

Winter 2026

Child and Youth Care Educational Accreditation Board of Canada



Image by [Alain Audet](#) from [Pixabay](#)



Let's hear from you!

This newsletter is intended to be a networking resource, firstly for the members of CYCEAB, and secondly for the broader public interested in the educational practice in the field of Child and Youth Care. Our board wants to celebrate the wonderful work that is occurring within the member programs. Over the next publications of the CYCEAB newsletter, you will get the opportunity to read about what is going on across Canada, and internationally, as we invite members from each region to share the work that goes on within their programs. This newsletter is focused on the Western region. We have membership from the following:

- Bow Valley College
- Douglas College
- Lakeland College
- MacEwan University
- Medicine Hat College
- Mount Royal University
- NorQuest College
- Red River College Polytechnic
- University of the Fraser Valley
- Vancouver Island University

Enjoy our contributions from:

- Lakeland College
- Mount Royal University
- MacEwan University
- Red River College Polytechnic

Our next newsletter will focus on our Central and Northern regions. Please consider submitting something for our spring/summer newsletter to:

admin@cycaccreditation.ca



CYCEA

CHILD AND YOUTH CARE EDUCATIONAL
ACCREDITATION BOARD OF CANADA



BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

Inclusiveness, engagement, reflective practice, and commitment to quality



Quality Assurance

Enhance the quality of education in Child and Youth Care.



Practice

Influence the future of CYC practice



Building Relationships

Build relationships with colleagues from across Canada and beyond



Developing Leadership

Showcase your program as a leader in the teaching of CYC

High quality education is a result of sound evaluation and continuous improvement. Accreditation is a process for regular, rigorous review of program goals, pedagogies, and outcomes. It facilitates dialogue and education within and across CYC programs about innovation and quality, assisting with decision-making about where and how to situate a School, Department, or Program. Consider becoming a member today! Email admin@cycaccreditation.ca for further information.



Communications Committee Member Recruitment

CYCEAB BE PART OF THE TEAM!

Child and Youth Care
Educational Accreditation
Board of Canada is looking for
Communications Committee
Members!

Be involved in:

- ✓ Managing social media
- ✓ Website updates
- ✓ Creating seasonal newsletters
- ✓ Meeting quarterly at minimum
- ✓ Promoting membership, accreditation & much more!

Why Join?

Are you passionate about CYC post-secondary education? Do you want to be part of the field as it changes?
We want you!

We actively seek members that reflect the people CYC practitioners engage with each day, in classrooms and community.



Contact:

admin@cycaccreditation.ca
to sign up or for more information

The poster features the CACEJ and CYCEA logos at the top left, which include a red maple leaf icon. The text 'SAVE THE DATE & REGISTER (\$30 CAD)' is prominently displayed in large white letters on a blue background. Below this, the webinar title is written in bold black text. The host's name and affiliation are listed in a smaller white font. The date and time are provided in large, bold black text. A QR code is located on the right side of the poster, and a call to action 'Register to save your spot!' is at the bottom left.

SAVE THE DATE & REGISTER (\$30 CAD)

Does Unregulated Care Mean Unprotected Rights? How a Lack of Professionalization Violates the Rights of Children and Youth in Canada

Hosted by Emmie Henderson Dekort, Mount Royal University

APRIL 22, 2026
8 PM – 9 PM EDT
OR 5PM – 6 PM MST

Register to save your spot!

Join our powerful webinar: “Does Unregulated Care Mean Unprotected Rights? How a Lack of Professionalization Violates the Rights of Children and Youth in Canada”

Discover why professionalization and regulation matters, how CYCs can be fierce rights advocates, and real steps to build stronger, safer care systems for Canada’s kids.

Key takeaways you’ll love:

- Uphold child + youth rights every day
- See why regulation is non-negotiable
- Become a stronger advocate in your practice

Practitioners, educators, advocates — this one’s for YOU!

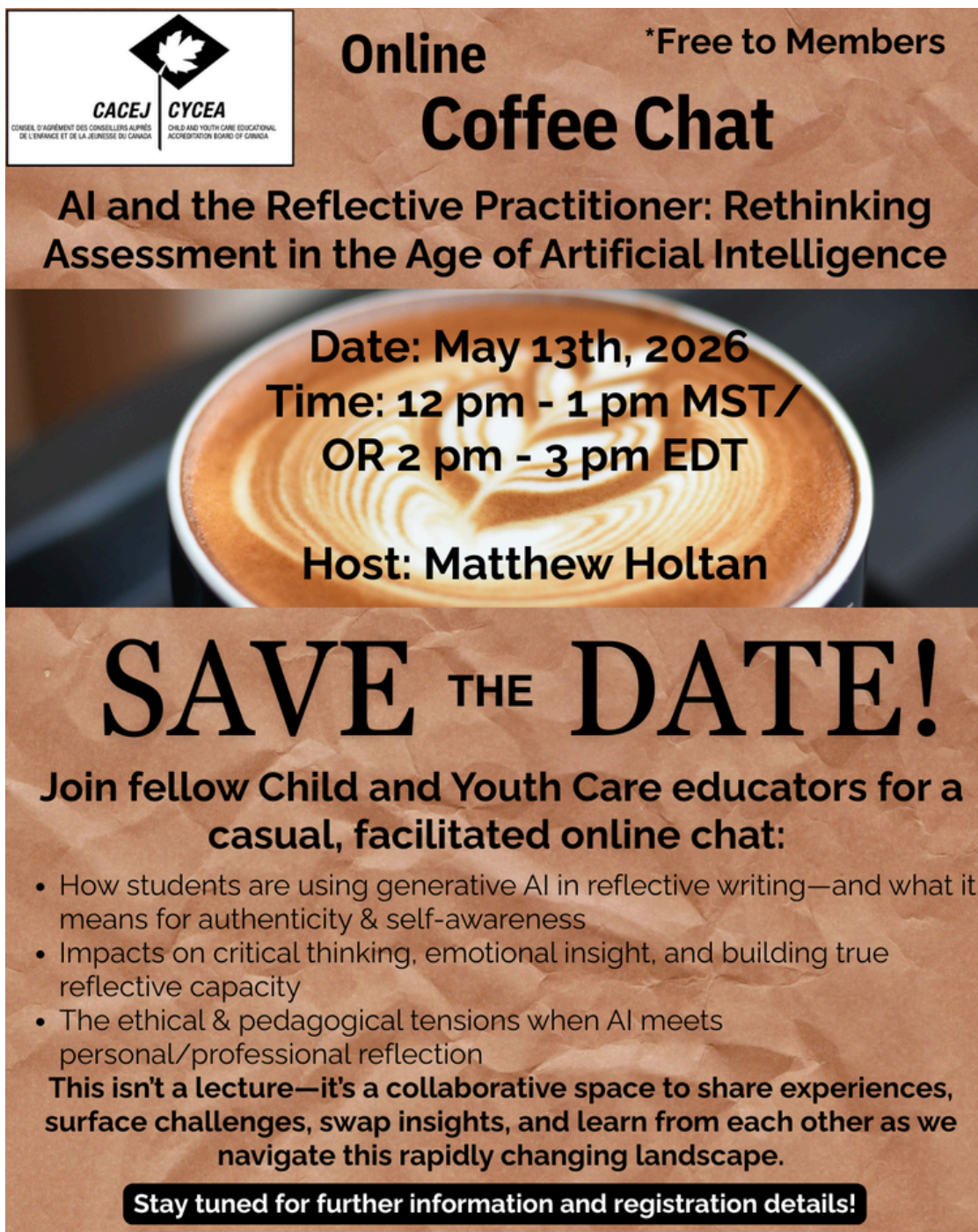
Use the QR code to register, or click the [Eventbrite direct registration link](#)


Hosted through Microsoft TEAMS

Looking for a space to connect with your peers? Our Coffee Chats offer a dedicated online forum for CYC faculty to congregate, share insights, and navigate the questions that matter most to our work.

Our upcoming session features host Matthew Holtan, who will be sharing about AI and reflective practice. Whether you have questions to bring to the table or just want to listen in and learn, we'd love to have your voice in the mix.

Save the date! More details will be shared on social media!

The poster features a brown, crumpled paper background. At the top left is the logo for CACEJ (Conseil d'agrément des conseillers alpines de l'enfance et de la jeunesse du Canada) and CYCEA (Child and Youth Care Educational Accreditation Board of Canada). The main title 'Online Coffee Chat' is prominently displayed in large, bold, black font. Below this, the topic 'AI and the Reflective Practitioner: Rethinking Assessment in the Age of Artificial Intelligence' is written in a smaller, bold font. A central image of a cup of coffee with latte art is overlaid with the event details: 'Date: May 13th, 2026', 'Time: 12 pm - 1 pm MST / OR 2 pm - 3 pm EDT', and 'Host: Matthew Holtan'. The bottom section is dominated by the large, bold text 'SAVE THE DATE!' followed by an invitation to join a casual, facilitated online chat. A list of topics to be discussed is provided, and a final call to action is enclosed in a black box with white text.

 **Online** ***Free to Members**

Coffee Chat

AI and the Reflective Practitioner: Rethinking Assessment in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

Date: May 13th, 2026
Time: 12 pm - 1 pm MST /
OR 2 pm - 3 pm EDT

Host: Matthew Holtan

SAVE ^{THE} DATE!

Join fellow Child and Youth Care educators for a casual, facilitated online chat:

- How students are using generative AI in reflective writing—and what it means for authenticity & self-awareness
- Impacts on critical thinking, emotional insight, and building true reflective capacity
- The ethical & pedagogical tensions when AI meets personal/professional reflection

This isn't a lecture—it's a collaborative space to share experiences, surface challenges, swap insights, and learn from each other as we navigate this rapidly changing landscape.

Stay tuned for further information and registration details!

Accreditation Updates

by Wendy Weninger, Accreditation Coordinator



WOW!! It is hard to believe that the winter academic term is well underway, “Reading Week” / “Spring Break” is on the calendar – maybe completed already or upcoming soon – and before you know it, the Winter 2026 term will be over. My hope is that you are currently managing well in balancing all your responsibilities.

This time of year is a busy one for programs engaged in the CYCEAB accreditation process. CYC faculty from Fall 2025 applications are well into completing their Self-Study, and those from Fall 2024 applications are at the point in time that site reviews and resulting reporting timelines are being attended to. Programs considering an upcoming accreditation application are also looking forward to what will be expected in the months ahead.

This is a great time to notify all CYC programs of exciting changes/revisions to the accreditation process:

- CYCEAB is now open to applications from programs at any time of the year, rather than the single previous annual deadline of September 15. The advantage of this is the opportunity to begin at a time that may be less overwhelming to faculty (and supporting departments) than the start of a new academic year. Currently we have several programs looking at applying in May 2026. This is exciting!
- Last fall the board developed a format for reporting/completing the Self-Study that “chunks” the eight sections into folders where both the What You Need and Engaging the Evidence sections can be focused on without having to “flip” through the entire document. We currently have a program piloting this. It is set up so that supporting documents get put directly into tables, making access for reviewers much easier. The actual reflective responses are completed in the folder so uploading a lengthy completed Self-Study once finished is unnecessary. This format greatly reduces administrative time and resources and to date, seems to be working efficiently.

- CYCEAB has a degree program currently at the site review stage of the accreditation process that is piloting a dual-accreditation review. CYCEAB's accreditation process was deemed of sufficient rigor and thoroughness by the provincial body that oversees degree program accreditation, that one site review will be coordinated to meet the needs of two accrediting bodies. This has wonderful potential for degree programs across Canada.
- The Standards Development and Implementation Committee is again immersed in the review of all accreditation documents, looking to make necessary revisions for the 2026 applicants. Feedback is also sought from members from other CYCEAB committees, reviewers, board directors, and accredited programs. Dianne Marcellus-Kerr and I will be working diligently to get the documents up by the end of March for new 2026 applicants.

As always, if your program is interested in engaging in the CYCEAB accreditation process, or if you have any questions about accreditation, please feel free to contact me at your convenience. I can answer your questions and provide information either via email or by setting up a virtual meeting. No application commitment is necessary to chat!

Enjoy the remainder of your Winter 2026 term!

-Wendy Weninger
CYCEAB Accreditation Coordinator
Email: wendy.weninger@outlook.com



Lakeland College

Child and Youth Care Counselling program

Our names are Amber and Sarah, and we are first-year Child & Youth Care Counselling students at Lakeland College who had the opportunity to participate in two meaningful field trips this semester. We visited the Thorpe Recovery Centre and the Lloydminster Sexual Assault Centre. These visits gave us valuable insight into the work happening in our community, and we want to share how they shaped our learning.

The first place we had the chance to visit was the Thorpe Recovery Centre. We were able to see their different spaces for those who are admitted there and how Thorpe supports them through each stage of recovery. We were told about the many professionals they have there so that those in residence have their needs met and are supported through their process of recovery. Secondly, we visited the Lloydminster Sexual Assault Centre, where we met many of the workers and learned about the various aspects of what they do and who they directly work with. The Sexual Assault Centre is set up to be a safe place for those who are coming in for support. They have many different rooms that are tailored to be a safe place for various age groups and use trauma-informed practices to help children and youth cope with the trauma they have experienced.

Our time at both places gave us a deeper understanding of how the theories we are learning are applied in the field. Both centres modelled the focus on holistic care, specifically at the Thorpe Recovery Centre. It was clear how every step of their program considered their physical, mental, and spiritual health. At the Lloydminster Sexual Assault Centre, we saw how all of the small things add up to create a trauma-informed space and practice from the variety of supports available. The colorful murals throughout the Centre created a warm, child-friendly atmosphere that demonstrated how trauma-informed practice begins with shaping spaces that feel safe, comforting, and welcoming despite the circumstances families may be facing. We learned a lot by seeing how the theories we are learning come together to create spaces that support individuals in very impactful ways.



These field trips provided a vital perspective that we cannot gain in the classroom. With the broad umbrella of places we can work as future CYC professionals, a deeper understanding of the different supports available is crucial.

One student in our class left the Lloydminster sexual assault center, “inspired to work in a place like that.” The impact of the interventions when creating safe spaces for children gave her insight into where she fits into the CYC world. Any chance to get further insight into this field directly from those working in it is very fulfilling for students in a relationally focused course.

Personally, pairing the tour of the physical space with the insight and experiences of those working there makes the field come alive in a new way.

We greatly appreciate the chance to get an up-close look at the impact being made in our own community and to look into the future of our careers in the possible places we could end up.



MacEwan University

Child and Youth Care program

In February 2026, twenty-two MacEwan University Child and Youth Care (CYC) students and two faculty members travelled to various locations in Ireland and Scotland on a 14-day study tour. The tour was part of a third-year course on global perspectives in CYC, where



students had the opportunity to learn about the socio-political landscape of care for young people and families in both countries. “Engaging and learning on this study tour to Ireland and Scotland about a field of work and study that I deeply love and admire has opened my mind and heart more than ever before” stated a student after the tour.

One stop on the tour involved spending several days with students and faculty at the Technological University of the Shannon (TUS) in Athlone, located in the Midlands of Ireland. As part of a three-day symposium organized by TUS, MacEwan students had the opportunity to present aspects of child and youth care practice to Irish students studying Social Care, a profession that shares similar standards of practice with CYC. One student shared that “Presenting at the symposium made me feel like a person with important things to say, when usually I feel like an imposter in academic spaces”. The symposium provided valuable opportunities for students from MacEwan and TUS to network, learn from one another, compare their professions and coursework, and explore the settings and scope of practice in each country.



Mount Royal University

Child and Youth Care program

Mount Royal University's (MRU) Child and Youth Care program continues to demonstrate strong provincial, national and international leadership through faculty scholarship, innovative pedagogy and community-engaged learning. Faculty and students were well represented at the Child and Youth Care Association of Alberta's 2026 Virtual Conference, contributing sessions on workforce retention (Dr. Michelle Briegel), awe in practice (Chelan McCallion and Dr. Pat Kostouros), experiential and anti-oppressive pedagogy (Jill Thompson) and inclusive workplaces (students, Alisha Bagshaw and Emma DeCecco).

Internationally, MRU faculty played a prominent role at the Unity 2025 Conference in Dublin, Ireland, with Dr. Michelle Briegel delivering the keynote address, as well as other faculty (Dr. Emmie Henderson-Dekort, Jill Thompson, Chelan McCallion, Maureen Cullen) who presented scholarly work and facilitated experiential sessions focused on relational leadership, advocacy, regulation and decolonizing education.

Recent scholarly contributions further strengthen the program's impact. Dr. Patricia Kostouros and Jill Thompson published *Child and Youth Care Interviewing and Counselling: Skills for the Other 23 Hours* (Canadian Scholars, 2025), a practice-focused text addressing lifespace interviewing and counselling skills. Faculty research also includes a current study by Dr. Monica Pauls on digital youth work in Alberta, exploring how technology is shaping CYC practice, and a forthcoming publication by Chelan McCallion and Dr. Pat Kostouros examining awe, collective effervescence and Indigenization through the Human Spider Web, developed in partnership with MRU CYC students and Blackfoot Elder Roy Bear Chief.

Community-engaged learning remains central to the program. Fourth-year Capstone students are partnering with Youth Centres of Calgary (YCC) to address service gaps for older youth in vulnerable Calgary communities. Following a community needs assessment, students designed YCC After Dark, an after-hours program for youth in grades 9–12, and successfully secured a \$5,000 grant from the Calgary Foundation to pilot the program in March.

The CYC program works to utilize innovative, student-centred pedagogies that enhance engagement, relevance and professional readiness. Faculty integrate simulation-based learning to mirror real-world CYC contexts, allowing students to apply theory, practice decision-making and engage in reflective practice in safe, supported environments. This work has been strengthened by Jill Thompson's second Provost's Grant for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, through which she is developing CYC-specific simulation videos. The program also employs approaches such as labour-based grading which fosters shared responsibility for learning and assessment, and exit tickets that invite anonymous student feedback and questions. Together, these practices enrich student learning and ensure curriculum remains responsive to current and emerging issues in the field.



Red River College Polytechnic

Greetings from Manitoba!

In January 2025, Red River College Polytech opened the Interdisciplinary Health and Community Services Simulation Centre, the first of its kind in Manitoba, with facilities mirroring health care and community settings that students will experience in the workforce. This collaborative approach helps students gain vital skills and experience in a simulated, safe, and supportive learning environment. In January of 2026 the Child and Youth Care Program piloted a simulation (SIM) for first year students in the hopes of better preparing them for the environment and experiences they will encounter for the first time in practicum 1.

The allied health programs at the college, including nursing & paramedicine, have long used simulation in their training and there is a vast amount of research to support the benefits of simulated learning. Our community services department was able to use the SIM centre apartment to replicate a managed care facility. Instructors and students were able to observe the SIM from another area through the audio/visual equipment available.

Using the *Canadian Alliance of Nursing Educators* simulation guidelines and template, faculty created a scenario representing a realistic encounter with a young person. Our goal was for students to practice interpersonal communication skills and verbal de-escalation skills drawing out some of the first term course content. Students were provided with this content along with the young person's social history and examples of documentation that they would find in practice (young person in care file) to review prior to the SIM.

The SIM itself ran for 20 minutes in the apartment followed by a 40 minute debrief. Students are reminded that this experience is not being formally evaluated and that "mistakes" are ok as this is an exercise of reflection in and on practice. The most important part of this whole experience is the debrief where Instructors and fellow students take part in reflexive practice by talking about the feelings and learning experienced during the SIM – and to help students recall and connect back to the course content.

Our hope was that this would be a positive and encouraging experience for students, helping them feel more prepared and confident as they begin their practical journey.

Our unofficial results – reflecting on the pilot as Instructors is that it was a huge success. Students reported enjoying the experience and were able to identify course content in the debrief, in some cases even more so than we expected. We are working on more official research results as we gather student survey data throughout the term.

This is an exciting opportunity for our program, and we can think of so many ways we could use SIM throughout the program – exploring the application of other first and second year learning outcomes.

Thank you,
Child & Youth Care Diploma Program Faculty
Kerry Coulter, Craig Calancia & Kathryn Wolschinski



Committee member Spotlight

Mary-Ann Pasula-Kelly, MacEwan University

Meet Mary-Ann Pasula-Kelly, a dedicated member of the Child and Youth Care Accreditation Board of Canada (CYCEAB) who plays a vital role in supporting and strengthening Child and Youth Care education. Mary-Ann brings passion and expertise to their committee work, helping to advance professional standards and accreditation processes across Canada.

About Mary-Ann

Standards Development and Implementation Committee: member

Years in CYC Work/Education:

28 years in the field / 4 years in Education

Key Areas of Focus:

Student engagement and mentorship; Theory to Practice; Professional Standards and Development

Why I Joined the CYCEAB:

I believe CYCEAB contributes to the relational pillars of CYC with educators, students and community partnerships. Accreditation strengthens education for our students, adds credibility to our field, and fosters community partnerships. I am excited to be part of the ongoing development and strategic implementation of accreditation locally, nationally, and internationally.

Words of Wisdom:

You are the art.



Fun Facts:

- I love tobogganing! My kids are at a life stage where they think they are either too old for it or too cool for it. I shamelessly bribe my adult friends to go with me.
- I enjoy making homemade soup and sharing with others in my community.



AN INVITATION

**Are you doing something cool in
CYC education? Are you facing a
challenge in the field? Do you
have CYC news to share?**

We want to hear from you!

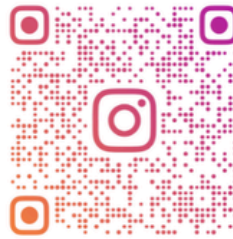
**Please consider writing
something for our next
newsletter.**

Email admin@cycaccreditation.ca to submit an article.

Celebrate CYC students!

Showcase student awards
accomplishments, and
incredible work in our
newsletter and on social media!

Tag us on
Instagram and Facebook!
use **#CYCEABcelebrates**



CYCEACREDITATION

Submit a picture
and short blurb!



CACEJ

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CYCEAB Be Part of the Team!

Committee Member Recruitment

Are you passionate about CYC
Post Secondary education?
Do you want to be part of the
field as it changes?
We want you!

Child and Youth Care Educational
Accreditation Board of Canada is
always looking for committee
members! From research to
policy to education.

We actively seek members that
reflect the people CYC
practitioners engage with each
day, in classrooms and
community.

The CYCEAB supports the
inclusion of all people and works
to promote the diverse
communities we teach, practice,
and live within.

Contact :
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sign up or for more information







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