

# Relational Child & Youth Care Practice

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# Contents

<b>Editorial – Moving Forward Together .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Aurora De Monte and Graham McPheat	
<b>Building Relational Spaces: Developing a Child and Youth Care Community of Practice.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Matthew Halton, Paula Cornell and Jaclyn Wickens	
<b>Advancing Child and Youth Care Practice: The Role of Child and Youth Rights’ Education in Strengthening Advocacy and Service Delivery .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Emmie Henderson-Dekort	
<b>Threads of Change: Exploring the Role of Craftivism.....</b>	<b>40</b>
Stephanie Allen, Chloe Calhoun, Timmi Chen, Mursal Hashimi, Christina Isaacs, Amy Labelle, Shynoor Ozkan, Lauren Penman, Katharin Pritchard, Rabab Rajpal, Alyssa Solnes and Catherine Soulabbaille	
<b>Refugee Children: Belonging and Exclusion through the Access of Space and Place.....</b>	<b>49</b>
Nadia Umadat	
<b>The Mattering Audit: Making Interactions Matter.....</b>	<b>55</b>
Grant Charles and Thom Garfat	
<b>Young Peoples’ Perceptions and Experiences of a Dog’s Presence in their Residential Placement.....</b>	<b>73</b>
Roisin Petticrew	
<b>Young People’s Experience of Post-Carceral Programs in Madagascar Case Study: “Youth Full of Hope Program” (YFH).....</b>	<b>99</b>
Daniel Henintsoa Rakotoarison	
<b>Information .....</b>	<b>121</b>

# Moving Forward Together

Aurora De Monte and Graham McPheat

New beginnings, such as a new year, are often accompanied by time for reflection. Reflective practice is a central component of good practice in helping professions and we hope that the reflections during this time of transition offer wisdom of our growth and development as well as signposts to where we may seek to further expand in this coming year. Times of transition are also opportunities to take stock of the moments and experiences of gratitude that have contributed to bringing us through the past year and into this new beginning. As editors of this issue, we are grateful for the time and dedication of researchers and practitioners for their ongoing contributions to the field of Child and Youth Care. We are always delighted in reading about the remarkable tapestry of research and practice experiences from this global discipline. The articles in this issue may present readers with new ideas or considerations for growth and development as we move into a new year of practice.

We would like to thank all authors and contributors as well as peer reviewers for their time and critical contributions to the research and literature of the field. Particularly we would like to thank the Graduate programs (the MSc in Residential Child Care and the MSc in Child and Youth Care Studies both at the University of Strathclyde) and their Program Leads for supporting their students in the process of writing their dissertations for publication.

Halton, Cornell and Wickens share the experiences of the joint development of a Community of Practice (CoP) supported by MacEwan and Norquest College. A CoP provides a space for connection and support for practitioners, educators, and students to discuss issues pertaining to CYC practice. They end with considerations for others who would like to endeavour to create their own CoP.

Emmie Henderson-Dekort shares research into the facilitation of workshops provided to CYC practitioners on young person rights. This research promotes the integration of advocacy and rights-based approaches into CYC education and provides evidence for how this strengthens professional identity and collaboration with service providers.

From Mount Royal University, a group of students and their instructor, share their capstone project on craftivism, which is the intentional use of crafting as a form of activism. The authors provide a grounding on the history and use of craftivism. Readers may be inspired to get crafty come the end of this read.

Nadia Umadat reflects on an incident which took place in a Toronto at a local school playground in the summer of 2019. The author considers if the reactions to a sizable group of racialized refugee and migrant children in a public space foreshadowed some of what we are experiencing now and what this means for belonging and exclusion via access to space and place. Developments in 2025 and 2026 make the themes of this piece scarily prescient.

Grant Charles and Thom Garfat share with us 'The Mattering Audit' and ask practitioners and organizations to consider how they are contributing to the creation of a mattering environment. This reflective tool can assist in facilitating conversations regarding how spaces, teams and individuals are supporting the sense of being valued and needed by the individuals and families they serve.

Roisin Petticrew, a graduate from the MSc in Residential Child Care from the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow shared details of her research project which explored young people's experiences and perceptions of a dog's presence in their residential placement. It's a lovely piece of work which acknowledges some of the practice challenges, but the findings offer evidence of the varied positive functions of

a dog's potential presence alongside the ability to promote feelings of responsibility, confidence and self-esteem.

Exploring the lived experiences of young people reintegrating after involvement in the justice system in Madagascar, Daniel Henintsoa Rakotoarison (MSc in Child and Youth Care Studies, University of Strathclyde), highlights the complexities that young people face and the need for more supportive services for this population. In collaboration with Youth Full of Hope, an organization dedicated to supporting young people in conflict with the law, this research offers insights into services that young people benefit from as they transitioning back into community.

This issue offers a timely snapshot of the diverse ideas, challenges, and innovations shaping contemporary practice. As we enter a new year, may these contributions prompt fresh thinking, meaningful conversation, and intentional growth. We encourage readers to carry these insights forward — into their workplaces, classrooms, communities, and daily practice — as we collectively shape the directions of our work in the months ahead.

### **Aurora De Monte**

teaches full time at Fleming College and is a part time educator in the MSc in Child and Youth Care Studies program at the University of Strathclyde. Aurora completed her MSc at the University of Strathclyde where the focus of her dissertation was on relational teaching. Aurora continues to practice supporting young people and families in a variety of capacities within the community.

### **Graham McPheat**

is a Principal Teaching Fellow in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, Scotland. He is Depute Head of the Department of Social Work and Social Policy and Course Leader on the MSc in Child and Youth Care Studies by Distance Learning. Graham is also a Board Member with the Child and Youth Care Educational Accreditation Board of Canada.



# Information

***Relational Child and Youth Care Practice*** (formerly *The Journal of Child & Youth Care*, established 1982) is committed to promoting and supporting the profession of Child and Youth Care through disseminating the knowledge and experience of individuals involved in the day-to-day lives of young people.

This commitment is founded upon the belief that all human issues, including personal growth and development, are essentially “relational”.

Certain pieces in *RCYCP* have received peer review. However, we do not peer review all articles as we choose not to exclude those voices where peer review would be inappropriate – or on request from writers.

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**ISSN 2410-2954 Volume 38, No.3**

**121**

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*Relational Child and Youth Care Practice* is committed to providing equitable and inclusive spaces that promote and support the global profession of Child and Youth Care through disseminating the knowledge and experience of individuals involved in the day-to-day lives of young people, families and communities. This commitment is founded upon the belief that all human issues, are essentially “relational”.

*Relational Child & Youth Care Practice* welcomes submissions on all aspects relating to young people, families and communities. This includes material that explores the intersectionality of Child and Youth Care practice and the lived experiences of all who are engaged in Child and Youth Care practice. Considerations will also be given to interpersonal dynamics of professional practice and all submissions that assume a relational perspective. This might include topics such as cultural values, ethics, social policy, program design, supervision, education, training etc. Welcomed are also submissions that address advocacy, social justice and reconciliation practices within the diverse spaces and places of Child and Youth Care. Each issue may include refereed articles that comply with acceptable ‘academic’ standards; submissions contributed by regular and guest columnists; short pieces that describe particular relational experiences and reflections; poetry; artwork and photographs.

Material should be submitted by email to [rcycp@press.cyc-net.org](mailto:rcycp@press.cyc-net.org) in standard word processing format (eg. .doc, .rtf). Formal articles should not exceed 6000 words in length (excluding references). Referencing should conform to either APA or Harvard format. Author-date citations should be used within the text and a double-spaced reference section should accompany each article. In all submissions, authorship details including an abstract of no more than 150 words should be included, as well as a short list of keywords at the beginning of the article, a headshot photo and a short author bio of about 100 words to publish with your article. Importantly, authors should also indicate whether a peer review is required (in addition to the standard editorial review).

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