UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL ™

INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

The value of using storybooks during conversations with young people

Maud Mthembu



INSPIRING GREATNESS

Indigenous Child-Centred tools

Social Workers' Reflections on Utilising Indigenous Games in Child Counselling

Maud Mthembu
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1606-2041
University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
Mthembum4@ukzn.ac.za

Nozuko Mkhize
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6413-9413
University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
mkhizenozuko@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper reports on the adaptation of local indigenous children's games in South Africa that can be integrated during child counselling. There is a plethora of literature that advocates for the reconceptualisation of social work in non-western societies to align it with the values of clients being served. However, there is a dearth of literature on available indigenous social work games that can be applied particular in child counselling. Using a qualitative design, six social work practitioners, purposively sampled, were individually interviewed to explore their integration of indigenous games during child counselling. The findings indicate that through reflexivity, social workers learn and observe context-relevant knowledge from the communities they serve and that accumulated knowledge informs innovative practice interventions in social work. In this paper, children's social background, culture, play behaviours and community assets informed social workers' choice of the games they could incorporate in child counselling. The integration of local games, such as *Uchiki*, *Umangqalutye*, Eight Stones and riverbank clay, in child counselling sessions

Social Work/Maatskaplike Werk Vol 57 No 4; Issue 4
http://socialwork.journals.ac.za/pub doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.15270/52-2-968

903 THE USE AND VALUE OF A CHILD ASSESSMENT TOOL (CAT) IN SOCIAL WORK CHILD ASSESSMENTS

Thenjiwe Mlotshwa, Maud Mthembu
Thenjiwe Mlotshwa, Postgraduate student, Department of Social Work, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa.
Dr Maud Mthembu, Department of Social Work, University of KwaZulu-Natal. Durban, South Africa.
Andiswa Mlotshwa: mlotshwaandiswa@gmail.com
Maud Mthembu: mthembum4@ukzn.ac.za

The integration of child-friendly tools during child counselling facilitates effective communication and child participation. However, the use of child-friendly tools in generalist child counselling remains sparse. This paper presents social work students' perceptions of using a child assessment tool (CAT). While the study adopted a mixed-method approach, this paper reports the findings drawn from the study's qualitative findings. Data collection included individual semi-structured interviews with purposively sampled fourth-level student social workers. The results indicated that using the CAT created a child-friendly environment that facilitated effective child communication and participation during assessments. Using the CAT addresses barriers to child participation during child assessment.

Key words: child assessment tool (CAT), child-centred, child friendly, communication, participation, social workers





Pedagogy

- Language
- Context-relevance (characters, storyline)
- Child-centred

Child-friendly, promote independence, child-initiated, humour, illustrations



Context-relevant tools

Social Work & Social Sciences Review 24(2) pp.86-103. https://doi.org/10.1921/swssr.v24i2.2024

The value of using a storybook to protect the psychological health of children during COVID-19 in resource-limited communities in South Africa

Maude N. Mthembu[1], Tanusha Raniga[2] and Michael Boecker[3]

Abstract: Globally, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused poor mental health, parental loss and food insecurity in children. At the pandemic's peak, context-relevant and child-friendly COVID-19 tools for child counselling and education were limited in low-income communities. Researchers and social work practitioners created the *Uhambo Lwami* storybook in isiZulu to initiate conversations with children about COVID-19. Using the Afrocentric framework, the authors present evidence from interviews with13 purposively selected community-based social workers and child and youth workers who integrated the storybook

here to search 21°C Partly sunny



Language, culture, belief system & age appropriateness

Teenage pregnancy

Reproductive health communication

- Effective communication on sexual health issues between adolescents and their parents has been recognised to influence safer sexual behaviour among adolescents (Usown, 2021).
- Adolescents also identified health care centres and healthcare workers as sources of accurate sexual health information.
- Accessing sexual health care is often shaped **by the nature and quality of communication with healthcare providers**. Government-funded health care facilities are generally perceived as judgemental, indiscreet, and difficult to navigate (Jonas et al. Citation2020; Nkosi et al. Citation2019; Zuma et al. Citation2020).
- Reproductive health education integrated as part of life skills programs (schools & child & youth institutions)
- Tools used lack context- specificity & alignment with lived experiences

“At home they don’t care. We don’t talk about such things. They won’t be asking if you are seeing someone or ask if you are using any contraceptives. It’s kind of a taboo to talk about such.”

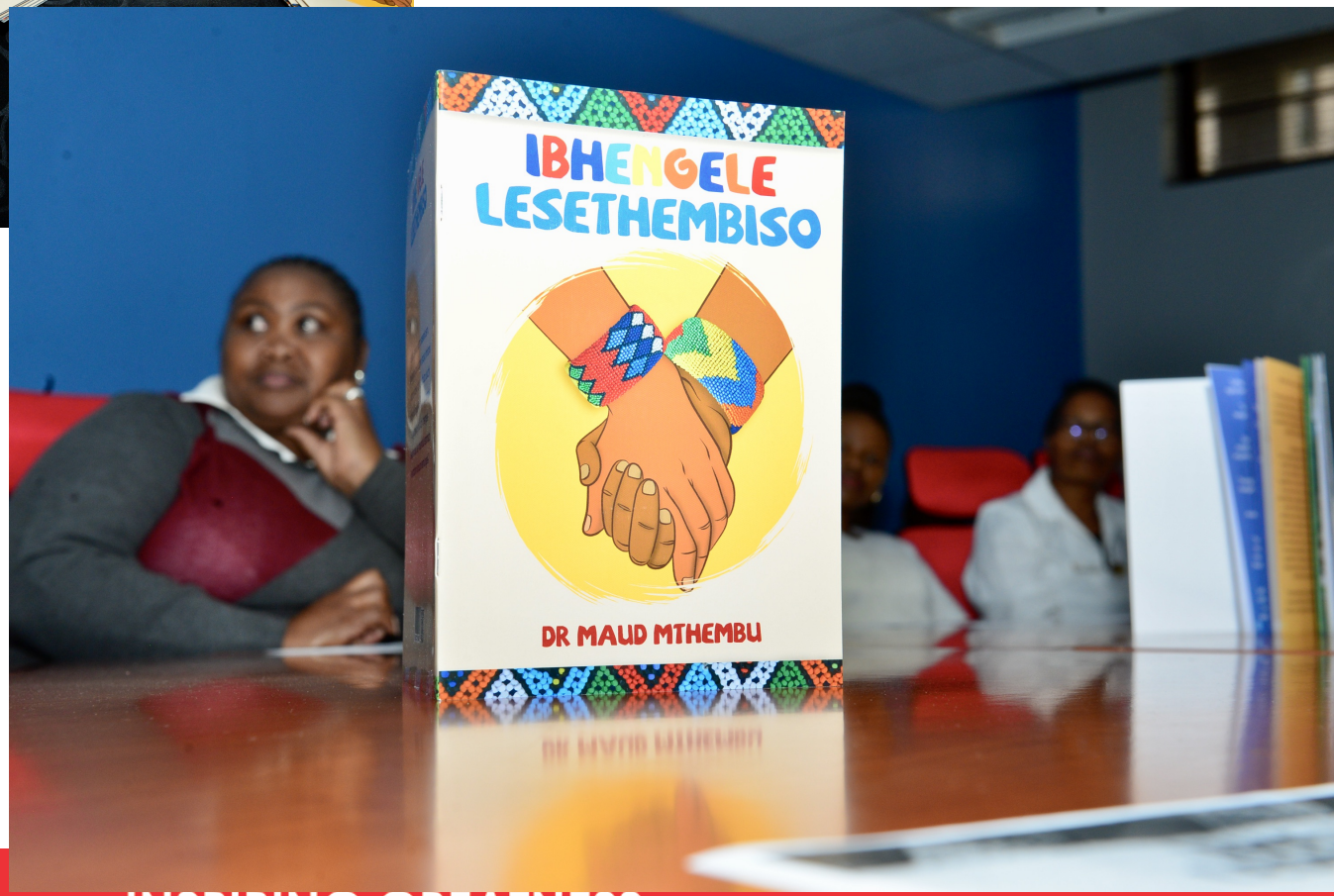
“You know us as Zulus, we don’t talk about such things. Talking about sex is disrespectful unless you are married. So, I can’t even ask my mother about contraceptives.”

“My aunt usually talks to us, myself and her daughter, who is my age, that once we start having sex, we should use condoms. She says that if we start giving her headaches, she will take us to the clinic for the injection.”



Stories & Izinganekwane (folklore as a long-standing African oral tradition for educating children.

Izinganekwane



Why storybooks

-Narratives can provide a shared, less confrontational starting point (less personal)

-Culturally familiar language, storyline, and illustrations can make sensitive topics easier to understand & discuss.

-Easier to memorise



KWETHULWE INCWADI EVULA AMEHLO NGOMJOLO PHAKATHI KWABANTWANA

UGOTSHWA USEMANZI: noZONKE SHAZI-HLONGWANE

ININGI labantu uma libona umntwana wentombazane onemiyaka ewu-10, into yokugcina eliyicabangayo wukuthi kungenzeka ukuba kuhleli umntwana esisiswini sakhe.

Okunye okubuhlungu wukuthi ngesikhathi umntwana omncane kangaka ekhulelwa, ephoxeka, etatazela, engazi kufanele athatheni ahlanganise nani, nomzali naye uma esezwa uba sesimweni esifanayo.

Lokhu kuyishwa elikhulu ngoba njengoba sibadala nje, izinto sizibona futhi sizizwa, kufanele engabe sesiyakwamukela ukuthi le nto iyenzeka, sithanda singathandi. Bese sithatha izinqumo zokuvikela abantwana bethu.

Ezinsukwini ezimbalwa ezedlule ngibe yisimenywa ekwethulweni kwencwadi ebaluleke kakhulu ebizwa ngokuthi Ibhangele Lesithembiso, ebhalwe wuDkt Maud Mthembu.

Le ncwadi ikhuluma ngomntwana oneminyaka ewu-15, oshelwa wumfana oyisilomo sesikole. Kuvela umngani ofaka ingcindezi kulona oshelwayo, oze amgabisele ngokuthi uma enza kancane bazomthatha umfana ngoba uyisilomo futhi kubo bakhomba ngophakathi.

Le ncwadi iveza ingcindezi abantwana abangena kuyo, kodwa bengazi ukuthi bazokhuluma nobani ngendlela abazizwa ngayo.

Lokhu kungivezele ukuthi singabazali nabantu abasebenza nabantwana, kuhle siziqale izingxoxo zothando, ukushelwa, nokuthanda, bachazeleke abantwana ngoba kuyimvelo. Uma senza njalo bazovuleleka beze bazokhuluma nathi, bangaze benze izinqumo ezizobeka impilo nekusasa labo engcupheni.

Le ncwadi ibaluleke kakhulu ngoba impela ukukhulelwa kwabantwana sekufike ezingeni elithusayo. Kunjalo kunomthelela omubi kwikusasa labo.

Izwe lwethu, ikakhulukazi isifundazwe saKwaZulu-Natal, lihlaselwe kakhulu yilesi sihlava.

UNkz Nokuthula Heath oyi-Maternal and Child Health Programme Manager ngaphansi kwenhlangano iZoe-Life elapha eThekwini, ebhekelele ukunakekelwa kwabantwana nemindeni ngokwezempilo, uthe isifundazwe sethu sihamba phambili ekukhulelweni kwabantwana, kanti kanjalo nezwe uma liqhathaniswa namanye amazwe.

Uveze ukuthi ngokocwaningo lakwaSouth African National Department of Health, ngo-2017, babewu-71,000 abantwana abakhulelwa, kubona bawu-2070 abaneminyaka ephakathi kuka-15 no 19. Isibalo sabantwana abakhulelwe eThekwini ezinyangeni ezintathu ezedlule siwu-2114, kanti abawu-44 kulabo, bangabazali abaneminyaka ewu-10 kuya kwewu-14.

UDkt uMaud Mthembu, oyi-*senior lecturer* e-UKZN aphinde abe ngusonhlalakahle, kwiSchool of Applied Human Sciences-Social Work Discipline, uthe inhloso yakhe yokubhala le ncwadi wukuthi abantwana bakwazi ukukhululeka ngezingxoxo ezifana nokuba sothandweni, okuyinto eyenzekayo.

Uthe kuliqiniso ukuthi abantwana bayaba nawo umuzwa wothando kodwa bese beshoda ngokuvuleleka ukuze baluleke kahle ngawo.

Uthe le cwadi uyibhalele ukuthi bonke abantwana bazizwe benendawo emphakathini.

Uthe igqugquzela abantwana abasagcine ubuntombi babo ukuthi baqhubeke, bese inikeza labo asebeqalile ukuzibandakanya ocansini ithuba lokubuyekeza isinqumo sabo, bazigcine. Kanti nabanabantwana uthe bangafunda ukuziphatha, bathathe isinqumo sokuzithuthukisa bangaphenduki abazali abasebancane kuphela, baphelele lapho.

Umbhali wale ncwadi uvule ithuba lokubambisana nezinhlangano ezisebenza nabantwana ukuba le ncwadi isetshenziswe njengohlelo lokuqwashisa abantwana nokubanika amathuluzi okubhekana nezingqinamba zempilo ngokweminyaka yabo.

UNkz Heath uthe ukukhulelwa kwabantwana kubenza bangasiqedi isikole, ikakhulukazi abamantombazane, bese bephelelwa nangamathuba okusebenza bazimele.

Uphinde wathi ukukhulelwa kwabantwana kubeka impilo yabo engcupheni njengoba besuke bengakakhuli ngokwanele ukukwazi ukuthwala umntwana nokumnakekela, okungaholela ekudluleni emhlabeni noma ukuphazamiseka ngokujulile empilweni.

Isandulela-nguclazi nengculazi nakho kubalwe njengezinye zezinselelo okusekude ukuba zinqotshwe uma abantwana beziba-ndakanya ocansini olungaphephile ngalolu hlobo.

Uhulumeni wethu unezinhlelo eziningi eziqwashisa abantwana, kodwa lokhu kudinga ukubambisana kwezinhlaka ezahlukene, ikakhulukazi abazali nemindeni.

Ukubambisana ekulweni nesihlava sokukhulelwa kwabantwana kugqugquzelwe nawuProfessor Matshepo Catherine Matoane oyiDean e-School of Applied Humanities e-UKZN, obengesinye sezikhulumi. Uncome incwadi ibhangele lesithembiso njengesu elihle lokujwayeza abantwana ukukhuluma nokukhululeka ngezingqinamba zabo.

"Buyancomeka ubuchule, nolwazi obuvezwa kule ncwadi, Ibhangele Lesethembiso. Le ncwadi iveza izindlela eziseqophelweni eliphezulu zokugwema izinkinga abantwana abangena kuzo, kusenesikhathi zokuthi bafundisekе," esho.

Uthe le ncwadi ayibaqwashisi nje kuphela kodwa ibanika amasu okubhekana nobunzima nokuthi bakwazi ukuthi bazoziphendulela bathini kontanga uma sebebhekene ngqo nengcindezi. Uncome ukuthi ibhalwe ngolwimi lwesiZulu, okuzokwenza abantwana abahlale besala ekuthoLeni ulwazi, bahlomule.

• UZonke Shazi-Hlongwane une-Bachelors Degree kwi Child and Youth Care. Ungumsunguli weIkusasa Ngelami eleluleka izingane ngokuziphatha, lifundise nabazali ngokukhuliswa kwabantwana. Utholakala kuFacebook othi Ikusasa Ngelami. Amahhovisi abo ase-9th floor, 320 Building eThekwini. Inkampani yakhe inoSonhlakahle obhekele ukweluleka ngokomqondo abantwana abahlukumezekile nabanenkinga yezidakamizwa.

Ibhengele Lesethembiso

- -IsiZulu illustrated storybook about *Ukushelwa,* decision making, abstinence, and teenage pregnancy.
- uses of culturally relevant language, relatable narratives, and age-appropriate illustrations.
- It can be used to facilitate discussion of relationships, pregnancy, and decision-making.









INSPIRING GREATNESS



- The starting point is determined by a young person
- Suitable for group & individual contexts
- Context-relevant
- Illustrations & humour

Use in a clinical setting: Probing questions

- What do you think is happening in this story?
- What choices does the character …have in this story?
- What questions might this young person (character) want to ask a health care worker?
- What are your thoughts about the pressures that …character is facing?

Use the story to invite discussion, not to test, lecture, or judge the adolescents.

Possible uses

- Link discussion to counselling and appropriate services.
- Support health education and contraceptive counselling.
- Explore family, social, emotional, and relationship-related concerns.
- Reinforce accurate information and appropriate referral pathways.

Limitations

- The book does not address structural & deep-seated socio-economic factors that fuel teenage pregnancy
- Fast-paced working contexts- difficult to use
- Literacy levels
- Acceptability does not establish effectiveness

End



