



Annual Report
2019-2020



inclusionBC



A world where everybody belongs

Letter from the Executive Director

At Inclusion BC our focus this past year has been on ensuring people and their families live full and inclusive lives where they are respected, empowered, and informed to make decisions for themselves and the people they love. The people we support, their families, and our community partners are an engaged and motivated group representing a diverse range of needs and interests. We know our collective success depends on our ability to truly engage people in thoughtful discussions on how we advance inclusion together.

To support the development of our 2020 Strategic Plan, Inclusion BC talked with staff, board members, people with disabilities, families, member organizations, government officials, and community living peers to learn their views on our organization. During these many conversations, we heard that people value our advocacy and the quality of our Annual Learning Conference. We also learned that we have work to do to diversify our engagement strategies for building stronger relationships with Indigenous communities, those new to Canada and young families.

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

Karla Verschoor
Executive Director
Inclusion BC

Letter from the President

I am pleased to present to you Inclusion BC's work and achievements for 2019/2020. Inclusion is best achieved when we work together to celebrate and honour the diversity among us, which we have done again this year.

I want to acknowledge the expertise and leadership of the volunteer Board and Committee Members. Your dedication and leadership allowed us to tackle complex issues such as medical assistance in dying, provincial accessibility legislation, and the need for enhanced safeguards to keep people safe and supported.

It was a year of reflection and renewal as we decided to amalgamate with the Inclusion BC Foundation. As a single society, we will operate from a place of greater strength and clarity. I want to extend a special thank you to the Board of Directors of the Inclusion BC Foundation for their guidance and commitment to keeping us financially healthy.

As President of Inclusion BC, I also represent our province on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Association for Community Living. I am proud to share the work of Inclusion BC with my national colleagues as I am to share it with you in this report.

Fiona Whittington-Walsh
President
Inclusion BC



Providing support, education and advocacy



#IAmVoting Toolkit

In October 2019 the Government of Canada held a Federal Election. Working with our Self Advocate Committee, Inclusion BC produced the “#IAmVoting Toolkit: Election Information and Participation Guide” This guide helped people understand what voting is about and why it is important.

Advancing rights. Promoting abilities

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

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

What is inclusion? Inclusion is an attitude and 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 better able to reach our full potential.

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 title throughout the province of British Columbia, the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the 94 calls to action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Special thanks to Karen DeLong who retired this year! “Karen, you are a spiritual warrior and a steadfast leader! Your strength of character and commitment has truly made a difference for everyone in our community.” Karla Verschoor, Executive Director

Our Team



Board of Directors

Dr. Fiona Whittington-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

Angela Bond, *Director* | North

Annette Delaplace, *Director* | Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley

Dr. Jonathan Down, *Director* | Vancouver Island

Courtney Fraser, *Director* | Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley

Cyndi Gerlach, *Director* | Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley

Michael McLellan, *Director* | Vancouver Island

Bendina Miller, *Director* | Interior

Ellen Tarshis, *Director* | ED Network Appointment

Staff Team

Karla Verschoor, *Executive Director*

Karen DeLong, *Director of Inclusive Education*

Danielle Kelliher, *Director of Communications*

Frank Peng, *Director of Finance and Administration*

Jillian Bradley, *Co-Director of Employment Initiatives*

Kwaku Yeboah, *Co-Director of Employment Initiatives*

William James, *Communications Manager*

Dawn Steele, *Communication Specialist*

Symbia Barnaby, *Community Inclusion Advocate*

Erika Cedillo, *Community Inclusion Advocate*

Tina Dam, *Community Inclusion Advocate*

Semanthi Wanni, *Engagement Coordinator*

Sebastien Peng, *Accounting*

Janice Bai, *Accounts Manager*

Mika Chibana, *Office Assistant*

Lowena Ko, *Office Assistant*

Christian Kulusic, *Office Assistant*

Supporting individuals and families, advocating for systemic change

Empowerment Through Advocacy

Inclusion BC's advocacy program provides direct one-to-one advocacy support for people with disabilities and their families. This is a free service for people across the province.

The information we learn from the people we support and from our research strengthens Inclusion BC's capacity to increase understanding of barriers at local, provincial and national levels.

This first-hand information is critical as we meet and consult with regional and provincial groups across the province, making a difference not only in the lives of the individual people we support, but at a systemic, organizational level.

Inclusion BC participated in the Re-imagining Community Inclusion consultations by bringing forth the messages we heard through our advocacy program. In addition, regular communication occurs between Inclusion BC and various ministries where again, the issues that families are experiencing are brought forth.

"I want to thank Tina and Inclusion BC for being there through our struggles with our son last year. It was nice to know I wasn't alone during my meetings. The support was very much appreciated."

Jayne Perrault

"I am grateful to Inclusion BC for helping me to advocate for my daughter. The advocate at Inclusion BC gave me valuable advice on how I should proceed to get the support needed for my daughter... I felt that I was talking to an old friend. The advocates are friendly, knowledgeable, and respond to my questions promptly."

Eleanor Kwok, mother of Priscilla Kwok





ADVOCACY: Policy Reports to BC's Standing Committees

Ending the Wait

Overcoming systemic delays in the provision of support for children and youth. [See Brief](#)

Children & Youth Services

- Increase funding to eliminate waitlists
- Eliminate geographical barriers
- Ensure access to nursing supports

K-12 Education

- Ensure access to full time education
- Eliminate the use of restraints and seclusion
- Eliminate wait-times for psycho-educational assessments throughout the K-12 system

Transition to Adult Services

- Ensure access to support after school graduation
- Improve collaboration among CLBC, Ministry of Health, and Regional Health Authorities
- Eliminate geographic barriers

Submitted to Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth with Neuro-diverse Special Needs.

Investing in Inclusion

Reducing immediate and long-term costs by supporting independent living for people with disabilities in inclusive communities. [See Brief](#)

- Support for **Children & Youth** with a funding increase to eliminate waitlists
- Save **At Home Program** with increased funding
- Support **Life Transitions** with timely support
- Develop **Flexible Housing** options by providing for portable rental supplements from BC Housing
- Support the move to **Independent Living** for adults with intellectual disabilities
- Support **Recruitment & Retention** in the community living service sector
- Increase **Persons with Disability (PWD)** rates

Accessibility Brief

Inclusion BC makes 16 recommendations for BC's Framework for Accessibility Legislation. [See Brief](#)

- Rights-based, aligned with the UNCRPD
- Developed with active participation by people with intellectual disabilities

Building social capital, strengthening our community and celebrating diversity

Inclusion BC's Annual Learning Event

Inclusion BC hosted its 43rd annual learning event in Victoria, BC from May 23-25, 2019. The event was co-hosted by Community Living Victoria and welcomed 500 delegates to the Victoria Conference Centre. We offered over 50 workshops on topics ranging from inclusive education to employment to health care and the arts. There were learning opportunities for community support professionals, self-advocates, family members, executives, students and inclusion allies. We featured six live arts performances, two keynote speakers—Dr. Al Condeluci and Dr. Leyton Schnellert—and one participatory theatre production, *Romance, Relationships and Rights!*

Thank you to everyone who helped make our annual conference such a huge success. Thank you to the enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers from Community Living Victoria who did everything from running the registration desk to supporting presenters in their workshops, and for making everyone, especially the attendees, feel welcome. We are deeply grateful.

"We know that social capital, or relationships in our lives, promote amazing positive effects among people—especially when it is coupled with strong inclusion values. This spirit of inclusion must be embraced as a human rights and social justice issue."
~ Dr. Al Condeluci

Conference Sponsors: Province of British Columbia • BC Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU) • Representative for Children and Youth • Kettner Creative • Vancity • BC Housing • Westland Insurance • Kwantlen Polytechnic University • Community Services Benefits Trust • BC Teachers Federation (BCTF) • BC CEO Network • Public Guardian and Trustee of BC • Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation • CBI consultants • TCS Thompson Community Services • Inclusion Langley • Family Support Institute • The HOME Society • Chilliwack Society for Community Living • AiMHi (Prince George Association for Community Living) • Lifetime Networks Victoria • Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion • Community Living Society • Port Alberni Association for Community Living • Bethesda • Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion • Nanaimo Association for Community Living • MACL (Mission Association for Community Living) • posAbilities • CISS (Community Integration Service Society) • Spectrum Society for Community Living • Society for Students with a Disability UVIC • Used.ca • WorkSafe BC • **Thank you!**

Conference Numbers for 2019!

- 502 Registrants
- 145 self-advocates
- 139 professionals
- 88 presenters
- 50 workshops
- 50 volunteers
- 45 scholarships
- 19 Exhibitors
- 6 Live Arts Performances
- 2 Keynote Presentations
- 2 Big Parties (Opening Party + Dinner/Dance)
- 1 participatory Theatre Project





Supporting families to find their voices and become champions for inclusion

Kids Can't Wait Gathering

Inclusion BC as part of the Kids Can't Wait Working Group co-hosted families, advocates, agencies, and organizations at our *Kids Can't Wait Gathering* in October 2019. This helped us develop a Community Action Plan to improve outcomes for children and families who receive early years supports and services in B.C. with 4 areas of focus:

- **Collaborative Services:** Build strong collaborative approaches between ministries and between community agencies and ministries.
- **Family-centred:** Emphasize a family-centred approach to support that builds the capacity of families to care for their children.
- **Timely Resources:** Seek sufficient capacity to meet the needs of families in a timely way.
- **Equitable Access:** Advocate for equitable access to services that are appropriate and available to families where and when they need them.

Thank you to the Vancouver Foundation and our community partners: BC Association for Child Development and Intervention (BCACDI), Provincial Advisor for Aboriginal Infant Development Program, Provincial Advisor for Aboriginal Supported Child Development Program, Richmond Association for Community Living, Inclusion Langley Society, BC Centre for Ability, Family Support Institute, and First Call - BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition.

Blooming Together

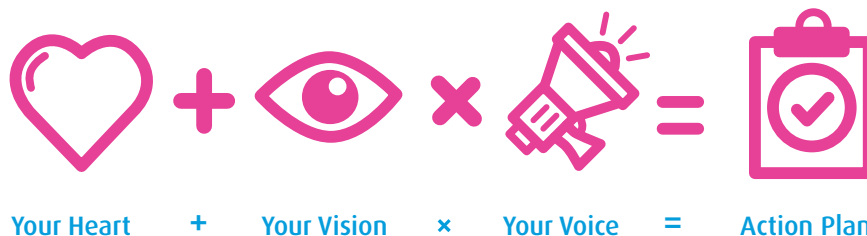
With our local partners in Victoria, we brought families together for the *Blooming Together Gathering*. The purpose was to grow and strengthen the family network by sharing knowledge, strengthening advocacy skills, and developing community support. We focused our discussion on:

- **Rights, Processes, and Advocacy:** develop the skills to become a champion for inclusion.
- **Hopes, Dreams, and Planning:** support a vision of inclusion with diverse planning tools.
- **Resilience and Selfcare:** be intentional about building family resilience.
- **Our inclusive community:** strengthen the network of families in Greater Victoria.

Thank you to our community partners: Lifetime Networks Victoria, Community Living Victoria, BCEDAccess, and Family Support Institute.

Loon Lake: Retreat & Re-emergence

The Inclusion BC weekend retreat at Loon Lake provided an opportunity for our Self Advocacy Advisory Committee, Family Advisory Committee, and special guests to meet in person and discuss their shared experiences, and map a path forward together.



All students belong in the classroom

Features of Inclusive Schools

Our Back-to-school campaign in September 2019 emphasized the theme that all students belong in the classroom and sought to raise awareness and understanding of the values and features of inclusive education.

Inclusive education means designing schools, classrooms, programs and activities so that all students participate and learn together. Inclusive public neighbourhood schools are the heart of our communities and of quality education systems.

Some ideas at the core of our inclusive education campaign are:

- All students are welcomed and valued for who they are.
- All students are supported to set personal goals and build on individual strengths.
- All students have equitable access to learning, with accommodations and support as required to overcome systemic barriers and discrimination.
- All students are supported to interact, play and collaborate with other students their own age.
- Parents are welcomed as respected partners in their child's education and local school community.
- School-wide commitment to upholding a safe, welcoming and supportive culture that emphasizes belonging and respect for diversity.

Inclusive Education Working Group

From February to August 2019, Inclusion BC participated in the Inclusive Education Working Group as part of the Ministry of Education's Funding Model Review process. The Working Group's final report includes key considerations for the potential implementation of a new funding model. Our key recommendations included:

- **Clear Economic Modelling:** Clear economic modelling needs to be made publicly available prior to full implementation so that everyone can understand how funding will flow to districts and classrooms that include students with diverse needs.
- **Prioritized Support:** Clarity on how the new model allocates appropriate funding and helps to fulfill a commitment to prioritizing support for individuals and communities with the highest needs.
- **Implementation Assistance:** Confirmation that support required to assist districts with the implementation of a new model will be worked out with each district prior to full implementation.
- **Specific Timelines:** Provide specific timelines for funding implementation moving forward, including stakeholder communication and engagement.

#BackToSchool #AllMeansAll #Inclusion

Restraint and Seclusion

We also continued to follow up our earlier work on stopping restraint and seclusion. All school districts were requested by the Ministry to have policies in place based upon the 2015 Provincial Guidelines on the use of restraint and seclusion. We undertook a review to assess district compliance with this directive and found that:

- As of November 2019, 56 school districts have adopted a policy on the use of restraint and seclusion.
- Four school districts had a draft policy or were in the approval process.

Inclusive Education Awards

Six B.C. educators were named as recipients of the 2019 National Inclusive Education Awards. The awards were hosted by Inclusion BC, the Family Support Institute of BC and Inclusive Education Canada.

The awards honour teachers, support staff and educational leaders who demonstrate leadership in ensuring that all students, especially those with extra support needs, are given full access to education and included in all aspects of school life. This 2019 winners include classroom teachers from elementary schools in Oliver and Maple Ridge, three educational assistants from New Westminster Secondary School, and the registrar at the University of Victoria.

“Children and youth with diverse abilities offer us new ways to live and learn in schools and the world.”

~Dr. Leyton Schnellert



Opening the doors to new careers and inclusive housing for all



MentorAbility

British Columbians with disabilities are discovering career goals through MentorAbility

MentorAbility is a national initiative which promotes the employment of people with disabilities through mentoring experiences in which job seekers with disabilities are matched with individual mentors in their field of interest. MentorAbility provides businesses, non-profits and public sector employers with opportunities to promote engagement in the workplace for persons with disabilities, recognize skills and potential, and develop rewarding and lasting relationships. Inclusion BC delivers the service across BC with the support of members and community partners.

READY WILLING & ABLE

Ready, Willing & Able

Since the launch of this program, 374 British Columbians with intellectual disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder have found work through Ready, Willing & Able.

Our partnership with the national Ready, Willing & Able (RWA) initiative continues to advance the inclusion of persons with intellectual disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder in BC workplaces through the business case approach. In Phase II, RWA is also supporting persons with intellectual disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder to pursue self-employment opportunities and post-secondary education. With employer partnerships across the province such as Costco, Purolator, Home Depot, Deloitte and Sodexo, RWA continues to create diverse pathways towards employment. RWA participated in key provincial inclusive employment initiatives, including providing the keynote speech for the Chartered Professionals in Human Resources of British Columbia and Yukon (CHRP) Annual Diversity and Inclusion Symposium. RWA also co-hosted the first Inclusive Hiring Fair in Metro Vancouver Area with MentorAbility, to enhance employment opportunities for persons with intellectual disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder.

"I really appreciated the opportunity to spend the day with Ross learning what he does... MentorAbility is one step in my learning and growing towards my hopes and dreams."

Tyler Bacon, MentorAbility Protégé





Photos: MentorAbility and Inclusion BC

Inclusive Housing for All

A primary goal in the first year of our plan to advance inclusive housing was to gather data to better understand and communicate the housing needs of people with intellectual disabilities. CLBC contracted with BC Non-Profit Housing Association (BCNPH) to conduct a survey and series of focus groups. Inclusion BC began a learning journey with the First Nations and Indigenous Studies program at UBC by looking to develop a deeper understanding of the housing needs of Indigenous people and their families.

Early results from BCNPH reflect the following:

- Over half of the people surveyed would choose a different living situation.
- Roughly 35% of people would prefer to move as soon as possible.
- When asked, do you have a plan for your loved one? Approximately 70% of people reported no.

During the 8-month research project, which included a literature review and a series of interviews with Indigenous people, it became clear that our research method did not match Indigenous protocol or the way in which Indigenous people

share information. We discovered how imperative it is to work directly and alongside Indigenous leaders as allies to support their self-identified housing needs.

We also strengthened our local presence through several workshops, a presentation, and exhibit at the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) conference. A new joint campaign designed to deepen these relationships and build the capacity of local communities is coming soon. Watch for the launch of "Key to Home".



"Thank you to all our community partners and member organizations for making these Ready, Willing & Able initiatives possible."

Kwaku Yaboah, Inclusion BC

756 job seekers and 25 employers participated in our Inclusive Job Fair coordinated by Ready Willing & Able, MentorAbility and Inclusion BC.

Get in the game with the champions

Inclusion Cup: Everybody's included. Everybody wins!

The Toronto Maple Leafs Alumni came to B.C. for the first time ever, for a three-game charitable hockey tour to support community inclusion in February 2020. The games were played in packed arenas in Victoria, Port Alberni, and Chilliwack with the Leafs facing off against teams of local players.

The tour was sponsored by *Lifetime Networks Victoria*, *Port Alberni Association for Community Living* and the *Chilliwack Society for Community Living*.

The Alumni team featured Maple Leafs stars Rick Vaive, Al Iafrate, Mike Krushelnyski, and ten others.

The goal of the hockey tour was to promote community inclusion, especially for people with developmental or intellectual disabilities.

Jeff Gilbank, Director of the Chilliwack Society for

Community Living, said, "We are using a common bond – hockey and the Toronto Maple Leafs Alumni – to bring together people of all abilities to celebrate inclusion and diversity."

Carlene Thompson, Finance Director at *Lifetime Networks Victoria*, said, "The immediate benefit of this event will be the reduction of social isolation for people with disabilities who will be welcomed and celebrated. The long-term benefit will be to strengthen Inclusion BC and our local community service providers."

Craig Summers, Executive Director at *Port Alberni Association for Community Living*, summed up the success of the event, "It's was a fun, family-friendly night! And everyone came out and showed their support for community inclusion, diversity, and hockey!!"



Serving people with intellectual disabilities and their families across B.C.

We continue to grow our membership welcoming the Family Support Institute of BC, BCEdAccess Society and Cranbrook Society for Community Living as organizational members.

Organizational Members

- AiMHi (Prince George Association for Community Living)
- BCEdAccess Society
- BC Centre for Ability
- Bethesda
- Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion (BACI)
- Campbell River & District Association for Community Living
- Canadian Deafblind Association
- 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
- Elk Valley Society for Community Living
- Family Support Institute of BC
- Fort St. John Association for Community Living
- HOME Society
- Hope Association for Community Living
- Kamloops Society for Community Inclusion
- Inclusion Powell River
- Kimberley Society for Community Living
- Kinsight (formerly Simon Fraser Society for Community Living)
- Kootenay Society for Community Living
- L'Arche Greater Vancouver
- Inclusion Langley (formerly - Langley Association for Community Living)
- 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 (formerly Penticton & District 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
- Shuswap Association for Community Living
- 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.
- Uniti
- Vela Microboard Association of BC
- Western Human Resource Corp.
- Williams Lake Association for Community Living

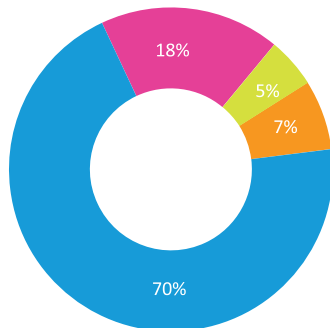
Affiliate Members

- Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU)
- BC Non-Profit Housing Association (BCNPHA)
- Vancouver Island University

Supporting advocacy and community development

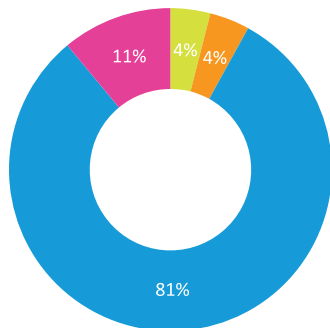
Thank you to our funders and supporters who are helping us make a real difference in the lives of people with intellectual disabilities and their families all across our province.

Where the Money Came From



- 18% ● Memberships
- 5% ● Inclusion BC Foundation
- 7% ● Fees For Services
- 70% ● Fundraising, Donations & Grants

How We Put the Money to Work



- 11% ● Member Services
- 4% ● Administration
- 4% ● Costs For Services
- 81% ● Advocacy & Community Development

Inclusion BC Funders

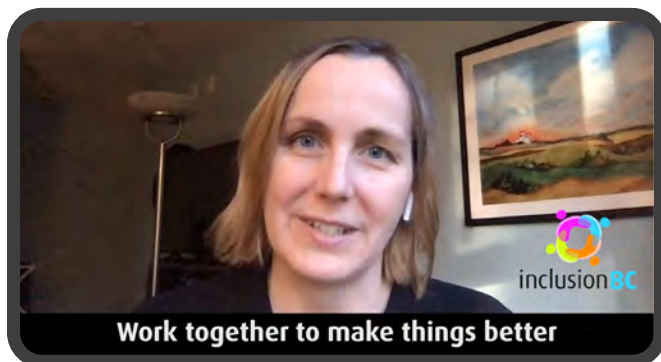
May & Stanley Smith Charitable Trust
Vancouver Foundation
Rick Hanson Foundation
Government of British Columbia
Government of Canada

Inclusion BC Donors \$240 and more

Wendy Baker	Howard Kettner
John Baxter	David R. Kirkby
Seth Berkowitz	Carol Kozevnikov
J. K. Birdsell	J. Alain D. Lefebvre
James Brander	Alan Lomax
Gordon Bursleson	Heather MacNaughton
Michael Chan	Malcolm & Leslie
Justin Chia	McIntosh
Suzanne Chubb	Harvey Mckinnon
Truus Clark	Gordon McNeil
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Erika A. Jozsa	Augusto Wu
Susan Kelly	Danny Yu

Awareness Campaigns

#StrongerTogether #COVID-19



March 31, 2020

The pandemic has been challenging for everyone, and it presents unique challenges for people with disabilities and their families. But I'm hopeful that, working together, we can make things better for all.

Our initial priority was to ensure the community living sector's vital role was recognized and secured. We want to thank the BC government for deeming our sector an "essential service" and for engaging meaningfully to plan an effective collaborative response.

A huge thank you to our member organizations for their incredible work and strong commitment to the people they support. It is my privilege to work with you.

I'm also inspired by the way people stepped up to help each other. The natural supports provided by parents, siblings, friends and neighbours are really making a difference. But we must do more to support all those who provide this vital safety net. Individuals and families also need immediate financial relief. Both the federal and provincial governments promise this is coming.

Meanwhile, if you find yourself struggling, reach out to our Advocacy Line. Inclusion BC is here for you—as an advocate, ally and friend to ensure no one is left behind. Stay well!

Karla Verschoor

Executive Director, Inclusion BC

Social Media Stats

Facebook: 5,000 followers, 1 million impressions

Twitter: 7,000 followers, 1.6 million impressions

Newsletter: 2,500 subscribers, 68,000 opens

Website: 220,000 visits



#IAmVoting

ELECTION 2019



All students learn differently



#BackToSchool #AllMeansAll #Inclusion

Bring your heart, your vision and your voice



Kids Can't Wait

Community Gathering: October 29, 2019

#MAID

Help us protect the lives of people with disabilities





Annual Report
2019-2020



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