



**Childhood and Youth Studies 2212G (574) (575) (576) (577)**  
**CHILDHOOD, YOUTH, AND THE LAW**  
**Fall/ Winter 2025-2026**

**Instructor:** J. Silcox  
**Email:** jsilcox5@uwo.ca

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### **Course Information**

#### **Calendar Description:**

An introduction to the study of childhood and law in Canada. By examining specific cases, statutes, treaties, and practices, students will have an opportunity to increase their understanding of the most relevant doctrines, principles, and debates about childhood in Canadian legal and political culture.

**Antirequisite(s):** The former Childhood and Social Institutions 2250F/G, the former Childhood and Social Institutions 2256F/G, and the former Childhood and Social Institutions 2253F/G.

**Prerequisite(s):** Childhood and Youth Studies 1025F/G or the former Childhood and Social Institutions 1025F/G.

**Extra Information:** 3 hours.

**Course Weight:** 0.50

**Breadth:** Category A

**Subject Code:** CYS

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), 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.

**King's University College**  
**CYS 2212 – Childhood, Youth, and the Law**

**Winter 2026**

**Course information:**

Course Name, Number, Section: CYS 2212G 574

Instructor(s): J. Silcox

Contact Information: [jsilcox5@uwo.ca](mailto:jsilcox5@uwo.ca)

Office hours: <https://calendly.com/jennifersilcox/15minute>

**Course description:**

An introduction to the study of childhood and law in Canada. By examining specific cases, statutes, treaties, and practices, students will increase their understanding of the most relevant legal debates about childhood in Canadian legal and political culture.

In the Winter 2026 version of this course, students will learn about the doctrine of children's right to protection by the state (*parens patriae*) and the best interest of the child test, custody and access law, child support, corporal punishment and parental rights, the duty to report, children's evidence and the laws that protect them from sexual abuse, the role of liability law in remedying harms suffered by children in care, and the establishment of cultural rights of Indigenous people in Canada through residential school litigation.

**Course learning outcomes:** LOs 1, 2, 4, 6, 9 (See Appendix A for descriptions of LOs)

In addition to the LOs above, by the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Apply legal principles and basic legal reasoning to a set of facts
- Read about court decisions and prepare succinct case briefs (i.e., legal summaries)
- Research relevant law to prepare for moots (i.e., mock trials)
- Demonstrate knowledge on various sources of law and the impact on children and youth
- Explain legal impacts of social, economic, and cultural issues
- Consider both theoretical/practical impacts of law on the lives of children and youth

**Mode of Instruction:** *in-person*

**Course textbooks/materials:**

Ryan, P.J., (2024). *Childhood and the Law in Canada - the family/state relationship*. LexisNexis.

Hardcopy LexisNexis (\$130); Hardcopy UWO bookstore (\$132); Campus e-Bookstore (\$127)

\*Hardcopy may be best because it can be more easily consulted in lectures and moots (tutorials).

\*\*Free hardcopies available for use at King's library (2-hour reserve)

**Method of evaluation:**

**Schedule and due dates are subject to minor changes; students will always receive ample notice.**

Students will be graded in alignment with university-wide grade descriptors (see Appendix A)

Item	Weight	Due date
Mock Moot	1%	January 12
Case Briefs (i.e., written legal summaries)	12%	Weeks with moots scheduled*
Moot Court Participation	12%	Weeks with moots scheduled
Tests x2	40%	February 9 and March 9
Final Exam	35%	TBA**

**\*See schedule for tentative moot dates; \*\*Do not schedule travel in exam period**

We devote the 2-hour lesson to learning the cases we will be mooted during tutorials.

A **moot court** is an activity whereby participants take part in mock court proceedings. Moots allow students to practice using legal language, concepts, and doctrines to understand important legal dilemmas impacting children and youth. To prepare for moots, students will read about the cases in assigned reading and write case briefs (i.e., legal summaries). Attending lessons enables you to hear about the cases and ask questions.

Together, **case briefs** (12%) and the quality of your **participation in moots during tutorials** (12%) comprise 24% of your grade. Students complete 6 moot courts and 6 case briefs. Weekly moots and case briefs also help prepare for tests. The in-person on-campus **tests** and **final exam (cumulative)** are based on the legal cases and concepts studied and include a mixture of multiple choice and short and long answer questions.

**Academic Considerations:**

1. Students are given **two** 24-hour late extensions that can be used for case briefs only
2. Students are given **one** missed moot alternative that allows students to complete an in-person quiz on the following Friday for one missed moot

**Minimum Attendance and Assignment Requirements:**

1. Throughout the semester, there are 6 moot courts and 6 written case briefs that you must complete. All 6 moots and 6 case briefs are graded
  - o Students are required complete at least 3 moots & 3 briefs to pass the course
2. *Students must attend at least 6 of 10 scheduled lessons to pass the course*

**Examination Policies/Requirements:**

1. Academic consideration for tests requires communication with the professor and may require formal supporting documentation.
  - o **Makeup dates (if approved): Feb. 13 (test #1) & Mar. 13 (test #2)**

**Academic Integrity:** *Penalties for late papers or projects may be avoided if extensions are requested in advance. Otherwise, a 2-mark deduction will be taken for each of the first five days it is late (including weekends). After 5-days without communication, a zero will be assigned.*

Students are expected to schedule appointments and other responsibilities around class time. To be excused from participatory requirements (attendance or homework, etc.) due to temporary illness or an unavoidable scheduling conflict, **contact the instructor directly via email as soon as you are aware of the problem. Ordinary problems of this nature do not require documentation or communication with the Dean's Office; they will be dealt with by the course instructor.**

*If a student experiences a disruption in their ability to study or participate in the course for more than one week, or if there is a personal loss or trauma of a serious nature, they may request more extensive accommodations, counselling, and other forms of help. The best way to do this is to contact the instructor and/or the Academic Dean's Office.*

**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 at Western (and King's)**, at the following Web site:*

[https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

**CYS AI Usage Policy:** Intentional usage of artificial intelligence or language generation or translation applications by students to summarize readings or complete assigned 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.* The use of Grammarly or similar applications is prohibited. Using plagiarism checkers to see if plagiarized text has been altered enough to avoid detection is itself a form of academic dishonesty. **Students must compose text, choose words, construct logic 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.

**Turnitin.com:** *All writing for this course will 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. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between Western University (including King's) and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

### Schedule of Classes, Readings, Assessments:

\* This is a tentative schedule.

A full schedule, including assigned reading, will be provided on OWL BrightSpace.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Lesson &amp; Topic</b>	<b>Important Dates &amp; Reminders</b>
<b>Jan. 5</b>	Course Introductions & Group Formation	
<b>Jan. 12</b>	Types of Law	Mock Moot
<b>Jan. 19</b>	Parens Patriae & Eugenics	Moot: Eve
<b>Jan. 26</b>	The Best Interest of the Child (custody)	Moot: Van de Perre
<b>Feb. 2</b>	International Borders & Family Law	Moot: Ellis
<b>Feb. 9</b>	Liberalism, Child Rearing, & Corporal Punishment	Test #1
<b>Feb. 16</b>	<b>Reading Week</b>	
<b>Feb. 23</b>	Children's Coverture and Parental Rights	Moot: CFCYL
<b>Mar. 2</b>	Sex Crime and Children's Evidence	Discussion
<b>Mar. 9</b>	Revolution in Evidence and the Duty to Report	Test #2
<b>Mar. 16</b>	Childhood as a Weapon in Cultural Conflict	Moot: Kaija
<b>Mar. 23</b>	Torts and Liabilities	
<b>Mar. 30</b>	Tort Law, Languages Loss, and Cultural Rights	Moot: Blackwater
<b>Apr. 6</b>	<b>Course Conclusions</b> Note: There is class on April 6 (only April 3 is a holiday)	Exam Q&A

## **Appendix A:**

### **Learning Outcomes – Descriptions**

LO1 - CYS students acquire a general knowledge of the key concepts, theoretical approaches and assumptions within the field of childhood and youth studies. They come to see children as competent social actors and understand the implications of this fact for children's participatory rights in a local, national and global contexts. Those who obtain an Honours Specialization (HSP) in CYS demonstrate the ability to assess issues and critique arguments about the politics of childhood, social justice for children, and children's rights and capabilities in various institutional contexts.

LO2 - CYS students become familiar with interdisciplinary approaches to childhood and learn to evaluate and distinguish between them. Those who complete an HSP come to understand how these approaches intersect with other fields and disciplines, and formulate their own research questions in upper division seminars.

LO3 – CYS students gain a working knowledge of case law, statutory law, public policy, and institutional features of childhood and youth in the past and the present. They critically reflect on the significance of various norms, rules, and practices for young people. They consider these structures in terms of power relationships between children, parents, and professionals, as well as those between racial, ethnic, migrant, gender, class, and national groups.

LO4 – CYS students apply analytic tools within childhood studies, and defend their ideas and arguments in oral and written forms. HSP students conduct research in childhood studies. Apply and defend ideas and arguments in speech and writing and in communication with others.

LO 5 – CYS students are able to assess the applicability of research and its social implications for public debate, policy, law, and professional practice. HSP students are able to offer critique and alternative perspectives on how research should be applied and what implications it might have for diverse communities in and beyond Canada.

LO 6 – CYS students appreciate that the way we position children and youth as persons shapes our policy positions and the research questions. HSP students develop the ability to place children's/youths' own experiences and perceptions at the center of research methods and policy/legal debate.

LO 7 – CYS students develop lines of argument and to make sound judgements in accordance with major concepts, theories and methods in childhood studies. Be able to use a range of techniques to frame questions, evaluate arguments and concepts and propose solutions.

LO 8 – CYS Students make critical use of scholarly reviews and primary sources.

LO 9 – CYS students gain the ability to communicate accurate information and clear arguments orally and in writing.

LO 10 – CYS Students respect the limits to their own knowledge. They appreciate how uncertainty, ambiguity, and limits to knowledge might influence analyses and interpretations.

LO 11 – CYS students work effectively with others and take personal responsibility for their actions when part of a team. They take initiative and maintain behavior consistent with academic integrity, community involvement, and social responsibility.

### **GRADE DESCRIPTORS**

University-wide grade descriptors:

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work which is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	below 50	Fail

**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.

Friday Make-Up Exams may only be written with the instructor's consent.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at [https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses\\_enrollment/exams and tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf](https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses_enrollment/exams_and_tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf).

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://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/academic\\_consideration\\_Sep24.pdf](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf)

**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 (under Special Examinations).

### **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://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-services/>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University

College: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-supportservices/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/mental\\_wellbeing/](https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/)

Academic Support Services at King's University College:  
<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-resources/>

### **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://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/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.

Further supports can be found on this website: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safecampus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

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://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-affairs/code-of-student-conduct1/>

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

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

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, grammarchecking 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/Originality Reports - 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.