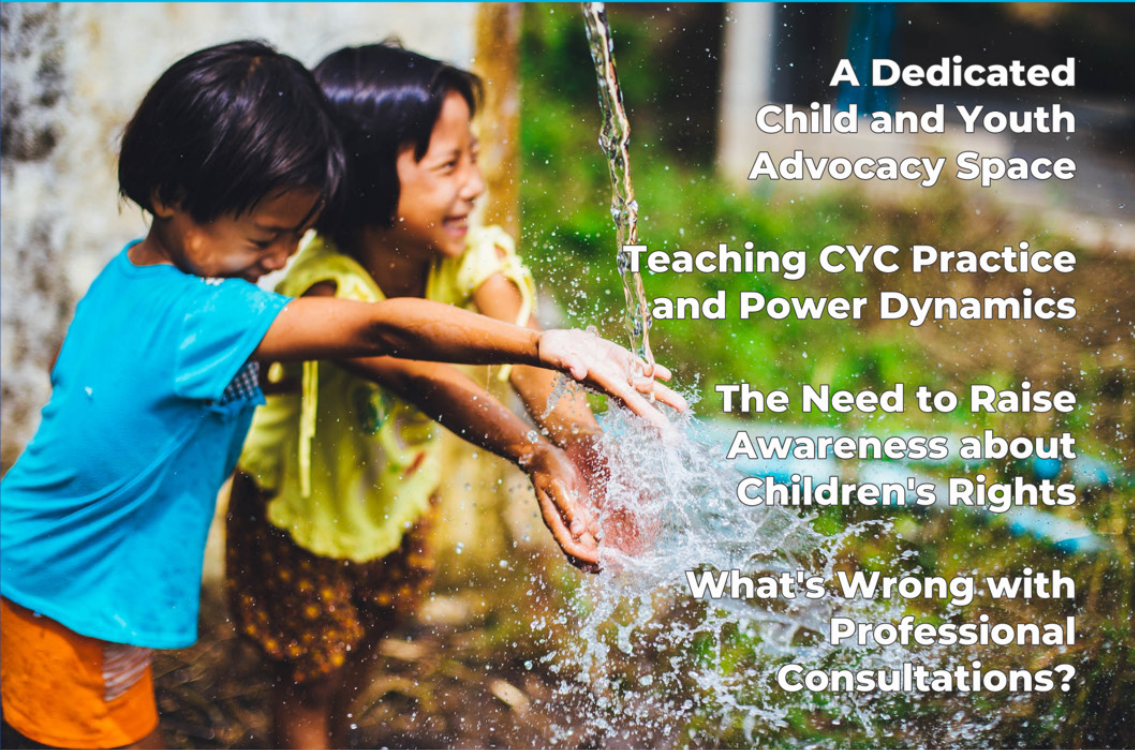


# CYC-Online

e-journal of the International Child and Youth Care Network (CYC-Net)



**A Dedicated  
Child and Youth  
Advocacy Space**

**Teaching CYC Practice  
and Power Dynamics**

**The Need to Raise  
Awareness about  
Children's Rights**

**What's Wrong with  
Professional  
Consultations?**

**A Journal for those who live or work  
with Children and Young People**

**Issue 238 / December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406



# Contents

<b>Editorial: Twelve Lives Lost.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<i>James Freeman</i>	
<b>Honoring the Child's Unique Song .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<i>Jaiya John</i>	
<b>How to Survive in Dark Times.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<i>Hans Skott-Myhre</i>	
<b>A Dedicated Child and Youth Advocacy Space.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<i>Kiaras Gharabaghi</i>	
<b>Teaching CYC Practice and Power Dynamics .....</b>	<b>34</b>
<i>Jack Phelan</i>	
<b>The Need to Raise Awareness about Children's Rights .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<i>Tara Collins</i>	
<b>What's Wrong with Professional Consultations?.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<i>Doug Magnuson</i>	
<b>More Voices from Autism in School .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<i>Introduced by Nancy Marshall</i>	
<b>The Supervisor's Responsibility and Privilege to Mentor New Practitioners .....</b>	<b>56</b>
<i>Pawel Biedrzycki</i>	
<b>Reflections: My Work in Residential Care in Egypt.....</b>	<b>63</b>
<i>Hamido Megahead</i>	
<b>Vulnerable Youth in Halton Region: CYCs Share their Perceptions .....</b>	<b>70</b>
<i>Kamelija Velkovska, Thomas Howe, Bethany Osborne and Ferzana Chaze</i>	
<b>Postcard from Leon Fulcher .....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Information .....</b>	<b>87</b>



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

# **Twelve Lives Lost**

**James Freeman**

**T**he 307th mass shooting during 2018 in the United States occurred last night in our community. In a city often referred to as one of the safest in the country.

A dozen families woke up this morning not knowing if their child, spouse, or sibling made it through the night. Many huddled together at the local teen center which served as a family reunification site while investigators and medical personnel cleaned up the scene and identified those who were killed.

Thousands gathered for the procession of the first responder killed as he rushed in to stop the shooter. The roadsides were lined with people as his body left the hospital and was transported to the county medical examiner – located within sight of where the third CYC World Conference was held. This veteran law enforcement officer had been on the phone with his partner and, when the call for help came in, said he loved her and had to respond to the call.

The violent act took place at a local country music bar and club. It was college night and the place was full of around 200 kids eighteen years and older. Dr. Erika Beck, president of the nearby California State University wrote to the student body:



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

*It is with a profoundly heavy heart that I write this morning with regard to the tragic mass shooting that that occurred during College Night at the Borderline Bar and Grill in Thousand Oaks last night. This senseless tragedy resulted in at least 12 deaths and far more physical and psychological trauma. Our hearts are broken and we extend our deepest condolences to all of the victims, their families, friends and, indeed, our entire community. As we process this tragedy, I ask that we all come together and find solace in supporting one another as we seek hope and light from the depths of our sadness.*





There are so many feelings surfacing around the community. Some angry at failed gun control efforts. Others blaming the mental health of the shooter. It will take time to process through the event and coming days. Every time someone passes by the club it will be a reminder. Every birthday or special date in the lives of those lost will be a reminder for the community.

The fear, grief, and loss this suburban community is experiencing is too often the norm in communities where violence and threat are everyday experiences. Places of poverty and oppression where the media doesn't cover, and governments don't track or respond to such incidents. Pulitzer prize winning author, Katherine Boo described the self-perspective of young boys in a Mumbai slum: "...in a modernizing, increasingly prosperous city, their lives were embarrassments best confined to small spaces, and their deaths would matter not at all" (Boo, 2012, p. 236). Today's tragedy was close to my home, and likely too familiar to many neighborhoods around the world where kids are growing up.

The aftermath of the event will be complex. Friends and family are being surrounded by a community with love and compassion. People are giving, praying, and being there for those who are suffering in the loss and trauma. People in the community are learning more about the role and daily heroics of first responders whose work is often unseen by the general population. These tragedies are not short-lived as we know that "events of traumatic violence affect both individuals and communities and, in particular, how they influence the way people perceive and make meaning of their worlds after such events" (Jones, 2009, p. 27).

In all of this, and in every tragedy small or large around the world, what's the biggest lesson we can learn? One of them is that people need to be connected. When people get isolated from belonging to their neighborhoods and communities it can lead to dangerous things. We also



learn that people need hope. With a career of caring for children and families who are in pain, I continue to learn that without hope for the future – at least hope for tomorrow – we get lost in our thoughts and the pain can become overwhelming. Unfortunately, last night that pain was overwhelming for someone to the point where they were driven to cause irreversible harm to others.

I'm sure in the coming days we'll learn about motives and if and how this act could have been prevented. But I'm confident that at the core will surface an isolated, hopeless moment in this person's life. I trust that the tragedy will serve as fuel for those of us committed to caring for kids and families around the world to continue showing up and supporting those around us.

## References

- Boo, K. (2012). *Behind the beautiful forevers: Life, death, and hope in a Mumbai undercity*. New York, NY: Random House.
- Jones, S. (2009). *Trauma and grace: Theology in a ruptured world*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.



@CYCAREWORKERS



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

**The CYC-Net Discussion Groups  
have made the transition to**

**facebook®**

**Click here for our  
General CYC Discussion Group**

**Click here for our  
Students CYC Discussion Group**



**December 2018**  
ISSN 1605-7406

# Honoring the Child's Unique Song

Jaiya John

Each of us is born with an essence—a distinctive nature or character. An inclination peculiar to us alone pulls us toward some things and away from others. While we commonly understand this as personality, this truth has been honored in world cultures for centuries in a more textured sense.

Many African communities have long held that each spirit born into the world carries its own unique song. This song represents the rhythm, frequency, and flavor of life that strikes the chords of the child's spirit with the greatest degree of harmony. It is her way of being. Her nature. Her song is her reason for having been brought into the world. She carries a package she must deliver, an insight to join into the collective awareness of her people.

When a woman in such a community becomes pregnant, a tradition occurs, varying according to the particular tribal culture. Here is a general depiction: The expecting woman gathers her female family members and friends. They venture out away from the compound, away from the children and men and the daily noise of society. Surrounded by listening trees and sitting close to Earth, the women form a circle.

They have a singular purpose in being here: to recognize the song of this new life on its way. They spend many moments in silence, so that they



**December 2018**  
ISSN 1605-7406



can hear what nature speaks to them. Back in the compound, commotion would drown out these voices.

Protected by shade clouds from the determined sun, they laugh together and tell stories. Laughing and storytelling create good vibrations that loosen clumps of dirt blocking the unseen rivers they wear like a skirt. Inspiration begins to flow.

At times they join hands, the two closest to the waiting mother cradling her affectionately like a small child. Waiting mother massages her belly. She is not just soothing her baby, she is receiving what that precious life is already voicing. This may seem like folly to us who inhabit a reality of the tangible and who often scorn what cannot be seen. But what is the nature of all things but energy? And how does energy exist but through vibration? How are we to notice and understand a vibration except by letting it dance into us?

Night emerges to greet the circle of women. Truthfully, some of them are impatient. They want the song to come so they can get back to their lives. But this ritual is sewn into the fabric of their lives. It is what their heritage has delivered them. They have the context in which to understand this ritual's value.

Some children sing louder from their mother's belly in the night. Some become brazen in the morning. Note by note, the song emerges. The song is a love song to the world: Prepare yourselves. I am come. Beat the drum.

The women begin to share with each other what they are intuiting about this new child. Intuition is all we have in this world. Many of us do not believe in our intuition so it becomes a rusted tool left on the floor of our despair. These women cannot imagine not believing in a gift such as this. When they intuit, they speak what they have received to each other without self-consciousness or worrying about what the others will think.



To lie about what one intuitively of a child, or to cloak that intuition in the clothes of what we desire of that child—these are bad tidings. They bring harm to the child, to the family, and to the community. Because all relationships based upon a false or disguised intuition about the child wreak havoc.

It is like being sold a bag of what we are told are melon seeds when in fact the bag contains flower seeds. Then we go about happily planting our seeds, congratulating ourselves; salivating at our expected harvest. When the harvest we expect does not come, we curse the seeds. But the seeds have done nothing wrong. They were flowers all along.

Our faulty understanding of the seeds' nature is behind our disappointment and frustration. What's more, conflicted about our failed expectations for the seeds, we fail to realize that we have been blessed by flowers. Their beauty escapes us because our limited understanding demands that they be something else.

Our children are those flower seeds. In this African setting the women continue to share what is being revealed to them about the nature-song of this child. The waiting mother's intuition is given the highest authority. This is true except in cases when an elder woman present deciphers something that helps clarify the mother's understanding of her child.

The child's song unfolds: I am a boisterous spirit; you must allow me voice and room to move and roam. I am a quiet child; you must grant me my silence. I am a teacher, please nurture my skills. I am meant to feel things deeply; I will use this for being a healer. I am small, but my vision is large; our people would do well to fall into it and drown.

Waiting mother and the other women reach an accord on their initial understanding of this new life on its way. This recognition of song has been the first sacred step in preparing to relate to the child in a way that will create wholeness. Wholeness depends upon being seen, recognized, and



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

understood accurately. This is why one of the most important questions between people in many of these grandparent cultures is: Do you see me?

The women return to the compound and gather the people around them. Again in a circle, the women announce to the community what they have learned about the song of this new life on the way. At this point, the broader community begins its responsibility for constructing the understanding necessary to honor the child. Parents initiate conversations with their children about the waiting mother, her family, and the new child. Young people question their elders about the same. This is how we begin to prepare a safe space, a greenhouse for wholeness to grow.

A child is come! Go beat the drum! The compound of children and adults, each with a conscious stake in the new life on its way, eagerly sing the child's song during the pregnancy; not only to the child but to each other. This way, when the child emerges and begins crawling, walking, running through the community, she encounters people and places that have been drenched in her essence. What a wonderful way to make her feel beautiful!

The song is the family's and community's way of saying to the child, "We recognize and honor that this is who you are." The song represents values, beliefs, personality, talents, life purpose, preferences—all of who she is.

Everyone's eagerness to sing comes from a simple understanding: that for each child who suffers in life there is a community that also suffers. For each child who thrives is a people who thrive. The degree of suffering or thriving in a child is mirrored by the amount of suffering or thriving in her people. This is a law that never changes.

The new child is bathed in her own song during her gestation; she receives this nourishment just as she receives nourishment through her umbilicus. She gestates in a bath of validation, celebration, and understanding. She is sung into beauty before she draws her first breath.



At the moment of her birth, among her first sensations are the sounds of her family and community singing to her. Along with the stark contrasts of cold air and bright light outside of the womb, she is wrapped in the warm blanket of recognition: Welcome new child! We see you. We have planted good seeds in you. You are a seed who grows in us. You are not alone in this world. We are each other. You will never be alone. This is a good way to begin a life.

During the important landmarks of the child's life, her loving people caress her with her song. When she learns to crawl, walk, or run, there is the song. When she learns to speak, there is the song. On her birthdays, on her first day of school, she is greeted in song. When she first menstruates she is initiated by song into the deeper meaning of her transformation. She is not allowed to breed shame inside herself for becoming a woman.

The older she grows and the more she develops, the more she dictates the nature of her song and teaches it to her people. She is the best teacher that can ever be of her song. She is granted her divinely endowed right to teach the world what she has been brought here to share.

Being imperfect, the child will struggle. This is a time when her people gather around her with determination. They sing to her more forcefully than ever. They have come to return her to herself. They recognize that punishment does not cause a struggling child to recover her vision of self. Discipline does. Discipline is a hard reminder of who we are and why we are. It snaps us back to our intended path.

In collective social harmony she receives the message: Dear child, you are forgetting yourself. You are losing your footing. The Earth beneath you does not change. The way in which you step has changed. Remember how you began. Remember why you are. Remember the truth of how you are to be. In Nepalese culture there is a term for this.





Shanti ko Samjhana: Remembering Peace. This refers to the peace of the womb, the peace of our natural state, and the peace of self-understanding.

Be true to yourself. This is the one and only Yurok Indian law. Imagine how powerful this manifestation must be for a people to hold it as their essential law. When we are true to ourselves, health and prosperity flow from that cup. Most personal and social despair can be traced back to individuals failing to be true to their nature and purpose. Trueness implies the child knows herself; believes in herself; understands her purpose; and has faith that being true to that purpose and to her nature will yield a bountiful life for her and the circle of life she inhabits.

The African village sings to the child to remind her of who she herself has told them she is. They sing to say: You are not being true to yourself. All of your suffering is a polluted water springing from the source which is your self-betrayal. They sing so she can find her way back through her blindness to the clearing of her recognition. They sing her back home.

When the woman who was once the child becomes an elder, she is crowned with her song—a harmony always evolving as she evolves. At the moment her seasons on Earth have ended and she passes into all things, oh what a glorious song comes out: Our dear child has become all things! She joins us now in the trees and the sky, in the water and the wind. She has not left us. She is all around us. She will visit us as she wishes, to teach again. A soul learns many things when it sits at the feet of all things. Immersed in affirming harmony, this child has lived a good life.

**DR. JAIYA JOHN** was a plenary speaker at the 3rd Child and Youth Care World Conference in Ventura, California USA. Jaiya has written 14 books addressing healing and wellness within the human experience. See his full bio and more at [www.jaiyajohn.com](http://www.jaiyajohn.com)



**December 2018**  
ISSN 1605-7406

# BECOME A PIONEER IN CHILD AND YOUTH CARE



We are excited to introduce our **Bachelor of Child and Youth Care professional degree** that is endorsed by The South African Council of Social Service Professions (SACSSP).

- The programme is specifically designed to equip Child and Youth Care professionals to work in various fields
- where services need to be delivered to vulnerable children, youth and families.

A variety of skills are taught to meet the demands of different settings. Extensive work integrated and reflective learning prepares you for the work environment.



**MONASH  
SOUTH AFRICA**

THE  
WORLD  
CLASS

Visit **[www.msa.ac.za](http://www.msa.ac.za)**  
or call us **+27 11 950 4009**

# How to Survive in Dark Times

Hans Skott-Myhre  
[hskotty@kennesaw.edu](mailto:hskotty@kennesaw.edu)

How are we to treat others?

There are no others.

***Ramana Maharshi***

There are any number of reasons to reflect on a growing darkness in contemporary society. We are living through a series of ongoing and escalating horrors such as the global rise of demagogues and dictators, the exponential extinction of species after species, wildfires, floods, mudslides, mass shootings and stabbings, rampant drug addiction that morphs like a social virus, starving and abandoned children, wars and violent conflicts from the intimate to the international, sexual assault and harassment on a global scale, and massive flows of immigrants fleeing all of the above and meeting with hostility and hatred.

There are those who would tell us that in spite of all of this, things have never been better. Steven Pinker (2018) in his new book *Enlightenment Now* argues that there has been a serious decline in life threatening illnesses, there is better education worldwide, wider access to information, and an overall improvement in rights for women, people of color and sexual minorities. New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof (2018) echoes these claims, stating that “2017 was probably the very best year in the long



**December 2018**  
ISSN 1605-7406

history of humanity". He claims that world hunger, poverty and illiteracy are at the lowest levels in human history. Children are dying at lower rates than ever before. Numbers of children and adults "disfigured by leprosy, blinded by diseases like trachoma or suffering from other ailments also fell." There is greater access to electricity and clean water.

The graphs and charts, supported by extensive statistical analysis, would certainly give credence to the claims that life is getting better in significant ways. For those of us whose lives have been improved by education, clean water, medicine, and so on, this is very good news indeed. However, the trouble with such data, is that although it may well be true, it lacks an ecological analysis that places these improvements within a broader and more entangled understanding of what constitutes better times. In another term, such historical trend analysis tends to leave out the possible troubling implications of such good news.

For example, while curing or seriously mitigating the impact of life-threatening disease for human beings is laudable indeed, it begs the question of the impact of more and more humans on the world's ecology. As more and more of us survive, we need more food, more resources, more water and so on. While there is the possibility that we could solve these problems through technological innovation or population control (voluntary or enforced), it raises the question of political will and social capacity. Similarly, access to clean water is a wonderful improvement in people's lives, but it occurs in a world in which ecological projections are warning of decreasing access to water generally due to climate change and the commodification of clean water by multinational corporations. Again, there are undoubtedly possible solutions to the problem of adequate water supplies, either technological or social, but do we have the political will or social capacity?





The question of political will and social capacity is not easily graphed or statistically measured. Without a doubt we, as living creative beings, have tremendous capacity and to some degree indomitable will. We have survived much and literally reshaped the planet upon which we live. The force of human endeavor can now be shown to have dramatic implications, not just for us, but for all living and non-living things that constitute planet earth. I would argue that this realization should come with complex and nuanced analysis. We need to think in terms of complicated relations and unintended consequences. There is so much that we have done that has been driven by a rather myopic view of ourselves as somehow exempt from the impacts we have on the world around us. We often appeared to think, that if it seemed to be good for us in the short-term (or even in a historical trend analysis) then it must be good. Of course, this leaves out the intricate ecological entanglements that constitute the actualities of our long-term well-being. The impact of our practices of consumption and seeming indifference to its effects, are premised in the short-term sense, that what is good for the economy and our capacity to make money is good for us in general. I won't belabor the scientific consensus that is calling, with increasing desperation, for a radical re-thinking of our patterns of consumption. The scientific community worldwide is telling us that the way we are living is unsustainable even within the next century. And yet, we are really doing very little to avert ecological catastrophe and I keep asking myself why that is?

The psychoanalyst, activist and philosopher Felix Guattari suggests that part of the problem may be that we have failed to account for the interplay of not one, but three ecologies in shaping our relations with each other and the rest of the planet. The three ecologies in question are what he calls the ecology of mind, the ecology of the social and the physical ecology. All of these interact with each other in ways that shape and re-shape the world



as an interplay of sociality, thought, and materiality. In his thinking, our social world extends beyond human relations and includes both living and non-living things as integral to how our society forms and re-forms itself. Of course, if we were to pay attention to indigenous ways of knowing, this has been well known for millennia. However, for the dominant colonial, capitalist sets of logic this kind of thinking is foreign.

Similarly, Guattari suggests that our ecologies of thought are deeply entangled with both the physical world and the realm of the social. For him, thought doesn't arise in each of us as individuals, but out of a rich interplay of infinite networks of materiality and sociality far beyond the comprehension of our abilities as a demarcated individual. As the poet Inger Christensen (Sehgal, 2018) would have it, "we think of those markers of humanity — language, consciousness, art — as being ways of perceiving (or depicting) nature, not as its products". In other words, our consciousness and ability to use language or create art are not centered in us, as those beings who see the world and define it. Instead, our ability to think, create, and speak are the result of the world creating itself through us. This kind of humility that sees our actions as an effect rather the cause of things is also a foreign logic in contemporary 21<sup>st</sup> century global capitalist society. Our world is centered around the valorization of the individual as a self-actualizing force of the neoliberal marketplace. Under that logic we make the world and the world is a vast marketplace in which everything is for sale including us.

Guattari warns us that ecologies of thought and sociality can be damaged just like the material ecology. He suggests, that just as species of animals and plants can be driven to the point of extinction, so can species of thought and modes of sociality. The drive towards anti-intellectualism in our current society might be seen as an ecological threat to rich and vibrant networks of difference and complexity. Certainly, the radical



alienation faced by so many of us as we lose any coherent sense of social affiliation in a world driven by a twenty-four hour, seven day a week drive to produce and not fall behind, might be seen as an ecological threat to our ability to function socially. Concepts of radical individualism and the advancement of a culture of selfishness and unbridled consumerism without regard to the cost to each other, other species, or even the geophysical world (think fracking and earthquakes), have devastating effects on the health of our networks of social relations. In a recent column in this journal, Kiaras Gharabaghi (2018) points out the dangers of neoliberal notions of self-care that alienate us from the networks of care to be found in actual living networks of social investments outside narcissistic investments in “just me.” The idea that those we encounter in our work are emotionally and psychologically draining on us is a pernicious perversion of the actuality of mutual networks of care. Just as our material ecology is being devastated by pollution and overconsumption, our social and mental ecologies are under similar threat.

In a recent editorial in the NY Times, Arthur C Brooks (2018) makes the argument that we have become a society of very lonely people. He cites a large survey recently completed by the health care provider Cigna that states:

*... most Americans suffer from strong feelings of loneliness and a lack of significance in their relationships. Nearly half say they sometimes or always feel alone or “left out.” Thirteen percent of Americans say that zero people know them well. The survey, which charts social isolation using a common measure known as the U.C.L.A. Loneliness Scale, shows that loneliness is worse in each successive generation.*



Brooks also cites a book by US Senator Ben Sasse called *Them: Why We Hate Each Other — and How to Heal*. In the book Mr. Sasse tells us that “loneliness is killing us.” He cites the escalating epidemics of suicide and drug overdose deaths across the country. He reminds us that this year 45,000 Americans will commit suicide and over 70,000 will overdose on drugs.

From a Guattarian perspective, this is an ecological disaster just as dangerous and devastating as climate change and not unrelated. Until we understand that how we think and live together is deeply interconnected with the damage we are doing to the physical ecology, we will continue down the very dangerous path we are on. We are all familiar, with the epidemics of what appear to be individual acts of suicidal behavior and homicidal rage across the planet. However, we need to begin to understand that these apparently individual acts are symptoms of an ecological breakdown in our ability to think and live together. We are poisoning ourselves at the level of thought and social logic. To solve the ecological problems facing us, we may well need to acknowledge a foundational bankruptcy in our existing social and intellectual knowledge. Being pathologically lonely is not the result of a system breakdown. It is the inevitable result of the success of a system that holds no regard for living things including us.

The good news is that we have the capacity to think and act together in ways that create new possibilities and pathways forward. There are still rich ecologies of thought and social interaction that we can access and support across the globe. One of these, I would argue, is the underlying thought and practice of Child and Youth Care as a field of alternate relations to colonial or capitalist logic. I have made the argument many times in this column and elsewhere that CYC holds a tremendous capacity for re-forming social relations in rich and complex ways.



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406



To do this however, we must be careful about the ecological damage done to our existing networks of care by logics of division premised in hierarchy and taxonomy. It never made sense for us to imagine a utility founded in a logic of development, biology, neurology, or any other system of hierarchical division. We are different indeed, but our ecologically resilient differences are not to be found in universal categories of normalcy, health, perfection, or development. Our ecological strength lies in the entangled relations of difference that constitute us as a rich tapestry of unanticipated capacities. None of these mutually constituted capacities can be found within us as individuals, but they can be found in the ways we collide and collude across thought and sociality.

To find “us” however, we have to stop looking at each other as somehow failed projects that need remediation. We are so much more than our trauma, mental illness, loneliness and so on. Benedict Carey (2018) in an analysis piece in the New York Times on “When Will We Solve Mental Illness?” points out the fact that biological psychiatry has made a powerful effort to detail how brain abnormalities have caused mental distress, but has failed to scientifically support any causal relationship. He notes that the DSM system of diagnosis has also failed to demonstrate any direct relation to any research that would support its diagnostic criterion. He points out that while there is some correlation between genes and mental distress (particularly in the areas of schizophrenia and autism) “genetic inheritance...falls well short of a stand-alone ‘cause’ in most people who receive a diagnosis”.

Carey then goes on to state that what really can be demonstrated to have a direct relation to mental suffering or its remediation is:

*...experience: the messy combination of trauma, substance use, loss and identity crises that make up an individual's*



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

*intimate, personal history. Biology has nothing to say about those factors, but people do. Millions of individuals who develop a disabling mental illness either recover entirely or learn to manage their distress in ways that gives them back a full life. Together, they constitute a deep reservoir of scientific data that until recently has not been tapped.*

In the terms we have been discussing so far, our distress and our recovery from such distress is ecological and idiosyncratic. It is not predictable nor universally understandable. Solutions are not to be found in “evidence based” practices. Instead, our work must be understood in the context of a life or lives lived together over time.

Later in the same piece Carey discusses the work of the Hearing Voices Network which is an international self-help group for “voice hearers”. The network facilitates opportunities for voice hearers to get together and talk about their experiences collectively. He quotes Dr. Hornstein a researcher studying the network as saying,

*We have underestimated the power of social interactions. We see people who've been in the system for years, on every med there is. How is it possible that such people have recovered, through the process of talking with others? How has that occurred? That is the question we need to answer.*

Perhaps for us in CYC, the answer to how to survive in dark times may lie here. The political will and social capacity to create resilient ecologies of social, intellectual, and material relations could well reside in our renewed abilities to understand ourselves collectively. Our survival may rest in the acknowledgment and practices rooted in understanding ourselves as



**December 2018**  
ISSN 1605-7406

entangled processes that cannot be separated and broken into binary configurations of youth/adult, human/nature, mental health/illness and so on without damage. To open and engage in ecologies that allow us to talk with others in ways that violate the very idea that we are separate from anyone or anything else may hold possibilities for revitalizing our networks of thought, sociality, and material relations. We have the tools, if we can simply remember that hanging out and hanging in is the foundation of our work and fully acknowledge this across all things living and non-living. After all being in relationship is our strength and our *raison d'être*. We have a powerful ecologically informed way of working and thinking together if we can remember the wisdom of Ramana Maharshi at the beginning of this column: there are no others –there is only us. To know this is perhaps the antidote to living through dark times and working together towards a brighter future.



## References

- Brooks, A.C. (2018). *How loneliness is tearing America apart*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/23/opinion/loneliness-political-polarization.html?action=click&module=Well&pgtype=Homepage&section=Opinion>
- Carey, B. (2018). *When will we solve mental illness?* Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/19/health/mental-health-psychology.html>



Gharabaghi, K. (2018). *Self care and the imagination*. Retrieved from <https://www.cyc-net.org/cyc-online/oct2018.pdf>

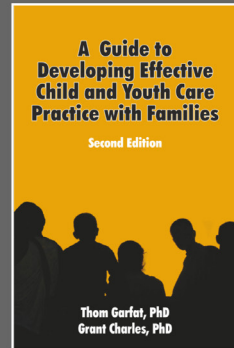
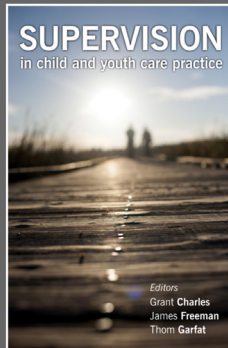
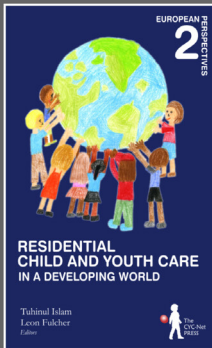
Kristof, N. (2018). Why 2017 was the best year in human history. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/06/opinion/sunday/2017-progress-illiteracy-poverty.html>

Pinker, S. (2018). *Enlightenment now: the case for reason, science, humanism, and progress*. New York: Penguin.

Sehgal, P. (2018). 'The condition of secrecy' teems with love for language and the natural world. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/20/books/review-condition-of-secrecy-essays-inger-christensen.html>

**HANS SKOTT-MYHRE** is a regular writer for CYC-Online. He is a Professor of Social Work and Human Services at Kennesaw State University in Georgia, USA. He may be reached at [hskottmy@kennesaw.edu](mailto:hskottmy@kennesaw.edu)

## AVAILABLE FROM THE CYC-Net PRESS



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

# A Dedicated Child and Youth Advocacy Space

Kiaras Gharabaghi

The child and youth care community in my province, Ontario, is up in arms about the latest policy declaration of the very right-leaning provincial government elected in June 2018. In its Fall Budget Statement (sort of like a mini-budget), the government announced its intention of shutting down the Ontario Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth (PACY), and moving the complaint-based investigative functions of that office to the Ombudsman Office, a much larger institution that handles complaints about public services in a wide range of contexts. The advocacy functions of PACY, both case advocacy and systemic advocacy, will be eliminated. In Canada, most provinces have a Child and Youth Advocacy office that is independent of the incumbent government and reports instead to the legislature of that province. The importance of that independence from the incumbent government cannot be overstated, since much of the work of these advocacy offices is to examine and then report on government-funded and sometimes government-operated child and youth services. This, inevitably, involves a high level of critical reporting, since in Canada, much like in the rest of the world, not all is well in child and youth service systems, and especially in those systems that serve young people, families and communities that are systemically and structurally marginalized, and therefore often lack a meaningful voice in the things that affect their lives directly.



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

The rationale for shutting down PACY is difficult to understand, The government has made vague comments about reducing costs, although it is not entirely clear how shutting down this office will reduce costs since the staff in the office will have to be accommodated with alternative public sector jobs, likely in the Ombudsman office. More likely, the government has made this move to eliminate criticism of its own services, which is congruent with the simultaneously announced elimination of the environmental watchdog agency in Ontario. The minister responsible for child and youth services in Ontario has sought to pacify critics of this move by suggesting that we need not worry because *she* will be young people's greatest advocate moving forward. This is an absurd claim for a person who has absolutely no idea about the portfolio she is responsible for and who may or may not have ever met a young person in care or a young person receiving services from the child and youth mental health sector or the youth justice sector. Regardless, I think what is important right now is not to point to the porous nature of government arguments, but to make the case that an independent advocacy office that is dedicated to advocacy on child and youth issues is an essential component of a democratic society. That is the case I wish to make below.

Young people in care, or in custody, live life at the mercy of adult decision-makers to a degree that is nearly totalizing. It is in fact no exaggeration to say that notwithstanding our generally democratic society (within the limitations of liberal democracy and neo-liberal ideology), child welfare and youth justice in particular are pockets of (sometimes unintentional but always systematic) totalitarianism about which we have been complacent for a very long time. Young people's lives are very much controlled within these contexts, with decisions made for and about young people ranging from the everyday contexts of when to wake up and when to go to bed, what to eat for breakfast, how to behave, and even when to



shower and brush teeth to the more planning-based decisions that capture where the young person will live, for how long, and who they can interact with, when they can see family, what sorts of friends they can be associated with and what pathway in school is most appropriate. There are very few moments and contexts of young people's lives in these sectors that are not subject to at the very least adult oversight and surveillance, and usually direct adult control and command.

It is dangerous to silence the voices of such control-based lives within the context of democratic societies. It is dangerous not simply for the young people impacted, but for the very existence of democracy itself. It normalizes and legitimizes the idea that within democratic societies, we can reasonably withdraw access to democratic principles for some people. Historically, this very same principle was at the heart of very horrible things, including concentration camps, interment camps, residential schools, Apartheid, and of course prisons, which even in Canada are places of despair, abuse and de-humanizing dynamics. While these events and processes unfolded at much larger and often genocide-level scales, the roots of each of these processes was a legitimization of silencing voices of those forced to live under conditions of total surveillance and control. Silencing these voices means rendering the lived experience of totalitarianism separate from other social experiences, a distant phenomenon of no relevance to you or I. We know that the presence of such life spaces impacts on societies in significant ways – this presence hardens societies into accepting a differential access to human rights and perpetuates societal moves to the sometimes explicit but certainly implicit endorsement of structural inequities and a hierarchy of value ascribed to human lives that are differently situated.





But the implications run deeper than the de-humanization of young people living in institutional contexts. In Ontario, the impact of totalitarian care systems is not evenly distributed amongst demographic groups. We know (in part through the work of PACY) that the young people disproportionately represented in these totalitarian systems are Black Youth, Indigenous young people and young people with disabilities, as well as trans young people and those who identify as LGBTQ2s+. This means that we have allowed societal structures to emerge in which we *knowingly* place young people from racialized groups and otherwise marginalized groups into totalitarian life contexts that are at the command of predominantly white people. Let me be a little more explicit about this: We are, right now, in Canada, in a position where we (and WE means you and I) knowingly enforce the *total* submission of Black and Indigenous bodies to the commands of the white (usually male) supreme officer. And just for added irony, we do so on the traditional lands (and legal but not yet resolved land entitlements) of the very Indigenous communities whose children and youth we have enslaved in this way. This is not some secret operation about which you and I are unaware. We are doing this openly, in full sight, and in many cases in ways that are fully integrated into communities and neighbourhoods. In other words, we are doing this consciously, visibly, intentionally.

Let me be clear that in characterizing the experience of child welfare and youth justice as a totalitarian one, I am not suggesting that every child and youth service, every residential program, every foster home, custody facility or even day program is designed to be a bastion of totalitarianism. Quite to the contrary, I recognize and acknowledge the huge efforts that many service providers have made to ensure a sense of dignity for young people involved with their services, and to engage young people in the spirit of fair and transparent decision-making. But I *am* suggesting that



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

there are in fact many settings that provide for no such quasi-democratic impulse. And since young people in child welfare and in youth justice don't get to choose their setting, and very often travel through many settings in their care journey, it is in fact the case that the experience of that journey is one in which young people are often exposed to totalitarian social relations for extended periods of time. Symptomatic of these kinds of social relations are the use of secure isolation in custody settings, the use of psychotropic medications to manage behaviour or even to chemically restrain, and the use of physical interventions to contain. More nuanced than these instances of professionally-imposed violence are the micro elements of control (through rules, restrictions of movement and privacy, control of family and peer contact, etc.) installed everywhere across settings and within the planning processes of these service sectors.

Sure, individually we speak out against racism. We demand social justice for our youth. We insist on governments following the demands of child and youth rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and even under Ontario child and youth-related legislation. But we have no organized strategy to make those demands real, and at any rate, we can't deny that our own privileged lives usually come in the way of our advocacy (someone, after all, has to take our children to their sports clubs, someone has to do the bulk shopping at COSTCO, and we do need to go for dinner and drinks with friends in the spirit of self care, not to mention that cruise that seems essential roughly in mid-February). The reality is that we have been speaking out against these things for a long time, but our speaking out is easily and quickly absorbed by the demands of living in a materialist culture, working in institutions that themselves replicate, at a lower threshold, the neoliberal and racist dynamics of (postmodern) social relations, and the rewards we reap for speaking out that serve to deactivate our activism (for example, our agency or post-secondary institution



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

gives us a Social Justice award, and we believe this to be in and of itself indicative of having achieved something).

Let me just say it bluntly; we are not very good at navigating the abdication of our power and privilege for the purpose of liberating the lives subjected to totalitarianism. We are good at naming the problem. And we are good at perpetuating the problem by finding escape routes for one young person here and another one there, giving the impression that we are getting closer to solve this problem. This is why we need a dedicated space for child and youth advocacy that can crystallize our support for change in a way that we cannot. We already know that collective action is much stronger and impactful than atomized, individual action that is further mitigated by the ever-present vested interests we have as individuals (career ambitions, glory, recognition, research funding, etc.). A dedicated space, independent of incumbent governments, has proven to be an incredibly effective vehicle for ensuring that we don't base our change agenda on our own agenda. Such a dedicated space is, I believe, the only mechanism by which we can amplify the voices of young people, create opportunities for young people to bring their issues and experiences to the forefront of societal discourse, and partner with young people to fight totalitarianism in our midst.

Of course, a dedicated child and youth advocacy space is not inherently free and unencumbered by the systemic forces that perpetuate racism and other forms of marginalization. Such a space must still be subject to critique and we must always question the authenticity of the space as a space of inclusion and equity. But we can only do that if there actually is such a space. And we must have such a space of contested and complex relational constellations for youth and allied adults in order to seriously attack the totalitarianism imposed on the bodies we claim to love.



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

A dedicated space of child and youth advocacy is the only kind of space that can provide the access necessary for young people to speak to their experiences; we need such a space to ensure it can be shaped, in its culture and its agenda, through the lens of young people themselves. We need this space to create a crack in these totalitarian fortresses so that the light get is (thanks to Leonard Cohen for this phrase). If we, you and I, are not confronted with the narrative of totalitarian systems and mechanisms in ways that challenge us to behave differently, we jeopardize not only the young people who we have silenced, but we put at risk the very democracy we claim to embrace. Indeed, once we allow the silencing of youth voices, already strongly biased toward the silencing of Black and Indigenous youth voices, we are not far from silencing others, from pushing others to the periphery of social and economic power, and ultimately from creating (or re-creating; or creating *again*) a society of rulers and their disembodied object subjects, their property.

Is this too dramatic? Well, pre-2016 it might have been. But the world has changed. Democracy, tenuous and fragile as it has always been, is seriously threatened. Human rights are for many people a thing of the past. In both the United States and in my province of Ontario, those in powerful positions have made it clear that even the sanctity of Constitutions is hardly safe. A substantial number of white people in North America are in favour of shooting bullets across a border to kill desperate and unarmed migrants seeking a better life. State-sanctioned murder of those with journalistic voices is forgiven and forgotten in favour of supplying arms to others who wish to kill their neighbours and their neighbours' children. The repeated warning of an impending humanitarian disaster in which millions of lives will be lost, such as what is unfolding in Yemen, in no way distracts us from our more banal daily pursuits, and sixty million people in the



United States will support this slaughter by voting in 2020 as they did in 2016.

The announcement by a small provincial government in a small and largely irrelevant northern country such as Canada of the intention to eliminate the Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth might seem quite insignificant given other issues in the world. It is not insignificant. It is a step in one direction. A step toward the repetition of historical events and processes in which millions died, were enslaved, kept away, or culturally assassinated. In Canada, when someone placed a handful of Indigenous youth in a church-run residential school, no one thought it would change the country forever. A short while later, 150,000 Indigenous youth had their lives destroyed, along with the lives of their families and communities, and ultimately the humanity of their being. And we all went along with that. We still do today. Democracy is not much once the silencing has started.

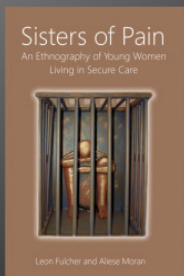
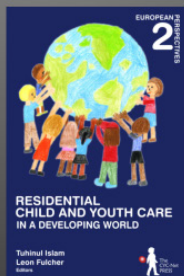
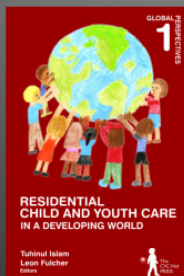
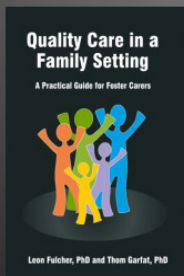
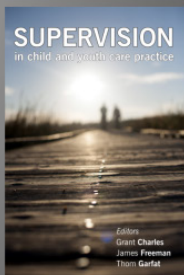
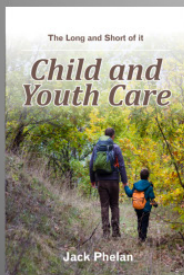
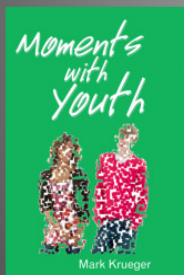
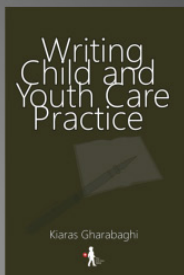
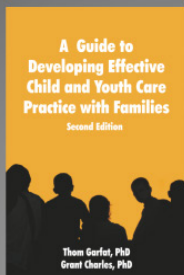
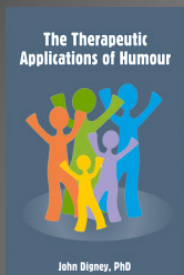
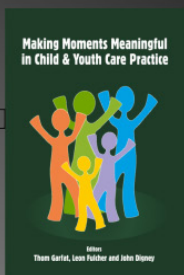
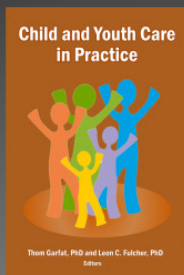
That's why we need a dedicated space for child and youth advocacy. Silencing young people will come at a price. The price is democracy.

**KIARAS GHARABAGHI** is the director of the School of Child and Youth Care at Ryerson University and a regular writer for CYC-Net. He is the author of the chapter 'External Models of Supervision' in the recently released book, *Supervision in Child and Youth Care Practice* (Charles, Freeman & Garfat, 2016). The book is available at <http://press.cyc-net.org/books/supervision.aspx>



**December 2018**  
ISSN 1605-7406

# THESE TITLES NOW AVAILABLE IN PAPERBACK AND e-BOOK



THE CYC-Net PRESS  
[press.cyc-net.org](http://press.cyc-net.org)



# Teaching CYC Practice and Power Dynamics

Jack Phelan

I have been writing about power and its implications for relational practice for a few columns now. I began with looking at direct practice and how an effective relational approach involves minimizing the power differences between the helper and the youth/family in order to support change (August, 2018). I then looked at CYC supervision and the ability to practice relational supervision, which is necessary at a professionally mature level of practice (October, 2018), and how it involves a reduction in authority and power dynamics. Now I want to explore the ability of effective teachers in post-secondary CYC programs to support CYC learning through using relational teaching strategies.

One of the clear limitations of classroom instruction is that it is an artificial and constructed environment, which is much different than the life space dynamics that are so important to deal with in actual practice. On the one hand, students get the opportunity to absorb fairly complex ideas in a safe and controlled environment, but this learning about CYC ideas absent the challenges inherent in life spaces can make the lessons ineffective. Mature practitioners often criticize the “Ivory Tower” learning of new graduates, since it rarely translates into skillful practice, at least immediately. In spite of this complication, because the actual ability to implement the skill of relational practice is still a future ability, it is essential to have a clear understanding and cognitive awareness of relational



December 2018

ISSN 1605-7406



practice concepts. The most effective way to teach relational practice would be after the student has been professionally engaged for about a year, but this is not practical. Trainers know that optimal learning occurs when the content of the training can be implemented immediately, which often is labelled “just in time learning”, and our post-secondary programs usually cannot expect this to occur, except with mature students who have prior experience in the field.

Given these serious limitations, it is still very useful to implement relational dynamics in the classroom so that students can get the experience of having a relational connection inside of an inherently power-laden interaction. Teachers can become “experience arrangers” who demonstrate the actual practice that is still beyond the grasp of most of the students, but by having the experience, they will have a future goal that is tangible.

So we need to examine the power issues in our post-secondary institutions. Schools and classrooms are very hierarchical structures. Teachers are in a very powerful position with a great deal of external control. My personal experience of large faculty meetings is that they are not very cooperative and inter-active, most of the individuals are used to being the smartest person in the room, so they are not good listeners. CYC faculty come from a much more collaborative stance and have an inherently more personal approach to the task of dealing with students. Generally, every faculty member knows each of their students by name, which is not typical in many post-secondary programs. Most faculty meetings involve discussing individual students learning issues and everyone who teaches that person is expected to have some ability to comment on the specific dynamics that they experience with that student. Professional schools usually do not have large sections of tiered classrooms with students passively listening to lectures, with little interaction between



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

the teacher and the class. Yet we also must deal with the structure of educational institutions, so we have to be cognizant of the many ways that we use power in our classrooms.

We have many procedures which exert external control, taking away the relational process from our interactions with students. Attendance policies, mandatory readings, pop quizzes and assignments in class that monitor ongoing homework habits, participation marks, and grading criteria all create external control rather than building relational learning capacity. We must examine our own beliefs about students, what do we believe about whether students really would put in the effort to learn if we did not control them?

Newer faculty need to develop through the stages of worrying about covering all the content and managing student behaviour in the classroom, so they will not be able to teach relationally right away, but after a few years they should be able to reduce their need for control.

The questions we need to address to become more relational in the classroom include; how can we reduce the power differential between us and the students, and between individual students and ourselves, and what are some relational approaches which are practiced in effective CYC work, which can be brought into the classroom? Teachers also need to demonstrate congruence between the ideas being presented and the physical reality experienced by the students. Relational practice is a complex dynamic generally demonstrated by skilled, mature practitioners and the people teaching CYC practice must first of all have been able to do this in their own experience as CYC practitioners, and then developed the instructional maturity to translate this into the inherently non-relational classroom.

If we are truly building relational practitioners in our CYC programs, this ability to teach relationally is an essential part of the learning.



# Relational Child & Youth Care Practice

Volume 31 Issue 3 / 2018

**SUBSCRIBE  
NOW**



ISSN 2410-2954



[press.cyc-net.org](http://press.cyc-net.org)

# **The Need to Raise Awareness about Children's Rights**

**Tara Collins**

**A**s we begin the last month of 2018 and the thirtieth year since the adoption of the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (UN, 1989), there is a need to do more about the lack of knowledge about children's rights. The need for better awareness about children's rights is not restricted to this field and young people more generally. As the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2005) describes, there a gap of awareness because "in most, if not all, societies children have not been regarded as rights holders" (p. 15). As a result, article 42 of the CRC identifies that children's rights should be "widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike." The essential first step for respecting child rights so that they can be implemented and monitored over time is sharing child rights knowledge, educating and training both young people and adults. As such, the UN Committee (2005) recommends that strategies to support knowledge dissemination, training and education (pp. 15-16). What does this mean for CYCs? Child rights should not be relegated to others. Even though they are part of international human rights law and obligate governments, they should not be considered disconnected from our relationships with young people. As noted in an earlier column, it is everyone's responsibility to implement



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

rights in society and children's rights can't be disassociated from our work. Children's rights have to be genuine and relevant in terms of how they are understood in order to be experienced by young people and supported and practiced by CYCs and others.

How do we do this in the context of CYC practice? Does child rights education mean memorizing the CRC? No, it certainly does not since this does not necessarily lead to influencing one's thoughts, words and actions. Rather, the CRC involves attention to how children's rights can affect our thinking about young people and our work with them in their life spaces. In addition to inclusion in CYC education and training programs, it involves asking questions about the connection between the field and child rights in practice. For example: How might the principle of non-discrimination influence how I do my work? How can the child's right to freedom from violence be better supported in my professional environment? In another example, how do child rights influence the essential 25 revised characteristics of a relational Child and Youth Care Approach in Being, Interpreting and Being (Freeman & Garfat, 2014, cited in Garfat, Freeman, Gharabaghi and Fulcher, 2018)? It is learning more about child rights and talking about them with others – both young and older – and how they can influence our relational practice wherever we work. Child rights education is needed for everyone because it means respectful care of the young people with whom we work. It means that children should be respected in every decision that we make in our efforts not *for* them but *with* them. For example, in a residential centre, have young people been involved in menu planning for the week? When an adult considers young people's behaviour less than ideal, are they blamed – whether directly or indirectly – by the institution, others or the practitioner? How do I respond to these questions? What opportunities for self-reflection do they offer? The aim is



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

to consider the opportunities to better understand child rights and practice them with young people.

Due to the importance of this topic, my valued colleague Kiaras Gharabaghi and I have recently completed an academic paper about child rights education for children in care. But the rest of this column offers some other ideas (if they haven't yet been considered) to explore children's rights with young people and adults. (As I am coming to the end of a stimulating stay in South Africa, I am particularly inspired by the developments here.)

### **Some suggestions for raising children's rights awareness –**

- 1) Ask each young person what right is most important to them and why. You may learn something about rights and more about the young person. (For example, my sons shared the importance of listening to children's ideas and the right to play.) If they are stumped by this question, how can you support the person to realize their right to such awareness and work together to answer the question? If you can access the Internet, one idea is to consider online resources including videos that you can watch and discuss with young people, e.g.  
<https://carleton.ca/landonpearsoncentre/childrens-rights-modules/>
- 2) Just as self-awareness is important to CYCs, consider how children's rights may influence your professional efforts or how they could better do so. What are the entry points wherever you work whether it is in education, juvenile justice, mental health, child protection or residential care and so on? How such matters as meals, study, play, sleep, and personal care addressed? (For example, how do the young people you work with feel about the products that they are



- provided with for bathing or feminine products?) For instance, how is the matter of physical restraints considered in your workplace or how do the young people you work with experience discrimination?
- 3) Since the issue of violence is so pervasive despite the right of young people to be free from it, how do you discuss violence with young people? There are global campaigns on violence against children (<http://www.end-violence.org/>) and against gender-based violence (<http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/take-action/16-days-of-activism>) that includes the current 16 days of activism in South Africa; see <https://www.parliament.gov.za/project-event-details/3>). Is violence in the lives of young people acknowledged within your institution and how is it addressed (or not)? How could a rights-based approach to violence change our prevention and intervention efforts?
- 4) Organize events to bring young people together whether within your institution or across your community, city, region or country. For example, Shaking the Movers (STM) is an important opportunity for young people in different regions of Canada to consider a different child rights topic each year. Participants discuss the topic, how it is experienced, and their ideas for solutions. The final report is then forwarded to decision-makers and considered during annual meetings of the Child Rights Academic Network. (See further <https://carleton.ca/landonpearsoncentre/shaking-the-movers/> (includes a model for collaborative consultation and final reports) and <https://carleton.ca/landonpearsoncentre/cran-child-rights-academic-network/>) At Ryerson University in Toronto, our Child and Youth Care students are involved in STM. They organize and run participatory activities and contribute to learning about children's



- rights of both participants and students. What would work in your community and how can young people support you?
- 5) Identify and support child rights groups, including national child rights coalitions or networks, or groups of young people working on issues of concern to them. Let young people with whom you work know about these efforts if you think that they would be interested (without applying any pressure of course). For instance, there are networks for children in care, monitoring children's rights, young people acting against climate change, and so on that would appreciate new energy and ideas from you and other young people.
  - 6) Consider speaking and working with others concerned about young people outside the CYC field to see if there are ways of collaborating to improve child rights education. For example, how can local businesses support child rights? Can they support a child rights training workshop and/or skills development for young people in the community? Media must also be considered: What supports and opportunities exist or need to be created for young people in sharing their realities with broader audiences? For instance, Rx Radio is an amazing example of radio organized by young people at the children's hospital in Cape Town. (See <https://rxradio.co.za/>). The role of faith communities may be important to consider for some young people. Local libraries are important in the community. For example, our local branch in Mowbray, Cape Town had an educational session about human rights for young people during the October school holidays, which would be extremely unusual in Canada. What bridges for working with others to promote children's rights can you build?
  - 7) Write letters to people in authority whether in your institution or government to explain how they are supporting children's rights.



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406



For example, corporal punishment is especially topical in South Africa as there is a Constitutional Court case on the matter and legislative review. In another example, the need for greater awareness of children's rights is evident in the Canadian province of Ontario where the government announced its decision to eliminate the Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth (<https://www.provincialadvocate.on.ca>). This is particularly shocking since this Office is well-known for its critically important contributions in highlighting young people's voices and bringing about necessary legislative and policy changes to better support them. Many are now protesting the recent decision. (Engagement across and outside of the province and internationally is invited. If you are interested in contributing, please don't hesitate to contact me.) If your jurisdiction does not have such an office of the ombudsperson or commissioner that supports children's rights, consider mounting or advancing a campaign to establish and maintain an effective office to support young people.

How can child rights influence our relationships with young people? Different contexts offer valuable perspectives about children's rights. And there continues to be opposition or apathy against children's rights around the world. So I suggest that there are many opportunities to identify and seize. Disagreements about what rights are will inevitably happen but our relational approach will encourage us to address them and work together.



**December 2018**  
ISSN 1605-7406

## References

- Collins, T.M. & K. Gharabaghi. *Child Rights Education in Ontario: Making Rights Meaningful for Young People in Care*. Manuscript submitted for publication.
- Garfat, T., Freeman, J., Gharabaghi, K. & Fulcher, L. (2018). Characteristics of a Relational Child and Youth Care Approach Revised. *CYC-Online* October, pp. 7-45.
- United Nations. (1989). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 20 November, UN Doc. A/RES/44/25.
- UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. (2003). General Comment No. 5 (2003): *General measures of implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, UN Doc. CRC/GC/2003/5, 27 November.

**TARA COLLINS** is a regular contributor to CYC-Online and is an associate professor in the school of Child and Youth Care at Ryerson University. She has been a visiting professor at the Children's Institute at the University of Cape Town in South Africa for the past five months. She teaches and writes regularly on the topics of children's rights. She may be reached at [tara.collins@ryerson.ca](mailto:tara.collins@ryerson.ca)



Find us on:  
**facebook®**



**December 2018**  
ISSN 1605-7406

# What's Wrong with Professional Consultations?

**Doug Magnuson**

*I am an optimist in the sense that I believe humans are noble and honourable, and some of them are really smart.... I have a somewhat more pessimistic view of people in groups.*

**Steve Jobs**

*Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it is time to pause and reflect.*

**Mark Twain**

*The main reason I rarely show up at case conferences is easily stated: The intellectual level is so low that I find them boring, sometimes even offensive.*

**Paul Meehl**

In a field with expectations of mutual support and guidance, we often make each other less smart! In an essay entitled, "Why I do not attend case conferences," Paul Meehl (1973) explained the difficulties he encountered over the years with professional discussions. Meehl was a contemporary of Fritz Redl, with the same wit and ability to cut to the chase and, like Redl, his insights about social situations were timeless. In particular, he complained that psychiatrists and psychologists often confused the values important to groupwork with the values that lead to



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

effective case and planning meetings, leading to numerous fallacies and obstacles to clear thought.

*All evidence is equally good.* We treat everyone's opinion the same, whether that opinion is relevant or not. "A casual anecdote about one's senile uncle as remembered from childhood is given the same time and attention...." as everything else.

*Reward everything—gold and garbage alike.* The therapeutic attitude applied to professional meetings means that "the most inane remark is received with joy and open arms..."

*Asking pointless questions.* The cases we discuss are rich, and it is easy to get distracted and to begin exploring issues irrelevant to the situation.

*Barnum effect.* Saying trivial things about clients that are true about everyone, like noting that they have interpsychic conflicts or a damaged self-image.

*Sick-Sick fallacy.* Thinking of ourselves as the model of psychological and behavioural health while assuming that those not like us are sick. If you pay attention to political conversations these days, the problem is more widespread than just case conferences.

*"Me-too" and "understanding it makes it normal" fallacies.* The opposite of the sick-sick fallacy. Arguing that irrational, bad behavior would be committed by everyone, including ourselves, under the same circumstances or with the same early childhood or the same temptation. Note that this is not the same thing as trying hard to understand a client for the purposes of more effective helping.

*Uncle George's pancake fallacy.* A professional may tell a story of a distant relative with the same problem as the client, with the implication that this makes the problem not a problem. "Uncle George stored pancakes in the attic for years."



*Crummy criterion fallacy.* Professionals expend great effort trying to “explain away” data rather than “integrating them with the interview, life history....” and current behavior of the client.

*Seductive fallacy.* Substituting the fact that someone is a patient, client, or participant with the inference that they have clinical problems. Just because someone is a client does not necessarily mean they have severe problems.

*The spun glass theory of the mind.* The “doctrine” that children are so frail that feedback, ordinary life frustrations, and rejection will cause major trauma, even though their lives provide ample evidence they are resilient.

*Double standard of evidential standards.* Sometimes we rely on anecdote, personal experience, and intuition to make consequential judgments about other people, while holding others’ judgments to a stricter standard than our own.

There are a series of problems related our assessment and interpretation of clients, often connected to statistical logic. One is over- or under-interpreting the significance of an event or behaviour based on small changes in frequency, even though the reliability of judgment is well known to be variable. We also make inferences to trait attributions based on too little data, tending to ignore the larger and longer context of behavior and attitudes. Finally, we often use categories about clients whose measurements or interpretations do not distinguish between them. Meehl’s example is schizophrenia in the 1960s, when its diagnosis overlapped significantly with other assessments. Contemporary examples include depression, anxiety, troubled, mature, responsible and at-risk. Some professionals assume that because a child has suffered some adverse event, it automatically means they will have future problems, or they assume that when a child has a problem it can be explained by some



past adverse event, even though the causal relationship between these is difficult to establish and is often spurious.

All of these waste time-ours and others—and contribute to poor quality thought about children, youth, and families. Meehl's criticisms of case conferences are an effective warning about our own behavior in meetings and an encouragement to help each other improve the sophistication of our case planning.

## Reference

Meehl, P.E. (1973). *Psychodiagnosis: Selected papers*. Minneapolis (MN): University of Minnesota Press, pp. 225-302.

# SAVE THE DATE



## Visit the Conference Website for details



**December 2018**  
ISSN 1605-7406

# More Voices from Autism in School

Introduced by Nancy Marshall

The following letters are four submissions (a continuation from issue 234 in August 2018) from culturally diverse autistic<sup>1</sup> students integrated into an inner city high school setting. The letters are addressed to CYC practitioners who support marginalized autistic youth everywhere. This issue's themes include transitioning out of high school, working on goals, successes, and fitting in- all from the voices of four more incredibly talented and creative young people. These four students are either in their last year of high school or are moving on to College and the work place. You will notice, at times, there is no editing to grammatical or spelling errors. This editing is avoided intentionally to keep the authenticity of voice intended by the young writers. Brown (2017), autistic self-advocate and author notes, "... Often, editing that focuses too much on "proper" spelling, grammar, punctuation, and other aspects of language ...[devalues] and [erases] language uses of racialized, poor and working-class, and un- or informally educated people ...(which is often related to class, race, and disability)" (pp. viii-x). I believe this to be a very important point of consideration as we work toward inclusion and acceptance of persons with disabilities everywhere.

---

<sup>1</sup> Special note- the term 'autistic' is used intentionally to align with autistic self-advocates' pride in advocating for identity-first language (for more information on identity-first language see: <http://autisticadvocacy.org/about-asan/identity-first-language>).



December 2018

ISSN 1605-7406

Again, it is an honour to know these young people and I am incredibly grateful for these gifts. In the last issue, I remarked on how school-based settings can emphasize compliance and performance outcomes as measures of success. When reading statements from students such as: “I don’t need to be treated like a baby, cause I’m not a baby”, my heart sinks. I wonder, in our aim to support young people to perform their best, to be different in the minutia of their lives to achieve enduring success (Garfat & Fulcher, 2012), do we also respect their own unique forms of self-determination? Or, is it possible, that with the best of intentions, we hover just a little too much? Again, these are important reflections.

I hope you enjoy these letters as much as I do. And, as you read them, take time to reflect on the supports offered to autistic young adults. This support will look different all over the world. It is my sincere hope that globally, we can advance toward the attainment of human rights together.

Let us listen.

### ***A Letter from JP: “I’m Determined, Smart, and Brave”***

*Dear CYW:*

The one thing that I’ve always been working on throughout high school and continue to work on this year is making friends. I feel that I pretty much completed this goal. The one goal I want for next year is to go outside of my house more coming into college because I see that a lot of my friends get to go out more often and not me. I may not come out as an enthusiastic or funny person all the time but that doesn’t mean I always lose faith in myself.

I may be able to overcome a few challenges at school here and there, but, there are still more challenge I face day to day. My biggest challenge at school is seeing whether or not I can trust anyone in my class to be



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406



completely successful in my life. For instance, I partnered up with a classmate in my Marketing class. We were both working together on two posters and a report talking about the History of Best Buy™ as well as a PowerPoint™ explaining Best Buy. I emailed him the PowerPoint so that he can add some information but when he emailed it back to me, he didn't add anything at all. He wasn't efficient in the work and it got me really frustrated, so, I had to take matters to my own hands to complete the whole PowerPoint myself. When I saw that he didn't add anything on the PowerPoint, It drove me crazy. Sometimes I see some students that may be up to no good, but that does not affect or dictate my performance in school.

Although College will be an exciting year for me, I also have some anxieties going to college. One thing I'm scared about is the routine of college such as the payments on books and equipment, although OSAP will cover tuition and some other payments. I worry I will be starting completely fresh and that whatever effort I put in my current school won't be enough for my future school. This is the one thing I will have some anxiety about because I can't be on a slump and waste money.

The strengths I've always had throughout my high school, and even my middle school, can be used to proceed through college. Those include that I'm Determined, Smart, and Brave to challenges overall. I always tend to be on top of my assignments and work as long as I can until I give up and get tired. With these skills and me acting on them, I will surely overcome my challenges and anxieties.

Even though I've been a really good student, I could still use support from the teachers and guidance before I leave high school. I may lose some support of the teachers and guidance counsellors, but, I still have my IEP [Individual Education Plan]. When I officially start off college and show my IEP, I can still gain the support I need such as extra time or more help.

J.P.



***A Letter from Mohamed: “I have to concentrate to connect with people”***

*Dear CYW,*

Hi, my name is Mohamed; I'm going to miss you guys when I graduate. Before I get started with this letter, I would like to tell you that one goal I have been working on throughout this year is I want to improve my mark by listening and participating. I was facing my challenges at school day to day by picking a partner because I have to concentrate to connect with people. Next year,

I want to work at a grocery store, I think it will be good but I'm nervous. Now, I think that one of my strengths is that I am good at working with others; this is a good strength to have for the workplace because I need to co-operate with others to get the job done. Another one of my strengths is that I'm good at swimming and basketball. These sports make me excited and give me something fun to do after high school! I could use the support of a CYW to help with transitioning to working in a different place. I could use some support practicing skills for working at a grocery store such as, stocking shelves, boxing thing, carrying food items, learning how to use a cash register, and job interviews.

In conclusion, I do think it will be sad to say goodbye to my high school and everybody. I will miss students, teachers and Best Buddies™. I will stop here. Thank you for being supportive, and sharing with us.

From Mohamed.



**December 2018**

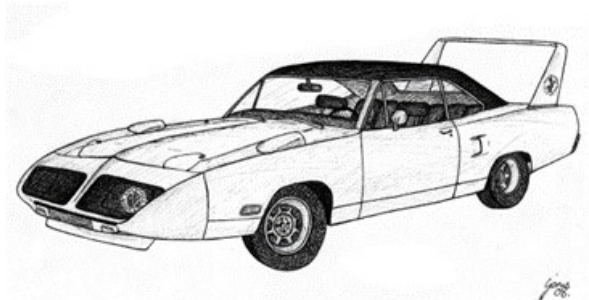
ISSN 1605-7406

## ***A Letter from Sean: "I was alone... [and] bullied"***

*Dear CYW,*

Life at high school has been one of, if not the best, experiences for me. It's literally the best school I've been in but some ask me what did happen to me before high school. Well, some of it wasn't easy for me.

My first year of middle school was ok but I had a few issues. For starters, my friend was kind of nuts because he did silly things and liked the movie Cars 2. But he left the following year and I was alone which leads me to the next and biggest issue. I was bullied a lot making grade 7 one of the hardest years for me. However, things got better in grade 8 when I met another friend. He taught me how to play Minecraft™ and we had a lot of fun.



Then we make it to grade 9 and this is the year that I changed my life. First of all, it's a new school and new people but I found my old best Friend. We were in shock to see each other in the same school again because we were in junior school together. We decided to join a friendship program called Best Buddies™ and boy did it change me.



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

Now a days I'm in grade 12 and taking a fifth year so I can do co-op and my friend is graduating but we'll keep in touch. Plus I was on the swim team for four years in a row.

Every challenge I faced this year from projects, to swim team tasks, to planning Best Buddies™ events, I went through most like a breeze. While others, I took my time on. After high school I'm not sure if I'll fit in at collage or if the work will be harder than I thought. However, I'll overcome by talking to someone and practicing stress relief and doing things that I'm good at like designing paint jobs for cars. Feedback is good for me in case I did something wrong and it gives me support. It just took me a while to see that. This year I feel I made Best Buddies great this year and I hope to do it again.

Well, I'm sure you're a great CYW and I'm hoping to work with you soon.

From Sean.

***A Letter from Shauna: "I don't need to be treated any differently"***

*Dear CYW,*

When you treat me the same I appreciate it, right? I don't need to be treated any differently. Look, there are certain things that take me longer to figure out, or that I am just not as good at, but I have strengths.

Oh, and as far as jobs go, stop suggesting the gaming industry. Here is the thing, people think that if you have special needs there are only two jobs you can do, pushing shopping carts in a grocery store or stocking shelves like a robot or robot minion, or working in the gaming industry.

And those are the people I just want to throw down an abandoned mine shaft like in Minecraft™, LOL. I want to feed them to zombies. Just kidding! People with special needs can do any job they have the skills for.



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

Not every person wants to stock shelves or push shopping carts at a grocery store, or design video games. Nope! I would rather work at Freddy's™ with the killer robots. Yes, I'd rather get stalked by killer robots for five nights than work for Nintendo or something. ... I like playing video games. Big, big difference!

And, I am happy I don't need an educational assistant in college. I don't need it now because in college they are more chill. What it boils down to is I have strengths and weaknesses. When you realize I don't need to be treated like a baby, cause I'm not a baby, that I can be treated like the students, I really appreciate it.

I appreciate people who really do care and you know, they keep on trying. But, it's like, you don't have to make things perfect. Some stuff works, some stuff doesn't. People need to work together. Special needs or not special needs, everyone needs to work together to help people get what's needed.

I hope this helps!

Shauna

## References

- Brown, L. X. Z. (2017). A note on process. In L. X. Z. Brown, E. Ashkenazy, & M.G. Onaiwu (Eds.), *All the weight of our dreams: On living racialized autism* (pp. viii-x) [Kindle Version]. Lincoln, NE: DragonBee Press.
- Garfat, T., & Fulcher, L.C. (2012). Characteristics of a relational child and youth care approach. In T. Garfat, & L. Fulcher (Eds.), *Child and Youth Care in Practice* (pp. 5-24). Cape Town: CYC Net Press.

**NANCY MARSHALL** M.A., B.A. (CYC) has been working full-time in school-based autism programs in Toronto, Canada. She may be reached at [marshall.nancy@gmail.com](mailto:marshall.nancy@gmail.com)



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

# **The Supervisor's Responsibility and Privilege to Mentor New Practitioners**

**Pawel Biedrzycki**

When an individual has made the decision to enter the field of Child and Youth Care, the assumption may be made by the supervisor that this person is invested and has given the work serious consideration (or not!). The supervisor who has accepted this new recruit then has a responsibility to guide, teach, train and care for the individual as they grow into becoming an effective, qualified and experienced practitioner. Whether this new recruit is ill equipped, lacking confidence or seemingly disinterested, the attitude of the supervisor is key to developing the hidden potential within this up and coming practitioner (Wade & Jones, 2015). Much like the relationship between a mentor and learner, it is important that the supervisor does everything they can to help support and strengthen the growth of the practitioner to become more experienced, equipped and trained than even the supervisor one day (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1975). It is this type of approach that is needed to grow the caring profession and advance the understanding of what it means to be an effective and respected CYC practitioner (Maier, 2010). The importance of a good supervisor is not to be overlooked, as they are a key figure in supporting practitioners to become the best helper they can be (Omand, 2010). Even the most sought out, successful and well-trained



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

practitioners who started their careers as rookies benefitted from the influence of not only one supervisor, but various members of multi-disciplinary teams and, of course, young people themselves.

The supervisor's foremost responsibility is to advance the supervisee in becoming a more equipped, knowledgeable, skillful and talented practitioner. This is not only beneficial for the new individual, but also for the profession, the workplace and young people. It is important for the supervisor to prepare and be the guide that the individual needs in order to work towards becoming a strong and competent practitioner (McQuaid, 2017). The current generation of practitioners needs to motivate and encourage up and coming practitioners in order to meet the future demands of our profession. Being a catalyst for this type of growth needs to be the desire of anyone who is privileged to be in a leadership role that touches, cares for and is responsible for so many lives (Rich, Kempin, Loughlin, Vitale, Wurmser & Thrall, 2015).

Graves (2005) attributes her own career success and competence to an early relationship with a supervisor, who supported her path to learning different techniques, strategies and interventions. Truly great supervisors are able to uniquely engage their supervisees in the hopes of allowing them to learn, grow, fail, succeed and receive constructive feedback and criticism. This serves to strengthen their development, understanding, skills and abilities, and grants them the opportunity to model what they learn from other experienced professionals in the hopes of finding themselves as effective workers (Kalen, Ponzer & Silen, 2012).

It is a vital aspect of the supervisor's role to support a supervisee to learn how to become satisfied with their job, to advance their career from trainee positions and to demonstrate emotional health and practice skills (McQuaid, 2017). Similarly of importance is for supervisors to help their supervisees value the role of supervision and support them to take



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

responsibility for their own learning and professional development. This can discourage complacency, a lack of will and dependency on the supervisor from the supervisee which promotes operative, self-regulating and component practitioners (Kravetz, 1985). Effective leaders arrange organizational conditions and methods of operation so that people can achieve their goals by directing their own efforts toward organizational objectives (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1979). An effective supervisor, according to Chandler & Richardson (2005), is one who incorporates traits such as collaboration and trust using coaching to improve the entry-level practitioners' expertise.

Effective care practice requires both a flexible and individualistic approach to each person to ensure that all interactions are tailored to each specific person in a particular context. Supervisors can use strategies and relationship building techniques which best suit their apprentices, much like they would with children and young people. This allows the experienced practitioner to better guide and role model for each new recruit's needs individually, providing the unique mentorship that every new worker requires. If an experienced practitioner and entry-level practitioner are unable to connect, take part in open dialogues and interactions and build nurturing, supportive professional relations with each other, then it is often the supervisor who has failed in their role (Delano, 2010). The supervisor is the one who is required to demonstrate effective leadership skills and capabilities in order to ensure this experience is meaningful and successful, not only for themselves but also for the learner. It is in this type of relationship where the supervisee ought to feel most comfortable, safe and trusted to learn from the experience of making mistakes and learning, ultimately advancing themselves and the profession (Delano & Shah, 2011).





One form of effective leadership is shared by Kratevz (1985) who discusses the importance of silent, informal influence. Kratevz advocates for role-modelling, setting strong examples and not engaging or trying to settle staff disputes or conflicts unless absolutely necessary. It is not only the supervisees thirst for learning but also that of the supervisors (which in this case is to advance themselves as a strong leader and role-model) that are key components to how our new professionals carry themselves and influence others. The finest supervisors allow their supervisees to make mistakes and do not condemn, but rather are open-minded and encourage positive transformation and the desire for change. The supervisor is there to provide support to the supervisee; however, their presence must not hinder the supervisees' professional development. This can be done by the supervisor integrating three guidelines as discussed by Amulya (2002): (1) a commitment to make supervision a priority, (2) a solid awareness of self and dedication to a self-reflexive practice, and (3) accepting that mentorship is a model of leadership. As mentioned by Gonsalvez & Crowe (2014), in order for a supervisor and supervisee to be successful, their attitudes, attributes and values must be mutually respected. It is even argued that, while clinical skills are important, a person's characteristics and soft skills such as a positive attitude, flexibility, working well under pressure, the ability to accept and learn from criticism, etc. play a much larger role in how well that person performs and is able to execute their role (Beck, 2013). Clinical and theoretical understanding pales in comparison to what Gonsalves & Crowe (2014) advocate for, which are attitudes, values, characteristics and soft skills.

## **The Value of Multi-Disciplinary Teams**

Wade & Jones (2015) advocate for positive psychological supervision on a macro management level. This consists of exposure and camaraderie



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

within the multi-disciplinary team, as opposed to working alongside a solitary supervisor, who is in the same profession as the recruit. With the support of remarkable trainers, teachers and guides, the promising, ambitious practitioner will be exposed to several different sources to role model and acquire professional abilities (Masten, 2001). They will have the opportunity to seek and receive feedback and constructive criticism from different members of the multi-disciplinary team such as psychologists, nurses, social workers and other CYCs (Woods, Bond, Tyldesley, Farrell & Humphrey, 2011). This helps the recruit grow, learn, advance and become a more competent practitioner. Without proper mentorship and the benefit of working in diverse settings with assorted professionals, the apprentice's experience will not be as uniquely diverse as it could be (Wade & Jones, 2015).

Much has been written about leadership from the context of taking initiative and professional development; yet it is vital to comprehend the importance of sharing one's wisdom in such a way that it encourages the new recruit to learn, think and find themselves (Boyden & de Berry, 2004).

After much self-reflection and research from the works of Charles, Gabor & Matheson (1992), this writer advocates for the necessity of the following five characteristics to be an exceptional supervisory practitioner:

- 1) Active listening – hearing others' opinions and perspectives
- 2) Patience – growth, success, achievements and accomplishments take time
- 3) Strength based approach – guide staff to utilize their strengths and aspects of their jobs that they most enjoy
- 4) Mentorship and modeling – showing that hard work, dedication, as well as self-care can lead to high levels of job satisfaction and morale



- 5) Communication and not falling into "burnout traps" – minimize the influence of staff that are negative and "burned out"

Supervisors have the responsibility to mentor practitioners that are able to transition from an apprentice role into a competent practitioner. Supervisors have a tremendous responsibility to advance our field and this begins with the influence they have on the practitioners they supervise. New practitioners must be supported in developing their own identity, resilience, commitment to a robust set of core values, and most importantly, their belief in the importance of their work alongside today's young people (Gilberg & Charles, 2002).

## References

- Amulya, J. (2002). *What is reflective practice?* Center for Reflective Community Practice Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA.
- Beck, S. (2013). The misunderstandings of the self-understanding view. *Philosophy, Psychiatry, & Psychology*, 20(1), 33-42.
- Boyden, J. & de Berry, J. (Eds.). (2004). *Children and youth on the front line*. New York, NY: Berghahn Books.
- Chandler, S., & Richardson, S. (2005). *100 Ways to Motivate Others: How Great Leaders Can Produce Insane Results Without Driving People Crazy*. Franklin Lakes, N.J.: Career Press.
- Charles, G., Gabor, P., & Matheson, J. (1992). An analysis of supervision of beginning child and youth care workers. *The Clinical Supervisor*, 10(1), 21-33.
- Delano, F. (2010) "If I could supervise my supervisor...": A model for child and youth care workers to "own their own supervision". *Journal of Child and Youth Care*. 183.
- Delano, F. & Shah, J. (2011). Games Played in the Supervisory Relationship: The Modern Version. *Relational Child and Youth Care Practice*, 24(1-2), 177- 185.
- Gilberg, S. and Charles, G. (2002). Child and Youth Care Practice: The foundation for great supervision. *Journal of Child and Youth Care*, 15(2), 23-31
- Gonsalvez, C. J., & Crowe, T. P. (2014). Evaluation of psychology practitioner competence in clinical supervision. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 68(2), 177-93. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.lib.ryerson.ca/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ryerson.ca/docview/1557118544?accountid=13631>



- Graves, S (2005). Supervision: What it means to me. *eJournal of International Child and Youth Care Network (CYC-Net)* – ISSN 1605-7406, Issue 74, March 2005
- Kalen S, Ponzer S. & Silen C. (2012). The core of mentorship: Medical students' experiences of one-to-one mentoring in a clinical environment. *Advances in Health Sciences Education*. 17(3), 389–401.
- Kravetz, D. J. (1985). *Getting noticed: A manager's success kit*. New York: Wiley, c1985
- Maier, W.H. (2010). Teaching and Training as a Facet of Supervision of Care Staff: An overview. *Journal of the International Child and Youth Care Network (CYC-Net)* – ISSN 1605-7406, ISSUE 37, August 2010.
- Masten, A. S. (2001). Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development. *American Psychologist*, 56(3), 227–238.
- McQuaid, M. (2017). Positive psychology coaching: An approach for human flourishing. *Organisationsberatung, Supervision, Coaching*, 24(3), 283-296. doi:10.1007/s11613-017-0510-8
- Omand, L. (2010). What makes for good supervision and whose responsibility is it anyway? *Psychodynamic Practice*, 16(4), 377-392. 10.1080/14753634.2010.512124
- Rich, M., Kempin, B., Loughlin, M. J., Vitale, T. R., Wurmser, T., & Thrall, T. H. (2015). Developing leadership talent: A statewide nurse leader mentorship program. *The Journal of Nursing Administration*, 45(2), 63-66. 10.1097/NNA.0000000000000166
- Sergiovanni, T. J. & Starratt, R. J. (1979). *Supervision: Human perspectives*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Wade, J. C., & Jones, J. E. (2015). *Strength-Based Clinical Supervision: A Positive Psychology Approach to Clinical Training*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.
- Woods, K., Bond, C., Tyldesley, K., Farrell, P., & Humphrey, N. (2011). The role of school psychologists in child protection and safeguarding. *School Psychology International*, 32(4), 361-376. 10.1177/0143034311406812.

**PAWEL BIEDRZYCKI** is a Registered Psychotherapist in the Greater Toronto Area in Ontario, Canada. With an Advanced Diploma (Centennial College) and Bachelor's Degree (Ryerson University) in Child and Youth Care, he is completing a Master of Arts in Child and Youth Care at Ryerson University. He has previously served as a rehabilitation therapist, crisis worker, school-based CYC, and mental health counsellor. Pawel may be reached at [pawel.biedrzycki@ryerson.ca](mailto:pawel.biedrzycki@ryerson.ca)



# Reflections: My Work in Residential Care in Egypt

Hamido Megahead

I have graduated from Helwan University in Cairo, Egypt as a qualified social work practitioner. Before my graduation, I received my social work field education in the fourth year of BSW (Bachelor of Science in Social Work) at one of the only male residential child care associations, in Cairo, Egypt. Once I graduated I went to the manager of this residential child care association and asked for work as residential social worker. The manager accepted my request and I worked there for a year before I moved to work at the university and higher education setting.

In Egypt there are three types of residential care associations. The first type of residential care association is for male children from the age of 2 to 19 or 21 years old. The second type is for both male and female children from the age of 2 to 19 or 21 years old (an example of this mixed sex type is the SOS Children's Villages). The third type is for only female residential children from the age of 2 to 19 or 21 years old. However, in this third type, it has included very young male residential children (from age 2 to 12 years old). Once they have reached 12 years old, they have been moved to another placement in one of the only male residential children associations.

## The Plight

The nature of my position was temporary work. There was previously high turnover in this role and there was one week off for every three weeks



December 2018

ISSN 1605-7406

on each month. My role included 24 hour and 7 days a week supervision of the children in this child care residential association. My tasks were also to focus on tracking and follow up with their educational, emotional health, and social development. During my responsibilities, I observed these residential children had been unable to initiate or form any social relationships with their residential setting, including with myself. They had also been unable to develop any social relationships with their residential brothers (their age was from 12-19 or 21 years old). My professional activities with these children were to help them develop satisfying social relationships with their residential brothers and their residential care-giving persons. There had been no programmes or specific social work interventions offered to them to help them to get rid of or overcome their struggles with social relationships.

I discussed this problem with my line manager. I asked him for help and support in relation to addressing this significant problem. He responded that *"we have neither funding, expertise nor the equipment to carry out any additional programmes other than the mainstream and usual day to day practice"*. The day to day practice included the following elements. At 6:30 am, the children got up in the morning and took their breakfast. At 7:30 am I took them to their school outside their residential child care association. At 3:00 pm, they were brought from their school, having had lunch, completed school homework. Once with us we shared dinner together. At 9:00 pm, they went to their bed for sleep.

## **The Pressure**

Having seen the reality of this day to day practice in this specific setting, I have followed a unique approach to help these children. I have found that in the mixed sex residential programs the residential care children have difficulties in initiating, forming and setting up satisfying and fruitful social



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

relationships with their caregiving residential mothers and the same with their residential brothers and sisters in the village.

I have found that these attachment difficulties are attributed to caregivers leaving the villages for one week in four to care for their own families, and also the high turnover of caregivers. During the admission, social work practitioners have examined the child's history and record their past experiences and classify them based on their past experiences and history. For example, children who have been neglected, children whose biological families had accidents and/or disaster, children whose biological parents are not able to care for them in the way those children need and orphan children of both parents who had no relatives to care for them (Kellany, 2001; Megahead & Cesario, 2008; Megahead, 2010). Each SOS Children Village has included an administration building and a small number of residential homes (average  $n=25$  homes). In each residential home there are a caregiving mother and a number of residential children (males ( $n=3$ ) and females ( $n=3$ )) (Mustafa & Eywais, 1980).

While each child has been living in their residential home, separations by gender have occurred from the age of 6. They have enrolled in public schools. At the age of 13, the males are grouped into groups of six and have two supervisors for their education. At the age of 18 or 21, the females have moved to youth hostels on the village premises and remained there until they complete their education and, for some, get married (El Noshokaty, 2004). For males, they have graduated and continue to prepare themselves for their independent life (Mustafa & Eywais, 1980).

It is an employment condition in Egyptian SOS villages that mothers should not be married. Employment in Egyptian SOS villages is ended once a woman begins her own private family and home life (e.g. Mustafa & Eywais, 1980; Abedel. Mageed, 1990). The instability and discontinuity of these caregiving mothers has caused attachment problems for children.



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

Care-giving mothers leaving these SOS children for a week or so have caused attachment problems of children with their care-giving mother. The children whose care-giving mothers are away experience upset during the period of their absence (Gibbons, 2005).

The high turnover of these care-giving mothers is also a critical issue. Once they have earned enough money for their marriage preparation, they tend to give up their care-giving job to others who are going to do the same (Gibbons, 2005).

## **The Process**

Having understood the possible causes of this problem I have been thinking to try out some social work interventions with these children. I found that possible solutions for these attachment difficulties could be concentrating on directing and implementing professional social work intervention with the care-giving mother and the residential brothers and sisters. For example, a health focused, psycho-educational model which addresses the care-giving residential mother and the residential brothers and sisters could be helpful (Pinderhughes & Rosenberg, 1990). This psycho-educational model included several therapeutic interventions designed to facilitate an understanding of the experiences of the care-giving residential mother and the residential brothers and sisters.

One such intervention is Holding Therapy which has its premise that children lack trust of their care-giving mother, and their residential brothers and sisters. With the goal of facilitating trust and building an attachment to their care-giving mother, Holding Therapy engages the social work practitioner and subsequently the care-giving mother in physically holding the residential child. This process allows the residential child to regress and reveal angry feelings about their past. With repeated episodes, the residential child is expected to loosen rigid behaviours and



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406



the need for control and develops trust in their care-giving mother, ultimately leading to attachment. The purpose is to facilitate an environment where it is possible for the residential child to develop a secure attachment and a sense of conscience (Pinderhughes & Rosenberg, 1990).

Another type of social work intervention is filial therapy. It is used as a means of strengthening social relationships between the care-giving mother and the residential children (Capps, 2012). The filial therapy can be an effective method for strengthening parent-child relationships can be used to strengthening social relationships between the care-giving mothers and the residential children. A filial therapy technique is a viable option for building attachment, particularly when implemented in conjunction with more traditional therapies. Filial therapy is a therapeutic intervention that focuses on improving the parent-child relationship. Although this modality has been traditionally applied to young children, this intervention as well as hold therapy can be adapted to residential children and their residential mothers (and residential social Workers) in Egypt. This intervention has promoted connectedness between the residential mother (and residential social worker) and residential child. Using filial therapy with residential adolescents and their residential mothers has the potential to strengthen the connection between the two parties and thus potentially improve the longevity and satisfaction with the residential care placement. Because an emphasis of filial therapy is on open and empathic communication, it may decrease behavioural struggles and increase thoughtful communication and problem solving between the residential mothers and the residential care adolescent. It allows the opportunity for intentional, consistent interaction between the residential care adolescents and the residential mothers. Attachment is used here to



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

imply an increase in trust and an increase in the residential mother–residential child bond (Guerney, 1964; Capps, 2012).

## Conclusions

Within the difficult economic context of residential care associations in Egypt and its day to day practice, I have been able to independently work and guide myself and my future colleagues, social work practitioners to possibly overcome the problems of social relationships that residential children have been experienced. While this is an enormous task, my residential social workers colleagues in the association offered some help in terms of discussion the causes and the concerned social relationship problem of these children.

There are many lessons learned from my experience. First of all, I did not depend on the support and help for my line manager and my residential care association. However, alternatively, I did have some discussion and deliberations with the other residential care associations to know whether this problem was only for my residential care association or if it had also existed in the other associations. While I have found the same problems existed in the other associations, this action helped me to know and understand the causes of this problem, because the causes of this problem have been clearly seen in these other settings. These causes have been clearly seen within the context of caregiving residential mothers, while they have been obscured within the context of caregiving residential male persons. Once I knew and understood the causes of this problem, the process of selecting the suitable and relevant social work intervention started to emerge. By these two sorts of social work interventions; holding therapy and filial therapy, social work practitioners can help residential care children to overcome their social relationships challenges.



## References

- Abedel-Mageed, E. (1990). *Planning substitute social welfare services: An Applied study between children village SOS and Family foster care in Social Affairs Department in Cairo*. Doctorate Dissertation, Faculty of Social Work. Helwan University, Cairo, Egypt.
- El Noshokaty, A. (2004). Home alone, *Elahram Weekly Newspaper*. Issue no. 685, El-aharam Organization, Cairo, Egypt.
- Capps, J.E. (2012) Strengthening Foster Parent-Adolescent Relationships through Filial Therapy, *the Family Journal*, 20(4), 427-432
- Gibbons, J. (2005) Orphanages in Egypt, *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 40(4), 261-285.
- Guerney, B (1964). Filial therapy: Description and rationale. *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, 28, 304-310.
- Kellany, L. (2001). National and professional services in order to look after and promote children. In T. Gibreal, A. Goher & A. Abdou (Eds.), *The advanced generalist practice of social work in the field of family and childhood welfare* (pp.385-446), Helwan University, Cairo, Egypt.
- Megahead, H.A. (2010) Non-relative Family Foster Care in Egypt, *Relational Child & Youth Care Practice*, 23(1), 25-33.
- Megahead, H. A. & Cesario, S (2008) Family Foster Care, Kinship Networks, and Residential Care of Abandoned Infants in Egypt, *Journal of Family Social Work*, 11(4), 463 – 477.
- Mustafa, A., & Eywais, S. (1980). *Research on Evaluating Family Foster Care*, National Centre of Sociological and Criminological Studies, Cairo: Egypt.
- Pinderhughes, E. & Rosenberg, K. (1990). Family-bonding with high risk placements: a therapy model that promotes the process of becoming a family in Glidden, L.M. (ed.) *Formed Families: Adoption of children with handicaps* (pp 209-230), Binghamton: The Haworth Press.

**HAMIDO MEGAHEAD** is currently affiliated with Education Authority in the Belfast Region of Northern Ireland, United Kingdom. He was formerly a faculty member staff of the Department of Fields of Social Work Practice at Helwan University in Cairo, Egypt. He may be reached at [megahead2001@hotmail.com](mailto:megahead2001@hotmail.com).



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

# Vulnerable Youth in Halton Region: CYCs Share their Perceptions

**Kamelija Velkovska, Thomas Howe, Bethany Osborne and Ferzana Chaze**

## Abstract

*This paper reports on responses and findings collected from 25 Child and Youth Care (CYC) practitioners and 11 Social Workers who work with vulnerable youth aged 4-19 in the Halton Region in Ontario, Canada. CYCs and Social Workers who participated in the study provided feedback on their experiences working with vulnerable youth. This article describes the participants' work with youth, the needs of youth as assessed by the respondents, and the challenges the CYCs and Social Workers face with vulnerable youth. Lastly, the authors summarize recommendations made by survey participants.*

## Introduction

Child and Youth Care Workers (CYCs) play an integral role in the development of children and young people. CYCs give attention to the infant, child and youth within the context of the family, the community, as well as the lifespan (Brown, 2018). According to Anglin (2001), child and youth workers are concerned with the “totality of the child’s functioning”, as opposed to fixating on certain aspects to determine challenges in functioning, as is often the case with some physicians who are primarily



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

concerned with physical health, or some probation officers who are concerned with criminal behaviour. This article reports on the findings of an online survey with CYCs and Social Workers in a school district in the Halton Region of Ontario, Canada. The survey was a part of a larger research study on the service needs of vulnerable youth in the Halton region (Chaze, Osborne & Howe, 2017). The findings of the survey provide important insights into the work of CYCs and youth in schools, the challenges they face in this work and their recommendations for better supports for vulnerable youth in the Halton Region. As previously mentioned, the CYCs' key role is to focus on the developmental aspects of the child or youth, with this focus allowing the child or youth an "enhanced" sense of self (Kissoo, 2006, p. 11). CYCs also work collaboratively with the child or youth to find ways to persevere within the setting that the child or youth is experiencing difficulties in: "we work in residential centres, schools, hospitals, family homes, day care, on the streets, etc." (Anglin, 2011). Within the school system, CYCs focus on a relational approach to support behavioural, emotional and social development, while emphasizing attention to the youth's communication, personal management, and social acquisition skills. Additionally, CYCs address any needs as they arise, ranging from concerns such as difficulties managing friendships, challenges around classroom expectations, and establishing appropriate behaviours with "life space interventions" (Toronto School Board, 2014).

## Methodology

The findings in this report incorporate survey data from 36 CYCs and social workers from two school boards in the Halton Region. Ethics approval for the study was received from Sheridan College Research Ethics board and from the ethics board of two school boards. The CYCs and social



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

workers were contacted through an internal listserv at both school boards through either the Manager or the REB representatives. All CYCs and social workers were invited to respond but they were allowed to respond anonymously. The survey was open for six weeks and two reminder emails were sent out during this time.

Respondents to the survey consisted of 25 CYCs, amounting to 69% of the survey respondents, and 11 Social Workers, making up 31% of survey respondents. The respondents were based in the Halton Region, with 30 of respondents equally divided among Oakville, Burlington and Milton, while 6 of the respondents worked in the sub region of Halton Hills.

## Findings

### *Profile of the participants*

All the respondents worked with vulnerable youth between 14-19 years of age, with 10 respondents working with youth aged 4 to 11 years old, 3 respondents working with youth aged 12 to 14 years old, and 5 of the respondents working with youth aged 15 to 19 years old. The remaining 18 respondents served a combination of all of the above-mentioned age categories, but none of the respondents worked with youth outside of the 4 to 19 year-old range (see Figure 1). When respondents were asked to describe the work they did, a majority of the participants (83%) defined the work they do as “targeted prevention”. Moreover, 97% of respondents stated that the work they do is “intervention” based. All respondents described the work that they do as incorporating one or more of the following: community collaboration, mental health promotion, class support, consultation, assessment, referrals, prevention, working with students in a crisis, delivering evidence-based programs in classrooms,



supporting students with personal issues, alternative education programs, ongoing follow up and support, and counselling.

### ***The needs of youth and gaps in existing services***

Eighty-eight percent of respondents identified access to mental health support and shorter waitlists for mental health services as a pressing need of youth. Participants identified many needs in relation to existing services for youth including: shorter waitlists for youth with mental health concerns, more access to free counselling; more services that support youth with anxiety, mental health support that is consistent, access to timely psychiatric consultations, and an increase in mental health programs for younger children. In addition, over 44% of the participants outlined that youth need more access to supportive educational resources. These supports would benefit youth who experience certain obstacles in consistently attending school. Another need listed by a few of the participants (30%), is that more transportation services are required. This need is especially for youth residing in North Halton (i.e. Georgetown, Halton Hills), where access to public transportation is virtually non-existent. Furthermore, three of the participants (8%) responded that food security is also a need.

Respondents recognized additional gaps in youth services within the North Halton region. They observed that there are significant challenges associated with accessing programs, services and resources in their communities. Some of these gaps include: inaccessibility, affordability, issues with gathering and comprehending information on services, and long wait-lists. Issues related to inaccessibility in North Halton include: the lack of programs to support youth who are disengaged in the classroom, as well as support youth who are unable to regularly attend school. Also, respondents specified that aside from traditional sports programs for



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

youth, there is a deficit of social programs that allow younger children to develop and strengthen their self-esteem and social skills. As mentioned, affordability is also an issue in accessing programs and services for youth, with respondents noting that there is a lack of programs, services and resources that provide support for free, or at a rate that would be appropriate for low-income households. There was also concern expressed by the participants with respect to long wait-lists and participant number caps – as many youth are turned away from certain programs, services and resources if they do not meet both a need or criteria that is outlined by the respective agency.

Participants further identified that there are limited services and resources geared towards younger children, specifically skill-building groups and programs which allow elementary aged children to develop positive assets. Moreover, there is an increased need for concurrent programs and services, which support youth who are grappling with mental health and addiction concerns. As discussed, long wait-lists remain a major issue for youth and families attempting to access mental health services and book appointments with counsellors, doctors and psychiatrists, meaning that youth are often unable to access these supports in a timely manner. Respondents identified a significant lack of resources available to youth and families residing in North Halton, except for the supports that are provided within the schools. Another need identified by the participants is the lack of affordable housing options for youth in Halton, which is a foremost concern for homeless and transient youth. Respondents further identified that there is a lack of long-term wrap-around services to provide more comprehensive mental health support. Many of the agencies employ a solution-based model, which sadly offers youth a pre-determined amount of counselling sessions on a short-term basis. This has been shown to be detrimental for youth as many are



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406



left without adequate support over long periods of time, and puts them at greater risk for recurrent mental health issues (see Figure 2).

## **Challenges of working with youth**

The survey respondents were asked open-ended questions in terms of what they believed the challenges were in working with vulnerable youth. One of the challenges was that they often felt forced to compete with social media devices and found that this has caused youth to disengage from school and their families. Respondents also pointed out the complexities related to supporting the needs of all students in a large school, with many of the CYCs stating the need for added CYC support in schools. They also found it challenging to involve the parents and families of youth that they work with. Many noted that the youth they work with have families who struggle with significant personal issues, which hinders their ability to ensure the well-being of their child. Similarly, survey respondents detailed that a significant challenge facing families of youth is transportation; public transportation can be costly or non-existent in certain parts of Halton Region, making it difficult for CYCs and social workers to refer youth to appropriate services and programs, especially if the agency is in a different part of Halton.

Participants felt they experienced challenges in supporting youth with complex mental health concerns. Youth grapple with increasingly complex and severe mental health concerns, ranging from anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation. This puts CYCs and social workers in a rather difficult situation as they may not be equipped with the skills or resources to address these needs. Respondents mentioned that another challenge is the issue of bullying on social media. Survey respondents stated that working with existing community agencies presented some challenges, specifically when staff members are unable to get an immediate response



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

from community supports as a consequence of program requirements enforced by many agencies. As a result, youth are denied access to programs and services for which they do not meet the criteria and are forced to seek alternative treatment options outside of the region. Respondents noted that they face difficulty supporting families who are trying to access services in North Halton as well, as North Halton has significantly fewer services available to youth and their families when compared to South Halton (i.e. Burlington and Oakville).

## **Recommendations**

Respondents made several recommendations to address the gaps in programming and services, which allow a better response to the needs of youth. Respondents have recommended an increase and improvement to mental health services, which would allow for a better response to the growing mental health needs. This would involve more therapists and programs intended to support the mental health needs of children, along with an increase in resources to aid families of children with mental health concerns. Moreover, participants suggested more exposure to mental health resources and information in places like public libraries, schools and online. Based on our findings we advise that mental health resources and strategies are incorporated into the student curriculum to better equip youth in addressing their mental health needs.

As limited funding has made adequate programming difficult, a major recommendation made by survey respondents was to increase the funding for youth mental health programming. Further, participants suggested increases to early intervention and prevention programming for vulnerable youth, which would serve to provide preventative programming to address the mental health concerns of youth before they become acute. Respondents noted that early intervention and preventative programming



may reduce criminal behaviour, unemployment, addictions, and hospitalizations of future interventions. Survey respondents additionally urged for an increase in the amount of wrap-around services available in Halton Region, including more long-term services for youth, as well as families of children affected by mental health. Likewise, respondents recommended an increase in CYCs and social workers in schools, which includes increases made to the number of full-time employees, as well as the overall number of hours CYCs and social workers are allocated, in order to better meet the needs of youth.

## **Conclusion**

The article shared data collected from 25 CYCs and 11 Social Workers who work with vulnerable youth aged 4-19 years of age in the Halton Region. The findings of this survey point to the need for greater access to mental health services in the Halton Region for youth, along with shorter wait-lists to access these services. Another major gap discussed was the lack of adequate transportation in the Halton Region, especially in North Halton, which is problematic for youth and their families when attempting to access services in other parts of the region. The challenges that CYCs and social workers face were further examined, with respondents reiterating that supporting youth with mental health is one of their biggest challenges. Several recommendations were put forth by the CYCs and social workers who completed the surveys, which included making a distinct improvement to mental health services for youth, increases made to funding mental health programming for youth, and an increase in the number of CYCs and social workers in the schools. Funding also remains a crucial gap in terms of allowing organizations in Halton Region to continue to implement helpful programming for youth, along with having the ability to keep existing and effective programming going. While the data



discussed in this paper reflects both the needs of youth and the experiences the respondents have in supporting them in Halton Region, the information obtained lays a foundation for research and dialogue on the needs of youth in surrounding regions.

# SAVE THE DATE

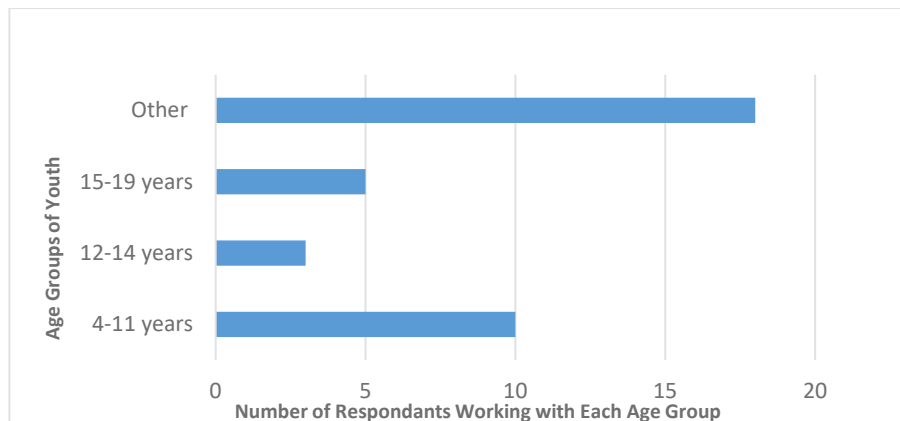


**Visit the Conference Website for details**

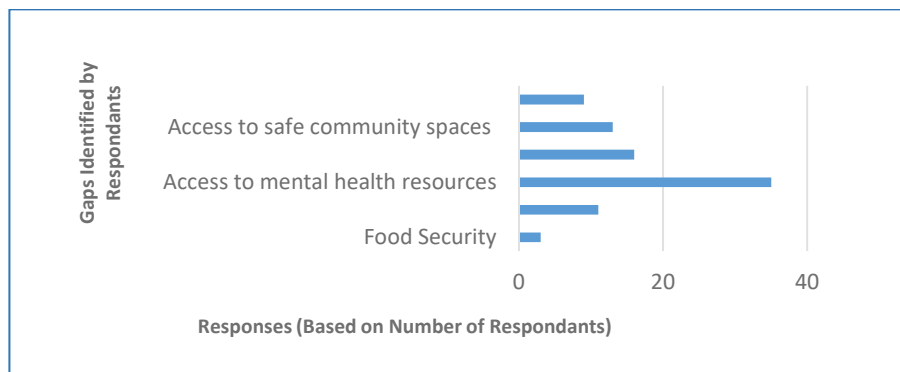


**December 2018**  
ISSN 1605-7406

## Appendix



**Figure 1. Ages of Youth Respondents Work with.**



**Figure 2. Needs/ Gaps in Programming/ Services Observed by Respondents.**

## References

- Anglin, J. (2001). Child and youth care: a unique profession. *CYC-Online*, 35. Retrieved from [www.cyc-net.org/cyc-online/cycol-1201-anglin.html](http://www.cyc-net.org/cyc-online/cycol-1201-anglin.html)
- Brown, N. (2018, April 12). Celebrating the important role of child and youth workers. *Global social service workforce alliance*. Retrieved from [www.socialserviceworkforce.org/resources/blog/celebrating-important-role-child-and-youth-care-workers](http://www.socialserviceworkforce.org/resources/blog/celebrating-important-role-child-and-youth-care-workers)
- Chaze, F., Osborne, B., & Howe, T. (2017). Halton region youth in/ at risk research report. *Publications and Scholarships*. Retrieved from [https://source.sheridancollege.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=fahcs\\_publications](https://source.sheridancollege.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=fahcs_publications)
- Kisson, G. (2006). *The role of child and youth care practitioners in the treatment planning process* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from <http://dc.msvu.ca:8080/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10587/301/GailKissoon-MACYS-2006.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y>
- Toronto District School Board. (2014). Child and youth services. Retrieved from [www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Professional-Support-Services/Child-and-Youth-Services](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Professional-Support-Services/Child-and-Youth-Services)

**KAMELIJA VELKOVSKA** is a Social Service Worker Student at Sheridan College. She may be reached at [velkovka@sheridancollege.ca](mailto:velkovka@sheridancollege.ca)

**THOMAS HOWE** is a Social Service Worker and Gerontology Student at Sheridan College. He may be reached at [athowetho@sheridancollege.ca](mailto:athowetho@sheridancollege.ca)

**BETHANY OSBORNE** is a Professor of Community Studies at Sheridan College. She may be reached at [bethany.osborne@sheridancollege.ca](mailto:bethany.osborne@sheridancollege.ca)

**FERZANA CHAZE** is a Professor of Community Studies at Sheridan College. She may be reached at [ferzana.chaze@sheridancollege.ca](mailto:ferzana.chaze@sheridancollege.ca)



# Postcard from Leon Fulcher

*New Zealand*



*Te Kura o Waikaremoana Kapa Haka Team*

**K**ia Ora MaComrades! Where has the year gone, eh? So much has been happening, including multiple opportunities to congratulate Child and Youth Care graduates of Distinction, especially those



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

who completed the MSc in Child and Youth Care Studies by distance education with Strathclyde University in Scotland.

The past month has been a tale of two hemispheres, with Halloween and advancing Spring-time in the South while encountering approaching Winter in the North! It is always a challenge deciding what to pack for such travels.

It still fascinates me to find how the commercial extravaganza of Halloween carries across international borders, even as Elsa look-alikes, dinosaurs and Toy Story characters turn up at our door, even in the back of beyond – an hour's drive to the nearest stores! More commercial challenges then confront families where we live with the 5<sup>th</sup> November 'celebration' of Guy Fawkes Night, the



***Trick or Treaters arrived in New Zealand but also on Guy Fawkes night!***



***Fun times with local Tamariki-children of our village***



British celebration marking the anniversary of the discovery of a plot by Catholic conspirators to blow up the Houses of Parliament in London in 1605. Many people light bonfires and set off fireworks on Guy Fawkes Night, and then often stockpile fireworks for use during personal celebrations throughout the year. The poor pets in the neighborhood cower in fear. And there are the inevitable bush fires set off by fireworks and burns to children when something goes awry – which is often.

The fun part of Halloween, though, is to see children being safe and enjoying their costume efforts. Just as important was the 'capture' of lollies, candy or sweets (different names are used in different countries)!



***A lovely evening was spent with all but one of the living New Zealand Poet Laureates***



***Prof Mark Smith opened Dublin's Unity Conference about 'Reclaiming the Field'***

Living in the bush, it is not always easy to obtain access to the latest cinema showings, or the arts and literature events of past times. This year we managed the Hawkes Bay Readers and Writers Festival and were thrilled to get ticket to ***Poemlines: Coming Home*** where we were privileged to hear seven of New Zealand's Poet Laureates read a couple of poems and then introduce the next Poet Laureate with a reading from one of that poet's writings. From the first New Zealand Poet Laureate, Bill Manhire through to the current Laureate, Selina Tusitala Marsh, the list of New Zealand's greatest living poets included Rob Tuwhare for his father Hone, Elizabeth Smither,



***Unity Social Time was well organized where participants learned Celtic drumming***



***Lovely example of Unity as Ziigwan & friends shared indigenous Canada sounds***

Michele Leggott, Cilla McQueen and Ian Wedde – all reading their poetry for a grateful audience.

Then, after 25 hours of travel time and a whole lot of waiting for airline connections at multiple international airports, I arrived in Dublin for the start of the Unity

Conference and Professor Mark Smith challenging Plenary about Reclaiming

the Field from those who stand outside relational life space care and education with children and young people. It is all too easy for other professions to tell child and youth care workers what to do without ever having to engage in daily life space encounters and opportunity moments with young people in care.

Conference social time is always important and the Unity Conference organizers did great work arranging for Celtic drums to be available so that participants could receive tuition and practice experience around rhythms that provide the foundations for Celtic and Irish music.

And then there was another great opportunity moment that followed, as the same drums inspired Canadian colleagues to contribute from their own indigenous experiences, and we loved the way the new opportunities made new connections that will last for lifetimes. Old folk like me and Thom Garfat just smiled and smiled.



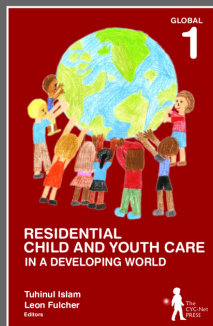
***Dublin's Unity Conference introduced a new generation of child and youth care workers***



The organizers of Dublin's Unity Conference deserved full accolades for their efforts to promote child and youth care and social care practices in Ireland, Scotland and the UK. These efforts have been especially important in nurturing a new generation of child and you care practitioners on both sides of the Atlantic, and elsewhere! This conference focuses on *Doing*, *Being* and *Interpreting* in child and youth care practice with no place to hide!



## AVAILABLE FROM THE CYC-Net PRESS



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

# Information

## Publishers

CYC-Online (ISSN 1605-7406) is an open-access e-journal published monthly by  
[The CYC-Net Press](#)

## Founding Editors

**Thom Garfat**

[thom@cyc-net.org](mailto:thom@cyc-net.org)

**Brian Gannon (1939-2017)**

## Editor

**James Freeman**

[james@cyc-net.org](mailto:james@cyc-net.org)

## Associate Editor

**Mark Smith**

[m.z.v.smith@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:m.z.v.smith@dundee.ac.uk)

## Assistant Editor

**Janice Daley**

[janicedaley@waypointsnl.ca](mailto:janicedaley@waypointsnl.ca)

## Correspondence

The Editors welcome your input, comment, requests, etc. Write to  
[cyconline@cyc-net.org](mailto:cyconline@cyc-net.org)

## Advertising

Only advertising related to the Child and Youth Care profession, programs, courses, books, conferences etc. will be accepted. Rates and specifications are listed over the page, or email [advertising@cyc-net.org](mailto:advertising@cyc-net.org)

## Columnists

**Kiaras Gharabaghi** – Ryerson University, Canada

**Jack Phelan** – Grant MacEwan University, Canada

**Hans Skott-Myhre** – Kennesaw State University, USA

**Leon Fulcher** – Transformation, New Zealand

**Doug Magnuson** – University of Victoria, Canada

**Tara Collins** – Ryerson University, Canada

**Aurora De Monte** – Fleming College, Canada



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406

## Permission to Reproduce Material

Readers are welcome to reproduce any part of this journal as desired.

## Writing for CYC-Online

*CYC-Online* is a monthly journal which reflects the activities of the field of Child and Youth Care. We welcome articles, pieces, poetry, case examples and general reflections from everyone.

In general:

- Submissions should be no longer than 2500 words
- The style of a paper is up to the author
- We prefer APA formatting for referencing
- We are willing to work with first-time authors to help them get published
- We accept previously published papers as long as copyright permission is assured
- We are open to alternative presentations such as poems, artwork, photography, etc.

Articles can be submitted to the email address below for consideration.

***Please note that authors retain joint copyright privileges.***

Send submissions to: [cyconline@cyc-net.org](mailto:cyconline@cyc-net.org)

Opinions and views expressed by authors are their own and don't necessarily represent the views or opinions of CYC-Net, its editors, or its supporters.



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406



## Advertising in CYC-Online

	1 x insertion	3 x insertions	6 x insertions	12 x insertions
<b>Size</b>				
Full page	\$250.00	\$200.00	\$150.00	\$100.00
½ page	\$200.00	\$150.00	\$120.00	\$90.00
¼ page	\$125.00	\$100.00	\$75.00	\$50.00
<i>Prices in US\$ per monthly issue, per insertion. Full amount payable at first insertion. Deadline: 7 days before month-end</i>				

### Material specifications

All artwork to be sent to [admin@cyc-net.org](mailto:admin@cyc-net.org)

*Files:* Only TIF, PDF and JPG files will be accepted. All images should RGB at 300dpi resolution.

*Fonts:* All fonts should be embedded. We accept no responsibility for incorrect font rendering.

### Sizing information

<i>Finished Size</i>	<i>Layout</i>	<i>Width</i>	<i>Height</i>
Full page	Portrait (5mm bleed)	150mm	200mm
½ page	Portrait	70mm	200mm
	Landscape	150mm	90mm
page	Portrait	70mm	90mm



**December 2018**

ISSN 1605-7406