

## Board Report September 2019 – Family Collaboration & Community Development

### **Family Engagement**

Our Community of Practice {CoP} partners; Brockville & District Association for Community Involvement, Community Living Mississauga and Rygiel Supports for Community Living, prepare for a number of events this coming fall. These events will extend to families regionally to gather on issues ranging from education, employment, wills and trusts to housing. This CoP, established from our former Family Engagement project work, is informing Community Living Ontario on what is required of local organizations to be supportive to families. The community of practice is a way in which our partners can exchange ideas and learn from one another. It provides opportunity for focused observation and reflection on how they are defining their role, as organizations, to support family engagement. This exchange among our partners is invaluable given one of the primary focuses of this work is learning of how organizations can be relevant and supportive to families, beyond service delivery.

March 31<sup>st</sup> 2019 marked the end of a four year project period, funded through the Social Development Partners Program- Disability Component (SDPP-DC). As of April 1<sup>st</sup> we moved forward with two years of continued funding from our federal partners to support the following work:

- 1) Provincial campaign for Inclusive Education & a strategy to support the National Inclusive Education agenda
- 2) Family Engagement with specific focus on Youth Transition & Inclusive Education
- 3) Supporting Local Community Living Family Engagement with partners through our Community of Practice
- 4) Hosting two regional Family Leadership series
- 5) Support five communities to advance family engagement with the focus of Supportive Decision Making

Additionally we are working with our partners to plan for a second provincial Social Value and Inclusion series for families.

### **Leadership development**

- Two family members were supported to attend a PASSING workshop in May. PASSING (Program Analysis of Service Systems' Implementation of Normalization Goals) is a workshop which teaches the practical application of Social Role Valorization (SRV). <http://www.srv-sotg.ca/events/passing>
- These two family members also participated in Empowering Ability Live; an online course by Eric Goll. <https://www.empoweringability.org/tag/empowering-ability-academy/>
- We provided resource to support another online family leadership course called: A Life of Belonging; creating a positive vision for the life of your child with a disability. Created and hosted by Genia Stephens of the Good Things In Life. <https://goodthingsinlife.org/>
- We are developing a Student Links Family Engagement series. A pilot series being launched in January, 2020 for Toronto families connected with Community Living Ontario's Student Links. This is a series of three Sunday informational luncheons. Our intent is to further develop the leadership among families associated with this program. These events will provide information and space for us to share with families effective strategies for navigating their child to live their best life!

## **Youth Engagement**

Leadership among youth and their adult allies within Re:Action4inclusion remains strong. There is momentum building with two summits planned for this fall! It has been a busy summer planning for them with our local membership partners. We have been working closely with them to host regionally focused events in an effort to build their youth engagement capacity.

A huge amount of support is behind these two events. See details here:

<https://reaction4inclusion.com/get-involved/leadershipsummit/>

October 4-6<sup>th</sup> at Port Sydney

Community Living partners include: Community Living North Bay, Huntsville & Almaguin Highlands Community Living

November 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> at London

Community Living partners include: Community Living Access, Essex, Windsor, St Mary's & Area, Norfolk, Haldimand and Haldimand Reach

## **Leadership Development**

- In May, Community Living Belleville and five other community organizations (including the town's accessibility committee) rallied with one of our youth leaders to host an "Epic Ability" day. The intent behind this event, built on the leadership of our youth, was

to break down the stigma about disability by helping youth learn about the impact of negative narratives of disability and strategies for dismantling them.

- In North Perth we will be facilitating a Start the Conversation workshop this October. North Perth sought out a grant from their municipality to have this workshop and to support their efforts to start a collaborative effort around youth engagement in the Listowel area.

### **Truths of Institutionalization: Past and Present**

Phase one of this project is well under way with our partners, which include: The Canadian Association for Community Living, People First of Canada, Inclusion Manitoba and Community Living Nova Scotia. Community Living Ontario is leading the work of developing a digital interactive curriculum which includes a video series that will teach youth about Canada's history of institutionalizing people who have an intellectual disability. We are currently working with our partners researching and developing the content for the curriculum. Additionally we have been working with our youth advisors from Re:Action4Inclusion, as they will be assisting and advising us on a framework that will identify the focus of the learning objectives.

The intent behind this project {see attached information document which outlines this project in more detail} is to raise national awareness about the harm of institutions and the impact of the history of institutionalization in order to prevent the use of institutional models today—meaning any place which people who have been labeled as having an intellectual disability are isolated, segregated and/or congregated. We want young people with and without a disability to grow a consciousness for the harm that has been done. We want them to understand the implications of institutionalizing people who have an intellectual disability as it's been experienced in the past and continues to be experienced today.

The project will also support the implementation of youth-led awareness projects in schools and communities during the second year of this project. It is funded by Canadian Heritage and will take place over the next two years.

Respectfully Submitted by;

Linda White

Director of Family Collaboration and Community Development