

Strengthening schools as nodes of care and support. Education policy round table meeting report, 28th and 29th July 2003

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Authors:

Giese, Sonja

Organizations:

University of Cape Town Children's Institute

Description:

The aim of the education policy round table was to consider the extended role of schools as nodes of care and support to vulnerable children in the context of HIV/AIDS in South Africa. The objectives of the meeting were: 1. To present and debate the concept of schools as nodes of care and support for vulnerable children in the context of HIV/AIDS. 2. To identify existing Governmental programmes and policies relevant to the care and support of vulnerable children through schools. 3. To identify potential challenges to putting into practice an expanded role for schools. 4. To identify action that could be taken to overcome these challenges, and improve the capacity of schools to become nodes of care and support. 5. To develop a framework for the way forward. 6. To create the opportunity for participants to share ideas and experiences, and explore opportunities for collaboration. In principle, participants supported the idea of an expanded role for schools as nodes of care and support for vulnerable children and recognised that the education system has several comparative advantages over other services when it comes to the care and support of children. However, it was agreed that an expanded role for schools cannot and should not exacerbate the burdens that educators already carry. Participants felt that the emphasis should be placed on better utilising schools as vehicles through which services can reach children and children can access support, and on viewing schools as one important link in a service chain.

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