

Child and Youth Care Worker

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Child and Youth Care Worker Program is designed to teach students the necessary practical skills and theory to work with adolescents, children, and families with diverse needs: including social, emotional, behavioural and mental health concerns. Students will explore what it means to engage with young people in their life space and learn how to facilitate and support young people in their growth and development through meaningful relationships and play. Students will identify the importance of working alongside an interdisciplinary team made up of many colleagues within their field: including educators, medical professionals, social workers, corrections staff, and community partners. Networking with these professionals will assist them when implementing appropriate prevention and intervention strategies that inspire change.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

You could enjoy a rewarding career as a child/youth worker, family support worker, program support worker, program development worker, educational program assistant, teaching assistant, or child and youth care practitioner. Work settings include treatment centers, group homes, youth centers, family support programs, community-based organizations, child welfare, hospitals, and schools. Many facilities operate 24/7 and shift work is common in these environments.

PREREQUISITES

1. Student has Grade 12.
2. Student must complete the Child and Youth Care Worker Personal Profile document.
3. Student must provide a clear Criminal Record Check.
4. Student must provide a clear Child Abuse Register Check.
5. Student must provide a clear Vulnerable Sector Check.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A student must complete all core modules as well as the requirements of Student Success Strategies, Career Planning and Preparation modules, Field Experience requirements. In addition, students must satisfy the attendance requirements as outlined by the Department of Labour and Advanced Education throughout the duration of the program.

Field Experience: This program includes both practicum and field placement components. During your first year, you will participate in a professional observation placement. At the end of your first year, you will spend time in a group recreation, group care, or community program setting running a program that you have designed with a group of your peers. At the end of your second year, you will spend time in a school, group care, community treatment program, or family support program. During each field experience, you will keep a detailed journal and participate in group discussions and debriefs to enhance your learning experience and further self-reflection.

Out of Town Field Placement: You may be required to go out of town for your field placement. You may incur additional costs associated with this (i.e.: travel, accommodations, etc.). At this time, field placement occurs only in Canada.

By the end of the program, the student will need to meet a minimum of 300 combined practicum/placement hours.

ADVANCED STANDING CREDIT

Graduates of the Eastern College NS Diploma in Child and Youth Care Worker are eligible to receive admission with advanced standing to Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU) Child and Youth Study Degree Program. Students must meet the requirements for admission for transfer students described in the MSVU calendar. Graduates of the Eastern College Child and Youth Care Worker Diploma who are admitted to MSVU will be granted a maximum of 50% of degree requirements as transfer credit toward the Child and Youth Study, BA Degree at Mount Saint Vincent University.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Course	Hours		
Student Success Strategies	20	Child and Youth Care Approaches	80
Career Planning and Preparation: Level I	20	Child and Youth Care Issue	100
Digital Literacy for Professionals	40	Individual Approaches	60
Diversity, Equity & Advocacy	40	Family issues	40
Social Issues	40	Family Work Practices	60
Professional Etiquette	20	Group Work	60
Self-Awareness and Personal Growth	20	Child and Youth Care Practice	40
Profession of Child and Youth Care	40	Career Planning and Preparation: Level II	20
Human Growth and Development	100	Field Placement - Child & Youth Care Worker	6 Weeks
Interpersonal Communication	60		
Social Training	60	Total Weeks:	64
Mental Health Practices Awareness	60	Total Hours:	1364
Family Ties	40	**Work terms/internships are scheduled for a minimum of 34 hours	
CYCW Professional Observation	80	per week in the field, but the total number of hours worked and the	
Activity Programming	60	timing of hours scheduled are at the discretion of the employer/host.	

CERTIFICATIONS

Occupational Health & Safety Training, Basic Principles & Practices of Personal Care
 Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCI)
 Food Handler's Certificate
 First Aid with CPR
 Fire and Life Safety
 Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)
 Workplace Hazardous Materials Information Systems Training (WHMIS)
 Mental Health First Aid
 High Five: Principles of Healthy Child Development
 High Five: Healthy Minds for Healthy Children
 Individual Program Planning
 Positive Principles & Practices of Non-Adverse Behaviour Change
 The Safe Zone
 Training Little Warriors "Prevent It" Training
 Restorative Practices Training
 Critical Incident Stress management
 Medication Awareness & Naloxone Training

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MODULE DESCRIPTIONS

Student Success Strategies

Instructor Led

In this orientation module, emphasis is placed on thinking about achieving success from Day One. This module stresses the importance of developing non-technical skills to enhance personal, academic, and career success. This includes understanding learning styles and honing practical study skills, such as memory, reading, note-and test-taking techniques. Personal exercises will focus on teamwork, decision making and problem-solving skills, setting SMART goals and maintaining a positive attitude; techniques for managing change, stress and conflict will also be explored.

Career Planning & Preparation: Level I

Instructor Facilitated

This module introduces tools for planning and preparing for a successful job search, so that students can maintain a career-focused approach throughout their education program. Students will learn about the "Hidden" Job Market and ways to access it in their upcoming job search, how to research opportunities and network for industry contacts, and use appropriate etiquette when communicating with prospective employers. Students will identify their personal skills, values and preferences for the workplace, begin preparation of a professional resume and references, and organize proof documents for their career portfolio. Class discussions on various self-management topics introduced in Student Success Strategies will round out this module, which is a pre-requisite for Career Planning and Preparation II.

An introduction to Occupational Health and Safety is also provided, with specific focus on the definition of occupational health and safety; an individual's safety rights; responsibility under Nova Scotia law; hazard identification and control; WHMIS.

Digital Literacy for Professionals

Instructor Facilitated

This course has four units that introduces you to the fundamental concepts and principles of learning and working in a digital environment. The first unit introduces you to using devices and handling information with topics on operating systems (Windows, MAC, and Linux), computer organization (folder management and naming conventions), cloud storage (including Microsoft OneDrive), types of web browsers including Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, and Apple Safari, and fundamental troubleshooting. In the second unit, you will become familiar with creating and editing information through learning about file formats (pdf, mp4, docx), productivity (including iWork and Microsoft Office Suite) and creativity (Adobe, Canva, iMovie) platforms, and basic introduction to Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. The third unit on communicating and collaborating will introduce you to web conferencing applications (Slack, Zoom, Microsoft Teams), mail applications (including Microsoft Outlook and Gmail), project management tools (Trello, Asana), and time management tools (including Todoist, Outlook Calendar, and iCal), and building rapport virtually. In the final unit, you will gain an understanding on netiquette, cybersecurity, and digital wellness. After completing this course, you will have

Diversity, Equity and Advocacy

Instructor Led

As a foundational principle, the profession of Child and Youth Care values family, community, culture, and human diversity as integral to the developmental and intervention process. As the ever-changing landscape of the Canadian population becomes increasingly diverse, there is a need for CYC practitioners to develop a diversity consciousness that enhances professionalism and promotes harmony. This course will define diversity, discuss challenges experienced by diverse populations in Canada and help students identify personal biases and strengths. Topics explored include class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, and religion. Upon course completion, students should be able to analyze the evolution of diversity issues and how they affect personality development, inequality, belief, and value systems.

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Social Issues

Instructor Led

Many Canadian children, youth, and their families face multiple barriers that impede healthy development and success. Introduction to Social Issues will provide CYCW students with introductory concepts, tools, and frameworks from within the field of sociology that will help illuminate the causes of social issues and their impact on individuals, families, and communities. Students will learn how to critically analyze, research, and discuss field related social issues. This course will allow students to apply sociological tools and concepts with the purpose of interpreting social issues and their relationship to the personal self, children, youth, and their families.

Professional Etiquette

Instructor Led

In this course, students will develop a professional persona by applying industry standards of conduct and self-regulated behaviour. Topic exploration includes, overcoming workplace challenges, effective workplace communication and developing an understanding of 'self' as a professional practitioner. Students will use varying methods of evaluation including self-discovery, group work and peer review methods. Areas explored include the elements needed for developing a professional work ethic; strategies for presenting oneself professionally; the importance of various interpersonal skills to function effectively in the workplace; and the value of developing problem-solving and critical-thinking skills for job performance success.

Self-Awareness and Personal Growth

Instructor Led

The purpose of this module is to support CYCW students develop an understanding of self in many areas in order to become an effective practitioner in the field of child and youth care. Key areas for self-awareness include our personality traits, personal values, habits, emotions, and the psychological needs that drive our behaviors. With a sense of who CYCW students are and a vision of the person they want to become, a plan for professional or personal development will be developed. Self-awareness will allow learners to motivate themselves and manage their stress better, in order to be able to lead and motivate others more effectively. Students will begin to understand how the knowledge of self will aid them in their ability to provide a relational approach to working with children, youth, and families.

Profession of Child and Youth Care Worker

Instructor Led

During this module students explore what it means to be a child and youth care worker. Students will explore the history of the profession and the role of child and youth care workers across a variety of settings. They will have the opportunity to explore legislation that governs youth care workers in different settings including the Nova Scotia Child & Family Services Act, the Youth Criminal Justice Act and Child & Youth Care codes of Ethics. The course also gives students the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the professional competencies as outlined by the Child and Youth Care Certification Board. Upon completion of this course, students will gain an understanding of the professional expectations of child and youth care practitioners.

Human Growth and Development

Instructor Led

This course focuses on human growth and development from conception, through childhood, adolescence, and adulthood thru to death. The emphasis is on the physical, cognitive, emotional, and social aspects of development as a knowledge base for child and youth care practice with children, youth, and families. Students will become aware of the major theoretical frameworks of lifespan development and outline factors which will support and foster resilience and healthy development throughout the ages. Students will also be able to identify potential challenges that could occur during various stages of development and identify how that impacts later development. During the module, students will be required to apply these theories to problem solving practical scenarios with children, youth, and families.

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Interpersonal Communication

Instructor Led

This module introduces students to basic interpersonal skills, students will focus on the use of 'self' in interactions with children and youth such as attending behaviours and verbal intervention techniques. Students will demonstrate practical knowledge through the development and analysis of role-play scenarios utilizing both collaborative problem solving and life space crisis intervention strategies.

Social Training

Instructor Led

As an adjunct to classroom learning, students are required to obtain several critical field related certifications. Training covered in this module include Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCi) or Theme-Centered Interaction (TCI); First Aid/CPR; and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), Food Handler's Certificate, Fire and Life Safety, Workplace Hazardous Materials Information Systems Training (WHMIS).

Mental Health Practices Awareness

Instructor Led

This module introduces students to a range of childhood and adolescent mental health issues including the role of childhood trauma, and mental illnesses including the signs, symptoms, causes and treatment. Students explore the impact of mental health stigma and explore mental health issues from a strength-based perspective. Students will learn various preventative and intervention strategies such as behavioral techniques as they explore the role of the Child & Youth Care Worker.

Family Ties

Instructor Led

This course continues the student's exploration of 'self' and introduces students to the idea that their families have played a large part in their identity development and that we are not able to understand the individual without understanding the family as a whole system. Students will directly apply the knowledge from this module to themselves and their families to truly grasp how their families have shaped their identity. Students will be challenged to shift their thinking from one of an individualized framework to a family framework. Students will learn that systemic attention is needed when dealing with children and youth to provide an all-encompassing healing experience. Students will explore what a family is, and family structure and the family lifecycle, they will learn about family systems theory and how to read, use and build genograms, ecomaps, and timelines to create a picture of a family. Students will also explore roles and rules of the family, triangulation and its impact on self, birth order and its impact on identity, and differentiation of self.

CYCW Professional Observation

Instructor Led

This module aims to introduce students to a Child and Youth Care work environment through a placement opportunity. Learners will have the opportunity to shadow a Child and Youth Care practitioner through the routines of their day, to gain a better understanding of the professional environment. Students will enjoy a blended experience of theory and practice, by being. In the field and coming back into the classroom during the course of their professional observation block.

Activity Programming

During this module students will explore different components of activity programming and the therapeutic role of recreation and play in the lives of children and youth. Students will learn how to be effective leaders when facilitating individual activities. Participants will explore the steps involved in planning and designing programs that will be facilitated in a community recreation organization including assessing developmental needs of the children and youth. Students will also discuss the role of activities in physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development as well as look at cultural identity development through activities. Students will be completing 4 practicum hours in this module by conducting their needs-based assessments with the partnering organization that they will offer their programming through.

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Child and Youth Care Approaches

Instructor Led

Over the past several decades, child and youth care has developed a distinct identity as a unique field of professional practice with a focus on children and youth using strengths-based, holistic, and ecological approaches that includes active engagement with children, youth, and families across multiple and diverse settings. In response this child and youth care practitioners are required to employ a wide range of therapeutic techniques and strategic intervention and prevention approaches. The purpose of this module is to familiarize and evaluate approaches used within the field of child and youth care including relational practice, a strength-based approach, solution focused therapy, narrative therapy, cooperative and competency-based approaches, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Trauma Informed Care, Functional Analysis, and the ABC's of behaviour. Students will learn alternative therapeutic methods such as music, art, and Indigenous approaches to child and youth care. Students will also explore current program trends in the child and youth care field that would impact their practice such as use of programs like The Zones of Regulation and CopingCats.

Child and Youth Care Issue

Instructor Led

Child and Youth Care Practitioners are committed to improving the lives of vulnerable children, youth, and their families. This course provides insight to intellectual, biological, physical, emotional, and social factors that create vulnerability for children and youth. Students will explore factors that create additional challenges to development including: the impact of trauma, environmental/societal factors; legal and ethical issues; family problems; school issues; individual characteristics; school dropout; substance use and addiction; teenage pregnancy; juvenile delinquency and youth violence; and youth suicide. Students will also explore the role of the Child and Youth Care Practitioner in providing strategies for prevention, intervention, and treatment.

During this course students will also be completing their Activity Programming Practicum by delivering their programs within a community-based child and youth care organization once a week for 4 weeks, to complete the delivery of their 8-week program. The purpose of this is for students to be able to relate the work they are doing in the field back to the knowledge being gained in class and vice versa.

Individual Approaches

Instructor Led

During this module students are introduced to the framework of essential interviewing skills and will integrate these skills with foundation skills previously learned in the Interpersonal Communication module. Students will also apply skills and theory from Child and Youth Care Approaches module. Students will have the opportunity to apply critical reasoning when selecting appropriate counselling responses. This module is practical in nature. Emphasis will be placed on goal setting that is child/youth centered, is specific to the current needs and capacity of the child/youth and is measurable and achievable in a reasonable time frame. Students will have the opportunity to integrate both old and new skills in small and large group role-play scenarios.

Family Issues

Instructor Led

This module focuses on the issues that impact the families that Child and Youth Care Workers interact and work with directly and indirectly. Students will explore different styles of parenting and how parenting plays a role on the individual and the parent-child relationship as well as sibling relationships. It will also look at parenting children with different temperaments and challenges. Students will also explore conflict within family relationships including spousal violence, power and decision making, child abuse, neglect and addiction and the impact these issues have on the family system. Students will look at the trauma that can exist within perpetual crisis within the family systems by studying the WAR cycle. Students will explore the impact of the child welfare system of families and children and youth in care of child welfare. The module will also look at the resilience's within families and students will develop and explore ways to foster their resilience's and use them to better the life of the family. This module will also look at diversity issues among families such as cultural considerations and socio-historical factors that contribute to family conflict and stress. For example, unique problems facing indigenous families, refugee families, and economic statuses impact on family relationships. The module will also look at the resilience's within families and students will develop and explore ways to foster their resilience's and use them to better the life of the family. This module will also look at diversity issues among families such as cultural considerations and socio-historical factors that contribute to family conflict and stress. For example, unique problems facing indigenous families, refugee families, and economic statuses impact on family relationships.

Family Work Practices

Instructor Led

This module introduces and explores the different frameworks and theories child, and youth care workers use pertaining to assessment, preventative early identification, and subsequent intervention, as well as intervention strategies when working with families in diverse settings. Students will apply their past knowledge of a strength-based approach, human development, family life cycle and family systems theory to the approaches discussed in this module. Students will be introduced to a variety of interventions used to promote positive ways of improving family patterns when challenges arise. Students will explore and practice creating family intervention plans and recognize the importance of developing these plans in collaboration with the family to provide developmental supports and/or interventions.

Child and Youth Care Practice

Instructor Led

Child and Youth Care Workers are often responsible to create or contribute to client case files, documents, client case notes, client assessment records, case plans and referral records. These documents require maintenance and must be kept in accordance with organizational procedures and with consideration of confidentiality. This course is both theoretical and practical in nature. Students will synthesize the skills and theories learned each day and apply them to practice exercises. Students will learn how to record information factually, objectively, and professionally. Topics include respecting the rights of children, youth, and families; accountability; confidentiality; professionalism; ethics in CYC work; record keeping and report writing.

Group Work

Instructor Led

During this module students will study the role of groups in the treatment process. They will explore the characteristics of group work and understand the stages of group work development. Students will explore group dynamics; ethical issues and confidentiality; leadership skills; challenges that arise in group work; and how to apply strategies to address those challenges. Students will learn how to integrate past learned counselling skills into a group setting. Students will also develop a group work program to be implemented in a child and youth care workplace.

Career Planning and Preparation: Level II

Instructor Led

This module continues to build on the concepts and skills introduced in Career Planning and Preparation Part I. Students will learn how to conduct an effective job search and identify various methods of applying for work with today's technology. Students will create a personal list of "Top Employers" and target current industry opportunities, while finalizing their professional resume, portfolio, and career correspondence. Students will learn to identify the different types of interviews, practice responding to typical questions, and practice follow-up, evaluation, and negotiation techniques they can use to ensure success. Self-management topics from Career Planning and Preparation - Part I will be reviewed, with a focus towards on-the-job success in both internships or placements and post-graduate employment.

Field Placement

Instructor Led

Field Placement is an essential part of the Child and Youth Care program, and all students must successfully complete the Field Placement component in order to graduate their program. Each student is required to work at his/her field placement for a minimum of 34 hours per week for six weeks, for a total minimum of 204 hours. Students are required to engage in active discussions with their instructor and peers via a social technology platform in order to debrief sessions, apply theory and skills gained from program course work at a practical level, post journal reflections, provide constructive feedback to peers and request for support and feedback on placement experiences. Discussions may involve topics such as professional and ethical conduct in relation to field experience, personal challenges, strategies for improvement, problem solving, and case reviews. Students are advised to keep a journal, documenting their placement experience, and maintaining a log of questions, thoughts, and ideas. Upon completion of the placement, the host employer will complete an evaluation which assesses the student's technical skills, professional conduct, and the ability to handle the work assigned. The evaluation will be made available to the student for review after the placement.

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