



Relational
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Care**
Practice

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Relational & Youth Child Care Practice

Relational Child and Youth Care Practice is committed to providing equitable and inclusive spaces that promote and support the global profession of Child and Youth Care through disseminating the knowledge and experience of individuals involved in the day-to-day lives of young people, families and communities. This commitment is founded upon the belief that all human issues, are essentially "relational".

Relational Child & Youth Care Practice welcomes submission of manuscripts on all aspects relating to young people, families and communities. This includes material that explores the intersectionality of Child and Youth Care practice and the lived experiences of all who are engaged in Child and Youth Care practice. Considerations will also be given to interpersonal dynamics of professional practice and all submissions that assume a relational perspective. This might include topics such as cultural values, ethics, social policy, program design, supervision, education, training etc. Welcomed are also submissions that address advocacy, social justice and reconciliation practices within the diverse spaces and places of Child and Youth Care. Each issue may include refereed articles that comply with acceptable 'academic' standards; submissions contributed by regular and guest columnists; short pieces that describe particular relational experiences and reflections; poetry; artwork and photographs.

Material should be submitted by email to rcycp@press.cyc-net.org in standard word processing format (eg. .doc, .rtf). Formal articles should not exceed 6000 words in length. Referencing should conform to either APA or Harvard format. Author-date citations should be used within the text and a double-spaced reference section should accompany each article. In all submissions, authorship details including an abstract of no more than 150 words should be included, as well as a short list of keywords at the beginning of the article, a headshot photo and a short author bio of about 100 words to publish with your article. Importantly, authors should also indicate whether a peer review is required (in addition to the standard editorial review).

Although no article or submission will be rejected purely for stylistic reasons, the editors reserve the right to return any manuscript for additional work. Authors requiring editorial assistance in this regard should indicate their request in a covering letter. Originality of material is the responsibility of the primary author. Previously published material must be identified as such and will be published only where the necessary permission has been granted from the original source.

Relational Child and Youth Care Practice may include Peer Reviewed contributions, stories, case studies, thought pieces, experiential descriptions and other forms of writing which will not be peer reviewed. In this way we aim to strike a balance between the values of Peer Reviewed articles and experiential voices from the field. This is a unique approach and one which we feel offers the best of both. Peer Review is available on request.

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The Future is Here!

Kiaras Gharabaghi

The field of child and youth care has come a long way in a relatively short period of time. Only 70 years ago, the field was largely informal, with well-meaning people across many different geographies trying their best to be helpful to young people facing a range of adversities. Sometimes their work was not particularly helpful, perhaps because of their own biases and dispositions, perhaps because of the lack of practice frameworks much less theoretical frameworks to guide them, or maybe because of a lack of supervision. More likely, however, it was the institutions, and sometimes the political systems, within which they worked that caused harm and rendered their practice less than ideal. In Canada, we can think of residential schools designed to ‘civilize’ Indigenous children and youth; in South Africa, the Apartheid system; and in Scotland, we know a lot more today about institutional abuses and individually driven abuse in places that were supposed to care for and provide therapeutic services to young people.

For significant periods of time, practitioners were working in the absence of an educational infrastructure, professional training, and on-going professional development opportunities. The implications of relying on the good intentions of informal helpers have been present for generations, and although sometimes those helpers saved lives, often they inadvertently damaged entire communities. It turns out that being with young people, ideally in the context of their families and communities and in tune with their multiple and overlapping identities, is not just a matter of good intentions – it is

complicated and often requires a much more thoughtful, activist, politicized, ethical, and skilful praxis.

How things have changed. Today, some countries boast dozens of post-secondary institutions providing diploma and degree programs in Child & Youth Care. While much of this infrastructure is situated at the college and undergraduate levels of post-secondary education systems, more recently, graduate programs have emerged in larger numbers. At least four such programs are clearly and unequivocally located within the field, and indeed the discipline, of Child & Youth Care: the longest standing Masters and PhD programs at the University of Victoria, the graduate Diploma program at Concordia University, the more recently established Masters program at Ryerson University, and the online and in class Masters programs at the University of Strathclyde in Scotland. In South Africa, in spite of the absence of graduate programs specifically in child and youth care, several undergraduate programs exist that have elevated their work to effectively provide graduate-level education in child and youth care to exceptional students – Monash University comes to mind.

Having formalized post-secondary education programs is not in and of itself proof that we have moved beyond doing damage, beyond poor practices, or beyond political and social oppressions. Some might even argue that elements of our post-secondary programs perpetuate dynamics of racism, ableism, and other forms of generating dominant norms, expectations and classifications. Then again, without these post-secondary education programs we would not have the platform or the employment context in which we could argue about these things publicly and with a high degree of professional integrity. Our programs, notwithstanding their faults and limitations, nevertheless provide the space to engage difficult and highly political issues and themes that are ever-present in our field. And increasingly, our programs are the launching pad for new scholars, thinkers, activists, rebels and revolutionaries who we need today more so than ever in order to ensure that our field is responsive to this century, the 21st century, rather than stuck in old ideas, assumptions, ontologies, and ways of seeing and being.

With the rise of graduate education in child and youth care, the field itself benefits from new research efforts, new engagements by the next generation of thinkers and activists, and perhaps even the rise of a new intellectual movement. As a result, RCYCP agreed to partner with the School of Child & Youth Care at Ryerson University in an effort to feature some of the graduate work (or high-end undergraduate work) of child and

youth care students from across those institutions providing graduate level education. The University of Victoria, Concordia University, Strathclyde and Monash quickly came on board to participate in this process, so that what we can offer in this issue of *RCYCP* is a selection of graduate-level work in our field reflecting the work of students from across geographies and contexts. We worked with a professional editor who connected with the authors of each of the papers featured in this issue to render them relatively consistent in format and length, given that some of the works featured here are revised graduate theses that were 50 or more pages in lengths; other works are papers submitted as assignments in graduate courses. The papers featured are not a 'best of...' selection; each institution had its own approach in nominating papers to be included. A common element across all of the papers, however, is that each contributes a unique perspective, angle or approach to engaging our field with a level of depth and sophistication we can now start to expect given the ever-increasing number of individuals with graduate degrees or diplomas in child and youth care.

In moving forward with this special issue of *RCYCP*, we hope to accomplish several things. First, we are happy to provide a platform for the authors of the featured papers to showcase their work. Publications are an important component of building a professional dossier, and often also serve to connect people with others whose interests are sparked by reading a particular article. Second, we think it is good to feature graduate level work in child and youth care as a way of confirming that our field is not limited to practice settings; research, theory and intellectual engagement are now part and parcel of the full spectrum of activity that unfolds in child and youth care. And third, perhaps most importantly, we hope to transcend the silos of institutional identities and priorities by doing together what we have previously done alone – we are featuring the work of students from all of our programs, demonstrating that while each program may have its unique orientation and way of situating itself, together we present a strong, lively and deeply engaged intellectual playground for a field that has a bright future in its contributions to a better world.

Collaborating across institutions is an essential element of a successful field and/or discipline. Geography matters in how we understand all aspects of social relations, as geography is always situated in histories and political narratives. Child and youth care in South Africa accounts for different circumstances than it does in Ontario or British Columbia. Quebec provides a different context for thinking about child and youth care practice than does Scotland. We can enrich each institution's pedagogies, competencies,

capacities and ideologies by coming together and allowing for dialogue, critique, and mutual support of each other's work. Featuring student work, edited to reflect common formats, in a special issue of *RCYCP* is one component of celebrating our field across institutions. We can invent many more ways of doing this; in a Canadian context, expanding the University of Victoria's extremely successful and excellent CYC in Action conference series to include stops in Montreal and Toronto is another way; developing courses and/or experiential learning experiences across our campuses and social contexts is possible; ensuring that our collective work is transformed to center Indigenous lives and Afric-centric perspectives is furthered by these kinds of efforts to engage each other.

The possibilities are really endless. With this special issue of *RCYCP*, we take a small step to bridging the distance between our institutional and geographic silos. But we can do so much more, and I hope we will! The Future is here; thanks in part to Sandrina deFinney at the University of Victoria, Varda Mann-Feder at Concordia University, Graham McPheat at Strathclyde, and Rika Swanzen at Monash. Thanks also to Heather Snell and Martin Stabrey at *RCYCP*, as well as Michael LaPointe, the professional editor who worked with each of the students.



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Information

Relational Child and Youth Care Practice (formerly *The Journal of Child & Youth Care*, established 1982) is committed to promoting and supporting the profession of Child and Youth Care through disseminating the knowledge and experience of individuals involved in the day-to-day lives of young people.

This commitment is founded upon the belief that all human issues, including personal growth and development, are essentially "relational".

Certain pieces in *RCYCP* have received peer review. However, we do not peer review all articles as we choose not to exclude those voices where peer review would be inappropriate or on request from writers.

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