



SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS

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INTERNATIONAL CHILD AND YOUTH CARE WEEK 2021

International Child and Youth Care Workers' Week 2021 (#cycweek21) is celebrated across the globe on the first full week of May (3 to 9 May in 2021) and this year's theme is "*Child and Youth Care Workers: Champions of hope in challenging times*". The focus of child and youth care workers is children, youth and families in our communities who require professional services. During *International Child and Youth Care Workers' Week 2021* the SACSSP joins many organisations, employers, service users and, most significantly, child and youth care workers in the country and across the globe in recognising and celebrating the role of this profession in social service delivery. In South Africa, child and youth care workers practice in residential care settings, in communities and in schools where they provide professional support to children and families, including child-headed households, children living and working on the streets and at-risk and vulnerable children.

"Child and youth care workers build relationships with children through interaction in typical daily routines. During this challenging time of the COVID-19 pandemic child and youth care workers have been demonstrating innovative practice in providing services to children and families through a mix of face to face and online contact", says Ms Zeni Thumbadoo, Chairperson of the Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work.

The past year has seen the world and our country experiencing a challenging time due to the impact of COVID-19, and adjustment to the minimum health, safety and social distancing measures to address, prevent and combat the spread of COVID-19. Children and families, particularly those who are vulnerable, have been stressed, and the role of child and youth care workers as Champions of Hope in the variety of settings where they practise has been evident. Every day, child and youth care workers are present where the children, youth and families are – to support, engage, intervene, refer, and most of all provide developmental and therapeutic care – a hallmark of this noble profession in the daily work with children.

"As the sector strives to develop and promote the profession globally, we call on all child and youth care workers to take a moment to reflect on the amazing work that they do and the difference they make to so many children. 'That child' is where she or he is today because of your commitment, care, passion, and hard work" says Donald Nghonyama, Vice President of Council and a registered child and youth care worker.

The South African Council for Social Service Professions through the Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work regulates the practice of the child and youth care work profession in terms of the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978. This includes being responsible for registration, setting standards of professional conduct, maintaining minimum standards of education and training, and monitoring the continuous professional development of practitioners. Child and youth care workers at a professional and

auxiliary level are required by law to be registered with the SACSSP. Child and youth care workers are also registered as a professional designation with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) under the ambit of the SACSSP. *International Child and Youth Care Week* (#cycweek21) also provides the opportunity to recognise and celebrate the work of the 147 child and youth care workers at professional level and 7,896 child and youth care workers at auxiliary level as well as the 3,367 student child and youth care workers (who are busy with their studies) registered with it in terms of the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978.

The Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work recognises the significant progress that has been made in relation to the profession over the past decades, but is also aware of persistent, often systemic challenges that are experienced by the profession. The Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work will be hosting an online full day Summit (in the form of a webinar) on the 6th May 2021 as part of International Child and Youth Care Week 2021 with the theme “The crisis in the child and youth care sector in South Africa and its impact on the welfare of children and youth”. It is intended that the summit will engage at a national level addressing the identified challenges.

The South African Council for Social Service Professions, the Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work and the Professional Board for Social Work acknowledge the important role of these heroines and heroes, who give hope, render care, and undertake developmental and therapeutic work with children, youth and families.

For more information on International Child and Youth Care Week 2021 visit the: www.sacssp.co.za (and download the CYCWEEK 2021 posters)

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ABOUT THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR SERVICE PROFESSIONS

The South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP/ Council) is a statutory body established in terms of section 2 of the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978 (the Act). Council has two Professional boards under its auspices: the Professional Board for Social Work and the Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work. Council, in conjunction with its Professional Boards, guides and regulates the professions of social work and child youth care work in aspects pertaining to registration; education and training; professional conduct and ethical behaviour; ensuring continuing professional development; and fostering compliance with professional standards. It protects the integrity of the social service professions as well as the interest of the public at large. In order to safeguard the public and indirectly the professions, registration with Council in terms of the Act is a prerequisite before practicing social work and child and youth care work. Registration is mandatory for social workers, social auxiliary workers, student social workers, learner social auxiliary workers, child and youth care workers, auxiliary child and youth care workers and student child and youth care workers.