it.

THEME 10: Conflict resolution

Phase Organiser: Personal Development and Empowerment				**Programme Organiser:** Making decisions and solving problems			
SO1 X	**SO2** X	**SO3** X	**SO4** X	**SO5** X	**SO6**	**SO7** X	**SO8**

SO = Specific outcomes

LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)

Learners should be able to –

1. establish the norm of reviewing what happened during the previous session. They should also be given an opportunity to discuss anything they still have questions about;
2. to define conflict and to know and demonstrate the ways of dealing with conflict (denial, aggression and problem solving);
3. know the steps for conflict resolution and apply them in conflict situations;
4. gain self-knowledge and be aware of their behaviours and feelings, and the effects that their behaviours have on other people.

RESOURCES

Exercise book: Learner's Workbook.
Materials for poster: Flip chart paper.
Handouts: Conflict: Definition and ways of dealing with conflict; Steps for resolving conflict; Pictures of animals; Questionnaire on anger.
Paper / Scissors / Glue / Crayons / markers / Fibre pens to create.

ICE-BREAKER AND SENSORY ACTIVITY

- **Sensory activity**
  Learners had to listen to different tone of voices (related to conflict situations).
- **Beginning: Self-awareness: My senses: smell, hear, taste, touch and see.**

ACTIVITY – EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (PROCESS)

- Have the word CONFLICT written in large letters on the blackboard as the learners enter. Ask for comments on what the word means to different people – get different reactions and meanings and use these as an introduction.
- Divide the whole group into small groups (5 to 7 learners in each), and ask them to brainstorm "How do you deal with conflict?" – make a list (see handout on the summary of what is conflict and ways of dealing with conflict which was collected from each group). Each group also had to dramatise the ways of dealing with conflict: Denial; Aggression or Problem Solving.
- The facilitator explains the need to be aware of our behaviour when confronted with problems. People need to be aware of their interactions with others as well as the effects of these interactions. Highlight the fact that animals show in a very clear way some kinds of human behaviour, and humans also show in a very clear way some kinds of animal behaviour.
- Divide the group into subgroups of 5 to 7 members. Hand each group a sheet with animal pictures (Handout). Each member in the group focuses on one animal and discusses: When did I behave like this? How did other people react, that is, what was the result of my behaviour?; How did I feel?; Did my behaviour help to solve the problem? Explain. After the exercise learners come together to discuss what they have learnt from the exercise. Discuss the fact that somehow it always seems easier to criticise the behaviour of others while failing to look at our responses and ourselves. Focus on the importance of being aware of our behaviours and the effect that our behaviour has on others.

- Ask the subgroups to think now about the steps for resolving a conflict. Each group reports back and information is integrated into one poster (see Handout: Steps for resolving conflict).
- Again in subgroups: Learners share personal conflict situations and what had happened (but only if they feel safe about sharing their experiences and feelings). Then, the learners in the group identify what the conflict was about and recommend what steps could have been followed to solve the conflict. Learners can also create their own conflict situation and then discuss how they would resolve the situation.
- At the end, ask one person from each subgroup to report to the whole group on the subgroup's findings / discussions (up to 2-3 minutes each to do this).
- Summarise the findings / discussions:
- Give learners the Questionnaire on Anger to complete (individual work and for self-knowledge and self-understanding).

DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK

Give learners an opportunity to practise the conflict resolution skills through role-playing and drama.
Allow learners in groups to make a poster on conflict resolution for their classroom (optional).

REMARKS / COMMENTS / REFLECTION

Learners have to work on their own by writing down, in any order, all the conflicts (big and small) they have to resolve. Then they have to rearrange the list, starting with the problem that is so important that it has to be solved first, then second, and so on. Apply the steps in the conflict resolution process. Once the learners have decided what to do, they should try out their resolution. Then, one or two weeks later, they should think (reflect) on “What are my strengths in conflict resolution? Where do I need to improve?”

Give the learners the time and opportunity to reflect.
Participants are given time to complete the session-by-session questionnaire.

SELF-NURTURING

Snacks.

RESOURCES USED FOR PREPARATION

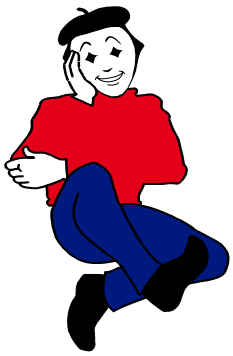
This theme is based on information obtained from the following resources:
Hopson and Scally (1986)
Morganett (1994)
Nelson-Jones (1991), (1992), (1993)

Handout 19

Conflict

A conflict is what happens when <u>one or more people</u> <u>CAN NOT AGREE</u> on something. Conflicts happen because we all <u>THINK,</u> and sometimes we have

3 different ways of dealing with

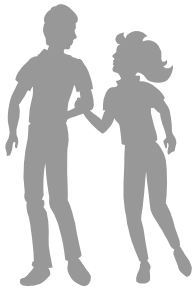


Denial

- no problem

Aggression

- attacks the other person

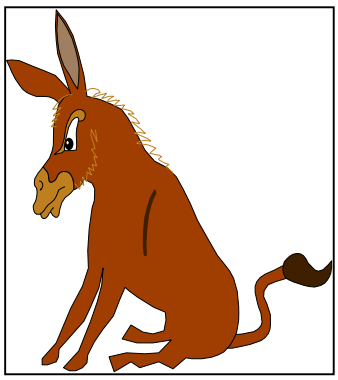


Problem solving

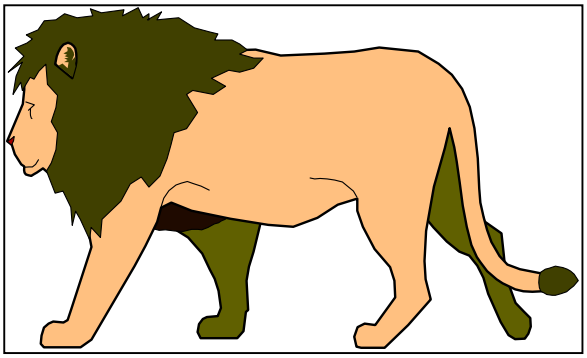
- talk without insulting or blaming

Handout 20

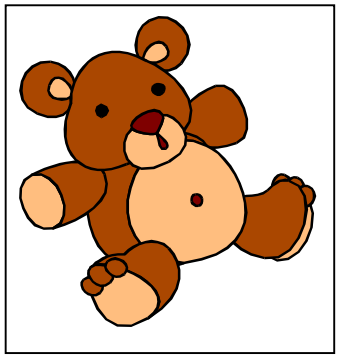
How do you deal with



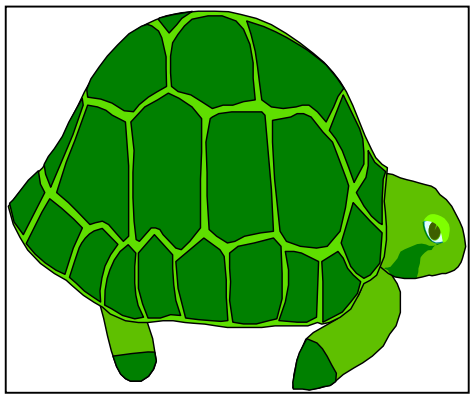
Donkey
is very stubborn, will not change his/her point of view.



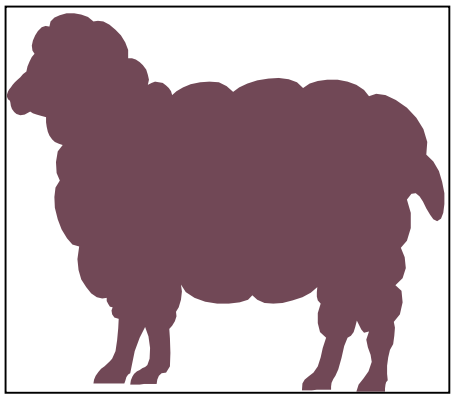
Lion is ready to fight whenever others disagree with his/her plans.



Teddy smoothes over the conflict in fear of harming the relationship

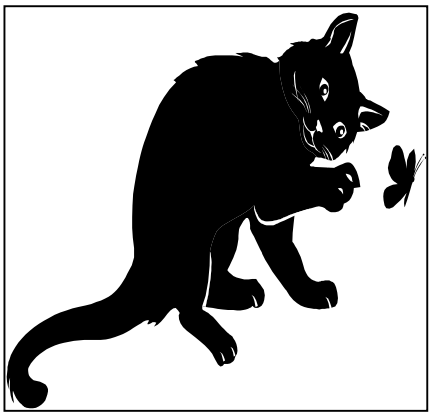


Tortoise withdraws to avoid the issue

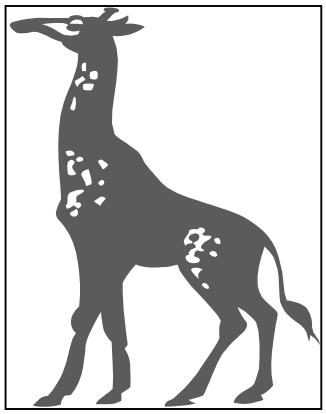


A sheep conforms. he goes along with the group rather than his own beliefs

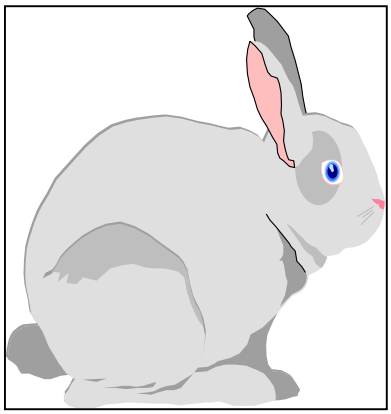
The owl thinks. his/her feelings and emotions are hidden



The cat fools around and away does not take issues seriously.



The giraffe looks down on others feelings. Too superior for conflict



The rabbit runs as soon as he/she senses tension and conflict. Switching to another topic.

Steps for resolving conflict

Step 5:
Agree on a solution
Both learners agree.

Step 4 : Each person suggests something she/he can do to solve the problem. Each one of us has a role to play in problem solving. We MUST take RESPONSIBILITY for

Step 3:
Both persons suggest possible solutions
Learners think of solutions that both of them can accept. They should be willing to explore a bit before.

Step 2:
Each person states the problem as he/she sees it.

- **How he/she feels**
- **What happened**

Step 1:
Each person agrees to the ground rules.

- **No name calling or foul language**
- **No shouting**
- **No interrupting while the other person is speaking.**

QUESTIONNAIRE: ANGER

Name:_____

Date:_____

Instructions: *Read each sentence. Put an X in the block that shows how you think and feel right now*

1. My anger gets me in trouble

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

2. Sometimes I think I am angry all the time

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

3. There are some ways to be angry that are OK

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

4. I can relax whenever I want

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

5. I never feel just a little angry, I only feel a lot angry

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

6. Sometimes I get so mad I don't know what to do.

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

7. I know how to avoid fights

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

8. I can deal with bullies

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

9. I have my temper under control

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

10. I can say things I need to say to someone without getting upset

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

THEME 11: Death: Grieving and growing

Phase Organiser: Personal development and empowerment Communication				**Programme Organiser:** Healthy relationships			
SO1 X	**SO2** X	**SO3**	**SO4** X	**SO5** X	**SO6**	**SO7** X	**SO8**

SO = Specific outcomes

LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)
Learners should be able to –

5. establish the norm of reviewing what happened during the previous session. They should be given an opportunity to discuss anything they still have questions about;
6. identify the changes experienced through life.
7. categorise their own losses in terms of the impact on their lives;
8. identify how the use of language indicates a human being's fear of death;
9. know and understand the stages of coping with grief;
10. identify strategies they can employ, which may help support a grieving friend or family member; and
11. gain self-knowledge and be aware of their behaviours and feelings and the effects that their behaviours have on other people.

RESOURCES
Exercise book: Learner's Workbook.
Handouts: Thinking-Feeling-Behaving Diagram; Coping with stages of grief; Dealing with a grieving person. Questionnaire: "Learning form losses".
Music (CDs).

ICE-BREAKER AND SENSORY ACTIVITY

- **Sensory activity**

  Learners listen to music (CD).

- **Beginning: Self-awareness: My senses: smell, hear, taste, touch and see.**

ACTIVITY – EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (PROCESS)

- Introduce the topic by saying: "Today we are going to talk about some life events that have happened to all of us and look at how these have affected us. We are also going to talk about a topic that is taboo in many families, that is, death and grieving, and then we are going to discuss how can we support grieving friends and relatives." The topic relates to the HIV/Aids Awareness Day that was held in partnership with the community (Theme 5). Pass out copies of the Thinking-Feeling-Behaving Diagram sharing the idea that we all think (represented by a brain), feel (represented by the heart), and behave (represented by the boy and girl busy with an activity). For example:
  - **Thinking**: Understanding how to do a maths problem, remembering something a loved one said or did, imagining what summer holidays will be like.
  - **Feeling**: Anger, fear, guilt, joy (refer to Feeling Faces Chart).
  - **Behaving**: Washing dishes, doing homework, and going to a funeral.

  As the learners talk during the rest of the session, point out the differences between thinking, feeling and behaving to reinforce the concepts.

- Ask the whole group (class) to think about something that has happened in their lives that they think changed them. If necessary give some examples. The

learners are to write the event down, trying to describe how they felt and what impact they think this event had on their lives. Ask the class if anyone would like to share what they have written down. After 2 or 3 responses, inform the class that sometimes change involves losses, for example, moving house means that you may lose contact with friends, or losing a pet or losing a family member (the learners could relate to losing a family member because two learners in the school lost their parents). “What are some of the expected changes in our lives that have a negative impact, that is, are expected losses?” “What can you lose as a result of these experiences?” Losses may involve a person, an object, a dream, etc. Show the class the definition of loss experiences on an overhead projector or by writing it on the board: “*A loss reaction occurs when anything that is valued or anyone we are attached to, is removed from our lives*." Therefore a loss reaction can occur in reaction to many changes in our lives. Divide the whole group into small groups (5 to 7), and ask them to shares one life event with the group and state any reactions they can remember having to an event, for example the death of a family member: Thinking, feeling and behaving. Learners can also add physical responses that could include, felt sick, headache or could not sleep.

Report back from subgroups. Say that these reactions differ between different people and the different events that have occurred to them. What is important is that we acknowledge that something significant has happened and what we are experiencing is a normal reaction to the event.

- Class (whole group). Tell the learners that when we lose a person we love, we have lots of different feelings and thoughts. Explain that on some days we may feel more one way and that on other days we may feel more another. Pass out copies of the Handout: Coping with stages of grief (males and females). (There were only the stages mentioned on the handout and the notes were added after the discussion and report back of the subgroups.) Discuss the five major stages of grief. Ask subgroups what thoughts and feelings a person might have at each stage. At the end, ask one person from each subgroup to report to the whole group on their findings / discussions (up to 2-3 minutes each to do this). (See handout on Coping with stages of grief (males and females) where the feedback was summarised and added to the stages.)

  Explain that people move forward and backward experiencing these feelings or stages – just when you think you are over feeling one way, you could start feeling that way again. Discuss special times when people might start feeling very sad after they had felt happier for a while – birthdays, holidays and the like. Encourage learners to share their own experiences. After the session, allow time for the learners to share their feelings with the facilitator if they need to do so.
- Class (whole group): Say: “Now we are going to try to develop skills in being a supportive friend or family member to those who are grieving. Two of the difficult things involved in this are that people who are grieving may reject your support. Also, though you may want to make things better for the person, you need to accept that you can’t take their pain away. People, children included, need the opportunity to 'feel' their feelings, not be talked out of them. You need to understand and accept the painful feelings they are experiencing. If a person tells you to go away, they are telling you they want privacy. Give them that privacy and say 'I understand you want to be alone, I am available if you want me'." Ask the class to recall a time when they were feeling sad. Say: "Can you remember anything people said or did that you feel did or did not help?" (Self-reflection, and if they want to write it down they may).
- Pass out the Handout: Dealing with a grieving person, and discuss each of the aspects Give Reach out Include Empathise Friends and the associated activities.

Ask the subgroups to discuss each of the aspects and how they plan to apply them. (See Handout; Dealing with a grieving person.)

- At the end, ask one person from each subgroup to report to the whole group on their findings / discussions (up to 2-3 minutes each to do this).
- Summarise the findings / discussions: CHANGE-LOSS-GRIEF-BEHAVIOUR
- Give learners the questionnaire on ''Learning from losses'' to complete (individual work and for self-knowledge and self-understanding).

DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK

Say that human beings are enormously resilient and with support can overcome great crises. Play the song ''I will survive'' by Gloria Gaynor. Ask the class to identify the grief response of the singer, that is, how she responds to her broken love affair. What was it that made the singer a survivor? Discussion in subgroups and report back from each group.

REMARKS / COMMENTS / REFLECTION

Give the learners the time and opportunity to reflect and share feelings if they want to. Participants are given time to complete the session-by-session questionnaire.

SELF-NURTURING

Snacks.

RESOURCES USED FOR PREPARATION

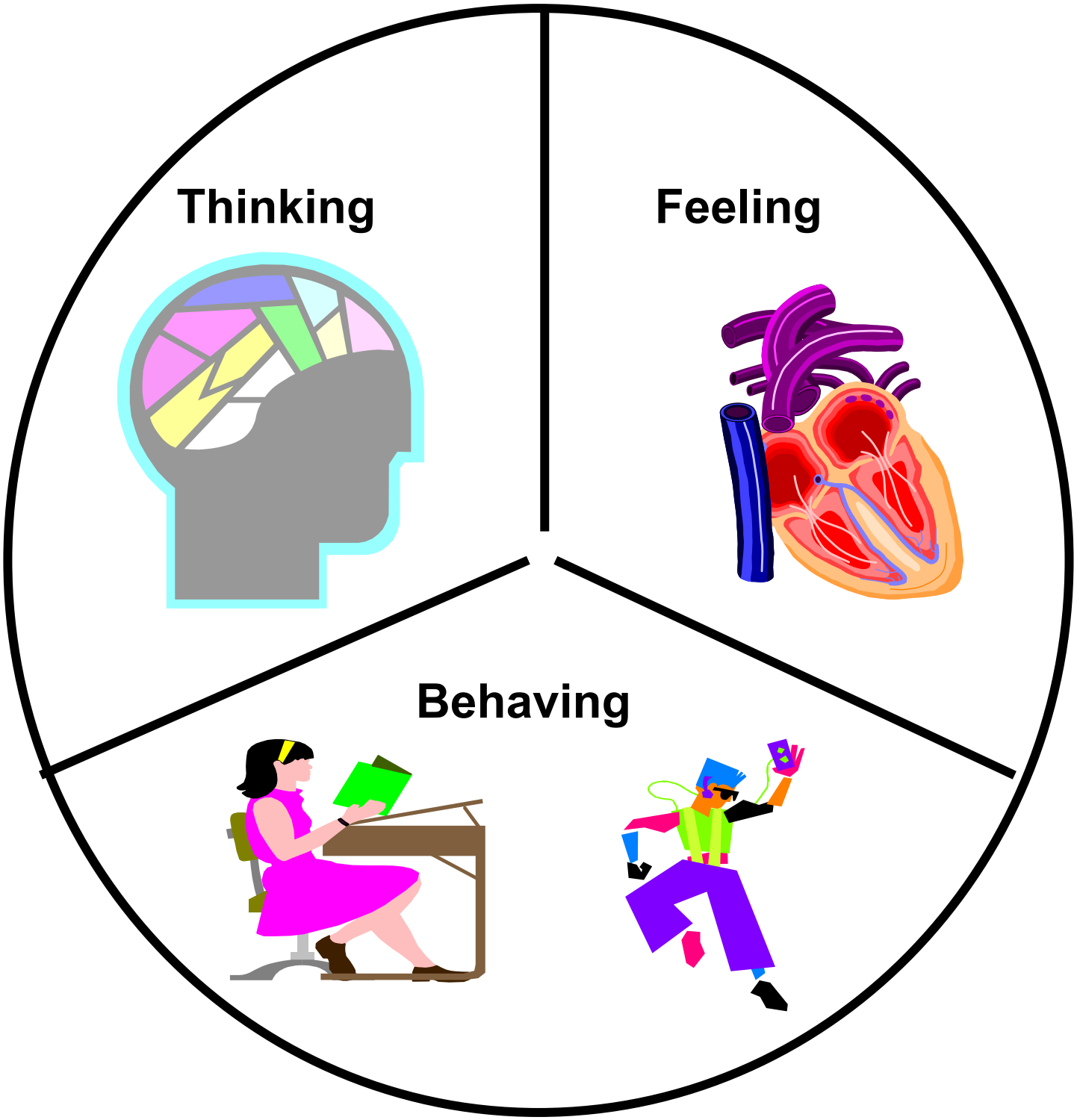
This theme is based on information obtained from the following resources:

Glassock & Rowling (1992)
Hopson & Scally (1986)
Morganett (1994)
Nelson-Jones (1991), (1992), (1993)

The stages of grief described in this session are the ones identified by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross (1969)

Handout 21

Thinking-Feeling-Behaving Diagram



Handout 22

Coping with stages of grief

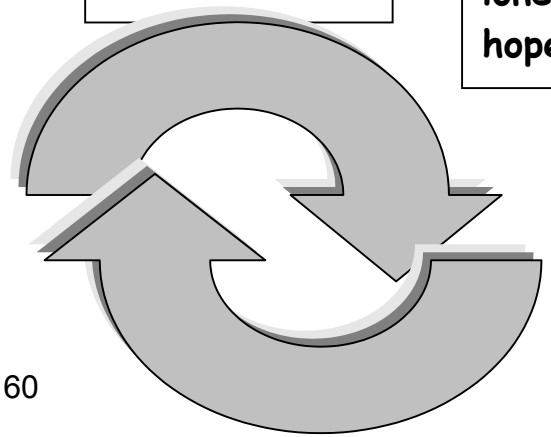
DENIAL
Pretending it did not happen, acting happy when you are really sad.

ANGER
Being moody, nasty, irritable,

BARGAINING
Thinking that if I'm better, smarter, or nicer, my loved one will return.

DEPRESSION
Feeling sad, lonely, tired or hopeless.

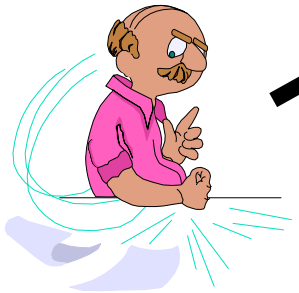
ACCEPTANCE
Thinking I can go on, life is OK, I can deal with this. I can remember my loved one and smile. I don't like it but I can accept it.



Handout 23

Coping with stages of grief

DENIAL
Pretending it did not happen, acting happy when you are really sad.



ANGER
Being moody, nasty, irritable, Hostile or bitter.

BARGAINING
Thinking that if I'm better, smarter, or nicer, my loved one will return.

DEPRESSION
Feeling sad, lonely, tired or hopeless.

ACCEPTANCE
Thinking I can go on, life is OK, I can deal with this. I can remember my loved one and smile. I

Handout 24

Dealing with a grieving person

G IVE

One need to be prepared to give some time, attention and compassion to anyone experiencing sorrow. A few minutes spent with the person each day can be a great help. One also need to pay attention to what they say and be sensitive to their needs. COMPASSION is important.

R EACH

Contact with people is vital for coping with grief. A person needs the reassurance that there are people who care. The company of others can be a source of comfort.

I NCLUDE

Person needs to be involved in activities like drawing or writing about their feelings. Creative work provides a release. They may need help in planning their day initially and encourage them to return to their normal routine.

E mpathise

Be there for someone in grief. Sufferers need to know that there is someone who will LISTEN without giving advises. It may take a while for trust to be built up.

F riends

A support system is very helpful. Friends should keep in contact as companionship is good comfort.

Questionnaire: Learning from losses

Name: _____ Date:_____

Instructions:

Read each sentence.

Put a circle ○ around the number that shows how you think and feel right now.

1= Strongly agree 2= Agree somewhat 3 = Agree 4 = Disagree somewhat 5 = Strongly disagree

10. It is scary to think about dying	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
11. I can remember and talk about the good things about the person (my loved one) who died	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
12. I can tell my mom or dad when I feel sad	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
13. I can tell my brother or sister when I feel sad	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
14. I can tell my friend when I feel sad	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
15. I know what funerals are for and what happens in them	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
16. I can share my feelings with my friends	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
17. I have said good-bye to my loved one who has died	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
18. I know that dying happens to everyone	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
10. I can ask for help when I feel very bad about **death and dying**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
11. It is OK to feel sad or cry when someone dies	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
12. I know the grief will not be so bad as time passes	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

THEME 12: Where can I go for help /counselling?

Phase organiser: Personal development and empower Environment Culture and society				**Programme Organiser**: Building the rainbow nation			
SO1 X	SO2 X	SO3	SOX X	SO5 X	SO6	SO7 X	SO8 X

SO = Specific outcomes

LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)
Learners should be able to –

1. establish the norm of reviewing what happened during the previous session and give learners an opportunity to discuss anything they still have questions about;
2. recognise the important role of interpersonal communication in their lives;
3. identify education support services at their school and community;
4. explore the characteristics of their supportive relationships;
5. identify their support networks; and
6. keep a diary in order to understand the self and help with coping skills.

RESOURCES
Exercise book: Learner's Workbook.
Materials for poster: Flip chart paper (optional).
Paper / Scissors / Glue / Crayons / Markers / Fibre pens.
Music (CDs).

ICE-BREAKER AND SENSORY ACTIVITY

- **Sensory activity**
  My senses: Smell, hear, taste, touch and see (all the senses are integrated).

ACTIVITY – EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (PROCESS)

- Introduction: Each group summarises a theme of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme and reflects on what they have learned.
- Facilitator: Summarises the coping process as follows:
  Step 1: What is happening? We all take in information about a situation differently. A lot depends on one's background. This step happens very quickly – the place you are in, you look at what people around you are doing, how they are communicating their expectations of us and our needs.
  Step 2: Thinking about it. This step enables you to do the best you can by considering a number of options. The first part of this is identifying your feelings – say to yourself: "I feel…" If you can own up to your feelings you are better able to take control. Then you need to think about the choices you have and consider what the consequences of each would be.
  Step 3: Now you make a decision to take action on one of your choices. Remember, not taking action is also making a choice! Take responsibility for your actions, and do not blame others if things go wrong. Reflect on the results of the action you have taken and if necessary remedy the situation – this might mean saying sorry. If you make a mistake, learn from it.
  - Presentation by social worker from the Educational Support Services (in the specific school district) to explain their services. Allow time for questions and answers.
  - Adding and relating to the presentation: Supportive relationships:

Explain that one of the most significant factors that researchers have discovered will help a grieving person is the existence and use of support systems. What is a support system? Some young people believe that to be grown up and independent you must cope with problems on your own, that if you turn to others for help, you will be seen as not being independent. You may suppress many feelings

because of this belief. You may also believe that after a short time, you should no longer share feelings with support persons because you would be putting too much strain on friendships.

What is your support network like?

Ask the students to take a sheet of paper and draw a circle in the centre of it. Write *"SELF"* in the middle. Then ask the class to imagine they have a relationship problem; it may be a conflict with their parents, a brother or sister, a boyfriend / girlfriend. They should think about the people they could talk to about this. Those they are most likely to talk to must be put close to their circle of self. Those they are less likely to talk to should be put further away. If they feel the person would let them talk freely, a strong line can connect the two; if they do not feel completely comfortable about talking to that person, a dotted line can be used.

We experience a number of problems in giving and receiving support. Ask the class to think of a time when problems occurred with offering or receiving support. Draw up a list on the board or use a transparency for the overhead projector:

Problems in giving support	Problems in receiving support
e.g. may not have the skill, support is rejected	May believe you have to cope yourself Do not trust others

o At the end, ask one person from each subgroup to report on their findings / discussions to the whole group (up to 2-3 minutes each to do this).

o Another coping strategy: Keep a diary. Keep it for a day (or longer) and write down the physical and emotional changes that are happening in your life which make you feel stressed / angry / unhappy. Next to each change, make a note of how this stress makes you feel. You can use the same process for a problem or need you are experiencing: **Step 1**: Write down what is happening; then **Step 2** write down your thoughts, feelings and behaviour; and then **Step 3** write down your actions (acting on it) and reflect on the process.

o Summarise the findings / discussions: Give learners the questionnaire on ‘’My feelings’’ to complete (individual work and for self-knowledge and self-understanding).

DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK

Summarise each of the sessions.

Allow learners in groups to make a poster on *Where should I go for help*? for the class (optional).

REMARKS / COMMENTS / REFLECTION

Give the learners the time and opportunity to reflect.

Participants are given the time to complete the session-by-session questionnaire.

SELF-NURTURING

Snacks.

RESOURCES USED FOR PREPARATION

This theme is based on information obtained from the following sources:

Brownell, Craig, de Haas, Harris & Ntshangase (1996)

Glassock & Rowling (1992)

Morganett (1994)

Questionnaire: My feelings

Name:_____ Date:_____

Instructions: *Judge which of the following personal characteristics describes you. Mark your choice with an* **X** *in the appropriate box.*

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

1. I feel I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others.

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

3. All in all, I am inclined to feel I am a failure.

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

6. I take a positive attitude towards myself.

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

9. I certainly feel useless at times.

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

10. At times I think I am not good at all.

☺	😐	😐	☹
strongly agree	agree		disagree

Final session and evaluation of the

Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme

LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)
Learners should be able to -

5. Assess their personal and interpersonal life skills.
6. Evaluate the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme.

ACTIVITIES

- Summary of all the themes and sessions: subgroups.
- Learners evaluate the programme: themes, methods used and the usefulness of each theme.
- Presentation of Certificates.

SELF-NURTURING
"'Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Party".

PHOTO OF SESSION

Photo 1: Final session: Grade 7 learners in the classroom

(Published with permission)

APPENDIX F
PARTICIPANT PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____ Date: _____

Instructions

Read each sentence. Put a tick (√) at the number that shows how you rate your life skill (that shows how you think and feel right now):

Use the following scale:

3 = Much need for improvement
2 = Moderate need for improvement
1 = Slight need for improvement
0 = No need for improvement

Put a question mark (?) rather than a rating by any skill which meaning is not clear to you

Personal				
1. I know myself	0	1	2	3
2. I know my feelings	0	1	2	3
3. I know my thinking	0	1	2	3
4. I know my actions (behaviour)	0	1	2	3
5. I know my likes and dislikes	0	1	2	3
6. I know my personality characteristics	0	1	2	3
7. I am aware of my wants and wishes	0	1	2	3
8. I can share personal information	0	1	2	3
9. I can acknowledge the importance of my feelings	0	1	2	3
10. I know my personal capabilities	0	1	2	3
11. I need to build positive attitudes towards myself	0	1	2	3
12. I can influence what happens to me	0	1	2	3
13. I can contribute in meaningful ways to my family, school, community	0	1	2	3
14. I feel genuinely needed	0	1	2	3
15. I know my needs, rights and responsibilities	0	1	2	3
16. I take responsibility for myself	0	1	2	3
17. I need to improve my self-concept	0	1	2	3
18. I have the ability to express my feelings appropriately	0	1	2	3
Interpersonal				
19. I know and understand my family	0	1	2	3
20. I know the history and heritage of my school	0	1	2	3
21. I know and understand my friends	0	1	2	3
22. I know how I can start to build relationships with people	0	1	2	3
23. I know how to develop relationships with people	0	1	2	3
24. I know how to date and develop relationships with the opposite sex	0	1	2	3
25. I know my community	0	1	2	3
26. I know how can I contribute to develop my school and community	0	1	2	3
27. I know and understand our rainbow nation	0	1	2	3
28. I know how to appreciate differences in people	0	1	2	3
29. I know how to communicate effectively	0	1	2	3
30. I am able to be a good listener	0	1	2	3
31. I am able to be a good speaker	0	1	2	3
32. I am able to solve problems	0	1	2	3
33. I am able to share, communicate, listen and trust people	0	1	2	3
34. I can handle and deal with conflict	0	1	2	3
35. I can handle and deal with anger	0	1	2	3
36. I know and understand death and grieving	0	1	2	3
37. I know where I can go for help/ guidance/ counselling	0	1	2	3

APPENDIX G

PARTICIPANT SESSION-BY-SESSION EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following questions honestly and to the best of your ability.

1. What did you learn about in this session today?

_____
_____

2. Were you easily able to understand what today's session was about?

_____
_____
_____

3. What did you most enjoy (like) of today's session?

_____
_____
Because_____
_____

4. What did you not enjoy (dislike) of today's session?

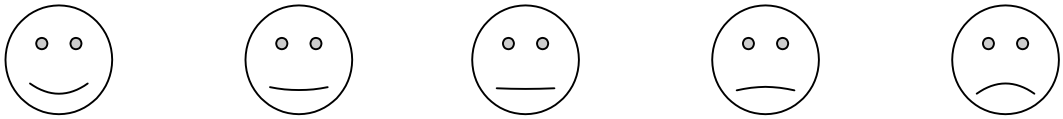
_____
_____
Because _____
_____

5. Did you learn any important lessons from today's session?
Please tick

YES	NO

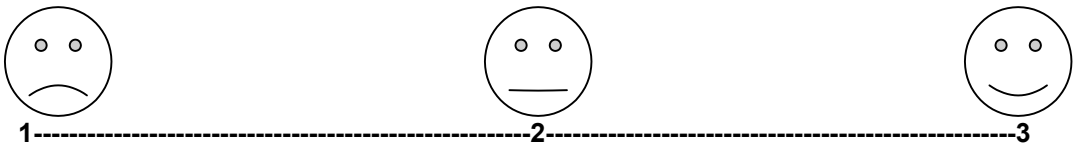
Please explain your answer _____
_____

6. Please circle ONE of the following to indicate how you think this session was:



Very good **Good** **O.K.** **Not so good** **Poor**
5 **4** **3** **2** **1**

7. Please circle on the following scale the number which best describes how useful you thought today's session was in terms of helping you to know and understand (add theme of session) .



1----------2----------3
not useful **useful** **very useful**

APPENDIX H

PARTICIPANT RETROSPECTIVE EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain a general idea of your experiences of the Personal and Interpersonal Life Skills Programme.

Please answer the following questions honestly and to the best of your ability.

1. Did you know what life skills are before you started with the programme?

YES	NO	UNSURE

2. Indicate whether you think and feel the following themes were useful to you? Please give an answer for each theme by placing a tick (√) in the box provided

THEMES	YES	NO
1. Me (Self-knowledge)		
2. My family and me		
3. My school, friends and me		
4. Dating and interpersonal relationships		
5. My community and me		
6. Needs, rights and responsibilities		
7. Rainbow nation, first impressions and stereotyping		
8. Effective communication		
9. Problem solving		
10. Conflict and conflict resolution		
11. Death: Grieving and growing		
12. Where can I go for help?		

3. According to IMPORTANCE to you, select 6 (SIX) themes and number it from 1 to 6, for example indicate number 1 for the most important theme to you.

THEMES	Number of importance
1. Me (Self-knowledge)	
2. My family and me	
3. My school, friends and me	
4. Dating and interpersonal relationships	
5. My community and me	
6. Needs, rights and responsibilities	
7. Rainbow nation, first impressions and stereotyping	
8. Effective communication	
9. Problem solving	
10. Conflict and conflict resolution	
11. Death: Grieving and growing	
12. Where can I go for help?	

4. Indicate whether you think and feel the following methods used were <u>useful to you?</u>
Please give an answer for each method by placing a tick (√) in the box provided

METHODS USED	YES	NO
1. General discussions		
2. Group discussions		
3. Role plays		
4. Drama		
5. Exercises		
6. Case study		
7. Music and movement		
8. Drawings		
9. Clay		
10. Seeds		
11. Pictures from magazines and news papers		
12. Pictures and notes for own books (pasting)		
13. Making posters for the class room		
14. Sensory activities (taste, smell, see, hear, touch)		

5. Do you think and feel that the programme helped you in the following ways?
Please give an answer for each statement listed by placing a tick (√) in the box provided

LESSONS LEARNT	YES	NO	NOT SURE
ME (Personal)			
1. To know and understand myself (feelings, thinking, behaviour)			
2. To know my personal capabilities			
3. To personally grow during the programme			
4. To gain feelings of self worth			
5. To better / improve my self-concept			
6. To build positive attitudes towards myself			
7. To contribute in meaningful ways and I know I am genuinely needed			
8. To influence what happens to me			
9. To take responsibility for myself			
OTHER PEOPLE (INTERPERSONAL)			
10. To know and understand my family			
11. To know and understand my school			
12. To know and understand my friends			
13. To know and understand dating and relations with the opposite sex			
14. To know and understand my community			
15. To know and understand our rainbow nation, first impressions and stereotyping			
16. To appreciate differences in people			
17. To develop friendships through communication			
18. To be able to be a good listener			
19. To be able to give an "I message"			

20. To understand the importance of communication in problem solving			
21. To be able to share, communicate, listen and trust other people (co-operation)			
22. To handle problem solving more confidently			
23. To understand the importance of communication in resolving conflicts			
24. To be able to use the steps in conflict resolution and handle it with confidence			
25. To be able to understand the meaning of death and grieving			
26. To know and understand the stages of grief			
27. To be able to deal with a grieving person			
28. To know where I could go for help when in need			

6. Do you think that other pupils (learners) will benefit from programmes of this nature?

YES	NO	UNSURE

7. Do you think that you have learnt what personal and interpersonal life skills are in the programme?

YES	NO	UNSURE

8. What are the most important life skills that you have learnt?

8.1_____
8.2_____
8.3_____

9. From your experience of the programme, would you like to make any comments or suggestions?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Thank you

Name: _____ Date:_____

SIGNATURE:_____