

Newsletter Highlights

Message from Board
Director, Jennifer

2026 Child and Youth
Care Celebration

Reflections on the
2026 World CYC
Conference

Where My CYC's At?

2026 Membership
Reminder!

2026 Child and Youth
Care World Conference

Let's Hear from You!



As we move through August, summer is in full swing—a time to celebrate accomplishments, reflect on the growth and achievements of the first half of the year, and begin looking ahead to the opportunities that the months ahead will bring. It is a season of reflection, renewal, and possibility—a chance to recognize the hard work, dedication, and milestones that have shaped our journey thus far.

This time of year is also an exciting one for our profession as we welcome new Child and Youth Care graduates and emerging leaders into the field. As they begin the next chapter of their careers, we look forward to the fresh perspectives, energy, and innovation they will bring to our communities, organizations, and the children, youth, and families they will serve.

In this newsletter, we are excited to introduce the theme of our upcoming Provincial Conference: Reigniting Your Flame. This theme invites those working in our field to pause and reflect on what first inspired them to pursue this meaningful career, while also considering what continues to fuel their passion, purpose, and commitment to those they walk alongside each day.

As summer continues, I encourage each of you to take time to rest, recharge, and reflect on all that you have accomplished this year. Whether you are enjoying a well-earned break, preparing for a new season, or continuing your important work in the community, remember to acknowledge the dedication, compassion, and resilience you bring to this profession every day.

Thank you for the difference you make in the lives of children, youth, families, and communities across Manitoba. I wish you a safe, restorative, and enjoyable remainder of the summer, and I look forward to connecting with many of you this fall.

Best regards,

Jennifer Lopez
Board Director
Child and Youth Care Workers Association of Manitoba

*We respectfully recognize that
the places we work are located
on original lands of
Anishinaabe, Cree, Oji-Cree,
Dakota, and Dene peoples, and
on the homeland of the Métis
Nation.*

Child and Youth Care Celebration



On Tuesday, April 30th, 2026, Red River College Polytech celebrated the success of the graduating second year students in the Child and Youth Care Program. Each year the Child and Youth Care Workers Association of Manitoba (CYCWAM) Award is awarded to an individual who has shown dedication to the CYC profession and has demonstrated commitment towards their professional growth and development as a Child and Youth Care practitioner. This year's recipient is Ezra Samson Kreklau.

Reflections on the 2026 World Child and Youth Care Conference

Attending the National Child and Youth Care Conference in St. John's, Newfoundland was an inspiring and meaningful experience that I learned so much from. This was my first time traveling and the experience was nothing short of amazing. Being surrounded by child and youth care practitioners, educators, researchers, and students from across the country had really reinforced the importance of our shared commitment to supporting children, youth, and families.

Connecting with other professionals was another highlight of the conference for me. It was moving to hear stories of resilience, innovation, and perseverance from practitioners across the country. Although our workplaces and communities may differ, many of the challenges we as child and youth care practitioners go through are shared. Having the opportunities to discuss strategies, exchange ideas, and build professional connections really reminded me that Child and Youth Care is strengthened through collaboration and mutual support.

Thank you, St Johns Convention center, for your hospitality!

Jodi Parliament

Board Director, Child and Youth Care Workers Association of Manitoba

It was such an honour to participate in the 2026 World Child and Youth Care conference hosted by Newfoundland's CYC association. I feel so grateful for the opportunity to connect with child and youth care professionals from across the globe and learn from not only their experiences, but from the experiences we shared throughout our time in Newfoundland. Each presentation brought unique perspectives and thoughtful critiques to how the Child and Youth care field currently operates, as well as potential cornerstone actions we can take to improve both work conditions for staff, and quality of life for the youth and families we serve.

Thank you so much to all the wonderful individuals I got to meet and I can't wait to see what's next for the field of Child and Youth Care!

Ezra Samsom Kreklau

Secretary, Child and Youth Care Workers Association of Manitoba

I had the opportunity to attend the International Child and Youth Care Conference in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, with our Manitoba Child and Youth Care Association President, Chelsea Champagne. The conference offered a wide variety of engaging workshops, and I enjoyed exploring topics outside my usual areas of practice. A standout session for me focused on using Dungeons & Dragons as a tool to build relationships with youth and create opportunities to explore emotions, problem-solving, and life experiences in a safe and creative way.

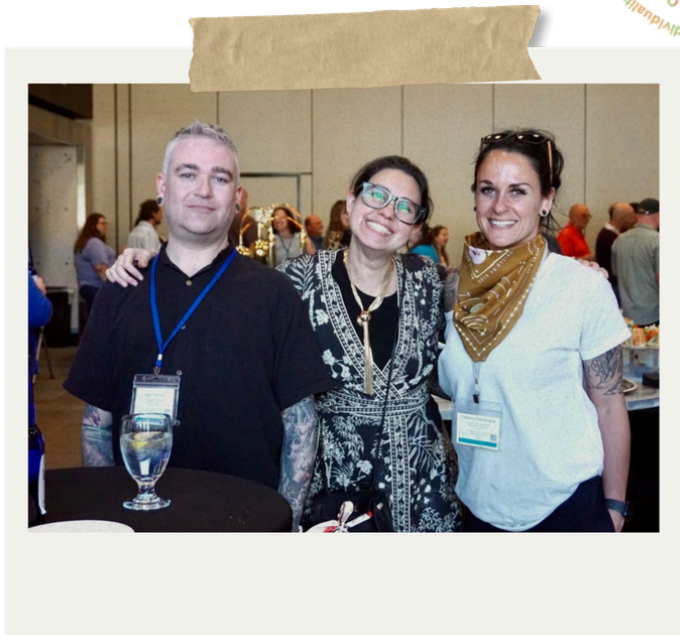
I also had the privilege of attending Canadian Council meetings, where it was inspiring to see associations from across the country collaborating to strengthen the child and youth care profession. It left me feeling hopeful about the future of our field.

Outside of the conference, we enjoyed exploring the beautiful city of St. John's and taking part in the conference social, where we were officially Screeched In—a memorable way to experience Newfoundland's hospitality!

Jason Fillmore

Board Director, Child and Youth Care Workers Association of Manitoba

2026 World Child and Youth Care Conference



Where My CYC's At?



Every year, around 30 students graduate from the Child and Youth Care program at Red River College Polytechnic. They enter the workforce with passion, knowledge, and a commitment to making a difference in the lives of children, youth, and families.

But where are they now?

As the Child and Youth Care Workers Association of Manitoba welcomes new graduates each year, we often see only a handful become members. Even more concerning, many of those memberships disappear after a year.

The question is: why?

You don't stop being a Child and Youth Care practitioner when you graduate. You don't stop being a professional because you've been working for a few years. If anything, your voice becomes even more important as your experience grows. One of the most common questions we hear is, "Why is our field struggling?" or "How do we improve outcomes for children, youth, families, and the professionals who support them?"

The answer starts with us.

Meaningful change requires collective action. Without strong membership in our provincial association, we lack the numbers needed to demonstrate the strength of our profession. Decision-makers look for organized, unified voices. When our membership is small, it sends the message that our profession is small or worse, that it isn't organized enough to advocate for itself.

Without representation, it becomes increasingly difficult to engage government, advocate for policy change, pursue regulation, improve wages, or strengthen professional recognition. We remain unseen, despite the essential work we do every day. As Child and Youth Care practitioners, we teach children, youth, and families that change requires participation. We encourage them to become active agents in shaping their own futures. We should be holding ourselves to that same standard.

If we want better wages, stronger professional recognition, regulation, and a louder voice in decisions that affect our work, we must stand together. Membership in the Child and Youth Care Workers Association of Manitoba costs just \$20 per year—the lowest membership fees of any Child and Youth Care association in Canada. We intentionally kept it affordable because we understand the financial realities many practitioners face, especially those early in their careers. For less than the cost of a few coffees each month, or even a single takeout meal, you can invest in the future of your profession. This association exists for you. But it can only be as strong as the people who choose to be part of it.

If you've ever said our profession deserves more respect, better wages, stronger advocacy, or regulation, now is the time to act. Your membership isn't just a subscription, it's a statement that Child and Youth Care matters, that our profession deserves recognition, and that we are prepared to advocate for the children, youth, families, and practitioners we serve.

The future of Child and Youth Care in Manitoba will not be shaped by a handful of dedicated volunteers. It will be shaped by all of us.

So, where my CYC's at?

Chelsea Champagne
President of CYCWAM



**ARE YOU A CYCWAM MEMBER? DO YOU
NEED TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP?
USE THE QR CODE OR LINK BELOW!**



Link:

**2026 CYCWAM
Membership Form**

To receive your membership card,
follow the steps below:

- 1) Fill out our application form
- 2) Pay for membership. Receipts will be sent out to our corporate members and available upon request for our individual members.
- 3) Membership cards will be sent out every 2nd and 4th Friday of the month

**Individual Membership:
\$20
Corporate Membership:
\$300**



Payment Options:

E-Transfer: treasurer@cycwam.org

Mail cheque to:
PO Box 33002
Polo Park PO
Winnipeg, MB. R3G 3N4

Call for Presentations



**Call for Presentations Opens:
September 1, 2026**

Submission Deadline: December 31, 2026

Conference Date: End of May 2027

Presented by: the Child and Youth Care
Workers' Association of Manitoba

Conference Theme: Reigniting Your Flame

The Child and Youth Care Workers' Association of Manitoba is pleased to announce the Child and Youth Care Provincial Conference 2027. This year's conference theme, "Reigniting Your Flame," invites Child and Youth Care practitioners, educators, leaders, advocates, researchers, and students to reconnect with the passion, purpose, and commitment that first brought them into the field.

Child and Youth Care work is rooted in relationships, resilience, advocacy, and hope. In a profession that often demands so much emotionally, mentally, and physically, this conference aims to create space for reflection, renewal, inspiration, and growth. Together, we will explore how practitioners can rediscover their "why," strengthen their professional identity, and reignite the flame that fuels meaningful work with children, youth, families, and communities.

We invite dynamic, engaging, and thoughtful presentations that align with the conference theme and contribute to meaningful dialogue, learning, and professional development.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!



Want to be featured in our newsletter?
Do you have feedback or any stories to share?



Send them our way!

Email us at info@cycwam.org.
Include your story and your name
or indicate if you want to remain
anonymous!



JESSIE HOME INC.



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Child and Youth Care
Workers' Association of
Manitoba



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