



CYAC DURHAM

**Transforming Child Abuse
Response in Durham**

Cristal Hines, BSW, RSW, MSW ©,





Today's Agenda

- An overview of Durham's approach to developing our CYAC
- Understanding how to embed anti-racism and community centric approaches to CYAC planning
- Embedding decolonial practice and equity in CYAC's



“...Together let us build the global alliance to realize that goal, secure in the knowledge that in serving the best interests of children, we serve the best interests of all humanity.”

Carol Bellamy



What is a CYAC?

- A highly robust and multi-disciplinary entity which provides enhanced investigations for children and youth where abuse is suspected
- CYAC's undertake any investigations but specialize in investigations involving childhood sexual abuse
- CYAC's take an integrative approach which enlists and collaborates with various social service agency

Child and Youth Advocacy Centre (Kelowna)



The Impact

- 939 CAC's exist nationwide
- 386, 191 children were helped by CAC's last year (2022)
- 2,860,456 people have been trained in child abuse prevention by CAC's
- 36% cost savings when compared to investigations conducted by non-CYAC's (2015)



Activating

Brighter

Tomorrows

CYAC

Durham

Durham CYAC Partners

- Victim Services Durham Region
- Durham Children's Aid Society
- Durham Regional Police Services (DRPS)
- Ministry of the Attorney General – Victim Witness Assistance Program (VWAP)
- Ministry of Community & Social Services
- Durham Family Court Clinic (DFCC)
- Dnaaddawenmag Binoojiiyag Child & Family Services (DBCFS)
- Catholic Family Services (CFS)
- Durham Family Cultural Centre
- Community Development Council Durham
- Iffarahda (Kujenga Wellness)
- CAREA Community Health Centre
- Durham District School Board

Past, Present and Future

NOW

Although there is a Child Abuse Protocol in Durham Region, which outlines the principles and procedures for joint child abuse investigations, the system is not well coordinated nor does it fully incorporate a child/youth-friendly and trauma lens.

In the current system, youth and children are often interviewed multiple times by people untrained in child development and trauma.

The physical spaces such as hospitals, police stations, and lawyer's offices are not child and youth friendly, nor culturally affirming for children and youth from communities other than non-racialized communities.

In addition, there is no one single agency responsible for overall navigation and advocacy on behalf of the children/youth and their families.

THE FUTURE

The Durham Region CYAC model will bring system and community-based service providers together to create a more coordinated, multidisciplinary approach in a welcoming, trauma-informed and age-appropriate environment for children and youth who have experienced abuse, and their families.

The model minimizes additional systemic trauma and re-victimization by limiting the number of times children/youth must repeat their story, provides early and seamless access to services, and ensures families have adequate support and follow-up.

The model will be reflective of the communities we serve and ensure equity is engrained at every level of the initiative, programming, hiring, policies etc. This will reduce adverse outcomes for all service recipients but also intentionally identify and address heightened barriers typically experienced by those from marginalized groups.

Working in tandem with trauma-informed service providers has been proven to improve relationships between service users and traditional systems they have a tendency to distrust.

2022

Justice Canada National Survey

Children and youth served have experienced a wide range of victimization. Out of the child/youth victims served in the last fiscal year, 22 centers report that:

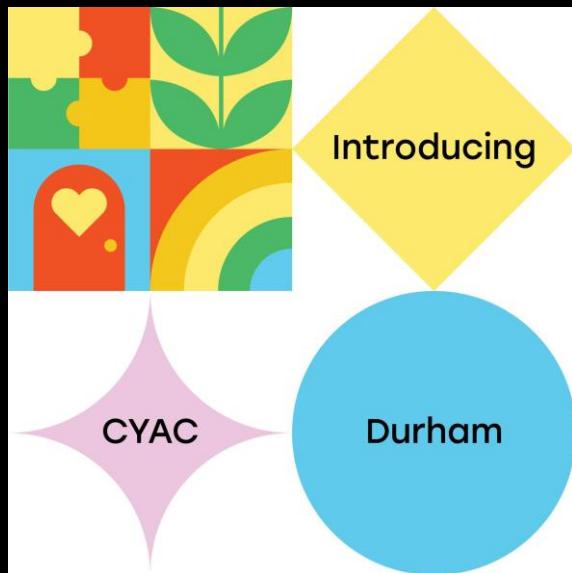
- 2,745 experienced physical abuse;
- 6,970 experienced sexual abuse;
- 27 experienced emotional harm;
- 62 experienced neglect;
- 223 were exposed to family violence;
- 250 experienced online child sexual exploitation; and
- 54 experienced human trafficking.



What Services do CYAC' s Provide?

- Forensic Child Interviews
- Victim Support
- Court Supports (Prep and Accompaniment)
- Support Referrals
- Trauma Therapy
- Health Support
- Integrated Service Approach

Who Funds CYAC?



- Justice Canada
- Ministry of the Attorney General
- Ministry of Child & Community Services
- Public Safety Canada
- Public Health Ontario
- Community Fundraising

What Stage is Durham CYAC at?

COMPLETE

- Established CYAC committee
- Feasibility study
- Developed guiding principles
- Hired program manager/project lead
- Successfully received grant funding
- Completed Site Visits
- Developed Sponsorship Package
- Hired legal team

ON-GOING

- Obtaining charitable status
- Developing cooperative/service agreements
- Funding acquisition
- Environmental scan/Community engagement
- Selecting centralized location
- Website Development

Anti-Racism & Community Centric Approach to Building Child & Youth Advocacy Centres



Examining the theoretical approach which guide the work

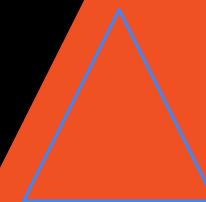
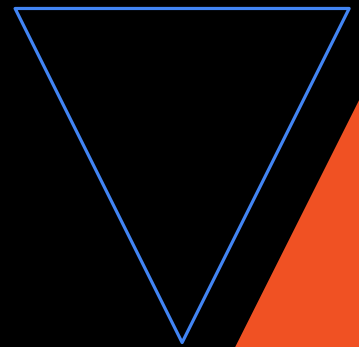
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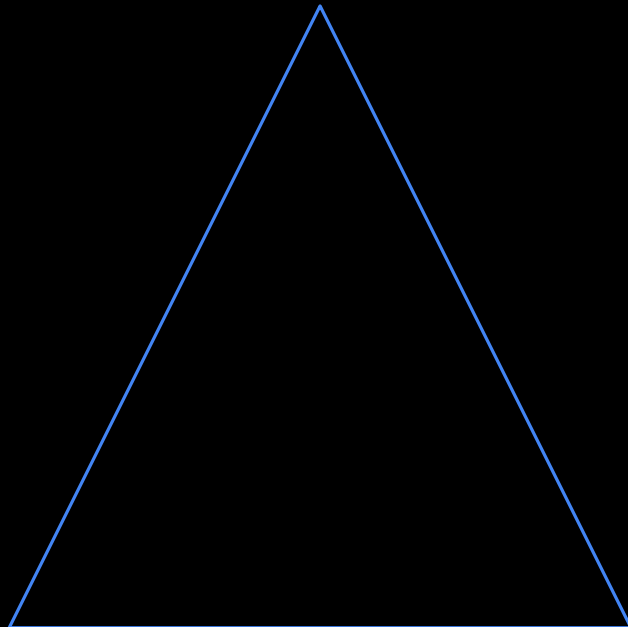
Key Definitions

- Systemic racism
- Structural oppression
- Social determinants of health
- Anti-Black racism
- Equity



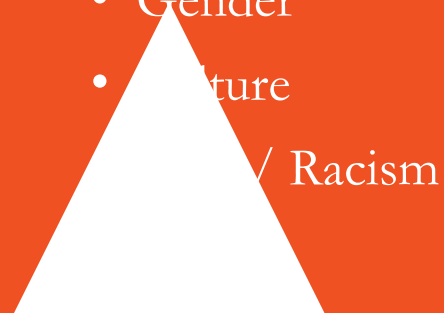
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(Abdillahi and Shaw, 2020)



Social determinants of health

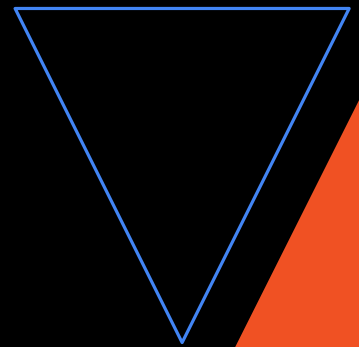
- Income and social status
- Employment and working conditions
- Education and literacy
- Childhood experiences
- Physical environments
- Social supports and coping skills
- Healthy behaviours
- Access to health services
- Biology and genetic endowment
- Gender
- Culture



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Anti-Black Racism



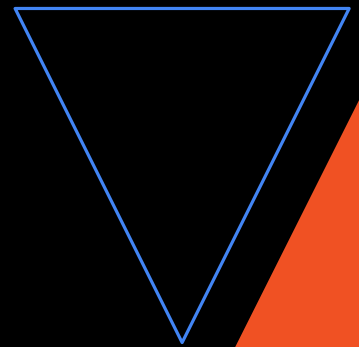
“Anti-Black racism is defined here as policies and practices rooted in Canadian institutions such as education, health care, and justice that mirror and reinforce beliefs, attitudes, prejudice, stereotyping and or discrimination towards people of Black-African descent” (Benjamin, Akua, 2001, p. iii).



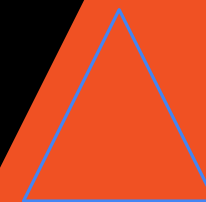
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Structural Oppression



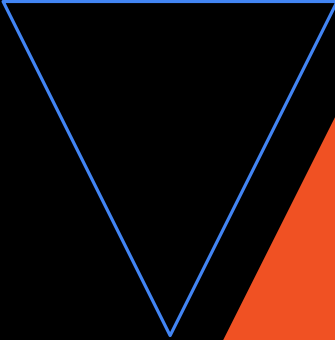
“Structural oppression: the multiplicity of ways that white/cisgender/heteronormative/ableist supremacy oppresses society, as well as the systematic and systemic ways that privilege is used to produce or reproduce inequities” (Philadelphia Health Corp, 2022).



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Systemic Racism



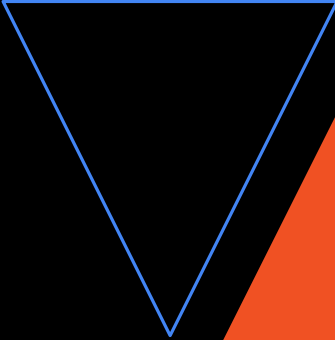
“is the ways that whiteness and white superiority become embedded in the policies and practices of an institution, resulting in a system that advantages white people and disadvantages People of Colour” (The University of British Columbia, 2022, pg.1).



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Equity



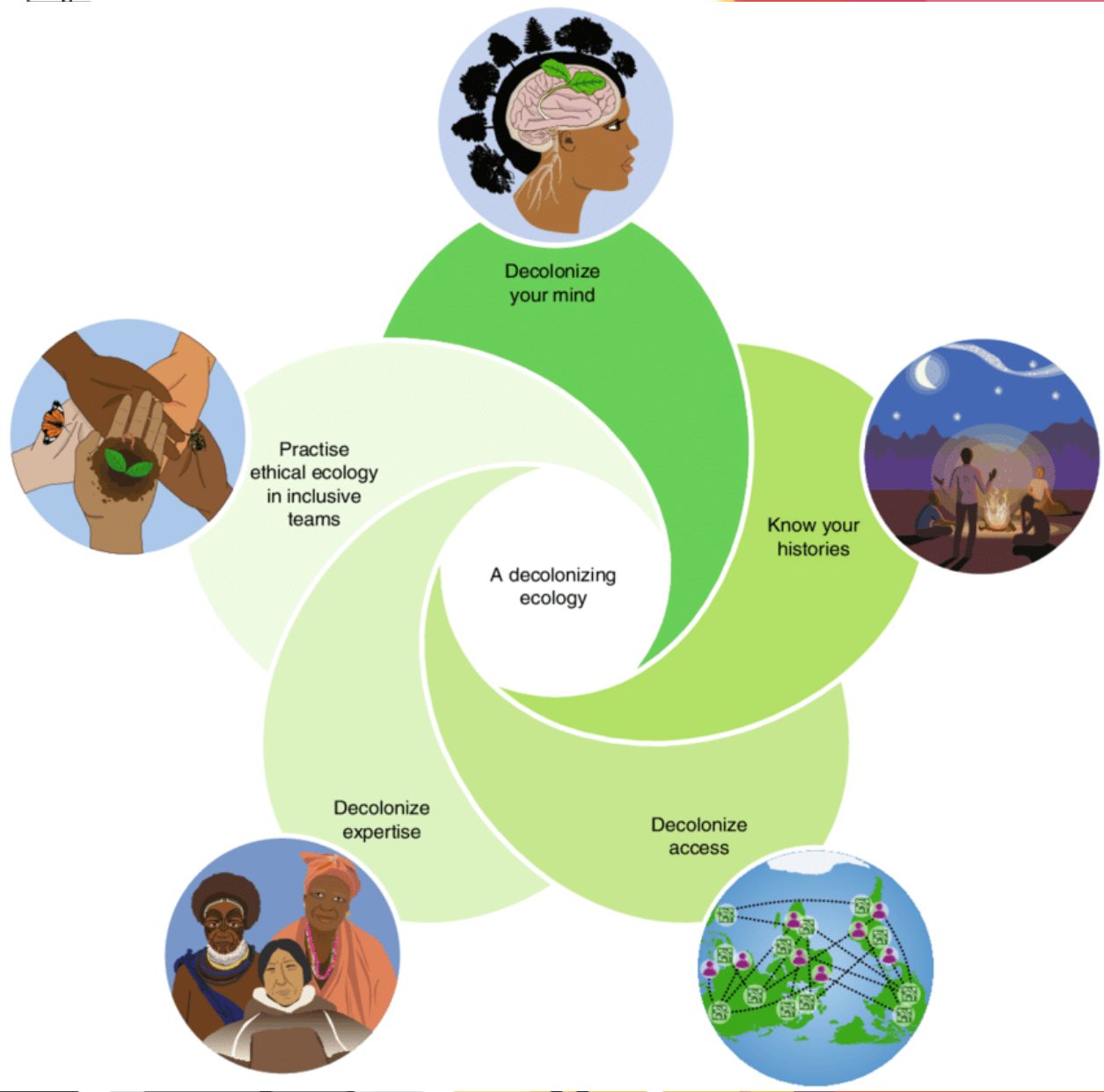
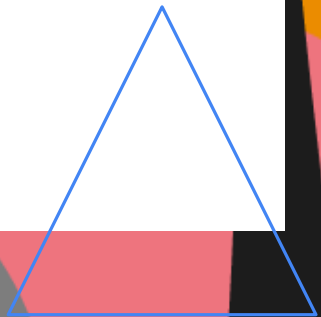
“refers to achieving parity in policy, profess and outcomes for historically and/or underrepresented and/or marginalized people and groups while accounting for diversity” (The University of British Columbia, 2022).



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Childhood Trauma and The Brain





Understanding Decolonial Practice

Intersectionality



Intersectionality & Complex Trauma

- A way of understanding multiple layers of people
- Sought to provide a frame to understand complex issues within the criminal justice system
- Provides context and tactics for meaningful encounters that reduce traumatic
- Complex trauma/Intersectionality provide us a way to frame multiple traumatic events that are both interpersonal and systemic



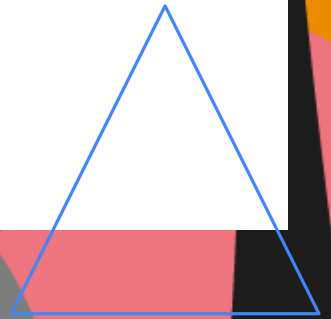
Trauma Informed Policing





(Justice Canada National Survey, 2022)

In the last year, most centers served Indigenous, 2SLBTQ+ and racialized clients as well as clients with disabilities.



Why is This Relevant to CYAC's?

A Non-Intersectional Lens

- Minimizes and individuals lived experiences and the ways that identity shapes encounters
- Increases the likelihood of and victim of crime being re-traumatized and compromises trust building
- Undermines the practitioners capacity to deliver meaningful care and support to victims

An Intersectional Lens

- Increases visibility for victims of crime and enhances the ability to provide meaningful care
- Allows individuals to balance competing priorities in a traumatic encounter
- Equips officers with a lens by which they can inform their approach and avoid escalation

“There are so many roots to the tree of anger that sometimes the branches shatter before they bear.”

- *Audre Lorde*



Why is this Important?

- Our communities need it
- Minimize barriers for victims of crime
- It makes our work easier and more cohesive





"Creating a world that is truly fit for children does not imply simply the absence of war. It means having the confidence that our children would not die of measles or malaria. It means having access to clean water and proper sanitation. It means having primary schools nearby that educate children, free of charge. It means changing the world with children, ensuring their right to participate, and that their views are heard and considered. It means building a world fit for children, where every child can grow to adulthood in health, peace and dignity."

Carol Bellamy

Thank you



Thank You!



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Child & Youth Advocacy Centre

DURHAM