



Summer is already here and our team is taking a break to recharge, but not without publishing our Spring/Summer Newsletter!

As the school year comes to an end, we want to acknowledge and congratulate all the graduates from the Certificate and Diploma programs at Ndinawé and Red River College Polytechnic. We welcome all the wonderful new professionals to our field, and encourage them to bring their fresh eyes into every conversation, every situation and every opportunity. Together we can continue to make this profession stand out while we showcase to Manitobans the work we do with children and youth in our province.

We would like to highlight the engagement we experienced with our "I am a CYC" campaign on Social Media for CYC Week. We thank all the CYCs that participated, sharing their stories and ideas, and to all that interacted with our posts. Our campaign ignited a spark in associations of other provinces to showcase their CYCs as well!

There is much work to be done, and I am aware our field is not "perfect", so I would like to leave you with this reflection: Every CYC's heart guides them to give their best every day to the children and youth they work with, because they care, because they see themselves in those they serve, because they want to provide a safe space that in turn, will make a difference in someone's life that will have a ripple effect to create a better world. Although you might not see the changes right away, and in some cases, maybe never, know your work matters, you make that difference in other's lives, and we see you, and we thank you for all you do.

"I am because we are"

Yours in community,

Victoria Gonzalez  
Vice-President, Child and Youth Care Workers Association of Manitoba

# Newsletter Highlights

**Message from the  
Vice President**

**CYC Student Feature: Ezra  
Samsom Kreklau**

**CYC WEEK!**

**CYC Student Feature:  
Jodi Parliament**

**Child and Youth Care  
Celebration of Success**

**2026 National & World  
Conference**

**Let's Hear from You!**

*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.*

## **THE SUCCESS OF MY FIRST YEAR**

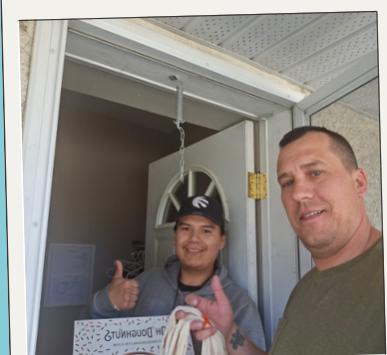
My name is Ezra. I applied to the Child and Youth Care program wanting to work with young people to help them achieve their goals, but I felt like I couldn't possibly be what any child needed. I thought that not having experienced the same things as the youth I would work with meant I couldn't walk alongside them in a meaningful way. I wanted to learn everything I could to prepare for my career because I was uncomfortable with working in the unknown.

What I've learned from the CYC program has been so much more valuable than just the material and competencies. I've also learnt what it means to grow and change. I've realized that the change I want to see in the world, and in child and youth care, can only happen when we are uncomfortable. Confronting the harsh reality of what has been done, and what continues to happen to youth in care, means being uncomfortable and bringing others into that uncomfortableness as well.

My biggest success in the first year of my program wasn't the history, psychology, and practices that go into being a child and youth care practitioner (although those will come in handy). It was the mindset shift that led me to see how walking alongside youth meant being uncomfortable, because the traumas that they've experienced are horrible. Being uncomfortable is what makes me a better CYCP. It's what pushes me to improve, makes me a better listener, and gives me the strength to speak up when something isn't right.

I am thankful for what my teachers, peers, and the youth I've met, have taught me. My experiences will never be the same as the youth I serve and that's okay, because as long as I can sit with them through the discomfort, I know I can make change.

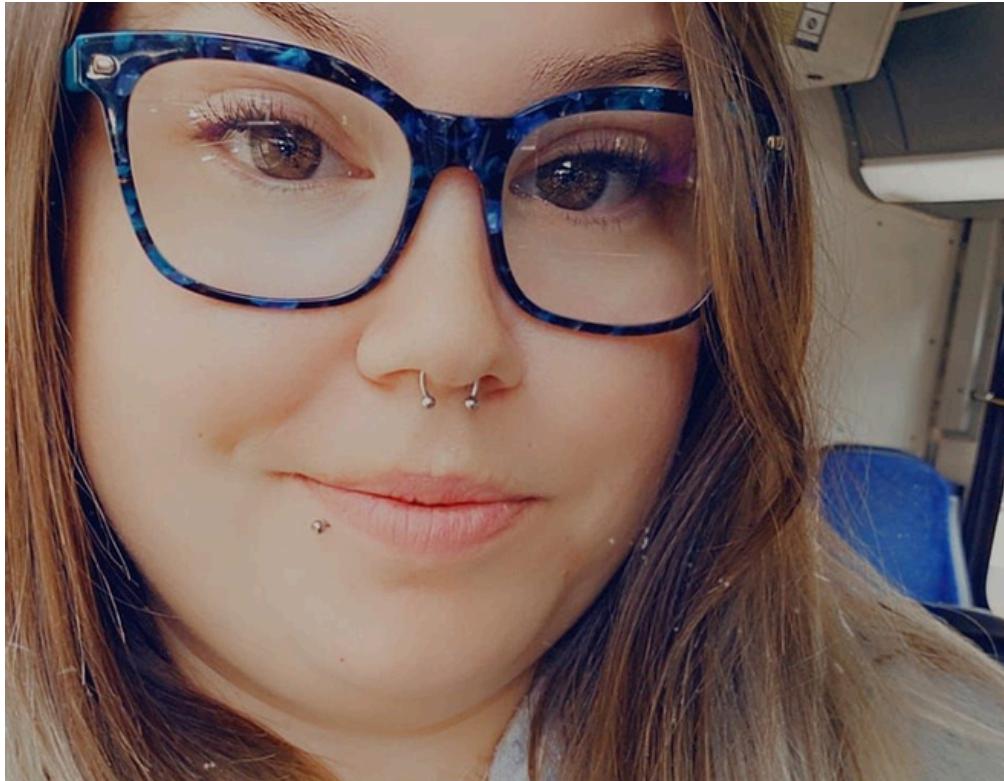
Ezra Samsom Kreklau - Student Director



# CYC WEEK

To celebrate and honour the work of CYCs, CYCWAM Board Members delivered boxes of Oh Doughnuts to 12 different locations where CYC Professionals were working!

## **CYC STUDENT FEATURE**



Hi, my name is Jodi, and I went through the Child and Youth Care Certificate program at Red River College Polytechnic and Ndinawé. During my time in this course, I learnt a lot about Indigenous culture and ceremonies. I was also able to learn a lot about myself as a person on both a personal and professional level. One of my takeaways from this program during my time at Ndinawé was “pivot”. This became our “motto” because we had to do a lot of that, it showed me how adaptable and resilient I am as a person during situations where things changed.

This program has helped me grow in ways I didn’t think about. It helped me realize my own self-awareness and that was something I had never thought about before either. It opened my eyes more to the child welfare system and to things I never knew about regarding children and youth. It also helped me with boundaries, and knowing which ones were healthy and which ones were not. I have met so many great people during the year and created amazing bonds. I am really looking forward to second year as I will learn more skills to help properly support our young people, have the chance to take more trainings like ASIST and to creating more bonds and relationships with amazing people in the field.

## CHILD AND YOUTH CARE CELEBRATION OF SUCCESS

On Tuesday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025, 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 Chantal Williamson.

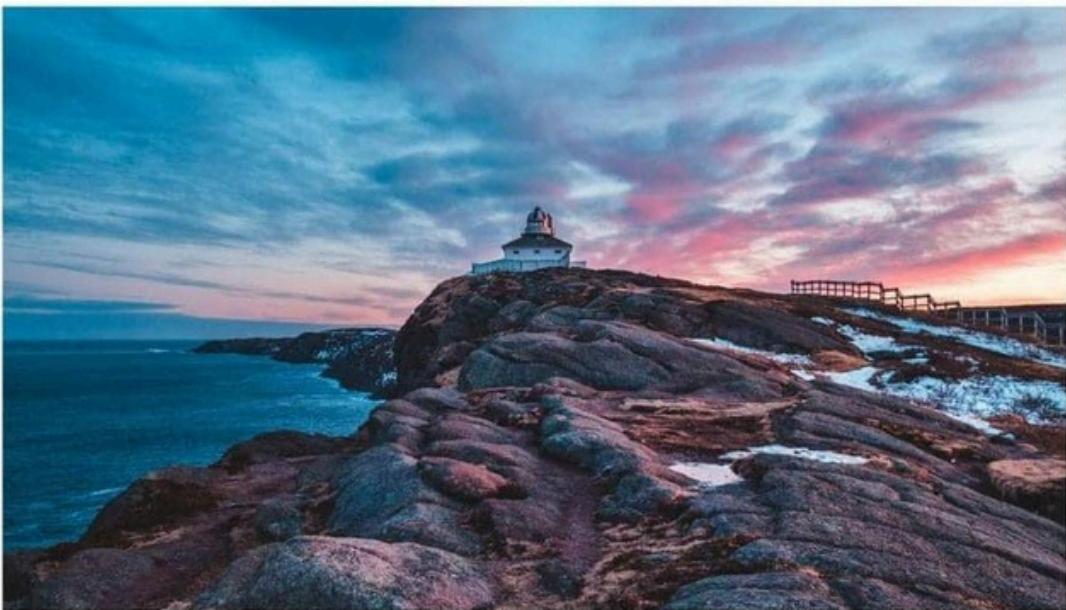


(Left to Right) Board Director- Jennifer Lopez  
CYCWAM Award Recipient- Chantal Williamson  
CYCWAM President- Chelsea Champagne

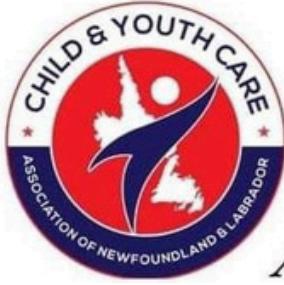
### A MESSAGE FROM THE CYCWAM AWARD RECIPIENT

My name is Chantal, and I'm proud to have recently graduated from the Child and Youth Care program at Red River College. Over the past two years, I've gained valuable tools, knowledge, and hands-on experience to help support young people and families in meaningful, strength-based ways. My journey as a CYC professional has only just begun and I'm so excited to see where this field takes me! I'm especially passionate about fostering positive change—not just in individual lives, but in the larger system that impact them. My long-term goals are to help shape policies that make our communities safer, more inclusive, and supportive for all children, youth, and families.

# Save the Date: June 23-26, 2026 St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador



CYC-Net and the Child and Youth Care Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, proudly announce the dates for the next combined National and World conference!



*Amazing local culture awaits*





## 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](mailto: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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