

Chair: Mezaun Lakha-Evin, Kim Marion

Present

Mezaun Lakha-Evin (CAN)	Jenny Crabbe (CIWA)
Danny Zoetewey (SCOPE Society)	Ermira Kusari (CAN)
Michael Farr (EmployAbilities)	Kim Marion (LEAD Foundation)
Ginger Mullen (Community Advocate)	Christopher Gordon (CNIB)
Lori James (PaceKids)	Fiona Lowes (CIWA)

1.	Land Acknowledgement Welcome and Introductions
2.	May minutes - Approved
3.	<p><u>May Minutes revisited</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The table has been approached by community members to inquire whether the table is doing any work towards discrimination and racism in the wake of recent attacks. - Frontline Worker Training – working towards planning a virtual delivery of the training across Alberta. Once more updates are available, they will be shared with the table. <p><u>Presentation: Benefits of Using Language Play with Children and Families</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language Play: the oral tradition of stories and nursery rhymes including songs, enjoyed between an adult and a child or group of children. - Family Resource Network: clients that are referred to these agencies may benefit greatly and enjoy their time participating in the programs. (Resource document attached to the email along with the minutes) - Research: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Language and Literacy: songs and poems with their rhythm and repetition are easily memorized and can be used to teach phonetic awareness and print concepts to ELLs. 2. Developmental: these centuries old tried-and-true nursery rhymes and songs support children’s overall development in meaningful and engaging ways. Not a lot of research has been done in this area. 3. Children with Disabilities: the program offered something to all of the children, not just to those who had challenges or who were showing typical development. The social aspect for the parents is as important as it is for the children.

4. Newcomer Families: Supported playgrounds provided a strong, key source of social support for refugees and migrant mothers, facilitating their development of informal networks of support.

- All three levels: the child, the family, the community benefit from using language play.

- **Child** Learning through play – development domains: speech and language, physical, intellectual, social, emotional, spiritual (<https://flightframework.ca/>)

- **Family:**

* Accessibility: no cost, orality (literacy level not a barrier), drawn on family's language and cultural traditions;

* Inclusion: includes families.

* Language as Resource (vs Language as Problem): when children feel pride in their mother language and include it, it helps with the communication within the family.

- **Community:**

* Multicultural Literacy: the entire group participating together benefit from it and learn to be empathetic.

* Inclusivity: all children and families can participate at some level.

* Resources and Networks: great way for the newcomer families to build their networks and resources, as it is for Canadian families.

- Story time can be used with adults as well to share stories and experiences.

- Anyone interested in learning more, please contact Ginger Mullen (ginger@bgway.ca)

Discussion:

- How open and receptive have families been to this form of communication?

* They have been very receptive. It can be made very simple and adapt it and get the entire family engaged (e.g. finger puppets where the child can direct it).

- How open and receptive have businesses/agencies been?

* There is a bit of a disconnect between the frontline workers who want to learn more and the administrators that facilitate the training and paying for them and it is not as forthcoming when funding comes into the equation.

- What has your experience with using rhymes to teach phonics to adults?

* If you were to seek it in their languages, would the phonemic awareness be better. For adults that have children, when children go home with nursery rhymes and songs that they learn at the school, the parents learn it through the children. Choosing rhymes that are a repetition of one word might be helpful.

- A lot of children learn through videos and online – any thoughts on it?

* It has been mostly teaching the professionals where to find existing rhymes and songs. The work with children online involves a lot of visual (e.g. finger puppets; not reading books online). Some publishers are putting books online that are narrated while the pictures are showing on screen.

<https://www.storybookscanada.ca/>

<https://bloomlibrary.org/create>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvQagFNHMrGgQpYunk4rHXg>

<https://calgarylibrary.ca/read-learn-and-explore/digital-library/tumblebook-library/>

Newcomers and AISH supports

- The AAN Poverty Reduction table is working towards and education and awareness campaign on AISH (to be launched during the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty) and we are collecting stories on the impact that AISH supports have on the recipients – Ermira read one of the stories submitted regarding a newcomer to Canada that qualified for AISH and how it changes her life for the better.
- This is also in discussion from the Federal Government, "BILL C-35: An Act to reduce poverty and to support the financial security of persons with disabilities by establishing the Canada disability benefit and making a consequential amendment to the Income Tax Act": <https://www.parl.ca/LegisInfo/BillDetails.aspx?Language=E&billId=11446219&View=7>
- What are agencies seeing and experiencing with AISH applications?
 - * CIWA: Very careful handling cases where an individual has qualified for AISH to ensure that they do not jeopardized their AISH support as AISH recipients are allowed to work only a certain number of hours. On the income supports side, several case workers have agreed that the plan for an individual is a good fit for them and they will continue to receive income supports for the duration of the training and placement and move on from there.
 - * SCOPE: work mostly with folks who are PDD eligible, so there hasn't been a noticeable difference on our end.
- The concern is long term in cases where an individual finds employment through an agency as the connecting with the individual is not retained forever and if they are laid off and they cannot get reemployed, an entire AISH application has to be triggered again and it will likely be unsuccessful.
- When Government creates programs that provides subsidies for wages, it is also up to the employers to take interest into it.
- Changes to employment of persons with disabilities should start with the agencies that work and support them to begin with.
- It is important to frame it in the context of what people with disabilities can do rather than what they cannot do.
- According to the jobs program, if a person with a disability finds employment via an agency and they are let go or quit employment, then they need to connect with a different agency to find employment.
- There is still stigma when it comes to employers as there is the notion that the benefits rate will go up if they hire someone with a disability. Accommodations piece should not be a factor that impacts employment opportunities.

Employment and Training Services Directory

AAN Newcomers with Disabilities Table

June 29, 2021

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - https://www.alberta.ca/employment-training-services-directory.aspx - These types of programs deliver employment training housed in the non-profit sector with ties to the business sector are the ones that are historically successful. - Canada Job Grant and the more recent grant: the driver is the employer or the business and they are cumbersome for businesses. - For many people with disabilities, access to services and supports was limited due to the pandemic in 2020, depending on the case. Hope to hear more of the stories of how agencies and the government support those people. - Agencies need to teach people seeking employment as to what the best approaches are to working with agencies that assist with employment. - The focus put on employment put on by elected officials is not necessarily always helpful.
4.	<p>Wrap-Up/Adjournment</p> <p><u>Next meeting:</u> Date: July 27, 2021 Time: 1:30 – 3:30 PM Location: Zoom</p>