putting *employment first* for youth with intellectual disabilities

A resource for community leaders
Acknowledgements

This guide was prepared by the Canadian Association for Community Living through the work of the National Advisory Group on Youth Transitions to Employment and Careers.

National Advisory Group Members:

Robin Acton        Erin Hay
Lynn Akmens        Bendina Miller
Sheila Anderson    Amy Murray
Rachelle Czerwinski Rashaad Sayeed
Frank Driscoll     Bob Vansickle

Project Coordinator: Tyler Hnatuk

Research Officer: Erin Terwissen

The Canadian Association for Community Living wishes to thank all of those who participated in the project and gratefully acknowledges the financial contribution to the development of this guide from the Government of Canada through the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development, Office for Disability Issues. The findings and statements in this guide are those of the Canadian Association for Community Living and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Government of Canada.
# Table of Contents

## Introduction

- “What makes an ‘Employment First’ community?” .......................... 1
- How to use the guide ................................................................. 5
- Outline of the guide .................................................................. 6

## Part I: Raising Expectations .......................................................... 7

- The employment situation for Canadians with intellectual disabilities ........................................ 7
- Where are we today, and how did we get here? ............................................................. 8
- Social and economic inclusion ........................................................................ 9
- Best practices for social and economic inclusion in employment support ................................ 10
- About “Employment First” ...................................................................... 12

## Part II: Rights and obligations .......................................................... 13

2. Federal Employment Equity Law ........................................................................... 17
3. Human Rights Code .............................................................................................. 17
4. Employment Standards ............................................................................................ 18

## Part III: Community Roles for Supporting Transitions to Employment and Careers ..................... 19

- Youth with and without disabilities ........................................................................... 20
- Parents, families and community network ..................................................................... 22
- Teachers, Administrators, Guidance Counsellors and School Officials .............................. 25
- Employers and the business community ...................................................................... 28
- Employment and community service providers .......................................................... 30
- Policy makers and government ................................................................................... 32

## Communities in Action: Case studies and ideas from communities across Canada ......................... 34

## Part IV: Developing a community strategy ........................................................................... 39

1. Getting started ................................................................................................. 39
2. Sustaining the process ......................................................................................... 46

## Part V: Resources and Templates ......................................................................................... 47

1. Key messages about “Employment First” ....................................................................... 47
2. “Disability-positive” Facts on Employment of People with Disabilities .............................. 47
3. Sample meeting agenda for a community employment strategy meeting ......................... 47
4. Videos about Disability and Employment .................................................................. 47
5. Situational Scan: Where are we today? ...................................................................... 47
6. Understanding Obstacles – Template Facilitation Activity .............................................. 48
7. Identifying Challenges and Opportunities – Template Facilitation Activity ...................... 48
8. Further Reading: Guides and Information Resources ....................................................... 49
Introduction

“What makes an ‘Employment First’ community?”

Put simply, Employment First is about raising expectations. It is about raising expectations about people with disabilities that are held by all community members. It is about communities that believe in and support the contributions of people with disabilities. An Employment First community recognizes that inclusive workplaces are good workplaces; that hiring people with disabilities makes good business sense; that inclusive schools provide better education for all students; that sheltered day services not only hinder individuals from achieving their full potential, but also rob the community of its true diversity.

Employment First is about raising expectations among families and youth. This means creating conditions that make it possible for young people with disabilities and their families to dream big and set goals for a life after school. It is about raising the expectations of service providers, government and policy makers, schools and employers. There are many outdated notions about disability and work that are held by the public at large. These are the result of a long history of segregation and assumptions made about people’s capabilities. But this involves more than changing attitudes. It involves addressing the practices that take place in our communities that in many cases are at the root of those attitudes toward people with disabilities.
People with disabilities have long been held back by others’ assumptions. However, attitudes are shifting. People want to be treated with dignity and respect. They want to be present in and contribute to their communities. People with disabilities are increasingly being known in their communities for their roles as fellow citizens, valued employees, co-workers, students and friends.

Work has often been treated like an ‘extra’ for people with disabilities—just one option among many. Work is about making the best use of our talents in our contributions to society, and having those contributions valued in the same way as they are for everyone. It is a vital part of our social identity. It no longer makes sense to talk about work as just one of many options for social inclusion.

Employment First means that for services provided to people with disabilities, employment is considered as the first and best option. It is a commitment in principles, policy and practice to achieving integrated employment for people with disabilities. The Employment First movement is growing internationally. For example, there are several jurisdictions in the United States where communities, districts and states have taken up the challenge through policy change, funding incentives, community development and reform of service practices through an employment first lens.

Systemic Factors:
So what does a community that puts employment first for youth with disabilities look like? There are several factors that work at a ‘systems level’ that influence the opportunities that are available to youth in pursuit of employment and careers. These are factors such as the local economy and job opportunities that are available; the availability of quality inclusive education; accessible transportation services; availability of quality community and employment supports; and so on. These ‘systems level’ factors are important in influencing the types of opportunities that are available but they are not the only factors.

Personal and Interpersonal Factors:
Other factors that influence the employment prospects for people with disabilities are at the individual and community level. For the individual, some examples of the factors that make the greatest difference are:

- Enthusiasm and having a positive attitude;
- Having a transition plan that includes career goals and expectations;
- Willingness to learn;
- Understanding the local job market and conditions;
- Basic skills for job search such as creating a resume and job interview skills
- Work experience and basic job skills;
- Presence and mobilization of social networks;
- Awareness and understanding of support needs.
Community Factors:
These individual and personal factors and capacities are in turn impacted and can be supported by the roles that are played by community members. Below, a brief summary of these roles is provided for families, teachers and school officials, youth, employers and policy makers.

Families — The path to employment and careers should begin early in a young person’s life. But it is never too late to start. Parents and siblings have the first and greatest impact on the capacity of youth to dream big and have aspirations for a career. It can be as simple as talking about “what you want to do when you grow up” around the dinner table. The same conversations that families have with children who do not have a disability need to take place with children with disabilities.

Families need opportunities to connect in order to support and challenge one another in cultivating and pursuing their vision of a good life for their child. More information about roles for families in a community that puts employment first can be found in section III of the guide.

Teachers, Administrators, School officials — The path to employment and careers is built on the foundation of a high quality education. An inclusive education system is critical in shaping the opportunities that will be available for youth with disabilities. In a community that puts employment first for youth with disabilities, educators at every level take seriously their responsibility for educating all students. This means that youth with disabilities learn in regular classrooms with their peers and take part in school and extra-curricular activities.

Just like students who do not have disabilities, youth with disabilities need to be included in activities that are focused on career exploration and work experience. Career-oriented educational programming is usually a key component of a high quality education. Youth with disabilities need to have access to this same programming.

The importance of an inclusive education on future career and employment outcomes cannot be overemphasized. Through an inclusive education, young people are better prepared for their life in the community. It is where friendships and a sense of belonging are developed and it is where children can first be exposed to a range of possibilities for their future.

Youth — When youth with and without disabilities are educated together in an inclusive education setting they are able to forge friendships and relationships that last a lifetime. Many of the most important conversations that youth have about their future take place in the context of peer-to-peer connections. Youth challenge one another to step outside of their comfort zone and try new things.

While the roles of youth in supporting one another may not be as formalized as, for example, the roles of teachers and education officials, there are ways of encouraging these connections to take place. When youth have the opportunity to connect in positive inclusive settings they can help one another to identify their strengths, talents, goals and dreams. Youth also become strong advocates for one another as they help keep each other ‘on the right track.’

Employers — Employers are sometimes seen as part of a problem rather than as key allies. Many employers, like other community members, have not had the benefit of exposure to contributions that youth with disabilities bring to the workplace. In many cases this has been the result of a ‘charitable
approach’ to working with the business community. Employers have been asked to hire people with disabilities as a matter of charity, or as a social service. Instead, employers need to be shown the benefits of hiring people with disabilities.

Powerful examples exist across the country of employer-to-employer connections. Higher degrees of success are found in communities where the business community takes ownership of this role, and champions employment of youth with disabilities.

**Employment service providers** — Many people with intellectual disabilities will need some degree of assistance in entering the labour market. That assistance may only take the form of initial job search and career exploration, or it may be in the form of getting a foot in the door. Others may require on the job support from a job coach. Employment support providers play a key role in the employment outcomes that are possible for youth with disabilities.

‘Supported employment’ following a place-and-train or job coach model is recognized as a best practice for employment services for people with disabilities. While this support is available in most communities across the country, the practices that are currently used tend to exist as a patchwork. This fact is explored further in section III.

**Policy Makers** — The conditions for communities that put employment first for youth with disabilities are also dependent on the policy and law regulating education, transition planning, provision of employment supports, income security systems, and so on. An Employment First approach to policy has been an effective way for bringing together each of the diverse stakeholders that impact the policy environment for youth making transitions to employment to eliminate disincentives and encourage employment as the first and best option for support. Key policy conditions for supporting employment first for youth with disabilities are explored in detail in section III.
How to use the guide

This guide is developed with community leaders in mind. It is meant to assist you in working with others to design and carry out a strategy to put employment first for youth with disabilities in your community. We have focused on assembling resources, tips and tools that will be useful in bringing community stakeholders together to create the conditions favourable to youth making positive transitions from school to work and careers.

You may want to start by familiarizing yourself with the material that is in the guide. By doing so, you will gain a better idea of who you may want to bring together to start the process. Then you can use the tips, ideas and resources in the latter part of the guide to begin the process.

Transition to what?

‘Transition planning’ happens for youth in a variety of contexts. There are numerous guides and protocols for assisting youth in making transitions from school to adult life. However, much of what is called ‘transition planning’ happens with an assumption that the goal is to move a person from one service system to another—i.e. the school system to ‘adult services’.

In thinking about transitions for youth with disabilities, it is important to focus on the transition from child to adult status or life-stage as opposed to child to adult services. Thinking about the transition from child to adult status means thinking about the typical changes and shifts that are experienced by all youth.

We chose to focus this guide on facilitating transitions from school to employment and careers. By focusing on ‘employment and careers’ we include additional activities that are part of a career path such as post-secondary education, and other generic work-related training programs. However, while there are a number of other important considerations involved in thinking about life after school such as housing, disability-related supports, financial independence, relationships and sexuality and other domains of life—those aspects of ‘life stage transitions’ are not the focus of this guide.

This guide at times uses the language of ‘transitions’ and ‘transition planning.’ However, this language can sometimes sound much like a program or service. We have tried to use language that is more typical of the life changes and planning that happen for all youth.

This guide focuses on the roles for community members in supporting youth in their move from school to employment and careers. As such, it builds on other work by the Canadian Association for Community Living completed in the area of assisting communities to adopt an ‘employment first’ approach to supporting people with disabilities.
Outline of the guide

Part I of this guide focuses on “raising expectations.” It begins by laying out the facts and data about the current employment situation for people with intellectual disabilities. It then moves to examine the changing perceptions of and attitudes towards people with disabilities in Canada. There is a complex path that led us to where we are today in regards to the employment situation for people with disabilities. The origin and evolution of the current service system that exists for people with disabilities in most communities across Canada is the result of families coming together to look for solutions to the problems of their day. In many cases, however, this service system has not progressed at the same rate to match the desires, dreams and needs of people with disabilities and their families. A brief overview of this history is provided in order to understand better where we are today and how we got here. The concepts of social and economic inclusion are frequently cited as a goal for policy and programming for people with disabilities. These concepts are reviewed and current employment support practices are evaluated in light of these aims. Finally, the concept of Employment First is introduced and explored as a set of principles to guide employment and community development strategies.

Part II explores some of the policy and legislation that currently regulates employment and employment supports. It provides a brief overview of the rights and obligations that must be met in working to facilitate employment for people with disabilities and address barriers.

Part III looks at the effective roles for community stakeholders in improving employment outcomes for youth with disabilities. It lists and details some of the key actors that are important in shaping a community employment strategy. It looks at the roles that they can play, and how they can be supported in those roles to facilitate youth in pursuing employment and careers.

Part IV outlines some of the steps in the process of a community strategy to put employment first for youth with disabilities. It provides tips on how to get started, and how to sustain the process.

Part V contains resources that can assist you throughout various stages of the process including facilitation tools, a sample meeting agenda, fact sheets and key messages.
Part I: Raising Expectations

The employment situation for Canadians with intellectual disabilities

Research on employment continues to show a huge gap between the employment situation for Canadians with intellectual disabilities and others.

- Using an internationally accepted prevalence rate of 2% of the population having an intellectual disability, there are approximately 475,000 working age Canadians with intellectual disabilities.
- Only 26% of working age Canadians with intellectual disabilities are employed.
- This is compared to employment rate of 53% for working-age people with other disabilities and 75% for those without disabilities.
- 40% of people with intellectual disabilities of this age group have never worked. This is in contrast to 6% of people with other disabilities and 6% of people without disabilities.
- For youth (15-24) with intellectual disabilities, only 15.5% are employed compared to 50% of youth with other disabilities;
- Only 15% of people with intellectual disabilities have some post-secondary education.
- The average income for working age persons with an intellectual disability who are working is less than half of that of Canadians without a disability.
- 46% of working age adult Canadians with intellectual disabilities struggle to live on provincial/territorial social assistance.
- Almost 74% of adults with intellectual disabilities living on their own or with friends live in poverty.

People with intellectual disabilities largely rely on social assistance, live with family or live in poverty with little control over their lives. They often live with ill health, social isolation, limited expectations for their lives and a limited sense of self-worth.

In Canada, we have created a situation where poverty is the most likely outcome for a person with a disability. Social assistance as it currently exists does not help lift people out of poverty but rather, traps them there.

Despite recent improvements in inclusive education, many young people with intellectual disabilities continue to leave school to sit at home, or spend their days in day program or sheltered workshop.
The cost of poverty is enormous. Those who live in poverty have higher rates of chronic illness, become less productive workers and use more social services. Health Canada estimated that the annual indirect cost to Canadians in terms of lost productivity stemming from the non-employment of people with long-term disabilities was $32.2 billion in 1998. This figure has only increased since.

Canada is on the threshold of a serious labour shortage within the next decade. Youth with intellectual disabilities are a growing and diverse group that could be in a position to respond to critical labour market needs.

The substantial under-representation of people with intellectual disabilities in the workforce, the cost of exclusion and the looming labour shortage means that comprehensive change in the labour market system is needed, and now is the time to act.

**Where are we today, and how did we get here?**

The statistics shown above reveal sobering facts about the employment situation for people with intellectual disabilities today. This situation has resulted from a number of interrelated factors. However, one of the factors that has had a great deal of influence over the situation as it is today, is the inherited system of services and supports that continues to be the dominant model in many communities across the country.

Community Living associations were started in the early 1950’s by groups of families who wanted alternatives to institutions and advocated for supports for their children in their home community. In many cases, they built these services themselves. Children with intellectual disabilities could not gain access to public education, so they created special separate schools. As their children grew into adults, they had few options for employment, nowhere to go and little to do, so they built sheltered workshops and day programs. Affordable housing and supports for independent living were not available so group homes were built. These services seemed to be solutions to the problems of the day. In the case of sheltered workshops, they provided a degree of activity and occupation and were a better alternative to institutionalization or being at home with nothing to do.

In the next decades, and especially during the 1970s, many began to question the effects of the segregated and congregate services that had been developed. Some began innovative approaches, closing their sheltered workshops and starting supported employment programs.

These supported employment programs operated on a ‘job carve’ model, or ‘place and train’ where people with disabilities are supported to identify their skills and goals, and are matched with employers. Employers are then provided support to adapt a position if necessary and make accommodations if needed. The employee is then supported to learn the job and is provided any ongoing supports that might be needed. Supported employment programs saw great success in these early years and significant numbers of people who had been working in the sheltered workshops secured jobs in the community.

At the same time, a number of other employment arrangements were created as a way of transitioning people who had spent their lives in the sheltered workshops and strongly desired to continue working under a similar structure. Some associations experimented with ideas of ‘workplace enclaves’—the most
common example being mail rooms. Some developed mobile work crews (janitorial, landscaping crews) and worker cooperatives—small businesses of 4-5 people that in many cases took over the contracts that had previously been completed by the sheltered workshop. It is important to note that these were intended as transitional strategies. For example, as the workers involved in these cooperatives aged and retired, the cooperatives were to be consolidated and discontinued.

Rather than work, a large number of other people from the sheltered workshops were supported to become involved in activities in the community such as social/recreational activities and volunteerism.

It has been acknowledged that our progress in making these transitions has stalled over the past decade. After the initial wave of closures of sheltered workshops and success with supported employment, we were left with a patchwork of sheltered workshops, day programs, supported employment, community involvement supports and some of the various alternative models.

Today, we find ourselves in a position where our vision for inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities outstrips the service capacity that has been developed over the past half-century. Youth find themselves struggling amidst, and often against, an inherited structure of services and supports designed in the context of different assumptions and different challenges.

Social and economic inclusion

Social inclusion is often identified as a policy and programming objective for people with disabilities. The deep historical roots of institutionalization, segregation and congregation of people with disabilities, and the continuing forms of poverty, exclusion and marginalization that people face, make social inclusion an important objective and consideration for policies and programs attempting to counteract these forces.

However, an objective of social inclusion often points to employment and careers as just one among many possible routes to achievement of social inclusion. As has been explored above, work is an important part of who we are. It is the way that we make our contributions to society and it is the way that society in turn values our presence and contributions. It makes little sense to continue to talk about employment and careers as just one among many routes to social inclusion. For most adults, employment and the income that it provides, is the preferred route to being included in the life of the community.

A narrowed goal of social inclusion has often resulted in an uneven focus on social and recreational outcomes for people with disabilities—often excluding the consideration of employment goals. For youth with disabilities this often means decreased expectations. It can often mean ‘a life of volunteering’ or ‘occupation’.

For these reasons it has become much more common in policy and social research to refer to an objective of social and economic inclusion. This recognizes the fact that a typical life path includes employment. It recognizes that it is difficult to achieve equal recognition and fulfillment of the benefits of citizenship without adequate economic resources. Poverty deprives people of much more than money—it can also deprive people of dignity, respect and status.
With the recognition that policy and programming goals ought to be oriented toward a horizon of *social and economic inclusion* we can begin to evaluate some of the outcomes that are made possible by the current forms of employment supports offered to people with disabilities. The following section looks across a number of the different types of employment services and supports that are in existence for people with disabilities today in order to evaluate which have the greatest potential for achieving social and economic inclusion.

**Best practices for social and economic inclusion in employment support**

The above diagram is meant to demonstrate the potential outcomes for social and economic inclusion that are possible through the different types of services and supports typically available in communities across the country.

The horizontal axis along the bottom represents the degree of *Labour Market Inclusion* that is enabled by a particular service type ranging from unpaid, volunteer or no work activity, to situations where marginal compensation or ‘training stipends’ are provided, to part time, low wage or precarious work, to employment that provides a competitive wage in standard employment situations.

The vertical axis along the side represents the degree of *Community Integration* that is enabled by different types of services and supports. These range from congregated, segregated and facility-based...
services which do not provide any great degree of community integration, to clustered and enclave employment supports where people may be more involved in the community but are grouped with others with disabilities, to mainstream and inclusive supports where people are assisted to be more fully involved and integrated in their community.

A combination of factors of Labour Market Inclusion and factors of Community Integration results in the Social and Economic Inclusion—the diagonal axis running across the centre of the diagram to the top right.

From the diagram we can see, for example, that “community involvement” type supports—directed toward assisting a person to pursue volunteer, social and recreational activities—achieve much more than day programs or sheltered workshops in the way of community integration but do not represent any degree of labour market inclusion.

Worker cooperatives, mobile work crews and workplace enclaves represent some stronger outcomes in terms of social and economic inclusion than sheltered workshops or day programs, but do not approach the type of inclusion that is possible through best practices in supported employment.

Self-employment strategies are a critical component of community employment strategies and are a good fit for many people who wish to pursue entrepreneurial activity. The outcomes represented by self-employment vary greatly and are of course very dependent on the individual business plan and support provided.

Supported employment and achievement of competitive employment in the open labour market represent the highest degree of social and economic inclusion. There remains a great deal of variation in the degree of labour market inclusion enabled here as many people with disabilities are steered toward low wage or precarious work.

A fuller analysis studying best practices for employment support and research on these different types of employment services can be found in the CACL publication Achieving Social and Economic Inclusion: From Segregation to ‘Employment First.’ See the resources section for more details.
About “Employment First”

- Employment First is about raising expectations. It is a commitment in principles, policy and practices to achieving inclusive employment outcomes for people with disabilities.

- Employment First is about “real work for real pay.”

- In Canada a number of communities, provinces and territories are exploring or moving toward an employment first approach.

- Employment First starts with an assumption that all people are capable of working and that supports and accommodations are provided to support individuals in their efforts to obtain mainstream employment.

- Generally, adopting an Employment First approach means that for services, supports or programs for people with intellectual disabilities, integrated employment is to be the first and preferred option.

- There is growing awareness and interest in Employment First approaches across the country. Dialogues are beginnings to develop province-wide Employment First approaches in New Brunswick and Ontario.

- British Columbia and Newfoundland have policies or practices that correspond with Employment First principles.

- Other cities across Canada have pursued an Employment First approach at the community level.

Employment First in the US

- In the U.S., a number of States have adopted Employment First initiatives to focus on integrated employment for people with intellectual disabilities.

- Tennessee, Washington, California, Indiana, Minnesota, Georgia, North Dakota, Wisconsin, Missouri, North Carolina, Iowa, Rhode Island and Nevada have all established or are in the process of developing Employment First initiatives.

- These policies have a clear impact on achieving high outcomes for people with intellectual disabilities. In 2008, Washington State reported that 87% of people with intellectual disabilities receiving employment and day supports participated in integrated employment.
Part II: Rights and obligations

There are a number of employment related laws, policies and regulations at the international, national and provincial/territorial level. It is important to be aware of the obligations and rights associated with employment and employment support.

It is an unacceptable reality of the current context of employment of people with disabilities that many practices that contravene employment law and policy continue to operate under the radar. Recently in Canada and internationally there have been increased efforts to make legal challenge to practices such as paying sub-minimum wage to people with disabilities or payment of ‘training stipends’ for work performed.

However, when thinking about laws that govern work and employment, it is important to remember that law and policy alone will not bring about the change that is needed to develop the capacity of communities for full employment of people with disabilities. This will take the coordinated efforts of communities dedicated to make things better for this generation of youth.

Much of employment-related law and policy is administered at the provincial and territorial level in Canada. This guide will not provide a detailed summary of law and policy across jurisdictions. Below, the four main categories of law and policy governing employment are reviewed. More information on the specific laws and policies in your area can be found by contacting sources such as your provincial/territorial government, community living association or labour organization.

On March 30, 2007 a landmark convention was signed for the first time at the United Nations. At that time 82 counties, including Canada, signed a new Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). This was the highest number of signatories for the first day of signing to a UN Convention in the history of the United Nations.

Canada was very active in the development of the Convention. This involved representation from non-government organizations, including disability organizations such as the Canadian Association for Community Living.

The main objective of the Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and freedoms by all people with disabilities.

What is a Convention?

A Convention is a legal agreement between countries that they will follow the same law about a specific issue. When a country signs and ratifies a Convention, it makes a legal promise to make its laws, policies and actions consistent with the Convention. By ratifying a Convention, countries take steps to support the goals of the Convention.

Why is the Convention important?

Throughout the world people with disabilities face discrimination, are denied basic rights, and are denied access to education, employment, equal justice, opportunities to live where they choose, and many other rights and freedoms that many people take for granted. The Convention represents the most progressive human rights document for people with disabilities in the history of the world. It marks a significant shift in attitudes and approaches to persons with disabilities.

The Convention views persons with disabilities as people with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for themselves as well as being active members of society.

New beginnings—A number of ‘firsts’:

The Convention represents a number of ‘firsts’ in United Nations history:

- It is the first human rights treaty of the 21st Century;
- The fastest negotiated human rights Convention in UN history;
- First time in history civil society actively participated in the development and negotiation of the text;
- First human rights Convention with an explicit social development dimension;
- With 82 signatories on March 30, 2007, it has the highest number of signatories in history to a UN Convention;
- UN CRPD marked the first time that Canada signed a convention on opening day.

The Convention also marked a new way for public participation in policy development. Never before in the history of the United Nations have people affected by a Convention been so intimately involved in drafting it. People with disabilities and families where involved at every step on the way and this made the convention more meaningful.

**New understandings of disability**

The traditional view of disability has been informed by a biomedical approach which sees disability as a something ‘held’ by a person. Sometimes this is referred to as the medical model of disability. This approach tended to see disability as something like sickness—as something to be ‘cured’ or prevented.

The social model of disability views disability as a something that happens as a result of social attitudes and inequalities in the structure of society. It views a person’s ‘impairment’ as just another feature and characteristic of human diversity. Disability is then seen as resulting from the failure of society to accommodate the particular needs of individuals with impairments. The emphasis under the social model is toward change of societal inequalities and removal of barriers.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) is a shift in society’s understanding of disability because it introduces this new understanding of disability to law and policy. Under the CRPD disability is acknowledged to be something about which society’s understanding is shifting. The preamble for the convention says:

> Disability is an evolving concept and results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. (UN CRPD)

The Convention puts this understanding of disability into law and policy and puts emphasis onto fixing the barriers in society that prevent full participation—rather than ‘fixing persons’.

**What does the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities say about employment?**

Article 27 of the CRPD is about work and employment. It says that people have a right to work in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible. It asks countries do a number of things to protect and promote the right to work. You can read the entire Article 27 on work and employment below.
UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 27: Work and employment

1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities.

States Parties shall safeguard and promote the realization of the right to work, including for those who acquire a disability during the course of employment, by taking appropriate steps, including through legislation, to, inter alia:

(a) Prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability with regard to all matters concerning all forms of employment, including conditions of recruitment, hiring and employment, continuance of employment, career advancement and safe and healthy working conditions;

(b) Protect the rights of persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others, to just and favourable conditions of work, including equal opportunities and equal remuneration for work of equal value, safe and healthy working conditions, including protection from harassment, and the redress of grievances;

(c) Ensure that persons with disabilities are able to exercise their labour and trade union rights on an equal basis with others;

(d) Enable persons with disabilities to have effective access to general technical and vocational guidance programmes, placement services and vocational and continuing training;

(e) Promote employment opportunities and career advancement for persons with disabilities in the labour market, as well as assistance in finding, obtaining, maintaining and returning to employment;

(f) Promote opportunities for self-employment, entrepreneurship, the development of cooperatives and starting one’s own business;

(g) Employ persons with disabilities in the public sector;

(h) Promote the employment of persons with disabilities in the private sector through appropriate policies and measures, which may include affirmative action programmes, incentives and other measures;

(i) Ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities in the workplace;

(j) Promote the acquisition by persons with disabilities of work experience in the open labour market;

(k) Promote vocational and professional rehabilitation, job retention and return-to-work programmes for persons with disabilities.

2. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are not held in slavery or in servitude, and are protected, on an equal basis with others, from forced or compulsory labour.
2. Federal Employment Equity Law

Canada’s *Employment Equity Act* is meant to remove barriers to employment and open doors for workers who are under-represented in the labour market. Many Canadian employers are required to comply with the federal Employment Equity Act and hiring workers who have a disability will help those employers meet their compliance requirements.

Large federally regulated employers are required to report on their progress in meeting legislated employment equity benchmarks set by the federal government. There are four designated employment equity groups including: people with disabilities, women, Aboriginal people and members of visible minorities.

Employers that are included under this legislation include the Federal public service as well as federally regulated private sector employers such as banks; air transportation and airports; and radio and television broadcasting. Also included are federal Crown corporations as well as employers who contract with the Federal government.


3. Human Rights Code

As with Federal *Employment Equity Act*, The *Canadian Human Rights Act* applies throughout Canada to federally regulated activities. Provinces and territories have their own anti-discrimination laws that apply to other activities that fall outside of federal jurisdiction.

The goal of the act is to ensure equal opportunity to people who may be victims of discrimination. The Canadian Human Rights Commission is created by the Act which is positioned to investigate claims of discrimination while the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal is positioned to negotiate and judge the claims.

The Canada Human Rights Commission and provincial and territorial Human Rights Commissions receive complaints related to discrimination on the basis of disability with regards to employment. This process usually involves initial investigation and attempt at mediation and resolution through services offered by the Commission. If the matter cannot be resolved then an investigator or mediator may be assigned. If mediation attempts fail, the Commission may ask the Human Rights Tribunal to hear the case. At all steps in the process, parties are assisted to look for solutions through alternative methods for resolving the dispute.

4. Employment Standards

Employment Standards laws are in place to define and guarantee rights in the workplace. Every province and territory has its own legislation and minimum standards and rights for federally regulated workplaces are defined by the Canada Labour Code.

Employment standards laws cover rights in areas such as hours of work and overtime pay, minimum wage, pay rates, vacations, public holidays, leaves and requirements around termination.

Complaints are usually processed and handled through the provincial or territorial labour department or ministry. Provincial and territorial labour organizations or Associations for Community Living may also be able to assist workers to connect to the information that they need to lodge a complaint in relation to employment standards.

Less than Minimum Wage for People with Disabilities?!

Minimum wage is one of the basic guarantees set out by labour standards across the country. It defines the lowest wage rate that an employer can pay employees for their work. Every province and territory has a minimum wage but they vary across the country.

In some provinces, there are provisions in the law that allow employers to apply for a certificate that allows them to pay people with disabilities less than minimum wage. These exemptions are becoming less common and have faced a number of challenges. Unfortunately, these few remaining laws and practices have created a persisting attitude that people with disabilities can be paid less than others. There have also been a number of cases where employers have illegally paid people with disabilities less than minimum wage without any backing of the law.

There is a growing awareness of these practices and public outcry against the inequity of paying sub-minimum wage to people with disabilities.
Part III: Community Roles for Supporting Transitions to Employment and Careers

What do we know about what works? What are the roles of different community members in facilitating youth transitions to employment and careers? How can those roles best be supported in a community development strategy? The following section explores effective roles for youth; parents, families and networks; teachers and other school officials—elementary, secondary and postsecondary; employers and the business community; employment service providers; and government funders and policy makers.
Youth with and without disabilities

As we consider roles for youth in this section, we are thinking about both the roles assumed by individual young adults with disabilities in the transition process as well as youth as a group. This means youth with disabilities as well as their inclusive peer group. As inclusive education is becoming a reality in more and more schools across the country, youth are being provided more opportunities to connect and form friendships. However, even where youth with disabilities are fully included in education there is benefit to facilitating additional opportunities to connect and foster strong relationships through inclusive groups of youth with and without disabilities coming together.

Roles of youth in transitions to employment and careers

- First and foremost, youth need to assume the central role in all aspects of planning for and making transitions. This means to the greatest degree possible, supporting the youth’s voice to come to the forefront in all planning and decision making. For youth, this means becoming clear for themselves on their goals, hopes and dreams so that they can drive the process.

- Youth should be encouraged to have career goals from an early age. Whether formally or informally, most children take part in conversations about “what they want to be when they grow up.” These conversations take place in the family, as well as at school—all the way from elementary to secondary and post-secondary education.

- Talking with friends about plans for life after school is an informal way of planning and setting sights on the future. Often these conversations plant the seeds for hopes and dreams that take greater shape.

- Getting into the habit of setting goals and making plans for how to achieve them is a practice that will pay off throughout a person’s life. When youth identify something that they want to do or achieve, steering this into an exercise of goal setting and action planning can help youth to adopt this valuable practice.

- Youth should be encouraged to take risks and move outside of their comfort zone in learning new skills and taking on new challenges. Youth with disabilities are told frequently that there are things that they cannot do. Taking on new challenges, big and small, helps to build capacity for learning and growth.

- Taking on more and greater responsibilities is a part of transitioning from child to adult roles.

- Youth need experience in making decisions—big and small—and learning to call on any supports, help and advice needed to make those decisions.
• An understanding of rights and responsibilities of citizenship equips youth to advocate for themselves and have a working knowledge of the rights that back up their desires for a good life.

• Youth benefit from finding opportunities to connect with mentors in the fields of their career interests. These connections are especially strong where youth initiate the relationship.

• Summer jobs are an invaluable way of gaining work experience, building a resume, developing basic work capacities and learning about what kinds of work they are interested in—or not interested in!

• Students who pursue their interests through involvement in their community have more opportunities for relationships and potential employment opportunities. By doing so they also able to develop a greater understanding and familiarity with their community.

• Opportunities to identify interests and cultivate talents can’t be overestimated. Many opportunities are available to students within the school system and through extra-curricular clubs and societies.

• For all students, and especially for youth with disabilities it is valuable to learn to identify and articulate the challenges that one faces in the context of developing additional capacities to address them.

• Being willing to actively participate in all aspects of the transition process is perhaps one of the most important roles and responsibilities for youth.
Parents, families and community network

Family forms the foundation of support to enable youth to have a positive vision for the future. The attitudes and expectations that families hold for their child have the strongest impact on equipping youth with confidence and skills to reach their full potential. Maintaining positive attitudes and expectations can often be the hardest for family members because of the bombardment of negative messages about their child that they are exposed to from day to day.

The contributions of siblings are often overlooked in thinking about roles for family members. Siblings often carry particular insights about their brother or sister that parents might otherwise miss. Involving more family members in discussions about the future can often result in perspectives that would not have emerged otherwise.

In thinking about employment and careers, it is helpful to consider the roles that can be played by the person’s extended community network—family friends, adult mentors and other adults in the community who know young person and share the vision. It can be easy for families to lose sight of the fact that others in the community want to be involved in and support the dream.

Roles of the family in transitions to employment and careers

- Family members know their child the best and can help identify unique talents, strengths and abilities.

- Families are also best equipped to assist in the development of a vision for a good life.

- Regardless of whether or not their child has a disability, parents play a large role in assisting their transition to adult life. For a child with a disability this often takes more deliberate planning and a more active role for parents.

- Even where planning for transition is a core part of school expectations, parents should maintain an active role in the process.

- Parents should encourage their child to set and pursue career goals from an early age.

- Involving youth with disabilities in appropriate aspects of broader family decision making is good experience with the sets of decisions faced in adult life. This might be as simple as plans for a family vacation or more complex decisions such as a career change or move to a different community.

- It is most often parents who will facilitate connections with others in the community throughout the transition process—these might be teachers, family friends, employers, or extended family members. Parents can use their own contacts and network within the community and let them know that their son or daughter is looking for work. Ask them to reach out to their networks as
• A major role for family members is to be informed about the transition process, options available in the community, programs available through the school and generic as well as disability specific community supports.

• Youth with disabilities are often streamed away from other valuable school activities in order to learn ‘life skills’ that could be learned at home. Parents can engage their child in the deliberate teaching of valuable ‘life skills’ through ordinary family activity throughout their child’s life—and free school time for real school learning.

• Families benefit from opportunities to connect with other families in order to challenge and support one another around employment and life after school. Other parents that are going through the same process can be a tremendous source of support and ideas.

• Connecting with other parents and families is also important if things that should be happening in the school or community to support youth with disabilities are not currently in place.

• Parents should look for ways to help to foster greater independence for youth with disabilities. This can mean such things as greater responsibilities around the house, learning about money management, decision making, and learning how to enroll others for help with tasks where assistance is needed.

• Encouraging youth to take risks can be one of the most difficult roles for parents to play. Sometimes it may be necessary to put protective instincts ‘in check’ through dialogue and support from others who know your child.

• Parents can instill an ‘employment lens’ and career focus for their child in visioning about the future and in planning activities.

• Parents are likely to play a role, especially in the beginning, in helping their son or daughter get to and from work. This may represent a large commitment in the beginning. Parents can work toward their son or daughter obtaining greater independence in this area over time as he or she forms relationships with coworkers and develops a routine.

• As individualized funding and self/family managed supports become a reality in more jurisdictions throughout Canada, increasing numbers of families and individuals are managing their own employment supports. This introduces new roles for families that have previously been the domain of employment service providers. These added roles and responsibilities include activities such as training supporters in an employment focus, understanding needs of employers, developing an understanding of best practice for employment supports. More information on these roles can be found in the section of this guide “Roles for Employment Service Providers.”
• Siblings can be brought into conversations about the future and can often help to identify unrecognized talents, skills or desires.

• Siblings networks of friends can also contribute to the process of opportunity mapping when thinking about a job search in the community.

• Families should consider their extended network of relationships in the community—family friends, places they shop, workplaces, other business services that they patronize—in order to think of others that they may bring in to support the vision. Families can often overlook or forget the fact that others in the community do in fact want to be involved in the vision and dream.
Teachers, Administrators, Guidance Counsellors and School Officials

As has been mentioned already in this guide, a quality inclusive education forms the strongest foundation for a path to future employment and careers. An inclusive education system is critical in equipping youth with disabilities with the skills, networks and experience to succeed in pursuing employment. Inclusive education is a reality in many schools across the country however there remains much work to be done. While this guide assumes an inclusive education as the best path to employment and careers, we know that high quality inclusive education is not yet a reality in all schools across the country. Numerous resources for advocacy to secure inclusive education are available for parents, teachers and school officials and other community leaders. See the Resources section of this guide or contact your provincial or territorial Association for Community Living for more information or support in this area.

In this section we identify some of the key roles for educators at all levels and key factors for successful transitions. We have divided this part of the guide into sections addressing potential roles and responsibilities for each of the different categories of people involved in education.

**Teachers at all levels**—elementary, high-school and post-secondary—have a major impact on preparing youth for transitions to adulthood. Their daily contact and connections with students form the basis for equipping youth with the skills needed to succeed and in securing high expectations for a life after school that includes employment and career goals.

As has been mentioned throughout the guide for all involved in the lives of youth with disabilities, thinking about employment and careers starts early for all students, and this must include youth with disabilities. Being included in or excluded from discussions about “what do you want to do when you grow up?” as early as elementary school can have a major impact on the expectations of a youth with a disability. Likewise, taking part in career fairs, job shadowing and career preparation activities should take place for students with and without disabilities.

**Guidance Counsellors** maintain a presence in most high schools across the country. In most cases they play a role of helping students to prepare for their future employment and career planning. It is therefore critical that guidance counsellors are on board and believe in the potential and possibilities for students with disabilities. They should be knowledgeable about supports that exist in the community for employment, possibilities enabled for students through on the job support, have a willingness to consider creative options for self-employment, should know about opportunities for inclusive post-secondary education. Most importantly, guidance and career counsellors must view youth with disabilities as an important part of their mandate in serving the whole school population.

**School administrators**—principals and vice principals—play a critical role in developing an inclusive school culture. Likewise, they are essential in setting a tone of holding equal expectations of employment and careers for all students regardless of student labels. Leadership from principals can be a key lever in shifting a school culture toward inclusion and putting in place the community relationships, structures,
policy and protocol, professional development opportunities and problem-solving processes necessary to best equip students for life after school.

Other School Officials such as Trustees, School Boards, Superintendents and others—can play important roles in setting policy and developing community relationships within the school district. They often can play a key role in enabling innovative partnerships with the community and creating an environment where changes toward inclusive school cultures and high expectations for employment are fostered and supported.

Post-Secondary teachers, officials and support staff can play key roles in helping students to pursue their career goals. Many students who have struggled through the elementary and secondary school process find that the post-secondary experience provides new opportunities to explore their skills, build networks of friends and bridge the transition to adult life. The opportunities in college and university to develop one’s own learning program can provide flexibility that benefits many students with disabilities. Also, the focus on group work and peer learning often works especially well for students of diverse sets of skills, abilities and challenges. Dedicated “inclusive post-secondary” programming is now available in several universities and colleges across the country and more schools are adopting these approaches. This provides students from all walks of life opportunities to audit courses or to pursue alternate college and university learning courses while taking part of the life of the school. Careful consideration should be given to such approaches however, that developing these opportunities does not result in “disability streams” of post-secondary school programming that further differentiate and segregate youth with disabilities.

Roles for Educators and School Officials

- Placing emphasis on high quality planning for a life after school that includes employment and careers is one of the crucial roles that can be played by educational institutions. All educators and officials have a role to play in promoting such planning and holding high expectations for students with disabilities.

- Educate students about a rights framework for understanding disability. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is a powerful tool for education of students with and without disabilities about human rights and disability.

- Educators can make concentrated efforts toward facilitating opportunities for relationships and friendships to develop between students with and without disabilities.

- Schools should endeavor to be welcoming of families participation in planning activities. Schools can be an unfamiliar ground for parents—they often need time and support to understand how they can work together with teachers to achieve desired outcomes for students.

- Schools can often play a critical role in stressing the importance of employment and careers to parents and family members.
• Setting goals and planning for life after school needs to begin early—this type of visioning for the future often occurs as early as elementary school.

• Communication is key—teachers and schools officials should provide good routes for communication with families around transition planning.

• Schools should ensure that they are well informed about resources and supports that are available in the community to support people in pursuing their career goals, as well as any disability-specific employment supports that are available.

• School boards and officials can assist principals and teachers by initiating in service training for educators on transition planning and the importance of work and careers to students with disabilities.

• Schools can form links with programs dedicated to assisting students during or after transition.

• Transition planning protocols and procedures can define roles and responsibilities for the board and for individual schools and identify resources that will be provided to support transition planning.

• Principals can play a key role in developing school procedures, initiating staff training and orientation, and help staff, students, families and other community members become familiar with and participate in the transition planning process.
Employers and the business community

Working with employers is a critical ingredient in the success of an initiative to put employment first for youth with disabilities. Many social service and not-for-profit organizations are developing better ways of working with the business community, yet charity attitudes continue to dominate many of these efforts. Employers need to be exposed to the ‘business case’ for hiring people with disabilities. This is often neglected in community disability employment strategies and employers are approached with an expectation of providing occupation or a social service.

Leaders in the business community can be a powerful ally in opening their doors to people with disabilities when they see the benefits of hiring. There is a ripple effect that takes place when employers come onside of an employment strategy, as employer-to-employer connections are the most effective communicators of the benefits of hiring people with disabilities. Private as well as public and government employers should be considered. Some of the key roles played by employers in a community that puts employment first for youth with disabilities are listed below.

Roles for employers and the business community

- Business leaders can assist a community employment strategy to get off the ground by helping groups to reframe their language and consider the messages that resonate with employers.

- Employers are the main people who talk to other employers about their experience in hiring people with disabilities. Every successful employment outcome results in another employer who can attest to the value of hiring people with disabilities.

- Every workplace that becomes inclusive of people with disabilities contributes to the community’s collective knowledge base about ways of accommodating and supporting people with disabilities as valued employees.

- Business leaders can assist a community employment strategy to get off the ground by helping groups to reframe their language and consider the messages that resonate with employers.

- In communities where work without pay, sheltered workshops, enclaves, subsidies and subminimum wage have been dominant, dedicated work with employers is necessary to reverse deeply seeded notions about the capacities and contributions of people with disabilities. Employers can play a role in challenging these outdated, and sometimes illegal, practices when they are taking place in their community.

- Employers and business leaders can also play a valuable role in assisting the transition of youth with disabilities from school to employment and careers by acting as mentors and providing advice and guidance on career goals and plans.
• Business leaders can play an important role by adding their unique perspectives and powerful voice to discussions with government about policy changes necessary for an employment first policy framework. This is a voice that is often neglected but is carefully listened to by governments.
Employment and community service providers

At the outset of this guide, we sketched some of the evolution of the current service delivery system for employment supports for people with disabilities. The character and quality of employment services and supports that available in a community can play a major determining role in the opportunities that are available for youth with disabilities. A fuller discussion of the issues and policy and programming context for employment services in Canada can be found in the research report “Achieving Social and Economic Inclusion: From Segregation to “Employment First,” details available in the Resources section of this guide.

In many cases, community service providers can provide assistance to youth with disabilities to find and secure employment. These may be agencies that serve a diverse population of people with barriers to employment, or they may be disability specific. One of the key considerations for roles for employment and community service providers is that there is a commitment to Employment First principles of “real work for real pay,” inclusion in mainstream work environments, and a commitment to serving job seekers with a full range of challenges and abilities.

Some community agencies also provide other forms of support in the area of planning and facilitation for youth making transitions from school to adult life. The planning and facilitation supports can assist individuals, families and schools with many elements of the process.

Listed below are some of the key effective roles and responsibilities of community service providers in supporting youth in making transitions to employment and careers.

Roles for employment and community service providers

- First and foremost, community service providers should demonstrate a commitment to Employment First principles and philosophy of employment as the first and best option, “real work for real pay,” placements in inclusive workplaces, and a commitment to assisting those with the most significant barriers to pursuing employment and careers.

- The most effective employment service providers do not approach their work from a charity or social service model but rather work to show employers the benefit and value of hiring people with disabilities and help to match employers with valuable employees.

- Some of the key components of employment services that are typically offered are:
  - skills assessment and service coordination;
  - employment training – provided with appropriate time limits, and a curriculum of best practice for enabling access to the labour market;
  - job search and job development;
  - outreach to employers;
  - job coaching, retention and follow-up supports;
- on-the-job supports – with possibility for long-term employment supports – e.g. availability on-the-job supports, without time restrictions (e.g. so that support does not have to necessarily be faded in 52 weeks);
- supports for business development and self-employment;
- connectivity to other supports to help to provide stability (i.e. supports for housing, community involvement, and other disability related supports);

- Effective employment service providers usually demonstrate a skills and culture rich in business development, networking and communications and marketing. It is critical that all involved are knowledgeable about job counselling, outreach to and working with employers, best practices for on-the-job support, developing capacities of co-workers and labour issues.

- Employment supports should be provided with sufficient incentive to ‘fade’ support over time. I.e. the person involved in on-the-job supports should be skilled at assisting the person to develop as much independence on the job as possible.

- Employment support providers that are effective in supporting youth with disabilities have found ways to work together with the school system to assist youth with any needed elements of on-the-job supports for work placements.

- Summer jobs are critical for youth with disabilities to develop their employment skills and build a resume. Providing this service to youth with disabilities is rare in Canada but where developed, has demonstrated positive outcomes and high rates of success.

- High degrees of success are shown by providers that demonstrate an entrepreneurial spirit in their operations. The provision of high quality employment supports in Canada often means working across a number of different funding streams including government and other fund development in the community.
Policy makers and government

Leadership from policy makers and government funders can be a critical ingredient in the success of a community employment strategy. Sometimes it is a matter of taking leadership in providing flexibility in policy and funding agreements to try new things. Other times it may involve putting an end to practices that are in contravention of employment law and standards.

Some of the key policy makers involved might be people responsible for funding and policy related to community and disability-related supports; employment services; administration of income support programs; and education, training and universities.

Numerous governments across the country have begun to show interest in an Employment First approach and consider the changes necessary to enable youth with disabilities to achieve their full potential. However, numerous barriers continue to exist in policy and program delivery toward an effective stream of employment support to achieve these ends. Research conducted by the Canadian Association for Community Living has identified the following key roles for policy makers in pursuing an Employment First approach.

Roles for policy makers and government

- Policy dialogue within government and with stakeholders about an Employment First approach can start with the question of “what is and what isn’t employment?” This creates a common language and set of starting assumptions providing positive first step.

- In many places in Canada there are a number of different government organizations and funding pots involved in the delivery of employment supports. These can be reviewed with an Employment First lens to understand whether they are effectively supporting youth with intellectual disabilities in their pursuit of employment and careers.

- Several jurisdictions in Canada have created policy commitments to early provision of quality transition planning focused on employment and careers within the school system;

- Provincial/territorial dialogues and partnerships with key stakeholders including families and youth with and without disabilities to pursue an Employment First strategy;

At the provincial/territorial level, a policy commitment to Employment First could start with the following:

- Clear definitions of employment outcomes—e.g. employment in the mainstream workforce at competitive wages, support for self-employment initiatives;

- Statement of Employment First principles—e.g. recognition that people with disabilities can work and want to work real jobs for real pay.
• Commitment to provision of supports necessary and workplace accommodations/adaptations. To ensure employment for all, supports need to be available over the long term (i.e. not limited to a certain time frame) and focused on best practices.

• Cross-departmental cooperation on an Employment First policy commitment between government bodies responsible for employment; training, education and universities; social and income supports; community and disability-related supports;

• Coherent community-based delivery system for provision of employment supports including elements of:
  o Assessment and coordination of supports;
  o Pre-employment training—with appropriate policy guidance on time limits and curriculum of best practice;
  o Job search and job development;
  o Employer outreach initiatives;
  o Job coaching, retention and follow up supports;
  o On-the-job supports—with availability of long term supports (i.e. not limited to 52 weeks);
  o Supports for business development and self-employment strategies;
  o Connectivity to other supports;

• Assistance to service providers of community and employment supports to encourage transition to an Employment First approach;

• Demonstration initiatives and pilot projects;

• Training and technical support for best practices in employment support;
Communities in Action: Case studies and ideas from communities across Canada

Provided below are four examples from across Canada of communities that have initiated efforts to support employment of youth with intellectual disabilities. The examples below are not provided as ‘programs’ or services that can be simply picked and transplanted, but are rather to stimulate ideas and learnings about how communities have taken action to enhance outcomes for youth.

Every community is unique and has a diverse set of needs and capacities to be built upon. What we have learned from the following four examples is that when communities are positioned to take ownership over an issue, these initiatives have the greatest chance for success. For example, with the first initiative featured—the Rotary Employment Partnership in Alberta—one of the key factors in the success of the undertaking has been the development of an ‘ethic’ amongst Rotarians and local service organizations with regard to employment of people with disabilities. These initiatives have demonstrated that the relationships developed at the community level are a ‘two-way street.’ They have shown that successful community employment strategies are not so much about ‘marketing’ people with disabilities to employers as they are about being a part of the heart of community and assisting the community to take ownership of the issue.
Rotary Employment Partnership in Alberta

Rotarians know that meaningful employment is more than just a paycheque to balance the monthly budget—and a group of Rotarians in Alberta is committed to creating meaningful employment opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities.

The Rotary Employment Partnership creates opportunities outside conventional hiring practices by connecting people with intellectual disabilities directly to community-minded employers, and the organizations that can help to provide funds, expertise, and support. The partnership between the local Rotary organization, the Alberta Association for Community Living, and the provincial Persons with Developmental Disabilities Program has created more than 100 jobs for people with intellectual disabilities, and is now in place in Edmonton, Calgary, Lloydminster, Medicine Hat and Red Deer.

The success of the partnership lies in the way the program addresses the needs and priorities of each group. Individuals with intellectual disabilities are given opportunities for real jobs with real pay and employers are given access to reliable and motivated staff who add value to the business and the work culture.

The key to creating opportunities under the partnership is the information and support that employers are given. This process starts before any hires are made—employers are helped to see how someone with an intellectual disability can contribute and the benefits to their business of having a diverse staff. Employers usually hire employees based to fill a specific role in their offices—the Rotary Employment Partnership encourages employers to think about job tasks not just job titles, and to re-organize some jobs, if necessary, to create an opportunity for a person with a disability.

Once a job opportunity has been identified, the Alberta Association for Community Living (AACL) works with Partnership staff to match the job with a candidate looking for work who has the skills, capacity and interest in the business. AACL and the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) Program then can help with evaluating to work place for suitability, tailoring the job description based on unique needs, providing on-the-job training and other ongoing supports.

Employers involved with the Rotary Employment Partnership have reported that it’s not just a good contribution to the community, but a wise business decision! The success of the program has benefited Rotary clubs and employers to such a degree that some Rotary clubs have stepped up to fund the program after government dollars were cut. They report that employee retention is improved, office and business practices are more efficient, workplace culture and employee morale is greatly improved, and customers are more satisfied. The Rotary Employment Partnership has gone beyond a simple social program; it is a socially-valuable business practice with benefits that create a better business, a stronger local economy, and a more vibrant community where everyone belongs.
Mayor’s Challenge in Sarnia, ON

In 2010, Mike Bradley, Mayor of Sarnia Ontario, issued a province-wide challenge to other mayors to `do the right thing` and hire people with disabilities. Mayor Bradley has long been a supporter of the rights of people with intellectual disabilities and inclusive communities. The ‘Mayor’s Challenge’ is a national-award-winning project that has seen dozens of municipalities and organizations following Sarnia’s suit by creating summer employment opportunities for youth with intellectual disabilities.

The municipality created 12 summer jobs for youth with intellectual disabilities, so students can start building experience and a resume and earn money for further education, and aims to link private and public sector employers with student workers with disabilities for the summer. Beyond simply being an employer, though, the city of Sarnia’s Human Resource department has been positioned as a resource for the community. Staff from the city’s HR department have volunteered their time to provide information and guidance on hiring youth with intellectual disabilities to other HR professionals.

The Mayor’s Challenge is issued with the support of staff from Community Living Sarnia-Lambton (CLSL), who run a highly successful Summer Employment Transitions project as part of their multi-faceted Employment Transitions program to help youth with intellectual disabilities gain summer jobs as a foundation for future careers. The CLSL Summer Employment Transitions program offers students with intellectual disabilities job readiness training and job coaching, including preparing students by demonstrating the benefits and rewards of meaningful employment. Participating employers are also offered support and guidance. Jobs range from retail to restaurant settings, from administrative to grounds keeping work, providing opportunities to match students to careers based on their interests and abilities.

The SLCL Summer Employment Transition program works with many parts of the community, and the whole community benefits from the success of the program. Students earn real money for real contributions, while gaining skills and invaluable self-esteem. Their families can see the benefits of their child being included in community life, and are introduced to tools and services to help further that inclusion. School staff receive ongoing and encouraging reports on the success of the program and support in maintaining its momentum. Employment agencies are linked to inclusive employers, the school board and other services, eventually leading to more jobs and more opportunities. The community develops pride in its status as a leader in inclusion and accessibility.

Mayor Bradley recognizes that employment is not a charitable hand-out, but a measure of meaningful inclusion that makes the whole community stronger. “For the last number of years, we’ve been trying to communicate to the rest of Ontario that hiring those intellectually challenged is not charity,” Mayor Bradley has said. “It’s good for business and it’s good for the community.”
Family Leadership in British Columbia

Families Promoting Employment First is a family leadership workshop sponsored by the Family Support Institute in B.C. The workshop brings families together to consider the tremendous value of employment in the lives of their sons and daughters.

The workshop helps families to think differently about employment and consider core questions such as: what roles do families play? What are potential roles for families? How can families play an active role in preparing, planning and pursuing employment? How can families use ideas and tools to profile, promote and support their sons and daughters toward employment?

There are three modules to the workshop geared toward families to support an Employment First approach. The first workshop focuses on preparing, planning and pursuing employment. The second workshop encourages employment focused thinking and supports families to profile, promote and support their sons and daughters toward employment. The third workshop is designed for community partners and professionals to encourage employment first thinking—it has a focus on supporting students in the high school years and planning toward adulthood.

Through real life examples and inspiring dialogue between families, the workshops have stimulated thinking and inspired families and their supporters to build an employment focus into planning for and with their sons’ or daughters’ future.
In 2001, the New Brunswick Community College and the New Brunswick Association for Community Living began a four year pilot project designed to make job training provided through the community college accessible to people with intellectual disabilities. The project was designed in response to the historical lack of opportunity to access job training through postsecondary education for persons with intellectual disabilities in New Brunswick.

During the first trial of this initiative, over 50 students with an intellectual disability participated in college programs in a number of programs and campuses. Of those 50 students, 86% went on to obtain and retain employment. The broad-based benefits and outcomes were clear.

The Connections project was completed in June 2005 and NBCC/CCNB moved to develop a service model for all students with disabilities. While the Connections project was deemed successful, NBCC/CCNB was still faced with the challenge of developing models whereby students with an intellectual disability have the opportunity to gain recognized post-secondary credentials and marketable job skills as part of the regular community college system.

Today, a special admissions process has been developed in order to accommodate students with intellectual disabilities who would not otherwise meet admissions criteria. A number of college spaces are reserved for students across the province.

In order to be considered for special admission, students must meet the following criteria:

- Students must have an intellectual disability and have followed a modified program in high school.
- Completion of high school (or be in the final year of completing).
- Strong desire to attend college and program of choice.
- Have a clear, well thought out, and attainable career goal that relates to the program choice.
- Students must be likely to be successful at completing the chosen college program with the support of family, friends, and others.

Each student is supported to develop an individualized learning plan that includes a strategy for adapting the course work for the program. They must attend class on their own or with the provision of appropriate accommodations. Graduates who have taken the program receive a certificate of participation which includes an outline the work completed and a skills profile. With the early successes in Alberta and New Brunswick in developing inclusive post-secondary opportunities many other provinces and territories now have implemented similar programs.
Part IV: Developing a community strategy for putting employment first for youth with intellectual disabilities

This section of the guide contains information that is intended to help you get started and sustain a community process to put employment first for youth with disabilities. It contains tips and information about how to identify and invite others into the process, considerations for planning a meeting in your community, as well as advice on how to sustain the work.

Every community is different and will be starting from a diverse set of challenges and opportunities. It is important that your process of developing an Employment First strategy be flexible and adapt to the strengths and challenges in your community and the skills and talents of the people you bring on board. The information provided below builds on what we know about what works but remains general enough that you can adapt the process for your purposes. It is divided into two sections, “Getting Started” and “Sustaining the Process.” You will find references throughout this section to resources that are provided in the back of this guide.

1. Getting started

**Identifying Leaders and Champions**

The first step in the process is to build a team that is knowledgeable about your community and equipped with the skills and expertise to drive and carry an Employment First strategy. Look across the key roles identified as critical in an employment first strategy. Are there key people in these roles that you would identify as potential champions and leaders?

- **Start with ‘champions’ not ‘stakeholders’:** Many community development processes begin by engaging a stakeholder analysis to discover the key players for a given issue. There will be a point in your strategic process that you will want to approach those who occupy key positions and play key roles. However, at the beginning it is better to engage those with the energy and dedication to the issue of employment of people with disabilities rather than people who may have reservations and drag down the process. Starting with champions ensures that you can develop some positive momentum. There will be time later to work with naysayers.

- **Families:** The chances are high that you are a family member of a person with a disability reading this guide and initiating the process. However, you might also be an employer, educator, service provider or other community member passionate about these issues. If so, it is critical that families are engaged from the beginning of the process as leaders in the strategy.

- **Recognizing leaders and champions:** You want to look for people who bring some degree of knowledge and experience to the process but also people who will put energy and commitment into the process, promote it to others and stay engaged over the long haul.
Inviting others to the process

Once you have identified some leaders and champions who could be involved in the process, you can start to plan a first meeting and invite others into the process. You can provide some of the materials from this guide as background on the issue of employment of youth with disabilities.

- **Make the personal connection:** Even if you will be sending more formal invitations to people, start by making the first connection in person or by telephone.

- **Ask for assistance in identifying other champions:** Ask those whom you invite into the process if they can think of others in their networks that share the vision and might be involved in the process.

Planning a first meeting

- **Location:** Depending on the size and composition of the group that you have assembled you may want to organize a first meeting at someone’s home, or you may need a larger space. Many community organizations, churches or other community centers will provide space for free or for a very low cost for this purpose.

- **Organize it around food:** Build some relaxation and enjoyment into the process. Food is a great convener.

- **Facilitation:** Consider whether you want to engage a facilitator to guide the group through the first meeting. You might feel prepared to do this yourself, but you may also want to free your energy to contribute to the process. If you are engaging a facilitator make certain that they are knowledgeable about the issue and share the guiding values and principles.

- **Facilitation Team:** Even if you decide that you will be conducting the meeting yourself, you are going to need one or two others to help you with the process. Select one or two others to be a part of the facilitation team, share this guide with them, and have a meeting in advance to make plans for the day.

- **Timing:** You will likely need a full day’s meeting to wade through the issues and visioning that is needed to kick start the strategy. To best engage families and community leaders it will probably work best to plan the first meeting for a day during the weekend.

- **Structuring the Meeting:** In the Resources section of the guide you will find a sample meeting agenda that you can use as a template for planning your meeting. Use this as a general guideline. You want to build the process in a way that makes the most sense for engaging those who you have assembled. Some of the main things that you will want to build in to the process are as
follows. Facilitation of each of these items should be shared among the facilitation team:

1. **Introductions and expectations for the day:** Ask people to introduce themselves to others in the group with a brief overview of why they are attending and what they are hoping to get out of the process. This helps to find out what objectives, values, ideas and expertise everyone brings to the group.

2. **Overview of the agenda:** Provide a brief overview of the plans for the day.

3. **Presentation of Employment First:** Use the resources and fact sheets assembled in this guide to develop a brief presentation on Employment First and the issues facing youth making transitions to employment and careers. Sample slides for key messages on Employment First are provided in the Resource Pack accompanying this guide.

4. **Share a story or two:** Ideally, you could invite a family or an employer/employee pair to share their employment success story. Starting from real stories will help to animate the process. People learn best from examples. You can also screen one of the videos listed in the resources section of this guide.

5. **Start with crafting a vision:** A key component in your first meeting will be to craft a vision for the strategy. The objective is to develop an employment strategy for youth making transitions to employment and careers. The vision is best developed through a group exercise. It is helpful to detail the discussion by working with a time frame. Some key questions for this exercise are: “Where do we want to be five years from now?” “What will we have achieved by then?” “What does success look like?”

   **Guiding Stars**

   One way of facilitating this exercise is to provide participants with colored paper stars on which they can take some time to write their vision for success. Each participant can then share their idea with the group and attach it to the wall. These act as your guiding stars for the rest of the process. You can then begin to cluster some of the common elements of a shared vision for the group. It may or may not be possible or desirable depending on the nature of the group to work from this material to develop a statement of shared vision. If there is enough commonality, you can charge a small team of people to develop this information into a Draft Statement of Vision to be shared in a report from the day.

6. **Principles and Values:** This can be a critical part of the process. Working from your discussion of a vision for the strategy, guide a discussion about the principles that will guide you in your work. These can flow from Employment First principles and will act to keep you grounded in your vision as the strategy progresses. Depending on the size of the group, this is likely best facilitated as a large group discussion. The principles and values
can act as a filter that flows from the vision. If conflict emerges in the process, it is most likely to emerge at this point.

**Handling Conflict**

At some point in the process you are likely to encounter some conflict over basic principles and assumptions. Recognize that people will be coming to the process with a diverse set of experiences that may affect their expectations and imaginings of what is possible. Often group discussion will be the most effective way of resolving conflict, but at a certain point, those initiating and leading the process may need to intervene with knowledge and experience to address the conflict. One approach to conflict is to validate, reframe and deepen the question at hand. For the issue of disability and employment, conflicts are likely to be deeply held and firm—and through exploration they will be likely to stem from an aspect of personal experience. It can be helpful to address the source of the conflict and explore additional systemic and broader social causes for the conflict. Pose the question: is it our principles and vision that need changing? Or are there other conditions that could be changed? What would make for a positive outcome in the future? Anchor these interventions in the guiding stars of your vision (and principles if established). Bring the question back to expectations, hopes and dreams that would be held for any other family member who does not have a label of disability. Draw from those who are firm in vision, and if it is not possible to fully resolve the conflict find ways to move the discussion along.

7. **Situational Scan:** Once you have established a vision for the strategy it is important to develop a sense of where your community stands today. Some sample questions and key facts and estimates to gather in the process are:

   i. What is the nature and quality of transitional planning for employment and careers for youth with disabilities in the school system?
   ii. Are supports for employment of youth with disabilities available in your community? Are they effective? What are the outcomes?
   iii. Are youth with disabilities being placed in sheltered workshops or other segregated or enclave settings?
   iv. Are people being paid below minimum wage for their work or volunteering in non-traditional/atypical ways (volunteering in private sector businesses or traditionally paid jobs)
   v. What is the employment situation and what are the typical jobs available to youth (who do not have a disability) in your community?
   vi. Are there known employers in your community that hire people with disabilities?
   vii. What post-secondary opportunities are available to youth with disabilities?
These questions are available in the form of presentation slides in the Resource Pack accompanying this guide.

8. **Understanding obstacles / clarifying challenges and opportunities:** After you have conducted a scan of your community’s assets and challenges to engage an employment strategy for youth with disabilities, it is helpful to further detail the current obstacles and clarify the challenges and opportunities for the strategy. In the Resources section you will find two templates for facilitating this group process.

   i. **Understanding Obstacles:** The chart provided in the Resource Pack named “Understanding Obstacles” is helpful for understanding some of the underlying causes that contribute to an obstacle. It helps participants to break out the system-level, community level, and personal/interpersonal level causes of an obstacle. You may want to ask people to divide into groups addressing three or four of the main obstacles that were identified in the situational scan exercise. For each obstacle, the group attempts to trace the causes. For example, if the obstacle is “Employers have not been receptive to hiring people with disabilities,” an example of a personal/interpersonal cause would be: attitudes toward and lack of knowledge of people with disabilities—employers view this as a risk; a community-level cause might be: current supports for employment are inadequate or ineffective; and a systems level cause might be: policy for funding of employment supports only allows short term temporary assistance with no follow up or support for retention.

   You can walk the group as a whole through one or two examples of analysing the causes of obstacles before asking them to tackle a few on their own. Display the ‘Understanding Obstacles’ slide on the screen and provide them with flipchart paper to list the different causes for each of the main obstacles.

   ii. **Clarifying Challenges and Opportunities:** A second exercise for exploring ways to address obstacles builds upon the fact that for every challenge in addressing an obstacle, there is an opportunity—and for every opportunity to address an obstacle, there will a be challenge. This chart is provided in the Resource Pack accompanying the guide. Display this slide on the presentation screen and walk participants through the process of mapping challenges and opportunities. Again if the group is large, you may want to divide into groups and each choose a few different obstacles and report back.

9. **Developing Strategies:** If you have used the facilitation exercises above, the list of challenges and opportunities provide a good start from which to develop potential strategies. Think big—do not focus at this point only on what is achievable and possible for the group assembled. The next step will be to prioritize and assign activities. This brainstorming activity will be valuable to come back to as more resources and people
come aboard. For each of the challenges and opportunities list things that can be done to address or take advantage of them. Make sure to use action words such as “Partner with…” “Engage…” “Research…” “Create…” These can be written on large sticky notes to facilitate prioritization of the strategies and placement of them on a timeline.

10. Prioritize and Assign: The last steps in the first stages of forming your strategy involve prioritizing and plotting the actions brainstormed above along a timeline. A commonly used timeline for this type of process is to look at the actions that need to have taken place 2-3 years from today, 1 year from now, 6 months from now, and actions that need to begin immediately after the meeting. Facilitation of this process will involve thinking about the people that you have in the room, the most critical actions that need to be taken today, the things that can wait or need longer term action, and the resources that may be required. You can then ask participants to take some time to review the different tasks and place their names beside the ones that they are most interested in / feel best positioned to take on. This is a dynamic process and will involve a large degree of flexibility and creativity to assign or reframe the different tasks. For tasks that need to happen immediately, they need to happen in the two weeks following the meeting or they will not happen. One strategy is to assign a “nag” for each task to be completed in the next six months. It is this person’s job to follow up two weeks following the meeting to check on the status of the task or provide a reminder.

11. Closing the meeting: It is good practice to close the meeting with a “check in” to evaluate the group’s impressions of the meeting. You can ask people to individually respond to what they found most challenging, or most exciting about the process.

- Checklist for first meeting:
  1. Invitations sent?
  2. Agenda distributed?
  3. Facilitation team has met?
  4. Materials: flipcharts, markers, laptop and projector, screen, speakers (if using videos) large sticky notes, pens, presentations, etc.
  5. Location confirmed?
  6. Food ordered or organized among participants?

- Considerations for next directions: Your community’s employment strategy is a dynamic and changing process. The sample items for a first meeting above are meant to provide guidance on the types of things you will want to discuss, and some established ways of facilitating the conversation. However there are numerous different ways that you can organize such a meeting and different directions that you could take. For example:

  1. You may decide to start with just a few people. Some of the most powerful community development processes have emerged from a group of people coming together to build
capacity and make things better for 2-3 people. This might translate into very individualized planning for a few youth in your community.

2. You may decide to use your collective networks to identify a greater pool of champions to continue to build a strong foundation. In this case your first meeting will focus on expanding the number of people involved. Make sure that all involved understand the importance of bringing together people who are clear in vision and values.

3. By the first meeting, you may get off to a great start and find that you are ready to invite others to the process are stakeholders, but have varying degrees of commitment or knowledge about the issue. In this case you will want to focus some time on equipping your team of leaders and champions to approach others and take the messages out to others in the community.
2. Sustaining the process

Depending on the directions taken from your first meeting, there will be several follow up actions needed to sustain the strategy that is developed—big or small. Below is a list of some general tips for maintaining engagement of your key leaders and for generating a sense of momentum.

- **Report from first and subsequent meetings**: Whatever strategy is created you should develop a report from your meetings detailing the vision and principles crafted, the participants, the activities that are brainstormed, the challenges that are faced, a timeline of activities agreed upon and future directions.

- **Form and build a group**: After your first meeting you can evaluate whether there is capacity or desire to form a more formalized volunteer working group structure. Note that there may be advantages or disadvantages to formalizing a group at any point that need careful thought and consideration.

- **Empower the community to take ownership**: Whatever strategies and actions are decided upon, it is advantageous to always look for ways for the broader community to take ownership over the issue. All too often “disability issues” become the sole concern of “disability groups.” With the issue of employment there are great opportunities to assist employers, employer groups, local service clubs, and other community organizations to take ownership responsibility and pride in the issue of employment of youth with disabilities as “their issue.”

- **Awards**: Recognizing larger efforts by nominating community leaders for awards achieves a number of positive objectives. First of all, it recognizes people for their efforts. It also has the effect of building prestige and positive associations around the issue. It is also a way of raising community awareness around the issue. Do a quick scan of your community and think of some of the awards and recognitions that you can network with to nominate people for their efforts in the area of employment of youth with disabilities.

- **Celebrate success and progress**: People like to be involved in a process when they feel that they are a part of something that has momentum. Try to find ways to celebrate successes, big and small, in a way that recognizes the contributions of the leaders in your community.
Part V: Resources and Templates

In the Resource Pack that accompanies this guide you will find a number of documents, PowerPoint slides and information sheets. These resources are meant to assist you with the various stages of getting started on a community employment strategy for youth with disabilities. Some of the fact sheets and other resources may be useful as handouts or materials for meeting with stakeholders in your community. Also included here are links to other sources of information related to employment and youth with intellectual disabilities.

Each of these resources found in the Resource Pack are described below. Links to other key resources are also provided.

1. **Key messages about “Employment First”**

   See the PowerPoint slide entitled “Employment First – Key Messages” in the Resource Pack. These slides put together messages on Employment First and can be used in presentations or in a community meeting to introduce people to an Employment First approach.

2. **“Disability-positive” Facts on Employment of People with Disabilities**

   See the PowerPoint slide “Facts about Disability and Employment.” These disability-positive facts and statistics are useful in demonstrating the benefits of hiring people with disabilities.

3. **Sample meeting agenda for a community employment strategy meeting**

   A sample meeting agenda for a community employment strategy meeting is provided in the Resource Pack. Use this only as a guide for designing a meeting—structure the meeting in a way that is most manageable given the time and participants.

4. **Videos about Disability and Employment**

   See the PowerPoint slides titled “Videos about Disability and Employment” in the Resource Pack. These can be used in a meeting to stimulate discussion.

5. **Situational Scan: Where are we today?**

   See the PowerPoint slide entitled “Situational Scan” for the questions that are suggested for a situational scan for your community. You should adapt these slides and questions as you wish to best suit the needs of your meeting.
6. Understanding Obstacles – Template Facilitation Activity

This diagram can be used to help with the exercise described in Part IV to understand the primary obstacles related to employment of youth with disabilities in your community. See Resource Pack.

7. Identifying Challenges and Opportunities – Template Facilitation Activity

The chart below is to be used in conjunction with the exercise “Understanding Obstacles”. For the main obstacles that were identified, ask participants to form groups. Divide the obstacles between the groups and ask each group to use the exercise below to identify challenges and opportunities for addressing the obstacle. Display the slide on the screen and provide flipchart paper to record the challenges and opportunities. This chart is provided in the Resource Pack.

### Identifying challenges and opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges in Addressing this Obstacle</th>
<th>Opportunities in Addressing this Obstacle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Here’s the challenge</td>
<td>1. What’s the opportunity?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What’s the challenge?</td>
<td>2. Here’s the opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Further Reading: Guides and Information Resources

*Youth Transitions to Employment and Careers*


*Transitions from School to Community for Students with Special Needs.* Charlottetown: PEI Association for Community Living, 2007. [www.peiacl.ca](http://www.peiacl.ca)


*Young Adults with Developmental Disabilities: Transition from High School to Adult Life.* Principal Investigator: Tim Stainton. Vancouver: Community Living Research Project, 2006.


Inclusive Education Canada: [http://www.inclusiveeducation.ca/](http://www.inclusiveeducation.ca/)

*Employment and Employment First Resources:*


US Senate Committee hearings on employment of people with disabilities and transition of Sheltered Workshops--Link to video of complete proceedings [http://help.senate.gov/hearings/reading/?id=448c93b8-5056-9502-5d7e-35fed69d35e4](http://help.senate.gov/hearings/reading/?id=448c93b8-5056-9502-5d7e-35fed69d35e4)

Crawford, Cameron. *Improving the Odds: Employment, Disability and Public Programs in Canada.* (Toronto: The Roeher Institute, 2004).
http://www.bcacl.org/sites/default/files/ImprovingTheOdds_Intro_Summary.pdf


Re-inventing Day Supports: A report from the forum on day services in British Columbia. BCACL, 2009.