



CHILD & YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH CONFERENCE:

ENHANCING OUTCOMES WITH BEST PRACTICES AND INNOVATION

NOVEMBER 2025 | West Shore (Colwood & Langford)

**For Senior Community
Organizational Leaders**

20

November 2025

11:30 am - 4:30 pm

Royal Roads University
Colwood, BC

A half-day for senior decision-makers and management will focus on collaborative planning to support partnerships, leadership training & development, community engagement, and workplace well-being.

**For Frontline Child & Youth
Community Workers**

21

November 2025

8:30 am - 4:45 pm

Spencer Middle School
Langford, BC

A full-day for frontline service providers will address emerging issues and support the practice and well-being of the region's frontline staff.

thevillageinitiative.ca



CONFERENCE **Day 1** - November 20 @ Royal Roads University

For Senior Community Organizational Leaders

This half-day for senior decision-makers and management will focus on collaborative planning to support partnerships, leadership training & development, community engagement, and workplace well-being.

11:30 am -
12:15 pm

Opening Activity: ENVISIONING COLLECTIVE FUTURES

Kathleen Manion, Royal Roads University

Networking opportunity and Lunch

12:15 -
12:30 pm

Welcome and TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

12:30 -
1:30 pm

Plenary: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Panel Discussion exploring best approaches to supporting the practice of existing leaders. It will cover topics such as change management, navigating conflict, emotional intelligence in leadership, managing hybrid teams and the difference between management and leadership.

Danella Parks, United Way British Columbia

Ace Mann, reThink Community Education Association

Denise Lloyd, Engaged

Dr. Azin Nasser, Transformative Training Institute Inc.

1:35 -
2:35 pm

Break-out Session: PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Michelle Colussi, Shift Collaborative

This workshop will focus on best practices related to building deep, collaborative relationships amongst service providers. Tangible tips will be provided that can help shift practice from competition to collaboration.

This session is also offered at 2:45 pm.

1:35 -
2:35 pm

Break-out Session: ASSESSING EMERGING COMMUNITY NEEDS

Lisa Mort-Putland, Volunteer Victoria

The West Shore and Sooke Region is seeing significant changes in terms of population growth, demographic changes and increasing pressures on children, youth, and families. In this session we will discuss how organizations can connect with community to understand the emerging needs and work together to identify community-responsive approaches to addressing those needs.

This session is also offered at 2:45 pm.

CONFERENCE **Day 1** - November 20 @ Royal Roads University

For Senior Community Organizational Leaders

1:35 -
2:35 pm

Break-out Session: **WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS STRATEGIES**

Vanessa White, Coastal Elements
Counselling and Wellness

Burnout and vicarious trauma are increasingly acknowledged challenges amongst youth service providers. This session will review what the employer's responsibility is to minimize these harms and tangible steps you can take to create a healthy working environment.

This session is also offered at 2:45 pm.

2:35 -
2:45 pm

TRANSITION TIME AND BREAK

2:45 -
3:45 pm

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3:50 -
4:30 pm

KEEPING THE CONVERSATION ALIVE: A NETWORKING GATHERING

Kathleen Manion, Royal Roads
University

How can we take what we've learned today and take it forward?

CONFERENCE **Day 2** - November 21 @ Spencer Middle School

For Frontline Child & Youth Community Workers

This full-day for frontline service providers will address emerging issues and support the practice and well-being of the region's frontline staff.

8:30 -
9:00 am

Opening Activity: **A CONVERSATION ON HOPES & DREAMS**

Kathleen Manion, Royal Roads
University
A networking opportunity

9:00 -
9:15 am

Welcome and TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

9:15 -
10:45 am

Plenary Session: **PREVENTING AND DEALING WITH VICARIOUS TRAUMA**

Vanessa White, Coastal Elements
Counselling and Wellness
Burnout and vicarious trauma are increasingly acknowledged challenges amongst youth service providers. This session will teach tangible steps to take to identify burnout and enforce professional boundaries and will inform staff about the shared responsibility between employers and employees to foster a healthy workplace, highlighting the employer's role in supporting well-being.

10:45 -
11:00 am

TRANSITION TIME AND BREAK

11:00 am -
12:00 pm

Break-out Session: **STRATEGIES FOR HELPING YOUTH BUILD HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS WITH(IN) THEIR DIGITAL LIVES, INCLUDING AI AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

Kathleen Manion, Royal Roads
University
Elizabeth Childs, Royal Roads
University

Technology, especially AI and social media, can provide useful tools for everyday life. Given young people are increasingly engrossed within their digital lives, it is essential to understand how this reality shapes them. Based on global research, we will discuss how various forms of technology positively and negatively impact young people. We will share practical strategies for frontline workers on supporting young people to build healthy relationships with technology, including AI and social media.

CONFERENCE **Day 2** - November 21 @ Spencer Middle School

For Frontline Child & Youth Community Workers

11:00 am -
12:00 pm

Break-out Session: **SUPPORTING YOUTH AND FAMILIES EXPERIENCING GRIEF**

Tamara Cotton, Learning Through Loss
Ana Pavon, Vancouver Island Counselling Centre for Immigrants and Refugees
Lindy Kovacik, Sooke School District

Grief can arise from many different experiences of loss and is not only tied to death. This session will allow us to explore different types and sources of grief and will teach child and youth service providers tangible skills for supporting families through experiences of loss.

12:00 -
1:00 pm

LUNCH AND NETWORKING

1:00 -
2:00 pm

Plenary: **NEURODIVERSITY-AFFIRMING SUPPORT: WHAT DOES IT MEAN AND WHAT CAN IT LOOK LIKE?**

Mary Klovance, The Neurodiversity Family Centre

In this keynote, we will learn about the importance of neurodiversity-affirming support and how child and youth service providers can take a strengths-based approach to supporting neurodiverse children and youth.

2:00 -
2:15 pm

TRANSITION TIME AND BREAK

2:15 -
3:15 pm

Break-out Session: **EMPOWERING CAREGIVERS TO SUPPORT THEIR YOUTH THROUGH CHALLENGES**

This panel will bring together experts who work with diverse groups of children, youth, and families who all have diverse needs. They will discuss tangible skills service providers can teach to caregivers so they are able to support their own children and youth and will explore the utility of peer support groups to help caregivers feel less alone.

Lisa Tate, Family Smart
Marcus McCullough, Victoria Native Friendship Centre,
Ashraf Al-Nasser, Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria
Beth Cowin, Thrive Social Services Society

This session is also offered at 3:30 pm.

2:15 -
3:15 pm

Break-out Session: **STRATEGIES AND REFERRALS FOR ADDRESSING COMPLEX TRAUMA**

Daniella Roze and **Nate Demetrius**, Human Nature Counselling

This session is designed to offer frontline service providers with practical, adaptable tools and frameworks to support clients affected by complex trauma, particularly those impacted by displacement, cultural loss and collective adversity. Special care will be given to reflect the realities of working with newcomer and Indigenous communities.

This session is also offered at 3:30 pm.

CONFERENCE **Day 2** - November 21 @ Spencer Middle School

For Frontline Child & Youth Community Workers

2:15 -
3:15 pm

Break-out Session: MODIFYING ATTACHMENT STRATEGIES THROUGHOUT DEVELOPMENT

This panel will bring together experienced professionals to discuss what attachment may look like throughout different developmental stages, specifically they will discuss how to maintain attachment throughout adolescence. The panel will also discuss how to recreate attachment in the event that it is lost.

Heather Yu, Larissa Coates and
Melissa Henderson, Thrive Social Services Society
Nicola MacKay, BGC
This session is also offered at 3:30 pm.

2:15 -
3:15 pm

Break-out Session: SUPPORTING NEURODIVERGENT CLIENTS WITHIN SOCIAL WORK AND MENTAL HEALTH-SPECIFIC STRATEGIES AND APPLICATIONS

Mary Kovance, The Neurodiversity Family Centre

Many mental health services are not equipped to support neurodiverse children and youth, and many disability supports are unable to support with mental health. This workshop will provide tangible tips that frontline service providers can integrate into their mental health interventions with neurodiverse children and youth.

This session is also offered at 3:30 pm.

3:15 -
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TRANSITION TIME AND BREAK

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A CONVERSATION ON HOPES & DREAMS: A NETWORKING GATHERING

Kathleen Manion, Royal Roads
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How can we take what we've
learned today and take it forward?

Gratitude:

Thank you to our generous sponsors and supporters.



United Way
British Columbia



CHILD & YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH CONFERENCE: ENHANCING OUTCOMES WITH BEST PRACTICES AND INNOVATION NOVEMBER 20 & 21, 2025

About the Village Initiative

The Village came together in response to the growing community social service needs of one of the fastest growing regions of British Columbia and the shared recognition that a regional, collaborative approach is required, with fewer silos and greater coordination of services.

Organizing events like the **Child & Youth Mental Health Conference** is just one of the ways The Village helps to improve cross-sectoral communications and fosters greater collaboration and coordination of services across the West Shore and Sooke Region.

Visit our News Page for more about what The Village is working on.

Click for the
Village News

