

Child and Youth Work

What is a Child and Youth Worker?

Child and Youth workers work with troubled children and adolescents who face a variety of emotional, behavioural or physical problems. These problems can arise within the family, at school, as a result of drug and alcohol abuse or because of conflicts with the law.

What do Child and Youth Workers do?

The Child and Youth Worker is a mental health professional who is part of an interdisciplinary team that serves children, adolescents and their families. They develop meaningful relationships because of the ongoing, intimate contact and, subsequently, are present to provide support and counselling when the client needs it. They also help manage inappropriate and/or destructive behaviour, including verbal aggression. If necessary, they may be physically involved in controlling their client's behaviour. Additionally, they are the source for appropriate role modelling, general supervision and management of behaviour and counselling. Types of relationships that are demanded of the C.Y.W. are ones that challenge the individual emotionally, mentally and physically. Consequently, self-awareness and emotional maturity are crucial characteristics of a Child and Youth Worker. While the C.Y.W. is trained to work in a variety of community agencies, she/he is expected to share a common set of values which includes a commitment to the rights of children and families.

Where do Child and Youth Workers work?

Child and Youth workers are employed by school boards, group homes, hospitals, correctional facilities, social agencies, detention or rehabilitation centres or community outreach programs

Education and Preparation

Child and Youth Workers need a high school diploma along with completion of a 3 year community college or university program in child and youth care. They need experience working with children either as a volunteer or in a summer or part-time job. Other useful skills include first aid and CPR training.

Professional Associations

Ontario Association of Child and Youth Counsellors

<http://www.oacyc.org/>

Licensure

Child and Youth workers are not currently a regulated health profession requiring a license.