

Annual Report

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An Interactive Annual Report

Accessibility notes for readers

For those using text to speech devices and screen readers the 2020–2021 Inclusion BC annual report has been design with alt text available on all images and graphic icons. This report also contains a variety of links to websites and videos. All links have the text set in a bold font weight and are highlighted with a blue underline that **looks like this**. To open links, hover the mouse over the link and click to open in a new webpage.

A World Where Everybody Belongs

A Message of Welcome: Letter from Inclusion BC President and Executive Director

We are pleased to present to you Inclusion BC's work and achievements for 2020–2021. Our focus this past year has been on ensuring people and their families are safe, supported, and included in all pandemic responses. This work began last spring as we advocated for changes to the essential visitor's policy and continues as we seek equity in our vaccine rollout and economic recovery. Although we have been physically apart this past year, Inclusion BC has created many new relationships that have widened our reach and illuminated our message of inclusion in all aspects of community life.

All this work is made possible through the leadership and steadfast support for people provided by our member organizations, volunteer leadership, and donors. The work of meeting people where they are at and supporting them

to live the life they want to live from a place of dignity and strength without stigma and judgment is essential and deserves to be celebrated. As the impact of racism, gender inequity, classism, and ableism continues to be revealed in our system, it will be this same commitment to people first that will support a more just society to unfold.

To drive the implementation of our new strategic plan we introduced the *Diversity Includes* campaign. This civic engagement initiative is designed to connect local leaders with their elected officials. This year Inclusion BC registered as a lobbyist under the Lobbyist Transparency Act. Each time we meet with a senior member of the provincial government, through the campaign, we need to register the activity for public record. We have come to appreciate this



Dr. Fiona Wittington-Walsh
President

documented account of our advocacy towards inclusive communities.

This year a Parliamentary Secretary for Accessibility was introduced as the province embarks on new accessibility legislation. It will be important that the lived experience of people with an intellectual disability is included in the development of accessibility standards to ensure a meaningful path forward for the people we support. Inclusion BC has participated on the provincial Accessibility Legislation Advisory Committee for the past two years and will continue to reinforce this message as the process moves forward and legislation is introduced this spring.

The Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (MSDPR) and Re-Imagining Community



Karla Verschoor
Executive Director

Inclusion (RCI) partners have moved forward via a steering committee with the RCI's ten-year vision implementation phase. Co-chaired by Inclusion BC, Community Living BC, and MSDPR, the committee identified four vital areas of focus (Employment, Housing, Health/Mental Health, and Indigenous Strategies for Community Inclusion), which align with our advocacy priorities. Inclusion BC is honoured to be a part of the committee and looks forward to moving this ambitious plan forward.

We are proud to showcase our efforts over the last 12 months and are equally excited to continue our work towards changes that will make a real difference to the people and communities we serve.

Building Awareness, Inspiring Action & Advancing Rights

Embracing Diversity & Promoting Equity

We are a federation working with partners to build community and enhance the lives of children, youth, and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and their families. We do this by building awareness, inspiring action, and advancing rights, responsibilities, and social justice.

Inclusion BC provides support, education, and advocacy where and when it is needed. We advocate at a systems level for policy change and promote inclusion through public awareness initiatives and campaigns.

We believe inclusion is an attitude and an approach that embraces diversity and differences and promotes equal opportunities for all. Inclusion is not just about people with disabilities. When our communities include and embrace everyone, we are ALL able to reach our full potential.

Honouring Turtle Island & the First People: A Territorial & Land Acknowledgment

Inclusion BC would like to acknowledge that our head office is located in the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the QayQayt First Nation, and that our staff and board members live and work in the unceded territories of Indigenous Nations across the province. We recognize and support the inherent Indigenous rights and titles throughout the province of British Columbia, the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the 94 calls to action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the B.C. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.



Inclusion BC board of directors and staff team portrait photographs.

Board of Directors

Dr. Fiona Wittington-Walsh
President | Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley

Hilary Thomson
Vice President | Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley

Brent Tolmie
Treasurer | Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley

Kya Bezanson
Director | Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley

Annette Delaplace
Director | Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley

Courtney Fraser
Director | Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley

Cyndi Gerlach
Director | Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley

Michael McLellan
Director | Vancouver Island

Bendina Miller
Director | Interior

Kate Gibbs
Director | Interior

Ellen Tarshis
Director | ED Network Appointment

Staff Team

Karla Verschoor | *Executive Director*

Erika Cedillo | *Director of Public Policy and Programs*

Frank Peng | *Director of Finance and Administration*

Jillian Bradley | *Co-Director of Employment Initiative MentorAbility*

Kwaku Yeboah | *Co-Director of Employment Initiative RWA*

Semanthi Wanni | *Senior Officer, Board Relations and Executive Support*

Janice Bai | *Accounts Manager*

Claire Inkster | *Communications Manager*

Renee MacDermid | *Development Officer*

Sebastian Peng | *Communications and Development Coordinator*

Tina Dam | *Community Inclusion Advocate*

Kerridan Dougan | *Community Inclusion Advocate*

Symbia Barnaby (on leave) | *Community Inclusion Advocate*

Jatinder Sandhu | *Intake Coordinator Advocacy Helpline*

Lowena Ko | *Office Assistant*

Christian Kulusic (on leave) | *Office Assistant*

Mika Chibana (on leave) | *Office Assistant*

Taking Action & Igniting Change

#KidsCantWait

The Kids Can't Wait partnership works to ensure B.C. children with disabilities and their families have timely, fair, and universal access to early childhood intervention, services, and supports. This year the Kids Can't Wait Working Group highlighted the challenges families with young children have faced during this complex time, and to further advanced a vision for successful early years supports. Further gaps and shortcomings in the early years' system were exposed and we saw the disproportionate effect the pandemic has had on young children and their families.

Families with children with disabilities immediately felt the impact of the pandemic when all their systems of support suddenly stopped. To elevate their experiences, we collaborated with our partners – BCEdAccess,

BC Parents of Complex Kids, and the Family Support Institute of BC – to launch the **COVID-19 BC Family Survey in April 2020**. We were humbled by the response from the community when we received over 1,000 responses in two and a half days. The results of the survey were directly presented to the Minister of Children and Family Development and informed many of our recommendations to the government and our provincial election materials.

Through community engagement and collaborations, the Kids Can't Wait partners worked to amplify the voices of families and create opportunities for sharing their stories to express what meaningful support is for them. These were elevated in our work with the Representative for Children and Youth and

a large group of community partners, in the report **Left Out: Children and youth with special needs in the pandemic**. This report and its recommendations capture the changes we will continue working for.

We would like to thank the Vancouver Foundation and our community partners: BC Association for Child Development and Intervention, BC Centre for Ability, Richmond Association for

Community Living, Family Support Institute of BC, Inclusion Langley, First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, the Provincial Advisors for the Aboriginal Infant Development Program and Aboriginal Supported Child Development Program, and Fraser Valley Child Development Centre.

Learn more about the #KidsCantWait campaign and access our reports [HERE](#).

A young child standing in a playground holding onto a bar on the playstructure.



By bringing attention to critical gaps in supports & services for people & their families, we continue to advocate for inclusion in all areas of life.

#StopHurtingKids

Inclusion BC reviewed the adoption of policies on the use of physical restraint and seclusion by school boards in British Columbia. The review examined whether the boards of B.C. school districts have adopted policies and procedures and if they included the elements required by the Ministry of Education provincial guidelines.

Out of the 60 B.C. school districts, 59 Boards of Education have approved a policy or administrative procedure. The review showed some districts included most of the elements, some were very innovative and adopted more robust policies, while several districts only copied some statements from the Ministry of Education's guidelines without fulfilling the expectations. Only 21% of the districts have an incident report form which reflects a lack of reporting mechanisms when these incidents happen.

A young child alone in a room crouching covering their face.

Inclusion BC continues to receive advocacy support calls about children and youth being subjected to the harmful and traumatizing practices of physical restraint and seclusion. Further, there are reports showing seclusion rooms continue to exist and more seclusion rooms are being built in new school projects. These are concerning facts and we will continue to take action. We will support families to advocate for the use of positive behavioural support plans for their children. At the systemic level, we will continue engaging with the Ministry of Education to ensure the mechanisms for documenting and reporting these incidents are properly implemented and acted upon to stop these practices that violate children's human rights.

[Learn more about the #StopHurtingKids campaign and access our reports HERE.](#)

Only 21% of the districts have an incident report form which reflects a lack of reporting mechanisms when these incidents happen.



We received over 1,100 answers from BC parents & guardians of children & youth with disabilities & extra support needs, including almost 200 students' responses.

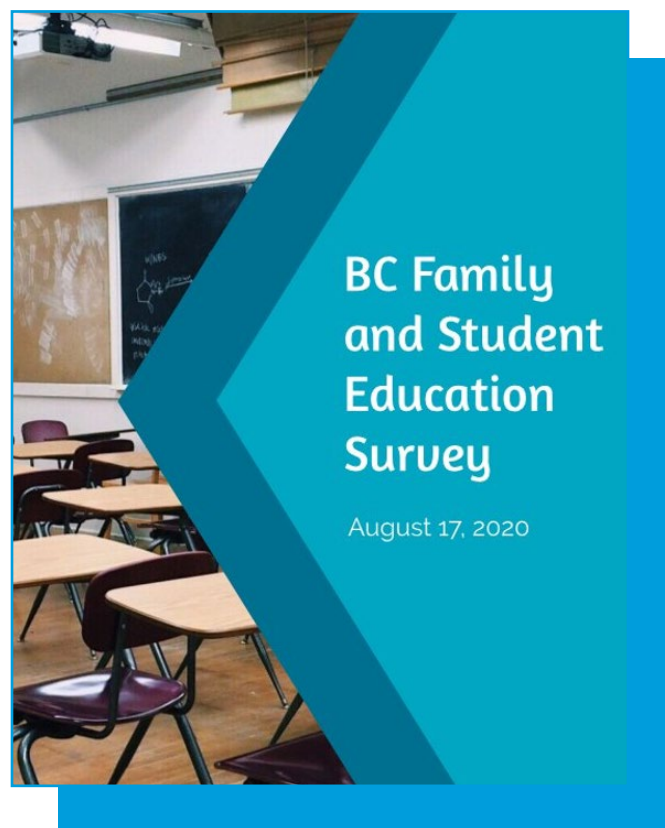
#AllStudentsBelong

Education continues to be the main topic that families contact our Advocacy Line for support. This includes access to education and navigating the school system to ensure their children have the supports they need. While our knowledgeable advocates work alongside individual families and caregivers, we continue our capacity building and systemic work on inclusive education.

In a time when life shifted so suddenly, fair access to education has been at the forefront for families with students in the K-12 system. We captured the collective voice of families and students through another collaborative effort with our partners – BCEdAccess, BC Parents of Complex Kids, and the Family Support Institute of BC – in the **BC Family and Student Education Survey**. We received over 1,100 answers from BC parents and guardians of children and youth with disabilities/extra support needs, including almost 200 students' responses. With their answers, we informed the Ministry of Education of the needs of caregivers and families as B.C. announced their K-12 Education Restart Plan for September 2020.

During this past year, we had continuous communication and engagement with the Inclusive Education branch of the Ministry. The open channel has allowed us to directly

bring to their attention the challenges and barriers that families and students are facing and has allowed us to offer insight and input in the development of more inclusive policies. Our collaborations also extend with other community partners as we participate in the Inclusive Education Partners Group and the EA Standards of Practice Working Group.



Inclusion BC collaborated with partners on the BC Family and Student Education Survey.



About 5,000 people with intellectual disabilities need, & will want, inclusive housing options within the next five years.

Two adults sitting on a couch holding out their housekeys.

#KeyToHome

This year Key to Home launched a new video and website to help people and their families, and service providers build awareness in their local communities for more inclusive housing. The website provides key research information on the need for inclusive housing here in B.C. and features a video as well as resource materials which can be used to create presentations for local city councils, planners, developers, and non-profit housing providers.

The goal for the Key to Home campaign is to ensure local community housing plans and projects include spaces for people with intellectual disabilities. The website also

provides a series of information sheets to help people, together with their families and friends, create plans to achieve their dream of living as independently as possible. The Key to Home campaign was created by Community Living BC (CLBC) and Inclusion BC and follows through on the 2018 Inclusive Task Force plan to increase access to inclusive housing.

The new website hosts a research report prepared by the BC Non-Profit Housing Association summarizing survey and focus group input from adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. The research found a significant demand for

inclusive housing exists. About 5,000 people with intellectual disabilities need, and will want, inclusive housing options within the next five years.

A significant aim of the Key to Home campaign is to help people understand what makes for

inclusive housing: affordability, accessibility, diversity as well as choice, and control.

[Learn more about the #KeyToHome campaign HERE](#) and [access our Inclusive Housing Task Force plan HERE](#).

#DiversityIncludes

The B.C. election was held on October 24, 2020. Inclusion BC wrote to the four main political parties to determine how their platforms connected to the issues important to people with intellectual disabilities and their families. What we learned from most of the official parties was not encouraging and seemed to reflect a limited understanding of our advocacy priorities. In response, Inclusion BC launched a civic engagement campaign, *#DiversityIncludes*, to connect our members and volunteer leadership with Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) and Members of Parliament (MPs) in British Columbia. To strengthen relationships and share our vision of inclusive communities, the campaign's goal is to meet with every single provincially and federally elected official in the province before the next election cycles.

After each meeting, we follow up with a thank you letter and an Inclusion BC pin. We invite each MLA to show their solidarity and support by wearing the pin during October, proclaimed as Community Inclusion Month by the province, as well as on December 3rd, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.



During February 2021, for Inclusive Education Month, Inclusion BC met with the Honorable Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Education.



Inclusion BC Diversity Includes web banner.

Highlights from the campaign include meeting with the Minister of Children and Family Development, the Honourable Mitzi Dean, to introduce our **#KidsCantWait** campaign and share our appreciation for the ongoing partnership through the Social Service Advisory Committee. We emphasized the importance of the recommendations from the report *Left Out: Children and youth with special needs in the pandemic* by the Representative for Children and Youth which captures the changes needed to better serve children and youth with support needs and their families.

We also met with the Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, the Honourable Nicholas Simons, to talk about two specific areas that are out of scope for the Re-imagining Committee Inclusion initiative –

support for transitioning youth and the need for additional income support for people with disabilities.

Our meeting with the Minister of Education, the Honourable Jennifer Whiteside, covered a lot of topics. We introduced the **#StopHurtingKids** and **#AllStudentsBelong** campaigns emphasizing the need for targeted investments in training and support for inclusion in our provincial schools. Inclusion BC has enjoyed a close working relationship with the Inclusive Education branch this past year and appreciated the weekly to monthly meetings.

As we continue developing relationships with all parties, Stephanie Cadieux, Liberal Caucus Chair and Critic for Gender Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion, agreed to meet with Inclusion

BC a few times a year. At our first meeting, we introduced our *Gender Equity: Why are women getting fewer jobs?* project and the **#StopHurtingKids** campaign.

During November and December 2020, Inclusion BC wrote to every MP in B.C. and met with 30% of our federally elected officials about the expansion of medical assistance in dying to include people with disabilities who are not at the end of their life. We met with the leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada, Jagmeet Singh, and Randell Garrison, MP for Esquimalt—Saanich—Sooke, and member of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights. We also met with Paul Manley, the Green MP from Nanaimo – Ladysmith, who was particularly supportive of our advocacy efforts.

Despite our efforts, Bill C-7 passed in February 2021. As Inclusion Canada and our national allies continue to challenge these changes, we are working to ensure there is a robust monitoring and assessment process in B.C. to prevent people with disabilities from requesting assistance in dying because their basic human needs are not being met.

Throughout the coming year, the *#DiversityIncludes* campaign will continue connecting our members and volunteer leaders with their provincial MLA's and federal MP's to ensure the issues important to people with intellectual disabilities and their families are brought forward.

Inclusion Canada, image from "PRESS RELEASE: UN experts challenge Canada over human rights violations in Bill C-7"



Empowering the Voices of Individuals & Families

Community Inclusion Advocacy Program

Advocacy support is a valuable resource providing the building blocks necessary to increase a person's or family's capacity to overcome barriers to inclusion faced when accessing needed services and supports.

The Community Inclusion Advocacy Program continues to provide free advocacy support to families of children and youth with extra support needs as well as adults and their families. This year, the volume and complexity of barriers to inclusion which people faced significantly increased. Advocacy within the education sector continues to dominate the call volume, followed by requests to navigate adult support systems.

Through a partnership with **BCEdAccess** and their Exclusion Tracker, the Community

Inclusion Advocacy Program supports families whose children are being excluded from schools by creating inclusive pathways for children to be back in their classrooms. This learning is being documented to support the development of a return to school guide.

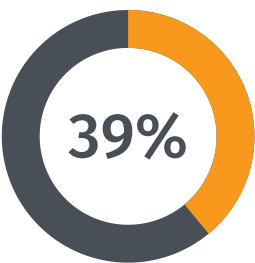
COVID-19 greatly impacted our world and shifted most services to virtual platforms. The benefit for those accessing the Community Inclusion Advocacy program has been an increased reach and support for people throughout the province. By keeping the team up-to-date with rapidly changing information, the advocates have been able to guide people to access COVID-19 related policies and information required when advocating for their needs.



“Inclusion BC made a real difference for our family in a moment of uncertainty; they helped us understand the barriers we were experiencing & supported us in advocating to ensure equitable opportunity for our child.” – Parent

A family of four looking at the camera and smiling.

Community Inclusion Advocacy Calls

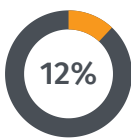


Access to K-12 Education

Just under half of all calls to our Community Inclusion Advocacy Program were related to advocacy supports needed for students' access to inclusive Kindergarten to grade 12 education.



Transition & Access to Adult Services (CLBC & Complaints)



Barriers to access PWD Benefits



Access to Children & Youth Supports (MCFD-CYSN)



Access to Health Services



Legal Referrals



Housing Instability



Access to Community Inclusion Supports



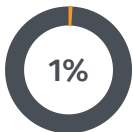
Access to Employment Supports



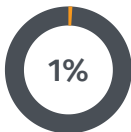
Other



Access to Mental Health Supports



Access to Post-Secondary Education



Access to Early Childhood Services & Supports

Family Support Workers' Network

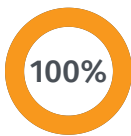
The Family Support Workers' Network is a group of people from across B.C. who work with families to navigate systems of support in all areas of life.

The intersectionality of the group continues to create connections to a wide scope of experiences and perspectives. Before the

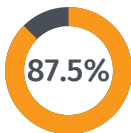
pandemic, the Family Support Workers' Network met in person, with only a couple of people calling in from remote parts of our province. Since the beginning of COVID-19, all meetings have become virtual. This new way of gathering has offered an opportunity for more people to attend and a larger pool of organizations to be present.

“Attending the Family Support Workers Network gatherings gives me the ability to connect with others supporting families with similar challenges. I appreciate being learning more about the resources & supports available.” – Network Member

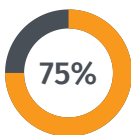
After Family Support Workers' Network Gatherings People Said



The presenters were good or excellent



They acquired new knowledge and developed new tools



They felt an increase in connection to people and resources

Family Support Workers' Network 2020-2021 Guest Speakers Schedule

- » **June 2020**
Being a Self-Advocate
- » **September 2020**
Kudoz and Co-Make Do
- » **October 2020**
Disability Alliances BC Law clinic
- » **November 2020**
BC Aboriginal Networks Disability Society
- » **February 2021**
Family Support Institute Wayfinders

Growing Capacity & Discovering New Pathways

Inclusion BC's Virtual Learning Series

Over the past 12 months, Inclusion BC has collaborated with the Self Advocates of Semiahmoo and UNITI to host a series of free virtual learning sessions.

During the fall of 2020, employment specialist Jose Duarte did a series of employment workshops for self-advocates to prepare for their job search, build their resume, and ace the interview. Melanie Callas from Elections BC presented *You Can Vote* to help people prepare for the provincial election. Keynote Speaker

Sarah Jama inspired us to put intentions into practice by building coalitions and connecting our communities for real change.

We celebrated December 3rd, International Day of Persons with Disabilities, with The Self Advocates of Semiahmoo presenting *The Successful Project* to learn about fundraising, community development, and creating successful projects with practical checklists.

The 2021 winter term included a three-day Youth Employment Summit. Our February

Our Virtual Learning Series successfully reached 884 participants, with 85% of participants reporting the series exceeded their expectations.



Inclusion BC “Virtual Learning Series” promotion.

webinar featured a panel discussion of “Reframing Challenging Behaviours in Our Schools” from our four-part film series *Disrupting Misconceptions and Forging Pathways Forward for Students with Developmental Disabilities*.

In *Supporting Transition to Life After High School*, panellists from the Representative for Children and Youth of BC, Children and Youth Services Public Guardian and Trustee, and Advocate for Service Quality discussed the roles of each office and their respective mandates. They highlighted the supports each office provides and how their work intersects to support youth and their families during this important life transition.

From September 2020 to March 2021, our Virtual Learning Series successfully reached 884 participants, with 85% of participants reporting

the series exceeded their expectations.

The Virtual Learning Series has been possible due to the ongoing generous support from our sponsors, the Province of B.C., the Public Guardian and Trustee of BC, and the BC CEO Network, thank you for helping to build strong and inclusive communities where everyone belongs!

Watch the presentations any time at the Virtual Learning Series website [HERE](#).



“Virtual Learning Series” sponsor logos.

Disrupting Misconceptions & Forging Pathways Forward for Students with Disabilities

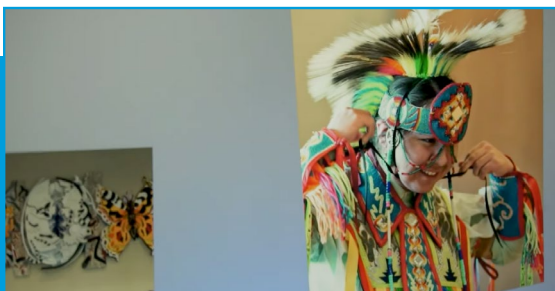
In 2020, Inclusion BC and the Canadian Institute for Inclusion and Citizenship (CIIC) partnered to create four short films that raise awareness about the exclusion of students with disabilities. The short films further our knowledge of inclusive education practices by providing key information and possible pathways to success for students, their families, and schools.

The vision for the four short films was co-created through a series of focus groups with educators, Indigenous people, professionals, and community organizations.

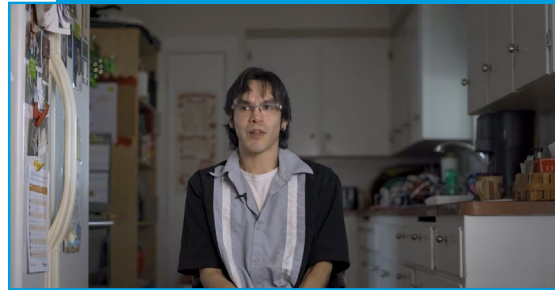
Drawing on their lived experiences, focus group participants shared their stories and offered examples of the issues and barriers they encounter when accessing education.



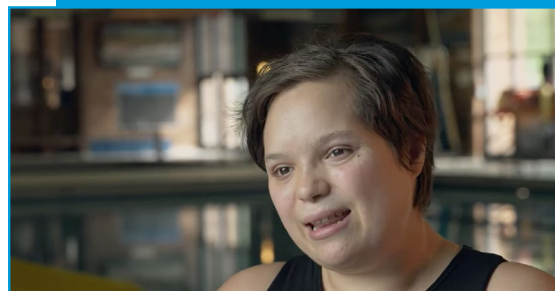
Watch: Reframing Challenging Behaviour in our Schools.



Watch: Indigeneity and Disability in our Schools.



Watch: Exercising Self Determination in our Schools.



Watch: Getting Ready to Work in our Schools.

Whether watched individually, or all together as a series, these short films provoke meaningful discussions surrounding the negative myths of including students with disabilities in regular classrooms by raising expectations, shifting language to be strength-based, honouring cultural approaches, and positioning all students as contributing members of their classroom communities and society.

We invite you to watch these four short films with your family, friends, colleagues, and networks, and would love to hear the actions these films have inspired you to take!

We acknowledge the generous funding from the Federal Government of Canada and the University of British Columbia to make this series possible.



Inclusion BC “Youth Employment Summit” promotion.

“I liked having people with lived experiences talk about how they found jobs, & their stories of challenge & celebration” – Family Member

Youth Employment Summit

In February, Inclusion BC, in collaboration with MentorAbility, hosted a three-day virtual Youth Employment Summit (YES) to inspire, encourage, and support youth in discovering paths to employment.

YES brought together over 200 delegates throughout British Columbia. The event showcased a spectacular lineup of youth speakers from the IMPACT and TYDE project, as well as employer presentations from The Brick, BC Transit, Banging Rocks, and Accessible Media. Community presenters included Back in Motion, post-secondary presentations from Kwantlen Polytechnic University, and Steps Forward. Local artist Missy D energized the

event with an interactive hip-hop performance. On the third day, youth explored career options, connected with employers, and applied for positions of interest at the online inclusive job fair

Thank you to the Youth Employment Summit presenters for creating an engaging and informative event full of career explorations and employment opportunities. We would like to thank Disability Alliance BC for generously sponsoring the 2021 Youth Employment Summit through the Accessibility Project Grant.

[Watch the Youth Employment Summit event sessions HERE.](#)

Developing Careers, Forging Inclusive Workplaces & Reconnecting to Employment



MentorAbility is delivered by Inclusion BC with the support of members and community partners. In 2020, MentorAbility continued to offer one-hour to full-day mentorships for people with disabilities in British Columbia to explore various career options and opportunities in an area of their interest.

During the pandemic, MentorAbility adapted to provide sector-related webinars and virtual

mentorships to continue engaging job seekers and to build relationships between job seekers, service providers, and employers.

This year, MentorAbility experienced an increase in employer engagement, leading to 71 mentorship matches and employment outcomes for protégés, and boosted the success of the project.

"I have been in touch with my mentor & have appreciated her guidance. I started on-line school from her recommendation. This is an exciting time for me & I am so appreciative for my mentor's support." – Protégé

READY

WILLING

& ABLE

Ready, Willing & Able (RWA) is a national initiative that engages, educates, and supports employers to hire people with intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorder.

Inclusion BC delivers the service in communities across B.C. RWA uses proven methods that are being used successfully in communities throughout the country and are demonstrating a positive impact. Employers are given knowledge, resources, and tools through targeted public

awareness, peer-to-peer workshops, mentoring, HR strategies, guides on workplace accommodations, and other tools. These methods have increased employers' capacity to find, hire, support, and retain employees with disabilities.

Since the launch of this program, over 400 job seekers with intellectual disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder have found work through Ready, Willing & Able.

Since the launch of this program, over 400 job seekers with intellectual disabilities & Autism Spectrum Disorder have found work through Ready, Willing & Able.

Supported Employment Recovery Grants

Inclusion BC was selected by the Government of B.C. to distribute \$9.5 million in grants to employment support services over the next two years. The funding will assist about 1,100 people with disabilities who lost their jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Approximately 100 agencies that deliver specialized employment services to the people Community Living BC serves are eligible to apply for funding.

Funding can be used to hire additional employment support staff to help people find

or reconnect to employment, support with job searching, assist individuals to understand and adhere to COVID-19 workplace requirements, and help people reconnect with former employers to know if an individual can be rehired. To date, funding to support 408 job seekers has been distributed.

Building Communities & Breaking Down Barriers

“With so much information coming from the Lower Mainland it was very nice to have an event focused on families & resources in the Okanagan area” – Participant

Connecting the Valley: Family to Family

In January, families living in the Okanagan were invited to attend a series of eight free virtual sessions. Connecting the Valley offered a space for families to meet, share knowledge, and develop a community of support.

The families learned ways to strengthen their advocacy and increase access to resources to help build a good life for their loved ones with a disability.

We would like to thank and acknowledge the following Connecting the Valley partners:

- » [Autism BC](#)
- » [Family Support Institute of BC](#)
- » [OneSky Community Resources](#)
- » [Pathways Abilities Society](#)
- » [Penticton and District Society for Community Living](#)

"I loved networking & collaborating with all of the organizations involved. I am looking forward to a reunion!" – Participant

A SERIES OF FREE VIRTUAL SESSIONS FOR OKANAGAN FAMILIES.

Connecting the Valley: family to family



Inclusion BC "Connecting the Valley: Family to Family" promotion.

Connecting the Valley Sessions

- » **Rights, Processes & Advocacy**
Learning about rights, how to exercise them, and advocacy skills;
- » **Hopes, Dreams & Planning**
Developing planning tools to support a vision of inclusion;
- » **Self Determination**
Learning from families and self-advocates about how they make choices and manage their lives;
- » **Movie Night**
viewing of INTELLIGENT LIVES, directed by Dan Habib, with a post-film facilitated conversation;
- » **Local & Provincial Resources**
Learning about available resources and how to access them;
- » **Ignite Talks**
Learning about innovative ideas in the Okanagan and;
- » **Resilience & Self Care**
Learning ways to increase and build self-care and family resilience.

Including All Citizens

Five years ago, Inclusion BC President Dr. Fiona Whittington-Walsh and five students with intellectual disabilities embarked on a journey of creating pathways for all students to be both fully included in post-secondary academic courses and to also graduate with a Faculty of Arts certificate.

Including All Citizens was a five-year pilot project at Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU) in which five students enrolled in ten academic courses alongside all other KPU students. The pilot program focused on changing teaching practices to be accessible to a wide range of learners. Using the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) instructors created multiple ways of engaging students and multiple ways of assessing students' knowledge.

The curriculum was never modified or adapted, there were no accommodations or Educational Assistants, and all students were exposed to the same curriculum, the same assignments, and had the same opportunities for how they submitted their work.

Inclusion BC Board Director Kya Bezanson is a recent graduate of Including All Citizens and describes herself as a lifelong learner, "going to school is my favourite thing ever!". Yet, during high school the expectations for how she completed her work caused Kya to dread learning.

At KPU Kya discovered instructors valued and encouraged all students to learn and process information in ways that worked for them. Students could doodle their class notes as well

"For two years I tried to build an inclusive curriculum for a post-secondary course. My process shifted when a group of students without credentials enrolled in my Sociology course. My teaching transformed to be accessible for a broad range of learners. I now assume there is a wide breadth of students in my classes and I teach for everyone." – Dr. Fiona Whittington-Walsh



“Before being a part of Including All Citizens I dreaded learning. Teachers expected me to write notes & five page essays & that was difficult for me to do.” – Student

An adult holding up their Faculty of Arts Certificate.

as present and submit assignments in various ways such as through artwork, posters, poetry, short stories, presentations, storyboards, mind maps, and more.

In the early stages of Including All Citizens, Dr. Fiona Whittington-Walsh discovered an inclusive teaching method started to emerge. Fiona wanted to expand the range of inclusive academic courses available to all students and she began to mentor other faculty at KPU to

incorporate UDL principles into their practice. Since that time, two more instructors have become mentors for other KPU faculty to integrate the principles of UDL into their teaching practices.

Fiona hopes a new cohort of Including All Citizen students will be enrolled in the fall of 2022 and for all KPU academic courses to be taught using the principles of Universal Design for Learning to support any student to take any course.

Strengthening Our Collective Voices & Increasing the Impact of Our Work

Our Organizational Members deliver a wide range of support services throughout the province of B.C., including early intervention, family support, residential services, and other kinds of individualized supports and services.

A Federation of Partners Dedicated to Promoting Diversity & Inclusion

Inclusion BC is British Columbia's only provincial federation dedicated to advancing the rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and their families.

We serve the needs of our members who provide vital services in communities across our province.

Today we represent sixty-one member organizations across B.C. with opportunities to share information, network, and contribute to the advancement of creating diverse and inclusive communities.

Organizational Members

- » AiMHi
- » BCEdAccess
- » BC Centre for Ability
- » Bethesda
- » Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion (BACI)
- » Campbell River & District Association for Community Living
- » Canadian Deafblind Association – BC Chapter
- » Chilliwack Society for Community Living
- » Clay Tree Society
- » Clements Centre Society
- » Community Integration Services Society
- » Community Living Society
- » Community Living Victoria
- » Community Ventures Society
- » Cranbrook Society for Community Living
- » Dawson Creek Society for Community Living
- » Delta Community Living Society
- » Delta Housing Be Mine Society
- » Elk Valley Society for Community Living
- » Eclipse Foundation for Individualized Supports
- » Family Support Institute
- » Fort St. John Association for Community Living
- » HOME Society
- » Hope Association for Community Living
- » Inclusion Kamloops
- » Inclusion Parksville Society
- » Inclusion Powell River
- » Kimberley Society for Community Living
- » Kinsight
- » Kootenay Society for Community Living
- » L'Arche Greater Vancouver
- » Inclusion Langley
- » Lifetime Networks Victoria
- » Milieu Family Services
- » Mission Association for Community Living
- » Nanaimo Association for Community Living
- » New Perspectives on Community Living Society
- » North Shore ConneXions Society
- » North Shore Disabilities Resource Centre
- » OneSky Community Resources Society
- » Pathways Abilities Society
- » Penticton & District Association for Community Living
- » Pivot Point Family Growth Centre
- » PLAN (Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network)
- » Port Alberni Association for Community Living
- » posAbilities
- » Princeton and District Community Services Society
- » Quesnel Community Living Association
- » REALM
- » Richmond Society for Community Living
- » Ridge Meadows Association for Community Living
- » Sea to Sky Community Services Society
- » UNITI
- » SOURCES Community Resources Centre
- » Spectrum Society for Community Living
- » Sunshine Coast Association for Community Living
- » Terrace and District Community Services Society
- » Thompson Community Services Inc.
- » Vela Microboard Association of BC
- » Western Human Resource Corp.
- » Williams Lake Association for Community Living

Affiliate Members

- » Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU)
- » BC Non-Profit Housing Society (BCNPHA)
- » Vancouver Island University (VIU)

Thank you!

Supporting Advocacy & Community Development

To all of our funders and supporters, thank you for your generosity. By supporting Inclusion BC you are helping individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families receive the supports they need to fully participate in community life. Together we are building inclusive communities throughout our province where everyone can thrive.

Our Circle of Friends are Creating Positive Outcomes for Individuals & their Families

Bendina Miller has been an Inclusion BC donor since 2005, a Circle of Friends monthly donor since 2015, and a Board Member since 2014. She became involved with Inclusion BC after she moved to Prince George in 1980. As an educator working in student services, Bendina has a long history of promoting inclusion in the education system in British Columbia and across Canada. She wanted to ensure that everyone had access to inclusive education.

As a Board Member and a donor, it has been meaningful for Bendina to watch financial contributions to Inclusion BC create positive outcomes for families. She chooses to donate to Inclusion BC because of the leadership and support provided to families to access employment, education, and for everyone to fully participate in all aspects of community life.

She has many memories over the years working with Inclusion BC, but the time which stands out



Bendina Miller
*Circle of Friends Donor &
Inclusion BC Board Director*

for her was when institutions across B.C. closed down. She recalls it being very emotional to see people coming out of Tranquille in Kamloops and the Woodlands School in New Westminster to begin living and thriving in the community.

Ask Bendina what would you say to anyone thinking about donating to Inclusion BC and you would hear her say:

“Support for Inclusion BC helps everyone. All people have an improved quality of life if all people are included in the community.”

Inclusion BC Donors \$250 & more

Ms. Marion Allan • Mr. & Mrs. Frances & William Ashwell • Ms. Wendy G Baker • Mr. John Baxter • Mr. Seth Berkowitz • Cathy Bird • Mr. J. K. Birdsall • Mr. Gordon Burleson • Ms. Violet H. Butler • Ms. Suzanne Chubb • Ms. Connie Clarke • Mr. Christian Co • Mr. Richard Combe • Ms. Rhonda Connell • Mrs. Anita Dadson • Mr. James Dales • Patrick DeHaan • Mrs. Karen DeLong • Mrs. Linda Dempster • Mrs. Linda Derkach • Leanne Dospital • Mr. David Ebert • Ms. Beverly Elo Ziebart • Mr. Maurice Freer • Mrs. Sonia Galbraith • Ms. Laura Gerlinsky • Ms. Alison Grant • Mrs. Elizabeth Green • Mr. & Mrs. Charles & Ruth Hamilton • Mrs. Madeleine Harlamovs • Mr. John Heady • Mr. Bert E. Hendriksen • Mrs. Phung Ho • Ms. Theresa Howard • Dr. James F. Howie • Mr. & Mrs. John & Bonita Hunter • Ms. Susan Irwin • Franke & Billiam James • Miss Elizabeth Jarvis • Ms. Sheila C. Jeck • Mrs. Erika A. Jozsa • Mrs. Susan Kelly • Ms. Bonita V Klovance • Mrs. Midori Kozuki • Mr. Dave Lappin • Mr. J. Alain • D. Lefebvre • Dr. Alan Lomax • Megan Lowenberger • Dr. Heather MacNaughton • Mr. & Mrs. Malcolm & Leslie McIntosh • Mr. Gordon McNeil • Mrs. Bendina Miller • Mrs. Sandrina Minelli • Mr. Jeff Mrochuk • Mrs. Wendy Nie • Mr. David J. Pacula • Mrs. Barbara Lee Page • Mr. Chris & Marg Parfitt • Paypal Giving Fund Canada • Miss Teresa Pocock • Mr. Jim Russell • Mr. Phil Russell • Mrs. Ruth Rutledge • Marie Sabine • Mrs. Lucy Shun • Mrs. Naoko Soukup • The Estate of Terrence • Morton Heaps • Mrs. Ida Tait • The Estate of Keith John Oswald • Hilary Thomson • Mrs. L. Tong • Ms. Lan Thi Trinh • Mrs. Colleen Trottier • Urban Impact Recycling LTD. • Ms. Karla Verschoor • Mr. Augusto Wu • Mr. Danny Yu

Inclusion BC Funders

- » **Community Living BC**
Supported Employment Recovery Grant
- » **Disability Alliance of British Columbia**
Accessibility Grant – Youth Employment Summit
- » **Government of Canada Employment and Social Development Canada**
Social Development Partnership Program – Family Support Network & Community Inclusion Advocacy
- » **Inclusion Canada & Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorders Alliance**
RWA Building Blocks – Ready Willing & ABLE | Gender Equity: Why are women getting fewer jobs?
- » **Canadian Association for Supported Employment**
MentorAbility
- » **Province of British Columbia Ministry of Social Development & Poverty Reduction**
Virtual Learning Series | Community Inclusion Advocacy
- » **The May & Stanley Smith Charitable Trust**
Community Inclusion Advocacy | COVID-19 Response | Disability Support & Housing
- » **Vancouver Foundation**
Kids Can't Wait Campaign

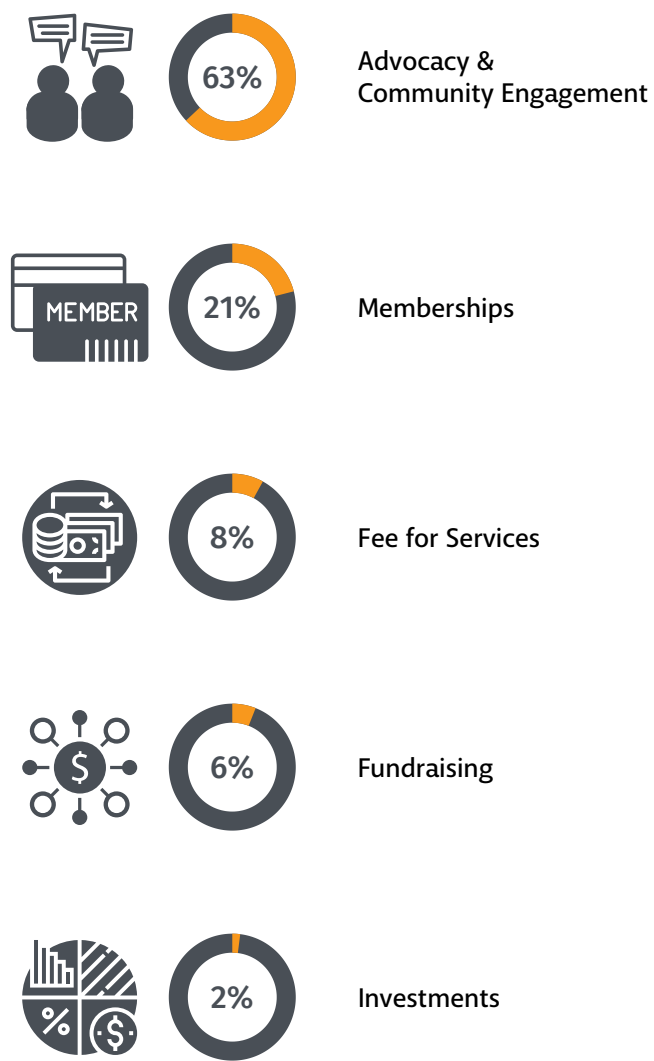
Maximizing the Impact of Our Work & Making a Difference Where it Matters Most

Inclusion BC is a lean, efficient organization with a strong focus on our members and community development.

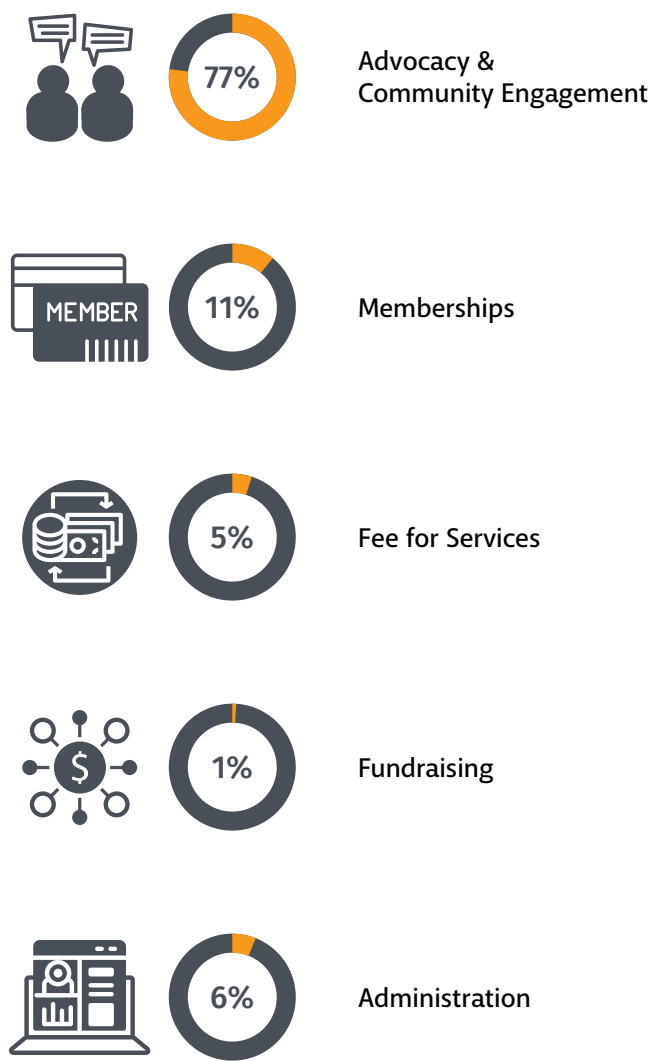
We manage our revenue responsibly, so we can maximize the impact of our work and make a real difference in the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, and our organizational members.

We are proud to share 77% of all revenue goes directly to advocacy and community engagement, funding the important work and accomplishments you have read about in this report.

Where the Money Came From



How We Put the Money to Work



Raising Awareness & Keeping Everyone Connected

Throughout the year, we made a considerable effort to reach out and connect with more families, individuals, and community partners through our online communications.

In 2020, the **Inclusion BC website** had 154,000 visits, with 87% new site visits. As COVID-19 greatly impacted the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and their families we continued to keep everyone connected, informed, and included by creating a new blog section on our website – **#COVIDdisability**. Out of the 63 blog posts in 2020, 62% were posted to **#COVIDdisability**.

This year we also delivered 75% more monthly E-updates, experienced an 80% increase in opening rates, and witnessed a 20% increase in the number of people subscribing to receive our monthly updates.

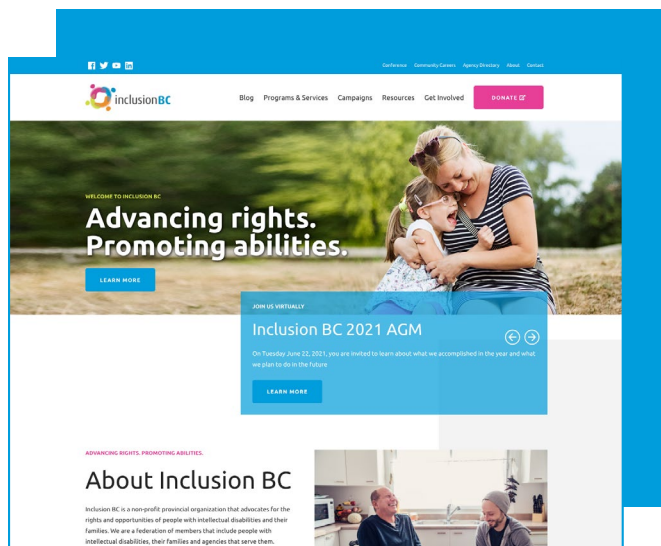


COVID-19 Response Risks

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE COVID-19 response risks leaving people with disabilities, caregivers behind, warns Inclusion BC...

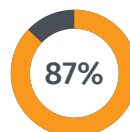
[Read More →](#)

March 19, 2020, #COVIDdisability blog post.

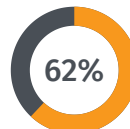


Inclusion BC website splash page.

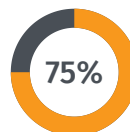
Online Communications



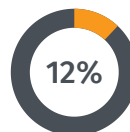
New website visits



Blog posts were about #COVIDdisability



More E-Updates sent to subscribers



More Facebook followers



More Twitter followers

227 Sixth Street
New Westminster, B.C.
V3L 3A5, Canada

T 604-777-9100
E info@inclusionbc.org

inclusionbc.org

