A Year of Great Consequence

The Role of Supervision

Child and Youth Empowerment Through Sports

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

The CYC-Net PRESS

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Wildfire

James Freeman

In my editorial last month, I wrote about the shooting and death of twelve people at the Borderline Bar and Grill in southern California. It took place about halfway between my home and the residential campus where I work as training director. Over the past weeks the names

of those killed have been made public. One of them was the law enforcement officer who ran into the building to stop the shooter. Another was a children's baseball league umpire. Several of the others were students from nearby universities. We have watched and participated in several funerals and memorials to those who were killed. It was a tragic loss for the local community and a horror that has affected far too many communities where similar shootings have occurred.

Within several hours after the shooting a massive wildfire broke out and quickly spread due to high wind conditions. Fires are not an uncommon occurrence in this area. The wind that creates such high fire risk is caused by the unique geography of the region and even has a name (the Santa Ana Winds). I suppose part of the price we pay for beautiful weather, beaches, and mountains is the threat of both earthquakes and wildfires. As a child I watched occasional fires from the school yard and the hillsides above my home. Until earlier this year never witnessed the loss of homes – at least in large numbers. A few years ago, the Springs Fire led to the evacuation of our family and the residential care program where I work. Last January the Thomas Fire threatened the community in the hillsides within view of where the third CYC World Conference was held. This fire, now knows as the Woolsey Fire, started within sight of my home and traveled nearly 97 thousand acres to the Pacific Ocean. The above photo is from the room of our home looking at the start of the fire. Over a quarter of a million people were eventually evacuated. During the same time in the northern part of our state, the Camp Fire would become known as the deadliest and most destructive wildfire in the history of the region.

The fires starting so soon after the mass shooting left little time to grieve, recover, or find any meaning from the events. Too quickly people were forced to move from shock and grief from the shooting into fear, emergency response, and loss from the fires.

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This complexity of multiple traumas is where many of you work in your day to day caring for young people affected by trauma. A horrible event occurs in in the life of a child and, with no or too little time to process what happened another harm is done. Sometimes when we wonder why a child isn't doing better it's because they haven't even had the chance to take a collective breath with someone and begin to think in ways toward the next step of growth or healing. Life just seems to come too hard and too fast for some people.

So, then what do these kids need? Of course, basic needs such as food, clean air, water, and shelter. We became acutely aware of these things during the fires and evacuations. For us this acute awareness would pass but it's a daily reality for children living in extreme poverty or parts of the world under oppression or at war. They also need safety, patience, acts of caring, and rhythmicity in life and relationships. These are the things CYCs work to provide every day across so many diverse settings.

The shooting and wildfires were a double trauma to our community. Many lost more than they could imagine. Property for some, loved ones for others. The community will recover with time and effort. It's a valuable reminder that the experience of consecutive, overwhelming events has a cumulative effect. Let's all remember that as we engage this month with children and young people who have experienced similar traumas in their relationships and places where they live their lives.

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Just Us Is All We Got

Hans Skott-Myhre
hskotty@kennesaw.edu

Over the years, I have had the opportunity to see thousands of youth workers at work or heard their stories of engaging with young people. They have been workers in residential programs, street outreach, emergency shelters, schools, rape crisis centers, community storefronts, government social service programs, day care, and foster care, among others. They have worked with small children, gangs, families, immigrants, queer kids of all ages, racially diverse populations, youth, straight kids, young people living in poverty or wealth, kids of various faiths, spiritualities, and communities. Compositionally, they themselves have been all these things and more. However, what has struck me in all this rich diversity of history, ethnicity, religion, race, gender, class, sexuality and so on, is how idiosyncratically all of these elements come together to form the work of each one of us.

I often remind my students that when they are in an encounter with a young person they only have one tool and that is themselves. They can have a rich and in depth knowledge of the theoretical literature of the field, have attended and absorbed the more innovative and pertinent new techniques for resolving life difficulties, practiced all the skills they have been taught in school and in professional development workshops, they might have aced the licensing or certification exam, but none of that matters if it hasn't been fully transformed and integrated into who they are as a radically unique living composition of body and mind. To the degree

that we understand how our bodies and minds work and are composed in each moment of our encounter with the world around us, we will engage that world more fully and with more life affirming force. To the degree we are limited in what we can apprehend about ourselves and our relation to the world that forms who we are, we will be restricted in our creative capacity to compose a life.

Now that might sound a little esoteric, but every child and youth care worker I have been privileged to know, works somewhere along a continuum of self-awareness and a certain openness to the richness of the experiential and experimental composition that is living relations. It is what shapes that ineffable aspect of our work we might think about as intuition.

I am thinking of intuition as the ability to sense the exact words to say or not say in our work with young people. To know when to speak and when to be still, to take a walk, have a sandwich, reach out and touch or refrain from touching someone, share our own experiences or keep them to ourselves. This is the stuff we can't teach. We can attempt to codify it in best practices, endless discussions about boundaries, interviewing techniques and so on, but none of it really gets at what makes a great CYC worker.

Mind you, all these things point in the right direction, but they are training wheels for those just learning to ride the bicycle. One hopes not to keep them affixed for the duration of the ride. The idea is to learn enough to get going and then to leave the training wheels behind and trust the relation we develop between the bike and ourselves. To learn the delicate balance, the tensile strength of the brakes, the tension and play of the gears, and feel of the various road surfaces, weather conditions, our own muscular capacities, and limits of breath. When we ride well, we hope to be so in sync with the bike that we can pay attention to all that the ride encompasses; the wind in our face, the thrill of velocity, the scenery passing

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by, our own breathing, the gradual release of endorphins, and that great feeling of just riding the bike. When we are out of sync with the bike, everything becomes more labored, more mechanical. We have to limit our focus to those aspects of the ride that are causing us difficulty. We lose the freedom of motion and the full exhilaration of riding.

Of course, we hopefully learn from these moments of difficulty at many levels. Perhaps we learn that we need to persevere in our fitness regimes so we have to pay less attention to body mechanics and more to the seamless flow of the body in motion. Maybe, we have to pay better attention to the road conditions and plan our journey so that the number of hills and difficult terrain is more in keeping with our skills and stamina. It is possible, that the bike itself is at issue and we need to learn to pay better attention to its capacities and maintenance. Or, there is the chance that we neglected the weather report and need to learn that a blue sky at the beginning is not a guarantee that it won't storm later. In all these adverse conditions, our knowledge of the elements that compose the relation of the bike, our body and the environment are key to our ability to let go and truly master the art of riding. Indeed, mastery is the moment in which we have painstakingly gained enough intellectual knowledge and body wisdom to go beyond the conscious application of what we know about the relationship between ourselves and the bike. It is when we develop a sense of oneness through which we can begin to test the limits of what can be done.

I remember being at a concert featuring the great jazz bassist Stanley Clark. As I watched him play, I became aware of how he and the rest of the band sensed where they might go, rather than predetermining where the song should go. This is not to say that the song wasn't highly arranged and stringently rehearsed, but as the musicians entered the improvisatory sections, they opened the song to possibility rather than certainty. Two

things became clear to me as I watched and listened. First, it was obvious that what Stanley Clark was accomplishing with his fingers on the large standup bass he was playing seemed physically impossible. The speed and dexterity with which he covered the rather large geography of the instrument was breathtaking. The ease with which he moved in sync with the instrument appeared effortless and yet, even a rudimentary understanding of what was involved proved that to be an illusion. Second, as he played, the relation between the creative thoughts he was having about what he would play and what he played looked to be seamless. It was as though his mind and body in relation to the bass were operating as one organism. It all came at once; thought and action.

Both instances of bodies and machines (bikes and basses) could not have occurred without strenuous and long periods of practice and training. I am reminded of the psychiatric hypnotist Milton Erickson who reached levels of hypnotic skill still unrivaled in the decades after his death. Watching him work also gave the impression of effortless performance. However, his biography demonstrated skills forged in extreme hardship and struggle. He was paralyzed from the neck down twice in his life and had to regain control of his body muscle by muscle until he had full utilization of all his bodily functions. He was tone deaf, color blind and dyslexic and yet, through tirelessly exploring alternative methods of apprehending sound, tone, color, and language he became powerfully adept at deploying all these aspects of his capacities in his work. Those who knew him reported that he was someone who practiced and experimented with his capabilities tirelessly and relentlessly. He treated his faculties the way athletes, musicians and artists treat their bodies, instruments, and tools of their craft. In each of these instances, the craft/art of each endeavor doesn't stop at the end of the work day but extends into every aspect of a

life until there is no barrier between the artist and the art, the musician and the music, the healer and the healing.

If we take seriously the idea proposed at the beginning of this column, that we are the only tool we have in working with young people, then the examples we have explored so far have some powerful implications. Possibly the most accessible is the idea that if we are to get good at working as CYC practitioners, we need to go beyond the well intentioned and necessary training wheels offered to us by the field as a profession. The idea that we are professionals has unfortunate resonances of limits and boundaries. It can imply that there is a distance between us and others, including those we work with. It can call for state regulation of our work, in which bureaucrats begin to legislatively dictate the terms of best practice. It can inadvertently instantiate training wheels on our work and give us the idea that there are universal ways to do what it is we do, rather than idiosyncratic, creative, and experimental responses to the living engagement we find in our work. Professional training wheels can be stultifying and draw us away from the messy and entangled realities of the encounters we have with those in our daily work.

This is not to say that training wheels aren't useful in small doses. We all begin this work somewhere and it can be very helpful to have some guidance and mentoring along the road. However, we need to be cautious about institutionalizing training wheels. We need to explore when to let go and how to allow each of us to discover the unique capacities we alone can manifest as we learn from the encounters we have with others. In this sense, we are always practicing and our practice as CYC (like that of artists, musicians and athletes) is never limited to the job site. We work with people and people are everywhere.

The idea that we only work with some people some of the time is an extremely limited idea premised in capitalist ideas about labor time and

payment for time worked. This way of thinking would have us believe that we are only CYC workers when we are being paid to be so. That our work is for an agency or organization and that the young people we serve are only accessible to us when they are within the purview of that organization. In a sense, the argument is that we and the young people we encounter are subject to the organization and the terms of employment that organization imposes on both of us. We are told to separate our work and our life; to achieve a "life-work balance." The idea is that our time spent with young people is a kind of labor like that done in a factory and that our relationships outside the place of labor is radically different.

I would argue that this is a very silly idea. Young people are young people and they populate our lives inside and outside work. To the degree we see our job as founded in the idea that the young people we encounter in our work are broken or damaged, then our work is constrained by this idea. If we believe that the young people we work with are somehow radically different from us, then our work is also constrained by this idea. If somehow we see what we do as helping young people deal with things that are significantly different than the world in which we live, then we will not seek to expand our work outside the CYC factory. However, if we come to understand our work as intimately and extensively connected to our lives and the communities in which we live, then our work and lives are afforded the possibility of not being fragmented, but seamless.

The tool that is us, dos not come fully formed or with a universal set of instructions. It is formed and shaped over time through entangled encounters with everything and everyone it encounters. If we pay attention to who we are becoming in our ongoing relations with the world, then we can begin to understand both the limits and infinite possibilities of how the tool that is us may be deployed. To discover what we are capable of requires an openness to experimentation and extensive applications of

what we think we can do and who we think we are. It means being open to seeing ourselves as unknowable in any final way. The goal is not to discover who you are, but to discover all that you might become. To do this implies that we comprehend ourselves as more than just a "self." It means to see how we are shaped in an infinite number of ways by each and every encounter we have with the world around us. As CYC workers, if we want to access the true capacities of the tool we are, we must understand that our capacity is interlinked with all the capacities of the living force that surrounds us.

The psychoanalyst, philosopher, and activist Felix Guattari suggest in his work, that we might apprehend ourselves as a work of art in progress. That we are constantly creating ourselves as an experimental canvas. That, like all art, we are an expression of the world out of which the work of art emerges. We are both the artist and the art simultaneously. How diligent we are in investigating the compositional elements, techniques, and practices involved in producing ourselves as an emerging work of art, will define the depth, integrity, and beauty of the piece. Our practices as CYC workers, across the span of our lived experience, is a rich field of materials through which we can co-create ourselves in the work we do inside and outside our formal work space. After all, in the end there is really nothing in CYC that is outside this process. In this sense, just us is all we got and that is very probably more than we could ever need.

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@kennessaw.edu*

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A Year of Great Consequence

Kiaras Gharabaghi

L et's face it; 2018 was not a great year, at least if you are young person contemplating your future. The planet itself may or may not be around much longer, but aside from that minor inconvenience, we learned in 2018 that the roots of white supremacy, and in particular the violence of white people against the yearning for justice on the part of Indigenous, Black and racialized people is far closer to the surface than we imagined, and the capacity of white people to complacently (in a best case scenario) and intentionally (in many scenarios) accept the active dying of non-white people in the name of national entitlements such as economic growth, secure borders, lower taxes and cultural purity is far more ubiquitous than previously thought. As much as the midterm elections in the United States seem to suggest the presence of resistance to the explicitly racist agenda of the President and his monkeys, the results hardly suggest a rejection of that agenda. In Brazil, an imbecile who openly endorses genocide against Indigenous and Black people won the presidency with ease. In France, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Australia, and many other global North countries, explicit and violent rhetoric against racialized people, generically labelled as illegal migrants, is rampant. In my own backyard, the all-white cabinet of the Ontario government has moved rapidly and dramatically to de-commission, silence, disperse, and de-fund

groups of marginalized people that all feature a significant overrepresentation of Indigenous, Black and racialized people.

All of this is happening with the support of substantial majorities in these countries. Real people, many of whom associated with the field of child and youth care, vote for this agenda of whiteness. These people want a future built on the past – white people with strong business etiquette controlling and running the everyday functioning of global society. They care about those left behind, albeit it in the same way as one might care about the tidy disposal of trash. No need to be anarchic about our trash; let's place it thoughtfully and tidily on the curb so that our employed and fully integrated racialized people can come and pick it up.

2019 needs to be a better year. It needs to provide some hope, and a lot of evidence, that we are collectively rejecting this white agenda. And I think child and youth care can play a part in generating this hope and in producing that evidence. Here is how.

1. There has been lots of talk over the past few years of thinking differently about child and youth care, in ways that allow for a much expanded understanding of what being with young people is really about. We have been having these conversations with greater urgency because surely we recognize that there is harm associated with rejecting the ways of being with young people that are evolving outside of the formal and institutional infrastructure of our field. The evidence is clear – we are systematically excluding those who don't fit our child and youth care imagination. This is not a problem we can solve internally, through such mundane activities as anti-oppressive practice training, regulation and professionalization, or 'greater awareness', whatever that might mean. We can, and should, stop the rhetoric and move into action mode. Let's use 2019 to fundamentally

transform our field into one that is driven and informed by the experiences of many differently positioned individuals and groups, with young people at the forefront, but also with the grassroots initiatives of racialized people working within and between communities as our guides. Lets set some goals: every professional association of child and youth care ought to be able to demonstrate an executive leadership in which white people are a minority; every post-secondary institution offering child and youth care programs ought to aim for at least a doubling of non-white faculty (mathematically, 2x0 is still 0, so in many institutions, 'doubling' means hiring someone who is not white). And every service setting where child and youth care practitioners are active ought to actively take steps to ensure that their setting provides voluntary and meaningful services to racialized people at double the rate of 2018 and mandated and coercive services to racialized people at half the rate of 2018.

2. We cannot create hope for young people by engaging primarily within the global North. Any solutions offered in the global North carry the stench of white supremacy and increasingly explicit racism. This means we must adjust our search for partnerships and collaboration and focus on communities, leaders, innovators and resistors in the global South. The global South is geographically located everywhere, including in the heart of Canada, throughout the United States, and across Europe. And it is also geographically located in the Caribbean, in Africa, in many parts of Asia, South and Central America, and across the island nations in the South Pacific.

3. Child and youth care, including its focus on relational practices but also its emerging focus on transforming communities by enabling these to optimize and bring to bear their already substantial and powerful resources, must re-assess its interdisciplinary foundations. It was right

and appropriate many decades ago that the field emerged through an inter-disciplinary mosaic that centered psychology, sociology, social work, nursing, psychiatry and related disciplines. But this is not the 20th century, and our issues and challenges have changed. 21st century child and youth care practice should still be based on an interdisciplinary and inter-professional foundation, but the disciplines of relevance today are Indigenous Knowledge, environmental science and ecological activism, child and youth rights, anti-racism, feminisms in all their manifestations, gender studies, and social innovation and entrepreneurship filtered through a lens of child and youth care ethics.

4. More than anything else, 2019 ought to be the year that we shift our attention to the models of child and youth care practice that are fundamentally embedded in communities, that seek community solutions that are local in scope but informed by the global knowledge and wisdom resources we have accumulated, and that engage young and old people not merely in participatory, but indeed in community-driven, social change based on community expertise.

If 2019 is to offer us hope that we can do better than our current political and economic decay, that democracy in some form can survive our current challenges, and that young people today can meaningfully contemplate their future, we must endorse new ideas, new ways of doing things, and new partnerships. We cannot have the same conversations with the same people about the same ideas all over again and hope for a different outcome. If we, as a professional field that has grown to represent quite a lot of social sector, economic and cultural activity around the globe, cannot become a force of change when change is really needed, we are not worth all that much. Doing what we can, relationally or otherwise, for young people in our institutional contexts serves little purpose in a decaying

world. Once they move beyond us, they will find that the promised land is fake news.

The good news is that our field is full of innovators. In practice settings, in institutional leadership, and in research and academia more generally, we have access to people who have made a huge difference for the better in the settings and contexts they work. It is time to create spaces where these people can partner with others, including non-traditional partners from the environmental, business, arts, culture, music and design communities, and groups of people representing various lived experiences of Indigenous peoples, Black communities and racialized peoples, to come together to generate a path forward. Such a path will undoubtedly be one of resistance to the whitening of everything so obviously at the centre of today's politics. But it will also be a pathway to emancipation from the control and surveillance imposed on the social innovators and grassroots activists.

The even better news is that there already are many spaces being planned for 2019 to make precisely this kind of gathering and collaboration possible. In April, the University of Victoria offers up CYC in Action, a student-focused conference ideally suited for critical but action-oriented dialogue. In June, Ontario is holding its Provincial CYC conference in Peterborough, promising a different tone and approach than previous conferences based on an honouring of Indigenous wisdoms. In July, the NACCW in South Africa is holding its biannual CYC conference in Durban, where the dialogue can continue in the context of learning about *Isibindi*, a CYC model of practice that reflects precisely what is needed to transform the current drive to disaster. And in October, FICE International is holding its conference in Tel Aviv, yet another opportunity to engage and plot a different kind of future.

I am sure there are other events being planned locally and regionally, other opportunities for child and youth care folks to come together and engage in a different sort of dialogue that is forward looking and takes account of where we are at today. And I sincerely hope that every one of these events, including the ones cited above, will make a concerted effort to ensure the presence of voices we have long neglected, pushed aside, delegitimized, or excluded. We cannot make 2019 a departure from 2018 by conversing in our limited circles. While others want to build walls, let child and youth care be the field that tears its own walls down.

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

Canaries in the Coal Mine

Jaiya John

We can learn much from nature and each of its creatures. The relationship between humans and canaries may seem peculiar and distant but in the context of coal mines the intimacy between the two comes shining forth. In the old days coal miners would take canaries in cages with them down into the dark mines far beneath the Earth. That far down, toxic fumes can easily accumulate in the closed spaces of the mines. Our human senses are not equipped to detect these deadly gases. When they build up, miners can be quickly overcome. Thousands of deaths and near deaths have occurred because of this.

Here is where the role of the canaries becomes clear. Out in the world we appear to have little need for something as small as a canary. But in the coal mine they become invaluable to the miner. Everything is priceless in the right context. Canaries are much more sensitive than we are to the kinds of deadly gases that can build up deep in the Earth's belly. Knowing this, the miners would keep the canaries close by in their cages.

When the canaries stopped singing, this was an alarm to the miners of a possible emergency with the gases. When the canaries began to sway, then fall over and die, this was a certain sign to the miners that they had better get out of the mine as soon as possible. For although the gases had not yet built up to a level concentrated enough to begin making the miners sick, they knew eventually they too could be overtaken and killed.

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This simple understanding the miners had for the nature of canaries allowed them to prevent some illness and death among the workers. Unfortunately, they sacrificed many canaries along the way. This

relationship provides us a very obvious allegory through which to view our way of relating to children.

We have an opportunity to view separated children as canaries who have been made more sensitive or allergic to certain life elements that are unhealthy to all of us. We often view these children as tainted and their behavior and attitudes as entirely negative. We interpret their distinctiveness from other children as evidence that they are dysfunctional. What if we viewed their lack of song, their acting out, their struggle, as their canary-warning to us that unhealthy elements exist in their lives and ours?

The question is whether or not we view their behavior and attitudes as dysfunction or allergy. While certainly much of what they express can be counterproductive, this does not mean that they alone possess the dysfunction in question. They might just be the loudest at protesting a dysfunction that is epidemic in their social circle.

Holistic approaches tell us that when seeking to cure what ails a child, we should seek first to recognize what ails the water from which the child drinks, the food the child eats, the air the child breathes, the relationships in which the child is encumbered. Too often we become fixated on a child as the source and location of the problem. The locale of the dysfunction more often lies within a child's collective life space. To treat the child we must treat the collective.

Rather than pathologizing our children, developing a habit of seeing them as perpetually flawed, we have an alternative. It may be much more productive to think of a child as a vessel vulnerable to what flows through her. We – the child's family, friends, teachers, therapists, community – are

also vessels, with our own rivers running through us. Perhaps a traumatized child is like the child who has developed an allergy and is now more sensitive to the allergens that exist, not within her but around her. Perhaps we are vessels who unwittingly deliver certain allergens to the child. The potential culprits are numerous:

- Forced change
- Destructive authority
- Power abuse
- Condescension
- Sympathy
- Low expectations
- Lack of empathy
- Harmful expectations
- Impatience
- Smothering control
- Anger
- Anxiety
- Rigid interaction
- Blocked communication
- Prejudice
- Judgmental attitudes
- Dishonesty
- Fear
- Avoidance
- Denial
- Our own pain
- Our own dysfunction

None of these dysfunctions is healthy to us. But as adults many of us have developed a greater capacity to tolerate them. This does not mean we are not becoming sickened by these pollutants just as our children are. They, vulnerable canaries that they are, might just stop chirping (thriving) before we do. Can we imagine our own lives as being lived in the precarious space that is a coal mine? All these noxious elements of society are silently, invisibly accumulating in our midst. The buildup is causing us such unwellness: anxiety, disease, anger, detachment. Does this sound familiar? Does this realization of our personal coal mine cause us to look upon children in a brighter light?

Maybe, when we vessels, carrying all these allergens, attempt to place our arms around a traumatized child, her sensitized system is alarmed and overwhelmed by the allergen stowaways in our embrace. Maybe her troubling behavior and attitudes are her allergic inflammation. We must stop assuming stigmatized children are the locus (location) or source of the problem.

Yes, children carry traumas within them from their past. But even in their present lives with us we are introducing them to new traumas. Maybe they are less obvious traumas but traumas just the same. We should view trauma as a shared wound within a child's life web, an aggregation of insults to the child.

Trauma creates attachment wounds (wounds leading to detachment). But what lies at the crux of helping a child is not the acuteness of a particular attachment wound. Rather it is the sum or aggregate of attachment wounds that exist in the holistic life arena of the child. Those collective wounds are both our treatment target and our treatment avenue.

Perhaps we should initiate our preventions and interventions by first reconceptualizing trauma. We can view trauma as a shared wound,

manifesting as a system of vessels, whose locations we may find scattered like a quilt throughout a child's social circle. This might position us onto an entirely new creative track in embracing children. Our creativity would open up like a geyser if we imagined children and their wounds as a function of our life together and the wounds we bring into their orbit.

Children can experience therapeutic attention as highlighting what's wrong with me, rather than what's wrong in my life. This can rupture esteem, create stigma, invade privacy, and aggravate a child's defensive impulse for self-protection. We can avoid this by focusing on the holistic situation involved, rather than the child as the source of flaw, problem, or trouble.

At the same time, we highlight how the child strengthens her family, her social circle, her school. As a team, we address with her ways to improve upon a challenge area, rather than to cure a problem within her. If our habit is to take the onus off her tendency to criticize herself and place it on her social circle, we disperse pressure. We lighten the weight she carries.

Separated children are truly canaries in the coal mine. Because of their life experiences, they have become more allergic, more sensitive to the harmful social energies and attitudes that sicken us all. Beauty and worth can be drawn from children's sensitivities. We should listen when these canaries sing!

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. This article is an excerpt from* Reflection Pond: Nurturing Wholeness in Displaced Children - A Compassionate Guide for Professionals and Caregivers. *See his full bio, books, and initiatives through Soul Water Rising and the Harvest Project at* www.jaiyajohn.com

A Reflection on Relational Messages

Jack Phelan

M ost of the young people and family members that CYC practitioners encounter have experienced significant neglect and abuse in their lives, which impact their attachment dynamics and developmental progress.

Simply stated, individuals with low attachment ability believe that no one cares about them and thus that they are not deserving of the love and care of others. Developmental progress is stunted by their experiences of abuse/neglect, so people are stuck in ego-centric, early stages of growth and have little ability to think about anyone's needs except their own.

This is manifested in our work by the behavior of parents who do not seem overly concerned about the abuse and neglect that their children are receiving, being more focussed on their own needs. The youth we encounter generally don't take responsibility for the results of much of their negative behaviors and usually do not seem to be guilty or concerned about any harm created for others.

CYC practitioners who are developmentally trained can see beyond the behavior and correctly analyse the issue as a lack of "other-awareness", based on the inability to consider anyone else's needs. When people do not feel cared about and loved, they never develop the ability to care about others, often including even their own children. VanderVen (2003, p137) described this issue in a metaphor which she termed "The Oxygen

Principle", referencing the familiar safety instructions on an airplane to put on your own oxygen mask before attempting to assist anyone else.

Working relationally in the life space is a successful approach with youth and families particularly because it can influence this critical area by arranging experiences (Phelan, 2015, p11) of feeling cared about, which challenges people to become more other aware. As skilled CYC practitioners build connections with youth and create experiences of feeling truly cared for and loved, which penetrate the shield of "you are just doing this because you are getting paid", the belief of being worthy of being cared about initiates the need to worry about someone else in return. Parents who have never really believed that "anyone even knew I was in the world" (Modlin, 2003, p181) experience being cared about, which they eventually will be able to transfer to their children.

So, effective relational practice includes supporting people to feel cared about and even loved by someone, which will build the belief that they are lovable and worthy of care. This in turn creates the desire to stay connected to others, which necessitates a capacity to be more other-aware and concerned about one's effect on the other person. Building an experience of being cared for in parents creates the capacity to use this caring for their children.

As CYC practitioners attempt to build caring and love into their interactions with a youth or parent, there are two interpretations which can be delivered as we break through peoples' resistance to changing beliefs about being lovable. The first possibility is that the CYC practitioner can see what others don't because we are so tolerant and skilled in caring, so we can care for them even when most people can not. The other option is to create the belief that the parent or youth is worthy of care and lovable, and that most people will eventually see that too.

There is a critical difference in these messages, which can be ignored by CYC staff who are too interested in being liked by others. Message #1, I

really care for you even when others do not, is a personally satisfying one to deliver for staff who want to feel liked and valued, which has the unfortunate result of being a problem when either the helper or the other leaves, which is inevitable. Many practitioners are very aware of this and often are reluctant to build strong connections with youth or parents because of the temporary nature of our connections. Basically, when either person leaves, the youth or parent is back to square one. Message #2, you deserve to be cared for and loved, builds the capacity to desire connection with others, which will not be erased by one of us leaving.

How does this work in life space practice? When the basic message is "I care for you because I am an unusually nice person (meaning I am a wonderful worker), my interventions focus on my caring behaviors, which translate as I am going beyond the requirements of the job because I am dedicated and somewhat saintly. This creates a strong connection with people who have not felt cared for previously but is very reliant on the specific relationship which has been established.

When the message received is that you are someone who is attractive and cared for, even loved, because of who you are, the focus is on the parent or youth, not the worker. The connection is based on the worth and value of the youth or parent, not the worker. This message will create the possibility of self-initiated attachment strength and other-awareness that will survive the inevitable good-byes of our practice.

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The Role of Supervision

Caroline Moore

Introduction

As a supervisor in a residential facility, I am responsible for the management, leadership, and development of 15 youth care workers who work directly with youth in the home. Our organization promotes relational based youth care with a strength-based approach. This article focuses on the role of supervision as a function of management and leadership and how this contributes to the creation and maintenance of an effective therapeutic culture.

Management and Leadership

The role of managers and leaders in child and youth care settings is often intertwined as managers are expected to be leaders in their organizations, however there are vast differences between the role of managers and the leaders (Ward, 2009). Management can be viewed as task-oriented in that the manager is responsible for overseeing various responsibilities that may be linked to organizational objectives (Mullins, L.J., Christy, G., 2013) . Some of my managerial tasks include managing the staff schedule, ensuring compliance of policies and procedures, and reviewing reports. The skills required for these tasks include organization, knowledge and planning. Effective management is required to ensure standards are met and organizations are in compliance with policies and procedures. This is required in order for our organization to maintain our license to operate.

So, in this context, "essential management is clearly essential for organizational success" (Mullins, L.J., Christy, G., 2013, p. 423).

Leaders, however, are not necessarily required to be managers (Ward, 2009). Leaders can emerge from within the staff team itself as the role of the leader differs from that of a manager. The role of leadership can be seen as relationship-oriented in that leaders are involved with the "personal qualities of engagement" (Ward, 2009, p. 6) with staff, and focus on how their work toward the organizational vision is implemented (Ward, 2009). As a supervisor of a residential facility, my role as a leader is to ensure staff morale remains high, enhance staff development, and help influence and motivate staff to practice relationship-based youth care. Some of the skills required for this role are communication and motivational skills (Ward, 2009). One area a leader can have influence into these aspects is in the supervisory relationship with staff as it is in this relationship the supervisor can have the most influence and promote growth (Delano & Shah, 2009).

Supervision

In our organization we use the 'SET: Support, Education, Train' framework for supervision developed by Dr. Thom Garfat. This framework identifies a responsibility on both the part of the supervisor and also the supervisee to engage in this supervision relationship (Garfat, 2007). The role of the supervisor is to evaluate each situation and interaction to determine if the supervisee requires support, education, or training to enhance their development and therefore enhance the quality of service offered to the youth (Garfat, 2007). In our organization supervision occurs on both a formal and informal basis. Formal supervision is a regularly scheduled meeting away from the facility focusing on a certain topic to promote youth care development. Informal supervision is an impromptu

conversation in the moment within the facility linked to a situation that is happening or has just happened, to promote learning.

In order to engage in effective supervision there needs to be a relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee that promotes self reflection, while at the same time establishes boundaries (Delano & Shah, 2009). Although both parties are responsible to engage in this relationship, there is a responsibility on the part of the supervisor to create the conditions of safety to enable the supervisee to engage in a self reflection process (Delano & Shah, 2009).

To create the conditions of safety, supervisors need leadership skills such as emotional intelligence in order to establish relationships that will allow supervisees to move out of their comfort zone and challenge themselves in specific areas of development. Emotional intelligence consists of five components: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills (Goleman, 2004). There is a link between the level of emotional intelligence and the rate of performance from that individual (Goleman, 2004). Therefore, with a high level of emotional intelligence, a supervisor can create the conditions of safety, allowing the supervisee to enhance their youth care development.

The supervisor must also be aware of their level of power in the supervisory relationship. For example, the supervisor controls the amount of access the employee has to them, therefore must make themselves available for connection and consultation (Delano & Shah, 2009). In our organization facility supervisors are on call 24 hours a day for this reason. There is also an evening supervisor working evenings and weekends to provide support to youth and youth care workers. Without an awareness of the role of power to create or limit access, the supervisor may be at risk of staff attempts to keep distance from the supervisor and limit their amount of responsibility (Bradley & Gould, 2002). The youth care worker may attempt to

deflect responsibility of their own inability to develop a relationship with a youth by focusing on policies that may limit this (Bradley & Gould, 2002). For example, in our organization an employee code of conduct prohibits a youth care worker from spending time with youth outside of working hours, which may be used as an excuse as to why that youth care worker is unable to develop a therapeutic relationship with a youth. In order to help youth care workers take ownership of this code of conduct, managers support a committee of youth care workers to help review this code of conduct regularly. This is an effort to help employees take ownership over this commitment and invest into its ongoing relevance.

The Role of Supervision in Professional Development

Youth care worker development can be categorized by the various stages the youth care worker experiences, with their ability to enter into each stage dependent on their personal capabilities and professional practice (Phelan, 2008). Garfat (2001), argues these stages are dependent on the level of relationship between the youth care worker and the youth and identifies four phases of development; doing for, doing to, doing with and doing together. In each phase the youth care worker is able to focus less on their own need for safety in the relationship and concentrate on the *process* of developing a therapeutic relationship, rather than simply the *outcome* of that relationship (Garfat, 2001). Focusing on the value of the relationship can contribute to an effective therapeutic culture. The supervisor must be aware of a youth care worker's stage of development in order to meet them where they're at, just as a youth care worker needs to be aware of the youth's capacity in order to meet them where they're at (Fulcher & Garfat 2012). Effective supervision will aid the youth care worker to move through these stages at a pace comparable to their development. Part of that effective supervision will be the supervisor's ability to create the

conditions of safety with the youth care worker in the context of supervision, in order to be able to encourage and support them to try new things and engage in reflective practice. Attention needs to be focused on the amount of anxiety that can be created in youth care workers due to the nature of their work in the residential setting (MacLeod, 2010). Youth care workers in our facility work with four boys who have a history of complex trauma. Working with these boys in their daily life space can potentially impact youth care workers by taking on vicarious trauma, or focusing on deficits (Racco, 2009). In order to promote a strengths-based approach, supervision needs to involve a level of 'containment' by the supervisor in order to alleviate feelings of anxiety which could possibly inhibit them from creating therapeutic relationships with the youth (Steckly, 2010). If the supervisor is able to help the youth care worker make sense of and therefore manage their own feelings of anxiety, they can help interpret those feelings in ways that promote professional development.

The Role of Supervision in Personal Development

Along with enhancing professional development, there should also be a focus on enhancing *personal* development. According to Modlin (2013), Robert Kegan's Constructive Developmental Theory helps to explain why youth care workers move through developmental stages of youth care at different rates. Kegan identified that as people grow and acquire more life experience, they move through a process of transformation in their ability to make meaning (Modlin, 2013). Most adults live mainly in, what Kegan has identified as, the socialized stage (Modlin, 2013). In this stage individuals may have a solid belief system, however are unable to separate self from another, therefore may assume ownership of the actions and emotions of others (Modlin, 2013). In a residential setting this may mean the youth care worker may interpret the actions of the youth as a measure of their own

success or failure as a youth care worker. For example the youth care worker might consider a 'good shift' one in which there were no escalated behaviours from the youth. The youth care worker in the socialized stage may stay a little longer in Garfat's (2001) 'doing for' stage. They don't want the youth to fail since they will view this as a reflection of their own failure as a youth care worker. It is not until youth care workers are functioning from, what Kegan has identified as the 'self-authored stage', that they will be able to develop an autonomous self (Modlin, 2013). In this stage individuals do not own other people's actions and understand where their self ends and the other begins (Modlin, 2013). It will be from this stage where youth care workers will be able to enter into Garfat's (2001) 'doing together' way of being where they will focus on the process of the relationship with the youth and the learning that comes from this. The role of supervision in context of youth care worker development, then, is to first understand *how* youth care workers think, not *what* they think (Modlin, 2013). As a result of youth care workers enhancing their professional and personal development, they are more likely to develop their level of relationship with the youth, therefore creating and maintaining a therapeutic culture.

Supervisor Development

In order for the supervisor to enhance the capabilities of others, they themselves must also focus on their own professional and personal development. A supervisor in the socialized stage will be able to articulate the beliefs and values of the organization and will focus their leadership on task-oriented actions (Helsing & Howell, 2014). The supervisor may prove to be an effective manager in that they can complete tasks and manage situations well based on policy and procedure. Leaders in this stage, however, do not do well with more complex situations such as mediating

conflict or examining their role in the situation, as they do not have an independent source of authority (Helsing & Howell, 2014).

Part of my role as a manager is to review the quality of reports written by youth care workers following a work-related crisis. From a socialized stage, when reviewing the report, I may choose to focus on whether or not the youth care worker implemented all policies and procedures related to that crisis. In the socialized stage I will consider this a direct reflection on my own success since it is my role to ensure youth care workers are aware of policies and procedures. My follow-up with the youth care worker may be to ask why a certain policy was not followed, or praise the fact that all policies were followed. Although this is an important aspect of the youth care worker role (especially since funding and licensing depend on the adherence to these polices) what is missed in this situation is the relational focus. This is both my lack of focus on the relationship between the youth care worker and the youth in crisis, and my relationship with the youth care worker in the follow-up. If I choose to focus on the management tasks I may miss the need for containment and debriefing with that youth care worker. This over emphasis on 'management' can hinder the maintenance of a therapeutic culture as quality becomes associated with documentation and compliance, rather than the quality of relationship (Tsui & Cheung, 2004). Without leadership skills such as emotional intelligence, the supervisor may miss opportunities to promote youth care worker development which may lead the youth care worker to bury their feelings of anxiety in an effort to not appear weak (MacLeod, 2010).

A supervisor in the self-authored stage does not require validation from others and is able to examine their role in the situation and take responsibility for thier role (Helsing & Howell, 2014). This supervisor can examine the situation as a whole and evaluate the actions of others, without interpreting them as a measure of their own success (Helsing &

Howell, 2014). Reviewing a report written on a crisis situation from a self authored stage enables me to see the situation as a whole and use it as a learning tool in supervision. Although I have a responsibility to ensure polices are followed, I also have a responsibility to reflect with the youth care worker and create a safe space to help contain any anxieties they may have. I can help the youth care worker in their own self-reflection, as I understand the separation and distinction between myself and the youth care worker. This process helps youth care workers enhance their relationships with youth as the link between the relationship created in supervision and the relationship created in youth care is a parallel process (Delano & Shah, 2009). Also, when youth care workers feel supported in exploring alternative responses to crisis, they will be more likely to speak up in team meetings and encourage others to reflect on their practice (Khan, 2005). As individual youth care workers grow in their own development, the team, as a whole, becomes equipped to support each other in their development. Due to the complex role of supervision the supervisor should be functioning from a self authored stage to help others in their development. Therefore, the supervisor must engage in their own supervision with either a supervisor or outside consultant in order to develop their own practice (Maas & Ney, 2005).

The role of Supervision in a Learning Organization

Individual learning and development is important to maintain a therapeutic culture, however, there must also be promotion and facilitation of learning from the organization itself in order to establish a learning organization (McPheat & Butler, 2014). Learning organizations are able to anticipate and welcome change and use that change to enhance their practice (McPheat & Butler, 2014). Supervision plays a large role in change as staff must be able to manage their own anxiety and reflect on their own

role in the change (McPheat & Butler, 2014). As a supervisor, I must ensure youth care workers feel empowered to reflect on their practice and promote this with their team. I must ensure learning is available and that youth care workers are open to learning that may bring about change in their practice. An example of this is 'developmental-based training'. My role in supervision is to be aware of the youth care workers level of development and then match their training to that level. This is parallel to the characteristic of child and youth care, 'responsive developmental practice' which states a youth care worker needs to be responsive to the youth's level of development in order to match their interventions to that youth's capabilities (Fulcher & Garfat, 2012). A new youth care worker may focus on safety and structure, and therefore may not respond to a training on relationship-based youth care. Matching a youth care workers level of development to training ensures the message is heard, and, therefore, promotes learning. This enables me to incorporate that learning into supervision with the worker in order to enhance their practice. This also contributes to maintaining a therapeutic culture.

Learning may be inhibited by the youth care worker's level of anxiety which may come from the level of power in the supervisor/supervisee relationship. Supervisors are responsible for evaluating staff's level of performance which means the supervisor will be continuously monitoring their performance (Harrison, 2001). This may result in youth care workers not investing in the supervision process as they may not want to expose their vulnerabilities (Harrison, 2001). This inhibits their ability to learn and therefore develop in their practice. Learning will also be inhibited if management is focused too much on policy as the staff may feel their own safety is not a concern for management (Harrison, 2001). Staff ratio, for example, in my setting is three youth care workers to four youth due to the higher level of behaviour in our facility. In certain situations the third youth

care worker may be required to support another facility, and due to budget limitations I may be unable to replace that youth care worker. This decision is made by weighing all safety concerns, however it may be viewed by some as a lack of regard for youth care worker safety in our facility. Youth care workers may feel my main concern is the budget, and not their personal safety which may inhibit our relationship in supervision. However, the argument can also be made that when youth care workers view management's main focus as policy adherence, they may feel the need to become advocates for the youth, which may strengthen their relationship with the youth and promote a therapeutic culture (Gharabaghi, 2011). In order for management and leadership to promote a learning organization, there must be an awareness of this power in the supervision relationship.

Just as youth care is strength-based, so must be supervision. The supervisor must be able to draw out the strengths of the youth care worker and provide opportunities to learn based on that strength (Saleebey, 2000). For example, a new youth care worker who is focused on structure can be put in charge of ensuring all medications administered to the youth are tracked and signed for. This will help that youth care worker become confident in their own practice and take ownership over some of their duties. In doing this the supervisor must be open to change and the youth care worker challenging the norm. The youth care worker, for example, may suggest a new tracking system. If the supervisor is working from the self-authored stage they will be open to exploring this further, despite the amount of time the original tracking system had been used or despite how trivial the supervisor may see this in comparison to other relational youth care practices. The supervisor has to be able to recognize where the youth care worker is in their development and then meet them at that stage. Similar to how youth care workers need to be able to meet youth at their level of development (Delano & Shah, 2009).

Conclusion

Supervision is an important part of management and leadership in youth care as the relationship created between the supervisor and youth care worker can accelerate (or hinder) the development of the youth care worker (Delano & Shah, 2009). Support in supervision is essential to help contain anxieties, while education and training in supervision are essential to enhance a knowledge base. All three of these factors contribute to an employee becoming a competent child and youth care worker by their ability to form relationships with youth and colleagues, thus promoting a therapeutic environment for all.

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CAROLINE MOORE *has worked at HomeBridge Youth Society in Nova Scotia, Canada for the last 17 years. For eight years, Caroline worked directly with youth as a CYC worker in both a crisis stabilization setting and in a longer-term community setting. Caroline has been in a CYC supervisory role for the past nine years and is currently the CYC supervisor of a longer-term community-based home in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Caroline's interests lie in the concepts of CYC-supervision and development. She is currently working with the HomeBridge CYC supervisor team to develop an internal training curriculum for new and advanced CYC supervisors.*

Child and Youth Empowerment Through Sports

Nadeem Saqlain

The research on child and youth empowerment through sports, particularly in care settings, is relatively scarce. The purpose of this article is to initiate a dialogue about child and youth empowerment through sports, among people who work with children and youth in general and among child and youth care practitioners. I have been working with children, youth and families for more than twenty years in different contexts and in different capacities as an educator, a researcher, a coach, a volunteer, and a child and youth care worker. From my personal experience and from anecdotal accounts it is clear that participation in sports is low and the obesity rate is increasing (Bergeron, 2007). Particularly, children and youth in care have far less sports participation opportunities than their counterparts in regular homes.

Robinson (2018) surveyed twelve thousand families across the world and asked a question how much time their children spent outdoor activities in a day and reported that the majority of children played less than an hour in a day. He further described that about ten percent children never went outside, and a vast majority of children did not play at all. He presented a very interesting fact by stating that the international protocol for the treatment of high security prisoners require them to spend two hours a

day outside, and our children spend less time outside than high security prisoners.

A body of literature have documented the benefits of sports for children and youth. The benefits of participation in sports are numerous (Caruso, 2011; Coakley, 2011; Miller & Siegel, 2017) and include learning various skills such as teamwork, leadership, problem solving, planning and social interaction. Gaining mental and physical vigour is also a common outcome. These benefits are associated with the well being of individuals, and eventually with the well being of society (Coakley, 2011). The benefits are categorised generally in three broader categories: academic, social, and health-related benefits. Child and Youth Care practitioners can use these three categories to think about ways they can empower and change the lives of children and young people while at work in their life spaces.

Academic Benefits

There are many academic benefits of participation in sports described in the literature. One of the benefits is that participation in sports influences cognitive functioning in children and youth (Coatsworth & Conroy, 2007). Rosewater (2009) argues that the use of high quality sports for children and youth can improve their grades and increase their chances of attending schools and colleges. Rosewater further describes that high-quality sports engage children and youth, help them stay on task, and teach them important skills. Le Menestrel and Perkins (2007) point out that participation in sports is also associated with attachment to school.

Social Benefits

A number of researchers have also described the social benefits of sports. Perkins and Noam (2007) described that sports provides opportunities for youth to build relationships with their peers, and among

youth and adults. Sports are also a great source of connecting with peers and with new people. Rosewater (2009) states that sports are also helpful for youth in gaining success in labor market. She also explains that sports can help decrease isolation among youth and breaking gender stereotypes. She also mentions that sports contribute towards youth identity as well. Others argue that sports help youth in learning valuable life skills (Wicks, Beedy, Spangler, & Perkins, 2007). Sports not only improves the quality of life of individuals but also improves society. A few experts in the field describe that youth in sports have a higher engagement with volunteering, which also contributes to improving communities and society.

Health Benefits

Some scholars focus on the health benefits of getting involved in sports. Sports significantly contributes towards a young person's health and their intellect (Rosewater, 2009; Bergeron, 2007). According to Le Menestrel and Perkins (2007), there are various benefits for youth of participation in sports such as building healthy bones and muscles, less odds of developing chronic disease, and less likelihood of being overweight. They further state that sports also helps in reducing anxiety depression and hopelessness. They state that youth involved in sports tend to have healthy life styles, including healthier dietary behaviours.

Challenges and Barriers

There is a need to increase child and youth participation in physical sports. Some factors may contribute to a low level of children and youth participation in sports. One of them is the lack of trained volunteers and coaches. It is unfortunate that we have volunteers who are willing to help children and youth to participate in sports but they do not have proper

training. Another important factor is the lack of sports facilities and opportunities. Additionally, children and youth from low income families are unlike to participate in sports (Wicks et al., 2007). Use of digital games and use of technology is another significant factor that may impede children and youth participation in sports.

Based on my personal experience and professional accounts in the field, children and youth in care face multiple barriers that impede them from getting involved in sports. For example, children and youth can be uninterested in playing sports because of their past trauma, they can be unwilling to trust an adult because of their past experiences, their carers are less trained to encourage them for sport participation, they may not have all the necessary equipment to play the sport, they are interested in playing but they may have fear of losing the game, they may have fear of facing a bully, and finally they may be more interested in playing digital games instead of playing sports outside.

Conclusion

It is hoped that proper training for the people who are involved working with children and youth may be support a higher number of individuals engaged in youth sports. In conclusion, consider these worthwhile questions: For training institutions, how do we teach and train our carers to encourage children and young people to participate in sports? For child and youth care practitioners, how do we encourage and motivate our children and young people to spend time in the outdoors playing?

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NADEEM SAQLAIN *holds a Ph.D. in education and teaches courses in education at Memorial University. He also works as a Child & Youth Care Practitioner with KeyAssets in Newfoundland and Labrador. He is an avid supporter of sports. In his leisure time, he plays and coaches cricket. He can be reached at nadeems@mun.ca*

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Collected Wisdom for New Practitioners

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Working Professionally with Children and Youth

Top 10 Internet Safety Rules for Your Kids

National Home Security Alliance

The Internet is a way of life for kids these days from homework to staying in touch with friends. The Internet is a great way for children to learn but, as parents and caregivers, how can you keep your kids safe? The threats online are real though and range from cyberbullying and other dangers from individuals that pose a serious risk to your child's safety.

We have put this guide together so that your children enjoy online safety.

1. A Good Relationship

Having a good and open relationship with your child is key. Should they encounter any problems then you want them to come to you so that the matter can be dealt with. All too often, things can happen online, and your child stays silent which has been known to lead to heart-breaking tragedies such as suicide due to cyber bullies.

Having a good relationship takes time, so make time out of your busy schedule to spend time with your child. They should feel they can talk to you about anything, whether it is personal problems, schoolwork, health issues, problems at school, or problems online.

2. Appropriate Online Behavior

Cyberbullying is a real issue today. While children, in general, have a respect for others and bullying is no longer an issue ignored by schools or authorities, it is still an activity that children do take part in. The Internet is a platform where bullying is all too easy. The consequences of cyberbullying are real. About 10% of children affected by cyberbullying attempt suicide and tragically over 4,000 a year succeed.

Do not allow your child to be a cause of this growing problem by taking these steps:

- Supervise your child when they are online or have access to their accounts. This includes monitoring cell phones.
- If you do find evidence that your child has engaged in this type of bullying, then take steps. Explain the consequences to your child in terms of the person being bullied and make them say the words they wrote out loud.
- Explain the consequences in terms of legalities and that your child could face charges of harassment.
- If your child repeats this behavior after being warned then for the good of all, confiscate cell phones and devices until your child has learned to respect others.

3. Dangerous Places on The Internet

You should have an age-appropriate conversation with your child about their online use. Explain in terms that they can understand that there are things online that are not for children and may cause them to become upset. You can also take the following steps:

- Create a list of sites that your children are allowed to use and that you have mutually agreed with your child are fine to use.
- By clicking on Google Chrome you can take a look at your child's Internet history. Block any sites that you do not want them to access in the future.
- You can use safety modes such as on YouTube which will filter out content that is not suitable for those under the age of 18.

4. Internet Usage

Millions of people all over the globe are addicted to the Internet. In adults, it can cause problems with relationships and at work. In children, it can cause problems with schoolwork and low grades as well as with peers. Take these steps to help your kids:

- Agree on an amount of time that your child can spend online after their homework is completed.
- Monitor the amount of time and the sites that your child visits.
- If you notice a change in your child's behaviour that you suspect is due to the amount of time they have spent on the Internet or the sites they have visited, then address it sooner rather than later.

5. Password Safety

Password safety is not just an issue for kids. The majority of online users simply do not spend the time to make unique passwords for all sites and accounts. Most people have the same password for almost all of their sites. This poses an issue in terms of secure information. Take these steps to protect your child.

- Help them to make secure passwords with at least 12 characters.

- Help them store the passwords safely and educate them to never give out their password information to others.

6. Phishing Scams

While children are unlikely to have financial accounts of any real value, they can still fall for a phishing scam. One aim of phishing scams is to obtain personal information, but they can also have the effect of your device becoming infected with viruses from malware. Once the device is damaged, it could be a costly exercise to fix which no doubt will fall to you. You can take the following steps to keep your kids and devices safe.

- Make sure your kids know not to open emails that look suspicious.
- Ensure that they know not to give out personal information such as bank details and passwords, etc.
- Teach them to report any suspect activity.

7. Dealing with Cyberbullying

It is estimated that, between one-third to one-half of children, have been affected by this type of bullying. It is unacceptable, it is criminal, it causes misery, and it takes the lives of otherwise happy, healthy children that would have gone on to have bright futures. With this kind of statistic, it makes sense to talk to your child on a regular basis to ensure they are not being affected. Take these steps to deal with the problem.

- Tell them that cyberbullying is wrong and if it is happening to them they should come to you straight away.
- Report the bullying to your Internet service provider and also to the social media provider connected with the offending accounts.

- It is likely the offending bullies are students at your child's school so take the matter to the school principal so that further steps can be taken. Cyberbullying is often not just restricted to the Internet and is likely going on in classrooms and playgrounds additionally.
- Look out for any telltale signs of bullying which could include your child becoming withdrawn and their schoolwork being affected.
- Bullies get bored when there is no reaction, so teach your child to ignore the messages and to not issue responses online.
- You can take the matter to www.wiredsafety.com which is an organization that will work to uncover the identity of any anonymous bullies.
- If the matter is serious, you could contact your local police and take a civil or criminal approach to this behavior.

8. Online Forums and Social Media

Along with cyberbullying, one of the greatest risks for children online is, sadly, pedophiles that use the Internet with the aim of meeting up with your child. In a recent study, researchers found that an online predator could be talking to your child about sex within just two minutes and they could be arranging to meet your child in no more than 40 minutes.

With statistics like these, this is not an issue that parents can ignore when their children are using the Internet independently. Experts and law-enforcement officers agree that any child that is being allowed to use the Internet needs to have an age-appropriate conversation with an adult to make them aware of the dangers,

- In the same way that you teach a young child to not talk to or go with strangers, the very same thing applies to the Internet and it is not a difficult message to get across to any age of the child.

- Explain to older children that they must only speak to people they have actually met on accounts such as Facebook.
- Check their social media accounts and if you see any "friends" that you do not know ask your child about that individual.
- Educate your child to not have secrets and to be suspicious of people contacting them online that they do not know. A myth surrounding online predators is that they pose as children. Yes, some do, but often if their aim is to meet up with your child they lie about their age and on average say that they are five years younger than they actually are.
- Online predators are often overly polite and complimentary. They are looking to target a vulnerable child who can be easily groomed. Once again, educate your child.
- Report any suspicious activity to police. If you do nothing then while you may have protected your child, the offender will simply move on to the next child.

9. Consider What You Post

We have all possibly posted something that was not a great idea. This could lead to problems in the future perhaps with job applications or college admissions. Young people can post all kinds of things and not consider how it may affect their future such as photos of nights out and illicit behavior. Take these steps to avoid damage.

- Monitor posts and deal with any possibly damaging posts by explaining the potential consequences and asking them to delete it.
- If your child does not want to delete it, either delete it yourself or have the site delete it.

- Consider restricting your child's access to the Internet until they have learned this important lesson.

10. Online Games and Apps

Kids love to play games online, but they can be addictive and are not the best use of your child's time. While some games can have educational value, others are highly addictive and can take your child away from schoolwork and social interaction. These games, while free to download, can often have add-ons that you have to pay for and bills can easily be run up. Protect your child by taking the following steps:

- Monitor your child's usage
- Block the ability to make purchases on devices and keep your credit card details secure
- Look out for telltale signs of your child being addicted to online games, such as isolation and falling school grades
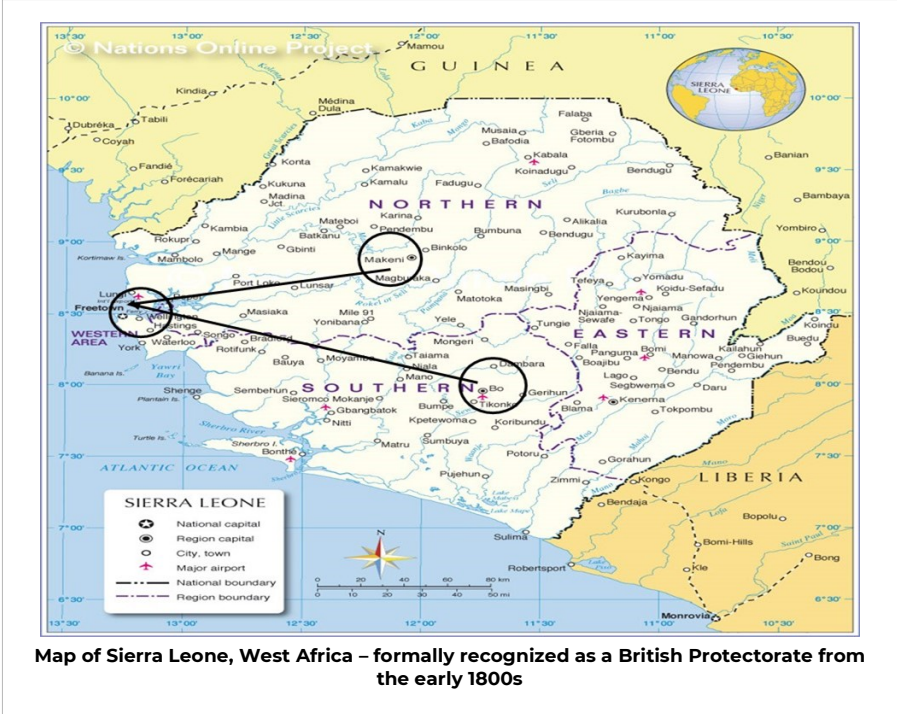
We hope you found the guide useful and your child stays safe online.

This article was contributed by the **NATIONAL HOME SECURITY ALLIANCE**. *Visit their website at www.staysafe.org. View the original post at www.staysafe.org/top-10-internet-safety-rules-for-your-kids*

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Postcard from Leon Fulcher

In Sierra Leone

Map of Sierra Leone, West Africa – formally recognized as a British Protectorate from the early 1800s

Kia Ora Ma Comrades! A country's history, institutions, political system and legislative procedures have strong influences on the delivery of residential child and youth care. Cultural symbols in

different countries influence how people view their work and relationships. Add what is arguably the most strategically important deep water port in West Africa, and there were political and economic justifications for European colonial influence. France and Britain both vied for control of Freetown Harbour as military protection for economic interests. Amongst other historic moments, Sierra Leone was arguably established as a country through the repatriation of freed slaves from the American colonies who made their way north to the British Army and then to London where they were cared for by a London charity. 'Sending them back to Africa' became an early London financial argument for the country of Sierra Leone.

British colonial influences that shaped contemporary Sierra Leone are still evident. Consider how the 190 Chieftainships recognised in 1896 when the country became a British protectorate are still operational today, as local government bodies in the public administration of Sierra Leone. Roughly 70% of the population are Muslim and ethnic diversity is extensive. The Creole whose ancestors were those freed slaves from London are still prominent inhabitants around the Capital City, Freetown.

Travelling with the President from Nairobi to Accra, then Monrovia, and then Freetown, Sierra Leone

I travelled to Freetown with Kenya Airways and found myself upgraded to Business Class. At Nairobi I was wondering why so few people used the Business Class option. Then, the President of Sierra Leone and his

entourage filled up the section! I travelled to Freetown sitting beside the Minister of Primary and Secondary Education, lending him my iPhone charging cable and teaching him how to turn off his new iPhone 10. With each stop at Accra, Ghana; Monrovia, Liberia; and Freetown, Sierra Leone – the President and his team left the aircraft and conducted Presidential level consultations with the leadership of two West African countries. We all stayed.

On arrival at Freetown International Airport, one learns about the thirty-minute ferry ride across Freetown Harbour – the only

A 30-minute Ferry from Lungi International Airport to Freetown across the best harbour in W. Africa

Children playing on the pollution-strewn beach at Lungi International Airport Ferry Terminal

option from Lungi Airport.
Suitcases and bags travel on
a separate boat, with
'porters' who transfer the
bags and operate the
tipping introduction to
Freetown life. Tipping helps
to reward local knowledge
and assistance!

Like children
everywhere, a group of
Sierra Leone children were
playing a modified form of
football on the Lungi
beachfront. The rubbish
scattered all along the
beachfront was a scary
introduction to what
followed in Freetown.

**Fishing boats along a Freetown foreshore at the
back of the Learning Workshop Hotel Venue**

**The Lebanese Lagoonda Hotel, Conference and
Casino Venue in a Freetown Suburb**

The view from the back of the learning workshop venue offered clear views of the Breadfruit tree and the large hanging fruits it produces. Further back, I noticed what once operated as hydrofoil transport – now parked up on the beachfront along with other discarded and as well as active ocean-going fishing boats.

The Professor Dr. Dr. Hermann Gmeiner Memorial on the Beach Front – May His Soul Rest in Peace

There was no mistaking how the learning workshop venue was upmarket from our local hotel accommodation. The bottled water offered throughout the four days came from the Lebanon and it transpired that the whole operation has been bankrolled by Lebanese entrepreneurs. A sharp contrast from our review of historic abuse.

Erecting a Freetown Christmas tree presents many construction challenges!

This beachfront memorial recognises the inspirational achievements of an important figure

in the international legacy of residential child and youth care with education. Born in the year after World War I and an orphaned survivor of World War II, Gmeiner's Austrian and international vision was: 'Every child belongs in a family and grows with love, respect and security'. Hence this Memorial symbol located in Sierra Leone and West Africa.

Contemplate an amazing beachfront residential child and youth care facility with education in a Civil War zone.

Happy New Year Everyone! Kia Kaha! Stand Tall!

@CYCAREWORKERS

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In general:

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- 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.

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