

Action for Inclusion:

A Resource Kit for Community Conversations



A collaborative project of:



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Land Acknowledgement

Recognition of the land as the foundation upon which we all live can broaden our awareness of the diverse forms of connectedness that shape our lives.

Recently it has become commonplace, in many urban communities and institutions, to open events with an acknowledgement of the traditional territories in which the event is being held.

As a form of respect and reconciliation, land acknowledgements are a first step towards establishing healthier, reciprocal relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Acknowledgements are a way of recognizing that the land was not empty when Europeans first arrived. They can provide the essential elements for understanding our connected histories in ways that are personally meaningful and powerful.

Land acknowledgements are a positive step towards better relations, but we must also reconcile the historical and contemporary realities of those relationships. There is still work to be done.

While territorial acknowledgments have the potential to be the most powerful in rural spaces, it is in these spaces that they are usually absent. Relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in rural and remote areas can often be strained. In urban settings, the level of removal from the land allows territorial acknowledgments to remain more theoretical than in rural/remote communities.

It is also important for people to take the time to do their own searching and learning about traditional territories. With the practice of land acknowledgement becoming more routine, we run the risk of turning respectful recognition into empty repetition.

Our task is to consider what land acknowledgments mean beyond the awareness of Indigenous presence. What is our intent and what else can we do to foster truth and reconciliation in tangible and meaningful ways?

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1. Introduction

What is the purpose of this Resource Kit?

This Resource Kit was developed to help individuals and members of community organizations engage the diversity of their communities in a positive and meaningful way. The emphasis is on practical, tangible and focused solutions, rather than policy,¹ that can be implemented quickly and effectively in smaller, rural-based communities.

The content of this Resource Kit has been selected to help readers understand the barriers to inclusion faced by many people, how our words and actions may affect others, and how our organizations and social systems may be structured in ways that have negative impacts. It is intended to increase the level of comfort readers have with addressing diversity and inclusion issues. People often fear that they may say the wrong thing, be perceived as discriminatory, or be stifled by rigid rules of political correctness. This Resource Kit is not about being perfect. *“Diversity and inclusion is best nurtured in an open workplace where mistakes can be used for learning—not for embarrassing or shaming individuals.”²*

This kit was developed for the *Kitchen Table Conversations: Action for Inclusion* project, led by the Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition (OHCC), in partnership with the Ontario Network of Employment Skills Training Projects (ONESTEP). However, it was designed as a stand-alone kit that may be useful to individuals and groups outside the scope of the project as they strive to become more inclusive in various aspects of their lives.

Why is inclusion important?

Inclusion is vital to health and well-being; we all need to feel we belong and are valued by others. We have a right to be treated fairly and equitably. We also need to be actively involved in making decisions that will affect us, and ensure that our needs and interests are being addressed. However, we live in a diverse and changing society, in which barriers exist at all levels that result in the inequitable treatment of some individuals and groups. A healthy community is an inclusive community, in which thoughtful efforts are made to ensure that all residents have equitable access to resources and are represented in decision-making bodies.

Who should use the Resource Kit?

The Resource Kit is aimed at individuals who work or volunteer in community-based nonprofit organizations. It is intended to be relevant to rural areas and smaller urban centres within southern and near-north Ontario. There are many resources on diversity and inclusion that reflect conditions in large urban centres, but few that deal with the kind of issues that arise in non-urban settings. In this Resource Kit, we have tried to capture some of the nuances related to the particular geographic and demographic contexts of rural Ontario.

How is the Resource Kit organized?

The Kitchen Table Conversations project incorporated Indigenous-inspired approaches and training methods to deepen understanding, and encourage storytelling and participation. This approach is also reflected, to some extent, in the Resource Kit. The materials compiled in the kit are consistent with recognized adult education practices and the movement towards reconciliation.

The Resource Kit consists of six sections:

1. Introduction
2. Understanding Diversity
3. Understanding Inclusion
4. Dimensions of Diversity
5. Tools for Inclusion
6. Additional Resources

While we would encourage readers to read through the whole kit, it has been designed with the expectation that readers will also refer to different sections at different times to provide practical assistance with specific initiatives and activities.

What are the benefits of using the Resource Kit?

Our hope is that this kit will be helpful at both the individual and organizational levels to increase inclusion. Individuals will increase their understanding of diversity and inclusion, and learn to promote inclusion and respond effectively to exclusionary language, actions and policies. It will help them to respond more effectively to the needs of diverse groups in their community, in an equitable and inclusive manner. Ideally, it will lead some to become champions and leaders for inclusive organizational and systemic change. It will also help small, rural community organizations to develop an organizational culture that values diversity in leadership and assist them in pursuing the goal of becoming more diverse, equitable and inclusive.

However, this Resource Kit is not designed to provide the specific, practical training necessary for working with individual clients of diverse backgrounds (i.e., skills such as cross-cultural communication, anti-racism training or conflict resolution). While it includes tips that can be used to think about (and become more sensitive to) these issues, it does not address them in detail.

Endnotes for Introduction

- ¹ OPS Diversity Office, Ministry of Government Services, *Inclusion Now! OPS Inclusion Strategic Plan 2013–2016*, 8, <http://www.ontla.on.ca/library/repository/mon/28004/326544.pdf>.
- ² HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector, *Diversity at Work: Creating an inclusive and supportive work environment*, <http://hrcouncil.ca/hr-toolkit/diversity-supportive-environment.cfm>.

2. Understanding Diversity

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Defining Diversity

Diversity is a broad term that refers to the variety of differences among people, often within the context of culture, education, organizations or workplaces. For the purpose of this Resource Kit, the term will be used to refer to the differences among groups of individuals.

Diversity among people can exist along several dimensions which include, but are not limited to: race; ethnicity; cultural traditions; age; religion; place of origin; citizenship; geographical location; gender; sexual orientation; mental or physical ability; educational background; literacy; economic status; work experience; and marital, parental or family status.

It is challenging to find appropriate ways to describe people. Different terminology is preferred by different people and those preferences change over time. In this Resource Kit, we have tried to use language that is respectful, with guidance from the Ontario Human Rights Code;¹ however, some variation in terminology exists as a result the different sources that were consulted in preparing this kit.

Changing Demographics

The demographics of Ontario are continually changing, so community organizations need to be aware of these changes to attract and retain participation, and be responsive to the needs of their communities. Below are some demographic facts and trends in Ontario:

- As of July 1, 2016, Ontario's population was more than 13.9 million people,² and it is growing every year, due primarily to immigration.
- In 2011, 86% of the population was urban. By comparison, 160 years earlier, in 1851, the figures were reversed: 86% of Ontario's population was rural.³

- Ontario has the most culturally diverse population in Canada; 28.5%, or more than one in four residents, were born outside the country,⁴ with immigration rates projected to increase every year.
- About half of the newcomers who immigrate to Canada each year choose to settle in Ontario. The province is home to people from more than 200 different ethnic origins and languages.⁵
- 22% of the Aboriginal identity population (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) in Canada lived in Ontario in 2011, making up 2.4% of Ontario's total population. First Nations peoples in Ontario include Algonquian-speaking Cree, Oji-Cree, Algonquin, Ojibwa, Odawa, Potawatomi and Delaware, plus the Iroquoian-speaking Six Nations (Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca and Tuscarora).
- The population of Aboriginal children and youth (42%) is growing more rapidly than that of the non-Aboriginal population (30%).⁶
- English is Ontario's official language, though there are several French-speaking communities across the province. French language rights exist for the province's legal and educational systems, and government services are provided in English and French in many designated regions across the province.⁷
- Approximately 200 different languages were reported as mother tongues in Ontario in 2011. English speakers make up most of the population, followed by Chinese, French and Italian speakers. Bengali, Hindi, Persian, Tagalog, Arabic and Punjabi are among the fastest growing language groups in the province.⁸
- The countries of origin of Canadian immigrants has changed over the past few decades. Prior to and immediately following World War II, most immigrants to Canada were of European origin. However, with changes in immigration policy in 1962 that removed most racial discrimination, more immigrants arrived from Africa and Asia. The 2011 National Housing Survey shows India as the top source of new arrivals to Canada (9%), followed by the United Kingdom (8%), China (7%) and the Philippines (6%).⁹
- Four in 10 Ontarians aged 15 and over do not have the literacy skills they need to meet the demands of modern life. 1.3 million people (16.2%) struggle with very serious literacy challenges.¹⁰



- In the last 35 years, except for a short period in the mid-1980s to 1991, the poverty rate in Ontario has hovered between 9% to just over 12%.
- At current rates, Ontario adults on social assistance are living in “deep poverty” (i.e., with an income that is less than 80% of the poverty line).¹¹
- 65% of Ontario’s population identified with a Christian denomination in 2011, followed by Islam (5%), Hinduism (3%) and Judaism (2%), while 23% claimed no religion affiliation.
- The 2012 Canadian Survey on Disability showed that 15.4% of Ontarians report having a disability—that is, they have difficulty performing tasks and are limited in their daily activities because of a long-term condition or health-related problem. Of this 15.4%, 4.8% (almost one-third) report a mental health or addiction disability. The vast majority of Ontarians who report a mental health disability or addiction also report having another type of disability (90.5%).¹²
- Same-sex marriages were legalized in Canada in 2005, and the number of same-sex married couples nearly tripled between 2006 and 2011, while the number of same-sex common-law couples rose 15%.

Benefits of Diversity

“Decades of research by organizational scientists, psychologists, sociologists, economists and demographers show that socially diverse groups (that is, those with a diversity of race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation) are more innovative than homogeneous groups.... This is not only because people with different backgrounds bring new information. Simply interacting with individuals who are different forces group members to prepare better, to anticipate alternative viewpoints and to expect that reaching consensus will take effort.”

Katherine W. Phillips¹³

Diversity and Difference

Every day we develop views, beliefs, opinions and attitudes based on information that we pick up from many different sources, such as family members, peers, the media and brief personal meetings. These sources provide a mixture of information that may include myths, stereotypes, and prejudicial and discriminatory attitudes. Some of this information causes us to misjudge those whom we perceive to be different from ourselves.

In our daily lives, we tend to process information quickly and often consciously or unconsciously make two key assumptions:

1. Everyone who looks or sounds the same is the same.
2. Everyone who looks or sounds like us is like us.

These assumptions are often incorrect.

In addition, each of us also has personal preferences and occasionally we act on these preferences in a manner that is exclusionary and may constitute bias. A bias is a point of view or inclination that may manifest itself through favouritism, dislike, prejudice and even fear because of a person's looks, behaviour, lifestyle or circumstances. Biases can be conveyed through verbal and physical actions.

Given that each of us is a product of our time and our environments to a certain extent, it is unrealistic to expect that anyone is completely without bias. Thus it is important to become aware of the misinformation and biases that we carry so that we can remove the barriers that exist and keep us from achieving mutual respect and understanding. Since we are not always aware of these attitudes and beliefs, we need to pay attention to how we think and feel about other people, examine the roots of our thoughts and analyze them for biases and be open to feedback from others.

Exploring Difference, Power and Privilege

All of us have different aspects of our identities that either help us to hold power and privilege or result in us being withheld from or lacking power and privilege. Our gender, race, age, physical and mental ability, religious faith or sexual orientation, may give us more or less access to power and privilege than others. This varies from situation to situation and depends upon what the dynamics and power relations are in each group or circumstance.

These aspects of ourselves that impact access to power or privilege intersect, and can overlap and be contradictory. For example, individuals with multiple marginalized identities (such as racialized LGBTQ people) are more likely to report excessive substance use.¹⁴ Also, our personal access to power and privilege can change over time (e.g., as we get older or if our economic circumstances change).

Some aspects of ourselves are visible, and others are invisible to the people we meet. Each of these aspects is interpreted by the people we encounter. Many of the examples used in this Resource Kit represent aspects of our identities that are visible (e.g., gender, race and age). A visible difference can be seen or heard, and is often noticed upon an initial sighting or encounter with another person (e.g., physical differences). An invisible difference cannot be seen or heard upon an initial sighting or encounter and may never be detected.

Generally, people with invisible differences have a greater ability to blend in with the mainstream or more privileged groups than those with visible differences. This may or may not be an advantage, depending on the situation. For instance, someone who does not want people to be made aware of the fact that they have a learning disability can perhaps conceal it by not actively participating in a public forum. However, if they decide not to disclose this information (e.g., to organizers ahead of time), it might mean that they will be prevented from participating when they choose to do so.

The accumulative stigma, prejudice and discrimination to which minoritized and marginalized people are exposed, known as “minority stress,” can lead to poor physical and mental health, and increased risk behaviour.¹⁵

Diversity in the Workplace

Diversity enhances an organization's brand, creating the perception of an innovative, dynamic and creative organization. A diverse workforce in a welcoming environment helps organizations attract talented employees, and by doing so, helps them achieve their objectives. However, social diversity in a negative workplace culture can cause a lack of trust and respect, which impedes productivity.

When individuals feel that they cannot be themselves at work, they will not engage fully as part of the team or in assigned work. For example, an employee may feel that sexual orientation or a hidden disability cannot be revealed due to fear of reprisals. This type of 'closed' environment can significantly impact an individual's involvement in the organization, potentially resulting in low staff morale, increased absenteeism, decreased productivity and retention difficulties.¹⁶

Yet, the places where we work, particularly in the upper echelons, are decidedly uniform when it comes to race and gender, i.e., mostly white and mostly male. If diverse workplaces are better, why aren't there more of them?

Research shows that there are many factors that impede workplace diversification, beyond explicit racism or sexism. Our individual experiences and biases play a role, as do organizational policies and practices. Leadership is an important factor. In a 2013 survey, the Ontario Nonprofit Network (ONN) found that nonprofit leadership did not reflect the communities they served: 13% of 810 leaders who responded were visible minorities and 20% were immigrants, compared to 26% of Ontarians who are visible minorities and 30% who are immigrants.¹⁷ Also, the way leaders choose to talk (or not to talk) about diversity and differences affects the outcomes of their diversity initiatives. There are two main approaches taken by employers. One emphasizes the value of difference and advocates for increasing awareness of differences. The other places a stronger emphasis on fairness and equity, affirming that differences will not be an obstacle to career opportunities and advancement.¹⁸ Many nonprofit organizations face challenges when it comes to diversity and inclusion, and often the main issues are simply a matter of resources and priorities.



Here are some ideas for embracing diversity in the workplace:

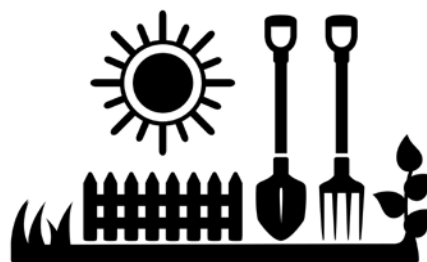
- Be creative, flexible and look for new ways of doing things that foster inclusion.
- Build understanding and trust relationships, e.g., learn about the cultural backgrounds, lives and interests of employees outside of the workplace.
- Include opportunities for staff to interact in settings outside of work so that employees feel more comfortable.
- Ensure all employees have the opportunity to take part in decision-making and planning for social activities; consider organizing collective meals where employees can learn about one another's cultures by sharing food.
- Acknowledge all faiths present in the workplace and be aware of, and provide time off for, culturally significant events and holy days.
- Recognize and acknowledge special days and events such as International Day of Persons with Disabilities, International Day to End Racism, Gay Pride celebrations, etc.
- Create Intranet-based multicultural calendars to avoid scheduling important meetings on major cultural holidays.¹⁹

Rural Diversity

Ontario communities can be characterized by five types of rural regions/communities: urban fringe communities, agriculture communities, cottage country communities, the mining and mill towns of northern Ontario, and Aboriginal communities. 2.6 million Ontarians, or 20% of the province's population, live in rural areas. Of this population, 1.4 million live in areas with under 10,000 in population and 1.1 million live in smaller cities with populations under 100,000 but over 10,000.²⁰

Rural challenges are different than those in urban areas. While most rural areas are experiencing growth, it has slowed over the past few years and some areas have declining populations. Many have a shortage of skilled labour and an aging population, with youth migrating to larger urban centres. Lack of transportation services make it difficult to get to work, school or medical appointments.

There are some distinctive cultural groups in rural areas, such as Amish and Old Order Mennonites. Over the last 50 years, some Mennonites have returned to Ontario from Mexico, after their ancestors fled Canada in the 1920s to live in traditional colonies. In Ontario, their church is called the Old Colony Mennonite Church.²¹



Agriculture



Mills



Mining

Migrant workers, and the farms that employ them, play a vital role in the food economy of the province and across Canada. However, due to their seasonal employment and lack of full legal status in Canada, they are socially disadvantaged and have many barriers to accessing social support services.²²

Internet service isn't as readily available or as reliable in rural areas as urban areas. Because of the low population density, developing and servicing broadband access in remote areas is costlier than in urban areas. "*Ontario may be recognized as a leader in digital media technologies, but the reality is that parts of the province are still without stable, basic broadband service.*"²³

Endnotes for Understanding Diversity

- ¹ Ontario Human Rights Commission, *Count me in—collecting human rights-based data* (2010), 6.
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3. Understanding Inclusion

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Defining Inclusion

The World Bank defines social inclusion as *“the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society—improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity.”*¹ It is aimed at creating conditions which enable the full and active participation of every member of the society in all aspects of life, including civic, social, economic and political activities, as well as participation in decision-making processes.²

According to the New Brunswick Association for Community Living, social inclusion means that people:

- experience a sense of belonging;
- are accepted (for who they are) within their communities;
- have valued roles in the community;
- are actively participating in the community;
- are involved in activities based on their personal preferences;
- have social relationships with others whom they chose and share common interests; and
- have friends.

When people experience some or all of these conditions in their life they are more likely to be happier and healthier. In fact, social inclusion is an important “determinant of health”—without inclusion, people are more likely to experience poor health (including poor mental health), loneliness, isolation and poor self esteem.³

Why Inclusion is Important

We live in a diverse and changing society. While every person has a right to be treated fairly and equitably, barriers exist at all levels of society that result in the inequitable treatment of some individuals and groups, based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. Social exclusion is created by unequal power relationships interacting across four dimensions (economic, political, social and cultural), at all levels of society.⁴ Social exclusion results in unequal access to resources and denies some individuals access to basic human rights and opportunities to participate in society at large.

To be effective, efforts to increase inclusiveness must take place at the individual, organizational, community and societal level. At the individual level, we must examine our values, stereotypes, stigmas, superstitions, conscious and unconscious biases, and verbal and body language when we interact with others. At the organizational level, we must analyze the impacts of our values, policies, practices and procedures. Do they create or perpetuate disadvantage for certain groups within the organization (i.e., systemic discrimination), or do they support welcoming workplaces that value all workers' contributions and are responsive to individual needs and aspirations?

There are many reasons why inclusiveness helps to make an organization more effective:

- It will ensure equal access and participation by diverse populations within an organization.
- It will be easier to respond effectively to the various needs of the community members that the organization serves.
- It will help to ensure that the organization is representative and reflective of the local population.
- It will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of programming and provide better outcomes for clients.
- It will help to ensure that community members are represented and validated within the various parts of the organization.

Barriers to Equitable Access

Issues of access and choice are important when examining power and privilege. Access is defined as having the right, opportunity or ability to reach, enter or use a facility, program or materials, visit a person or people and/or receive, understand and use information, knowledge or skills. Access is limited or prevented when barriers exist. Barriers create limited or restricted access to a facility, program, materials, people or information. Such barriers may be accidental or intended. People may face many barriers that prevent their full and active participation in society based on their personal identities and/or circumstances.

For instance, systemic discrimination may be encountered by those who have a disability, by people of colour, or by youth and seniors, in situations where programs are set up for able-bodied, white, middle-aged people. A person's cultural or religious attire, or the fact that they have a speech impediment or limited ability in English, can also subject them to discrimination in circumstances where strict dress codes are in effect and verbal communication is important. Such barriers may not only limit their active participation in organizations, but may prevent them from even contacting such groups to begin with.⁵

People do not necessarily choose to deliberately discriminate against those who are different from themselves. Many of the barriers to participation within community organizations exist because of a lack of awareness of differing wants or needs.

Reducing Barriers to Inclusion

Barriers can be removed and access increased by first exploring what some of these barriers are and how we can learn to notice them in the behaviours of ourselves and others. Basically, a barrier is an obstacle that prevents an individual or group from accessing certain services or opportunities. A barrier can be physical (e.g., stairs), financial (e.g., lack of bus fare), attitudinal (e.g., individual or organizational discrimination), social (e.g., prevailing norms and attitudes), linguistic (e.g., limited English skills) or geographic (e.g., isolated location). Such barriers may be real or perceived. It is key to recognize that there are a variety of ways in which community buildings, programs, services and opportunities can be inaccessible to some people. Access is related to many different aspects of an organization, such as communications, signage, physical design and delivery of services. In some cases, people may find it difficult to fully participate in their communities because of an individual constraint. For instance, an individual who has a hearing impairment may find it difficult to participate in a community meeting. However, they may be accommodated by being provided with materials in print format, by a request that participants in the meeting speak clearly and try to face the hearing-impaired person so they can read their lips, or perhaps by having a sign language interpreter available.



There is no simple formula for alleviating all barriers, as each person's needs are unique. When we treat people *equally*, we ignore differences. When we treat people *equitably*, we recognize and respect differences. Therefore, the process of determining what accommodations are needed and feasible must be considered on an individual basis in each specific circumstance. Since not all needs will be apparent, it is important to find out from every person involved or potentially involved in an organization if there are ways that their participation can be maximized.

This may be addressed during the orientation of new staff, volunteers and members. By consulting individuals, plans for accommodation can often be established within a reasonable and mutually acceptable time frame.

Sometimes the accommodation of needs is not possible without causing undue hardship for the people involved or for the organization that is trying to accommodate them. In these cases, solutions may have to be found to offset the costs or risks involved in accommodation. Also, where accommodation cannot be immediately addressed, it may need to be phased in over a longer period. For example, for changes to be made to physical infrastructure that may require a large financial outlay, the organization might consider:

- creating a special fund where periodic payments can be made;
- asking individuals and organizations for grants or donations; and/or
- holding a fundraising event specifically for this purpose.

It is also important to recognize that people who require accommodations are unlikely to approach the organization to demand or even request them. It is more likely that they will simply feel unwelcome, consider not participating or be unable to do so. Organizations can create a welcoming image by choosing their meeting or activity locations carefully (e.g., ensuring they are physically accessible and on subway or bus routes.).

Exhibiting good faith and a willingness to explore creative solutions for reducing barriers to equitable access and making accommodations is a huge step towards becoming inclusive. Taking steps to make all people feel welcome and included (before someone issues a request or complaint) shows that an organization is concerned about their well-being and is open to change.



Benefits of Inclusion

There are many reasons why inclusiveness helps to make an organization more effective. It will:

- build organizational capacity and expertise;
- help people make good decisions in an environment of change and fiscal uncertainty;
- enhance an organization's ability to effectively respond to future changes in demographics;
- make it more accountable to the community;
- enhance community input and relationship building;
- help to build an organization's reputation as progressive and inclusive—an employer of choice;
- provide social, economic and cultural enrichment through increased diversity;
- improve morale, especially among Board members, staff and volunteers who may currently feel marginalized;
- increase participation and encourages greater sharing of responsibility and workload;
- help to decrease conflict and make the root sources of conflict better understood; and
- help an organization comply with legislation, manage risks and reduce liability.⁶

Taking Action Towards Inclusion

There are many ways to take action towards inclusion. These actions need not be complicated, but it is important that they are intentional. Determining the most suitable actions will depend on a variety of factors. These could include: the audience, the objective, the setting, and the capacity of those involved.

Raising awareness at an individual or organizational level is a good place to begin. Activities that enhance understanding of diversity and inclusion can take place formally or informally. When done with consistency these actions build a foundation for a culture of inclusion.

Deeper learning occurs through critical reflection on the impact of social exclusion. At this stage, the capacity to recognize and empathize with various perspectives on diversity is developed. The intent is to inspire the search for increased knowledge and insight.

Embedding inclusion begins by focussing on identified barriers to full inclusion. These actions clearly illustrate value, character and commitment to advancing inclusion in our lives. This includes activities that demonstrate individual and collective responsibility to challenge exclusion wherever it exists.

Leading initiatives can be undertaken by anyone with a strong commitment and enthusiasm for inclusion. Actions that "raise the bar" on what it means to be inclusive encourage others to do the same. The success of these activities can have deep and lasting effects within organizations and in communities.

Examples of actions for inclusion:

Raising awareness

- Create or share a diversity calendar, recognize and celebrate significant dates.
- Identify and learn more about the history of the traditional territory the community is in.
- Show or share video messages on inclusion.
- Send out a diversity word of the day.

Deeper learning

- Assess individual values, biases and privilege; take the Harvard IAT test.
- Learn about microaggressions.
- Review census data for the community, consider who is missing, consider who is unseen.
- Host a video screening and discussion panel on current issues related to diversity.

Embedding inclusion

- Put yourself in someone else's shoes, look at everyday activities from a different perspective.
- Conduct a policy review using an equity and inclusion lens, develop more inclusive policies.
- Link inclusion to values, make it a priority, get it on the agenda and keep it there.

Leading the way

- Initiate a diversity charter for the community or for organizations within the community.
- Establish a diversity committee, task force or working group to advise on issues of inclusion.
- Hold groups, government and businesses accountable for their commitments to inclusion.

Endnotes for Understanding Inclusion

- ¹ World Bank, *Brief: Social Inclusion* (March 28, 2017), <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/socialdevelopment/brief/social-inclusion>.
- ² United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *Creating an Inclusive Society: Practical Strategies to Promote Social Integration* (2009), <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/egms/docs/2009/Ghana/inclusive-society.pdf>.
- ³ New Brunswick Association for Community Living, <https://nbacl.nb.ca/module-pages/why-social-inclusion/>.
- ⁴ World Health Organization, *Social Exclusion* (2017), http://www.who.int/social_determinants/themes/social-exclusion/en/.
- ⁵ Khedr, Rabia, *Building Inclusive Communities for Ethnoracial People with Disabilities* (Ethnoracial People with Disabilities Coalition of Ontario, Toronto ON, 2003).
- ⁶ Much of the material in this section was adapted from: “Diversity at the City of Toronto,” Tim Rees’ presentation in a Diverse Society forum of the Sustainability Network (October 2001), and “Why Diversity?” Paul Kwasi Kafele’s presentation to the York Support Network (2001).

4. Dimensions of Diversity

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- Gender and Sexual Orientationpage 36
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Dimensions of diversity refer to various continuums of difference. For example, along the dimension of age, individuals may be anywhere from very young to very old. Where we are on each dimension of diversity is a filter through which we process the world around us. Within each of us, these dimensions intersect, resulting in a complex web of diversity filters. These lead to assumptions that we make about others, which then drive our own behaviours, which in turn have an impact on others.¹

This section gives a summary of each of the personal dimensions of diversity (ability, age, cultural heritage, gender, sexual orientation, and race) and also a couple of external dimensions (literacy and income). However, there are many other dimensions of diversity, such as marital status, education, work experience and marital status.

A note about intersectionality...

Race, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability and other characteristics of individuals are often talked about as if they are separate from each other. Intersectionality is the acknowledgement that these dimensions of diversity all interact with one another. We need to recognize the complexity of our lived experiences and understand that while there may be some commonalities among people, each individual is unique.²

Endnotes for this page

¹ Adapted from Marilyn Loden and Julie Rosener, *Internal Dimensions and External Dimensions, Workforce America* (Business One Irwin, 1991), http://www.lacrosseconsortium.org/uploads/content_files/Dimensions_of_Diversity_Wheel_Expanded.pdf.

² Palmer, Nathan, "Life at the Intersectionality of Race, Class & Gender," *Sociology in Focus* (December 14, 2011), <http://sociologyinfocus.com/2011/12/life-at-the-intersectionality-of-race-class-gender/>.

Dimensions of Diversity: ABILITY

The term “ability” refers to the power or capacity to do or act physically, mentally, legally, morally, financially, etc.¹ Every individual has varying degrees of ability in different areas. The term “disability” refers to the impairment of ability, and covers a broad range and degree of conditions, some visible and some not visible. A disability may have been present from birth, caused by an accident, or developed over time. There are physical, mental and learning disabilities; mental disorders; hearing or vision disabilities; epilepsy; drug and alcohol dependencies; environmental sensitivities; and other conditions.²

The United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) states that *“disability is an evolving concept and that disability 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.”*³

The Ontario Human Rights Code recognizes the dignity and worth of every person in Ontario and provides for equal rights and opportunities, and freedom from discrimination. It applies to the areas of employment; housing; facilities and services; contracts; and membership in unions, trade or professional associations. People with disabilities are entitled to the same opportunities and benefits as people without disabilities. In some cases, they may need special arrangements or “accommodations” so they can participate effectively.⁴

In 2012, an estimated 3.8 million adults in Canada (13.7%) had a disability that limited their daily activities.⁵ The table below shows the prevalence of disability by type, among adults aged 15 years and older.

Prevalence of types of disability in Canada among adults (15+ yrs)

| | |
|-----------------------|-------|
| Pain-related | 13.7% |
| Flexibility | 9.7% |
| Mobility | 7.2% |
| Mental Health-related | 3.9% |
| Dexterity | 3.5% |
| Hearing | 3.2% |
| Seeing | 2.8% |
| Memory | 2.3% |
| Learning | 2.3% |
| Developmental | 0.6% |
| Unknown | 0.3% |

Actions for Inclusion: Accessibility with Dignity

For people with disabilities to be included in everyday activities and have roles similar to their non-disabled peers involves more than simply encouraging people; it requires making sure that adequate policies and practices are in effect in a community or organization.⁶ The Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services categorizes accessibility barriers into: physical and architectural, information and communication, attitudinal, technological, and organizational.⁷ To ensure that people with disabilities (visible and invisible) live fuller inclusive lives, interventions should aim towards:

- increasing visibility and awareness;
- empowerment; and
- removing barriers.

Specific actions that would improve the lives of people with disabilities include:

- Engage the media in promoting awareness of issues around disabilities. The [Rick Hansen Foundation](#)'s work is an example of how awareness can be promoted.⁸
- Increase engagement and representation of persons with disabilities in political settings.
- View the disability community as valuable consumers.
- Make employment and volunteer opportunities inclusive and comfortable,⁹ for example, the [Not Myself Today](#) campaign.
- Utilize information and communication technologies to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities.
- Promote social inclusion in workplaces, schools and recreational areas.
- Ensure organizational materials such as brochures and website are in formats that make it easier for people with disabilities to access.
- Make public travel, including air travel, universally accessible.
- Explore your workplaces, public spaces, and neighbourhoods for what needs to be changed to make them more accessible and welcoming for people with disabilities.¹⁰ Learn more at the [AccessForward](#) website.
- Educate people about how to behave around people with disabilities. For example, know what to do during a mental health emergency—see section 10 on “Crisis and Emergency” starting on page 161 in *A Family Guide to Concurrent Disorders* by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (http://www.camh.ca/en/hospital/health_information/a_z_mental_health_and_addiction_information/concurrent_disorders/Documents/family-guide-concurrent-disorders.pdf).¹¹

Resources

The **Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act** (Ontario Ministry of Citizenship) develops, implements and enforces accessibility standards to achieve accessibility for all Ontarians with disabilities. <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/05a11>

Accessibility Ontario is a training and development organization that helps nonprofits and businesses in Ontario understand and comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005). <https://accessontario.com>

The **EnAbling Change Program** is an initiative of the Government of Ontario that provides financial support and expertise to incorporated non-profit organizations that help organizations comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). <http://www.grants.gov.on.ca/GrantsPortal/en/OntarioGrants/GrantOpportunities/PRDR006997>

Access Forward is a website that provides free training modules to meet the training requirements under Ontario's accessibility laws (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act). <http://accessforward.ca/>

Autism Ontario works towards increasing public awareness about autism and the day-to-day issues faced by individuals with autism, their families and the professionals with whom they interact. <http://www.autismontario.com>

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) combines clinical care, research, education, policy development and health promotion to help transform the lives of people affected by mental health and addiction issues. <http://www.camh.ca/en/hospital/Pages/home.aspx>

Community Living Ontario (CLO) supports and advocates on behalf of people who have learning disabilities to create a world where people who have an intellectual disability can fully participate in their community. <http://communitylivingontario.ca>

Epilepsy Ontario aims at promoting independence and optimal quality of life for children and adults living with seizure disorders by providing client services (counselling and referral), information, education and advocacy services. <http://epilepsyontario.org/>

Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) works towards improving the lives of persons with learning disabilities by providing resources, services, information, venues and products designed to help people with LD and ADHA as well as parents, teachers and other professionals. <http://www.ldao.ca/>

Mood Disorders Association of Ontario (MDAO) is committed to improving the quality of lives of people with mood disorders, their families and their friends through mutual support, information sharing, and education. <https://www.mooddorders.ca/>

Ontario Brain Injury Association (OBIA) has sites across Ontario that provide support, information, education, and advocacy programs to people affected by acquired brain injury in local communities. <http://obia.ca/>

Schizophrenia Society of Ontario (SSO) provides education, support and advocacy services to individuals, families, and communities affected by schizophrenia and psychotic illnesses. <http://www.schizophrenia.on.ca/>

Canada-wide Organizations

The Canadian Abilities Foundation provides inspiration, information and opportunity for Canadians with disabilities. They envision an inclusive, universally accessible society, where all people belong and are valued. <http://abilities.ca/>

Canadian Hearing Society (CHS) offers a wide range of programs, services, products and information to help remove communication barriers and provide support and advice for people who are culturally deaf, oral deaf, deafened and hard of hearing. <https://www.chs.ca/>

Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) provides rehabilitation services to enhance independence, safety, and mobility after a loss of sight, and empowerment to the blind and partially sighted to participate fully in life. <http://www.cnib.ca/en/Pages/default.aspx>

March of Dimes Canada is involved with services, advocacy and research designed to further equal opportunity, self-sufficiency, dignity and quality of life of people with physical disabilities. <http://www.marchofdimes.ca>

The **Rick Hansen Foundation** works towards creating awareness, changing attitudes and breaking down barriers faced by people with disabilities preventing them from reaching their full potential. <http://www.rickhansen.com/>

Canada and Beyond

The **Access Now App** provides accessibility information in mapped places around the world. <http://accessnow.me/>

The **Disability Today (DT) Network** is an online “exposition” of independently-hosted media channels under 15 different areas of special interest to people with disabilities, their families and friends and healthcare professionals. <http://www.disabilitytodaynetwork.com/>

Endnotes for Ability

- 1 <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/ability?s=t>.
- 2 Ontario Human Rights Code, *Disability and Human Rights brochure* (2016), <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/disability-and-human-rights-brochure-2016>.
- 3 Ontario Human Rights Code, *Policy on ableism and discrimination based on disability: 2. What is disability?* <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-ableism-and-discrimination-based-disability/2-what-disability>.
- 4 Ontario Human Rights Code, *Disability and Human Rights brochure* (2016), <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/disability-and-human-rights-brochure-2016>.
- 5 Statistics Canada, *Disability in Canada: Initial findings from the Canadian Survey on Disability* (2013), <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-654-x/89-654-x2013002-eng.htm>.
- 6 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Disability Inclusion*, <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/disability-inclusion.html>.
- 7 Ministry of Community and Social Services, *About the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005* (2008), <http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/documents/en/mcss/publications/accessibility/AboutAODASWeb20080311EN.pdf>.
- 8 <http://www.rickhansen.com>
- 9 <http://www.notmyselftoday.ca>
- 10 <http://accessforward.ca>
- 11 Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, *When a crisis becomes an emergency* (2012), http://www.camh.ca/en/hospital/health_information/a_z_mental_health_and_addiction_information/concurrent_disorders/a_family_guide_to_concurrent_disorders/crisis_and_emergency/Pages/when_crisisbecms_emergency.aspx

Dimensions of Diversity: AGE

Age refers to the number of years an individual has lived, but in the context of inclusive communities, it can be viewed as the different stages in one's life cycle. While people's capacities and needs change over time, age is an area where discrimination and bias (conscious or unconscious) often occur. Ageism is discrimination or unfair treatment based on a person's age. This can have a negative impact on someone's confidence, job prospects, financial situation and quality of life. Ageism also includes the way that older or younger people are represented in the media, which shapes public attitudes.¹

Ontario's population is shifting to an older age structure. Regions that don't have a natural increase in their population and where more people are moving out than into the region (which is the case in many rural areas) will see the largest shifts towards aging. The Greater Toronto Area (GTA) is expected to continue to have the youngest age structure, because of strong international immigration and positive natural increase.

Children

The number of children aged 0–14 in Ontario is projected to increase gradually, from 2.2 million in 2015 to almost 2.7 million by 2041. However, children as a percentage of total population is projected to decrease gradually from 15.9% in 2015 to 14.9% by 2041.²

The concept of child-friendly cities has been advanced over the decades by various individuals and groups. The Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989—its guiding principles include non-discrimination; adherence to the best interests of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and the right to participate.³ Other groups such as 80 Cities advocate for cities “where people are actively engaged and fairly represented,” including people as young as 8 and those as old as 80 years.⁴

It is important that children are encouraged to participate in activities to develop the skills necessary for effective community participation when they are older.

Youth

Research has shown that youth who are engaged in their communities experience many significant benefits, including decreased use of alcohol and drugs, lower rates



of school failure and dropping out, lower rates of anti-social behaviour and lower rates of depression.⁵

“Youth engagement is the meaningful participation and sustained involvement of a young person in an activity, with a focus outside of him or herself. The kind of activity in which the youth is engaged can be almost anything—sports, the arts, music, volunteer work, politics, social activism—and it can occur in almost any kind of setting.”⁶

Older Adults

The world’s population is aging. The number of people aged 60 or over is projected to increase from 900 million to 2 billion between 2015 and 2050, increasing from 12% to 22% of the population.

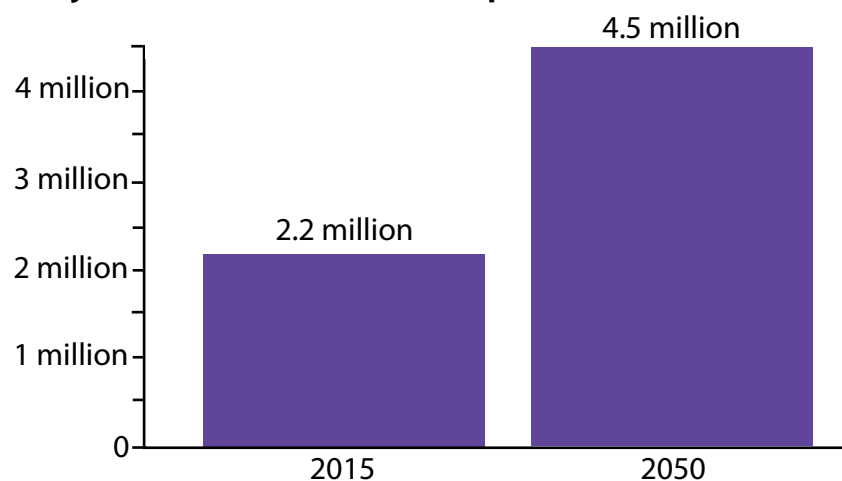
The number of seniors (aged 65 and over) in Ontario is projected to more than double from 2.2 million, or 16% of the population in 2015, to over 4.5 million, or 25.3%, by 2041. Growth in the number and share of seniors will accelerate quickly between 2016 and 2031 as baby boomers turn 65, and then slow considerably from 2031 to 2041.² In Ontario, seniors have outnumbered children aged 0-14 since 2015.⁷

In Ontario, the oldest age groups will experience the fastest growth, as the number of people aged 75 and over rises from 974,000 in 2015 to 2.7 million by 2041. During this time, the 90+ age group will almost quadruple in size from 109,000 to 413,000.⁸

When it comes to health, there is no ‘typical’ older person. Everyone ages differently. Although some of the variation in older people’s health is determined by genetic inheritance, most is determined by people’s physical and social environment.

Health in old age need not be defined merely as the absence of disease. Rather, older persons’ health may be defined by their sense of well-being, and their ability to continue to do the things that are important to them.

Projected Growth of Ontario’s Population of Seniors (65+)



Many older adults face barriers that can make it difficult to enjoy a high quality of life. These barriers include difficulty accessing outdoor spaces, buildings, transportation, affordable housing, employment, opportunities for social interaction, and access to community supports and health services.

At the same time, seniors possess a wide range of skills and experience, and make significant contributions to their communities as caregivers, volunteers and community leaders.

Actions for Inclusion

- Create age-friendly communities. The concept of age-friendly communities was introduced by the World Health Organization in 2005 and continues to gain support around the world. Many Ontario communities are implementing age-friendly initiatives to help older residents live safely, enjoy good health, and stay involved in all aspects of community life. Age-friendly communities address many aspects of community life, such as walkability, accessibility, safety, transportation, housing, social inclusion, volunteerism, employment, and community health and support services.⁸
- Learn about effective youth engagement strategies and educate others about the importance of involving youth in activities and decision-making within their communities.
- Create family friendly policies in the workplace or volunteer programs.
- Plan intergenerational activities and events.
- Provide a stimulating environment within community facilities and gatherings by providing appropriate books, toys, and structured activities that will engage children.
- Make gatherings more family friendly and fun, e.g., by including games, barbeques, art, music etc. This will capture a broader base of stakeholders than conventional meeting styles.
- Make community spaces accessible for all children and their parents or caretakers.
- Foster a culture that recognizes, values and rewards the efforts of children and youth.

Resources

8 80 Cities is a non-profit organization that brings citizens together to enhance mobility and public space to create more vibrant, healthy, and equitable communities. They believe that if everything we do in our public spaces is great for an 8-year-old and an 80-year-old, then it will be great for all people. <http://www.880cities.org/>

Best Start: How to be a Family Friendly Workplace is a guidebook containing policies and practices that help families before pregnancy, during pregnancy and during breastfeeding. http://www.beststart.org/resources/wrkplc_health/pdf/preg_work_16pg_FNL.pdf

Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health published a report in September 2016, *Youth engagement in rural and remote contexts*. http://www.excellenceforchildandyouth.ca/sites/default/files/resource/EIS_Rural_Remote_Youth_Engagement.pdf

Search Institute® has been a leader and partner for organizations around the world in discovering what kids need to succeed, for more than 50 years.

<http://www.search-institute.org/>

The Students Commission: Centre for Excellence for Youth Engagement

http://www.studentscommission.ca/aorg/index_e.php

Rural Ontario Institute: 2017 Youth Engagement Showcase Stories

<http://www.ruralontarioinstitute.ca/yes-stories>

Age-Friendly Rural/Remote Communities Initiative, Public Health Agency of Canada

http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/seniors-aines/publications/public/afc-cao/rural-rurales/intro-eng.php#healthy_aging

Checklist of Age-Friendly Features, Public Health Agency of Canada

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/seniors-aines/publications/public/afc-cao/rural-rurales/checklist-eng.php>

Age-friendly Communities in Canada: Community Implementation Guide, Public Health Agency of Canada

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/age-friendly-communities-canada-community-implementation-guide.html>

Older Adults: Equity and Inclusion Lens Snapshot, City of Ottawa

http://www.cawi-ivtf.org/sites/default/files/older_adults_snapshot_en_2016_final_acc.pdf

Endnotes for Age

- 1 Age UK, <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/work-and-learning/discrimination-and-rights/what-is-ageism/>.
- 2 Ontario Ministry of Finance, *Ontario Population Projections Update* (Spring 2016), <http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/economy/demographics/projections/>.
- 3 UNICEF Canada, *About the convention on the rights of the child*, <http://www.unicef.ca/en/policy-advocacy-for-children/about-the-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child?adid=110415491458>.
- 4 8 80 Cities, <http://www.880cities.org/>.
- 5 Centres for Excellence for Children's Well-Being, *What is Youth Engagement?*, 4 http://archives.studentscommission.ca/pdf/Whatis_WEB_e.pdf.
- 6 Ibid, 5.
- 7 Ontario Ministry of Finance, *Ontario Population Projections Update* (Spring 2016), <http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/economy/demographics/projections/>.
- 8 World Health Organization, *Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide* (2007), http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global_age_friendly_cities_Guide_English.pdf.

Dimensions of Diversity: CULTURAL HERITAGE

“Humans are social creatures. Since the dawn of Homo sapiens nearly 250,000 years ago, people have grouped together into communities in order to survive. Living together, people form common habits and behaviours—from specific methods of childrearing to preferred techniques for obtaining food.”¹

Culture is made up of ideas, symbols, language, beliefs, values and artifacts (material items such as tools, technology, cuisine, clothing and transportation).² Despite how much all humans have in common, there are many cultural differences within and among societies. These differences can make it difficult for people to live, work or play together in harmony.

Cultural heritage is an expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation, including customs, practices, places, objects, artistic expressions and values.³

In this section, three aspects of cultural heritage will be considered: language, religion and Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

Language

To be included, people need to be able to understand and be understood by those around them. Thus, it is essential that the potential for language barriers be examined.

The 2011 census data, as reported by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages,⁴ showed that 69.3% of Ontarians had English as their mother tongue and 4.1% had French as a mother tongue. Twenty-six percent of Ontarians had a non-official language as their mother tongue. Eighty-six percent of the Ontario population spoke only English, 0.3% spoke only French, 11% spoke both French and English and 2.3% spoke neither English nor French.

Francophones’ cultural, social, economic and political contributions to the province of Ontario began over 400 years ago.⁵ Ontario has the highest number of Francophones outside Quebec. The 2011 Canadian census showed that of the 13.5 million people in Ontario, 611,500 (or nearly 5% of the population) identify as Francophone. The distribution of the Ontario Francophone population by region is: East (42.2%), Central (30%) and Northeast (20.8%).⁶ The number of Francophones in Ontario has steadily increased over the past two decades.

Until 2009, Francophones were defined as people whose mother tongue is French, but the Ontario government now uses a more inclusive definition of the Francophone population which includes *“those whose mother tongue is neither French nor English, but who have personal knowledge of French as an official language, and who use French at home,”* thus including *“recent immigrants to Ontario for whom French is the language of integration.”⁷* Beyond language, however, the Franco-Ontarian community is characterized by diversity—of ethnicity, religion, origin, education, culture, income, values and experience.

Having two official languages (English and French) is a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian identity, and the importance of language rights is clearly recognized in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.⁸ Francophones in Ontario have the right to request and receive services in their own language, from provincial and federal government services as well as from designated organizations that receive funding from the provincial government.⁹ While most Francophones in Ontario are bilingual, they are often better able to express themselves in their first language, or just more comfortable doing so. The costs associated with bilingualism are often seen as being necessary to meet the needs of Francophones, but the reality is that it is the needs of unilingual individuals that are being met, of which there are many more Anglophones than Francophones.

Francophone members of visible minorities face a double minority status—both as a linguistic minority in a predominantly English-speaking Ontario, and as a visible minority in a predominantly white, French-speaking Ontario.

Ontario has more multilingual residents than the national average, reporting more than 100 languages as mother tongues. The most common non-official-language mother tongues in Ontario are:

- Chinese (includes Cantonese, Mandarin, Hakka and others);
- Italian;
- Spanish;
- Panjabi (Punjabi);
- Portuguese;
- German;
- Tagalog (Pilipino, Filipino);
- Arabic; and
- Urdu.¹⁰



Considering the diversity of non-official languages spoken by nearly one-quarter of Ontarians, it is important that communities and community organizations support the linguistic and cultural needs and preferences of these individuals so they can participate in, and contribute fully to, community life.

Equity, inclusion and a sense of belonging contribute to a healthier population, better social cohesion, stronger communities, and a more equitable and prosperous society. The provision of services in languages other than English can help to build a more inclusive society by removing language as a key barrier to accessible services.¹¹ It is important to actively offer service in other languages, rather than assuming people will ask if they require interpretation or translation.

A person's language or accent is often a pretext for indirectly discriminating against someone because of her or his ancestry, place of origin or ethnic origin. Although the Ontario Human Rights Code does not explicitly identify "language" as a prohibited grounds of discrimination, the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario may consider claims under several related grounds, such as ancestry, ethnic origin, place of origin and in some circumstances, race. Language can be an element of a complaint based on any of these grounds.¹²

Across Ontario, many people working with community organizations face the dilemma of wanting to fully engage and work with all of the people within a community, but do not have the ability to speak their language(s). This doesn't mean that they cannot meaningfully engage community members. Reaching out and working with individuals to identify strategies for inclusion will build a sense of belonging and value, and demonstrate respect for them as individuals, and for their culture.

Actions for Inclusion

Individuals and organizations can become more linguistically and culturally inclusive by:

- learning about the cultural diversity within the community;
- showing respect and appreciation for different languages and cultures (e.g., hold community celebrations featuring various culture's food, music and history; acknowledge various culture's religious or cultural holidays; encourage community members to learn greetings and phrases in the languages of their neighbours);
- developing and implementing policies on cultural competency;
- ensuring that those offering community programs and services are knowledgeable about the culture of those in the community;
- offering community services in a culturally appropriate manner;
- using plain spoken language when possible;
- adopting Plain Language principles in any written materials;
- producing key information in the preferred language of the audience;
- ensuring that everyone can understand and be understood; in some cases, the services of an interpreter may be required;
- identifying individuals in the community who could serve as translators or interpreters at community meetings and/or events;
- being clear about the purpose before engaging with people that speak a different language;¹³
- encouraging those learning a second language and allowing them the freedom to make mistakes without judging them;
- providing written materials in different languages, and distributing them all at the same time;
- planning for sufficient time and resources to accommodate different languages; and
- creating an organizational climate that values language diversity.¹⁴

Resources About Language

Language Interpreter Services: Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration provides free interpretation services for victims of domestic violence, sexual violence or human trafficking.

<http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/english/grantsandfunding/language.shtml>

Ontario Interpreting Services: Canadian Hearing Society provides sign language interpreters onsite or by remote video.

<https://www.chs.ca/services/ontario-interpreting-services>

Remote Interpretation Ontario: Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services provides high quality, immediate over-the-phone interpretation (OPI) using trained and qualified interpreters in more than 170 languages, 24/7 days at non-profit rates.

<http://accessalliance.ca/programs-services/language-services/r-i-o-network-remote-interpretation-ontario/>

Office of Francophone Affairs ensures Franco-Ontarians receive government services in French so they can participate in the social, economic and political life of the province, while maintaining their linguistic and cultural heritage.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/office-francophone-affairs>

Office of the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario works to ensure active, integrated delivery of French-language services in support of the development of the Francophone community and Ontarian society. <http://csfontario.ca>

HC Link provides educational resources on topics relating to engaging and working with Francophones.

<http://www.hclinkontario.ca/resources/resources/engaging-working-with-francophones.html>

“Chapter 13: Plain Language” is a *Translation Bureau, Public Works and Government Services Canada, Termium Plus* website section about the Government of Canada’s call for the use of plain language.

<http://www.btb.termiumplus.gc.ca/tcdnstyl-chap?lang=eng&lettr=chapsect13&info0=13>

Religion

The majority of Ontario's population (65%) identify themselves as Christian, followed by Islam (5%), Hinduism (3%) and Judaism (2%). Twenty-three percent claim no religious affiliation.¹⁵ Religious affiliation has declined over the past decade, but not as much as was predicted, due to the many immigrants that arrive in Canada with strong religious beliefs. While Canadian-born people who are older than 55 are more likely to embrace religion than younger Canadian-born people, for those born outside of Canada, younger people are more religious than older people.¹⁶ While there has been an increase in the number of inter-religious unions, most Canadian couples are from the same broad religious group.¹⁷

As defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code, religion (creed) includes the practices, beliefs and observances that are part of a faith or religion. It does not include personal moral, ethical or political views, or religions that promote violence or hate towards others, or that violate criminal law. Under the Ontario Human Rights Code, discrimination because of religion (creed) is against the law. Everyone should have access to the same opportunities and benefits, and be treated with equal dignity and respect, regardless of their religion.¹⁸

Canada has a long history of religious discrimination. There are instances of Hindus, Muslims and Jews being denied entry into Canada, and the cultural genocide of the Indigenous peoples of Canada is only starting to be acknowledged. Many Canadians believe that religious discrimination is a thing of the past, but there has been an increase in hate crimes particularly against people who are Muslims and Jews. Some people also have stereotyped religious people as backward, less informed and close-minded.¹⁹

There are many issues in our society that relate to religion; for example, the extent to which government should scrutinize institutions with religious affiliations, whether religious attire should be worn in the workplace, and conflicts arising from the right to religious freedom. In 2012, the Ontario Human Rights Commission developed a *Policy on competing human rights* to help organizations and individuals deal with everyday situations where rights come into conflict. This policy highlights the importance of engaging in respectful dialogue between both parties who claim their rights are affected.

Resources About Religion

The Times They Are A Changin': Implications of Ontario's Changing Demographics is a 2014 presentation by Environics Analytics. https://oacfp.com/assets/uploads/content/pdf_upload/Doug_Norris_presentation_on_demographics.pdf

The Ontario Human Rights Commission's website features helpful brochures, fact sheets and guides, http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/our_work/brochures_factsheets. Their "Policy on preventing discrimination based on creed (rev Sept 2015)" is available at <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-preventing-discrimination-based-creed>.



Indigenous Peoples in Canada

Aboriginal or Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) are the first inhabitants of the lands which many call Turtle Island (now known as Canada). Despite experiencing colonization, assimilation and near extinction, the Aboriginal population has survived and is now among the fastest growing segments of the country's population—the Aboriginal population is estimated to be over 1.5 million, or 4% of the total.

First Nations: This term refers to Status and non-Status Indians, as defined by Canada's Indian Act, and is comprised of more than 50 language groups belonging to more than 630 nations throughout Canada.

Inuit: The Canadian Arctic is the traditional territory of the Inuit people who share a common language. In 1999, Canada and the Inuit created the jurisdiction of Nunavut in recognition of the traditional territories of the Inuit people.

Métis: The Métis Nation is a distinct Nation among Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Their paternal ancestors were the former employees of the Hudson Bay and Northwest Fur Companies and their maternal ancestors were Aboriginal women from various First Nations.

On a whole, the Aboriginal population is the fastest growing and youngest demographic group in Canada. More than 50% of Aboriginal people are under the age of 24. Based on 2006 census data, 54% of the Aboriginal population live in urban areas, up from 49% in 2001.

Ontario has the largest Aboriginal population of any province or territory. In 2006, there were 242,490 Aboriginal persons living in Ontario, representing 20.7% of the Canadian total. First Nation communities are located all across the province. Ontario is home to five of the 20 largest bands in Canada

One in four Ontario First Nations is a small, remote community, accessible only by air year-round, or by ice road in the winter. Ontario has more remote First Nations than any other region in Canada. Major urban Aboriginal populations are in Thunder Bay, Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie, Ottawa and Toronto

The history of Indigenous people in Canada and their relationship with government has evolved but continues to impact most aspects of Aboriginal life.

Generations of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children were forcibly removed from their homes and placed in 130 residential schools from 1831 to 1998. Denied contact with their families, they were institutionalized and subjected to racist denigration. This strategy of aggressive assimilation was to destroy the family in order to destroy Indigenous cultures and languages. This physical, emotional and mental abuse experienced by many of the children has left an impact on hundreds of thousands of children and their families today.

Aboriginal peoples have fought hard over past decades to achieve recognition in mainstream society of the right to determine their own affairs, including self-determination or self-government.

Actions for Inclusion

Truth and Reconciliation—Learn about the impact of the residential school system, the experiences of former students. Review the 94 calls to action made by the commission in its final report and take action.

Traditional Territories—Identify and recognize Traditional Territories, learn as much as possible about the First Nations in the region. Learn about treaties and accept that all Canadians are treaty people.

Native Appropriation—Consider how wrong it is to trivialize and commodify Indigenous culture and imagery. Speak out about native appropriation in the use of mascots, costumes, art, literature, fashion etc.

National Aboriginal History Month of June—Recognize the historic contributions of Indigenous peoples to the development of Canada, and the strength of present-day Indigenous communities.

National Aboriginal Day, June 21—Recognize and celebrate the rich contributions Indigenous peoples have made to Canada.

Annual Pow Wows—Attend one of the many annual Pow Wows across Ontario. Check the website of local First Nations to find out when they are held.

Resources About Indigenous Peoples in Canada

- **Assembly of First Nations:** <http://www.afn.ca/en>
- **Chiefs of Ontario:** <http://www.chiefs-of-ontario.org/>
- **Native Women's Association of Canada:** <https://www.nwac.ca/>
- **Ontario Native Women's Association:** <http://www.onwa.ca/>
- **Métis National Council:** <http://www.metisnation.ca/>
- **Métis Nation of Ontario:** <http://www.metisnation.org/>
- **Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami:** <https://www.itk.ca/>
- **Turtle Island Native Network** provides daily news updates on Aboriginal and First Nations issues and topics of interest. <http://www.turtleisland.org/>

Endnotes for Cultural Heritage

- 1 BC Open Textbooks, *Introduction to Sociology—1st Canadian Edition*, Chapter 3.1: What is Culture? <https://opentextbc.ca/introductiontosociology/chapter/chapter3-culture/>.
- 2 *Sociology: Brief Edition* (v. 1.1), section 2.2 "The Elements of Culture," <https://2012books.lardbucket.org/books/sociology-brief-edition-v1.1/s05-02-the-elements-of-culture.html>.
- 3 "What is Cultural Heritage," Culture in Development, http://www.cultureindevelopment.nl/cultural_heritage/what_is_cultural_heritage.

- 4 Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, <http://www.ocol-clo.gc.ca/en/statistics/province-territory#on>.
- 5 Government of Ontario, *Franco-Ontarian History*, <https://www.ontario.ca/page/franco-ontarian-history>.
- 6 Office of the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario, Francophones In Ontario infographic, http://csfontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/2014.09.18-Francophones-in-Ontario_infographic_J.pdf.
- 7 HC Link, *Working Together with Francophones in Ontario*, http://www.hclinkontario.ca/images/Uploaded_files/2012/CollaborerPart1DEnglish.pdf.
- 8 Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, *Understanding your language rights*, http://www.officiallanguages.gc.ca/en/language_rights/act.
- 9 HC Link, *Working Together with Francophones in Ontario*, http://www.hclinkontario.ca/images/Uploaded_files/2012/CollaborerPart1DEnglish.pdf.
- 10 Statistics Canada, *Visual Census—Language, Ontario*, http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/vc-rv/index.cfm?Lang=ENG&VIEW=D&GEOCODE=35&TOPIC_ID=4.
- 11 HC Link, *Working Together with Francophones in Ontario*, http://www.hclinkontario.ca/images/Uploaded_files/2012/CollaborerPart1DEnglish.pdf.
- 12 Ontario Human Rights Commission, *Policy on discrimination and language* (2009), http://www.ohrc.on.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/Policy_on_discrimination_and_language.pdf.
- 13 HC Link, *How to engage Francophones—when you don't speak French!* http://www.hclinkontario.ca/images/How_to_Engage_Francophones.pdf.
- 14 Savoie, Irène, *Policy on Official Languages*, prepared for the “Healthy Communities—An Approach to Action on Health Determinants in Canada” project (2012), http://www.ohcc-ccso.ca/en/webfm_send/664.
- 15 *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, Ontario (updated April 2017), <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/ontario/>.
- 16 “What Canadians really believe: A surprising poll,” *McLean's*, <http://www.macleans.ca/society/life/what-canadians-really-believe>.
- 17 Statistics Canada Archive, *Interreligious unions in Canada*, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2006003/9478-eng.htm#couples>.
- 18 Ontario Human Rights Commission, *Religion and Human Rights Fact Sheet*, <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/religious-rights-fact-sheet>.
- 19 Ontario Human Rights Commission, *History teaches us that difficult conversations about religion must start from respect and inclusion, not hate and division*, http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/news_centre/history-teaches-us-difficult-conversations-about-religion-must-start-respect-and-inclusion-not-hate.

Dimensions of Diversity: GENDER AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION

There are many terms and labels for the varying sexual orientations and gender identities and not everyone agrees with their definitions or uses. It is a very personal matter, and just because someone appears to fit the definition of a term does not mean they identify with it. It is respectful to describe people using the language they use to describe themselves.¹

LGBTQ is an acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer. Queer includes Pangendered, Intersexed, Transsexual or Two-Spirited and the many other ways that people self-identify, and is used *“both as a way to critique foundational norms pertaining to identities and in a more popular usage as inclusive of a wide range of varying and fluid gender and erotic expression.”*²

In Western society, gender (boy or girl) is assigned at birth. However, gender is also a social construct; there are social norms and expectations related to being a boy/man or girl/woman. Gender identity describes what gender someone feels like inside, regardless of the genitalia they were born with. Fifty-nine percent of transgendered people knew that their gender identity did not match their body before the age of 10, and 80% knew by the age of 14. “Transgender,” “transsexual” and “trans” are terms for people whose gender identity, expression or behaviour is different from those typically associated with their assigned sex at birth.³ Transgendered people may elect to change their physical characteristics to be congruent with their gender identity by taking hormones or having sex reassignment surgeries. There is a lot of diversity within trans communities, and about 1 in 5 trans people do not identify as male or female, but can identify as both male and female, neither male nor female, or as something else.

People who have intersex conditions have anatomy that is not considered typically male or female. Most identify themselves as male or female, and face different issues and have different needs than transgendered people.

Sexual orientation ranges along a continuum, and applies not just to physical attraction but also feelings of intimacy. Persons who are emotionally and sexually attracted to members of the opposite sex have a heterosexual orientation. Persons who are attracted to members of the same sex have either a gay orientation (males) or lesbian orientation (female). Persons who are attracted to members of both sexes have a bisexual orientation.⁴

Despite the delisting of homosexuality as a mental disorder in 1986 by the American Psychiatric Association and in 1990 by the World Health Organization, there is still a lot of stigma attached to same-sex attraction in many cultures.⁵ This stigma can have a variety of negative



effects throughout the person's lifetime. Studies have found high rates of depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive and phobic disorders, suicidal thoughts and acts, self-harm, and alcohol and drug dependence among LGBTQ people.⁶ Poverty may be a factor exacerbating LGBTQ mental health. A Canadian study found that bisexuals were over-represented in the lowest income categories, and an Ontario-based study found that half of trans people were living on less than \$15,000 a year.⁷

There has been some progress in the acceptance of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. Same sex marriages have been legal in Ontario since 2003 and in 2016 the "All Families Are Equal Act" was passed, which recognizes the legal status of parents without regard to sexual orientation or gender, or whether reproductive assistance was used.⁸ Since June 2016, sex designation is no longer displayed on the Ontario health card and, as of March 2017, driver's licences include "X" as a third option for sex, which is a standard accepted by the International Civil Aviation Organization Standards, which promotes consistency among travel documents.⁹

Gay or LGBTQ pride events take place in cities throughout the world to fight discrimination, shame and violence, and to promote self-affirmation, dignity, equality rights, build community, and celebrate sexual diversity and gender variance.¹⁰

Actions for Inclusion

- Don't assume everyone is heterosexual.
- If specific significant days or events are highlighted for other employees, annual Gay Pride celebrations (usually held during the month of June) should be similarly marked.
- Acknowledge the relationships of staff equally by ensuring that anniversaries, births and marriages/union ceremonies are celebrated in the same way.
- Use the term 'partners' when inviting spouses to social activities. This is a more inclusive and non-gender-specific term, and includes same-sex couples.
- Never reveal a LGBTQ person's sexual orientation or gender identity without permission.
- In training or information sessions for employees or managers, use concrete examples of situations that pertain to LGBTQ persons (e.g., when addressing legal issues related to financial matters of opposite-sex couples in a pre-retirement course, discuss those that apply to same-sex couples as well).¹¹
- Provide gender-neutral washrooms for everyone.

Resources

Rainbow Health Ontario works to improve the health and well-being of LGBTQ people in Ontario, and to increase access to competent and LGBTQ-friendly health care services across the province. They provide education and training to providers, advocate for public policy change, share information and consult with service providers and organizations.

Sam Killermann, Social Justice Comedian, is a multi-disciplinary artist whose work (that he uncopyrighted in 2013) has been downloaded by hundreds of millions of people around the world to bolster their efforts towards equity.

<http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/about-sam-killermann/#sthash.ok0A2U2f.dpuf>

Listen to Sam's most recent TEDx Talk, "Understanding the Complexities of Gender" at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NRcPXtqdKjE>

The Safe Zone Project is a free online resource for creating powerful, effective LGBTQ awareness and ally training workshops. <http://hues.xyz/safe-zone-project>

Comprehensive List of LGBTQ+ Vocabulary

<http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2013/01/a-comprehensive-list-of-lgbtq-term-definitions>

The 50 best gay songs to celebrate Gay Pride

<https://www.timeout.com/newyork/music/ultimate-pride-playlist-50-best-gay-songs>

Endnotes for Gender and Sexual Orientation

- ¹ CUSU LGBT+, Cambridge University Student Union, <http://www.lgbt.cusu.cam.ac.uk/resources/trans/glossary/>.
- ² Queer Ontario, <http://queerontario.org/about-us/mission/>.
- ³ National Center for Transgender Equality, *Transgender terminology*, <http://www.transequality.org/issues/resources/transgender-terminology>.
- ⁴ GLBT Pride@PCH and Parks Canada, *Out and About: Towards a better understanding of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered persons in the workplace*, <http://publications.gc.ca/collections/Collection/CH37-4-9-2005E.pdf>.
- ⁵ Rainbow Health Ontario, *Evidence Brief: Inform your practice... Because LGBTQ health matters*, 1, http://www.rainbowhealthontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/woocommerce_uploads/2011/06/RHO_FactSheet_LGBTQMENTALHEALTH_E.pdf.
- ⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷ Ibid, 4.
- ⁸ Government of Ontario Newsroom, *Ontario Passes Law Ensuring Equal Recognition for All Parents and Children* (November 29, 2016), <https://news.ontario.ca/mag/en/2016/11/ontario-passes-law-ensuring-equal-rights-for-all-parents-and-children.html>.
- ⁹ Government of Ontario Newsroom, *New 'X' Gender Option Now Available on Ontario Driver's Licences* (March 20, 2017), <https://news.ontario.ca/mto/en/2017/03/new-x-gender-option-now-available-on-ontario-drivers-licences.html>.
- ¹⁰ Gay Pride, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gay_pride.
- ¹¹ *HR ToolKit: Diversity at Work*, <http://hrcouncil.ca/hr-toolkit/diversity-supportive-environment.cfm>.

Dimensions of Diversity: INCOME

Income and socioeconomic status are key determinants of health; one's health status improves as income and socioeconomic status improves. With a higher income, a person can access better quality goods and services, including better housing, more nutritious foods, and better transportation, all of which are essential to sustaining a decent quality of life. A great deal of research suggests that greater control over one's life circumstances and the freedom to decide actions improve health. Both are strongly associated with higher incomes and socioeconomic status. Moreover, it seems that the healthiest populations are found in societies that are prosperous and have an equitable distribution of wealth (PHAC 2003).¹

According to Statistics Canada, a family or person is low-income if they spend 20% more of their income on food, shelter and clothing than the average family.² In 2010, the average middle income Canadian family spent 50% of their before-tax income on these necessities (food, shelter, clothing), while low-income families spent 70% of their total income on them.³

The income gap between the rich and the poor in Canadian communities has increased over the decades. The top 10% of income earners experienced a median net worth growth of 42% between 2005 and 2012.⁴ In contrast, the net worth of the bottom 10% of income earners decreased by 150%, with their debts outweighing their assets by \$5,100.⁵ The groups found to have the lowest incomes include children, seniors, lone parent families, non-attached non-elderly people, off-reserve Aboriginal people, new immigrants, and people with activity limitations.⁶

Actions to Improve Income

The reduction of poverty requires long-term, integrated solutions that address five key issues:

- economic opportunities;
- income security;
- affordable and accessible transportation;
- food security; and
- safe and affordable housing (e.g., Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy).⁷

Specific actions that would increase income potential include:

- Identify and address barriers to employment.
- Use bulletin boards, website and social media to create and/or increase awareness about services that could facilitate better access to employment and the necessities of life.
- Make available loans or grants for community members with entrepreneurial skills to start their own businesses.
- Lobby for higher basic income for all.

- Improve access to education that not only leads to higher-income jobs but also financial literacy.
- Ensure workplaces accessibility for people with disabilities.
- Build community capacity to help communities to mobilize their resources to generate income and ensure all residents' needs are met.⁸

Resources

Campaign 2000 is a Cross-Canada public education movement to build awareness and support for putting an end to child poverty in Canada. Campaign 2000 has grown to over 120 national, provincial and community partners that actively work on child/family issues from diverse perspectives. Their work focuses on increasing awareness of the levels and consequences of child/family poverty by publishing research on the indicators of child poverty and developing public education resources. Their key publication is the National Report Card on Child and Family Poverty in Canada. <http://campaign2000.ca/>

Canada Without Poverty (CWP) uses a human rights approach to relieve poverty in Canadian communities. Their work includes hosting workshops, publishing human rights guide for workers and governmental officials, presenting to the United Nations about poverty in Canada, advising on poverty reduction strategies at the provincial level, providing online economic and social rights. CWP also acts as a voice for those facing discrimination and stereotyping due to poverty. <http://www.cwp-csp.ca/contact/>

The Centre for Social Justice is an advocacy organization that focuses on strengthening the struggle for social justice. They conduct research, education and advocacy in a bid to narrow the gap in income, wealth and power, and enhance peace and human security. <http://www.socialjustice.org/>

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) works towards improving the standard of living and quality of life of all Canadians. Their work focuses on promoting a highly skilled labour force and an efficient and inclusive labour market. Their website has extensive information on a wide range of services including but not limited to employment insurance, benefits, job opportunities, education and training, communities, and hiring foreign workers. Their services are also accessible through Service Canada Offices across the province. <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development.html>

The Government of Canada is developing a Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy to reduce poverty and improve the economic well-being of all Canadian families. The website has tools and resources about the strategy including a backgrounder on poverty in Canada (October 2016). <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/campaigns/poverty-reduction.html>

The Government of Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy focuses on breaking the cycle of poverty for children and youth, to create employment opportunities, improve income security and work to end homelessness. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/realizing-our-potential-ontarios-poverty-reduction-strategy-2014-2019>

Income Security Advocacy Centre
<http://incomesecurity.org/>

Low Income Families Together (LIFT): LIFT's goal is to change social policy by engaging in social innovation, human rights education and advocacy, community governance, and food security. They have created and supported various projects according to the needs and goals of their membership and those of vulnerable communities. LIFT develops information and resources making them available to their members and other low-income populations across Ontario. <http://www.lift.to/>

Prosper Canada offers a framework within which low-income households can be empowered financially. <http://prospercanada.org/getattachment/77fecc22-dff1-4a22-9d90-1f6746c9436b/Financial-Empowerment-Improving-Financial-Outcomes.aspx>

Endnotes for Income

- ¹ Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), *What Makes Canadians Healthy or Unhealthy?* (2003), <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ph-sp/determinants/determinants-eng.php#income>.
- ² Statistics Canada—Income Statistics Division, *Low income lines: What they are and how they are created* (2016), <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75f0002m/75f0002m2016002-eng.htm>.
- ³ Statistics Canada, *Low income definitions* (2010), <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75f0011x/2010001/notes/low-faible-eng.htm>.
- ⁴ Statistics Canada, *Survey of Financial Security* (2012), <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/140225/dq140225b-eng.htm>.
- ⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶ Statistics Canada, *Low Income in Canada—A Multi-line and Multi-index Perspective Statistics Canada* (2015), <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75f0002m/2012001/chap3-eng.htm>.
- ⁷ Peel Poverty Reduction Strategy (October 2012), <http://www.povertyinpeel.ca/comm-strat-nr.htm>.
- ⁸ Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition, *Community Capacity Building*, <http://www.ohcc-ccso.ca/en/community-capacity-building-0>.

Dimensions of Diversity: LITERACY

Literacy is the ability to process and understand information through reading, writing and calculating information, in a way that allows people to function effectively in their everyday life. It's important to understand that as society changes, the necessary literacy skills required to function and participate fully in community life also change.¹ A certain level of literacy is required to participate fully in community and civic life which, in turn, is fundamentally important to building inclusive and diverse communities.

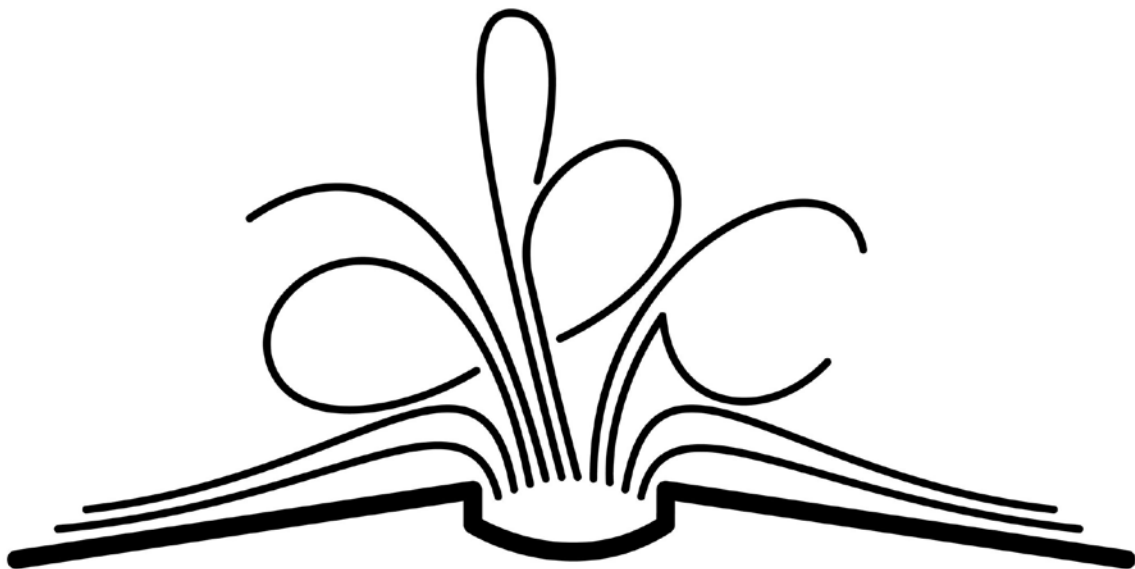
In Ontario, approximately 42% of adults do not have the literacy skills they need for home, work and life. Specifically,

- 16% of Ontarians struggle with serious literacy challenges and have trouble reading even the most basic text; and
- 26% can read, but not well enough to meet the demands of today's society.²

Illiteracy and low literacy have consequences for both the individual and their family, as well as the rest of society.^{3,4}

Individuals with low literacy often experience:

- under-employment and unemployment;
- lower income;
- precarious financial situations;
- reduced access to lifelong learning and professional development;
- low self-esteem, which can lead to isolation;
- poorer health; and
- limited participation in civic life.



Conversely, being literate improves people's opportunities for employment, builds self-confidence and enables individuals to have discussions and take actions that positively affect the welfare of themselves, their families and their community.⁵ Greater understanding of social and political issues encourages community and civic engagement as well as leadership.

Considering the extent of low literacy skills among our province's adults, it is vital that we recognize and routinely set in place necessary strategies and supports which will allow those with low literacy skills to actively participate in discussions and decisions which affect their lives.

All too often, we assume that everyone can read and write when in fact, we should *likely assume* that many people in our community will require an approach *other* than reading and writing in order to participate fully in community and civic activities.

Actions for Inclusion

The following strategies can be used in a variety of community settings and organizations to promote inclusivity and encourage participation of those with low literacy skills:

- Use word of mouth, personal conversations and when possible, radio and television to inform community members of upcoming events and meetings. Don't rely solely on written information (e.g., flyers, brochures, websites) to reach everyone in the community.
- Adults of all literacy levels enjoy and benefit from receiving information in a variety of ways. Oral presentations (in real time or recorded video), infographics, pictures, "hands on" learning with 3D models, and paired or small groups discussions, for example, appeal to a variety of learning styles as well as literacy levels.
- When organized and promoted in a sensitive manner, community organizations can have "friendly companions" available, to assist individuals with low literacy skills with deciphering written materials, providing explanations or rephrasing questions.
- Provide individuals with low literacy skills the opportunity to contribute their opinions and ideas in ways that do not rely on reading or writing. Organizing small group discussions with a trained facilitator sensitive to literacy issues can support their participation.
- When requesting feedback from community members on programs and services (as part of an evaluation plan), include caregivers or support workers during "individual" interviews or focus groups to assist with any explanation of materials or questions.

Actively encouraging and supporting the full participation of community members with low literacy skills is crucial to building inclusive and diverse communities. Many of the suggested actions will benefit not only those with limited literacy skills, but many other community members who prefer to consider information in a variety of ways and engage with others through personal discussion.

Resources

Community Literacy of Ontario (CLO) is a provincial literacy network of 100 community literacy agencies across Ontario. www.communityliteracyofontario.ca

Ontario Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) program helps adults in Ontario to develop and apply communication, numeracy, interpersonal and digital skills to achieve their goals. <http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/programs/lbs.html>

Adult Learning: The Government of Ontario has provided a helpful site that lists and links to various adult learning, literacy and training opportunities. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/adult-learning>

Frontier College began working in Ontario in 1899. Today, they run literacy programs for children, youth, and adults in London, Hamilton, Guelph/Waterloo, Toronto, Scarborough, Kingston, Ottawa, North Bay, Sudbury and Thunder Bay. <http://www.frontiercollege.ca/>

Learning Network of Ontario (LNO) is made up of 16 learning networks from across Ontario. Each network provides support to Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) programs and various other services across the province. <http://www.learningnetworks.ca>

ABC Life Literacy Canada is a non-profit organization that inspires Canadians to increase their literacy skills in many different areas, including financial, health, civic and life. They connect and mobilize business, unions, government, communities and individuals to support lifelong learning and achieve their goals through leadership in programs, communications and partnerships. <http://abclifeliteracy.ca>

Endnotes for Literacy

- ¹ Darcovich, N and Jones, S, *Second Report of the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS): Literacy Skills for the Knowledge Society* [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD); Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC)], <http://hdl.voced.edu.au/10707/44615>.
- ² Ontario Literacy Organizations and Networks, <http://www.communityliteracyofontario.ca/links>.
- ³ Literacy Foundation, *Consequences of Illiteracy* (Quebec, Canada), <https://www.fondationalphabetisation.org/en/causes-of-illiteracy/consequences-of-illiteracy/>.
- ⁴ The Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada, *Literacy as a Social Determinant of Health*, <http://phprimer.afmc.ca/Part1-TheoryThinkingAboutHealth/Chapter2DeterminantsOfHealthAndHealthInequities/DeterminantsofHealth>.
- ⁵ Canadian International Development Agency, *Literacy: Means of Empowerment* (2012), <https://www.slideshare.net/juliadouglass7393/literacy-a-local-and-global-perspective>.

Dimensions of Diversity: RACE

While Canada prides itself on being a world leader in multiculturalism and immigration policy, injustices faced by racialized and Indigenous people in Canada have been well-documented. Mikkonen and Raphael, in their 2010 publication, *Social Determinants of Health—The Canadian Facts*, list race as a determinant of health; it structures the way in which one experiences and has access to many, if not all, of the other social determinants of health.¹

The term “race” doesn’t have a biological or genetic basis. It is a socially-constructed classification of humans, based on a combination of various physical characteristics, ethnicity and ancestry.² Skin colour is the most obvious physical sign of difference, and the term “peoples of colour” is sometimes used to describe all non-white peoples.

Racialization, according to the Ontario Human Rights Commission (2015), is “the process by which societies construct races as real, different and unequal in ways that matter to economic, political and social life.” According to Camara Jones (2003), racism is the

“system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks (which is what we call ‘race’). What this results in is the simultaneous unfair advantage certain individuals and communities have at the cost of unfairly disadvantaging other individuals and communities. This is one of the fundamental reasons why combating racism, in all of its forms, is essential to the health of society as a whole. Because when one group is unjustly targeted, not only is that an infringement on their human rights, we all also lose our collective potential to be a vibrant and inclusive society.”³

According to Jones, there are three key levels of racism and they each have an impact on health:

- 1. Interpersonal** racism is characterized by prejudice and discrimination experienced by people on the basis of their race; for example, racial slurs, police brutality, shopkeeper vigilance, teacher devaluation, waiter indifference and physician disrespect. This contributes to increased stress for racialized people.
- 2. Internalized** racism is the result of consistent negative stereotypes which lead to racialized people believing in the supposed inferiority of their racial group, which, in turn, may lead to the development of behaviours and beliefs that are detrimental to their health.
- 3. Institutionalized** racism is the ways in which racist policies, practices and programs have become codified within the very structures of society, leading to negative impacts on racialized groups.⁴

Systemic racism—including anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism, Islamophobia and racisms experienced by other racialized communities—is deeply entrenched into our day-to-day lives and the institutions we rely on for critical public services.⁵

Anti-racism is about taking proactive steps to fight racial inequity. It's different from other approaches that focus on multiculturalism or diversity because it acknowledges that systemic racism exists and actively confronts the unequal power dynamic between groups and the structures that sustain it.⁶

The Ontario Anti-Racism Act (2017) legislated an Anti-Racism Directorate that will maintain a multi-year anti-racism strategy and collect race-related data.

The discussion of racism is a difficult and sensitive issue, but we can't live in fear of having honest conversations with each other about it. All of us make mistakes or exhibit insensitivity from time to time, and we need to support each other in our ongoing fight against racism, in society and within ourselves. "Fear and anxiety will not lead us to solutions, only integrity and honesty will."⁷

Actions for Inclusion

- Acknowledge that racism and racial discrimination exist and affect the lives of not only racialized persons, but also all persons in Canada.⁸
- Become aware of and expose systemic or institutional racism.
- Identify policies, practices, decision-making processes and cultures within organizations that can create or perpetuate a position of relative disadvantage for racialized persons.
- Take proactive steps to ensure that you or your organization are not engaging in, condoning or allowing racial discrimination or harassment.
- Reflect on your own biases, stereotypes and microaggressions.
- Speak up when you hear others make racist slurs or remarks, in an open and compassionate way.

Resources

The Canadian Race Relations Foundation is dedicated to the elimination of racism and all forms of racial discrimination in Canadian society.

<http://www.crrf-fcrr.ca/en/>

Ontario Anti-Racism Directorate

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/anti-racism-directorate>

A Better Way Forward is Ontario's 3-year Anti-Racism Strategic Plan.

https://files.ontario.ca/ar-2001_ard_summary_tagged_final-s.pdf

Ontario Human Rights Commission offers e-learning (<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/learning/elearning>) as well as a useful manual, "Anti-racism and anti-discrimination for municipalities: Introductory manual" (<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/anti-racism-and-anti-discrimination-municipalities-introductory-manual>).

Urban Alliance on Race Relations provides educational programs and research.

<https://urbanalliance.ca>

Endnotes for Race

- 1 Sultana, Anjum, "Racial Justice Matters: Why Racism is a Public Health Issue," *OHPE Bulletin* (April 14, 2017), <http://www.ohpe.ca/node/16867>.
- 2 Henry, Frances, *Concepts of race and racism and implications for OHRC policy, Race Policy Dialogue Paper* (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2004), <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/race-policy-dialogue-papers/concepts-race-and-racism-and-implications-ohrc-policy>.
- 3 Sultana, Anjum, "Racial Justice Matters: Why Racism is a Public Health Issue," *OHPE Bulletin* (April 14, 2017), <http://www.ohpe.ca/node/16867>.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 *A Better Way Forward: Ontario's 3-Year Anti-Racism Strategic Plan Summary* (2017), https://files.ontario.ca/ar-2001_and_summary_tagged_final-s.pdf.
- 6 Ibid, 13.
- 7 *Hey, you got a little racism stuck in your teeth. Nonprofit...and Fearless!* <http://nonprofitaf.com/2016/08/flossing-and-the-dental-hygiene-paradigm-of-race-discourse/>.
- 8 *Policy and guidelines on racism and racial discrimination* (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2005), http://www.ohrc.on.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/Policy_and_guidelines_on_racism_and_racial_discrimination.pdf.

5. Tools for Inclusion

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Tool #1: Tips for Planning Inclusive Events

When organizing a meeting or an event for a diverse group of people, there are many ways to make the event more inclusive. Foremost is to take the time to identify potential barriers to inclusion and develop a plan to eliminate or reduce them.¹

Not everything listed here will apply to every meeting or event that an organization holds. The planning team will determine which aspects are relevant for which events. When uncertain about what the needs are for an individual or group, be sure to ask.

Advance Planning

Advance planning can help to ensure the accommodation of all people in the community. Even when it isn't known in advance whether any of the people attending the event may need special accommodations, one should plan for the event to be as accessible as possible, so that everyone will be able to participate. Create a planning group that represents, as much as possible, the diversity of the community. They can provide feedback and generate solutions for overcoming barriers. Consider what is known about those likely to attend, anticipate potential problems and attempt to address them ahead of time. Remember that diversity exists within groups as well as between them. Not all individuals belonging to a particular group have the same interests or needs, and these needs may vary from situation to situation. Treat each person as an individual and strive to understand and meet their individual needs.

Budget

Create a budget that enables a variety of needs to be met. Plan ahead by considering the financial costs and logistics involved in hosting an accessible event, such as:

- promoting the event through various forms (print, audio, user-friendly website);
- providing presentation materials in accessible formats during and/or after the event (e.g., large print, Braille, audio/video recording, captioning, translated, e-file);
- identifying a specific person to manage the contracts of service providers that are providing accessibility supports and liaise with individuals requiring those supports;
- providing child care and/or subsidies for child care;
- providing financial subsidies for transportation, registration fees or accommodation costs; and
- providing food and refreshments, including accommodation requests related to allergens (e.g., peanuts, gluten, shell fish, lactose), and food sensitivities and preferences (e.g., vegan, vegetarian).

For some people, especially persons with low incomes, single parents and people with disabilities, these provisions may be essential to enable their attendance.

Registration

If the event invitation has a registration form, be sure it includes requests to identify the following requirements:

- special access needs (e.g., physical accessibility, materials to be provided in alternate formats, assistive devices, attendant requirements);
- dietary restrictions (based on health, cultural, religious or other reasons);
- child care needs;
- financial assistance (e.g., subsidy for registration fee, transportation costs); or
- other forms of assistance (e.g. attendant care).

Provide an event contact name, email and phone for discussion of confidential access requests, and designate someone to follow up on all such requests.² Take care with how the request is worded, so that it isn't difficult or uncomfortable for participants to identify their needs. Here is a sample statement:

*"If you require an accessibility-related measure (e.g., sign language interpretation, captioning, accessible parking, specific dietary requirements, or any other accessibility-related measure) please contact _____ (name, phone number, email address, etc.)."*³

If there will be registration or ticket sales tables, make sure there is enough room for a person using a wheelchair or scooter to approach and maneuver in front of registration tables. Put out chairs for people who use canes or crutches and find it hard to stand in lines for long periods. Consider providing volunteers to stand in their place, or allow them to jump the line.

Activities

Include a mix of activities that encourage participation from a wide variety of participants. Ensure that the format of the event is structured to engage and support participants with diverse needs and from varied backgrounds. Provide frequent opportunities throughout the event for physical movement to avoid prolonged sitting. This is important for everyone, but essential to some. Provide sufficient breaks and ensure the length of the break will allow for the needs of individuals to be addressed. For example, those with physical disabilities may require more time to use the washroom.

Venue

Choose event and meeting locations carefully. Make sure that the chosen space is physically accessible, not difficult to locate and not intimidating to some people; for example, ensure it is within walking distance and/or on public transportation routes, and, for night-time events, in a well-lighted area. Provide transit tickets or arrange for car-pooling and accessible pick-up and drop-off points for people with low incomes.

Before committing to the venue, check it out. Ensure that there is safe, accessible and community-friendly entry to the building, the meeting rooms, food and refreshment areas and washrooms. Do not assume that because a building claims to be accessible that it is. For instance, check that the accessibility ramp is wide enough for any wheelchair, has a non-slip surface, is well lit, has handrails, and is not too steep. The gradient should be at least 1:12 and ideally 1:2. Make sure the meeting room is large enough for wheelchair users. Someone using a wheelchair, walker or stroller should have easy access and mobility between tables, chairs and displays.

Does the main room have a loud echo? Environments with significant echo create barriers for people who are hard of hearing.⁴ Ensure that the seating is arranged so that participants with visual or hearing impairments are facing the front of the room and are close to the presenters. Draw up an evacuation plan for participants with disabilities and communicate the evacuation plan to organizers, participants and volunteers.⁵

Here are some things to check for during the visit:

- adequate lighting (especially if the meeting is at night);
- wheelchair-accessible parking spaces close to the front entrance;
- elevators have low buttons, braille markings and are wheelchair accessible;
- washrooms have:
 - a wide door and low, easy to open handle,
 - sinks and accessories that can be reached by a child,
 - at least one stall that is adapted for a wheelchair and has a grab bar,
 - a baby-changing station, and
 - one or more inclusive or gender neutral washrooms;
- designated quiet area for reflection, meditation and/or multi-faith prayer;
- secluded, comfortable location for breastfeeding;
- sufficient space to provide child care;
- public telephones with a coin slot less than 1.23m above floor level and a volume control;
- designated places where persons using guide dogs can allow the animals to rest and relieve themselves, and drinking water is available for the dogs;
- adequate power supply for audio/visual or other physical aids; and
- all electrical cords are covered over aisles or pathways for wheelchairs, walkers, canes.

Timing

Schedule meetings and events at a time that accommodates the lives of the invitees/ participants. Many people don't operate on a nine-to-five, Monday-to-Friday schedule. In general, avoid early morning or late evening sessions. If possible, find out when would be a good time for most people, and find ways of including those that are not available at those times, e.g. by inviting them to share their information or opinions ahead of the meeting, sending them materials after the meeting, and ensuring they receive any information about follow-up steps. Schedule events to avoid major social, cultural and religious events and activities; view an interfaith calendar online⁶ or purchase a multicultural calendar.⁷

To reach the greatest number of people, conduct outreach during weekdays, weekends *and* evenings.

Provide ample time for people with special needs to make arrangements to attend. Make sure that enough time is provided before the event for booking transportation, childcare, attendants and/or interpreters for people who need them. Also, adhere to the advertised event start and end times so that people can meet any transportation or other arrangements that have been previously scheduled.⁸ (Be aware that if presentations run longer than planned, people who use specialized transportation services may need to leave the event on time, i.e., before the presentations wrap up.) Provide interpreters and note takers with agendas and presentation outlines in advance of the event.⁹

Invitations and Promotions

Express in all advertising materials that attempts have been made to be inclusive. Include a statement that anyone may contact the event planner to request accommodation, with full contact information for the event planner.

Use a variety of ways to communicate, such as telephone, email and print, to ensure that guests with disabilities receive the information they need, and can respond in a way that works best for them.

In preparing any websites, emails, hardcopy mailouts, posters and all other promotional materials the following basic accessibility principles should be observed:

- Use text size that is 14-point or larger.
- Use a sans serif font such as Arial. Fancy, small or italic scripts are not accessible.
- Use high contrast colours—dark text on light background is preferred.
- Do not embed essential information (e.g., the name, date, time and location of the event, and the accessibility statement described above) in a graphic. Graphics often cannot be 'read' by screen readers used by individuals with a visual disability.

Include on promotional and advertising materials, a request that attendees refrain from wearing perfumes and scented soaps to prevent causing allergic reactions for other attendees.¹⁰

Presentation Materials

Provide information and services in accessible and alternative formats. Make sure that all event materials are written in clear and plain language. If there will be a diverse audience, make presentations available in a variety of alternate formats, such as print, Braille, audio and sign language. Ensure speakers are aware of guidelines for accessible content and formats for presentation materials ahead of time. Arrange for captioning to be provided on any films/videos shown. For those that are not fluent in the language to be used at the event, arrange for translation or interpretation as needed.

Book interpreters, real-time captioning or note-takers 6 weeks in advance of the event, and send event material electronically to the Braille contractor 3-6 weeks ahead of event. Ask presenters to provide electronic text versions of their presentations and handouts well in advance of the event, with specific deadlines as needed to meet the requirements of translators, interpreters and captionists.

Signage

Provide easy-to-read signage identifying accessible entrances and washrooms; use plain language, large characters and contrasting colours to make signs easy to read. This is especially important for those who have a first language other than English, for people who are visually impaired and for people with lower levels of literacy. Ensure that signage doesn't block sidewalks or create a trip hazard.¹¹

Content and Facilitation

Help to create a welcoming environment by talking to the organizers, hosts, facilitators and volunteers about the importance of being friendly and accommodating to all participants. Have organizers and volunteers wear name tags that clearly identify them and their role, and ensure they are available to answer questions and guide participants to the correct locations, facilities and resources.

Ensure that assistance is available for computer and other technological access such as assistive devices. Check that presenters have adhered to suggestions for presentation materials. Ask that they speak using plain language and avoid jargon or acronyms. Clarify that they need to keep presentations within scheduled time frames.

For presenters, lectern heights and audio visual controls need to be adjustable to meet the needs of different speakers. Ask presenters to use a minimum 24-point font size for their presentation text, and captioned images and videos. For events with an audience of more than 30 people, speakers should use a microphone, speak slowly and describe images that are projected. Through all aspects of the meeting or event, ensure that sensitivity is shown to the needs, issues and aspirations of those in attendance.

Help overcome any possible power imbalances or feelings of intimidation by providing open and respectful leadership of meetings. People need to feel comfortable in order to

participate. For instance, don't single out individuals for comment. Make it clear that their active participation is welcomed and respected, and provide appropriate opportunities for discussion and dialogue.

Manage meeting agendas effectively so they are not too long or unnecessarily complex. Simplify decision-making processes whenever possible. Complex decision-making can present a challenge for inexperienced people, those with literacy constraints or those for whom English is not their first language. Also, parents with children, people with mental or physical disabilities, youth and seniors can sometimes become tired, overwhelmed or agitated about how long it takes to come to decisions.

Invite more than one member of a particular group to the event or to join the group. This enables them to provide mutual support and avoids feelings of isolation. Being the only member of a group may make someone feel that they are merely token representatives, being patronized or denied equitable status, which may cause them to become frustrated and disaffected.

Food and Refreshments

Provide culturally appropriate beverages, snacks or light meals, especially if the meeting time coincides with meal times. This goes a long way to foster active participation. Keep in mind that for some people this is viewed as a courtesy, while others consider it a necessity. It may be of particular importance for families with small children or youth, some ethno-racial groups and people of low incomes. For instance, youth typically need to eat more often and have larger appetites than adults do because they are growing and lead active lives.

For buffet-style events, be sure to place food, drinks and utensils in easy reach of a person using a wheelchair. Provide bendable straws as well as some cups with handles. Ask volunteers to offer assistance to guests with disabilities. Ensure volunteers have been trained on providing accessible customer service. Free training modules to meet the requirements of Ontario's accessibility laws are available at Access Forward.

Ensure that caterers or contractors providing food or drink for the event are able and willing to comply with accommodation requests related to allergens (e.g., peanuts, gluten, shell fish, lactose), food sensitivities and preferences (e.g., vegan, vegetarian, Halaal, Kosher). Provide food and drink in containers and dishes that do not contain plastic.

Where individual meals are being served, ensure the accommodated meals are clearly labelled to avoid confusion. If there is table service, serve the accommodated meals first, to avoid or correct any errors, but within the same time frame as everyone else. For buffet-style presentations, invite the accommodated participants to serve themselves first, with assistance, to avoid or correct any errors, and ensure that foods are clearly labelled and separated to avoid cross-contamination.

Evaluation

Use an appropriate method to obtain feedback from participants to determine if people's needs, wants and expectations were adequately addressed. Specifically inquire if they found the event to be accessible and, if not, why not, to help with planning for future events. Ask for verbal feedback after the session, provide anonymous evaluation forms for participants to complete, or incorporate alternative methods for providing feedback that might work better for some. Be prepared for considerable variance in experiences and feedback.

Endnotes for Tool #1

- ¹ Access Ontario, *Planning Accessible Events*, 1, <https://accessontario.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Planning-Accessible-Events-May-2016.pdf>.
- ² Kwantlen Polytechnic University, *Checklist for Planning Accessible Events* (British Columbia), <http://bit.ly/2nAkQcC>.
- ³ *Checklist for Accessible and Inclusive Event Planning at UBC*, <http://equity.ubc.ca/event-planning>.
- ⁴ Access Ontario, *Planning Accessible Events*, 2, <https://accessontario.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Planning-Accessible-Events-May-2016.pdf>.
- ⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶ Interfaith Calendar, <http://www.interfaith-calendar.org/>.
- ⁷ Multicultural Calendar, <https://canada.multiculturalcalendar.com/>.
- ⁸ Checklist for Planning Accessible Events. Kwantlen Polytechnic University, British Columbia, <http://bit.ly/2nAkQcC>.
- ⁹ Queen's University, *Accessible Event Planning*, <http://bit.ly/2oiaDyz>.
- ¹⁰ *Checklist for Accessible and Inclusive Event Planning at UBC*, <http://equity.ubc.ca/event-planning>
- ¹¹ Ibid.

Inclusive Events Checklist

This brief checklist will help with planning an event so everyone can participate.

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Name of Event: | |
| Date and Time: | |
| Event Location: | |
| Number of Attendees: | |

Venue

- ☐ Accessible parking/passenger drop-off area
- ☐ Located near public transportation
- ☐ Outdoor and indoor pathways free of barriers
- ☐ Doors easy to open
- ☐ Accessible washrooms
- ☐ Adjustable lighting
- ☐ Good acoustics
- ☐ Relief area for service animals with water bowl

Invitations and Promotion

- ☐ Due dates and contact information for accessibility requests included
- ☐ Variety of communication methods used
- ☐ A minimum of 12-point font for printed materials

Food and Refreshments

- ☐ Food, drinks and utensils easy to reach for people using wheelchairs
- ☐ Food buffet assistance available
- ☐ Bendable straws and cups with handles available
- ☐ Accommodations made for dietary restrictions

Room Set-up

- ☐ Reserved seating available
- ☐ Clear, easy-to-read signs
- ☐ Clear floor space
- ☐ Cables and wiring secured
- ☐ Chairs provided near registration tables

Speeches and Presentations

- ☐ Speakers provided tips on accessibility
- ☐ Presentation materials are accessible and received in advance for translation

Volunteers

- ☐ Volunteer assigned to resolve accessibility barriers
- ☐ Volunteers reminded to ask guests, "How may I help you?"

For a more comprehensive accessibility checklist, see: Accessible Event and Conference Planning. Accessible Campus, Council of Ontario Universities.
<http://www.accessiblecampus.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/A-Checklist-for-Planning-Accessible-Events-1.pdf>

Tool #2: Organizational Self-Assessment Tool

Becoming a diverse, inclusive and equitable organization is an ongoing process. The following assessment tool was developed by the Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition as a means of tracking their progress in implementing their diversity, inclusion and equity strategy. It has been updated to comply with Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005).¹ The objective of this tool was to provide a quantitative assessment of the standards, principles, policies and procedures that guide the OHCC based on the perceptions of those involved in the organization.

The OHCC Diversity Committee established vision statements and standards relating to diversity, inclusion and equity within the areas of governance, programs and services, and human resources. They also identified a number of measures for each of the standards. This tool will require adaptation for use in different agencies and organizations.

For each of the measures, respondents are asked to rate the status of the organization in that area. Individuals associated with the organization—including directors, staff, volunteers, members and representatives of funders and organizational partners—were given the opportunity to complete the assessment ratings. Since not all will have the appropriate knowledge or experience to answer every question, a “not applicable” rating is included in all of the questions. Respondents were also encouraged to add comments to explain their rating.

We found that this assessment tool was applied most successfully during a facilitated group session, with the opportunity to seek clarification, receive pertinent information about current practices, and discuss items with others.

We recommend that this assessment be incorporated into a larger process that includes developing a deeply embedded vision and set of guiding principles that lead to positive informal relationships, supportive working conditions and an atmosphere of acceptance and responsiveness. Qualitative methods of exploring the less tangible aspects of organizational life should supplement these quantitative findings to provide a fully integrated and comprehensive organizational assessment.

Organizational Self-Assessment Tool

Rank the status of each of the following items according to the rating scale shown below:

0 = Not yet started

1 = Beginning phase

2 = Well underway

3 = Fully developed

N/A = Not applicable/don't know

Explain or give an example to illustrate your rating in the comment box.

| MEASURES | STATUS | COMMENTS |
|--|--------|----------|
| A. Governance | | |
| 1. Policy | | |
| Vision: The organization's commitment to creating an environment free of barriers to inclusion is incorporated into the policies, guidelines and practices of the organization. | | |
| Standard 1.1 The organization's commitment to inclusion is understood by all Board members, management, staff, volunteers, members and organizational affiliates. | | |
| a) The Board has publicly stated their commitment to being an inclusive organization. | | |
| b) Opportunities for involvement in the development of organizational policies and strategies have been clearly defined for all members of the organization (Board, staff, volunteers) and the community at large. | | |
| c) Principles of diversity, equity and inclusion are contained in the organization's statement of values. | | |
| d) Appropriate resources (staffing, time, financial) are allocated to the development and review of policies relating to diversity, equity and inclusion. | | |
| e) Policies and standards of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 ² have been developed and implemented. | | |

| MEASURES | STATUS | COMMENTS |
|---|--------|----------|
| Standard 1.2 Principles of diversity, inclusion and equity are embedded in all organizational policies and practices. | | |
| a) The organization has addressed issues of diversity and inclusion in its strategic plan. | | |
| b) Anti-discrimination and workplace harassment policies are in place. | | |
| c) The organization has assessed its existing policies, guidelines and practices to determine if they contain any barriers to inclusion. | | |
| Standard 1.3 Progress towards reducing barriers to inclusion is monitored and evaluated. | | |
| a) The Board has established a policy for monitoring and evaluating progress in eliminating barriers to inclusion. | | |
| b) All members of the organization have opportunities for involvement in evaluating progress made in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion. | | |
| 2. Leadership Vision: The Board and management provide informed leadership in the implementation of anti-discrimination and workplace harassment policies. | | |
| Standard 2.1 Principles of diversity, inclusion and equity are embedded in all organizational policies and practices. | | |
| a) The Board has clearly outlined its expectations for management on the implementation of diversity, equity and inclusion policies. | | |
| b) The Board has clearly outlined its expectations for management on the implementation of workplace discrimination/harassment policies. | | |
| c) The Board has developed clear guidelines to follow if the policies are breached. | | |

| MEASURES | STATUS | COMMENTS |
|---|--------|----------|
| d) An action plan to eliminate or reduce barriers to inclusion has been established, including steps to monitor and review the plan. | | |
| e) Resources have been explicitly allocated to the effective implementation of diversity, inclusion, equity and workplace discrimination/harassment policies and programs. | | |
| 3. Participation and Decision-Making Vision: The participation and decision-making processes are inclusive and reflect community needs and expectations. | | |
| Standard 3.1 Information about the organization, including its governance structure and opportunities to become involved, are communicated effectively to members of diverse communities within the service area. | | |
| a) The organization has developed a communications strategy to inform diverse populations of its activities and invite them to participate. | | |
| b) The organization has developed a comprehensive list of community and ethnic media. | | |
| c) The organization has developed a comprehensive list of community, regional and provincial groups and organizations that deal directly with diverse and/or marginalized populations. | | |
| d) The organization has developed a comprehensive list of other points of access for reaching diverse communities (e.g., places of worship, community centres, social clubs). | | |
| e) The organization has compiled and updated provincial and regional profiles including demographics and social, economic, health and environmental issues. | | |

| MEASURES | STATUS | COMMENTS |
|--|--------|----------|
| Standard 3.2 Effective partnerships exist between this organization and other community organizations that reflect the diversity of the population. | | |
| a) The organization has developed effective and inclusive formal and informal working relationships with diverse community groups and organizations. | | |
| b) The organization has developed a two-way consultation mechanism with diverse communities. | | |
| c) Partnerships are actively sought with organizations representing diverse populations. | | |
| d) Partnership agreements include a process for conflict resolution. | | |
| Standard 3.3 Members of diverse communities are equitably represented in the different decision-making levels of the organization (i.e., Board, committees and management). | | |
| a) The organization has explored the possibility of systemic barriers in the recruitment, selection and retention processes for Board, committees and senior management (e.g., advertising outlets, criteria for selection, interviews). | | |
| b) The Board has explored the possibility of barriers existing in the way the Board and committees function (e.g., time and location of meetings, accessibility of building, availability of child/elder care, meeting style). | | |
| c) Orientation and training are provided to members as needed to increase their ability to participate effectively. | | |
| d) Time is set aside in meetings for each member to express their perspective and concerns. | | |
| e) Ground rules have been established for how group members relate to one another. | | |
| f) Terms of reference for committees include a process for conflict resolution. | | |

| MEASURES | STATUS | COMMENTS |
|---|--------|----------|
| Standard 3.4 Effective procedures exist to handle complaints about incidences of discrimination. | | |
| a) The organization has written procedures for effectively handling complaints of discrimination by the organization from organizational partners, affiliates, volunteers and community groups. | | |
| b) The organization ensures that the Board, management, staff, organizational affiliates, volunteers and community groups are aware of their right to access the complaints procedure to address any incidence of discrimination. | | |
| B. Programs and Services | | |
| 1. Service Planning Vision: Services are barrier-free and appropriate to the needs of diverse communities. | | |
| Standard 1.1 Participation of diverse communities in identifying needs and planning programs and services is supported and encouraged. | | |
| a) Key members of diverse communities have been invited to participate in the planning of the organization's programs and services. | | |
| b) The organization has obtained information about the needs and interests of these diverse communities. | | |
| 2. Outreach Vision: Diverse communities in the service area are aware of the organization's programs and services. | | |
| Standard 2.1 Effective and appropriate communication strategies are used to increase awareness of programs and services with diverse communities in the service area. | | |
| a) An outreach strategy has been developed and appropriate resources allocated to reach the various communities in an equitable manner. | | |

| MEASURES | STATUS | COMMENTS |
|---|--------|----------|
| b) A communication strategy has been developed to provide information to various communities within the service area, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> targeted media (TV, audio/radio, print); community newspapers; key informants; and community leaders. | | |
| c) The organization has established two-way communication with diverse communities in its service area. | | |
| 3. Service Delivery Vision: Programs and services are responsive to the values, norms and needs of diverse communities. | | |
| Standard 3.1 Programs and services are adapted to take into account and accommodate the values, norms and issues of diverse communities. | | |
| a) Programs and services are adapted to respond to expressed or identified needs and issues; for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> meals/childcare/transportation provided; faith/spiritual practices respected; and meeting times, locations and structures considered. | | |
| Standard 3.2 Appropriate linguistic resources are provided to reduce or eliminate language barriers. | | |
| a) The various linguistic groups have been identified within the organization's service area. | | |
| b) The organization has developed an action plan with members of diverse communities to eliminate language barriers. | | |

| MEASURES | STATUS | COMMENTS |
|--|--------|----------|
| 4. Program Evaluation and Monitoring | | |
| Vision: The organization's programs and services meet the needs of diverse communities. | | |
| Standard 4.1 An evaluation plan is in place to monitor the accessibility, appropriateness and effectiveness of programs and services. | | |
| a) Members of diverse communities have been consulted in the development of an evaluation plan. | | |
| b) An evaluation process has been established to monitor the accessibility, appropriateness and effectiveness of programs and services to diverse communities. | | |
| C. Human Resources | | |
| 1. Staff Recruitment, Retention and Promotion | | |
| Vision: All levels of staff and volunteers reflect the diversity found in the service area. | | |
| Standard 1.1 Human resources policies and procedures reflect a commitment to inclusion. | | |
| a) The organization has explored possible barriers in the recruitment, hiring, promotion and retention of diverse staff, volunteers and partners. | | |
| b) Paid and volunteer opportunities have been advertised in non-mainstream media (e.g., target media, community newspapers). | | |
| c) Members of diverse communities are involved in the recruitment process. | | |
| d) Language of job postings have been examined for bias. | | |
| e) Mentoring and conflict resolution systems have been put into place to ensure the retention of diverse staff, partners and volunteers. | | |

| MEASURES | STATUS | COMMENTS |
|--|--------|----------|
| 2. Board/Staff/Volunteer Training Vision: All staff and volunteers are knowledgeable about how social, political, economic and cultural differences affect the ability of diverse groups to fully participate in their communities, and are skilled in working with diverse members of the community. | | |
| Standard 2.1 All staff, Board members and volunteers are given opportunities to participate in diversity, equity and inclusion knowledge and skill development programs. | | |
| a) The knowledge and skills of the Board, management, staff and volunteers have been assessed in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion. | | |
| b) Staff and volunteers have been trained on the requirements of the AODA Customer Service Standard. ³ | | |
| c) A diversity, equity and inclusion education/training program has been attended by all staff, Board members and volunteers. | | |
| d) Members of diverse communities have been involved in the planning, delivery and evaluation of the diversity, equity and inclusion education/training program. | | |
| e) The organization keeps its resources current for staff, Board and volunteers to update their knowledge and skills on appropriate service delivery to diverse populations. | | |

| MEASURES | STATUS | COMMENTS |
|--|--------|----------|
| 3. Performance Appraisals Vision: Improved staff, Board and volunteer performance promotes an environment free of all forms of discrimination, workplace harassment and barriers to equity and inclusion. | | |
| Standard 3.1 Evaluation of management, staff and volunteers includes an assessment of their adherence to discrimination and workplace harassment prevention policies. | | |
| a) Clear guidelines are in place for staff to provide services in an inclusive manner. | | |
| b) Indicators of inclusive practice are included in the performance appraisal of staff. | | |
| c) Consideration is given to volunteers' contributions to promoting diversity, equity and inclusion during volunteer appraisals. | | |
| d) Indicators of diversity and inclusion are included in the performance appraisal of the Board of Directors' functioning. | | |

Endnotes for Tool #2

¹ Government of Ontario, *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (2005), <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/05a11>.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

Tool #3: Understanding Unconscious Bias

Unconscious bias happens automatically and is triggered by our brain making quick judgments and assessments of people and situations. It is a normal part of how humans make decisions and it happens outside of our control.

Unconscious bias is far more prevalent than conscious prejudice and is often inconsistent with one's conscious values. No one is immune from inheriting the biases of society. On a daily basis we are bombarded with messages about what is perceived as "normal" and accepted and what is not. **The Harvard Implicit Association Test (IAT)** can help uncover unconscious biases. This online tool can help individuals gain greater awareness of their unconscious preferences and beliefs. Heightened awareness and intentional effort can increase our ability to reframe and resist our biases.

Stereotyping is a form of unconscious bias that we are exposed to everyday. Whether or not we "endorse" specific stereotypes we probably know what they are. It is the "knowing" that feeds our unconscious biases. We must accept the fact that we all use stereotypes, all the time. We cannot address it if we cannot admit it.

Microaggressions are another form of unconscious bias. These are everyday comments and actions that are often unintentional but nonetheless demeaning and discriminatory towards marginalized groups. There are various types of microaggressions and they can occur on an individual, institutional or societal level. They include behaviours, questions, comments and sometimes even what seems like a compliment. *Microaggressions and Everyday Life* is one of a number of books written by Derald Wing Sue, a recognized authority on the subject of microaggressions.

Common phrases and terms are often used without awareness of where they originated. At one time or another we have all caused unintentional offense because of this lack of awareness. Some phrases are easily recognized as offensive but there are many more that not everyone is aware of. Do not get defensive if someone informs you of an offensive phrase you have used. Remember we are all on a learning journey. *Deep Diversity*, written by Shakil Choudhury, identifies a number of practical solutions for breaking the "prejudice habits" we have learned.

Tool #4: Overcoming Barriers to Equity & Inclusion

Working towards equity and inclusion takes commitment and persistence. It will not be accomplished overnight and there will be challenges to overcome. Whatever the challenges, consider them part of the process and forge ahead.

Leaders set the tone in organizations and in communities. Be positive about what can be done and reach out to others for support and to generate new ways to overcome barriers. Recognize that you are not the only one faced with challenges trying to advance diversity and inclusion.

While barriers and challenges may be unique to each organization they tend to fall into four main categories: lack of, or limited, (1) time; (2) resources; (3) knowledge and (4) support. There are variations of how these barriers present themselves but with some simple planning and determination most can be overcome.

The information provided will not address every barrier that may be encountered. The ideas are meant to point in the right direction and help maintain focus on positive outcomes.

Frequently Identified as Barriers to Equity & Inclusion

There is never enough:



Time



Resources



Knowledge



Support

Time and Resources are interrelated and interchangeable. As time usually relates to staff hours it is also a resource. Resources can include money to engage in activities and/or people to facilitate the work. In the social benefit sector, there never seems to be enough time or resources to accomplish all that we would like to.

Knowledge is subjective when it comes to diversity and inclusion. There is always more to learn. Don't focus solely on formal learning and subject matter expertise. Knowledge exchanges can take place wherever and whenever groups get together or when information is communicated. This could be done by sharing stories in newsletters, annual reports, at staff meetings or special events.

Support from others can be internal or external. Do an assessment of what support is already present and where it is lacking. Don't assume that you know what support you already have. A lack of support can also be used to describe apathy and/or resistance and may require additional effort to overcome. Support may seem limited if it does not come from leadership.

Strategies to Overcome Barriers

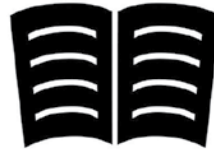
These strategies will often overlap and interconnect:



Prioritizing



Budgeting



Educating



Collaborating

Prioritizing inclusion as part of the strategic plan is a great way to incorporate it into all aspects of an organization. Beyond just responding to legislation, it is about putting equity and inclusion up front. When inclusion is a priority, it is included in policies, budgets, education and building partnerships.

Strong leadership is at the forefront of ensuring that diversity and inclusion are seen as priorities in any organization. As role models, leaders set the standard and establish expectations.

Budgeting for inclusion is often a missed opportunity; it is either left out completely or addressed as an afterthought. Including budget lines for inclusion, accessibility and accommodation should be standard procedure when writing funding or project proposals. Funders will take note as more proposals incorporate these measures.

Sourcing new funding for initiatives is one way to budget for inclusion, but also consider ways to add inclusion without adding costs. Identify opportunities to add equity and inclusion into what is already being done. For example, when staff positions open up or when creating new positions, be sure to include aspects of equity in the job description and duties.

Educating individuals and groups on diversity and inclusion can be accomplished in many ways and should be included to some extent in all professional development.

If paying for training is a concern think about partnering with other organizations to share the cost. This has the added benefit of establishing relationships that could lead to further collaborations. Don't forget to look internally for expertise and utilize it whenever possible.

Collaborating as a strategy has many benefits and can provide as many opportunities as one can imagine. Working together can mitigate costs of training, research, resources and event hosting. It can also help to generate new ideas, establish and develop new connections, and intensify efforts towards social inclusion.

Ensuring Leadership Support is a key factor in overcoming barriers to inclusion. Get leaders on board by communicating the benefits, value proposition or business case for diversity.

Tool #5: Disaggregated Data Survey Tool

The gap between rich and poor in Ontario (and Canada) is widening generally, but what is much less well understood is that this growing gulf is felt much more profoundly by racialized group members—both Indigenous peoples and peoples of colour. The growing exclusion of racialized group members in Ontario in particular has, in fact, led to what some social scientists have described as the racialization of poverty.

Colour of Poverty—Colour of Change developed a research and organizational programming tool-template in 2015, with the support of the Atkinson Charitable Foundation and Trillium Foundation. It is intended for wide application, adaptation and use to help groups, governments, service providers, institutions and others gather, monitor and analyze needed disaggregated data—as well as to allow for the critical tracking of differential policy, program, service and other related experiences and outcomes. This demographic survey tool can be used on a stand-alone basis as well as to “front-end” or “back-stop” any intake form, program monitoring or survey. The survey questions should be translated into a number of commonly-spoken languages and piloted with member agencies in order to test for cultural sensitivity. Lastly, it is recommended that personal information be collected *after* services are provided in order to reduce refusal rate and alleviate client concerns.

The Ontario Human Rights Code permits the collection and analysis of data based on race and other grounds, provided that the data is collected for purposes consistent with the Code, such as to monitor discrimination, identify and remove systemic barriers, address historical disadvantage and promote substantive equality.

Staff collecting the data should be given appropriate training. The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) recognizes that how data collection is done depends on the context, including the issue that needs to be monitored, and the nature and size of the organization. When collecting data, member agencies should ensure client privacy and confidentiality by restricting who has access to personal information, assuring anonymity and ensuring that client consent is obtained before sharing or releasing any personal information.

For further information see the following OHRC resources:

- Count me in! Collecting human rights based data—[Summary \(fact sheet\)](#)
- Count me in! Collecting human rights based data—[Full Guide](#)

Defining Race/Racial Identity and Ethnic Ancestry

It is useful to define these categorizations for clients since there may be confusion between the two. Race/racial identity groups refers to broad, self-identified, socially-constructed groupings—e.g., White/Caucasian, East Asian, South Asian, Black, Latin American, South-East Asian, Arab, West Asian, and Indigenous/Aboriginal. Other than Aboriginal/Indigenous and White/Caucasian, these groupings are collectively equivalent to “peoples of colour” or the “visible minority” grouping as used both by Statistics Canada as well as in the federal Employment Equity Act. Ethnic Ancestry represents an expression of common heritage and a sense of peoplehood or identity based on descent, language, religion, tradition and other common experiences. An ethnic group is a category of the population in a larger society whose culture is considered distinct or whose members have a common bond based on racial, national, tribal, religious, linguistic, or cultural origin or background.

Ontario has an ethnically diverse population. The 2011 census reported over 200 different ethnic origins. After Canadian, the most cited ethnic origin was English, followed by Scottish, Irish, French, German, Italian, Chinese and East Indian.¹

Endnotes for Tool #5

¹ The Canadian Encyclopedia, <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/ontario>.

Disaggregated Survey Tool

Gender

Are you:

- ☐ Male ☐ Transgender ☐ Two-spirited
☐ Female ☐ Transsexual

Year of Birth _____

Disability Status

Do you have a disability? Disability is defined as a long-term physical, mental, emotional/psychiatric or learning disability, which may result in a person experiencing disadvantage or encountering barriers to employment, public appointment or other opportunities for full participation in society.

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, pick all that apply:

- ☐ Hearing ☐ Mobility, e.g., body movement
☐ Learning ☐ Speech
☐ Mental/Emotional Health ☐ Vision
☐ Other (please specify): _____

Sexual Orientation

How do you identify your sexual orientation?

- ☐ Not Sure ☐ Lesbian
☐ Bi-sexual ☐ Queer
☐ Gay ☐ Questioning
☐ Heterosexual (Straight)

Aboriginal Status

After reviewing research and data on the racialization of poverty in Canada, and considering the historic treatment of First Nations people, here and around the world, we feel it is important to politically recognize and acknowledge those who self-identify as Aboriginal. The intention is to monitor and track inequities in service delivery and service outcomes of groups who have been historically excluded from planning, so as to acknowledge and address inequities as they arise, in an effort to not repeat a history of oppressive practices against First Nations people in Canada.

Are you of Aboriginal background?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, pick one of the following:

- ☐ Aboriginal/Indigenous from outside Canada ☐ Métis
☐ First Nations (or Indian as defined by the Indian Act) ☐ Non-status Indian
☐ Inuit
☐ Other (please specify): _____

Race/Racial Identity

Racial groups are defined by race or colour only—not by country of birth, citizenship or religious affiliation. Do you consider yourself to be? (Pick all that apply.)

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arab | <input type="checkbox"/> East Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> West Asian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black—African | <input type="checkbox"/> Latin American | <input type="checkbox"/> White/Caucasian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black—Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> South Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> South-East Asian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black—North American or Other | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ | |

Ethnic Ancestry

To what ethnic or cultural group(s) do your ancestors belong? (Pick all that apply.)

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal/Indigenous | <input type="checkbox"/> Filipino | <input type="checkbox"/> Polish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arab | <input type="checkbox"/> French | <input type="checkbox"/> Portuguese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canadian | <input type="checkbox"/> German | <input type="checkbox"/> Salvadoran |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Ghanaian | <input type="checkbox"/> Scottish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chilean | <input type="checkbox"/> Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> Somali |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> Italian | <input type="checkbox"/> Tamil |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dutch | <input type="checkbox"/> Korean | <input type="checkbox"/> Ukrainian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> East Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Mexican | <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple ethnic ancestries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> English | <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ |

Country of Birth

In what country were you born? _____

Year of Arrival

If you were not born in Canada, what year did you first come to Canada? (If born in Canada, write "Not Applicable.") _____

Language

What is/are the language(s) that you first learned at home in childhood and can still understand? If you can no longer understand the first language learned, choose the second language learned. Pick all that apply:

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arabic | <input type="checkbox"/> Hindi | <input type="checkbox"/> Russian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bengali | <input type="checkbox"/> Italian | <input type="checkbox"/> Serbo-Croatia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cantonese | <input type="checkbox"/> Korean | <input type="checkbox"/> Somali |
| <input type="checkbox"/> English | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandarin | <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farsi (Persian) | <input type="checkbox"/> Polish | <input type="checkbox"/> Tagalog |
| <input type="checkbox"/> French | <input type="checkbox"/> Portuguese | <input type="checkbox"/> Tamil |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gujarati | <input type="checkbox"/> Punjabi | <input type="checkbox"/> Urdu |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ | | |

Religious Background/Faith

What, if any, is your religious background/faith? (Pick all that apply.)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No Religion | <input type="checkbox"/> Muslim |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist | <input type="checkbox"/> Orthodox and Other Christian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Catholic | <input type="checkbox"/> Protestant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confucianism | <input type="checkbox"/> Sikh |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hindu | <input type="checkbox"/> Traditional Aboriginal/Indigenous |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ |

Immigration Status on Arrival

What was your immigration status when you first came to Canada?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent Resident—Economic immigrant or family class (came through Federal Skilled Worker, Federal Skilled Trade Program, Family Sponsorship, Provincial Nominee, Immigrant Investor or Federal Entrepreneur Program.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Foreign Worker program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent Resident—Refugee stream (came as Government Assisted Refugee or Privately Sponsored Refugee) | <input type="checkbox"/> Seasonal Agricultural Worker program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Refugee claimant | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Authorization (Student visa) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Live-in caregiver | <input type="checkbox"/> Visitor Visa |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Grandparent Super Visa |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Status |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Do not know |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ |

Additional Tools Available Online

Building Inclusive Communities

The Community Tool Box is a public service of the University of Kansas. This section provides information about culture and diversity, building relations, internalized oppression, and suggests strategies and activities to reduce racism, build culturally competent organizations and enhance leadership. It also provides tools and a PowerPoint presentation. <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/culture/cultural-competence/inclusive-communities/main>

How to make my group more inclusive

The Our Community group provides advice, connections, training and easy-to-use tech tools for people and organizations working to build stronger communities. OurCommunity.com.au is Australia's centre for excellence for the nation's 600,000 not-for-profits and schools. This site outlines some steps an organization can take to evolve into a more inclusive, responsive and representative body. https://www.ourcommunity.com.au/article/view_article.jsp?articleId=3489

Dimensions of Diversity Wheel

This diagram shows the complexity of the diversity filters through which all of us process stimuli and information. That in turn leads to the assumptions that we make (usually about the behaviours of other people), which ultimately drive our own behaviours, which in turn have an impact on others. It can also be used as a reflective tool by individuals to develop understanding of the impact of diversity on their life. http://www.lacrosseconsortium.org/uploads/content_files/Dimensions_of_Diversity_Wheel_Expanded.pdf

White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack by Peggy McIntosh, <https://nationalseedproject.org/white-privilege-unpacking-the-invisible-knapsack>

Implicit Association Test measures implicit attitudes and beliefs that people are either unwilling or unable to report. <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/canada/background/index.jsp>

Equity and Inclusion Lens Handbook by City of Ottawa and City for All Women Initiative, <http://www.cawi-ivtf.org/sites/default/files/publications/ei-lens-community-agencies-2015-en.pdf>

Traditional Teachings Booklet by the Native Women's Centre, Aboriginal Healing & Outreach Program (2008), http://www.nativewomenscentre.com/files/Traditional_Teachings_Booklet.pdf

Age-friendly Communities in Canada: Community Implementation Toolbox by Public Health Agency of Canada, <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/age-friendly-communities-canada-community-implementation-guide-toolbox.html>

Age-Friendly Communities: Resources, Tools and Links from Ontario Ministry of Seniors Affairs, http://www.seniors.gov.on.ca/en/afc/resources_tools.php

Respect and Inclusion Workshop: Facilitator's Guide by Age-Friendly Edmonton, https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/PDF/AgeFriendlyEdmontonWorkshopFacilitatorsGuide.pdf

Together to Live: A toolkit for addressing youth suicide in your community by The Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health, <http://www.togethertolive.ca/engaging-rural-youth>

Policy on Competing Human Rights by Ontario Human Rights Commission is a useful tool for individuals and organizations as they deal with different types of conflict. It sets out a process to analyze and reconcile competing rights that emphasizes specific objectives and considerations, with an emphasis on respect and dignity for all. <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-competing-human-rights>

Interfaith & Belonging: Our Canada Handbook and Resources is a practical guide to bridging faith with Canadian identity, human rights, belonging and values. Each chapter provides a perspective on these topics, written to provoke discussion and reflection, with Questions to Consider and Additional Issues at the end of each chapter. <http://www.crrf-fcrr.ca/en/programs/education-and-training/item/25168-our-canada-handbook>

6. Additional Resources

Contents in This Section

- A. Websites.....page 77
- B. Videos.....page 80

Below are a few websites that might be of interest, followed by a list of movies and short videos that address issues of inclusion.

A. Websites

Aboriginal/Indigenous Resources

- **Good Minds** is a website with links to bias-free teaching and educational resources related to Indigenous studies. <http://goodminds.com>
- **Inclusive Practice and the School Curriculum**
The New Zealand Curriculum Online, New Zealand Ministry of Education
<https://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Inclusive-practices/Facilitating-professional-learning>
- **Aboriginal Peoples: Fact Sheet for Ontario** is a fact sheet by Statistics Canada containing data from the 2011 National Household Survey and the 2012 Aboriginal Peoples Survey.
<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-656-x/89-656-x2016007-eng.htm>

Accessibility

- **Access Forward** is a website that provides free training modules to meet the training requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, developed in partnership with the Government of Ontario.
<http://www.accessforward.ca/>
- About the 2005 **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)** <http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/documents/en/mcss/publications/accessibility/AboutAODAWeb20080311EN.pdf>
- **Planning Accessible Events** is a booklet from Access Ontario that includes a checklist to help ensure that everyone can participate in events.
<https://accessontario.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Planning-Accessible-Events-May-2016.pdf>

Community Engagement

- **Community Democracy Workshop Resources** are available online. This site lists publications that have deeply influenced Community Democracy Workshop's analysis of the barriers to community democracy. <http://cdworkshop.org/resources/>

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

- **Time inequity: What it is and why it's no-good, very-bad**
Blog post by Vu Le <http://nonprofitwithballs.com/2017/03/time-inequity-what-it-is-and-why-its-no-good-very-bad/>
- **Inclusion Now! OPS Inclusion Strategic Plan 2013–2016**
<http://www.ontla.on.ca/library/repository/mon/28004/326544.pdf>
- **Achieving the Vision of An Inclusive Peel Region: A Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**
Organizational Self-Assessment Tool
Diversity and Inclusion (D & I) Charter of Peel
www.dicharter.rdrpeel.org/edu-training-tools-resources
- **Diversity at Work: Creating an inclusive and supportive work environment** is a resource published by HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector. <http://hrcouncil.ca/hr-toolkit/diversity-supportive-environment.cfm>
- **Inclusion** is the website for Inclusion Press, Inclusion Network, Marsha Forest Centre. It provides information about workshops, books, media, resources on inclusion and a newsletter. <http://www.inclusion.com/>
- **Speak Up: Responding to Everyday Bigotry** is a publication that shares stories of everyday bigotry and gives advice on how to respond to various forms of bigotry.
<https://www.splcenter.org/20150126/speak-responding-everyday-bigotry>
Abridged Version: <https://www.splcenter.org/20150126/speak-responding-everyday-bigotry-abridged-version>
- **HC Link** has a website that contains blogs, webinar recordings and publications relating to equity, diversity and inclusion. <http://hclinkontario.ca>

Faith

- **Multicultural Calendar** is a diversity calendar that incorporates hundreds of multifaith, multicultural and diversity related holidays and observances. <https://canada.multiculturalcalendar.com/>
- **Interfaith Calendar** (free). <http://www.interfaith-calendar.org/>
- **Muslim Women and the Niqab**
http://ccmw.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/WEB_EN_WiNiqab_FINAL.pdf

LGBTQ

- **Sam Killermann**, Social Justice Comedian, is a multi-disciplinary artist whose work (that he uncopyrighted in 2013) has been downloaded by hundreds of millions of people around the world to bolster their efforts towards equity.
<http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/about-sam-killermann/#sthash.ok0A2U2f.dpuf>
Listen to Sam's most recent TEDx Talk, "Understanding the Complexities of Gender" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NRcPXtqdKjE>
- **The Safe Zone Project** is a free online resource for creating powerful, effective LGBTQ awareness and ally training workshops. <http://hues.xyz/safe-zone-project>
- **Comprehensive List of LGBTQ+ Vocabulary** <http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2013/01/a-comprehensive-list-of-lgbtq-term-definitions>

Poverty

- **Poverty Free Ontario's** mission is to eliminate divided communities in which large numbers of adults and children live in chronic states of material hardship, poor health and social exclusion.
<http://www.povertyfreeontario.ca/poverty-in-ontario/status-of-poverty-in-ontario>
- **Canada Without Poverty (CWP)** works to relieve poverty using a human rights approach that is rooted in international law. <http://www.cwp-csp.ca>

Rural

- Schaer, Lilian, *Attracting immigrants to rural Ontario*. Ontario Agricultural College, (University of Guelph, February 6, 2017)
- Recommendations from Professor Wayne Caldwell on how Ontario's rural communities could do more to attract and keep newcomers in their municipalities, as a way of ensuring their long-term viability.
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/oac/news/attracting-immigrants-rural-ontario>

Social Justice

- **It's Pronounced Metrosexual** is an online resource where advocates of social justice can find helpful articles, fun graphics, and other resources designed to be shared to advance social equity. It's a site that helps people be better people. It's also a comedy show performed on college campuses.
<http://itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/about-the-blog/#sthash.lxrhL9yF.dpuf>
- **Citizens for Public Justice** has a long history of speaking out for public justice across Canada, and provides research reports, infographics and an advocacy toolkit on their website. <https://cpj.ca>

B. Videos

Shorts

- Sometimes You're a Caterpillar
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRiWgx4sHGg>
- Microaggressions in Everyday Life
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJL2P0JsAS4>
- 13 Ways to Expand Your Organization's Anti-Oppression Capacity
<http://coco-net.org/portfolio-item/13-ways-to-expand-your-organizations-anti-oppression-capacity>

Ability

- CinemAbility
- Infinitely Polar Bear
- Best Kept Secret

Gender

- Hidden Figures
- The Ascent of Woman

Income

- Basic Income video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qlwyTtPY0vY>

Indigenous

- Walk a Mile – comes with discussion/curriculum guides
- Smoke Signals
- Reel Injun

LGBTQ+

- Pride
- Moonlight
- Gun Hill Road

Race

- Trevor Noah: Afraid of the Dark
- Remember the Titans
- Stand and Deliver