



Culture, Religion and the Mental Health of African Children

Training Course

London, Friday 20 June 2008

AFRUCA – Africans Unite Against Child Abuse is the premier charity promoting the welfare of African children in the UK.

We are pleased to invite you to participate in our forthcoming specialist training event:

Culture, Religion and the Mental Health of African Children

Date: Friday 20 June 2008

Time: 9:30am – 4:30pm

Venue: Central London

Course Fee: £80 (covers lunch, refreshments and training materials)

Course Background

This event will explore some of the key cultural and religious issues confronting mental health practitioners who work with African children and their families. One of these, the belief in demonic possession, where the claim that an external force has taken over a child's mind and body and controls the child's thoughts and actions leading him to cause harm to other people is becoming very rampant among new African communities in the UK. In many instances, the physical and emotional effects attributed to demonic possession are seen by practitioners as symptoms very typical of paranoid disorders. However many parents who genuinely believe their children have been bewitched see this as a "spiritual" problem requiring a "spiritual" and not a clinical solution. In many cases, it is indeed difficult for practitioners to distinguish between genuine cases of mental health disorders and those that are based on cultural/religious beliefs and practices like demonic possession.

Course Objectives

This course will focus on the history of African traditional beliefs in demonic possession and how these manifest in some of the communities present here in the UK. It will examine the growth in the traditional belief in demonic possession among newly arrived Africans and the link with a number of African Christian organisations in the country. It will explore the practice of exorcism and the mental health impact on children and young people. It will examine the proposals being put forward that practitioners need to combine clinical solutions with “spiritual” solutions in order to achieve better outcomes for children. It will also examine the pros and cons of this approach in the best interest of children.

Who Should Attend

This course will be of special interest to mental health practitioners working in different capacities to support children and their families. Participants will benefit from a variety of training methods and materials to help stimulate learning and enrich their knowledge of key issues.

This is a non accredited but professionally designed and delivered course. Participants will receive a training certificate as proof of attendance.

Course Facilitator

Debbie Ariyo is Founder and Director of AFRUCA. She has vast experience advising many agencies across the UK on diversity and child safeguarding issues. She has worked with many practitioners dealing with cases involving African children and their families through the provision of advice and guidance. She has facilitated many training courses for local authorities and other children’s charities and their staff on a variety of issues confronting African children and families. She is a highly rated and experienced trainer with specialist knowledge of work with African children and their families in the UK.

Feedback from AFRUCA training participants

“Using a variety of teaching methods to engage participants was great. I really enjoyed the training”

“This course was very useful. All those directly involved with African children should attend it”

Registration

To book your place at the above training, please complete attached booking form and return to Elsie Till at AFRUCA, email training@afruca.org or fax to us on 0207 704 2266. You can also download this training information and the booking form from our website at www.afruca.org