

Your Quarterly News & Updates Vol.11 Issue 1/Winter 2026
From The Association of Child and Youth Care Practice



THE CYC ADVOCATE

"Real Expertise Comes From Those Closest To The Challenge" ---
Anonymous

CELEBRATING OUR



ANNIVERSARY



[OUR PASSIONS WHISPER TO US](#)

[♪ Deep Peace - Bill Douglas ♪](#)

[Your Worth Was Never About Your Output](#)

[♪ Solstice Song ♪](#)

[Human Trafficking Prevention Month](#)

[While You're Reading, A Child Is Being Trafficked Or Exploited Near You](#)

Illustration: nck-gsi on Pixabay.com

LONGIVITY BREEDS GRATITUDE

By Michael Mitchell, MAT, Editor

As we look forward to a new year and, at the CYC Advocate, our next decade at the same time, I want to explain why this “we” is so important and why I am not tacking this on at the end as is so often done with anniversary retrospectives. I also do not feel the need to reinforce or validate my acknowledgements, with a quote from famous and well-respected child and youth care (CYC) pioneers, though it is not for lack of suitable examples. Rather, I am going to trust in my gratitude, sincerity, and composition skills (in that order), to convey what our contributors have meant to me personally and as editor. Let me also add that, compensated or volunteer (or a combination of both) ACYCP has always received more than fair value for its expenditures.

The following is an approximate chronology, recalled in a retrospective narrative, with an anecdotal rather than a historical focus. I will leave the latter task to a more competent researcher.

When I took over the reins of the ACYCP newsletter, I was thrown head-long into the world of online publishing. Yes, I did have three years' experience as editor of *The Gleaner*, the quarterly newsletter of the New Harvest Foundation of southcentral Wisconsin, of which I was co-vice-chair. However, all I had to do there was write copy and organize each 6-page hard copy issue. Everything else from layout to printing to distribution was volunteered by a supportive ad agency. So, I quickly found myself facing a steep learning curve.

But then, who should thankfully appear, but **Frank Eckles** and his team of **Laura Klemm** and **Mary Krause**, from the Academy For Competent Youth Work, which had contracted with ACYCP to handle the organization's membership database, email blasts, and other miscellaneous, yet critical tasks too essential to be delegated to an all-volunteer board; many of whom hold down full-time management positions across the full spectrum of our profession. Frank (with the on-going support of Board president, **Jody Rhodes**) was to prove to be our "guiding star" to this very day. He quickly put me in touch with Suzie Henderson, who tutored me to the point where, together, we could put out a quality product on a predictable schedule. Perhaps it was this accomplishment that quickly garnered us our first columnists. This happened just when I was not sure where we would draw a consistent core of relevant content for our readership. Their names were unknown to me before coming on the Board, yet nationally extolled with decades-long pedigrees. We gratefully welcomed **Lorraine Fox, Karen Vander Ven, and Dale Curry** on board. My partnership with Suzie continued until ACYCP decided to streamline operations, turning layout duties over to **Paulette Marzahl** of Pollygrafx, LLC our website guru. Like Frank, she voluntarily exceeds the usual menu of services for which ACYCP has gratefully contracted.

This quantum leap in quality encouraged us to expand the quantity of our coverage, including a Canadian columnist by the name of **Melanie Fournier**. She did a admirable job until passing the torch to **Susan Hunt**. She, in turn, kept our readers well informed on Canadian CYC developments until **Julia Hollings** took over. Unfortunately, her tenure too was dedicated, yet relatively short, leaving us currently looking for a like-spirited successor.

This is a suitable place to thank all the dozens of people who, while not serial columnists and too large to single out, fed us CYC news, editorials, resources, and ad hoc articles. Many in this cadre came from our Board Advisors comprised of past Board members, officers, associates, and allies. This mosaic of information supported my often-repeated mantra that "our profession is a mile wide and a mile deep in its scope and depth", in the structure of children, youth, and family services.

About the time we regretfully accepted Lorraine's resignation due to health challenges, we were renewed by the recruitment of "**Chip**" **Bonsutto**, plus the dynamic juvenile justice team of **Felix and Carol Brooks**. With a background in juvenile justice myself, I have to admit to a biased delight at the addition of the latter teammates. In what has to be a most fortuitous omen for our next decade, we just welcomed **Alicia Campbell**, a graduating high school senior, as a youth columnist. She has also accepted a delegate position on the Board as our first-ever youth representative. Alicia came to us under the tutorship of **Andrew (Andy) Schneider Munoz**, another esteemed CYC giant and past Board president.

Not to pull a “last -but-not-least”, I do want to loop back around to the very earliest days of the CYC Advocate, when our publication was something of a nameless foster child, not by intent but by having to compete for the attention accorded older siblings like Certification, Advocacy, Ethics, and Professionalization.

When I transitioned from the appointed ACYCP Community Advisory Board to the elected Board of Directors, I told then Board President Andy Schneider Munoz, that I “Didn’t join the ACYCP to defend the status quo.” Slightly alarmed as I recall, Andy urged caution and diplomacy; sage advice, which I have tried to heed ever since. While I did not have specific ideas, much less an agenda in mind, like a neophyte explorer, I did have a mirage-like vision of ACYCP’s potential. This led me to run for the 1st Vice-president position, while I also volunteered to chair the Membership Services Committee. In this capacity, I quickly focused on membership benefits, keeping “high perceived value yet low cost” as my goal, thus keeping membership dues affordable.

As an advocate of synergy in business operations, which I honed over an earlier two decades in international tourism, I realized that there was a strong connection between supporting the life-long-learning of our members, while keeping them engaged in the aforementioned pillars of CYC Professional Competency. This was additionally supported through workshops, conferences, and webinars, under the umbrella of AYCYP CYC Certification. In my view, the CYC Advocate’s news articles provide the details, whereas the columnists supplied the historical and philosophical context. This has hopefully helped members keep their skillsets current and out-come-based. As Abraham Maslow famously said, “When all you have in your tool kit is a hammer, you tend to approach every problem as a nail.” I could not agree more.

Where initially I had worried about having enough pertinent content to support a full issue, we soon found ourselves with a treasure trove, where we had to sadly leave dozens of worthy articles (out of hundreds) “on the cutting room floor” for lack of space. We decided to dedicate the CYC Advocate to our thousands of CYC profession-at-large readers (at no charge), while creating a comparable monthly periodical, called the **ACYCP Membership Mem** as a membership benefit. This happened just shortly after I retired from a 20-year career in employment skills training, within a community-based juvenile justice agency. Its 10th anniversary will be coming up shortly and like its parent publication, it has served its mission well. Both urge readers to “take what you like and leave the rest”, with an initial skim, coming back for a deeper dive later. There has also been talk of taking the “best-of-the-best” from past CYC Advocate columns and compiling them into a special edition of the ACYCP Youth Work Journal. We could use additional help to make this happen, so please contact me at my email below.

So, tell your colleagues, friends, students, and anyone who has the interest of child and youth care workers at heart, about the ACYCP and the CYC Advocate. You will be doing them a big favor. To renew or join ACYCP simply go to: www.acycp.org today!

Past issues of the CYC Advocate are archived on the ACYCP website. Readers can subscribe by contacting me at: propman46@gmail.com

Please, let us know what you would like to read about more.

Happy Reading! ♦

Consider This (From the (Human) Editor):

“When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.’” ---Fred Rogers [“Mister Rogers” children’s TV show host]

Illustration: Freemages.com

'Kindness Is' Pride Pullover Fleece



THE HOODIE THAT HAS DONATED OVER 100,000 BOOKS TO KIDS

ARE YOU USING THE ACYCP JOURNAL OF CHILD AND YOUTH CARE WORK?

[GO HERE](#)

acycp
ASSOCIATION FOR CHILD AND YOUTH CARE PRACTICE

Our Mission: ACYCP’s mission is to engage practitioners in building the child and youth care profession. We build collaborative partnerships, promote innovative

training and education, shape public policy, and inform developmental practice through research and scholarship.

Our Vision: We envision a society which recognizes, understands, and supports the essential role of child and youth care work in ensuring the well-being and success of children, youth and families. ACYCP aspires to excel as an influential and innovative organization advancing child and youth care practice throughout the profession.

Our Value Proposition: There is probably no undertaking more essential to the stability of humanity than the nurturing of each generation into mature self-actualizing adults. This task, after parents, falls mainly to youth and childcare workers. Often underpaid and overworked, these professionals are society's first responders to the many crises, which can impact human development in the most formative years. Primarily through its professional certification program, the Association for Child and Youth Care Practice, Inc. (ACYCP) supports these care providers in the acquisition and use of best practices. Employing research-based methods, plus personal dedication, ensures strong measurable outcomes. ACYCP bolsters both the individual and the collective field through communication, education, and advocacy. These activities encourage individual live-long learning, selfcare and career dedication. As such, ACYCP seeks the financial support of its Vision and Mission, which guide its daily practices. ACYCP reaches every community of care across the entire spectrum of youth and childcare services, with proven results. Through the prudent stewardship of its resources by an all-volunteer staff and board, ACYCP has maximized its direct benefit to its members and the profession at large for over 45 years. An investment in ACYCP is an investment in the quality of tomorrow's citizens.

Find out what ACYCP is all about. See a quick video at: <https://www.acycp.org/acycp-at-a-glance>

HOW HAS THE CYC ADVOCATE HELPED YOU PROFESSIONALLY OR PERSONALLY? SAY AND SHARE HERE... WE REALLY WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Yes, YOU! And while you're at it, please forward this issue to colleagues, peers, friends and any stakeholder who has the interests of youth and child care workers at heart. You'll be doing them a real service.

Would you like to write for the CYC Advocate? **OF COURSE YOU CAN!** Share your CYC experiences, expertise, perspectives, and opinions!

Next Issue: Copy for the Spring issue is due April 1, 2026 to: Michael Mitchell, propman46@gmail.com (608-846-2860) Madison, WI (CT)

ACYCP is on social media! Follow us on Facebook using **The-Association-for-Child-Youth-Care-Practice-Inc-186063394783003/** and Twitter using **@ACYCP** and on Instagram using **@ACYCP_Inc** . We look forward to hearing from you!

Illustration: Pixabay.com



IN THIS EXCITING ISSUE:

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- **FROM BOYS TO MEN ALOUD**
- **YOUR AGENCY NEEDS THIS MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT NOW!**
- **JOB OPPORTUNITIES - Workforce Connection**
- **YOUR AD CAN GO HERE! (More CYC Resources)**
-

Check out our display ad section at the end of this issue for more valuable CYC resources.

What Our Readers Are Saying

"I think the range of [articles] in the [CYC] Advocate is truly impressive...[each] issue...looks extremely professional...the [CYC] Advocate does a good job of appealing both to the most advanced workers and to workers just getting started."

"Great! Lots of links to valuable resources. Again, so well done!"

“I’m really looking forward to the new issue and want to congratulate you in advance—I’m sure it will be excellent!”

“Once again I am SO IMPRESSED by the depth and scope of the [CYC] Advocate. I’ve never seen anything better in our field!”

“Wow that is quite a newsletter! Very impressive work.”

PLEASE NOTE: While we happily understand if you regard the CYC Advocate as you might a good book, you don’t have to finish this entire issue in one sitting, as much as you might like to (LOL). We know there’s a broad range of CYC information and resources in each issue, which reflects the scope and depth of service activities within our CYC field. After all, it took us 3 months and 400 news items to compile this issue, so we suggest you take an initial scan, read what grabs your attention, then come back for a deeper dive later.

We’re all very busy. But doesn’t real life-long learning, best practice, and professional and personal development deserve more than the usual three-minute attention span and 15-second sound bite? (This seems to have become the norm for most of today’s social media messaging.) After all, isn’t this what you would expect from your professional doctor, dentist, lawyer, professor, etc.? We believe you’ll be glad you did.

REMEMBER: IF YOU ARE NOT STAYING CURRENT WITH ACYCP ONLINE PERIODICALS, YOUR SKILL SETS MAY BE LESS THAN YOU’D LIKE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUTH YOU SERVE. YOU DON’T KNOW WHAT YOU DON’T KNOW.

LIKE WHAT YOU SEE? FEEL FREE TO SHARE, ANNOUNCE, PRINT AND POST AS YOU SEE FIT. FREE SUBSCRIPTIONS AT propman46@gmail.com REPRINTS?—See terms and conditions at end of this issue. Comments, questions, or concerns? Contact Michael Mitchell propman46@gmail.com, or (608)846-2860 Madison, WI (Central Time)

IF YOU LIKE THIS QUARTERLY CYC ADVOCATE...Join ACYCP and get the monthly ACYCP Membership Memo, as one of many membership benefits!

TO JOIN ACYCP OR RENEW YOUR INDIVIDUAL, STUDENT, AGENCY, or ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERSHIP, GO TO: <https://www.acycp.org/acycp-membership>

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

ACYCP PRESIDENT’S PERSPECTIVE



By Jody Rhodes, CYC-P, MS, Board President

Dear ACYCP Members, CYC Colleagues, Allies, and Friends,

Welcome to the Winter edition of the CYC Advocate's 10th Anniversary year!

In historic news we are proud to announce that we have hired our first ever Executive Director! A part-time position, this person will be shared with our partner, The Child and Youth Care Certification Board (CYCCB). You can learn more about Andrew Young in this edition of the CYC Advocate. We are so excited to have him join us and lead us in achieving our top strategic goals.

A special thank you to Michael Mitchell, who recently retired as a long-time board member, who led the charge on a special campaign to raise the funds to help hire our new ED. Your dedication to the field and ACYCP is unmatched. Thank you to Michael and all who participated.

Save the Date! This year's Thank A Youth Worker Day 2026 is on Thursday, May 7th. There's more to come on how we will celebrate youth care workers all over the nation. Watch for the February issue of the ACYCP Membership Memo and the Spring issue of the CYC Advocate. Meanwhile, [GO HERE!](#)

As usual this issue is full of resources and information you can use. Read a lot - read a little- save for later- whatever works for you!
. Just contact me and we can explore the different options for engagement in the exciting work of ACYCP. I can be reached at jodyrhodeswi@gmail.com

Happy reading and exploring!

Jody Rhodes
ACYCP Board President

BREAKING NEWS!

ACYCP HIRES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In an historic move compared to the development of CYC Certification and its 501c3 US IRS nonprofit/tax deductible incorporation, the ACYCP all-volunteer Board has hired its first-ever paid part-time Executive Director. The news was announced in an email dated December 16, 2025 from Board president Jody Rhodes:

"We are proud to formally announce the hiring of the historic first- ever Executive Director for the ACYCP and CYCBB- Andrew Young. His bio is below and we are excited to have him lead the path ahead.

He will start January 7th and he may be reaching out to some of you in his early on-boarding days to get to know you and see what ideas you have to offer for the growth of both organizations.

Deb [Getz, CYCCB Board President] and I wanted to let you know that the hiring process got finished. Thank you to all that helped with the process! " ♦



In an accompanying statement, Andrew Young shared the following:

"With more than 20 years of experience in the nonprofit and youth development sector, I have dedicated my career to creating spaces where young people and families can thrive. I am a TBRI® Practitioner, a Certified Professional Youth Worker, and a firm believer in the power of the natural environment to foster connection, resilience, and growth.

I completed my undergraduate studies in Outdoor Recreation, Resource Management, and Parks Administration at Indiana University and earned a Master's degree in Nonprofit Management from the IU O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. Throughout my career, I have held leadership, facilitation, and professional development roles with a consistent focus on advancing equity, access, and meaningful community impact. Most recently, I served as Executive Director of Bradford Woods through IU's Office of Student Life and as Associate Executive Director at Foundation For Youth. In these roles, I led organizational strategy, fund development, staff development, and partnership growth—always centered on supporting young people, families, and the communities they call home.

I am passionate about aligning service leadership with strategic action, cultivating strong partnerships, and building programs that create lasting, positive change." ♦

BREAKING NEWS!

SAVE THE DATE!
[GO HERE!](#)

NATIONAL THANK A YOUTH WORKER DAY

MAY 7 2026

Thank a Youth Worker Day is a joint effort of community partners, youth work organizations, youth and child care workers, and individuals who have signed on to declare an international day of celebrating youth workers.

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www.acycp.org





MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Please also take a minute to see that your membership is current, so that you continue to receive your full menu of membership benefits and services, including the monthly ACYCP Membership Memo.

[Follow this link to renew](#)

ACYCP ENCOURAGES OUTREACH TO ALLIED CYC ORGANIZATIONS

For 45 years, the Association For Child and Youth Care Practice has worked hard to lift up the recognition, status, and compensation of child and youth care workers. They have done this primarily through professional Certification, supported by webinars, workshops, trainings and conferences, not to mention awards, scholarships, and media recognition.

Now, ACYCP is reaching out to potential allies in every community of care, with a cost-free reciprocal promotional exchange program, with other social service organizations focused on the welfare of youth, children, and families.

Collaborator

- ◇ Exchange of logos and links to website homepage on respective websites Partner
- ◇ Exchange of logos and link to website homepage on respective websites
- ◇ Exchange of promotional advertisement in newsletters and online periodicals

Associate

- ◇ Exchange of logos and link to website homepage
- ◇ Exchange of promotional advertisement in newsletters and online publications
- ◇ Exchange designation of liaison person for on-going communications
- ◇ Reciprocal endorsements of respective Mission and Vision Statements

[GO HERE FOR MORE DETAILS](#)

CONTACT US TODAY AT:

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Madison, WI (Central Time)

CYC BEST PRACTICE METHODS



TIPS, TOOLS, AND RESOURCES ON DAILY CYC PRACTICE

**DOWNLOAD THE ACYCP BEST PRACTICE STANDARDS OF CARE
HERE: <https://acycp.org/best-practice-standards>**

[Editor's Note: The following is reprinted with thanks to the authors and The Trace and was posted on December 18, 2025.]

THE YEAR IN GUN VIOLENCE SOLUTIONS

By Chip Brownlee and Fairriona Magee

The federal government hasn't made it easier to prevent shootings. Cities and states are picking up the slack.

Whenever I pick up the phone and call anyone working in gun violence prevention or gun violence research, the conversation usually starts with a "How are you doing?" followed by the inevitable "Hanging in there."

That's because I'm not usually calling to talk about positive news (unless it's for this newsletter), and 2025 has been a year of setback after setback for gun violence prevention — at least on the federal level. You've no doubt read plenty of stories about that, I'm sure, so we're not going to spend any more time on that here.

Instead, we're going to spend this edition of The Trajectory looking back on the year and taking stock of the progress. Work on preventing shootings and deaths from guns didn't stop, and here are just a few of the highlights from 2025.

[READ MORE](#)

BONUS FEATURES

[How to Listen to Teens with Compassion](#)

[Multilingualism Calculator Reveals True Language Strengths](#)

[Why I'm Never Going to Let AI Write My Emails](#)

[The Out-of-Touch Adults' Guide to Kid Culture](#)

[The Out-of-Touch Adults' Guide to Kid Culture: The Memes of 2025](#)

[Rapid Food Allergen Testers](#)

[See All Upcoming ADDitude Webinars, On-Demand Replays, And Podcast Episodes](#)

[Stimulant ADHD Medications Work Differently Than Thought](#)

[The Damage Being Done by Misinformation About Autism](#)

[“The Secret to Communicating with Rejection-Sensitive Kids”](#)

Illustration: Freemages.com

ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL: A DEI SPOT LIGHT ON THE CYC COMMUNITIES WE SERVE



"MUTUAL IGNORANCE BREEDS MUTUAL DISTRUST."-- ANDREW CARNEGIE

[Editor's Note: The following is reprinted with thanks to the author and The Conversation US and was accessed from its website on December 19,, 2025.]

HOW CHINESE FOOD AND THE MOVIES BECAME A TIME-HONORED TRADITION FOR AMERICAN

JEWS

By Benjamin Taylor

There is a meme that circulates every holiday season, an image of a sign in a restaurant window. "The Chinese Restaurant Association of the United States would like to extend our thanks to the Jewish people," it says. "We do not completely understand your dietary customs ... but we are proud and grateful that your GOD insists you eat our food on Christmas."

Is the sign real? Perhaps not; the fact-checking site Snopes found no evidence of the association even existing. But the joke's popularity points to a tradition cherished by many American Jews – Chinese food on Christmas.

But why would Jews, who do not celebrate Christmas, have Christmas traditions?

Like many minority groups, Jews have always created ways of adapting to the societies in which they live, but whose culture they do not totally share. And one thing that means is a collection of Christmas traditions, varying by time and place. Many of them came up in interviews for my book "Beyond Chrismukkah: The Christian-Jewish Interfaith Family in the United States."

[READ MORE](#)

BONUS FEATURES

[How to Address Ageism in Nonprofit Leadership and Staffing](#)

[What Is Kwanzaa and How Is It Celebrated?](#)

["When Did Woke Become A Four-Letter Word?"](#)

[A Native American Photographer Took Powerful Portraits Of Members Of Every Tribe Across The US](#)

[Monthly Resource Information To Support Youth And Families During Transition To Adult Life \[Handicapped\]](#)

[St. Pete \[St. Petersburg, FL\] Installed Rainbow Bike Racks](#)

[10 Ways to Be More Inclusive and Learn About Diversity Within Disability](#)

[A New Shoe For People With Foot Disabilities](#)

[Native Pride Productions Brings Tradition to Macy's Parade in NYC](#)

RESOURCE DIRECTORY

[This Week in Queer History](#)

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI):The ACYCP Position

The Association of Child and Youth Care Practice (ACYCP) stands in solidarity with all who seek social justice and equality. We are grateful to be associated with Black Lives Matter and others, who demonstrate their commitment to these ideals and to a vision of a future that recognizes the value and worth of all human beings irrespective of their race, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, national origin, economic status, or religious beliefs. These are fundamental values upon which the child and youth care field is founded. It is the foundation upon which we humbly stand.

As an association, we strive to uphold these values but know that we, as a board and as a profession, have fallen short of living up to this vision. The recent tragic events connected to the killings of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and others, have brought to light just how big this gap is in our country as well as in our field. We promote diversity and inclusion, but racial disparity and exclusion are still prevalent. We proclaim justice and equality, but injustice and inequality are everywhere we turn.

As child and youth care practitioners, we meet our youth where they are at and accept them for who they are. We are the foundation of society, helping to raise the next generation of leaders. If we don't take this seriously, who will?

We can start making changes to better the world we live and work in – for the youth, children and families we serve, as well as our own lives. It won't happen overnight, but if we do this together, it will happen. ◇

Illustration: jarmouk on Pixabay.com

CYC RESEARCH, REPORTS & RESOURCES



STAYING CURRENT WITH THE LATEST DISCOVERIES IN CYC WORK

[Editor's Note: The following is reprinted with thanks to Youth Today and was accessed from their website on December 30, 2025 To subscribe go to: <https://youthtoday.org/subscribe/>]

MEET YOUTH TODAY'S NEW PUBLISHER

For more than 35 years, Youth Today has published in-depth reporting on issues affecting youth, including foster care and child welfare, juvenile justice, youth with disabilities, education, out-of-school time, positive youth development and more.

In 2012, Youth Today was acquired by the Center for Sustainable Journalism at Kennesaw State University (KSU). During its time at KSU, Youth Today has continued to serve as the go-to publication for the youth development field, transitioning from a print to online publication and strengthening its commitment to high-quality journalistic integrity.

After 12 years with KSU, it is time for Youth Today to enter its next era, housed within an organization that has deep knowledge of and connections to the allied youth fields. We are pleased to announce that Youth Today is now published by Knowledge to Power Catalysts (KP Catalysts).

[READ MORE](#)

BONUS FEATURES

[MLK Day of Service Resources \[January 19, 2026\]](#)

[Study Challenges Myths About Self-Centeredness](#)

[Missing Brain Receptor May Hold the Key to Autism](#)

[U.S. Suicide Rate Fell in 2024 After Hovering at High Level](#)

[Dental Franchise Has Offered Free Care To Anyone In Need For The Holidays](#)

[Is Oral Bacteria Influencing Multiple Sclerosis?](#)

[ADHD's Curious Connections to Chronic Inflammation and Dysautonomia](#)



WELCOME

CYCCB Café

Want to connect with other passionate people working to advance the profession?

We meet the 2nd Tuesday every other month. Click here to register for future Café meetings.

[REGISTER HERE CYCCB CAFE](#)

Illustration: rawpixels on Unsplash.com

REFLECTIONS FROM THE JJ SIDE



By Felix Brooks, MS & Carol Cramer Brooks, MS-CYC Advocate Staff Writers

WE REALLY WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!
Yes, YOU! See our contact info below. * ◇

***Carol Cramer Brooks**
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[Editor's Note: Readers can find past columns in archived issues of the CYC Advocate at www.acycp.org]

WHEN HOLIDAYS AREN'T MERRY

November, December, January, and February are particularly challenging months for staff and youth in juvenile justice facilities. This is not only due to daily struggles but also because these months are packed with family and cultural holidays. There's U.S. Thanksgiving (the end of November), Jewish Hanukkah (early December), Christian Christmas celebrations (December 24-25), African American Kwanzaa (December 26-January 1), U.S. New Year's celebrations (December 31 and January 1), and, in our Puerto Rican facilities, the Epiphany of the Three Kings (January 6)

Understandably, neither staff nor youth want to be away from family, friends, and the traditions they cherish. We can and should help reframe their current experience for both youth and staff. These months and holidays can also serve as opportunities for them to develop their cultural humility skills.

Cultural humility is the awareness that different cultures exist and that each person is an expert in their own culture. It involves a lifelong process of learning, self-reflection, and critique that helps individuals understand and appreciate cultural differences as an essential part of society to be explored and valued.

Cultural humility requires recognizing and seeking to navigate the gap between a lack of understanding and knowledge. Juvenile Justice staff wishing to practice cultural humility can bridge this gap by practicing three specific skills:

1. Ask questions out of curiosity and to seek understanding. By asking questions, staff and youth could learn about the seven principles of African heritage or how lighting the Hanukkah menorah, a nine-branched candelabrum, highlights themes of faith, resilience, and Jewish identity.

2. Practice being open to alternative narratives, which involves shifting from a fixed mindset to an open, growth mindset. Developing a growth mindset can be transformative, changing what is possible for youth and staff. A growth mindset enables you to learn from others' experiences, education, and attitudes. Imagine hearing the story of the Three Kings celebration from a Puerto Rican colleague or youth and being open to the idea that the "kings" didn't actually visit the Christ child in the manger, contrary to traditional Christian manger scenes.

Professor Carol Dweck originally coined the terms 'fixed' and 'growth' mindsets. For more details, listen to the presentation at the provided link.

<https://youtu.be/hiiEeMN7vbQ?si=oG457OsoLlqHGN8w>

3. Adopt an equity mindset to meet people where they are. For example, applying this skill in juvenile facilities around the holidays would allow for variations in dietary options for youth celebrating different holidays.

For practitioners in the field and those involved in the criminal justice continuum, the lesson is to be less judgmental and more willing to understand that our young people and colleagues come from diverse backgrounds that influence and shape their perspectives. If we want to succeed with the youth and be high-performing team members, we need to take the concept of a growth mindset seriously as a way to reduce our own biases.

Holidays and special occasions in juvenile facilities can be challenging, but they do not have to lack significance.

To all the staff in juvenile confinement facilities who work on holidays and sacrifice time away from their families and friends, we appreciate you. Thank you.♥

BONUS FEATURE

[Developing a Growth Mindset with Carol Dweck](#)

[A Conversation Guide to Support Young Fathers in Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Systems](#)

Illustration: Pixabay.com

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



*A virtual marketplace of professional development for
Child and Youth Care Practitioners.*

Discounts for ACYCP Members



What I Would Tell
My Younger
Manager Self

Jerriane Chandler-Ochoa,
PhD, LMFT, CYC-P



Intercultural
Competence in the
Ever-Changing
Workforce

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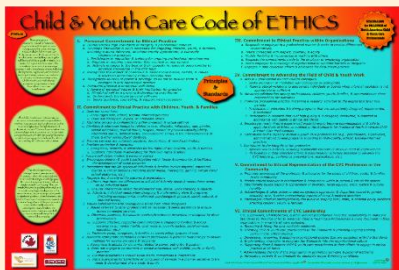
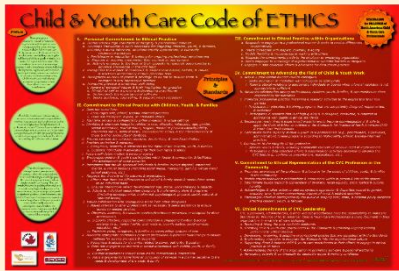
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[Editor's Note: The following is reprinted with thanks to the author and MedPage Today and was first posted on November 17, 2025.]

MY CHILD WAS IN AN ACTIVE SHOOTER LOCKDOWN

By Dara Kass, MD

Here are lessons learned about a reality even physicians aren't trained for

: The text, from a fellow emergency department (ED) doctor and former Brown University faculty member, arrived at 4:27 p.m. on Saturday: "Active shooter near Brown engineering building? Is Hannah OK?"

Within seconds, I looked on my phone for my daughter's location -- she was on campus in Friedman Hall. I texted her. It was real. There was an active shooter. She was hiding in a bathroom with her four best friends. For the next 24 hours, I lived every parent's nightmare while learning hard lessons about a reality even I was not trained for.

As an emergency medicine physician with over 20 years of experience, I've operated from positions of information and authority in mass casualties before. This weekend, I had neither. I was simply a mother trying to keep my daughter safe from 150 miles away, armed only with a phone and whatever guidance I could piece together. I want to share what I learned, because on Saturday, thousands of students were in lockdown texting their anxious parents, and I realized how unprepared we are for this side of the experience.

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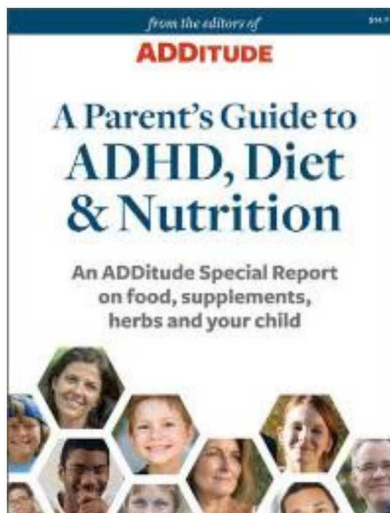
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Illustration: Omar Medinal Films on Pixabay.com

WHAT ABOUT ME?



“IF YOU DON’T MAKE TIME FOR YOUR WELLNESS, YOU’LL BE FORCED TO MAKE TIME FOR YOUR ILLNESS!” --- Matt Jenkins

[Editor's Note: The following is reprinted with thanks to the author and MedPage Today and was posted December 31, 2025. This editor also copes with partial blindness attributable to untreated sleep apnea.]

SLEEP APNEA RISK LINKED TO MENTAL HEALTH

By Crystal Phend

Large Canadian study shows link with depression, mood disorders

Key Takeaways

A high risk of obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) was associated with higher odds of a composite of depression and mental health conditions in a large observational study. OSA may influence depressive states in older adults, potentially through its association with cardiovascular health.

Clinicians might use these results to help motivate patients to manage OSA, the researchers suggested.

Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) risk correlated with mental health conditions in middle age and older adults, a large Canadian longitudinal study showed.

High risk of OSA was associated with about 40% higher adjusted odds of the composite of depression and physician-diagnosed mental health conditions compared with low OSA risk, Tetyana Kendzerska, MD, PhD, of the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute in Ontario, and colleagues reported in JAMA Network Open.

That was true both cross-sectionally at baseline (OR 1.39, 95% CI 1.28-1.50) and longitudinally at follow-up an average of 2.9 years later (OR 1.40, 95% CI 1.30-1.50).

While the associations were moderate in strength, they were consistent across outcomes and analytic approaches and strongest for self-reported mood disorders and clinical depression, the group noted.

"These findings bridge knowledge gaps on the association between OSA and mental health, highlighting the need for integrated screening and intervention strategies," the researchers concluded. "Although more detailed studies are needed, our findings suggest OSA may influence depressive states in older adults, potentially through its association with cardiovascular health, a known risk factor for depression in this age group."

In the study, high OSA risk was defined by having at least two of the following: snoring, daytime somnolence, witnessed apnea during sleep, and hypertension.

The literature suggests that the association between OSA risk and mental health might go both directions.

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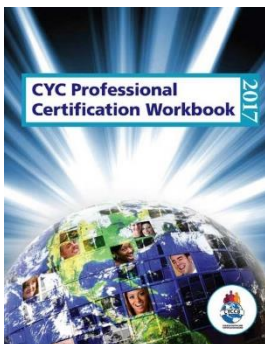


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THE OTHER HALF OF THE JOB



BUSINESS TIPS FOR CYC AGENCIES, PROGRAMS, EMPLOYERS & EMPLOYEES

[Editor's Note: The following is reprinted in part with thanks to the authos and The 74, and was posted August 15, 2025.]

NEARLY 70% OF CHILD CARE WORKERS STRUGGLE TO AFFORD A BASIC NEED

By Elly Yu

The number of child care workers who struggle to meet basic needs like food, healthcare, and housing is on the rise, according to a new report.

The Stanford Center on Early Childhood's RAPID project started surveying child care providers around the country back in 2021, when about 40% of workers said they struggled to afford a basic need.

In March of this year, that rose to nearly 70% — the highest since the project started.

"We've started to talk about some of these data as like representing the canary in a coal mine kind of a scenario," said Philip Fisher, director of the Stanford Center on Early Childhood.

Since child care providers are among the lowest paid workers in the country, challenges in the economy — like the rising cost of food — "are hitting home for them more than they would for other people," Fisher said. Providers have to buy goods like diapers and food for their child care centers that eat into their income. Many have had to make the decision to close their centers.

Where are the biggest problems?

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THE ACCIDENTAL PRACTITIONER



By Dale Curry, Ph.D., LSW, CYC-P, Professor Emeritus-Kent State University; CYC Advocate Staff Writer

**THE INTERNATIONAL CHILD AND YOUTH CARE NETWORK (CYC-NET)
A PRICELESS GEM OF A RESOURCE FOR THE GLOBAL CHILD AND YOUTH CARE
COMMUNITY**

Founded in 1997 by Brian Gannon and Thom Garfat, the International Child and Youth Care Network (CYC-Net) is priceless but freely available to all. It is a global open-access platform dedicated to the professional development and support of those working with children and youth. Its resources are designed for students, practitioners, and educators in the field of Child and Youth Care (CYC). Doing a Google AI search will reveal some of its treasures below.

- The profession - Resources on philosophies of care, core competencies, and the UNICEF Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- CYC-Online journal - A monthly open-access e-journal featuring articles, columns by experts like Dr. Kiaras Gharabaghi, and practical insights into daily CYC practice.
- Discussion threads - An extensive archive of peer-to-peer discussions covering thousands of topics such as trauma-informed care, professional boundaries, self-care, and restorative justice.
- Open-access library - One of the world's largest collections of CYC writings, including "Readarounds" (selected classic and contemporary articles) on foundational concepts like attachment and relational practice.
- Podcasts and videos - A multimedia section providing downloadable audio and video files on specialized topics.
- Standards and ethics - Provides access to the Standards for Practice of North American CYC Professionals.
- Specialized practice themes - Categorized resource areas for specific practice areas.
- Information on upcoming events, such as the in St. John's, NL (June 23–26, 2026).
- CYC-Net app - Mobile access to the network's databases and journals via Google Play.

Some annotated bibliographies of articles from CYC-Net's journal CYC-Online organized by the five domains of competence of the Competencies for Professional Child and Youth Work Practitioners (Mattingly, et al., 2010 revised) are provided within the CYC Professional Certification Workbook published by the Child and Youth Care Certification Board (Eckles et al., 2017). The bibliographies were prepared by Courtney Walsh, Linda Miles, and Katherine Wolford (former graduate students at Kent State University). Below are a few examples (one for each of the five domains) of the vast wealth of information within the CYC-Online monthly journal.

Take Heed, CYC Supervisors... Take Heed"

- Here Frank gives insight to what it means to be a CYC Worker supervisor, and how important the supervisor-worker relationship is. He compares the worker-child/family relationship to the supervisor-employee relationship. The article lists answers from a survey given at the 2013 CYC World Conference titled "If I Could Supervise My Supervisor I Would..." which stresses the need for a positive relationship between supervisors and employees. Just as youth care workers are taught to meet a child and family where they are at and connect to them and their needs, supervisors should be taught to do the same with their workers.

Delano, F. (2013). Take heed, CYC supervisors... take heed. CYC-Online, July(173), 45-45. Retrieved from <http://www.cyc-net.org/cyc-online/cyconline.html>

"Thinking about Refugee Camps"

- All over the world refugee camps have been formed or are forming as a result of untenable living conditions or flight from war and conflict which mandate their existence. While these camps are meant to be temporary living quarters they seldom are and children are likely to live their entire childhoods and/or youths living in them. In most camps there are very few or no accommodations to serve to serve their physical, emotional, and/or educational needs. The people practicing in the field of Child and Youth Care might have an opportunity to practice "Out of Home" care to aid these youth who have lost all control over what happens with or to them. This article is a call to begin a dialogue about how we, in the field, might explore how we may best help.

Gharabaghi, K. (2014). Thinking about refugee camps. CYC-Online, February (180), 8-9. Retrieved February 9, 2014, from <http://www.cyc-net.org/cyc-online/cyconline.html>

"Lunch 101 Grilled Cheese"

- In this lighthearted article, the topic of lunch is explored. It is said that if we can get the daily routines down, you have 50% of the work mastered. Daily meals should be considered a significant part of the daily routine. Here we explore the meaning of food, the development of trust and attachments that come along with having meals together, and the connectedness that is created when we share a meal or make a meal together. Lunch can be an effective time of development as

well as relationship building if we pay attention to and foster the opportunity at hand.

Krueger, M. (2013). Lunch 101 grilled cheese. CYC-Online, August(174), 19-21. Retrieved from <http://www.cyc-net.org/cyc-online/cyconline.html>

“Connecting”

- This article is a reprint from six years ago where Frank Eckles fondly looks back to time spent in a park while working in child and youth work care. He illustrates the importance developing relationships with youth in order to be able to take advantage of every opportunity to teach them lessons. He acknowledges “in our work with youth, there are special moments of connection where our understanding, sensitivity, and helping potential release us. Drawn by the other person’s developmental readiness and the demands of the moment, an opportunity emerges for heightened relationship and communication. This is when we are at our best as CYCs.”

Eckles, F. (2013). Connecting. CYC-Online, October (176), 48-49. Retrieved March 20, 2014, from <http://www.cyc-net.org/cyc-online/cyconline.html>

“A Multi-level Evaluation of the Impact of Training on the Therapeutic Use of Daily Life Events”

- The Therapeutic Use of Daily Life Events is a curriculum designed to use daily life events in the life of a child. Freeman reports the positive results of this professional training for organizations, workers, families/caregivers, and children/youth.

Freeman, J. (2014). A multi-level evaluation of the impact of training on the therapeutic use of daily life events. CYC-Online, February(180), 30-37. Retrieved February 10, 2014, from <http://www.cyc-net.org/cyc-online/cyconline.html>

CYC-net reported that in 2024 its website received more than a million hits world-wide. There are over 6 000 members on its Facebook page and Discussion group. CYC-Online, its monthly online journal, is accessed over 2500 times a month (Jan-Dec 2024 average, Google Analytics). There were nearly 450,000 page views on the CYC-Net website from January through December and over 200,000 unique users on the CYC-Net website. It also has nearly 1500 followers on X (formerly Twitter) (CYC-Net, 2025).

While CYC practitioners in the United States who have participated in CYC-specific higher education and/or training programs may have accessed the CYC-Net resources; many who have accidentally found their path into the CYC field are unaware of the tremendous opportunities for learning and professional development available on CYC-Net. Professional CYC practitioners have a responsibility to help “spread the word” about CYC-Net and help support it by actions such as the following:

- Read CYC-Net’s useful information and apply learning to practice.
- Share summaries of your readings in team meetings, training sessions, and conferences.
- Participate in discussion threads.
- Submit articles to CYC-Online.
- Provide financial contributions to CYC-Net if you are able.

References

CYC-Net (2025). Supporting our work by advertising on CYC-Net. The International Child and Youth Care Network. Retrieved from <https://cyc-net.org/ads-2.html>.

Eckles, F., Carraway-Wilson, C., & Curry, D. (2017). Child and Youth Care Professional Certification Workbook. Child and Youth Care Certification Board. College Station, TX.

Mattingly, M., Stuart, C., & VanderVen, K. (2010 revised). North American Certification Project (NACP) Competencies for professional child and youth work practitioners. Child and Youth Care Certification Board.



The
International
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[Editor’s Note: Readers can find past columns in archived issues of the CYC Advocate at www.acycp.org]

Illustration: Dale Curry, Ph.D dcurry@kent.edu /Frank Eckles (lower)

WHY WE STAY



By Angelo "Chip" Bonsutto, Ed. D., CYC Advocate Staff Writer
ambonsutto@zoominternet.net

CAN AI HELP US FIND THE RIGHT PEOPLE FOR THE JOB?

About two years after my late wife started her second career as a RN, we ran into one of her nursing school classmates at a local shopping mall. While the pair were catching up on life's details since the end of their studies, I remember my wife asking her classmate how she liked her job at a local, large, nationally ranked hospital. "Oh, I quit that job several months ago! I found that I didn't like working with sick people! I now work for an insurance company!" As the classmate walked away, I asked my wife if her school taught future nurses that they would in fact be working with people with illnesses. She gave me one of those looks that simply conveyed "are you seriously asking me that, you idiot?" Several years later, I had a relatively new hirer quit her job because she had to go into a client's homes to provide behavioral therapy. When her immediate supervisor noted that she took on and was trained for a position with a job defining title of "in-home therapist," the now former employee retorted that she didn't believe that we were really serious regarding the almost total in-home duties of the position. I playfully banged my head against the nearby wall commiserating with the former worker's supervisor.

In the early 1990s, I hired a very educated, compassionate and seemingly motivated young man who checked all the "hire-this-guy" boxes, our so I believed, during the lengthy interview process we practiced. While he was observing on the unit during the second day of the agency's required in-service training, we experienced a little loud, but relatively mild confrontation between two rather large, older teenage boys. Incidents like this one happen almost hourly in many residential treatment environments. The staff and I quickly de-escalated the situation, but when I re-entered the staff office, I found the new trainee trembling behind a file cabinet. He was truly scared to death. After a brief and open conversation with me, he resigned from his position. As he stated, "The potential for violence was not something he was comfortable with!"

Recently, I had a conversation with a new college graduate that had started a job providing direct care for younger children in a day treatment program. He was only on the job for a few months, but he recently enrolled in a graduate program so that he could train for and find a job in which he wouldn't have to directly work "constantly," as he put it, with children especially children with "special needs." He explained to me that he found the work tedious, a bit scary and way too intense. The almost constant interactions, with equally frequent behavioral corrections was "mind-numbing" as he stated it.

As any experienced direct care supervisor has come to know, success in child and youth care tends to be predicted less by formal credentials, degrees and experience and more by a cluster of relational, emotional, and resilience traits exhibited and expressed in day-to-day practice. Though standards and licensing requirements often require specific training and often advance degrees to be hired, children are often blind to the letters after our names and respond, often appropriately, to specific interpersonal and polished traits.

If one thinks about some of the “best”, most successful and competent therapists or child and youth care professionals that one has worked with, they are often described as individuals that:

- have deep empathy and compassion for at-risk youth. Children often describe their personalities and mannerisms as being understanding or caring. These children often describe these staff as “real”;
- have the social skill set to build and support a safe, caring, nurturing, and trusting treatment environment;
- are perceived as patient and nonjudgmental, and practice the concept of active listening;
- have a high to very high tolerance level and are not easily flustered, frightened or intimidated. They demonstrate a high level of determination or “stick-to-it-ness”;
- can demonstrate physical as well as emotional self-control, and the capacity to stay calm, warm, and firm under threat or in a crisis;
- can recognize their own limits, ask for advice when needed, and use available supervision;
- have sound judgment and can balance program structure and empowerment for youth and understand that they are part of the solution, not the solution;
- see the need and have the capacity to effectively work in teams and across systems, coordinating with schools, other child and youth care professionals, and community partners;
- have genuine commitment to youth development and a strengths-based view of children and families;
- and are comfortable with diversity and have an openness to learning from culturally different youth, families, and colleagues.

Interestingly if asked, any experienced child and youth care manager will share their hiring or staffing “misses.” That is, those individuals that they hired that were short (i.e, short timed) for the position or “just a bad hire,” not able or willing to perform the job. If you have been in a position with the responsibility of hiring employees, you most likely have your own personal list. For experienced managers, these are often long lists. Senior managers often caution against the “fog-the-mirror” hire (i.e., hiring out of desperation or sheer panic to fill vacant positions) but sometimes hindsight provides insight into our errors. Over a beverage, we will share our “evil twin” hire or the individual that started the job that doesn’t seem to be the same person we interviewed. So in the early age of Artificial Intelligence (AI), how can child and youth care hiring managers use AI to help them avoid or reduce hiring errors and better find individuals who answer “yes” to the 10 strengths listed above?

Practice and evidence from child welfare and related people helping fields suggests that the methods that best predict retention are those that directly tap job demands, describe available supports, and detail personal coping resources, rather than one size fit all interviews that are all too common in child and youth care and other helping fields. Sadly,

supervisors' global impressions at hire show only modest to poor prediction of long-term employee retention. Much research and years of practice suggest that structured, multi-method approaches outperform informal interviews for forecasting who will stay. AI is a new tool that can assist hiring managers in the development of interview questions, practices, measurements and instruments that are customized to our work setting and clients demand.

AI programs such as ChatGPT, Perplexity, Grok or one of the almost daily new programs coming on the market, can provide new tools in assisting us in finding and evaluating potential staff. With AI one can quickly develop worksite specific assessments that can help predict and provide managers with information to assess or predict a new hire's retention propensity. These can include:

- Standardized measures of job demands and resources: Tools that assess perceived workload, role clarity, supervisory support, and organizational climate early in tenure (e.g., at 6 months) strongly predict who is still in role a year later.
- Personal resource scales: Brief validated scales of self-efficacy, task-oriented coping, and social/family support have been linked to higher odds of staying in child welfare and care jobs.
- Structured behavioral interviews: Interviews that score specific behaviors (problem solving, help-seeking, boundary setting, empathy, tolerance) using standardized rubrics that are far more predictive of staying than unstructured conversations.
- Basic screening of education and prior experience: Degrees and years of experience alone do not reliably distinguish those who stay from those who quickly leave youth-serving roles but are often required by licensing and/or credentialing standards.
- Narratives or vignettes that provide a detailed and real-world description of the daily routines and activities of the job offered.

For child and youth care professional hiring managers combining a structured behavioral interview with a brief personal-resources battery (asking and evaluating an applicant's coping, self-efficacy, social support system), and an early "check-in" survey on workload, role clarity, and supervisory support at 3–6 months of employment; together, have shown strong links to impacting job retention. Again, AI can assist the hiring manager in finding resources and quickly create tools that can be the building blocks for more successful hiring as well as retention practices. By re-using these tools over the course of an individual's employment can be useful in offering continued support to staff to further promote retention.

Using AI is fairly straightforward, and the Internet provides many, many resources and trainings in using the various current programs available to assist a hiring manager in developing the types of tools and practices described above. It can be as simple as inputting the questions you want asked and have the AI develop resources and practices you can use during the interview process. As with all hiring practices, run them by your HR personnel first before using them to make sure that they conform to your company's hiring practices and policies.

Child and youth care agencies spend tremendous fiscal and human capital in finding and re-finding competent professionals to provide the services they are tasked with. At times, it seems that their efforts are only feeding the seemingly perpetual revolving door of new and exiting staff. AI may be able to help us not only evaluate the licensing, credential,

educational, and experience requirements of a job but also focus on finding professionals with the temperament and social skill set to promote their tenure within the job and field. We really do want to find professionals that want to work with our clientele, understand the requirements and demands of the new job that are embarking on, can live and grow through our work practices, and stay in the field providing the work that we do. ♦

[Editor's Note: Readers can find past columns in archived issues of the CYC Advocate at www.acycp.org]

Illustration: Chip Bonsutto

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE ON YOUTH AND CHILD CARE WORK



[Editor's Note: The following reprinted with thanks to the author National Public Radio (NPR), and first posted June 15, 2025..]

WHAT I SAW AT A MATERNITY WARD IN KENYA AFTER THE U.S. CUT OFF FOOD AND FOREIGN AID.

By Anna Maria Barry-Jester

Soon after President Donald Trump froze foreign aid on his first day in office, my colleague Brett Murphy and I began hearing from government experts.

We learned that despite explicit promises from Secretary of State Marco Rubio that food and other lifesaving care would continue during the administration's review of foreign aid, programs were shutting down, putting millions of lives at risk. I've covered health in the U.S. and abroad for 15 years, and Brett has covered both the State Department and public health in the U.S. Brett and I teamed up, interviewing dozens of government officials and aid workers, and poring over reams of internal government documents. Then, we traveled to Kakuma (and South Sudan) to see for ourselves how these policies were affecting people.

In an investigation we published this week, we wrote about how food rations were slashed throughout the camp of more than 308,000 people. We learned firsthand how the Trump

administration's decision to withhold funding for the World Food Program's operations in Kenya led children to starve and forced thousands of families to make impossible decisions. One of the groups hit hardest by the cuts was pregnant women.

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Editor's Note: Looking to get more involved with international CYC work? Want to bring your international experience to the ACYCP Board?

ACYCP-FICE is working on some exciting major international initiatives. For more information contact:

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<https://www.acycp.org/an-invitation-to-learn-and-share-as-a-member-of-fice>

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FROM CAMPUS TO COMMUNITY



“IF YOU THINK EDUCATION IS EXPENSIVE, TRY IGNORANCE.”
Derek Bok, the former president of Harvard University

Instructors: Help Your Students Get A Head=Start On Their CYC Careers By Urging To [Join ACYCP HERE](#).

[Editor's Note: The following is reprinted with thanks to the author National Public Radio/Wisconsin Public Radio (NPR/WPR) and was access from the latter's website on January 14, 2026.]

PRAGER U IS A CONSERVATIVE VIDEO GIANT. HERE'S WHY IT'S TRYING TO GET INTO SCHOOLS

By Lisa Hagen

Despite the suggestive sound of its name, PragerU is not a university. It's a content creator. The conservative media nonprofit makes short, well-produced videos crafted to appeal to college students and young people. It has polished animations and titles like "What Radical Islam and the Woke Have in Common" and "Is There Really a Climate Emergency?"

Recently, news headlines have focused on its PragerU Kids content.

Arizona recently became the latest state where education officials have embraced online videos produced by PragerU. It follows at least four other states that approved Prager's material for use in public school classrooms last year, though it's unclear how many students have watched these videos.

In a podcast interview last fall, the group's CEO, Marissa Streit, argued that the U.S. education system is "a left-wing propaganda machine" that teaches students to hate America. PragerU Kids, she says, is the supposed inoculation.

"PragerU shows up everywhere with medicine for the mind so that we can cure and help people think clearly," said Streit.

Educators have voiced alarms about the tone and accuracy of some of PragerU's videos, such as one that features an animated Christopher Columbus saying: "Being taken as a slave is better than being killed, no? I don't see the problem."

[READ MORE & LISTEN HERE](#)

BONUS FEATURES

[Apprenticeships Aimed At Boosting Child Care Careers Have Been Flourishing](#)

[Rural High School Students Are More Likely Than City Kids To Get Their Diplomas, But...](#)

[From Chronic Absence To Chosen Presence](#)

[How The Uvalde Shooting And Police Response Unfolded](#)

[How A Republican Homeschooling Mom Came To Love Her Public Schools](#)

[I've Survived Two School Shootings. I Implore You to Speak Up](#)

[Announcing The NPR Student Podcast Challenge For 2026](#)

[Dearborn Becomes First In Michigan To Launch Citywide School Bus Stop-Arm Cameras](#)

[Working with Special Needs Kids Gave Me...\[Comedy\]](#)

[What Does It Look Like To Teach Civil Dialogue On Campus?](#)

[WEBINAR: Proven Solutions For Your Enrollment Challenges](#)

[Teacher 3D Printed A Functional, Prosthetic Hand For A 4th Grader](#)

[Student Loan Forgiveness Is Back](#)

READY RESOURCE DIRECTORY

[Careers Inside Higher Ed](#)

[Tuition Tracker](#)

Illustration: geralt on Pixabay.com

Enjoy!

ON BEGINNING



[Editor's Note: This column is dedicated to the indispensable ideas and activities of our youngest readers and hopefully future child and youth care workers. As her column implies, Alicia is a bright and capable high school student who, as a graduating senior, is busy laying groundwork for her post-secondary education. We are delighted that she has made time to launch a regular staff column as we celebrate our 10th anniversary. Perhaps our readers can suggest topics for her to explore. Just email this editor at: propman46@gmail.com].

By Alicia Campbell

"Open when... You want to hear something nice!" bore the sticker of the ever-courageous rabbit Calico Critter on the envelope, adorned in a red polka-dot dress. Inside, the card was filled with words of affirmation, written in loopy black ink and sealed with wax. Each letter was a reminder of what I already saw in them.

I write for my friends, not because they ask, but because in my family, when something lingers too long in your chest, we believe it must be given away; offered, even, so it doesn't harden into something else. I've never wanted my thoughts to turn bitter with time.

So, I give them to my people.

To one friend, I wrote: "I'm just so proud of you. I love that I get to grow up with you!" A month later, when our internships had concluded, she opened her backpack and took out an envelope: mine. "I keep it in my bag," she said offhandedly. "It helps me set the tone of my day." The envelope was wrinkled from its travels, and the once-pristine pink wax seal was now chipped. Inside the envelope, the card was soft at the corners. I wondered how many times she'd opened it, how many times it sat between her hands in the early mornings before she clocked into her internship. For the first time, the words I'd written had come back to me.

"Open me! Special Delivery!" was written especially for my friend who had an important out-of-state cross-country race; it came with a token of luck—a small green man, a Smiski figurine from the cheer series. Over time, I'd noticed that this friend felt cared for through actions rather than words. So, I adjusted: a sticky note instead of a full card, and the usual tangent being exchanged for something short and sweet.

To him, I wrote: "I know you don't need luck on your cross-country race, but I'm sending it anyway! Hope this cutesy little cheerleader gives you some of my enthusiasm."

Two weeks later, during our school's college workshop day, the smallest pocket in his backpack was opened and held two things: a tube of Chapstick and the Smiski I had given him. I assumed the trinket would be buried in a drawer or discarded, but instead, it was quietly being cherished.

Writing letters taught me that care isn't one-size-fits-all. Every envelope has been a test of my attention to detail: who needed to be told that they are brilliant as they are, who needed something tangible to hold instead of a lengthy letter to read. As I've learned the language of my friends, I've also started to learn the language of who I am becoming: someone filled with intentionality and who refuses to let good things go unsaid.

As I embark on the next adventure in my life, I know that I will continue to write letters. "Open when... It's finals week!" will be written to my future roommates and accompanied with a coffee as a gesture of goodwill. "Thank you for a wonderful semester!" will be left on my professors' desks, because I owe them thanks for laying the foundation of knowledge needed to make my dreams a reality. Maybe the silly stickers will stay the same, and the names on envelopes will begin to include new ones, but the intention will stay the same: I leave people a little more seen than I found them. And one day, someone new will open an envelope sealed with pink wax and know exactly what I mean. ♦

BONUS FEATURES

[The Out-of-Touch Adults' Guide to Kid Culture: 'Millennial Optimism](#)

Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the

United States

The United States is the only country in the world that has yet to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Several of the provisions of the CRC came at the recommendation of President Reagan's Administration and President Bill Clinton signed the CRC in 1995. However, the Convention has not been ratified by the U.S. Senate. The failure to ratify this treaty has left U.S. children vulnerable to human rights abuses at the state and federal level. It is critical that every nation, including the U.S., sign and ratify the CRC to protect the human rights of children.

How To Contact Your Political Rep Today!

[The Whitehouse](#)

[House](#)

[*NAUWU](#)

[*Disabled World](#)

Illustration: debaasbe on Pixabay.com

FROM THE HILL



CYC REGULATIONS, LEGISLATION & COURT RULINGS Have You Contacted Your Representative Lately?

[Editor's Note: The following is reprinted in part with thanks to the author and The Chronicle for Evidence-based Mentoring and was posted January 15, 2026.]

**THE RECENT GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN HURT CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS:
WELL-TRAINED MENTORS CAN HELP**

By Jean Rhodes, Ph. D.

The recent government shutdown led to widespread economic uncertainty and loss of benefits, the weight of which permeated the lives of children and adolescents. And

according to new research, this stress may have lasting effects on young people's academic prospects, emotional resilience, and sense of selves. In the study, "Perceived economic hardship and adjustment outcomes of children and adolescents: a systematic review and meta-analysis," published in the Journal of Research on Adolescence, researchers synthesized evidence across dozens of studies to examine how the subjective experience of financial strain impacts the academic and psychological adjustment of young people aged six to eighteen. The researchers distinguished perceived hardship from objective economic status, tapping into how children and parents actually feel about their financial situations, not just what those situations might look like on paper... They reviewed 954 articles, narrowing to 53 rigorous cross-sectional studies with 344 effect sizes, encompassing research conducted primarily in the U.S., China, and several other countries. Their methods accounted for complex dependencies across studies using correlated and hierarchical effects models, a technique well-suited for synthesizing heterogeneous data.

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BONUS FEATURES

[Cassidy Decries Child Vax Changes](#)

[US Contributes \\$2 Billion To OCHA-Managed Humanitarian Funds](#)

[Look to the States to Lead on Public Health](#)

[Federal Action on Foster Youth Benefits Reflects Growing Attention to State Practices](#)

[Child Welfare Reauthorization Delivers First-In-A-Generation Wins for Parents and Families](#)

[Should Congress Intervene in the Newborn Hep B Vaccine Controversy?](#)

[A New Statue Honoring A Black Teen Who Fought Segregation Was Unveiled In The U.S. Capitol](#)

When Was The Last Time You Contacted Your Political Rep?

[The White House](#)

[US House of Representatives](#)

[US Senate](#)

[National Conference Of State Legislatures](#)

[United States Conference of Mayors](#)

[State Legislature Websites](#)

Enjoy! ◇

Illustration: Ross Johnston

HEALTHY KIDS, HEALTHY ADULTS



EXPLORING CYC DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES WITH LIFELONG IMPACTS

[Editor's Note: The following is reprinted with thanks to the author and Fatherly and was posted November 28, 2025.]

ARE OUR CHILDREN REALLY SO MENTALLY UNWELL?

In a New York Time ideas story that ran this past week, Jia Lynn Yang opens with a bang: “One of the more bewildering aspects of the already high-stress endeavor of 21st-century American parenting is that at some point your child is likely to be identified with a psychiatric diagnosis of one kind or another. Many exist in a gray zone that previous generations of parents never encountered.”

For those with tweens and teens, this might seem obvious. For those with younger ones, buckle up.

In Yang's story, she focuses on the role schools play. Failures in education may lead to an increase of psychiatric diagnoses like ADHD — alongside IEPs or maybe medications — as a means to catch up kids who are being lost in crowded, test-reliant, merit-funded schools. Of course, even Yang points out that schools are only one part of the puzzle. There's screens and social media taking over our emotional lives and psychiatric development; the pandemic's long-felt chilling effect on socialization; the adult world of division and anger in politics and everywhere else; and of course changes within the Mental Health Industrial Complex.

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BONUS FEATURES

[New CDC Guidance Could Revive a Rare but Deadly \[Childhood\] Disease](#)

[Kidnapped Girl Escapes From Danger](#)

[The Psychology Of A Child Who Grew Up Too Fast](#)

[When Angry Kids Lash Out](#)

[What It's Like To Have ADHD](#)

[Teens, Social Media and AI Chatbots 2025](#)

[Why ADHD Brains Go Over-Bored](#)

[Louisiana Prison Held Its First-Ever 'Father-Daughter Dance](#)

[Origins Of The Names Of 24 Classic Toys](#)

[Meet the New Host of Reading Rainbow](#)

Enjoy!

YOUTH LEADERSHIP AT A GLANCE



[Editor's Note The following is reprinted with thanks to the authors and the Chronicle for Evidence-based Mentoring and was posted January 15, 2026.]

THE SHIFTING SOCIAL WEB: HOW ADOLESCENT RELATIONSHIPS CHANGE

By Brehm, M. V., Melton, T. N., & Deutsch, N. L. (2025). Adolescent peer and adult relationships across time and transition: A longitudinal, mixed-

methods study. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 1–32. <https://doi.org/10.1177/07435584251377437>

Introduction

Supportive relationships are critical for adolescents, but peer and non-parental adult ties shift during development. Guided by the webs of support theory, which emphasizes the interconnectedness of social ties in youth development, Brehm and colleagues (2025) investigated how and why relationships with peers and adults end or persist, specifically focusing on the transitions to and from high school.

Methods

Brehm and colleagues (2025) used a three-year longitudinal study with a convergent mixed-methods design. Thirty-five participants (split between middle and high school starts) completed egocentric social network maps and qualitative interviews at three time points. Quantitative map changes were analyzed with t-tests, while interview transcripts were thematically analyzed to understand the “why”.

Results

Peer networks expanded significantly during the transition to high school, particularly within school settings, while adult relationships—especially with teachers and coaches—declined after graduation. Youth described short-term, intense “quick flames” and enduring “slow burns,” as well as “interchangeable adults” in extracurricular contexts. Time together, trust, and shared identity predicted relationship stability.

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BONUS FEATURES

[Hershey Heartwarming Young Heroes Grants - 2026 Application Opens ~January 22](#)

[Girl Scout Cookie Season Has Finally Arrived](#)

[Youth-Designed Toolkit Teaches Students To Resolve Conflict And Create Safer Schools](#)

[US Teens Spend Over An Hour On Smartphones During School.](#)

Editor's Note: We regret to announce that, due to professional and personal commitments, columnist JULIA HOLLINGS has had to step away from doing the OH CANADA! column. We thank her for her past contributions and wish her the best of success in the future.

Are you a Canadian CYC worker looking to let the world know about the great things going on in your country? Well, come on down! Just contact Editor Michael Mitchell at propman46@gmail.com or call (608)846-2860 Central and let's talk!

Illustration: US Department of Labor



[GO HERE](#)

FROM THE SOAPBOX... AGAIN!



Karen Vander Ven, Ph.D., Professor Emerita, Department of Psychology in Education, University of Pittsburgh; CYC Advocate Staff Writer
at kvander@pitt.edu Enjoy!

OF COURSE IT'S THE LIFE COURSE!

Of course I want to support the crucial work of the Child and Youth Care Certification Board, regardless of what structure it might take within the organization itself.

However, there are some important issues in advancing the field (not yet a full profession) I will outline them here. (Not for the first time as some of my readers and former students well know).

Interestingly, there are few human service programs (day, residential, special programs, etc. that can operate without direct care workers. These include schools, psychiatric centers, day care programs, recreational activities, retirement and senior care facilities, and many others,

We must work to define and present the work we do and why it is so crucially important, to the consuming public, including political makers.

We need to boost our self-confidence as a fundamental human service so that we can increase its public image, political support, and the like.

We now have the capacity to do this because of everything that has been accomplished to date, including the hiring of Andrew Young as Executive Director to oversee both ACYCP and CYCCB. That there is a Certification Board is an example.

We need to give ourselves a distinctive title embracing people of all ages - THE LIFE COURSE !

People in nursing homes and other special care programs for people older than children need the kind of preparation trained and experienced child and youth workers can give.

The fundamental knowledge and skills that define child and youth care are applicable to people of all ages and special needs and we can work to ensure that they receive this.

In the Spring issue of the CYC Advocate, I will explain how I think this may be accomplished in more detail. ♦

[Editor's Note: Readers can find past columns in archived issues of the CYC Advocate at www.acycp.org]

Illustration: geralt on Pixabay.com

FROM BOYS TO MEN ALOUD



[Editor's Note: The following is reprinted with thanks to The Good Men Project and was posted November 1, 2025.]

THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF MASCULINITY:

For more than a decade, conversations about masculinity have been marked by tension, misunderstanding, and rapid cultural shifts. Traditional expectations of manhood no longer fit the realities men are living. At the same time, new possibilities—more expansive, more humane, more inclusive—are emerging faster than institutions, media, or social systems can adapt.

These tensions are why The Good Men Project exists.

Founded in 2010, The Good Men Project began with a simple but profound insight: nearly every man has a moment when he looks in the mirror and realizes he is no longer sure what it means to be “a man,” or “a good one,” by the standards he inherited. That moment, repeated across millions of lives, is both a reckoning and an opening.

Over 10,000 authors have now contributed their stories, expertise and lived experience to the platform—building one of the largest, most diverse and most mission-driven conversations about men and masculinity in the world.

The world has changed dramatically since our founding. But the need for this conversation has only grown more urgent.

[READ MORE](#)

BONUS FEATURES

[Loving Men Means Never Shaming Them for Having Emotions](#)

[Why Love and Emotional Support Are Essential for Men's Mental Health in Today's World](#)

[The Rise of the Dad Club](#)


[Healthy Masculinity for Gay Men: 8 Shifts That Change Everything](#)

[The Silent Killer of Men's Relationships: Emotional Withdrawal](#)



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Job Opportunities

[Looking for a better opportunity?](#)

YOUR AGENCY NEEDS THIS ACYCP MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT NOW!



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NEWS BREAK!

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Want to know more? [Follow this link.](#)

Questions?

Just contact:
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ACYCP Membership Services Chair
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PARENTS AND FRIENDS OF LESBIAN AND GAYS



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 **YOUTH TODAY**

The logo for Youth Today, featuring a stylized green and white icon on the left that resembles a person or a group of people, followed by the words "YOUTH TODAY" in a bold, sans-serif font. "YOUTH" is in green and "TODAY" is in grey.

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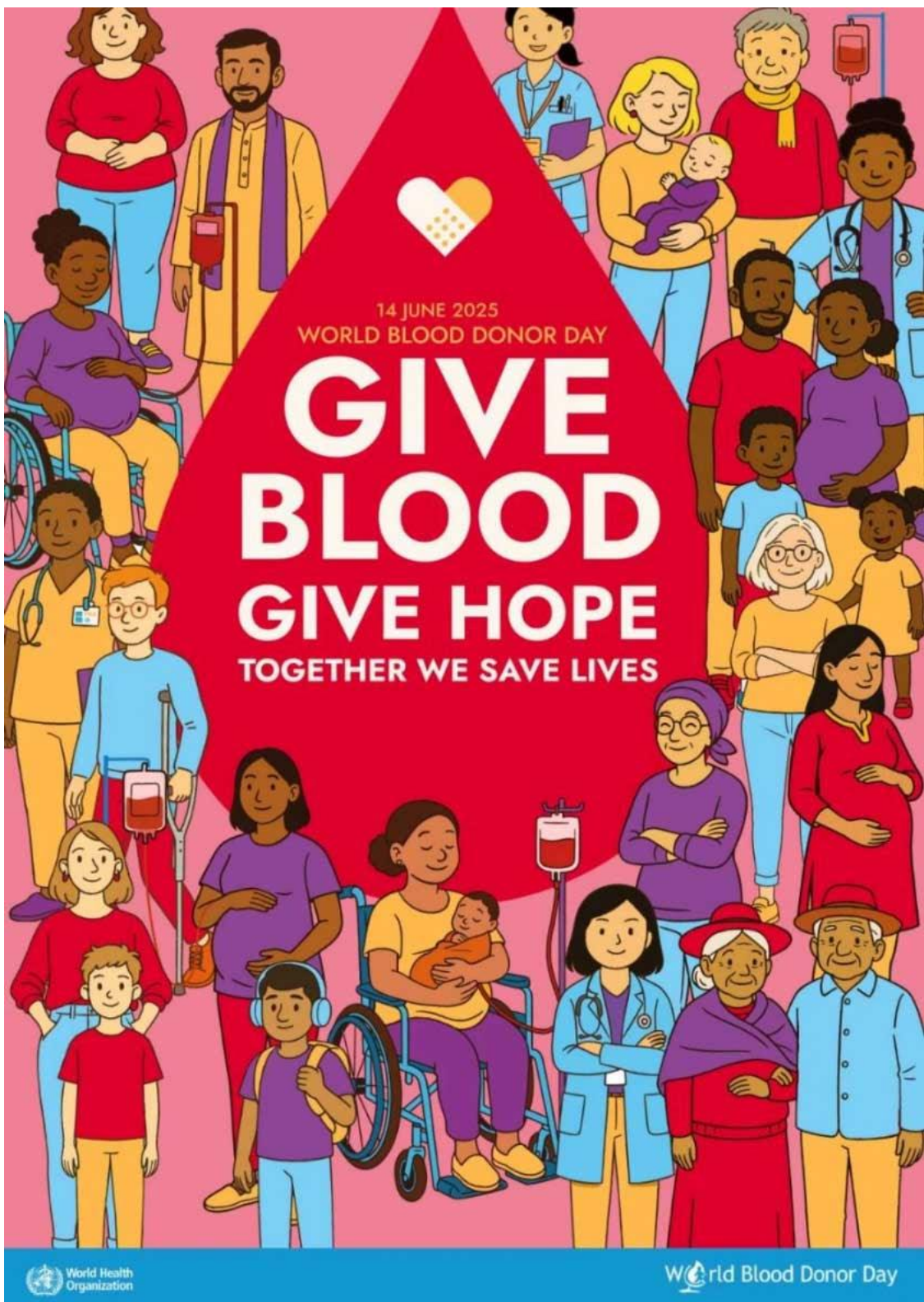
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[WE HELP AT-RISK LGBTQI+ PEOPLE GET TO SAFETY](#)

**THE
TREVOR
PROJECT**



Remember, The Trevor Project is available 24/7, day and night, to support LGBTQ+ young people who may find themselves overwhelmed and impacted by this news. Your identity is valid, your feelings matter, and you are so loved. If you need to talk, you can text START to 678678, call us at 1-866-488-7386, or chat with us online.

Following our premiere episode with Daniel Radcliffe, the second episode of our roundtable series "Sharing Space" features transgender, intersex, queer, and nonbinary young people who join Nova Bright-Williams, Head of Internal Training, Learning, and Development at Trevor, to talk about their experiences with gender euphoria, stigma, and acceptance.

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Improved survival

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Reduced lifetime risk of obesity, asthma and heart disease

Optimal nutrition

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Healthy brain development

Strong microbiomes



World Health Organization

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Visit the Youth Connections Community of Practice for the latest training, promising practices, and technical assistance tools.

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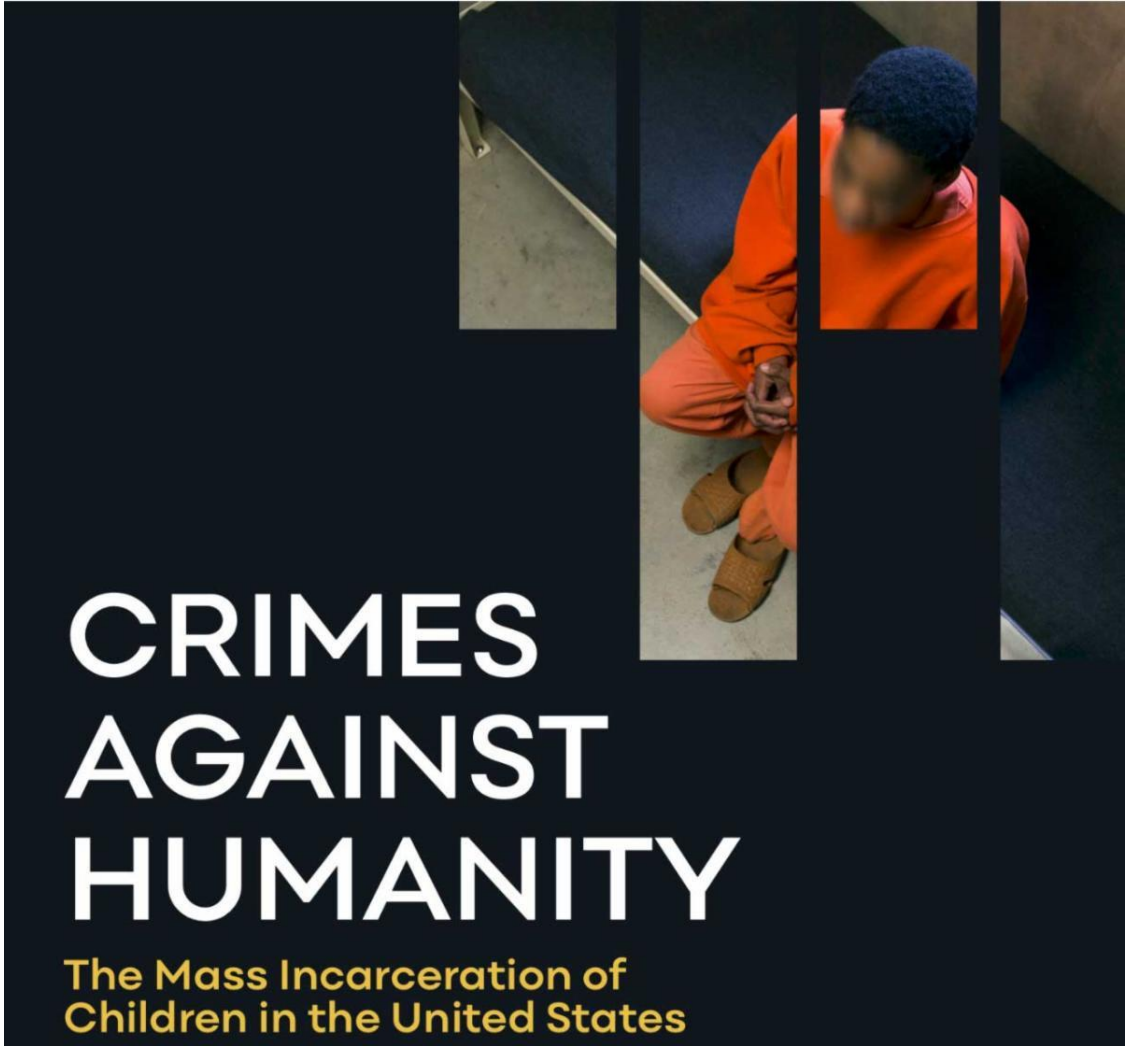
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CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

The Mass Incarceration of
Children in the United States

[Human Rights For Kids, Inc.](#)

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988 SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

PEP22-08-03-012
33371A

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[NEW! 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Adds Spanish Text and Chat](#)

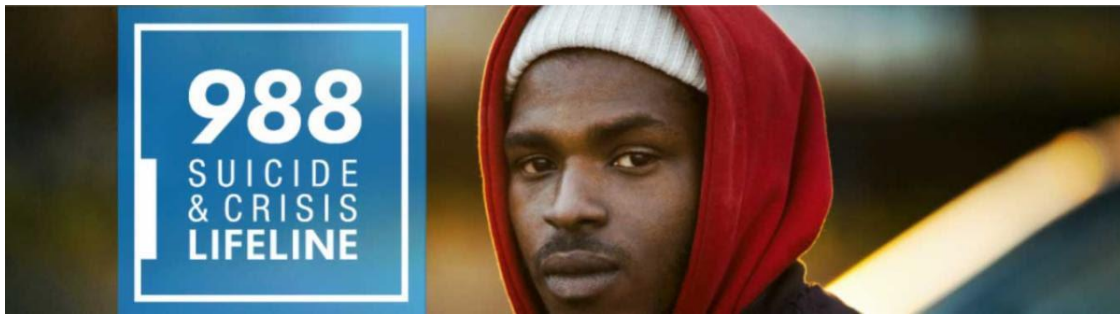
988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Stickers - There is Hope - Green

These 2 inch x 2 inch "There is Hope" stickers help publicize the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. The stickers are packaged in quantities of 100 and orders are limited to one packet per order. The stickers are available in green, pink, and blue as well as in English and Spanish.

[MORE RESOURCES HERE, PLUS ASL](#)

[NEW VIDEO - WHAT IS 988 AND HOW DOES IT WORK?](#)

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The advertisement for the All of Us Research Program features a diverse group of people of various ages and ethnicities standing together. One woman is seated in a wheelchair. The text on the left side of the image reads: 'All of Us RESEARCH PROGRAM | The Future of Health Begins With You', 'Be one in 1,000,000 for a better future.', and 'JoinAllofUs.org'. The background is a light blue gradient.

**SUPPORT GREATER DIVERSITY, INCLUSION and EQUITY
IN MEDICAL RESEARCH**

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U=U

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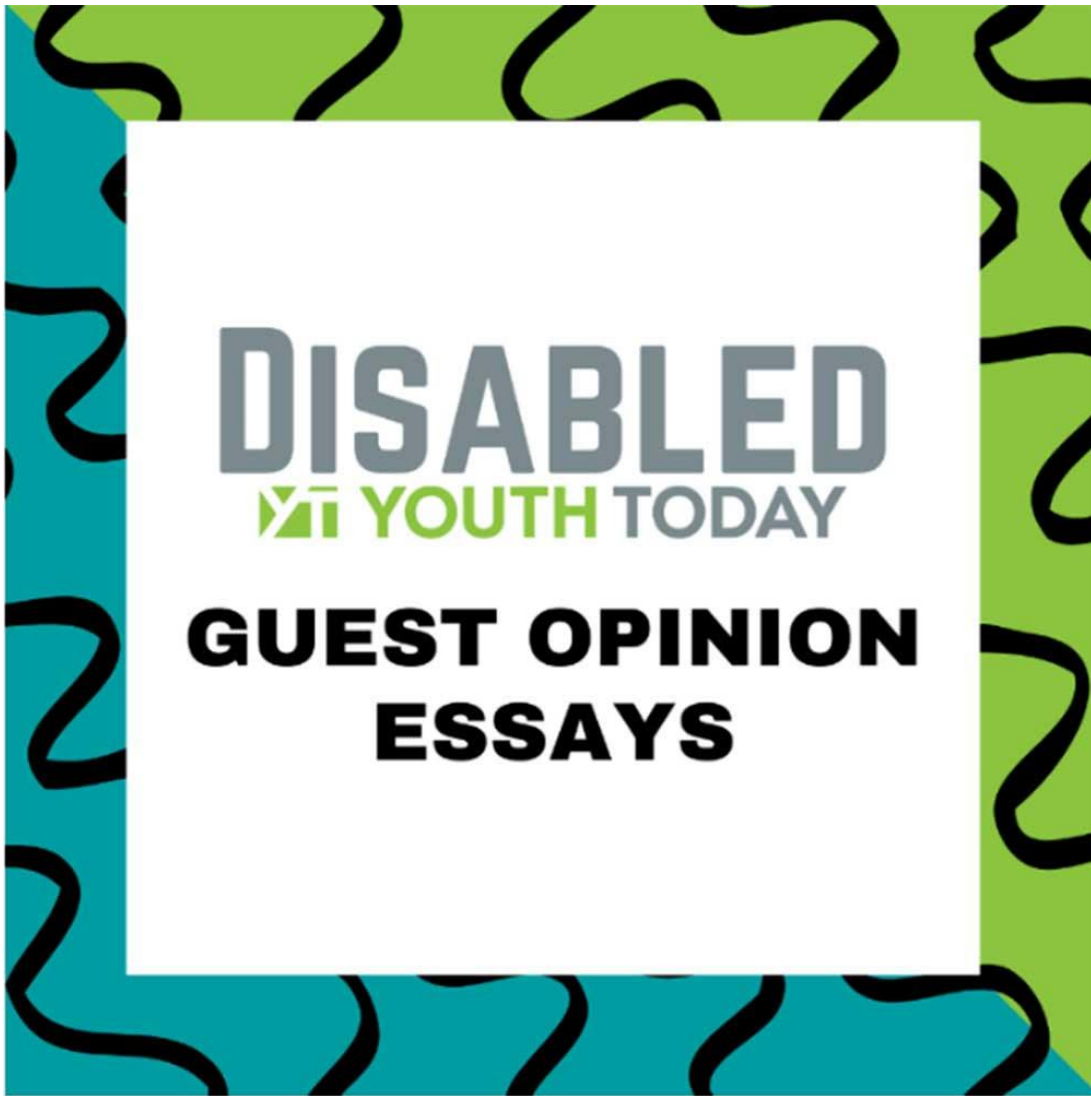
A person living with HIV who is on treatment and has an undetectable viral load cannot transmit HIV through sex.

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[Paulette Marzahl](#)

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Would you like to advertise a job opening, service or event? Contact Michael Mitchell at propman46@gmail.com. ACYCP members ads are free as a membership benefit!



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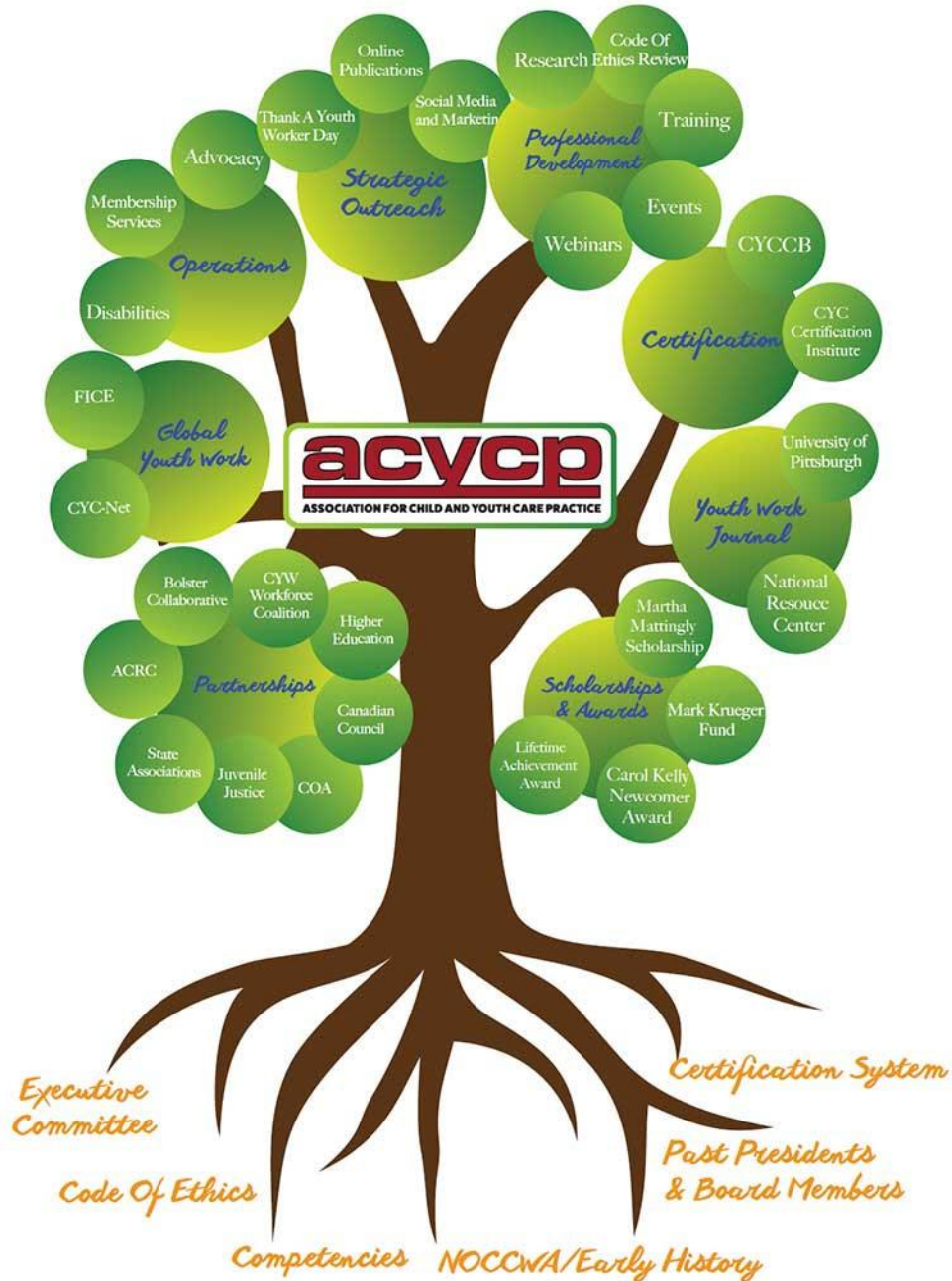


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ACYCP organization tree update, v6.0
10/3/2019

MOVING? CHANGE OF JOB? GOT A PROMOTION?...

Well, we wish you all the best of success! But don't forget to take us along! Who knows, your ACYCP membership benefits and resources may come in real handy in your new situation. Or does your current email not permit personal or outside messages? Just get us your new email contact and any other membership data updates. So put us on your calendar or to-do list to make sure our contact remains unbroken. Just shoot off a quick easy email to acycp2011@yahoo.com with all your relevant changes, and we'll take care of the rest. We're soooo confident you'll be glad you did!

LINK WITH US!

CYC agencies and organizations may email the general email address at: acycp2011@yahoo.com and send their logo and web link, along with the name and contact information of a designated representative. Please put "Invitation To Link-ACYCP" in the subject line. We look forward to welcoming you to our communications and resource network!

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