

Child and Youth Care Competencies

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Introduction

The Five Domains

Professionalism

Cultural and Human Diversity

Applied Human Development

Relationship and Communication

Developmental Practice Methods

Let's Reflect

Review Your Knowledge

Checklist

References and Resources

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this chapter, you should be able to

1. identify the five domains of child and youth care competencies
2. explain why professionalism is an important competency for child and youth work
3. outline how awareness of cultural and human diversity impacts child and youth work
4. explain the role of applied human development in child and youth work
5. outline how developing relationships and fostering communication with all partners benefits your client
6. analyze the developmental practice methods in child and youth work

CASE FILE

As a Field Placement Supervisor, I (Richard) worked with college students in their placement settings. First-year students were generally placed in elementary schools and/or community-based settings, second-year students worked in residential settings, and third-year students had the option of working in mental health settings depending on their academic standing. First-year students would attend class three times per week and attended placement two times per week. Field placement supervisors would meet with the student and their placement supervisor (teacher or CYCP) two or three times during the student's placement to maintain communication and to ensure that the student was on course to meet their competencies, goals, and objectives.

I was a field supervisor for a student who was placed at a local YMCA in Toronto. This was the student's first placement, and he was quite enthusiastic. Prior to my students beginning their field placement, I always made sure to review and discuss professionalism with the class. At the first placement meeting for the student, his placement supervisor raised a concern. My student had worn his gold teeth to placement and was caught in the same vicinity as clients while they were smoking marijuana (this was prior to legalization). When the supervisor confronted my student about his behaviour, he didn't see the error in his judgment. At the meeting, we discussed professionalism and how the student's decision to wear his gold teeth to placement could impact his relationship not only with the clients but also with the staff team. I made sure to reiterate that the student should have removed himself from the area in which the clients were smoking marijuana and perhaps reported the behaviour to his supervisor. By the end of the meeting, the student recognized that his behaviour was not professional and that he made poor choices.

Introduction

As Child and Youth Care Practitioners (CYCPs), we work primarily with infants, children, youth, and adolescents. As a result of working with this demographic, we also work with families, caregivers, and other professional services/institutions. The focus of this work is to promote and support the well-being of infants, children, youth, and their families/caregivers. Within a service team that might include child and youth practitioners, therapists, social workers, teachers, probation officers, and doctors, to name a few, the CYCP should have the most meaningful and therapeutic relationship with the youth.

CYCPs engage with infants, children, youth, and adolescents in a variety of settings that include but are not limited to

- early childcare
- residential settings
- school settings
- hospital settings
- mental health settings
- juvenile detention settings



So, it's only natural that in these intimate and personal settings the CYCP can establish strong and meaningful connections to infants, children, youth, and adolescents.

The original seven competencies were originally developed by the North American Certification Project in 2001 to give CYCPs the ability to engage in a full professional practice. The competencies provide a foundation for ongoing development through the CYCP's career span. In 2010 the competencies were reviewed and then revised by a team of North American Child and Youth Professionals because they realized that the client base had become more diverse than it had been when the original document was created. Recommendations were made to reflect the evolution, changes, and diversity within the field of CYC. The addition of the Cultural and Human Diversity competency speaks to this change perfectly.

Certainly, it's only beneficial to you as a CYCP to become familiar with the five competencies. You won't be tested on your ability to recite each competency but as a CYCP, you should familiarize yourself with all five and be prepared to put each one into your regular practice.

Professional CYCPs are knowledgeable about the discipline and other ethical considerations, and continue to develop personally and professionally over time.

Photo by Victoria Heath on Unsplash

The Five Domains

The competencies as developed by the North American Certification Project are organized across five domains:

- I. Professionalism
- II. Cultural & human diversity
- III. Applied human development
- IV. Relationship & communication
- V. Developmental practice methods

Professionalism

Child and Youth Care Practitioners are knowledgeable about the history of the profession. They are aware of the structure and layout of child and youth care within and outside of their agencies. CYCPs are accountable to themselves, to their peers, and to the clients that they work with. They keep themselves informed regarding latest trends and/or changes in the field that might impact their role. They are conscious about the laws and protocols that impact the field. CYCPs are advocates for the children, youth, and adolescents that they engage with. They

recognize the importance of self-care and personal wellness, actively seek supervision, and can receive and provide constructive feedback.

Awareness of the Profession

After you've graduated from college and acquired a job in the field, there will be opportunities to further develop your skills and knowledge in the child and youth care profession. Inquire about reading materials that you can access to get a fulsome idea of how your agency provides services to clients. The profession of child and youth work is constantly changing and evolving, which means you will need to stay well informed to ensure you are up to date on the latest issues, trends, and challenges. Ensure that you are aware of how changes can not only impact the profession locally and provincially, but also nationally as well.

Professional Development

CYCPs are aware of their own biases and beliefs and recognize when their own personal beliefs and practices may influence quality work with clients. They are flexible and work well independently or within a team. They are self-motivated, proactive, professionals who actively seek opportunities to further develop their skill set by participating in training opportunities and workshops inside and outside of their agency.

CYCPs seek formal and informal supervision and are open to receiving and providing constructive feedback. Child and Youth Practitioners use performance evaluations to gauge “where they are” with regards to the daily expectations and responsibilities of the job. Performance evaluations give the practitioner the ability to see any areas in which they can build and improve.

They are also respectful of their agency's and the profession's code of ethics and realize that they are representatives of the field of child and youth care. Practitioners are professionals who aim to set and model appropriate boundaries with clients and peers.

Personal Development and Self-Care

CYCPs recognize their strengths and weaknesses. It can become difficult to balance personal life and work life, but practitioners need to maintain this balance to avoid potential burnout. In this helping field, it is extremely important to be able to disconnect from work at the end of the day. CYCPs also recognize the importance of self-care and personal wellness. In a profession where vicarious trauma might be a daily experience, practitioners make a conscious effort to set aside time for self-care and reflection.

Having a consistent self-care routine will help to ensure that practitioners are able to do their best work with children, youth, adolescents, and their families. Most agencies have peer support networks that are available to staff who might need additional support with their mental health or physical health. Connect with peers to find out what services are available at your agency.

Mandates and Laws

CYCPs are well informed about the laws and protocols that impact the field. Practitioners are familiar with their provincial or territorial Acts (in Ontario, this is the Child, Youth and Family Services Act) and can explain the programs and services that the act governs.

CYCPs keep themselves acquainted with the latest trends and/or changes in the field that might impact their duties. Practitioners are familiar with the duty to report and they are aware of the consequences of failing to report abuse and/or neglect.

Each agency/organization will have its own individual and specific mandates and mission statements. Practitioners should familiarize themselves with their agency's mandates and mission statement as they are part of a larger endeavour to achieve an important goal. Practitioners are encouraged to think about how their actions will impact projected successes and positive agency culture.

Advocacy

Practitioners should familiarize themselves with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. As a CYCP, your employment opportunities will vary, and each organization will have its own specific terms regarding rights and responsibilities. CYCPs should be able to demonstrate their understanding of the rights and responsibilities of children, youth, adolescents, and families and advocate by using their knowledge and experience to support and strengthen the client's ability to speak up for themselves. In your role as a CYCP, you might be in a position where you must advocate for youth who have endured systemic abuse in the criminal justice system, education system, or other institutions. Familiarize yourself with these systems and the rights of clients within these systems. When clients lack support or knowledge in one system, they tend to lack support in other systems as well.

Cultural and Human Diversity

CASE FILE

I (Richard) started my career in Toronto and then moved to another municipality. I had been to the region only a handful of times and when I moved there permanently, I was surprised by the lack of diversity inside and outside of the work environment. Most of my co-workers identified as Caucasian but there were some from other cultures. I was able to ask questions in a safe environment, so I didn't feel like I was offending anyone's culture, identity, or ethnicity.

I worked with some diverse families, and I had some knowledge about certain practices and traditions, but I wasn't well versed on practices of some of the other families that I was assigned to work with. I took it upon myself to find out about some of the traditions, beliefs, and practices that my clientele followed. Furthermore, I took advantage of training opportunities that assisted in expanding my knowledge and understanding of how other cultures viewed the sometimes intrusive involvement of a protection agency. I realized that I had my own biases, so instead of making assumptions, I spoke to my clients about their fears, struggles, and worries. I was able to get a clear picture as to what some of my clients experienced because of their ethnicity, cultural background, beliefs, and sexual orientation.

Several years later, my peers and I put together a committee that focused on supports for youth who identified as Black or biracial. This group was made to give a voice to Black and biracial youth who were in care or were involved with the agency.

Cultural and Human Diversity Awareness Inquiry

Practitioners are aware of their own biases, stereotypes, and prejudices, and thereby pursue ways in which they can educate themselves and become more understanding and empathetic. They are supportive of their client's cultural values and practices and advocate for clients in accessing suitable services and resources in the community. Practitioners regularly review and assess current services to ensure that they are culturally sensitive and supportive for clients.

Relationship and Communication Sensitive to Cultural Human Diversity

CYCPs are cognizant of the nine factors that distinguish groups from each other and give them their own identity: age, class, race, ethnicity, levels of ability, language, spiritual belief-systems, educational achievement, and gender differences. With these nine factors in mind, practitioners strive to ensure that families are given equal and equitable opportunities. People are not always given the same chances to succeed, so it's up to us as helpers to be the change that we want to see in society.

Practitioners are considerate of cultural and human diversity, age, sexual orientation, and developmental ability with regards to non-verbal and verbal communication. They can describe and explain the different forms of non-verbal and verbal contact between themselves and clients, peers, and other professionals, and can analyze the role that culture, and diversity play with regards to the formation of relationships. Practitioners are attentive to the pronouns that clients, peers, and professionals choose to use to identify themselves.

Developmental Practice Methods Sensitive to Cultural and Human Diversity

CYCPs can transfer their knowledge on cultural and human diversity teachings into real-life situations for clients. Programs/activities and planned environments are sensitive to the cultural and human diversity of clients. Information that is provided to clients is sensitive to multicultural and human diversity. Learning environments are reflective of the diversity of service users and service providers. Calendar events/celebrations are culturally inclusive.

At our local child protection agency we run yearly celebrations to highlight Black History Month. Our events include spoken word poetry, live music, arts and crafts, and food. A lot of people (including myself) look forward to the food. Over the years, we began to notice that some people would come down for the food and then leave before the education and entertainment part began. As a group we decided to make an announcement at the beginning of every celebration advising participants that it was mandatory to stay for some or all of the event and that taking food and leaving would no longer be acceptable. If you are committed to working with diverse communities of people, you must educate yourself on all aspects of their lives.



SKILLS TO SUCCEED Respecting diversity in child and youth work goes beyond work with your clients. It is critical that you also be respectful of the opinions, values, and beliefs of your co-workers. This will help ensure that everyone feels safe to share their thoughts without fear of judgment, and you may learn something new or gain a different perspective on a situation.

CASE FILE

I (Richard) worked as a Serious Occurrence Worker (S.O. worker) with a child protection agency for several years. The duties of an S.O. worker include but are not limited to investigating allegations made against community caregivers who are responsible for looking after children/youth and adolescents. This may include home daycares, community daycares, teachers, counsellors, volunteers (Big Brothers or Big Sisters), and residential staff. As an S.O. worker, I also conducted investigations into matters that were sensitive and had the potential of making it to the media.

A referral came in from a hospital that involved a sick infant. The medical team wanted to perform a blood transfusion, but the family refused and wanted to explore other treatment interventions. When the referral was initially processed, it was rated as a case of neglect on the Eligibility Spectrum (a tool that is used to assist child protection workers in making decisions about eligibility at the time-of-service delivery).

Prior to meeting with the family, I had already begun to form my own internal biases. I asked myself what possible reasons the family would have for not wanting to pursue the blood transfusion for their child. As a parent, wouldn't you want the best for your child? I recognized what I was doing, took a step back, and decided that I wouldn't hold judgment. I scheduled a family visit that included one of our high-risk infant nurses and the family worker. The family were very pleasant and inviting. It turned out that the family's religious beliefs prevented them from receiving blood, even if it is their own. The family believed that the procedure would create a risk of losing eternal salvation.

After meeting with the family, I had a consultation with the medical team, my supervisor, and the family. The medical team conducted more tests, and they were able to find another procedure that did not involve a blood transfusion. The child's health improved, and the hospital ended up creating a new protocol for situations where religious beliefs intersected with certain medical procedures.

Applied Human Development

CYCPs support and encourage the development of children, youth, and adolescents in multiple settings. Special attention and focus is put on the relationship between the client/clients, and their **socio-ecological environment**. Depending on the age of the child/youth, they might be part of a larger socio-ecosystem than just their immediate family members. A toddler might attend daycare outside of the home. A school-age child might attend an after-school program and then participate in an extracurricular sport in the early evening. An adolescent might have a part-time job that they attend every day after school. A youth to whom you provide academic support might attend the nearby mosque every day during their lunch break. As CYCPs, we understand how people's physical, social, cultural, and political environments intersect and influence each other. Children, youth, and adolescents are the focus, with considerable attention given to those who have special needs and/or are involved with the law.

socio-ecological environment (socio-ecosystem) the environment around an individual and how they interact and respond to that environment

Developmental Assessment in Context

Practitioners complete assessments of the five domains of development within various contexts. They complete evaluations of the environments in which clients receive service to ensure that they are suitable for client's needs. The needs of clients are assessed in conjunction to the appropriateness of available supports and resources.

Sensitivity in Relationships and Communication

CYCPs take culture, age, sexual orientation, and diversity into careful consideration when they interact with clients. Practitioners are sensitive to the individual needs of clients, and they connect with clients in a respectful and meaningful manner and take careful consideration of a client's history when looking to formulate treatment plans and assessments. As practitioners, we want to ensure that our clientele is provided with equal and equitable opportunities for success.

Sensitive Practice Methods

CYCPs are supportive of client development in different domains and contexts. Practitioners create programs, activities, and group work that reflect the individual needs of children, youth, and their families. Taking age, sexual orientation, developmental capacity, and culture into consideration, the practitioner can formalize care plans that reflect the uniqueness of the client base and try to ensure that clients are given a safe space that promotes growth and encourages participation and learning.

Accessing Resources to Support Healthy Development

When making referrals for children, youth, and families, the CYCP must ensure that the potential service is able to meet the unique and diverse needs of the clients. One goal of the practitioner is to empower children, youth, adolescents, and families to advocate for themselves when accessing supportive resources/programs in the community. The practitioner's role becomes less involved once the client is empowered enough to advocate for themselves.

When making referrals, the CYCP must ensure that the service is able to meet the unique and diverse needs of their client.

Daisy Daisy / Shutterstock.com



CASE FILE

I (Richard) worked with a family who were new to the country and didn't have a lot of supports in place. The family was struggling financially; only one parent was able to find employment. Their 8-year-old son had difficulties with his behaviour that, unfortunately, impacted his ability to be successful in school. The role of the agency was supportive as opposed to the historically more common child protection role.

To support the family with food, the Society connected the family with a local food bank. This program provided families with food boxes on a weekly basis at no cost. I assisted the family in making the referral and within two weeks they received their first food box.

The family was also a member of a local church so I suggested that they could invite a fellow parishioner or pastor to any upcoming meetings as someone to assist in advocating and supporting their needs.

The family gave me permission to speak to their son's teacher. I met with the teacher and the S.E.R.T. (Special Education Resource Teacher), and together we formulated a plan that would give the student extra time to complete assignments and allow him to take space whenever he felt frustrated or unable to focus. Additionally, the school board assigned a CYCP that provided one-to-one support throughout the day. We revisited this plan one month later to gauge whether we had to make any changes or alterations to the plan.

This is an example of how the support networks came together for the betterment of the family. The family felt empowered and more equipped to deal with and handle the stressors in their lives.

Relationship and Communication

CYCPs and clients work side by side in a manner that promotes growth and change. Practitioners are skilled at communication with peers, clients, and other professionals/service providers, and those who take on a quality-first approach develop genuine relationships based on empathy and positive regard. Practitioners respect the confidentiality of clients and their observations and notes/records are objective and respectful of clients.

CYCPs have a foundational knowledge of helping relationships, interpersonal relationships, cultural differences in communication styles, developmental differences in communication, communication theory (verbal and non-verbal), group dynamics and teamwork theory, and family dynamics and communication patterns, including attachment theory. This knowledge assists the CYCP in building trusting and meaningful therapeutic relationships with children, youth, adolescents, and families.

Interpersonal Communication

Practitioners use interpersonal communication to further strengthen relationships with clients, peers, and other professionals. They engage with clients by using verbal and non-verbal communication such as active listening, paraphrasing, silence, empathy, and reflection of feelings. The practitioner is aware when a client might be experiencing difficulties in communication due to individual or cultural diversity and

offers supports by ensuring that there are no roadblocks to open communication. This might mean encouraging the client to invite extended family and/or friends in the planning and implementation of services. This might also include the use of a translation service.

Relationship Development

Child and youth care practitioners regularly assess the quality of relationships and the impact that the relationships have on themselves. They reflect on how their own biases and beliefs can impact the relationships that they have with peers, clients, and other professionals. Relationships are built on trust, shared interests, open and honest communication, mutual respect, and empathy. Boundaries, expectations, and confidentiality are clearly discussed and reviewed early in the relationship between the practitioner and the client.

Family Communication

CYCPs engage family members and/or friends to contribute by becoming involved in meetings, conferences, and mediation. They are well informed regarding social trends and issues that can impact the service delivery to children, youth, adolescents, and their families. They also encourage involvement from the child's various support systems.

Practitioners recognize the importance and relevance of the child's history and provide support in assisting the youth in understanding their past experiences and the experiences of their family. They support clients and families in sharing their traditions, customs, and experiences that are unique to their life history.



SKILLS TO SUCCEED In the workplace, it is very important that you clearly articulate your goals and directions when speaking or writing to clients and their families. Take the time to consider what you want to say and how you want to say it. You are sharing information and offering direction, but you are also building a rapport and relationship with your clients and families. A clear message delivered with proper grammar and spelling will ensure that your message is appropriately understood and applied.

CASE FILE

We strongly believe that strong and healthy relationships with open and honest communication form the basis of a successful rapport between service providers and clients and between service providers and their colleagues.

I (Richard) worked in a residential setting after graduating from Centennial College. My responsibilities included, but were not limited to, providing therapeutic support to the youth, preparing plans of care reports, completing daily logs, transporting youth to appointments and access visits, attending medical appointments, and maintaining communication with the youth's school. The multidisciplinary team for the children and youth that I worked with was quite extensive. As a CYCP, you may work with social workers, doctors, therapists, counsellors, teachers, and sometimes probation officers.

I worked with a youth who acquired a brain injury while riding his scooter and was being treated at a program specific for individuals with brain injuries. His team consisted of an occupational therapist, physiotherapist, rehabilitation nurse, speech and language therapist, social worker, and case manager. I had never worked with so many professionals on one case. I was more accustomed to working with two or three professionals at a time and was a bit overwhelmed and intimidated as a young, recent graduate without experience.

I was invited to attend a meeting that included the whole team of professionals. I arrived five minutes early and took a seat in the waiting room. As more people began to arrive, I felt less anxious. I recognized some faces from training sessions I had previously attended. The meeting was about to begin, and we all filed into the meeting area. We took our seats and immediately began to talk about our client. I was asked about the youth's history prior to the injury which wasn't as scary as I thought it would be. I spoke, I asked questions, I took notes, and I also gave suggestions. After the meeting I spoke to a few people on the team and exchanged contact information.

I maintained these professional relationships for the duration of my employment at the residential program. I'm glad that my first impression was a good one. It helped me to build long-lasting relationships with the professionals who supported the youth that I worked with.

Developmental Practice Methods

Practitioners observe the significance of developmental practice methods in child and youth practice:

- Genuine Relationships
- Health and Safety
- Intervention Planning
- Designing and Maintaining Environments
- Planning Programs and Activities
- Implementing Activities of Daily Living
- Acknowledging Group Process
- Counselling, Guiding Behaviour
- Engaging Family and Engaging Community

These are intended to encourage the most advantageous development for children, youth, adolescents, and their families.

Genuine Relationships

Practitioners keep in mind the importance of authentic relationships that are based on trust and understanding. The formation and maintenance of these relationships is a key factor with regards to future success and positive outcomes. For a positive rapport to be built between client and practitioner, authenticity and genuineness are key components to developing and solidifying that relationship.

Health and Safety

CYCPs maintain and promote safety within their workspace and outside of their work environments. Practitioners keep up to date regarding health and safety regulations that might impact or influence their interactions with clients. If applicable, practitioners share newly found health information with clients and their families, and keep themselves informed regarding information on medications that are taken by clients. CYCPs can explain the effects of medications that are relevant to their practice, and are knowledgeable on the procedures for storing and administering medications in different settings.

Intervention Planning

CYCPs take several things into consideration when intervention planning: goals, activities, the agency's mission, and group objectives. Children, youth, adolescents, and family members are all encouraged to participate and contribute to the assessment, goals setting, and creation of individual plans. Goals should be created from the plans and activities that have been agreed upon by the participants. Clients should be given an opportunity to provide input, feedback, and to monitor and assess progress.

Environmental Design and Maintenance

CYCPs encourage participation from children, youth, and their families in the design and maintenance of therapeutic spaces. Practitioners ensure that spaces are inclusive and culturally and developmentally suitable for clients, and that spaces are arranged in a way that promotes participation and engagement from clients.

Program Planning and Activity Planning

When program planning and activity planning, practitioners use their own personal experiences plus knowledge that they've obtained from their own training and apply these experiences to their work with children, youth, adolescents, and their families. Practitioners should aim to develop programs that are suitable for use in multiple settings/environments. They are conscious of a client's age, gender, cultural background, and developmental capacity and design programs and activities that are unique and created specifically for clients.

Activities of Daily Living

CYCPs have the best opportunities to encourage and teach children, youth, and adolescents' activities of daily living in specific settings. Residential programs, in-patient

mental health settings, and drop-in programs enable practitioners the space and time to model and work with youth on life skills. CYCPs also support the caregivers/parents of children, youth, and adolescents to ensure that they are involved in designing and implementing healthy life skills. In doing so, CYCPs become cognizant of the groups they are working with.

Group Process

The dynamics of a group are assessed prior to creating a program. CYCPs come up with topics for groups based on the needs of the participants and create group sessions with the best interest of the members in mind. If necessary, practitioners will mediate any issues or conflicts that might arise during a group session.

Counselling

CYCPs identify the significance of relationships as an infrastructure for counselling with children, youth, and their family members and are supportive of those who are actively involved in counselling. If necessary, practitioners will assist clients in researching appropriate and suitable counselling support and in setting goals that clients wish to achieve when taking part in counselling services.



SKILLS TO SUCCEED Every workplace has different policies and procedures, and different ways of scheduling and securing referrals. Make sure that you familiarize yourself with these in any new role in order to locate the information you will need to support your clients.

Behavioural Guidance

CYCPs are professionals who model appropriate behaviour for clients. They assist clients in identifying and labelling behaviours that might not be appropriate and may, in fact, be troublesome. With involvement from clients, practitioners regularly conduct behavioural assessments and document strengths and weaknesses. They set realistic and clear boundaries with clients to ensure transparency and understanding. Practitioners do not engage in power struggles with clients, but instead try to bring the focus back to more significant issues/concerns.

Family/Caregiver Engagement

CYCPs encourage family members to contribute and participate in goal setting, and in developing supports and interventions. They highlight areas that require the involvement of community resources and services, and family members are encouraged and supported by the practitioner to use community resources and services.

Community Engagement

CYCPs are aware of the community services, programs, and support systems that are available for children, youth, and families and when necessary, they promote relationships between clients and community partners. Practitioners also create and maintain professional relationships with peers and with members of the community.

CASE FILE

When I (Richard) worked as a Children's Services Worker, my co-worker and I shared duties with a family that included a mother, father, and three children. The three children were in foster homes and the plan was for all the children to be returned home over a 4-week period.

While the children were at home there was ongoing conflict between both parents, and concerns related to the safety and supervision of the children, and this resulted in several referrals to the agency. As a result of the protection concerns, the agency and the courts encouraged the parents to complete couple's counselling and a parenting program. The parents agreed to this plan, and the Society supported the parents in finding suitable programs.

The children's paternal uncle and grandparents were actively involved in assisting the parents to prepare for the return of their children. Their grandparents attended access visits regularly and they also volunteered to support the access when it transitioned outside of the agency's access program. The three children also spent a considerable amount of time with their paternal uncle, and he assisted in bringing parents to meetings and access visits. These family members were an integral part of the parents' support group and attended court appearances when they were able to do so.

The parents had to look for and secure suitable accommodations. While the children were in care, the parents lived in a one-bedroom apartment. With assistance and support from the agency, the social housing authority, and Ontario Works, the parents were able to find housing that was suitable for all members of the family. We were able to furnish the family's home with the necessities after sending out internal requests for gently used or new appliances and/or furniture.

The application of these developmental practice methods helped greatly in achieving positive outcomes for this family. The family felt empowered, and they were able to have all three children return to their care as planned.

Let's Reflect

Think of an example where you will use one specific competency in one specific context. (Remember, in true practice, you likely won't just use one competency at a time, and they will overlap and occur in various contexts.)

Review Your Knowledge

1. Explain why professionalism as a core competency is about more than just appearance and behaviour.
2. Provide two examples of professional development behaviour within the child and youth care field.
3. What is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child?
4. In what ways do practitioners advocate for children, youth, and adolescents?
5. What are the nine factors that distinguish groups from each other and give them their own identity?
6. Give three examples of socio-ecological environments.
7. What are some verbal and non-verbal forms of communication?
8. What does it mean to assess the *quality* of relationships?
9. What do CYCPs rely on when formulating programs/activities for clients?
10. List the nine developmental practice methods in child and youth practice. Choose one to explain in detail.

Checklist

- I can list and explain the five domains developed by the North American Certification Project.
- I can speak with knowledge on the importance of professionalism as a competency to child and youth work.
- I understand the importance of professional development, including staying up to date on all applicable mandates and laws.
- I have reflected on how my personal development and self-care are critical to doing my best work and avoiding burnout.
- I am aware of my own biases, stereotypes, and prejudices and am considerate of cultural and human diversity, age, sexual orientation, and developmental ability.
- I can list the nine factors that distinguish groups from each other.
- I will support and encourage the development of children, youth, and adolescents in their socio-ecological environment.
- I will ensure that, when making referrals, the service will meet the unique needs of my client.
- I understand the importance of setting and maintaining boundaries with the families I work with.
- I understand the importance of helping and interpersonal relationships, communication differences and styles, and group dynamics and teamwork and will continue develop these skills.
- I can list the nine developmental practice methods and speak to their significance in child and youth practice.

References and Resources

- Association for Child and Youth Care Practice. (2010). *Competencies for professional child & youth work practitioners*. (Revised 2010). [https://cyc-net.org/pdf/2010_Competencies_for_Professional_CYW_Practitioners%20\(1\).pdf](https://cyc-net.org/pdf/2010_Competencies_for_Professional_CYW_Practitioners%20(1).pdf)
- Government of Ontario. (2017). *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017, S.O. 2017, c. 14, Sched. 1*. <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/17c14>
- Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies. (2021). *Eligibility spectrum*. (Revised 2021). <http://www.oacas.org/publications-and-newsroom/professional-resources/>
- United Nations. (1989). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>