



**CHILDHOOD & YOUTH STUDIES 3394A (570)**  
**Child and Youth Mental Health Programs**  
**Summer 2026**

Instructor: Dr. Kym Briggs  
Email: [kbriggs@uwo.ca](mailto:kbriggs@uwo.ca)

**Course Information**

**Calendar Description:** This course uses a seminar-style approach to explore youth mental health through a critical and intersectional lens. Moving beyond traditional medical models, students will examine how social, cultural, and structural factors shape young people's mental health experiences.

**Prerequisite(s):** Any course in Childhood and Youth Studies at the 2200-level.

**Antirequisite(s):**

**Extra Information:** 3 seminar hours

**Course Weight:** 0.5

**Breadth:** Category A

**Subject Code:** CYS

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course, or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.



**CYS 3394 (570)**  
**Child and Youth Mental Health Programs**  
**Summer 2026**

Instructor: Dr. Kym Briggs, RSW, EdD, MEd, BA  
Email: [kbriggs@uwo.ca](mailto:kbriggs@uwo.ca)

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**Course and Faculty Contact:**

For Course Information (Day, Time and Location), please go to [student.uwo.ca](http://student.uwo.ca), login, select Academics then Summer 2026. For Faculty Contact information, please see the class OWL.

**Calendar Description:**

Special topic in childhood and youth studies

**Prerequisite(s):** Any course in Childhood and Youth Studies at the 2200-level

**Course Weight:** 0.50

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**Course Overview:**

This course uses a seminar-style approach to explore youth mental health through a critical and intersectional lens. Moving beyond traditional medical models, students will examine how social, cultural, and structural factors shape young people's mental health experiences. Topics include trauma, resilience, identity, stigma, and the impact of systems such as education, child welfare, and justice. Emphasis is placed on youth voice, empowerment, and inclusive approaches that challenge stigma and promote wellbeing. Students will engage with case studies, current research, and community-based strategies to reimagine what mental health support can look like for youth.

**Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, students will:

- Critically analyze dominant approaches to youth mental health
- Apply an intersectional lens to youth mental health experiences
- Assess the role of systems in shaping mental health outcomes
- Interpret the impact of trauma, stigma, and social context
- Translate theory into practice through applied analysis
- Design inclusive and responsive mental health approaches
- Engage in reflective and collaborative learning

**Course Materials: Required textbook****[Child and Youth Mental Health in Canada Second Edition](#)**

Kutcher, S., Wei, Y., & Coniglio, C. (Eds.). (2021). *Child and youth mental health in Canada* (2nd ed.). Canadian Scholars.

Ebook: \$84.95

Print: \$99.95

**Evaluation:**

A note on AI: Intentional use of artificial intelligence or language generation or translation applications by students to summarize readings or complete assignment work for this course must be approved by the instructor and noted by the student in the submitted work itself. This mandate does not refer to aspects of AI programming embedded into applications such as Word, Chrome, etc. It applies to all intentional usage of AI as a 'co-reader' or 'co-writer'. Students must do their own reading and writing to construct their own voices as democratic citizens. They are not allowed to write text and feed it into a computer application to improve it or translate it. Asking an application to compose text and then changing words before submitting it as your own constitutes plagiarism. Use of Grammarly or similar applications is prohibited. Using plagiarism checkers to see if plagiarized text has been altered enough to avoid detection itself is a form of academic dishonesty. Students must compose text, choose words, construct logical flow, structure sentences and paragraphs using their own minds and in response to what they read, hear, and experience. When you borrow words or ideas from another person or from a machine, this must be placed in quotation marks and properly cited.

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
#1 – Reflexive Practice – Practitioner Mental Health	20%	May 14, 2026 by 11:59pm
#2 – Seminar Leadership	35%	Weeks 2 – 6 during class
#3 – Reimagining Youth Mental Health Project	35%	June 12, 2026 by 11:59pm
#4 - Participation	10%	June 10, 2026 by 11:59pm

## **Assignment #1 – Reflexive Practice – Practitioner Mental Health**

**Due Date: May 14, 2026 by 11:59pm**

**Weight: 20%**

Students will complete a reflexive assignment that examines the importance of practitioner mental health in work with children and youth. Drawing on course readings and early class discussions, students will reflect on how practitioner well-being, stress, and mental health can shape interactions with youth, decision-making, and professional practice.

The assignment invites students to consider how individual experiences, workplace culture, and broader system pressures influence practitioner capacity, and to critically examine the potential impact on youth outcomes.

Students are not required to disclose personal experiences; rather, the focus is on developing professional reflexivity and awareness of how practitioner mental health is connected to ethical, responsive, and effective practice. Reflections should incorporate course concepts and demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the role of practitioner wellness within youth-serving systems.

Length: 2-4 pages double spaced

*Note: This is a reflexive assignment. You are invited to engage personally and thoughtfully, but you are not required to disclose anything you are uncomfortable sharing. The focus is on developing professional self-awareness.*

Prompts:

- How do you understand the role of practitioner mental health in working with children and youth?
- What experiences, observations, or assumptions have shaped your thinking about practitioner wellness?
- In what ways do you think your own stress, well-being, or emotional capacity could influence your interactions with youth?
- What kinds of environments or supports would you need to sustain your own well-being in this field?
- How might organizational culture or system pressures impact your ability to show up as a supportive practitioner?
- What are the potential impacts on youth when practitioners are struggling or unsupported?

## **Assignment #2 – Seminar Leadership**

**Due: Weeks 2-6**

**Weight: 35%**

Students will form groups of 2–3 and take on a seminar leadership role for one assigned class, working collaboratively to guide discussion and deepen engagement with the readings/concepts.

There are three key components to this assignment.

1. First, on their assigned day, the leadership team will deliver a 10–15 minute presentation that provides an overview of the assigned chapter(s), highlighting key concepts, important information, and critical tensions to frame the discussion.
2. Second, the class will move into 10-minute breakout sessions, where each leader will facilitate a group focused on a specific lens:
  - a. one group will engage in a Critical and Context Lens discussion, examining assumptions, gaps, and youth perspectives,
  - b. while another group will engage in a Systems and Application Connection discussion, focusing on how the material connects to real-world systems and practice. Students who are not leading that session will be randomly assigned to breakout groups and are expected to participate in discussion, with preparation limited to completing the assigned readings.
  - c. Third, the class will reconvene for a final 10-minute facilitated discussion focused on solution generation, where leaders will guide the class in identifying what needs to change to positively impact youth mental health and how systems, practitioners, or communities can respond more effectively. Each breakout group will be asked to contribute at least one potential solution or recommendation, which will be shared and discussed collectively. The purpose of this structure is to foster critical thinking, collaborative learning, and the ability to move from analysis to action. Evaluation will be based on preparation, clarity of presentation, depth of insight, ability to connect course concepts to broader contexts, and effectiveness in facilitating meaningful discussion and solution-focused dialogue.

## **Assignment #3 – Reimagining Youth Mental Health Project**

**Due: June 12, 2026 by 11:59pm**

**Weight:**

For the final assignment (in pairs for individually), students will critically examine a specific issue, gap, or challenge within youth mental health and propose a thoughtful, solution-focused response.

Drawing on course readings, discussions, and seminar activities, students will identify an area where current approaches are limited, inequitable, or ineffective and analyze how systems, policies, or practices contribute to the issue.

Students will then propose a realistic and meaningful strategy for improvement, considering how youth, practitioners, and systems can respond more effectively.

Emphasis should be placed on moving from analysis to action, including consideration of youth voice, accessibility, and systemic change.

Here are some possible topic examples – you may use your own topic.

- School-Based Mental Health
  - The overuse of discipline vs. support for mental health challenges
  - Gaps in mental health support in elementary vs. secondary schools
  - The role of teachers in responding to student mental health/where systems fall short
- Access and Equity
  - Barriers to accessing mental health services for youth in rural or northern communities
  - Inequities in mental health support for racialized or marginalized youth
  - Financial and systemic barriers to care (e.g., waitlists, service eligibility)
- Youth Voice and Engagement
  - Lack of meaningful youth involvement in mental health service design
  - Tokenism vs. authentic youth participation in programs
  - Reimagining services that centre youth voice and lived experience
- Family and Home Contexts
  - Supporting families experiencing stress, trauma, or mental health challenges
  - Gaps in family-based interventions and supports
  - The impact of family systems on youth mental health outcomes
- Organizational Culture and Practitioner Wellness
  - The impact of practitioner burnout on youth outcomes
  - Workplace culture and its influence on mental health support quality
- Transitions and System Gaps
  - Youth transitioning out of care or services (e.g., aging out)
  - Gaps between child and adult mental health systems
  - Supporting youth during key life transitions

#### **Assignment #4 – Participation**

**Ongoing – Personal Write-up Due June 10**

**Weight: 10%**

Participation in this course is evaluated as a single overall grade, recognizing that meaningful engagement can vary from week to week and allowing students to demonstrate their contributions across the term rather than being penalized for occasional absences or less active weeks.

Students are expected to actively engage in all classes, particularly when their peers are leading seminar sessions, by contributing to discussions, participating in breakout activities, and responding thoughtfully to questions and ideas presented.

Preparation for participation is limited to completing the assigned readings; however, students are expected to come ready to engage in dialogue, share perspectives, and collaborate with others.

At the end of the course, students will complete a brief self-assessment reflecting on their participation, using specific examples to demonstrate their engagement. The participation grade will reflect the overall quality and consistency of contributions, including evidence of preparation, thoughtful and relevant input, active listening, respectful interaction with peers, and meaningful involvement in group discussions and activities

**Course Schedule**

<u><b>Week &amp; Date</b></u>	<u><b>Topic &amp; Guiding Questions</b></u>	<u><b>Readings</b></u>
<p><b>#1</b></p> <p><b>May 5</b></p> <p><b>May 7</b></p>	<p><u>Topic:</u> <b>Foundations, Positioning, and Wellness</b></p> <p><u>Guiding questions:</u></p> <p>How do our assumptions shape how we understand youth mental health?</p> <p>What does ethical, reflexive practice look like?</p>	<p>Chapter 1 – Important considerations</p> <p>Chapter 2 – practitioner wellness</p>
<p><b>#2</b></p> <p><b>May 12</b></p> <p><b>May 14</b></p>	<p><u>Topic:</u> <b>Trauma, Attachment and Family Context</b></p> <p><u>Guiding Questions:</u></p> <p>How are behaviours often misunderstood without context?</p> <p>Where do systems support vs fail families?</p> <p><b>May 12 – Seminar Leadership Group #1</b></p> <p><b>May 14 – Seminar Leadership Group #2</b></p> <p><b>May 14 – Assignment #1 Due – Reflexive Practice</b></p>	<p>Chapter 3 – Trauma and attachment</p> <p>Chapter 4 – Family home</p>
<p><b>#3</b></p> <p><b>May 19</b></p> <p><b>May 21</b></p>	<p><u>Topic:</u> <b>Youth Mental Health in School Systems</b></p> <p><u>Guiding Questions:</u></p> <p>How do schools respond to mental health?</p> <p>Who get supported vs. disciplined?</p> <p><b>May 19 – Seminar Leadership Group #3</b></p> <p><b>May 21 – Seminar Leadership Group #4</b></p>	<p>Chapter 5 – Elementary school</p> <p>Chapter 6 – High School</p>

<p><b>#4</b></p> <p><b>May 26</b></p> <p><b>May 28</b></p>	<p><u>Topic:</u> <b>Alternative and Community-Based Supports</b></p> <p><u>Guiding Questions:</u></p> <p>What does support look like outside clinical settings?</p> <p>Who is left out of mainstream services?</p> <p><b>May 26 – Seminar Leadership Group #5</b></p> <p><b>May 28 – Seminar Leadership Group #6</b></p>	<p>Chapter 7 – Recreation and expressive therapeutic interventions</p> <p>Chapter 8 – Community-based integrated youth service</p> <p>Chapter 9 – Northern and rural communities</p>
<p><b>#5</b></p> <p><b>June 2</b></p> <p><b>June 4</b></p>	<p><u>Topic:</u><b>High-Risk and Institutional Contexts</b></p> <p><u>Guiding Questions:</u></p> <p>When does care become control?</p> <p>How do systems reproduce harm?</p> <p><b>June 2 – Seminar Leadership Group #7</b></p> <p><b>June 4 – Seminar Leadership Group #8</b></p>	<p>Chapter 10: Group Care</p> <p>Chapter 11: Secure-Based Services</p> <p>Chapter 12: Youth Homelessness and Shelter Services</p>
<p><b>#6</b></p> <p><b>June 9</b></p> <p><b>June 11</b></p>	<p><u>Topic:</u><b>Justice, Transition and Reimagining Systems</b></p> <p><u>Guiding Questions:</u></p> <p>What happens when youth age out of systems?</p> <p>What would a truly supportive system look like?</p> <p><b>June 9 – Seminar Leadership Group #9</b></p> <p><b>June 10 – Assignment #4 Due - Participation Self-Evaluation</b></p> <p><b>June 12, 2026 – Assignment # 3 Due – Reimagining Youth Mental Health Project</b></p>	<p>Chapter 13: Youth Criminal Justice</p> <p>Chapter 14: Youth in Transition</p>

# King's University College General Course Policies 2025-2026

## **1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences**

### **Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)**

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

### **Academic Consideration for Student Absence**

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at [here](#).

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course. Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course. For further information, please see:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>

### **Absences from Final Examinations**

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details [https://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible\\_education/exams/index.html](https://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/exams/index.html).

## **Religious Accommodation**

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

## **2. Support Services**

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King’s University College:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King’s University College: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/personal-counselling>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King’s University College:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>

## **GBSV Support:**

King’s is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/campus-safety-and-reporting/gender-and-sexual-violence>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing [Care@kings.uwo.ca](mailto:Care@kings.uwo.ca) or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western’s Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by [email](#) or by calling 519-661-3568.

See also [https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html)

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

### **3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices**

**Use of Electronic Devices:** Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

**Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom:** King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/campus-safety-and-reporting/student-code-of-conduct>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

### **4. Statement on Academic Offences**

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at [here](#).

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with you instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/OriginalityReports-TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

## **5. Copyright of Course Material**

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member.

Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

## **6. Use of Recordings**

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

## **7. Policy on Attendance**

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.