

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is distinctive about York's Children's Studies Program?

- ❑ It is based in the Humanities rather than the Social Sciences.
- ❑ It considers children to be authoritative sources on childhood.
- ❑ It is both interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary.
- ❑ It is rights-based.
- ❑ It is child-centered.

How is the Children's Studies Program different from an Early Childhood Education Program?

- ❑ York's *Children's Studies Program* defines children according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as all humans under 18.
- ❑ It is a 4-year Honours BA program, not a 2-year certificate course.
- ❑ It can lead to many possible career outcomes apart from only Education.

If I transfer to York from a college, can I get advanced standing?

- ❑ Depending on your course of study, you will receive a certain number of credits towards a 120-credit university degree. The number of credits will be determined by York's Office of Admissions when you apply to the program.
- ❑ Although you may receive credit for free choice courses, you will still have to fulfill all core requirements for the Major or Minor in *Children's Studies* plus any designated child-related course requirements for which you have not received specific credit.

How can I get more detailed information about the Children's Studies Program, including lists of courses and advising checklists to help me understand the whole program?

- ❑ Download a copy of the *Children's Studies Program Mini-Calendar* on the *Children's Studies Website* (www.yorku.ca/laps/huma/chst) or ask for a print copy from the Program Office.



Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies

Children's Studies

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PROGRAM INQUIRIES

Children's Studies Program

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WHAT IS CHILDREN'S STUDIES?

Children's Studies is an interdisciplinary program, based in the Humanities, that seeks to understand human experience from the perspective of children, over time and throughout the world, by studying both philosophical and social conceptions of childhood and the impact of those ideas in the broad range of children's lived experience.

In *Children's Studies*, the child is regarded as a subject, rather than an object, as has been typical of most child-focused research. Children are considered as authoritative sources who ought to be not only included, but also valued, in academic research about children and childhood.

The *Children's Studies Program* explores the experiences of children and adult constructions of childhood, adopting a "childist" (child-centered) and children's rights approach that recognizes children as social actors in their own children's culture. It is for children somewhat like what a *Women's Studies Program* is for women.

Students in *Children's Studies* learn practical techniques to hear from contemporary children and to discern children's voices in a broad range of historical documentation. Furthermore, they are encouraged to develop an appreciation for what is involved in determining "the best interests of the child" as well as in developing best practices of working with children to promote their best interests.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

York's *Children's Studies Program* is a 120-credit, direct-entry, interdisciplinary Honours BA degree program, which also includes Double Major, Major/Minor, and Minor degree options. Based in the Department of Humanities in the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies, the Program consists of several core courses in Humanities as well as additional child-related courses throughout the University. For the Major in *Children's Studies*, there is a core course at each year level: HUMA 1970A, *The Worlds of Childhood*; HUMA 2690, *On Children: An Introduction to Children's Studies*; HUMA 3695, *Listening to Children: Ethics and Methodology of Child-Centered Research*; and HUMA 4142, *Contemporary Children's Culture*. An additional 18 credits in designated child-related courses are also required. For the Minor in *Children's Studies*, HUMA 1970A, HUMA 2690, and one of the Humanities 4000-level child-related seminars are required as well as 12 additional credits in designated child-related courses.

CAREER PATHS

The *Children's Studies Program* opens doors to further study that could lead to a variety of possible ways of working with and for children in:

- advocacy
- counselling
- education
- health and wellness
- international development
- law
- librarianship
- media
- parenting
- publishing
- recreation
- social work



INTERNATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Through *Right to Play* and *Free the Children* as well as existing internships programs managed by York International, there are various opportunities for *Children's Studies* Majors and Minors to undertake child-related work abroad. Further opportunities for international exchanges, partnerships with institutions for study around the world, and virtual international experiences will be explored by the *Children's Studies Program*, building on the international concern for children central to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

CANADIAN CHILDREN'S CULTURE COLLECTION

This collection is a library and archive that provide unique resources for the *Children's Studies Program*, having been developed over the past twenty-five years through student research projects and other assignments such as childhood ethnographies. The CCCC consists of a substantial collection of children's books and child-related publications suitable for supporting undergraduate scholarly work. Further, the primary research into hearing the voices of children undertaken by all *Children's Studies* students contributes to the growth of this outstanding archive, which is developing into a major focus for ethical, child-centered research. Students will not only use the resource, but will also acquire the understanding and techniques to develop, undertake, present, and archive such studies for the use of future scholars. The CCCC is currently open by appointment to qualified researchers and to the university community.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Through a partnership with Vanier College, the *Children's Studies Program* runs a variety of programs that are embedded in the core courses and involve working with schools in the surrounding community, especially Shoreham Public School. The Literacy Buddy Partnership was founded in Winter 2004 and now annually partners 250 students in Humanities 1970A, *The Worlds of Childhood*, with Shoreham students. It has made a truly substantial impact on the literacy levels of the school. As well, the 140 students in Humanities 2690, *Introduction to Children's Studies*, have participated in a playground program, *Play in Peace*, which helps promote positive play among Shoreham students. There has also been a *STOMP (Student On-Line Mentorship)* program with Bakersfield Public School in York Region, and other programs of this sort, as well as ones pertaining to Children's Rights and Creative Writing, are planned for future years.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

The *Children's Studies Program* already has chapters of two high-profile Canadian NGOs involved with children—one for *Right to Play* and *The White Rose Project* for *Free the Children*, both of which offer opportunities for advocacy work on behalf of children in Canada and abroad. The possibilities for other such student organizations are many: *Children's Studies* students are encouraged to pursue initiatives of interest and to organize appropriate events in support of child-related programs and charities.

