



# YDRS

**Youth Development through  
Recreation Services Symposium**

**20  
24**

# WELCOME

## ABOUT THE ALBERTA RECREATION & PARKS ASSOCIATION

The Alberta Recreation & Parks Association (ARPA) is a provincial not-for-profit organization committed to collaborating with our members and partners to help build healthy citizens, communities and environments.

We believe recreation and parks include everything from play to sport to culture and outdoor pursuits. All are essential to support the social, mental, spiritual and physical well-being of citizens and communities.

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ARPA would like to acknowledge the First Nations, the Métis, and all of the peoples across Alberta who share a history and a deep connection with this land. We dedicate ourselves to moving forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in the spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

## MESSAGE FROM ARPA PRESIDENT



On behalf of the ARPA Board of Directors and the Association Staff, I welcome you to this year's 2024 Youth Development through Recreation Services Symposium. Your participation at this symposium is your opportunity to understand your critical role in delivering quality recreation programs for youth.

This symposium is a fun, energizing way to connect with new ideas and information, network with a fun group of colleagues from across Alberta and share the great work you are doing in your community.

ARPA is so proud to host this learning opportunity, and I want to recognize the planning committee, our sponsors, partners and, of course, you, the amazing participants!

Providing quality, safe, fun experiences for children and youth creates the foundation for healthy and happy participants and parents. Your commitment to leading, creating, and delivering these experiences with children and youth in our communities is so important and valued.

Thank you!

Now jump in, have some fun, get creative, and make some new friends. I wish you all the best for a great symposium.

Deb Comfort

President  
Alberta Recreation & Parks Association (ARPA)



## Tuesday, April 30, 2024

6:00 - 9:00 pm REGISTRATION & CAMP KINDLE CHECK-IN

7:00 - 11:00 pm YDRS 2024 WEDNESDAY NIGHT SNACK & SOCIAL

## Wednesday, May 1, 2024

8:30 - 9:00 am BREAKFAST

9:00 - 9:15 am ELDER BLESSING AND OPENING COMMENTS

9:15 - 10:45 am SESSION 1:

### **Conscious Future Ancestors: Reconciling Our Relationships to Self, Community, and Earth Across Space and Time (Larissa Crawford)**

What does it mean to move recreational programming beyond the connotation of 'hobby'? For Indigenous peoples around the world, being on the Land and Water is so much more than a hobby. For anyone, and especially people with disabilities, being on the Land and Water can be one of the most effective healing practices. Where we find inclusion, self, direction, and community outdoor, so have our ancestors, and hopefully those who come after us. In the session, "Conscious Future Ancestors: Reconciling Our Relationships to Self, Community, and Earth Across Space and Time" Larissa Crawford will hold space to explore how, when we seek to understand how the actions and inactions of our ancestors shaped the realities we've inherited today, we're better positioned to understand how our own actions and inactions are shaping our realities and those of future generations.

### **Connecting through Play (Sarah Reader)**

We are our most authentic selves in play. Through Play, we can develop resiliency, self-confidence, social and problem-solving skills, well-being, and a sense of calm. Play connects us to ourselves and each other and is a tremendous and fun way to increase relationships with your family.

Come join Sarah as she delves into the science behind play, what happens in our brain during play, and how we can find connection through play. Participants will leave with practical ideas on bringing back play into their programs.

### **Sport for Life: Developing Physical Literacy in Recreation Programs (Jen Goeres)**

The *Developing Physical Literacy in Recreation Programs* workshop aims to build on your experiences to understand physical literacy and how your experience can also develop you into an effective leader for recreation programs. With an emphasis on recreation leaders, this workshop breaks down the definition of physical literacy and its importance in quality programs. Participants will work through scenarios and learn to adapt programs using the '5+5 model' (completing this training will provide participants with a certificate of completion and is one of two workshops within the Sport for Life Physical Literacy Leader - Level 1 certification (please note: this certificate is an additional \$75.00 + GST).

## Extended Learning and Development Opportunity:

### **Sport for Life: Developing Physical Literacy in Recreation Programs Learning Facilitator Training Pathway**

*Sport for Life: Developing Physical Literacy in Recreation Programs Learning Facilitators* lead the *Developing Physical Literacy in Recreation Programs* workshop, support coordination when applicable, and promote deliveries to prospective workshop hosts.

Sport for Life Learning Facilitators have a crucial role in assisting with the development of a new generation of community leaders through clear learning objectives. We see our learning facilitators as ambassadors of Sport for Life, and they are encouraged to reach even more people on the topics of quality sport and physical literacy.

- All interested Learning Facilitators must complete the following pathway to become a *Developing Physical Literacy in Recreation Programs Learning Facilitator*:
  - a. Complete the [Sport for Life Learning Facilitator Application](#).
  - b. Participate in the *Sport for Life: Developing Physical Literacy in Recreation Programs* workshop (YDRS 2024 - Session 1).
  - c. Complete the **Sport for Life: Developing Physical Literacy in Recreation Programs Learning Facilitator Training Pathway (YDRS Session 7)** to review content and delivery.
  - d. Co-facilitate a *Sport for Life: Developing Physical Literacy in Recreation Programs* workshop with a certified Sport for Life Developing Physical Literacy in Recreation Programs Learning Facilitator.
  - e. Have a Sport for Life Learning Facilitator Evaluation signed off by a Master Learning Facilitator.
- This extended YDRS 2024 session will be available to eight successful Learning Facilitator candidates/YDRS delegates.
- For more information, please email [workshops@sportforlife.ca](mailto:workshops@sportforlife.ca).

10:45 - 11:00 am

#### **COFFEE BREAK AND TRANSITION**

11:00 - 12:30 pm

#### **SESSION 2:**

##### **Calgary Adapted Hub: Creating Inclusive Sport and Recreation Opportunities (Ashley Fox & Jen Goeres)**

Calgary Adapted Hub powered by Jumpstart is a collective of Calgary-based organizations committed to providing quality sports and recreation opportunities for children, youth, and families living with disabilities in the city of Calgary. By working together with our partners, we are pathfinders, travel companions, and motivators on the journey to participation. Our goal is to maximize existing programs and create bold new ones through knowledge-sharing, research, education, evaluation, and—above all else—collaboration. Utilizing our program navigation service, we aim to support families, educators, and allied health professionals in finding a program that is a good fit for a group or an individual child interested in participating in sport and recreation.

### **Supporting Newcomer Youth Through Play (Fatima Warsame & Farzaneh Anjomshoae)**

This presentation will start by delving into the analysis of comfort and emphasizing why it needs to be a focus, primarily through play, when assisting newcomers undergoing substantial changes. The presentation will also outline practical approaches to teaching newcomers about Canada, emphasizing the incorporation of play for better comprehension. Additionally, it will address the importance of fostering cross-cultural understanding among newcomers and explore its significance in social development. Facilitators will illustrate key points throughout the presentation using examples of the games they employ.

### **Play, Connect, Thrive: The Art of Empathetic Communication (Matt leung)**

Imagine a work environment where laughter and collaboration thrive and trust is a cornerstone of your entire team. In this workshop, you will immerse yourself in activities that spark curiosity and empower a new appreciation for diverse perspectives. You will refine your communication skills and experience firsthand how the power of play can foster collaborative relationships, create positive environments, and reduce burnout. Unleash your inner child, and use interactive games to learn innovative communication techniques and non-intrusive strategies that will allow you to practice empathy actively!

**12:30 - 1:30 pm**

### **LUNCH & KEYNOTE: Outdoor Learning: Ready, Set, Let's Go Outside! (Dr. Kevin Keirs)**

**1:30 - 3:00 pm**

### **SESSION 3:**

#### **Creating a Safe Space in a Recreation Setting (Jasmin Ladouceur & Chrissie Rozak)**

This session will discuss creating and implementing a safe space within a recreation facility. From creating a committee and policies to training staff and creating awareness within the community, the methods that the Auburn Bay Resident's Association (ABRA) has used for training and awareness will be at the forefront of this session.

*Celebrating*  
— 20 YEARS —

The Youth Development Through Recreation Services (YDRS) Symposium is based on the National Youth Development Symposium, which was launched in Calgary in the Spring of 2003!



## **UCalgary Summer Camps: Let's Play! (Evan Smibert, Curtis Polowick, Lauren Chown, Ranee Drader and Sam Easton)**

Join our UCalgary Summer Camp team for a fun interactive session where we will teach you and play our favourite games and activities for kids of all ages! UCalgary Summer Camps hosts over 10,000 campers every summer, led by over 300 staff members. We have many different camps for families, including business, design, STEM, arts, aquatics, sports, outdoor camps and more; there's something for everyone ages 4 to 17.

We will also talk about how our team created a *Natural Adventure Park (NAP)* on campus and share some ideas so you can create your own - with NAPs being places where children can explore, create, imagine, and learn uniquely, and unlike anywhere else, children are free to build, create, and transform their surroundings using loose parts and natural materials.

### **What is your Colour Personality? (Nolana Nichols & Tanya Snelson)**

Your personality can influence many aspects of your life. The *Colors Personality Test* might shed light on the values, likes and dislikes that can explain your overall personality, behaviours, and thoughts. Workplaces can use these tests to hire those who fit their team environment, with students often taking them to discover potential career opportunities and education paths. Additionally, individuals might try these tests to better understand themselves and their relationships - come learn what colour(s) YOU ARE!

**3:00 - 3:30 pm**

### **COFFEE BREAK AND TRANSITION**

**3:30 - 5:00 pm**

### **SESSION 4:**

#### **Aquatic Leadership: Building Strong Leaders of Youth and Youth That Are Leaders (Lifesaving Society Alberta and NWT)**

Have you ever been at your local pool and looked up to see a baby-faced lifeguard on deck responsible for the safety of everyone in your immediate vicinity and thought, "Wow, they look young! They can't be qualified for this job!"

*The Lifesaving Society* certifies young leaders in aquatics through a competency-based system that develops their skills and knowledge. Despite being perceived as "too young," those working in aquatics are well-rounded individuals with leadership potential. The leadership training focuses on developing essential knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviours, and values for aquatic staff to successfully meet expectations and carry out their duties by building confident, competent, and skilled leaders for life.

#### **Outdoor Therapy & Well Being Support (Melissa Pearce)**

In this session, we will discuss how nature is naturally therapeutic and what being outdoors does for our cortisol levels. We will also discuss how barriers to receiving therapeutic support are broken in a non-traditional setting and how we can incorporate coping skills in a non-threatening and non-clinical way. Come with me to learn about typical forest school/nature-based learning used as a shoulder-to-shoulder approach to mental health well-being and as a stimulus for growth while discussing and practicing nature connection activities and how to foster coping skills.



## **Empathetic Leadership and Navigating Courageous Conversations for Positive Change (Tracy Morgan)**

Leadership is about guiding others with a clear vision. Empathy helps you connect; getting to know yourself is the compass that points your leadership North. Learn how all of these tie in together to help you be the best leader you can be and guide you through courageous conversations.

**5:30 - 6:30 pm**

**DINNER**

**6:30 - 7:00 pm**

**DOWNTIME**

**7:00 - 11:00 pm**

**YDRS 2024 SNACK & SOCIAL**

## **Thursday, May 2, 2024**

**8:30 - 9:00 am**

**BREAKFAST**

**9:00 - 9:15 am**

**ELDER BLESSING AND OPENING COMMENTS**

**9:15 - 10:45 am**

**SESSION 5:**

### **Engaging Supports to Develop Youth Employment Pathways (Emily Kinkade-Speight)**

Join *Ever Active Schools* to learn about a new youth-developed toolkit to promote inclusive youth employment hiring practices. This session will support recreation leaders, social programs, and other community-based organizations working with youth throughout the employment cycle. We will discuss the current employment landscape and how to set youth up for success within your organization. You will leave this session with practical resources, a youth employment toolkit, and tips to best support youth in their employment journey.

### **Soil Yourself! (Tami Nisbet)**

The physical and mental benefits of touching soil, connecting with plants and learning how to garden effectively are an untapped recreational greenhouse; pardon me, powerhouse! Participants will get a chance to play outside for this adventure, work in pairs or groups and take away valuable ideas for budding plant and nature lovers in the youth they aim to serve.

Join this interactive session and learn the recreational and mental health benefits of outdoor gardening, indoor plant care, and physical contact with soil - our time spent together will support the development of our collective communities and the movement of returning to our roots!



## **Leading with Artificial Intelligence in Recreation: Opportunities and Challenges (Toby Nwabuogor)**

Artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming various aspects of our society, including recreation. As recreation professionals, we need to be aware of how AI can help us improve our skills and abilities as leaders in our field and how we can overcome the challenges and risks of using AI in our work.

In this presentation, we will explore how AI can help us design, deliver, and evaluate recreation activities that are inclusive, accessible, and engaging for participants of diverse backgrounds, abilities, and identities.

**10:45 - 11:00 am COFFEE BREAK AND TRANSITION**

**11:00 - 12:30 pm SESSION 6:**

### **The 7 Pillars in an Inclusive Space (Mackenzie Golden & Kayla MacIntosh)**

Throughout this session, participants will learn valuable tools to create inclusive spaces as they work through the *Communities Chooeswell Healthy Communities Framework*, comprised of seven pillars (Policy, Places, Programs, Participation, People, Promotion, and Partnerships).

Participants will work through each, breaking into pairs or small groups to practice brainstorming with the given example case study and problem-solving for a project of their own. They will leave the session with tangible skills and ideas to apply to their work in community projects as we add ideas through a collaborative element by gaining new perspectives and forming networking connections.

### **Developing Physical Literacy: The Importance of Learning to Fall (Janelle Eisler Carr & Darrin Jones)**

Learn about the importance of learning how to fall during the early and adolescent years and the benefits of a child's wellness throughout their life.

Participants will learn tips and tricks to integrate falling into PLAY in a fun, safe and effective way. Facilitated discussions will be conducted to allow the group of participants to critically analyze their programs and share their successes, limitations and plans for future programming to integrate falling.

### **How to Deal with Difficult People or Situations (Tracy Morgan)**

This session will dive into key components required to deal with difficult people or situations by learning about "good" communication vs. "poor" communication, creating an inviting space for open conversations, effectively reading body language, and resolving conflict all through practical recreation-based scenarios.

**12:30 - 1:30 pm LUNCH & CONNECT**



1:30 - 3:00 pm

## SESSION 7:

### **Play is for Everybody! (Emily Kinkade-Speight)**

At *Ever Active Schools*, we believe that everyone deserves access to health and well-being opportunities. Through this belief, we have created a *Play is for Everybody Framework* to support the knowledge, understanding, and skills to foster active environments and recreation opportunities that are equitable, accessible, and inclusive for all children. Participants will leave the session with new games, skills, and knowledge (a few laughs, too!) to create and facilitate play opportunities for every child in your program!

### **Part 1: Rekindling Joy in Grown-ups: Fostering Outdoor Play for All Ages (Monique Lozeron)**

In a world that often leaves adults overwhelmed and disconnected from the wonders of the outdoors, the workshop is a journey to rediscover the childlike sense of wonder and joy through outdoor play.

Participants will not only find renewed enthusiasm for outdoor play for all ages but leave with practical approaches to overall well-being through the following focus areas: rediscovering wonder, mental and emotional well-being, interconnectedness, community and social engagement and environmental stewardship. The workshop will implement theory and highlight how outdoor nature play benefits everyone. (NOTE: This is a half-day workshop over Sessions 7 and 8, and you must attend both.)

### **So, I'm a Leader...Now what? (John Napier & Maren Tyron)**

Found yourself in a leadership position and not sure where to begin (after all, being a leader is challenging, right?!)

John and Maren from the Alberta Association of Recreation Facilities Personnel (AARFP) will help you better understand your leadership style and how to apply your strengths (and weaknesses) to become the most authentic leader you can be!

3:00 - 3:30 pm

## COFFEE BREAK AND TRANSITION

3:30 - 5:00 pm

## SESSION 8:

### **Inclusive Play 101 (Jesse Dyck)**

The session is split into three sections: 1. Identifying Barriers (focusing on language, neurodivergence, physical ability), 2. Strategies to Create Belonging, and 3. Application (witness and lead using the strategies) to help identify barriers program leaders and coaches may face when leading activities.

This inclusive session will provide strategies to help create an environment where all participants feel a sense of belonging, how the strategies can be applied in games and activities, and some new, inclusive games you can bring back to your programs.

**Rekindling Joy in Grown-ups: Fostering Outdoor Play for All Ages  
(Monique Lozeron)**

**NOTE:** This is a half-day workshop, and you must select this session for both Sessions 7 and 8.

**Coaching and Feedback - How to do it great!  
(Karina Damgaard)**

Are you ready to elevate your communication skills to the next level? Join us for an interactive and engaging workshop where you'll learn the art of giving and receiving feedback like a pro!

In this dynamic session, you'll discover the power of constructive criticism, effective coaching techniques, and the secrets to providing feedback that inspires growth and improvement.

**Extended Learning and Development Opportunity:  
Sport for Life Sport for Life: Developing Physical Literacy in  
Recreation Programs Learning Facilitator Training Pathway**

**5:30 - 6:30 pm DINNER**

**6:30 - 7:00 pm DOWNTIME**

**7:00 - 11:00 pm YDRS 2024 SNACK & SOCIAL**

**Friday, May 3, 2024**

**8:30 - 9:00 am BREAKFAST**

**9:00 - 11:30 am SESSION 9:**

**Healthy Play™ (Jen Smith)**

Healthy Play™ training provides teachers and staff with a practical and simple step-by-step approach to enhance positive social skill building, strengthen conflict resolution skills, reduce aggression and bullying, foster resiliency, promote cooperation and maximize involvement for all students and participants.

We provide a fun and relaxed learning environment to introduce the Healthy Play™ Philosophy and provide participants with "hands-on" play opportunities they can use in their classrooms and programs the very next day!

Understanding the budget impacts of purchasing additional equipment and materials, all Healthy Play™ activities can be played with little to no equipment.



## **Play is Risky Business! (Melissa Pearce)**

*Risky Play...what does it mean to each of us?*

*What steps must we take to ensure transparency with licensing officers, stakeholders, and caregivers?*

*What steps should be taken to ensure youth are learning how to mitigate risks in a safe environment?*

Learn what a day in a nature school would look like and how you can encourage children and staff to mitigate risk, create safety measures and do dynamic risk assessments.

## **Empowering Children and Youth through Indigenous Traditions and Teachings**

Delve into the rich tapestry of Indigenous culture, wisdom, and traditions that have nurtured communities for generations by exploring how to create inclusive and empowering environments for children and youth that honour diverse perspectives and histories, fostering a sense of belonging and understanding for all.

In this session, you will be able to engage with Indigenous speakers and facilitators who will guide you through practical strategies and tools to incorporate Indigenous values and teachings into your work, gain insights on how to navigate the complexities of reconciliation and decolonization and learn to foster meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities by promoting equity and justice in your programs.

**11:30 - 11:45 am**

**CLOSING REMARKS**

**12:00 pm**

**YDRS 2024 & CAMP KINDLE CHECKOUT**

# SPEAKER BIOS

## **Farzaneh Anjomshoae (Action For Healthy Communities)**

Farzaneh came to Canada from Iran in 2019, and her firsthand experiences as an immigrant guided her academic and professional path. Feeling the challenges and seeing the resilience within immigrant communities inspired her to pursue a Master's in psychology. She researched immigrant children's mental health and is currently doing a Ph.D. at the University of Alberta, where she is dedicated to contributing meaningfully through her research. At Action for Healthy Communities (AHC), she is a part of an incredible team. Together, they are committed to supporting newcomer youth and their families, offering resources and guidance to help them navigate their settling lives in Canada.

## **Lauren Chown (University of Calgary)**

Lauren Chown is the *Outdoor Youth Program Coordinator* for the University of Calgary Outdoor Centre. Lauren has been an instructor and guide with the organization since 2017 before transitioning to the Youth Program Coordinator in 2021. She leads a team committed to year-round outdoor programming, including summer camps, climbing, cross-country skiing, and adaptive programs. The Outdoor Youth Program focuses on introducing outdoor recreation to participants of all abilities and instilling responsible outdoor practices.

## **Larissa Crawford (Future Ancestors)**

Larissa Crawford proudly passes on Métis and Jamaican ancestry to her daughter, Zyra, and is a published Indigenous, anti-racism, and climate justice researcher, policy advisor, and restorative circle keeper with 15 years of experience. Larissa is the Founder of Future Ancestors Services, a youth-led professional services social enterprise that operates at the intersection of climate and racial justice.

## **Karina Damgaard (City of Calgary)**

Karina Damgaard is the *Learning and Development Coordinator* with the City of Calgary, Recreation & Social Programs and has been involved in recreation for over 35 years. In her spare time, you will likely find her with family and friends or in an arena or gym cheering on her kids.

## **Ranee Drader (University of Calgary)**

Ranee Drader is the *Assistant Outdoor Youth Program Coordinator* for the Outdoor Centre at the University of Calgary. This year will be Ranee's eighth summer working with UCalgary Outdoor Camps, with two years in her current position. Ranee supports leading outdoor year-round programming, including climbing, cross-country skiing and summer camps. She holds a Bachelor of Education degree from Mount Royal University and is passionate about outdoor education and getting kids active and outside!

### **Jesse Dyck (YMCA Lethbridge)**

Jesse graduated with a Bachelor of Human Kinetics, a minor in Psychology focusing on Sports Leadership, and has 12 years of experience leading Multi-Sport Camps for the University of Lethbridge. Jesse has taught camps in multiple countries, is the Assistant Coach for the University of Lethbridge Women's Soccer Team (focusing on team building), and worked for four years with Disney Cruise Line, focusing on training staff to work with children and youth from all backgrounds and creating new programs for the company. Jesse is currently employed with the YMCA of Lethbridge, developing sports programs while also providing mentorship to program staff.

### **Sam Easton (University of Calgary)**

Sam Easton is the *Outdoor Sports and Games Instructor* for Mini University Summer Camps. This is her third year doing Mini University camps. She is a first-year Education student at the University of Calgary, specializing in Physical Education.

### **Janelle Eisler Carr (Capilano University Department of Athletics and Recreation)**

Over the past 15 years, Janelle has been pursuing her passion for educating people about the evidence-based benefits of physical activity and play through a recreation, fitness, and physiotherapy career. This has led her to work as a Recreation Supervisor in various settings and ages.

### **Ashley Fox (Calgary Adapted Hub)**

Ashley Fox is a relationship driven leader bringing over 17 years of experience supporting physical, mental and social well-being initiatives across Alberta. Ashley is committed to providing opportunities and developing systems for individuals to access safe, inclusive, and quality sport and physical activity. Working with others to build healthy communities and support meaningful participation in physical activity is what Ashley is motivated to do.

### **Jen Goeres (ARPA/Calgary Adapted Hub/Sport for Life)**

Jen Goeres has been involved in sport and recreation for nearly 30 years, working and volunteering for not-for-profit, municipal, provincial, and national organizations. She obtained a Bachelor of Kinesiology (Adapted and Therapeutic Physical Activity) and a Bachelor of Education (Secondary Physical Education) from the University of Calgary and currently works as an educator with Calgary Catholic School Division as well as a *Practicum Advisor* and *Sessional Instructor - Physical Education & Wellness* within the Faculty of Education - St. Mary's University.

She is also the *Owner and Founder* of WordPLAY Consulting Inc., and works as the *ARPA HIGH FIVE® Coordinator/Chair of YDRS, Program and Community Engagement Coordinator* at Calgary Adapted Hub powered by Jumpstart, and a *Sport for Life Master Learning Facilitator*.

### **Mackenzie Golden (ARPA - Communities ChooseWell)**

Mackenzie Golden is a *Program Officer* at Communities ChooseWell. She recently graduated from Mount Royal University with a Bachelor's degree in Sports and Recreation Management. Her academic journey has been complemented by her hands-on experience in the recreation industry during her university years. This developed her passion for providing accessible opportunities for people to live a healthy lifestyle through recreation and healthy eating.

### **Darrin Jones (YMCA Calgary)**

Darrin Jones Over the last 14 years, Darrin has been educating people of all ages and backgrounds on the value of fitness, exercise and recreation. Darrin works as a strength coach, group fitness instructor and personal trainer in various setting facilities. He is a volunteer softball coach and has developed several youth and early years physical activity events to engage people in play and physical activity.

### **Dr. Kevin Kiers, PhD (Burman University)**

Dr. Kiers is an *Assistant Professor* in the School of Education at Burman University. Previously, he chaired the Outdoor Leadership Department, served as Camp Director, and was an elementary school teacher. He is currently co-authoring a book titled *Outdoor Learning in Canadian Contexts: Practical Examples for Teachers*.

### **Emily Kinkade-Speight (she/her) (EverActive Schools)**

As a *Health and Wellness Consultant* at Ever Active Schools, Emily has been a part of many projects which involve empowering youth and reducing barriers. This includes facilitating the Youth Wellness Leader Certificate training, building a Community of Practice to increase employer and sector readiness for under-represented populations, and working with partners such as the Jays Care Foundation and Volunteer AB on program implementation.

A large portion of Emily's career has been dedicated to working with children and youth who have been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder and/or a variety of learning disabilities. This has taught her patience, compassion and how to create a safe, positive environment for others.

### **Jasmin Ladouceur (Auburn Bay Residents Association)**

Jasmin has worked for the Auburn Bay Residents Association for 8 years. She helped form their Safe Space Initiative and is a current member of the Safe Space Committee. She is passionate about inclusivity and accessibility.

### **Matt Leung (Global Play Solutions/ARPA)**

Matt Leung is a Professional Child who has facilitated workshops across North America. With over 15 years of experience in recreation, he is an expert at instigating play for all ages. Matt is a *Program Manager* with ARPA, a *Director* of Outdoor Play Canada, and studied Global Leadership at Royal Roads University.

### **Monique Lozeron (Move Play Nature)**

Monique owns Move Play Nature and is passionate about sharing her knowledge and expertise in physical literacy, play and the outdoors. She values the role each field brings to child development and recognizes that when they all come together, amazing things happen for children and the professionals supporting them.

Her enthusiasm, positivity, and open-minded approach to working alongside children inspire educators to reframe how they view the role of the adult, and the environment when interacting with children.

### **Kayla MacIntosh (ARPA)**

Kayla is the *Program Officer of Engagement and Storytelling - Communities ChooseWell*. With a Bachelor's Degree in History and experience across the recreation, tourism and childcare industries, she has merged her experiences, which shape her focus on storytelling.

She is passionate about working with communities and individuals to help guide the development and telling of their stories effectively and engagingly. Kayla loves theatre, film, travel, and good food (especially potatoes).

### **Tracy Morgan (Town of High River)**

Tracy Morgan is a dedicated leader with a genuine passion for recreation and mentoring staff. Her journey from instructor to supervisor reflects her commitment to fostering growth and success in recreation and directly with her staff. She believes the sky is the limit when you are your authentic self.

### **John Napier (Alberta Recreation Facility Personnel)**

John's superpower is to lead and lead by example. He has an innate ability to inspire others to grow and incite change. With over 25 years of experience in the recreation field, Johan has enjoyed building, training and leading many strong teams.

### **Nolana Nichols (City of Red Deer)**

Nolana Nichols has worked in Recreation and Sport for over 20 years and is a *Recreation Programmer* at the Collicutt Centre in Red Deer. Her passion is playing sports and seeing kids learn and develop new skills in their sports.

Nolana has used colours and personalities in all aspects of her life to enhancing her work, sports and family environments. Of the *Personality Colors*, Nolana is high blue (connection), orange (competitive), green (analytical), and gold (well organized) - she can't wait to connect with others to learn their true colors!

### **Tami Nisbet (Grow as We Go)**

Tami holds a BA in Child and Youth Counselling, with 19 years of experience in community development, mental health and outdoor education. She's passionate about the value of connection to the land, how to interact with our natural elements and the healing power of nature. She lives, works and plays in Treaty 7 Region, Calgary, Mohkinstsis.

### **Toby Nwabuogor (Panorama Hills Residents Association)**

Toby is a highly adaptable and speedy learner powered by the constant hunger of curiosity; I boldly confront challenges and solve problems with an analytical and objective approach through teamwork or independent work performed professionally, utilizing my experiences as a global citizen (learn more at [www.Toby4WARD.com](http://www.Toby4WARD.com))



### **Melissa Pearce (Rediscover Play: Nature Programs & Consulting)**

Melissa's programs guide children in learning how to mitigate risk in a safe environment, allowing space and time for children and youth to be themselves while they bond with each other and nature around them. Her passion for child inquiry, emergent curriculum, large loose parts play and bushcraft teaching guides her programs, and she designs her curriculum with the welfare of the whole child in mind. She has been running nature schools for ages 4 - 15 since 2017 and was the director of an out-of-school care program for seven years before that.

Melissa is a certified *Forest and Nature School Practitioner* and *Outdoor Mental Health Practitioner* and took her post-secondary education in Child and Youth (BCYC), obtained a diploma in Early Learning and Child Development, as well as certification in *Mental Health First Aid* and *Brain Story*.

### **Curtis Polowick (University of Calgary)**

Curtis Polowick is a *Program Coordinator* for Mini University Summer Camps at The University of Calgary. This is Curtis's sixth year working with UCalgary Summer Camps, and he has over a decade of experience working with children and youth in various capacities. Along with his Ecotourism and Outdoor Leadership degree from Mount Royal University, he is furthering his passion for education by completing an Education Degree at the University of Calgary, specializing in Secondary Biology.

### **Sarah Reader (Playful Adventures)**

Sarah Reader has been running recreation programs in the Calgary area for all ages since 2008. In 2016, she created and managed the City of Calgary's first Mobile Adventure Playground through her company, Playful Adventures. She loves inspiring people to rediscover their Wildhoods through education and unstructured outdoor play.

### **Chrissie Rozak (Auburn Bay Residents Association)**

Throughout the years, Chrissie Rozak has had incredible career opportunities that have allowed her to pursue and enhance her portfolio in the recreation industry. From working the front lines as an Information Officer in Kananaskis to being the Sports Administrator for the Canadian Ski Jumping & Nordic Combined teams, to becoming a General Manager of a lake community in SE Calgary, she knows the importance of every position within the organization, and she understands the value of great management.

Chrissie takes great pride in her ability to create a positive and safe atmosphere in her workplace. Her management style encourages, guides and empowers a team to make solid decisions and strive for greatness in all aspects of their roles.

### **Evan Smibert (University of Calgary)**

Evan Smibert is a *Program Coordinator* for Mini University Summer Camps at The University of Calgary. This will be his eleventh year, and he is stoked to share what he has learned planning camps for over a decade. At Mini U, he works year-round to plan summer camps that integrate various physical activities and games that promote a healthy, active lifestyle.

### **Jen Smith (Healthy Play™ - WordPLAY Consulting Inc.)**

Jen has worked in recreation for 21 years, starting as a support worker for adults with disabilities. She has held various leadership roles in outdoor experiential education for vulnerable youth and at a year-round accessible outdoor facility offering programs for children and adults with disabilities and serious illnesses. Jen later took on various roles within municipal recreation, including *Sport Coordinator*, *Learning and Development Coordinator*, *Recreation Coordinator*, and currently, *Arts and Culture Strategist*.

She is one of the only Canadian Healthy Play™ Facilitators and Classroom/Play Consultants providing training and consultations to recreation, sport, and education groups across Canada.

### **Tanya Snelson (City of Red Deer)**

Tanya Snelson has been involved in Fitness and Recreation for over 30 years! She started with the Boys and Girls Club in BC and is currently a *Fitness Instructor* at the Collicutt Centre in Red Deer.

Of the *Personality Colors*, Tanya is high blue (harmony at all cost), gold (rule follower), orange (fun) and green (information seeking...only if extremely interested), but would instead hug you and chat about it - she looks forward to sharing more about colours with everyone.

### **Maren Tyron (Alberta Recreation Facility Personnel)**

Maren has worked in various roles in the recreation industry for more than 15 years, from Camp Coordinator to Program Manager and many positions in between. She is now the *Education Coordinator* for AARFP.

### **Fatima Warsame (Action For Healthy Communities)**

Fatima, a first-generation Somali-Canadian, was born and raised in Canada. Initially enrolling in Macewan University with the aim of studying law, her journey steered her towards a focus on immigration and assisting newcomers in settling here. She started her journey with the non-profit organization Alberta Immigrant Women & Children Centre, where she gained valuable experience serving newcomer youth. Subsequently, she transitioned to Action for Healthy Communities, where she continues to build skills in supporting newcomer youth.

### **A special thanks to the YDRS 2024 Steering Committee who shared their time and expertise to help plan and lead this year's symposium:**

Jen Alexander (City of Calgary)  
Dillon Cosgrove (City of Grande Prairie)  
Katrina Epp (Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services)  
Jen Goeres (ARPA)  
Megan Klassen (MNPSC)  
Kristina Del Corro (City of Calgary)  
Matt Leung (ARPA)  
Tracy Morgan (Town of High River)  
Sarah Reader (Playful Adventures)  
Carlee Schaefer (Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services)  
Julia Soucie (Fort McKay Wellness Centre)  
Jodi Smith (City of Red Deer)



**THANK YOU!**

# CAMP KINDLE (WATER VALLEY, AB)



Camp Kindle is 45 minutes north of Cochrane, west on Highway 579. From Highway 22, continue to the intersection of Highway 22 and Highway 579. Head west on Highway 579 for about 10 minutes. Camp Kindle is located on the north side of the highway.

**ONSITE CONTACT (JEN GOERES): 403-828-8000**

# YDRS 2024 Packing List

YDRS 2024 delegates will be participating in sessions and activities in various weather – please make sure you pack clothing items that can be layered and are appropriate for changing weather conditions.

## **CLOTHING:**

T-shirts/long-sleeved shirts  
Pants/jeans/shorts  
Underwear/socks  
Sweater/sweatshirt  
Base layers  
Pyjamas

## **OUTDOOR GEAR:**

Sturdy shoes/boots  
Warm jacket  
Light jacket/vest  
Toque/hat  
Gloves/mittens  
Rain jacket/rain pants  
Waterproof/rubber boots  
Sunglasses  
Cabin shoes/sandals/slippers (optional)  
Indoor shoes (for sessions/dining hall)  
Closed toed shoes (for ropes course)  
Shower sandals (optional)

## **TOILETRIES:**

Sunscreen/repellent  
Toothbrush/toothpaste  
Soap, shampoo/conditioner  
Comb/brush  
Deodorant  
Menstruation supplies (if needed)  
Personal Medication

## **ACCOMMODATIONS**

Sleeping bag  
Sheet (optional)  
Pillow  
Towel(s)

## **EXTRAS:**

Headlamp/flashlight  
Camp blanket/cushion (for campfires)  
Water bottle  
To-Go mug/insulated mug  
Phone charger/earphones  
Book  
Backpack  
Buff/neckwarmer  
Laundry bag  
Swag to share with other delegates

## **Please note:**

Camp Kindle is a nut-aware facility, so please do not bring nuts or nut-containing items to your visit.

Cell service is minimal at Camp Kindle. Wifi is available, but satellite based so speed and data are also limited.