

IFCO Conference



IFCO2020
Montreal, Canada
June 25-28 **Close Ties**



IFCO 2020 Youth Program

Youth-centered empowerment* and advocacy & leadership sessions**, workshops and activities for young people with lived experience in government care.

*Our Youth Empowerment workshops are targeted to young people in and from care who have little to no experience in engaging in community advocacy, and are still figuring out their identities as young people with government care experience.

**Our Youth Advocacy & Leadership workshops are targeted to young people in and from care who have some experience or are interested in engaging in community advocacy and want to further their advocacy and leadership skills.

Note: This document is a DRAFT Youth Program and is subject to modifications.

Thursday, 25 June 2020



Day 1: Registration & Opening Ceremony

15:00 – 19:00 Registration

17:00 – 18:00 IFCO 2020 Conference Opening Ceremony

18:00 – 19:00 Reception

Friday, 26 June 2020



Day 2: Youth Program Agenda

8:45 – 9:15 Welcome by Local Indigenous Elders (Kahnawá:ke Mohawk Territory)

Youth Workshop Session I

9:15 – 10:15 Get2KnowU: Welcome to IFCO 2020!

This workshop focuses on welcoming the youth participants to the IFCO 2020 Youth Program, and doing interactive ice-breaker activities for participants to get to know each other and build a sense of community. The IFCO President and/or Vice-President provides some words of welcome, and IFCO Board members who are experienced in youth-centered facilitation guide the participants through the workshop activities.

Facilitators:

Carrie Wilson, IFCO Board member (Manchester, UK)

Jean Anne Kennedy, IFCO Board member (Waterford, Ireland)

10:15 – 10:45 Break

Youth Workshop Session II

10:45 -12:15 Get2KnowUs

This workshop focuses on getting to know the functioning of the child protection systems of the various jurisdictions and countries represented at the Youth Program. Participants are asked to break into small groups and prepare a short presentation on their country's system (e.g., type of system, how does it work, what are the priorities, major reform/changes in recent times, support for care leavers) and report back to the

larger group. A debriefing exercise is done with the larger group at the end of the workshop. This workshop is also facilitated by IFCO Board members who are experienced in youth-centered facilitation.

Facilitators:

Carrie Wilson, IFCO Board member (Manchester, UK)

April Curtis, IFCO Board member (Chicago, USA)

12:15 – 13:30 Lunch

Youth Workshop Session III

(Concurrent sessions - choose one to attend)

Youth Empowerment workshop:

13:30 – 15:00 Dancing With My Dodem (*arts-based workshop*)

This workshop focuses on identity and cultural development through experiential arts-based learning. Through a relaxed give and take interaction and conversation with an Indigenous Elder, youth participants are guided to craft a community crest or clan symbol on a shield. The shield is made of canvas stretched over a plastic charger plate. While this workshop has been developed specifically for Indigenous youth, all youth in care need to maintain connection to their culture of origin to develop and participation of youth from all backgrounds is encouraged. This activity is done on an ongoing basis since 1995 with children and youth in the care of the provincial government or Delegated First Nation Agencies in Alberta.

Facilitator: Beverly Keeshig-Soonias, Psychologist and member of Nawash First Nation (Red Deer, AB, Canada)

Youth Advocacy & Leadership workshop:

13:30 – 15:00 Empowering Youth in Advocacy - A Youth-Led Perspective

This interactive and youth-centered workshop is focused on building advocacy and leadership skills to mobilize and advocate for oneself and others. In recognition that many youth voices are dampened by the child welfare system, concrete tools in fostering youth leadership within communities will be distributed. Learning objectives include impactful messaging for effective communication in advocacy; strategic planning methods for daily success in leadership; and painting a clear future with goal setting.

Facilitator: Susan Russell, Fostering Change Campaign Organizer (Vancouver, BC, Canada)

15:00 – 15:30 Break

Youth Workshop Sessions IV

(Concurrent sessions - choose one to attend)

Youth Empowerment workshop:

15:30 – 17:00 Art Attack (*arts-based workshop*)

Art Attack is a painting workshop designed to help youth find ways to express themselves through art. Not every youth is comfortable sharing their stories or experiences with words, so this workshop allows youth to connect and share in a creative way. The beauty in art is allowing youth the freedom to be creative and to use their imagination. Art attack also expands a youth's ability to interact with the world around them, along with providing youth with a new set of skills for self-expression and communication. Youth will have the opportunity to either use paints, markers, pastels or just the use of pencil. This workshop is aimed to inspire all youth artists! This workshop will help get your creative juices flowing – the youth can create a piece that will tell a story or maybe the youth was inspired by certain colors and designed an abstract piece – either way this workshop will be flexible, fun and easy!

Facilitator: Zoe Bourgeois, New Brunswick Youth in Care Network (NBVCN) Coordinator (Fredericton, NB Canada)

Youth Advocacy & Leadership workshop:

15:30 – 17:00 Changing Landscapes: Navigating identity, safety, culture and community in the transition to adulthood (*arts-based workshop*)

Changing landscapes is a workshop centered around exploring disclosures and the effects they have on ourselves, our experiences, and how we interact with others. We will use the decoration of masks to create a visual representation of the different selves we put forward over time, reflecting as well on the effects our environment has on our identities. Using the masks, we will discuss the positive and negative effects of identity disclosure, focusing on relationship building, personal growth, and resilience.

Facilitators: Rachel Malek, Authentic Engagement Consulting President (Massarosa, Tuscany, Italy) & Erin Doiron, Head & Hands Aging Out With Care Coordinator (Montreal, QC, Canada)

Saturday, 27 June 2020



Day 3: Youth Program Agenda

Conference Keynote Panel

(Group joins Adult Program for keynote)

9:00 – 10:15 Peers Are Doing It for Themselves: Conversations with leaders from care about the different ways of doing youth engagement & empowerment

Around the world, young people in and from care are leading movements for change. Day 2 of the IFCO conference kicks off with a peer facilitated and led panel that highlights the young leaders who are building a movement for change in Canada's child welfare system. Join us for a frank and enlightening conversation with young leaders from care on the ways they practice youth engagement and empowerment within their communities, from grassroots community-based organizing, formalized networks to advising government from within. You'll learn about the strengths they rely on and challenges they face in their advocacy work, youth engagement and empowerment best practices, and the lessons these young leaders have learned along the way.

Facilitator: Melanie Doucet, Co-founder, Montreal Youth in Care Alumni Student Association (MYCASA) (Montreal)

Panelists: Dylan Cohen, Former Campaign Organizer, Fostering Change BC (British Columbia); Meredith Graham, BC Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) Youth Advisor, Youth Outreach and Empowerment Team (British Columbia); Jennifer Dupuis, CARE Jeunesse (Quebec); Ashley Dawn Louise Bach, President, Youth in Care Canada (Ottawa); Zo Bourgeois, Coordinator, NB Youth in Care Network (New Brunswick); Cheyanne Ratnam, Ontario Children's Advocacy Coalition (OCAC) (Ontario)

10:15 – 10:45 Break

Youth Workshop Session V

(Concurrent sessions - choose one to attend)

Youth Empowerment workshop:

10:45 – 12:15 Strategic Sharing

This workshop is geared towards youth who are interested in telling their story to make an impact. It explains how to share your story for maximum influence. It also reviews how to avoid common pitfalls in storytelling. It summarizes how youth can find and evaluate invitations to share their knowledge and lived experience. This highly interactive workshop starts with a short power point presentation which focuses on the features, outline, and process of storytelling. The focus of the workshop engages participants in the process of writing their own short story. Youth will have the opportunity to share their writing with their peers and receive feedback.

Facilitator: Amanda Keller, PhD student, McGill University School of Social Work & CARE Jeunesse founder (Canada)

Youth Advocacy & Leadership workshop:

10:45 – 12:15 You can't pour out of an empty cup: Self-Care and Burnout Prevention strategies for youth with lived-experience

"You can't pour out of an empty cup." This is a very common saying in helping professions, however actually practicing effective self-care has become all too UNcommon in our field, especially for youth advocates and young professionals. Our passion to make it better for other young people drives us so much that sometimes we forget to stop and take care of ourselves, which can lead to feelings of isolation and overwhelm, return to negative coping strategies, and ultimately lead to burnout. Join us for a refreshing, "refilling" workshop where you get to stop and explore YOUR wellness, self-assess your satisfaction across and deep dive into the 8 dimensions of wellness, identify existing and desired coping strategies, and build a support network with other like-purposed, amazing advocates and professionals like yourself! You will walk away from this workshop with a customized plan for increasing wellness across the 8 domains of wellness in your life.

Facilitators: Lacy Kendrick, IFCO Board member, Youth Era Chief Strategy Officer (Eugene, OR, USA) & Jammie Gardner, Youth Era (Eugene, OR, USA)

12:15 – 13:30 Lunch

Youth Workshop Sessions VI

(Concurrent sessions - choose one to attend)

Youth Empowerment workshop:

13:30 – 15:00 Rap Writing Workshop: Foster Care Edition (*arts-based workshop*)

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Facilitators: Marcelle Partouche Gutierrez, Master's student, McGill University, CARE Jeunesse Board member, Montreal Youth in Care Alumni Student Association (MYCASA) co-leader, Head & Hands Community Worker (Montreal, QC, Canada)

Dez Gregoire, Dawson College student, Montreal Youth in Care Alumni Student Association (MYCASA) co-leader (Montreal, QC, Canada)

Youth Advocacy & Leadership workshop:

13:30 – 15:00 Art as a Tool for Advocacy (*arts-based workshop*)

Spoken word is storytelling with a rhythm and flow that’s sometimes fast and sometimes slow and weaves details in tales that illustrates and illuminates what it is you need to know to get to where you need to go. As such, it can communicate and convey one’s truth in a different way. This participatory workshop provides the opportunity for young people to explore their rights, their voice, and how to use art as a tool to be heard in their world. Skills learned through this workshop can also empower young people to be their own advocate in the government care system and beyond. In our time together, we make space for all the voices, individually and collectively, as we learn the foundation of spoken word, have room for creative writing, and celebrate by sharing our poetry and speaking it into the room.

Facilitator: Meredith Graham, Ministry of Children and Families (MCFD) Youth Advisor, Spoken Word Artist (Vancouver, BC, Canada)

15:00 – 15:30 Break

Youth Workshop Session VII

15:30 – 17:00 Rights and Responsibilities, Advocacy and Action!

Do you know that you have rights? Too many youth in and from care do not know their rights, or how to speak up for themselves when their rights are violated. In this workshop, we are going to explore our rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). We’ll talk about our responsibilities as rights holders. We’ll look at what it means to be an advocate, and finally we’ll celebrate advocacy in action across our country!

Facilitators: VOICES Manitoba's Youth in Care Network Leadership Team, supported by Marie Christian & Jaina Cabral (VOICES staff) (Winnipeg, MB, Canada)

18:00 Gala Dinner

Sunday, 28 June 2020



Day 4: Youth Program Agenda

Youth Workshop Session VIII

9:00 – 10:15 What do YOUth Want to Say?

This workshop is a debrief of the overall Youth Program, where youth participants are asked to reflect and share their key takeaways and what they are taking back with them to their respective communities. Part of this workshop is also dedicated to planning the key messages that will be shared with the overall conference during the Adult Program closing ceremony. This workshop is also facilitated by IFCO Board members who are experienced in youth-centered facilitation.

Facilitators:

Carrie Wilson, IFCO Board member (Manchester, UK)

April Curtis, IFCO Board member (Chicago, USA)

Melanie Doucet, Co-founder, Montreal Youth in Care Alumni Student Association (MYCASA) (Montreal)

10:15 – 10:45 Break

10:45 – 11:15 Youth Program Closing Ceremony

11:15 – 12:00 Networking

12:05 – 12:45 IFCO 2020 Conference Closing Ceremony

13:00 – 14:45 Lunch on Your Own

15:00 – 18:00 Group Social Activity (To Be Confirmed)

(Choose one to participate in)

Guided walk to Mont Royal

OR

Guided walk in Plateau-Mont-Royal to view murals and street art