

## EDITORIAL

Various policies and laws in South Africa, as in many other countries in the world, aim at protecting and supporting families to meet their needs adequately in order to enhance the self-reliance of family members. Against this background, this issue offers articles about the experiences of family members that can either promote or inhibit their development. These articles state the reasons why the reported findings are important and show how research results promote an understanding of the challenges that many South African families face.

The first article provides a critical review of resilience theory. It evaluates the relevance of resilience theory for social work in South Africa according to three criteria: the research questions it generates, its contribution to indigenous knowledge and decolonisation, and its contribution to social development.

The focus of the next five articles is on housing programmes for poor families, special challenges faced by the young, and men's experiences of divorce-related issues. The first article reports on housing provided by government for poor families and reveals how the substandard quality of the housing poses a threat to the health and human dignity of the intended beneficiaries. The next two articles evaluate the challenges faced by young people in families and in institutions. One focuses on the effects of family conflict on the psychological needs and externalising behaviour of preadolescents. The other evaluates how transition programmes for adolescent girls in institutions prepare them for life outside institutional care, and it identifies gaps between the expected performance standards and actual services delivered. Thereafter, a pair of articles cover the topic of men and divorce. The first article explores men's experiences of divorce, the challenges they face and their coping strategies. The second article offers insights into fathers' experiences and perceptions of parent alienation in instances of high-conflict divorces.

A final duo of articles report on social work education. The first article describes how a discipline-specific academic programme meets the unique needs of students and promotes their professional identity development. The second article explores the application of asset-based community-driven development (ABCD) in the context of field education.

This issue concludes with Alice Butterfield's extremely helpful review of *The Handbook of Social Work and Social Development in Africa* edited by Mel Gray.

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