



Ontario Association of Young Parent Agencies
serving infants, children and young parents - together

L'Association Ontarienne des Agences pour Jeunes Pa

March 2026 Newsletter

10 min read

This month, we recognize International Women's Day — a meaningful moment in a sector shaped by women's leadership at every level. From frontline practice to executive leadership, women across our network are advancing advocacy, challenging stigma, and strengthening pathways for young families.

With March Break approaching, we also acknowledge that this season can bring both connection and added pressures for young parents. The responsiveness and community-based supports provided by member agencies remain essential during these shifts.

Thank you for your continued partnership, shared learning, and collective advocacy.



Significant Dates

- March 5 Member Meeting
- March 8 [International Women's Day](#)
- March 16-20 [Neurodiversity Celebration Week](#)
- March 21 [International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#)

Member Updates

DEIB Task Force Request

The DEIB Task Force Committee has compiled a comprehensive [list of DEIB trainings](#) that have been offered to OAYPA members. As part of our commitment to establishing meaningful metrics and benchmarks to track progress in dismantling racism and promoting equity, we would like to gather data on training participation across our Association.

We kindly ask Executive Directors to review the attached list and provide information regarding their staff's participation in any of the training offered. Please email Nicole, Chair of the DEIB Task Force Committee (nicole@nicoleperryman.com) with the number of staff that have participated in any of the training by **March 10, 2026**. It would also be amazing to list any training that you provided to staff that not appear on our list. Thank you in advance for your participation and support in helping us collect this important data and advance our shared goals.

Membership Dues

As we look ahead to an exciting year of advocacy and collaboration, we wanted to remind you that your 2026 membership fees are due March. We are so grateful for your continued support and for being a vital part of our Association. Your membership helps drive our mission forward, and together, we'll continue to work with government bodies and funders to make a lasting impact on behalf of all our members. Thank you for your ongoing commitment and for all that you do! Please access the Membership Renewal Form [here](#).

Black History Month Presentation

Thank you to everyone who attended Shellene Drakes-Tull's presentation: *Honouring Black Brilliance: Joy, Resilience, and the Work of Oppression*. During this presentation, we deepened our understanding of the core principles of anti-oppression and examined how systemic inequities show up in everyday systems, policies, and social norms. We explored how Black joy and resilience function as powerful acts of resistance, affirming humanity, dignity, and community. By tracing Canada's Black history across generations, we connected past struggles to present-day responsibilities. We were challenged to reflect on our own roles in sustaining joy, protecting dignity, and advancing equity in workplaces and communities. Please access the recording [here](#).



New Date: Food Allergy Canada Webinar

OAYPA is proud to be partnering with Food Allergy Canada on an upcoming webinar focused on food allergies and supporting young parents and their children. As part of this collaboration, we are sharing this timely and informative article to build awareness and practical understanding.

We invite you to read the feature below and promote the webinar below to your program teams: [What You Need to Know About Preventing Food Allergies in Infants](#)

When: Wednesday, March 25th, 2026, 11:00-11:45AM

SickKids Consultation Sessions Reminder

All are welcome to the SickKids monthly Consultation Sessions: Bring Your Team! Any questions? Contact Bev (bmackillop@abionacentre.ca)

Monthly 2nd Wednesday (1:00 - 2:30 PM) [Click here to join these sessions.](#)

Dates: 11-Mar-26, 8-Apr-26, 13-May-26, 10-Jun-26

Monthly 4th Wednesday (9:00 – 10:30 AM) [Click here to join these sessions.](#)

All Are Welcome to the SickKids Bimonthly Consultation Sessions: Bring Your Team!

SickKids Telemental Health Consultation Sessions, facilitated by Dr. Dafni Sadler and Gillian Thompson are available to all OAYPA agency staff for 2025-2026. These OAYPA-specific consultations are an opportunity to connect with colleagues across the province, fostering a community of practice and offering essential guidance for our daily work. Through dynamic discussions with SickKids and case study presentations by agency staff, we will collectively learn and grow from one another's experiences.

These sessions run twice a month. Feel free to attend as many sessions as you wish.

[Click on the link below to join the conversation!](#)

In addition...

The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) Tele-Mental Health Education Sessions are free to attend and open to all members. Please register [here](#) to be added to the distribution list. If you would like to access previous presentations, they are available in our Member Resource Hub [here](#).



Fundraising & Grants

DonorPerfect

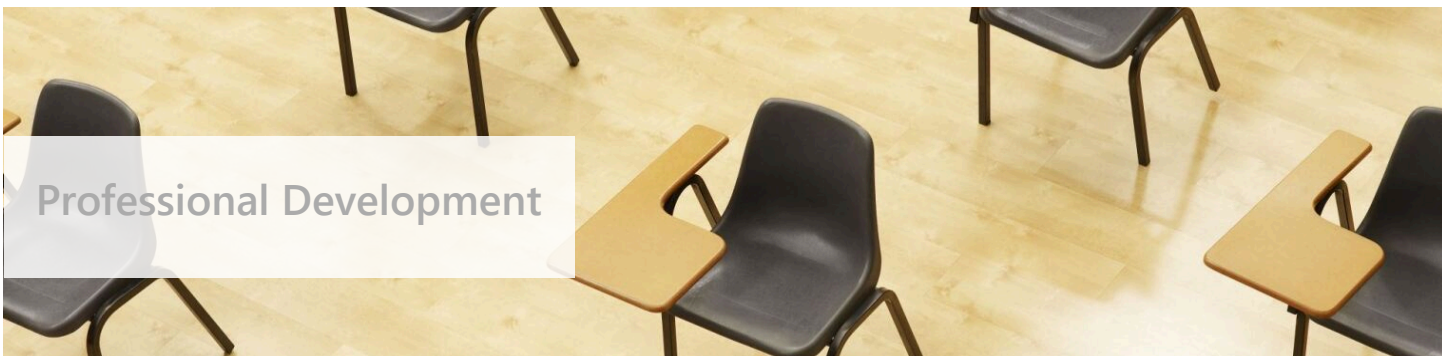
Fundraising moves quickly, and it's hard to cut through the haze of competing priorities and changing expectations. But where there is clarity, there is light.

[The 2026 DonorPerfect Conference](#) is a space for bright ideas that drive results—whether you're leading strategy, managing day-to-day operations, or doing it all. Each session will bring you brand-new perspectives on complex challenges, offering relatable stories and practical tools you can use right away. The topics covered during this FREE conference include:

- Clear your vision and focus your fundraising efforts where they matter most
- Use donor data and insights to make informed, confident decisions
- Communicate your mission with clarity, warmth, and purpose
- Streamline your workflows to save time and reduce stress
- Build meaningful donor relationships rooted in trust and understanding
- Explore new approaches that illuminate what's possible for your mission
- Discover bright ideas that lead to renewed energy and glowing results

The Grant Circle

It is difficult for Canadian nonprofits to stay on top of grant deadlines without expensive tools, endless Googling, or stress. Finding grant deadlines every month takes a massive amount of time. Executive Directors wear too many hats, including fundraising and grant writing. If you're tired of missing deadlines or spending hours each month searching for grants, you may want to check out the [Grant C](#)





ASQ/DSP Training

Our next free ASQ/DSP training cohort for OAYPA staff is starting in May. Please send staff name, role, email and session selections to B MacKillop/Tamar Meyer.

Orientation Session 1	Tuesday, May 5, 2026	11:30am - 12:00pm EST	Orientation Session 1
Orientation Session 2	Thursday, May 7, 2026	1:00pm - 1:30pm EST	Orientation Session 2
ASQ Session 1	Tuesday, May 12, 2026	1:00pm - 3:00pm EST	ASQ Session 1
ASQ Session 2	Thursday, May 14, 2026	10:00am - 12:00pm EST	ASQ Session 2
DSP Session 1	Tuesday, May 19, 2026	10:00am - 12:00pm EST	DSP Session 1
DSP Session 2	Thursday, May 21, 2026	1:00pm - 3:00pm EST	DSP Session 2
Implementation Session 1	Tuesday, May 26, 2026	1:00pm - 2:30pm EST	Implementation Session 1
Implementation Session 2	Thursday, May 28, 2026	10:30am - 12:00pm EST	Implementation Session 2



Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion

[International Women’s Day Panel](#): March 10, 2026, 1:00 – 2:00 PM

Women make up half of the Canadian workforce, yet only 5% of Canadian companies have a woman CEO. Join CCDI for a thought-prov conversation celebrating women who are shaping the future of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) in Canada. The pane leaders will explore what it means to lead inclusively, navigate complex systems, and create lasting impacts in workplaces and commun Together, they’ll discuss the evolving landscape of DEIA leadership and reflect on how women are redefining leadership for a more equitable future.

[Mapping DEIA Metrics in the Workplace: Stories, Data, And Benchmarks That Matter](#): April 7, 2026, 1:00 – 2:00 PM

Research and data continue to demonstrate that diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) create more innovative and stronge performing teams and organizations. Learn how DEIA metrics can be mapped in workplaces through stories, data, and benchmarks. Join CCDI as they explore how mapping DEIA metrics can provide a strong foundation for sustainability and ethical growth.



WAIMH Conference 2026 is taking place from October 2-6 at the Sheraton Centre in Toronto, Canada. With the theme *"Harmony in Diversity: Nurturing the Youngest Minds Around the World,"* this conference promises to be an enriching and uplifting five-day event. This year brings new opportunities, discoveries, collaborations, and connections that will shape the future of infant and early mental health. The conference offers your chance to meet colleagues from around the world, gain fresh perspectives, expand your network, and be part of a community committed to advancing the well-being of infants, young children and their families.

[Conference Registration](#)

[Hotel Reservation at the Sheraton Centre](#)

Interwoven

Co-Creating the **Future** of Child
and Youth Mental Health

#CMHO2026

April 20–21, 2026

Children's Mental Health Ontario Conference

The CMHO Conference will bring together over 700 leaders, practitioners, caregivers, researchers, youth advocates, and policymakers from across Ontario and beyond at the Sheraton Hotel Toronto Centre on April 21-22, 2026. This year's theme, Interwoven: Co-Creating the Future of Child and Youth Mental Health, invites all connected sectors, roles, and communities to step boldly into the unknown, together. Whether through equity-driven practice, creative models of collaboration, or the centering of lived and living experience, the path forward calls for imagination, integration, and courage.

[Register here!](#)



Mindfulness Toolkit

YouthREX is excited to launch New Leaf Foundation's [Mindfulness Toolkit](#) on Learn by YouthREX. The Toolkit includes lesson plans with leveled activities to engage youth.

Centering Black Youth Wellbeing Certificate

This [online certificate](#) provides the Ontario youth sector with the foundational knowledge to cultivate practices, policies and alliances that challenge, disrupt and combat systemic anti-Black racism.

Cannabis and Youth Certificate

This [online certificate](#) provides Ontario youth workers with evidence-based information on the health, social and legal risks associated with cannabis use so they can support informed decision-making, educate and increase awareness among young people.

Program Evaluation for Youth Wellbeing Certificate

This [online certificate](#) provides the Ontario youth sector with a foundational understanding of the main concepts, approaches and practices relevant to evaluating a youth program and using the findings to improve their programs and share their impact.

Stages of Change Framework

This [workshop](#) provides youth workers with an understanding of how to support youth to make difficult but necessary changes in their using the Stages of Change Framework. The workshop also includes lectures on Motivational Interviewing and how to combine this with Stages of Change Framework.

Anti-Oppressive Practice Workshop

This [workshop](#) explores the transformative potential of Anti-Oppressive Practice frameworks for working with youth. It includes lectures on anti-Black racism, Indigenous perspectives, Islamophobia and youth, and supporting LGBTQ+ youth.

Youth and Violence Workshop

This [workshop](#) explores what violence and youth justice mean for young people who are susceptible and implicated in violence. It also explores the broader social context and complexities of violence in the lives of young people.

Engaging Black Youth and their Families Workshop

This [workshop](#) explores how to facilitate equitable spaces for Black youth that support their authentic participation and advocacy; share strategies for allying with Black youth and their families; and provides an understanding of parenting within the context of historical trauma.

Trauma-Informed Youth Work

This [workshop](#) looks at how we can re-imagine our work with young people and their communities from a trauma-informed approach that focuses on individual harm and injury to a healing-centered practice that fosters possibility and advances collective wellbeing.



SafeGuards is a partnership of provincial associations dedicated to providing culturally informed training on trauma-informed practice, trauma assessment and treatment and related effects of trauma. OAYPA is an Association Member of SafeGuards. OAYPA agencies receive a member's rate, which is 12-23% off on SafeGuards training fees. Save an additional 20% off with group registration of 4 or more participants. Download the group registration form [here](#). For more information and to browse their list of courses, see below/click [here](#).

The following courses may be of interest to you.

- [Self-Compassion in the Workplace; Caring for Ourselves While Caring for Others](#)
March 3, 2026, 1:00 – 4:00 PM
- [Trauma Informed Care; Supporting Individuals with Developmental Disabilities](#)
March 5, 2026, 9:30 AM – 3:30 PM & March 6, 2026, 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM
- [Therapeutic Journaling; An Evidence-Based Intervention](#)
March 9, 2026, 12:30 – 4:00 PM
- [Using the STAIR Model and Critical Race Theory when Working with Black Youth and Families](#)
March 10 & 11, 2026, 1:00 – 4:00 PM
- [Compassionate Leadership; Fostering Self-Care and Well-Being in Staff Teams and Organizations](#)
March 12, 2026, 1:00 – 4:00 PM
- [Indigenous Perspectives on the Mental Health of Children and Youth](#)
March 30 & 31, 2026, 1:00 – 4:00 PM
- [Embrace Trauma-Informed Care with Children and Youth](#)
April 7 & 8, 2026, 1:00pm – 4:00 PM
- [Trauma-Informed Approach to Communication](#) April 14 & 15, 2026, 1:00 – 4:00 PM

GET INVOLVED

The 2026 Canadian Nonprofit Sector Salary & Benefits Report from Charity Village will be published soon! Charity Village is asking for your participation. There is no cost to participate in the survey. Accurate salary information specific to the nonprofit sector is vital to workforce planning.

planning. Participating in this survey contributes to a report that offers cash compensation metrics broken out by:

- Geographic region
- Organization type, size, and focus
- Profession

Participation is vital to creating a robust report that will provide a better understanding of how the pandemic has impacted salaries and benefit programs in Canadian nonprofits and charities. If you complete the survey on or before March 6, 2026, you will receive a 50% discount when you purchase the report. Access the survey here.



Resources

The Hanen Centre

Peer models matter but only when children with delayed language skills have meaningful opportunities to interact with peers with strong language skills. This [article](#) explores recent research on peer interactions in preschool settings and offers strategies educators can use, as well as ideas you can coach families to look for and encourage.

Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI)

[See Different DEI Certificate](#): Know a young changemaker aged 15-26, who would benefit from free diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) certification training, access to a nationwide network of like-minded peers, and grant opportunities? CCDI is thrilled to announce that registration is now OPEN for their first 2026 Principles of DEI Certificate cohort for individuals! Through two virtual workshops, participants can dive deep into DEI and gain valuable credentials.

Charity Village

The Charity Village [Leadership Skills Guide](#) covers fundamental leadership skills, including employee engagement, the art of delegation, constructive feedback, and succession planning. Each section is filled with helpful tips and strategies that you can put to use right away. Covered in this handbook:

- Determining your leadership philosophy
- How to boost employee engagement
- Delegating work
- Providing feedback
- Succession planning

Get practical, high-quality training through [self-paced online courses](#). Learn on your own schedule and access downloadable resources when it's convenient. These courses offer:

- Flexible, web-based learning tailored to your goals
- Practical tools you can apply right away
- Topics ranging from fundraising, DEI, & more!

Succession Planning

Is your organization prepared for the future? Investing in succession planning now reduces the impact and risks associated with offboard and unplanned staffing changes. In this [article](#), Andrea Coutts, Certified Executive Coach, Facilitator, and Founder of Arbutus Coast Consulting, shares 20 practical ways to reduce risk and build resilience, ideally as part of your annual strategic planning and ongoing development.

HR Covered – Employment Contract Template Feb 2026

Protect your organization with a lawyer-vetted, [Ontario-specific employment contract](#) designed for nonprofits. Cover key HR essentials, including roles, responsibilities, termination clauses, and legal compliance. Avoid common pitfalls and ensure clarity for both your team

your organization.

Women and Gender Equality Canada

New tools for 2SLGBTQI+ inclusion at work: [Explore the Unity Campaign](#)

Building an inclusive workplace takes more than good intentions. It also takes the right tools. The Canadian Center for Diversity and Inc is proud to highlight the Unity Campaign by Women and Gender Equality Canada. This free suite of resources is for employers and individuals committed to 2SLGBTQI+ inclusion:

- Practical tools: Try the introspective exercises, watch the real-life allyship stories, and use the printable posters.
- Clear language: Refer to the comprehensive 2SLGBTQI+ glossary to help your team use accurate, respectful language.
- Flexible use: Bring these resources to your staff meetings, onboarding sessions, or lunch-and-learn events.
- Help your team spot stigma and speak up for a better together.

YouthREX

[The Role of Mindfulness in Reducing the Adverse Effects of Childhood Stress and Trauma](#)

This resource summarizes a literature review that demonstrates how mindfulness can be an effective strategy for mitigating the effects trauma and chronic stress in young people.

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