



**Manitoba Child  
Care Association**

# *Facing the Mirror*

Balancing Leadership and Self Care



**THE MANITOBA CHILD CARE ASSOCIATION  
25TH ANNUAL DIRECTORS CONFERENCE  
VICTORIA INN, BRANDON, MANITOBA  
SEPTEMBER 23 - 25, 2026**

**Thursday, September 24, 2026**

**9:30 am – 3:30 pm**

## *Leading with Influence: Strengthen Presence, Credibility and Connection*

Great leadership starts from within.

Before we can inspire, influence, or guide others, we must first understand—and trust—ourselves.

In this interactive workshop, participants explore the mindset and behaviours that shape effective, influential leadership. Through reflection, evidence-based insights, and guided discussion, they examine how self-awareness, strategic thinking, and emotional intelligence contribute to stronger decision-making, communication, and credibility.

Grounded in research and real-world leadership experience, this session equips participants with practical frameworks and tools to enhance their presence, build authentic influence, and lead with greater clarity and impact. Leaders will leave with new awareness, sharper perspective, and actionable strategies to strengthen their leadership effectiveness and career growth.

Learning objectives:

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Strengthen self-leadership and emotional intelligence by identifying personal strengths, blind spots, and behavioural patterns that influence effectiveness.
2. Enhance trust and credibility by aligning values, actions, and communication to model consistency, integrity, and accountability.
3. Communicate with influence and adaptability by recognizing communication tendencies and adjusting approach to improve clarity, connection, and collaboration.
4. Foster a culture of feedback and respect by applying best practices for giving, receiving, and modeling feedback that builds civility and accountability.
5. Translate insights into action through a personalized leadership plan designed to sustain growth, presence, and impact beyond the workshop.

Jaime Mann is a leadership strategist, certified coach, and founder of The Amaryllis Project. With a background in psychology and over 20 years of experience leading people in high-pressure environments, she helps teams build resilience, lead with compassion, and stay steady under stress. Today, she's here to share real talk and practical tools to help us show up with presence—even when the pressure's on.

*Jaime Mann*



**Friday, September 25, 2026**

**9:30 am – 3:30 pm**

***Too Much on Your Plate, Too Little in Your Tank: A Reflective Stress Reset for Child Care Leaders***

Working in child care leadership can be deeply meaningful, rewarding, and energizing. It can also feel like a daily juggling act of staffing pressures, family needs, children’s emotions, constant decision-making, and unexpected “fires” that need your attention right now.

For child care directors, the work often means keeping children safe and supported, families reassured, staff encouraged, and programs running smoothly – all while trying to keep yourself from running on empty.

Drawing from the best of neuroscience, positive psychology, and the counselling chair, this dynamic and engaging session explores how child care leaders can close the stress loop, reduce the drain of constant mental load, protect their well-being, and reconnect with the purpose and joy that brought you to this work in the first place.

This reflective and uplifting session will help child care leaders move from “There’s too much on my plate and too little in my tank” to “I still care, can reset, protect my energy, and keep leading with purpose.”

From this dynamic and engaging session, you will leave with:

- A personal reset toolkit for protecting your mental well-being and bringing more energy home at the end of the day.
- Practical ways to reduce brain drain, decision fatigue, and the mental load that comes with leading children, families, staff, and programs.
- Boundary practices that help prevent burnout, over-giving, and carrying everyone else’s needs at the expense of your own.
- Simple, sustainable team resilience strategies that support staff well-being, strengthen connection, and make daily work feel better for everyone.

*Shannon Gander*



Shannon Gander, BPE, CAC, CM is a mental health, stress, and resilience speaker and the CEO of Life Work Wellness, on a mission to help individuals and organizations achieve their goals for better mental health. She works with senior leaders, executive teams, and organizations to strengthen psychological health and safety, prevent burnout, helping people flourish through stress, change, and uncertainty. Shannon is honoured to return once again to the Manitoba Child Care Association and to spend time with a community of leaders she deeply respects.

Having worked with child care professionals and directors many times before, Shannon understands that your roles are both profoundly meaningful and incredibly full. Her approach is warm, honest, practical, and encouraging, with enough humour to make hard topics feel a little lighter.

In this session, she will help directors reflect on what they are carrying, what may need to be restored, and how to lead with steadiness, compassion, and enough energy left for themselves.

When not presenting, Shannon works in her private counselling practice here in Winnipeg or can be found walking her high energy goldendoodle, in search of a great hike or local restaurant.

# Registration Information

**WHERE IS THE CONFERENCE BEING HELD?** Brandon, Manitoba - Victoria Inn

**HOW DO I REGISTER AND PAY?** Online Only - Credit Card or Visa Debit Accepted

## **WHO CAN REGISTER?**

- Members will receive first priority for registration.
- If spots remain available, non-members may begin registering on June 26, 2025.
- You must be a personal member of MCCA since January 1, 2026 to receive the member rate. **Registrations with centre membership numbers will be automatically deleted and refunded.**

## **WHAT WILL THE CONFERENCE COST TO ATTEND?**

SINGLE	\$675 PP	<b>MEMBER</b>
	\$1350.00 PP	<b>NON-MEMBER</b>
DOUBLE QUEEN	\$575.00 PP	<b>MEMBER</b>
	\$1150.00 PP	<b>NON-MEMBER</b>
NO ACCOMMODATIONS	\$450.00 PP	<b>MEMBER</b>
	\$900.00 PP	<b>NON-MEMBER</b>

## **WHAT IS INCLUDED IN MY CONFERENCE FEE?**

- Wednesday welcome reception
- Wednesday and Thursday accommodations
- 2 full days of workshops
- Thursday & Friday breakfast and lunch
- Thursday dinner and social evening

## **GOOD STUFF TO KNOW:**

- If sharing a room, one person will register and secure the room, the other roommate will be given a link to register at a later date. **If name and email of roommate are not included, the registration will be deleted.**
- The workshops planned for this Directors Conference have been designed to meet the needs of people currently in leadership/management positions (Directors/Assistant Directors).
- If two people are sharing a room they must select a double.
- To qualify for a member rate, you must be a member since January 1, 2026.
- All conference fees must be paid at time of registration.
- If you have any inquiries about the hotel, please contact Karen and not the hotel.
- Registrations are on a first come first serve basis for members.
- **Registration deadline is August 17, 2026.**
- Cancellations and refunds will only be accepted until August 17, 2026 at noon. MCCA will retain \$100.00 admin fee per person.
- Substitutions will be accepted until September 8/26.

*Information regarding the social evening and the Made in Manitoba donation items will be sent in July!*

*For more information, call Karen Kowalski at 204-336-5062 or email [kkowalski@mccahouse.org](mailto:kkowalski@mccahouse.org)*