



# *Activity Matters*

*Using Activities to Build Connections  
in Child and Youth Care*

**Jack Phelan**  
Editor

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# INTRODUCTION

Dear Reader,

This is a book about recreational activities, which is a very broad topic. It includes most things that we associate with playing, being creative, doing things for fun, and participating in learning or skill building tasks for the personal enjoyment they contain.

You will be engaged in looking at your own attitudes and beliefs about several aspects of recreation and creative arts, because your personal reaction to doing different activities will affect how you can engage others as a Child and Youth Care practitioner.

You will start your learning about activity programming by looking inward and getting a handle on what each of you think about different types of activities and your emotional response to doing certain activities. This self-awareness process will be an integral part of most of the course work in the Child and Youth Care education curriculum you will experience, so the issues arising here in looking at recreational activities will be like the personal responses you may have in other situations.

This course will involve physically engaging in activities, being a participant in various games and sports, doing things that will be unfamiliar and awkward sometimes and getting sweaty and messy, so please wear your play clothes and runners to class when required. Some people will enjoy this a lot, some not so much, which is part of the learning. While this book will be useful and important, it is no substitute for the process of doing the activities too.

You will have many memories of being in play groups as a child and teen, gym class being a powerful experience either pleasant or not for most adults, which will impact your thinking about many activities. Summer camping, sports team participation, art instruction, dance class, musical instrument practice, playground fun or mishaps, theater groups and so many other experiences will be a part of every class member's background, and this will enrich the learning for each of you.

Being enthusiastic when engaging in the exercises which this class will entail makes the learning experience most powerful, but there will be times

when you will not feel safe or energized to do certain activities. Your instructors hope that you can trust the learning process and challenge yourself to take a leap of faith and “just do it” (to quote Nike).

Play is strongly influenced by the degree of safety involved as perceived by each person and you will eventually be responsible for providing safe conditions for others as they engage in play. You will only be able to create a safe environment for others when you become capable of managing your own safety needs. This book will hopefully enable you to become more skillful and informed about how to be an effective CYC practitioner as you create play experiences for young people and families.

Chapter one is focused on some of the dynamics which you will experience in learning about activity programming, which will support your self-awareness. The next two chapters describe everyday interventions using the skills you will be learning in this course. Chapter four will provide a theory for activity-based practice that can serve as a guide for your thinking about what you are doing, and the following chapters describe themes and topics that are important, practical examples of activity-based work. All the chapters were written by CYC practitioners, many of whom are also faculty in CYC educational programs. There will also be descriptions of activity ideas and CYC examples of using activity with young people.

It will be important to reflect on your own reactions as you experience the dynamics in this course of study. Your self-awareness about the challenges and enjoyable moments you encounter will create useful learning. Your ability to reflect on how you are impacted by doing a variety of recreational activities will be a powerful personal agenda and will support your ability to be an effective CYC practitioner.

Enjoy the journey.

# 1

## **A SIMPLE EXPLANATION OF A COMPLEX ISSUE**

Jack Phelan

### **A Fun Course?**

Most college students taking a course on Activity Programming will expect to have an easy, fun, stress-free and enjoyable time. However, there are also many students who will expect to be anxious, fearful and unsafe in this type of course. Recollections of high school gym class will either motivate or intimidate many of the students. During this CYC course you will be expected to be very aware of your own feelings and beliefs as you progress through the semester. Activities like play will be a wonderful way to practice life space interactions, the essence of CYC work, and your enthusiasm or lack of it will have a large impact on your effectiveness as a helper. At the same time, people who are reluctant to engage in some activities will have the benefit of immediate empathy with most of the young people we are trying to influence. Much of the course will involve interacting with others in small or large groups and the class discussions about how you have experienced the different activities will be very important. The overall message for students is to listen and learn from everyone's experience during your playing and planning, because it will all be useful and important.

## Sports

Sports are an obvious topic here, as many forms of play involve doing some version of an athletic game. Some people are very anxious about engaging in sports, fearful of being less skilled than others or not very competitive. People who enjoy team participation and competition will quickly lead their fellow students in this direction, but it does not have to be the agenda for learning how to use sports with young people. There are many variations on conventional athletic games which minimize or eliminate competition and teamwork.

My experience in CYC agencies has been that workers often encourage young people to play the sports that the adults enjoy or know well, which is a poor reason and often ignores what is best for the program. It can be very useful to share an activity that you are passionate about, since it will often motivate reluctant youth to try something new, but you also are expected to be reflective and aware of when your own needs are taking precedence.

Body image complications quickly arise during this class, since many activities require people to wear gym clothes or a bathing suit, which can be intimidating for some adults. Teenagers are probably even more self-conscious, which students need to think about and use their own uncomfortable feelings to build empathy for others. Openly discussing the dynamics and how each person is impacted during the actual class demonstrations will be very useful. It will eventually be the CYC practitioners' task to manage all these issues for vulnerable young people, since personal safety is a major factor. Physical handicaps and even minor physical limitations may become hindrances to full participation.

Male and female attitudes can clash and people with more fluid gender identities may be especially sensitive to traditional activity role participation and expectations. Gender expectations are often heightened in sports, which will become another potential challenge. Students will be reminded of how they felt as children and teens when engaging at school, with peers or as a family member in sporting activities and may be bringing that emotional baggage into the class. Traditional coaches often use demeaning comments and personal challenges to motivate players to be more competitive and this may influence CYC staff using sports in their program.



Competition is usually involved in more traditional forms of athletics, with an emphasis on winning and losing. Keeping score is an innate part of most athletic games, yet this is not usually helpful in our CYC practice. The young people in our care have not typically been winners in their lives and competitive score keeping can serve to remind them of this.

Many sports and games can be adapted to minimize competition and scorekeeping. Baseball can have a “no-strikeout rule” so that everyone hits the ball, or “one bounce” volleyball can allow players to keep the ball in play more easily. Trying to maximize the number of volleys across the net by both teams, with everyone trying to cooperate rather than compete can change the dynamic very effectively. Aggressive games like dodgeball are not generally a good choice, even though you might enjoy it yourself.

### Discussion questions

- What is your own attitude about doing sports?
- How important is competition as an ingredient in sports?
- What are the sports that you prefer? Why?

## Indoor Games

Some families regularly engage in activities like “Games Night”, with both adults and children involved. Chess, bridge and many other games require training and focus, while games like Uno, Monopoly and Checkers may be easier to learn. Younger children learn to play games like Snakes and Ladders and Sorry more quickly and they all are useful ways to get people to interact and laugh together. The element of competition with winners and losers may be difficult for many young people, so these activities need to be modified on occasion. Creating teams to reduce the individual focus and balancing players to create healthy comparisons will be useful. Early experiences with table games can strongly influence adult attitudes, some people needing to temper an aggressive style or a need to win attitude, while others may need to build enthusiasm and a willingness to play because of unpleasant memories.

Table games are excellent vehicles for creating safe conversations and connections with young people, but they can also be negative experiences for people who are self-conscious about personal competence. Both adults

and young people may need to be carefully monitored when personality issues surface during an otherwise straightforward interaction. Unfortunately, adults can get too invested in being better at games than young people and can become competitive and legalistic instead of flexible and relaxed.

The challenge for running Table Game activities is to create innovative methods and rules that allow young people to feel competent and successful without thinking that the adults are letting them win. Options like “ask a friend for help” or requesting a “do-over” can be easily included in the game, to allow for safe ways to play.

### Discussion Questions

- Do you enjoy table games? Why?
- Describe a fun experience you had with a table game.
- What is your favorite game?

### **Camping, Hiking, Exploring**

Outdoor activities in the forest can be wonderful places to get to know young people better, and the removal of familiar surroundings can allow all of us to be different, even though it may be uncomfortable. Many city dwellers have not been exposed to outdoor environments and this can be both challenging and exciting if it remains safe. Adults who are not comfortable in this type of activity can request resource support from others and CYC students should see these outdoor skills as a necessary part of their training. Chopping wood, building a campfire, hiking on a wilderness trail, and carrying a backpack may be new experiences for many young people. Water activities like canoeing and swimming may also be part of an outdoor experience program. There is a degree of physical fitness required to hike, go camping and paddle a canoe which must be monitored in any group who use the outdoors.

Physical safety is a major focus for outdoor activity leaders, since young people can be anxious in unfamiliar places and can act impulsively.

## Discussion Questions

- Are you comfortable doing outdoor activities? Which ones?
- Do you enjoy camping?

## Art, Music, Design, Creative Activity

Young people are often very able to express themselves with art, poetry, music, dramatic activity, or design. Adults can support this by joining in the creative process themselves to model enthusiasm or be a coach and audience for the result. Graphic novels, life books and other artistic projects can be very useful ways to learn more about young people. Again, your personal experience with creative expression will influence your attitude here. Many adults belong to the “can’t draw a straight line with a ruler” club and resist art activity, or don’t like the type of music enjoyed by the youth. CYC students should see the value in these creative endeavors for young people, especially youths who may have difficulty verbalizing ideas. CYC practitioners will find it useful to encourage a wide variety of projects rather than getting stuck on their own personal preferences. It may be important to do a bit of background research on music styles or graphic novels favored by the young people before trying to establish a connection.

It is important to acknowledge the hard work and validity of each youth’s efforts as much as possible. Halloween costume contests can end with only one winner for best costume, which creates a lot of disappointment, but you can also have multiple winners for several categories with everyone feeling rewarded for their efforts. Staging an Art Show where every entry is displayed, and categories are expanded so that there is a maximum number of awards given, builds pride and confidence. Holiday seasons are wonderful times to have youths create presents for family members, celebrate cultural backgrounds and build happy memories for themselves. Staging a dramatic play or a musical concert may seem too daunting, but young people may find this to be a highly motivating project. There is an example later in the book describing Black Light theater, which was undertaken by a Child and Youth Care practitioner who had almost no prior experience with stage performances.

## Discussion Questions

- Have you been involved in stage performances?
- What concerns would you have if you were asked to be an actor?

## Electronic Games, Internet Use

Generational issues are often exposed when computer use is explored, with age being a big factor. Even a few years' age spread can make a great difference in how electronic devices are understood. Younger CYC staff may have a more sympathetic attitude about the importance of video games, internet communication and screen time availability for the young people in your group. Aside from the relational implications of communicating electronically and using less face-to-face conversations, there is a recreational need that electronic devices provide.

Newer young staff often feel less competent than their experienced colleagues and their more informed expertise in this area is a nice way for them to feel like fully participating members of the team.

## Discussion Questions

- Do you play any computer games regularly?
- Are you comfortable with the way that social media has become a big part of teens' lives?

## Using Tools, Making Equipment

A CYC educational program in Holland has students, especially female students, operate power tools and learn some basic construction concepts since this can be a useful way to create feelings of being powerful and competent as well as build closeness with people. CYC staff can work with young people to build things for their recreational use. Skateboard ramps, outdoor game equipment, and many other objects can be both fun and helpful, while forging relational connections with young people. Earlier experiences will influence your willingness to engage this way, but this type of activity is an important way to build connections with young people.

## Discussion Questions

- Do you have any experience building things?
- Are you able to teach others about power tool safety?

## Classroom Exercises

During this course you may be expected to lead the other students in an activity which you created. You may be doing this as part of a small group or individually and it will require you to find the necessary resources and equipment, think about the safety issues for the participants, and develop a leadership strategy that allows everyone to understand what is expected of each of them and to have a clear goal and purpose for the activity.

Even though you are dealing with fellow students, the dynamics of the activity will mirror how it will work with other groups, so it is important to focus on your leadership skills and the atmosphere in the group. There will be people in the class who are nervous or reluctant and others who are too stimulated and it is your job to manage the issues which arise. Some students will be very competitive, and others will be passive or uninvolved; you should think beyond what you are comfortable with and plan ahead for any complications.

Another consideration as you think about fun and useful programs is how easy it will be for the young people to continue to engage in this activity after they return to their homes. Games that require expensive equipment to participate will have very limited carry-over value, and field trips or visits to places that have entry fees and ticket prices will probably not work well. Activities that can be done in local neighborhoods and public parks are highly desirable and are more realistic for the young people and families in our programs.

Group discussions which critique each classroom activity are very helpful and should be part of the course requirements. Honest feedback about what was interesting, boring, confusing, and fun about the exercises will be an important part of your classroom learning.

## Discussion Questions

- Does your group evaluate the dynamics of classroom activities?
- How would you evaluate your own participation in class?
- What can you suggest to your fellow students that will improve the process?

## Leadership Training

Students are learning about new activities as well as practicing familiar experiences to have an array of options when interacting with young people and families. An additional skill that students need to develop during this course is how to be an effective leader. Knowing how to motivate people to participate enthusiastically and cooperatively is an important asset as well as having a sense of when to end things before boredom sets in. Timing when and how to initiate a game or project will have a large impact on its success. Leaders also must have an awareness of the participants so that they can motivate reluctant people and not frustrate enthusiastic people with too much direction or advice. Basic developmental information about how preteens are more interested in organizing the rules and roles for a game, while teens need to feel independent and in charge of the activity, will support your leadership ability. Both deciding whether you should be an active participant or a less involved mentor or coach, as well as knowing how to minimize unhealthy comparisons or competition among the group members are part of being an effective leader.

A practical example of this might be while teaching a group a new skill in gymnastics there will be a tendency for teens to make fun of anyone who is awkward or clumsy at first, which will quickly deteriorate into group name calling or worse. Learning how to do basic gymnastic moves will work better if everyone does the exercise at the same time, rather than having people try one at a time while others watch. Having a group learn how to dance will work better if everyone dances at the same time rather than having a few people try the steps while others stand around and observe.

## Discussion Questions

- Describe someone who was an effective recreational leader for you. What was their key quality?
- List two goals you will set to improve your leadership,

## Physical and Emotional Safety

Every activity you attempt must be safe for the participants. Physical safety is maintained by having the right equipment available, rules and expectations that anticipate potential problems and an environment that promotes safe behavior. Your physical presence is a very powerful factor in creating safety for all. If you appear to be uncomfortable or anxious while leading any activity, this will become quickly apparent to the group and it will translate to anxious and unsafe behavior in the group of young people. It may be useful for you to anticipate this and to rehearse your planned event before doing it with a group. Being actively engaged in the game or activity is also generally a good way to both create enthusiasm for the reluctant members of your group and a less intrusive way to supervise and manage the behavior of the participants. Getting physically close to a reluctant or awkward participant and supporting them to continue trying to succeed will get better results than standing back and vocally instructing him/her.

It is important to anticipate behavior that may impede the smooth flow of your activity without creating too much unnecessary control. Young people who have experienced difficult childhood experiences can be anxious and hyper vigilant, especially when trying something unfamiliar. For example, young people who do not know how to swim may jump off a diving board because they don't want to appear vulnerable or will appear to be familiar with equipment that they have never seen before to hide their anxiety.

Teenagers are especially sensitive to being laughed at, and fear of looking bad may create the paradoxical behavior of laughing at others to hide their own fears. As the leader of any activity, it is important to think about these issues and develop strategies to deal with them. Usually, as an activity gets flowing and people start enjoying themselves, these anxious behaviors become managed more easily, so it is always useful to begin

things with a lot of enthusiasm and energy. Standing around listening to a lot of rules or instructions is typically not helpful.

As your group becomes more cohesive and supportive of each other, these dynamics will not be a major issue.

### Discussion Questions

- Describe an unsafe recreational experience you have experienced or observed. What could have been done differently?
- Describe a strategy you can use to improve the safety of an activity.

### **Trauma, abuse, and neglect dynamics**

CYC practitioners are working with young people who have typically had significant experiences of neglect, abuse and possibly trauma in their young lives, which creates some unique challenges for recreational leadership. Recreational leaders must be sensitive to the vulnerability and hypervigilance that abused and neglected young people exhibit as they engage in new or physically difficult games and other emotional interactions. There are two issues for the leader, how can the activity be presented and attempted in the safest possible way for all and what strategies are available to handle reactions that may be caused by engaging in the activity.

Some factors to consider include how many participants are involved, smaller groups or even one-to-one activities may be necessary to maintain a safe situation. Generally bigger groups increase the dynamics occurring which can be difficult to manage, depending on the space available. Other factors include the complexity or potential misuse of the equipment required and the competitive spirit of the group doing the activity.

Leaders should be prepared to actively participate in games and activities rather than sitting back and directing, because teens especially can be fearful of looking bad and need an example of someone taking that risk first. Also, leaders can use their physical presence to create safety and control. For example, a CYC leading an aerobics class can move around the group and support young people who struggle with the motions involved or can step in between two young people who are beginning to annoy each other.



The leader should also wear the same outfit as the participants; runners, sweats, shorts, swimsuits, etc., because potentially embarrassing clothing should not just be required for the young people.

### Discussion Questions

- How does an awareness of abuse and trauma influence your approach to doing activities?
- Describe how being hyper-vigilant will affect the dynamics of a game.

### Textbook Format

This text will support your development as a CYC practitioner using physical activity and other forms of play to build connections, create competence, and open new possibilities for young people and families. The book is formatted around several themes: practical daily life space interactions, using a theoretical perspective to organize your efforts, and specific focal areas of activity-based practice. All the chapters have been written by experienced CYC practitioners who are reflecting on their years of using play and leisure time to work effectively with young people and families. This book will be a useful reference for you to analyze and plan interventions, create new thinking about cooperation versus competition, and learn how to build positive moments into daily life space events. However, it is not a substitute for doing the work of shifting your perspective about cultural dynamics, being sensitive to your own biases about physical activity or learning the skills needed to be a safe, effective play facilitator. This course requires you to be active, enthusiastic, self-aware and open to new ideas. You will be expected to get out of your chair, out of your comfort zone and into a playful, energetic attitude. Please use this text to support yourself in the journey.

### Summary

The chapters in this text have been written by experienced CYC practitioners who are sharing their expertise on specific areas of focus, which will hopefully broaden your awareness of the scope and complexity of using recreational activities as an integral aspect of effective CYC

practice. The use of practical, experiential methods to support young people and families as they engage with CYC services is the basis of our profession. Relational practice occurs as people do things with each other in life space moments, and doing fun things together opens the possibility of building safe, powerful connections.

So, even though this course will be fun (hopefully) for you, it will build a very important skill set that you will need to be an effective CYC practitioner. Knowing how to create enjoyment and physical competence using recreation and activity is the focus of your learning in this course and that is a very serious business. Having a theoretical structure to organize your efforts will be an important issue and Chapter 4 will discuss this area in detail. The first three chapters discuss some specific uses of activities in our daily work with young people in life space situations. The rest of the text describes various methodologies and frameworks that utilize activity-based interventions that you will learn about to build your toolbox of skills as an effective CYC practitioner.

# CONTRIBUTORS

**JACK PHELAN** started in community youth work in 1967 and is on the faculty of the Department of Child and Youth Care at MacEwan University in Alberta, Canada. He is a regular contributor to *CYC-Online* ([www.cyc-net.org/cyc-online](http://www.cyc-net.org/cyc-online)) and the author of *Child and Youth Care: The Long and Short of it* and *Intentional Child and Youth Care Supervision: A Developmental Approach* (both CYC-Net Press).

**THERESA FRASER** is a Child and Youth Care Practitioner who started her CYC learning journey at Humber College and across three provinces, working as a CYC in residential, community and educational milieus. She is also a certified Play Therapy Supervisor and has one many awards for her work with children and families including the Monica Herbert award for contribution to children/family mental health and Play Therapy across Canada April 2017, Jim Lewis Treatment Foster Care Award 2017, the Dennis McDermott Career Achievement Award Ontario Association of Child and Youth Care 2017, the School of Community Services Lifetime Achievement Award Sheridan College 2017 , Nominated for Ontario Premier Award 2017 for Community Service and North American Trauma Award – Clinician of the Year – 2009 National Institute for Trauma and Loss as well as an Alumnus of Distinction - School of Community Studies Humber College 2009. She continues to teach as adjunct faculty at Nova Scotia Community College and Mount St. Vincent University in CYC programs in Halifax, NS. and is a program review volunteer with the Child and Youth Care Education Accreditation Board of Canada.

**KELLY SHAW** is a faculty member at the Nova Scotia Community College (Canada) in the Child and Youth Care Diploma Program. She is a believer in creative interactive programming with youth and with learners and is interested in exploring further how creative programming can be used to build essential practice skills within a Child and Youth Care educational setting and how to support Child and Youth Care Workers in their continued professional development.

Prior to engaging in post-secondary, she worked in 24/7 care, family-based care, reunification, and placement prevention. She has a master's degree in Child and Youth Study and is completing a PhD in Education. The focus of her research is CYC Pre-Service Education in Inuit Nunangat.

**JESSICA HADLEY** has been in the field of child and youth care for 20 years. She is a graduate of Red River College Polytechnic and is currently working on her masters in youth care. She is passionate about the work that we do in the context of daily life events, relational practice, and the purposeful use of activities. She is Red River Metis and resides on the unceded lands of Treaty one. She believes that child and youth work has a strong role to play in reconciliation.

**JENNY MCGRATH** is an Associate Professor in the Child and Youth Care department at MacEwan University. Her interests include practicum education, CYC practice, creative pedagogy, family, and activity-based interventions. Jenny is a PhD candidate at the University of Victoria and is a Certified Child and Youth Care Worker.

**CHRISTINE POPE** is a Child and Youth Care Practitioner. Over a span of 30 years working with young people or families in various roles, she utilizes experiential and activity-based approaches in her work and teaching. She is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Child and Youth Care at MacEwan University in Edmonton, AB with a focus on field education.

**REBECCA STILLER** is a Certified Child and Youth Care Counsellor and Assistant Professor at MacEwan University in Edmonton, Alberta. Previously, Rebecca has practiced in residential care, activity programming, and community-based youth and family settings. She is currently completing her Ph.D. in Education and Social Justice at Lancaster University, has presented at various domestic and international conferences, and has published in various topic areas including family caregiving, parenting, and CYC education.

**ANDIE FOURNIER** - Throughout my career I have had the privilege of working in the field of Child and Youth Care with diverse groups of young people facing complex challenges in front-line and supervisory capacities. My experiences span from supporting mentees to working with young people involved in street life, human trafficking, becoming young parents, children in the educational system, and youth and families in out-of-home care. Since the beginning of my career as a CYW student, I have been a proud member of the Ontario Association of Child and Youth Care and certified by the Child and Youth Care Certification Board. Currently, I am a professor and coordinator in the Child and Youth Care program at Algonquin College (my alumni), where I mentor and teach aspiring CYCs. As a dedicated mom of two and staunch advocate for the field, I am driven by my dedication to promoting optimal healthy development for young people through creative, strengths-focused interventions. I believe that every moment with a young person is an opportunity to make a positive impact, build skills, and create meaningful memories. As an educator, advocate, and role model for professionals in the field, I strive to uphold the highest standards of excellence in child and youth care, because the young people and families we work with deserve our very best.

**HEATHER MODLIN** has worked in the field of child and youth care for over 35 years. She is currently CEO of Amal Youth and Family Centre, a non-profit organization providing a range of innovative, culturally diverse services to children, youth and families across Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada. Heather has served on numerous national and international boards and is currently Chair of the Board of Governors of the International Child and Youth Care Network (CYC-Net); Treasurer of the Board of Directors of FICE-Canada; Steering Committee member of the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance; and editorial board member of *Relational Child and Youth Care Practice*. Heather has published numerous journal articles and book chapters and co-edited the book *Relational Child and Youth Care in Action*. Heather has a PhD in Child and Youth Care from the University of Victoria. In 2017, Heather received the YWCA Woman of Distinction Award for Community and Social Development in Newfoundland and Labrador.

**LARISA JEFFARES** lives in Edmonton, Alberta, and has provided Child and Youth Care Counselling support to youth, adults and their families in a variety of professional settings for 22 years. Compassionately supporting people who have experienced trauma, addiction, sexual abuse and exploitation has been a passion of Larisa's. She believes all people have a unique story, deserve to know they belong and to experience connection to their body's wisdom. Larisa uses nature-based therapy, somatic experiencing, reiki and somatic practices (yoga, qigong and mindfulness) to support the people she serves. She loves most practices that are connected to nature, synchronized swimming, yoga, qigong and spending time with her friends and family.

**JOHN M DIGNEY** has been working with troubled kids for over thirty years in specialist settings and residential programmes. He has worked in frontline practice, as a manager and clinician. John is the National Training & Development Coordinator for Ireland's Children and Family Agency, with responsibility for responding to the Learning and Development needs of staff and foster carers. John Graduated with an Honours degree in Psychology in 1991, and subsequently attained professional qualifications in Psychotherapy, Psychoanalysis, Adult Learning, Project Management and has a PhD. focusing on the therapeutic use of humour. He provides advice, consultancy, Coaching and Relational Practice training internationally to those working with troubled and vulnerable children, youth and families.

**CHRISTINE GAITENS** is a Child and Youth Care Practitioner and Registered Social Worker who worked as Manager of Child and Youth Services at the Toronto District School Board in Ontario, Canada, for fourteen years. In this position she was responsible for the supervision and professional leadership of the Child and Youth Care Practitioners at the school board. Christine has been a trainer in Restorative Practices and is currently a trainer in the Purposeful Use of Daily Life Events.

# Activity Matters

*This book is organized as a text for college level Child and Youth Care students, but it also is a resource for practitioners who need a practical guide to build more effective activity-based approaches.*

*Creating recreational experiences that are useful, fun and impactful, is a very large part of working in the life space. Practitioners must be fully prepared to use activity work to support the young people and families that they serve, and this book is designed to train newer CYC staff in the complexity of doing those activities.*

*The title **Activity Matters** is both a challenge and a reminder that Child and Youth Care programs can be powerful change agents for young people and families, and the use of well planned and theoretically sound activity experiences will create meaningful and effective results.*



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