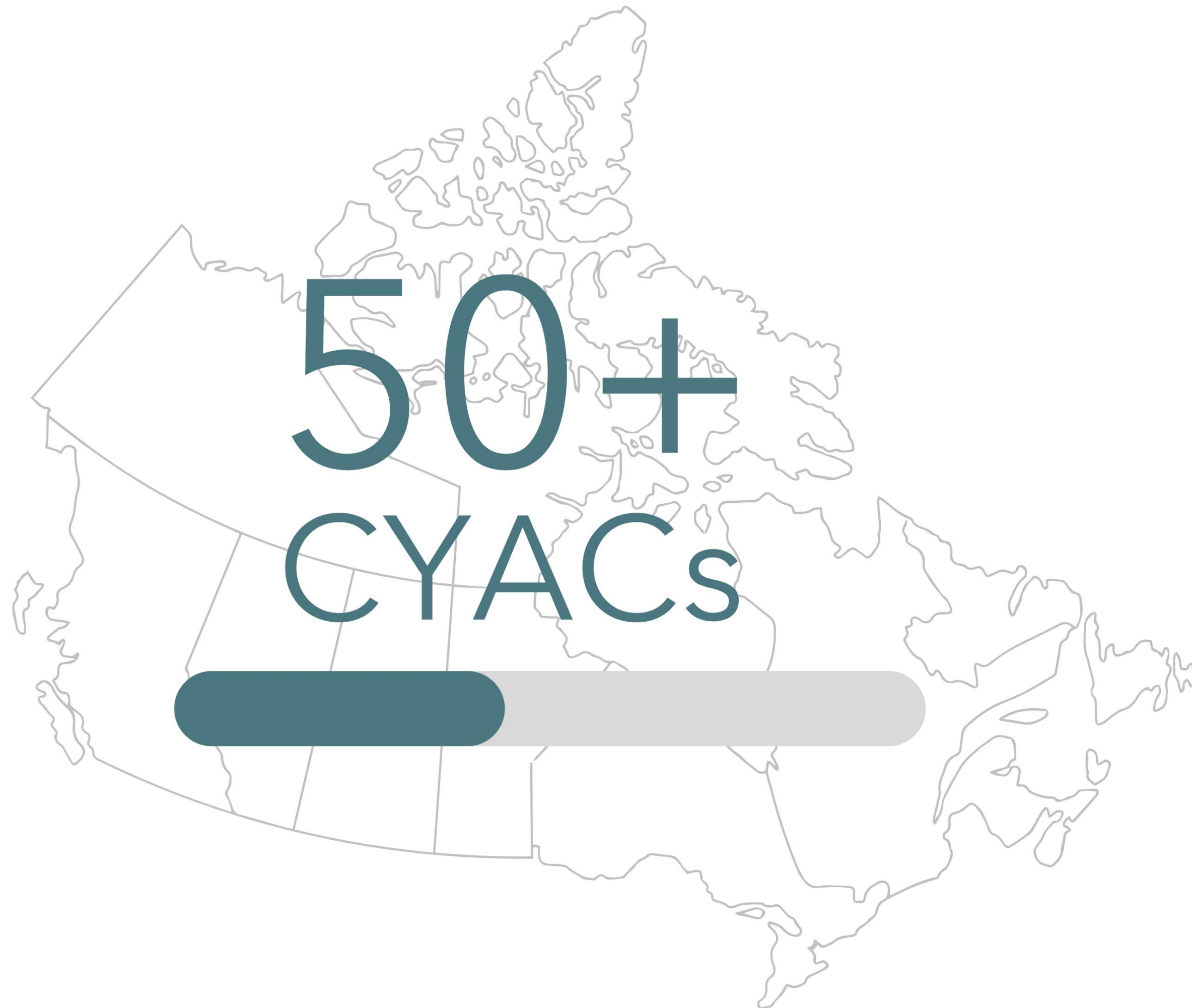




Canadian Child and Youth Advocacy Research and Knowledge Centre

Why it matters and what you need to know



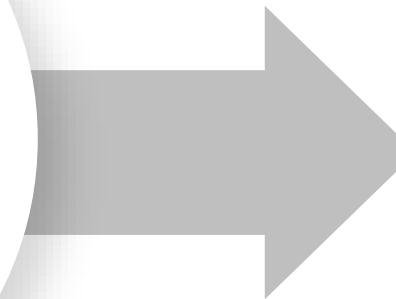
Why and Why Now?

NEED #1: Given the rapid increase in the number of CYACs, there is urgency to develop a forum in which to coordinate and disseminate efforts, and build knowledge, leading practice, and policy development between established and emerging CYACs.

NEED #2 There is a need to demonstrate the immediate and long-term outcomes for vulnerable children and youth and their families through ongoing evaluation and research. Research is needed to analyze existing systems-based data on health and well-being of children, youth and families who access CYACs.

Child and Youth Advocacy Centres of Canada (CYACC)

Exists to ensure children and youth impacted by abuse and violence have access to high quality supports and services offered by an integrated team of professionals at a CYAC.



Shared Vision

Children can access CYACs wherever they live, and that every CYAC is a centre of excellence providing coordinated, wrap around supports, and trauma informed services.

Canadian Child and Youth Advocacy Research and Knowledge Centre

Exists to generate and integrate new evidence and knowledge about child and youth advocacy into everyday practice.



PARTNERSHIPS

Co-design the Research and Knowledge Centre with academic and practitioner partners.

RESEARCH

Research generated is high quality, contextually specific, and has a clear, developmental and practical value.

KNOWLEDGE

Evidence is interpreted and translated into actionable steps to guide policy and practice improvement at CAC/CYACs.



The resulting impact of this collaborative partnership approach to the Research and Knowledge Centre is that children can access CYACs wherever they live, and that every CYAC is a centre of excellence providing coordinated wrap around supports and trauma informed services to respond to child abuse.

Our Guiding Principles

Useful and Relevant

Our work has clear developmental and practical value. We share and disseminate findings and knowledge to our policy, practice, and research partners.

Participatory and Context Specific

Our work genuinely involves CYAC partners in all stages of the research design, implementation, and interpretation. All findings will be interpreted and understood in partnership and turned into actionable steps to guide policy and practice improvement at CYACs.

Collaborative

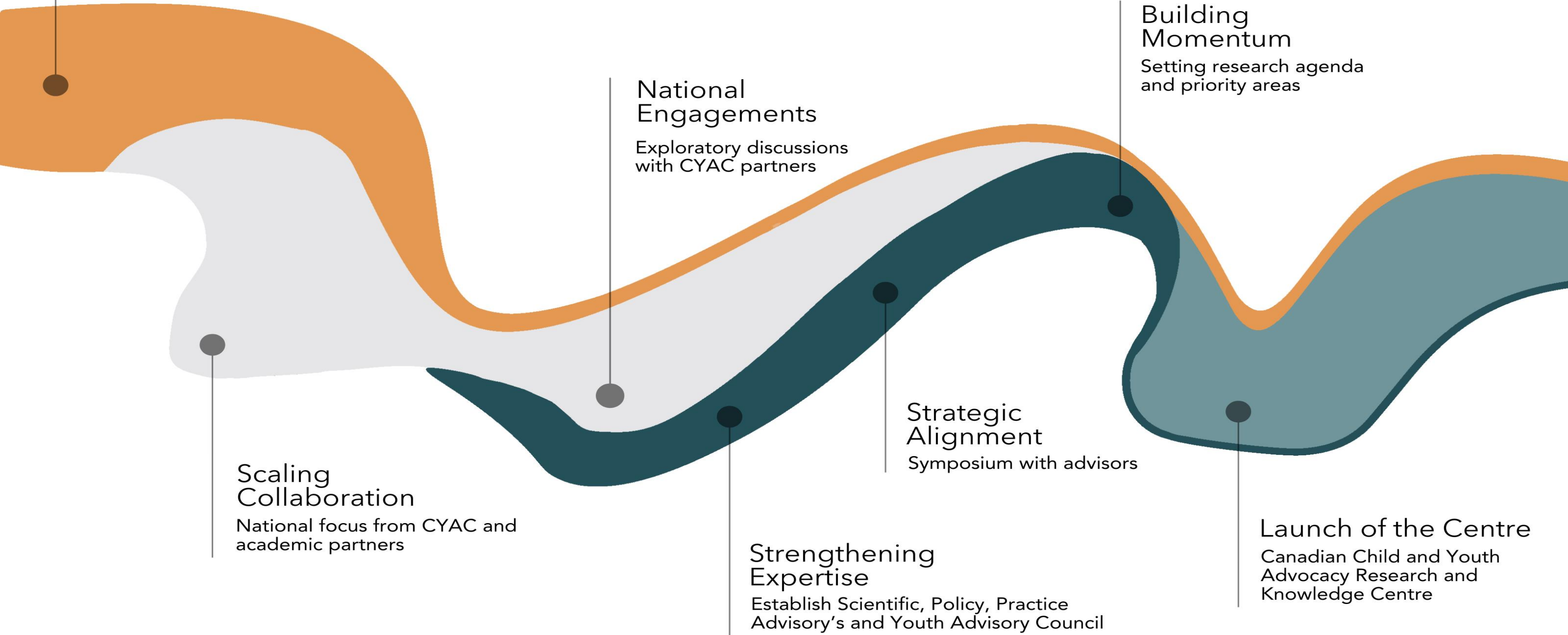
We foster reciprocity among partners, learn from one another, and build on our mutual strengths and resources. Our work will be marked by mutual respect; recognition of each others' knowledge, expertise, and resource capacities; and open communication.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Decolonization

We create opportunity for all, eliminate barriers, recognize and celebrate differences. We work to foster an environment where all individuals feel valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their perspectives and experiences.

Community- Academic Partnership

University of Calgary and
Luna Child and Youth Child Advocacy Centre



February 25, 2024

Who We Are

Collectively, we strive to equip CYAC leaders, practitioners, and policy makers to make evidence-informed decisions to support Canadian children, youth and their families who have experienced abuse.

Research and Knowledge Centre includes expertise and perspectives from across Canada:

Scientific Advisors

- Ramona Alaggia, University of Toronto
- Warren Binford, University of Colorado
- Delphine Collin-Vezina, McGill University
- Isabelle Daignault, Université de Montréal
- Gina Dimitropoulos, University of Calgary
- Hadley Friedland, University of Alberta
- Melissa Kimber, McMaster University
- Amy Ornstein, Dalhousie University
- Heather Price, Thompson River University

Policy and Practice Advisors

- Roxanne Bélanger, SIAM
- Cassidy Biener, Kelowna CYAC
- Karen Chymy, Toba Centre
- Kayla Yama, Boost CYAC
- Cassandra Galenzoski, Central Alberta CAC
- Daniel Garfinkel, The Treehouse
- Christina Shaffer, SeaStar CYAC
- Bianca Stumpf, Department of Justice

Training and Mentorship

- Master of Law, University of Calgary
- Master of Social Work, University of Calgary
- Master of Health Sciences, Western University
- Youth Researcher, Luna CYAC

What We Do

1

Generate High Quality, Contextual Evidence

Generate evidence that acknowledges and responds to the diverse geographical, cultural, and resource contexts that Canadian CYACs are situated within.

2

Advance Accessible and Relevant Practice Supports

Create a place to exchange knowledge and to access research and tools to support advocacy and practice.

3

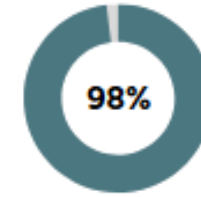
Establish practices for data collection and evaluation

Develop and support implementation of shared outcomes and measures with adaptations for diverse CYAC contexts.

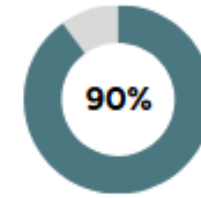
Generate High Quality, Contextual Evidence



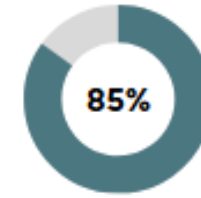
Establishing the Canadian Child and Youth Advocacy Research and Knowledge Centre



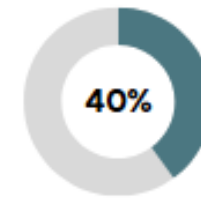
Debunking "Expert" Witnesses Who Rely on Hypothesis Testing in Child Forensic Interviews



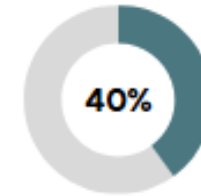
Remote Testimony Implementation Evaluation



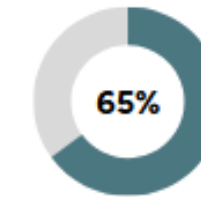
Youth Perspectives on Sexual Consent Messaging



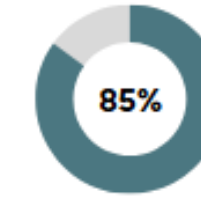
Quality Assessment of Community Evidence for an Alberta-based CYAC Response to Youth with Problematic Sexual Behaviour



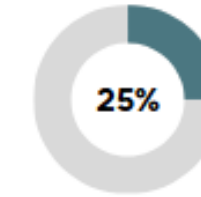
Physician Recognition of Child Abuse



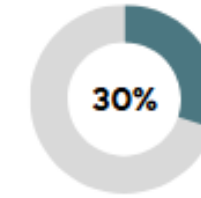
Client Characteristics and Service Use: Descriptive Data of Luna CYAC



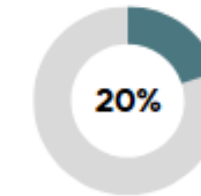
Predictors of Pathways to Prosecution of Child Abuse at a Canadian Child and Youth Advocacy Centre



Capturing the Youth Voice to Inform CAC/CYAC Outcomes



Towards a Trauma Informed Justice System for Child Abuse



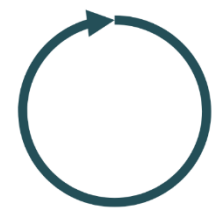
At the Intersection of Family and Criminal Court – Responding to Repeated Unsubstantiated Cases of Caregiver-to-Caregiver Allegations of Child Abuse



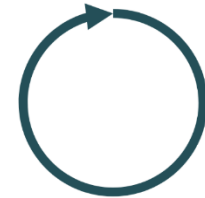
Research in Practice

Advance Accessible and Relevant Practice Supports

Quarterly



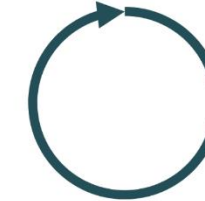
Research to Practice Panel



Trendcast



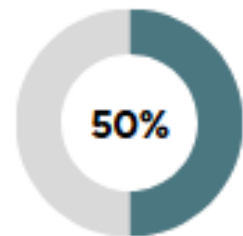
Webinars



Knowledge Assets

(e.g., Policy and practice briefs, evidence synthesis, infographics, etc.)

Website



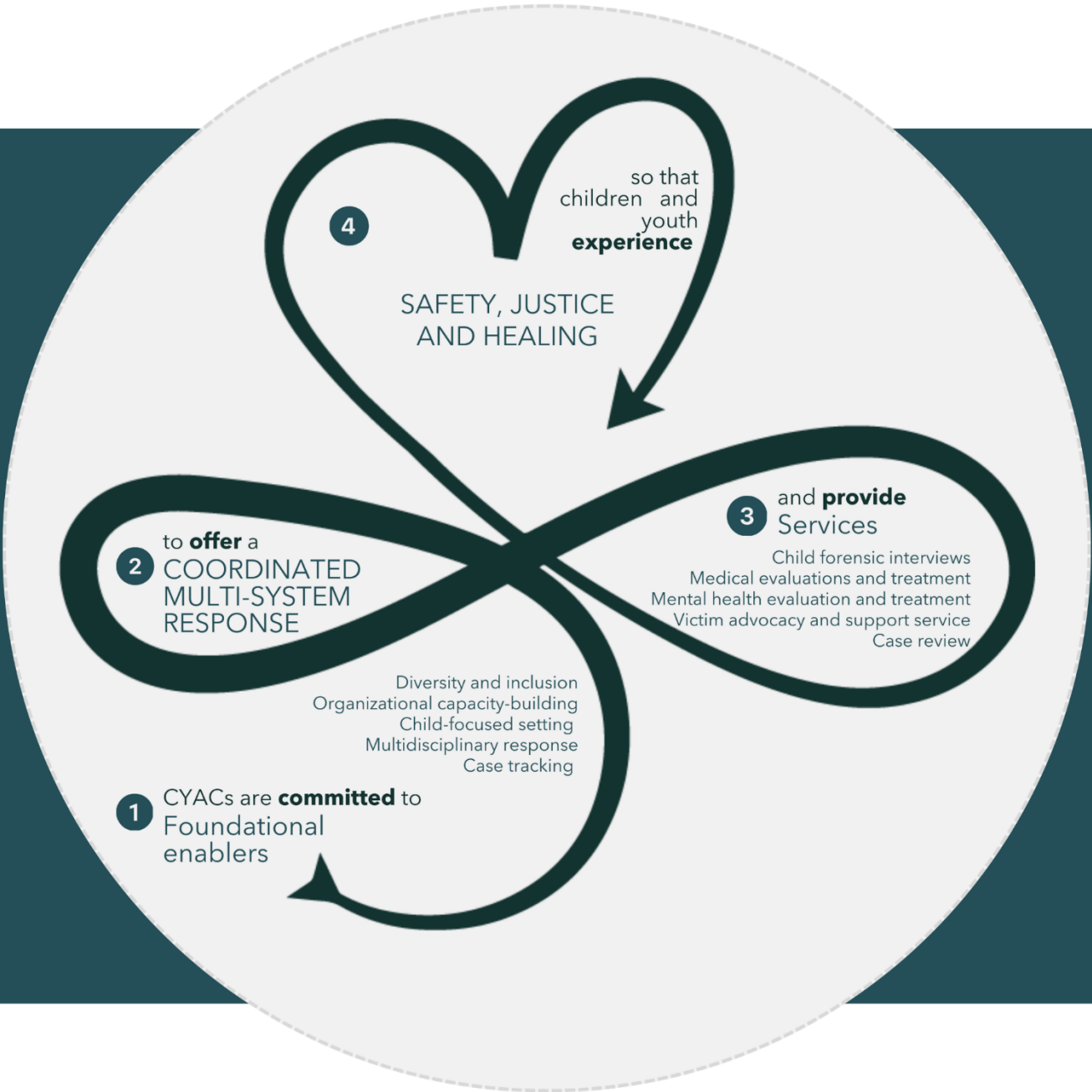
Repository

live Spring/Summer 2025

Establish Practices for Data Collection and Evaluation

Alberta CYAC's theory of change

A road map in that it connects values, ways of working, activities, and outcomes.



What is Next

We need you to help us improve and shape the future direction and opportunities of the Research and Knowledge Centre.

2026-2028 Strategic Plan: We need to evaluate progress, identify strategic priorities and needs.

Infrastructure for Data Collection: Co-develop a national minimum dataset. This work will support consistent data collection processes and approaches to understand the effectiveness of the CYAC model.

Youth Research Hub: Empower young people to generate high-quality, context-specific evidence. This hub will amplify youth voices, strengthen knowledge-sharing, and drive improvements to service delivery, practices, policies, and systems within the CYACs.

Brand and Visual Identity: Establish visual identity and brand guidelines for the Research and Knowledge Centre in alignment with CYACC.

Review 2024 Survey



Meet Our Team

Gina Dimitropoulos

Co-lead, Research and Knowledge Centre

Naomi Parker

Co-lead, Research and Knowledge Centre

Rebecca Balasa

Postdoctoral Research Associate, University of Toronto

Olivia Cullen

Postdoctoral Research Associate, University of Calgary

Janine Elenko

Senior Research Associate, Luna Child and Youth Advocacy Centre

Noah Harris

Youth Researcher, Luna Child and Youth Advocacy Centre

Tyler Kruger

Senior Research Associate, Toba Centre for Children and Youth

Jennifer McAlpine

Project Manager, Luna Child and Youth Advocacy Centre

Graduate Students

Master of Law, University of Calgary

Master of Social Work, University of Calgary

Master of Health Sciences, Western University

Connect with Us

Connecting research to practice fosters meaningful knowledge exchange among practitioners.

Connect with

Naomi Parker: nparker@lunacentre.ca

Together, we will integrate new evidence and knowledge into everyday practice.

Scan for Update from
Research and Knowledge Centre

