



Children and Youth Planning Table Voting Meeting Minutes for March 12, 2020

The Family Centre; 65 Hanson Ave, Kitchener
9:00am to 12:00pm

Summary of Minutes

The first two (2) pages are the high-level summary of the meeting minutes. The fulsome minutes follow the summary. To skip to the fulsome minutes, click [here](#).

Welcome

Barb Cardow and Debbie Engel, Co-Chairs of the Children and Youth Planning Table (CYPT), welcomed everyone and provided a territorial acknowledgement (the acknowledgement was created by the Wellbeing Waterloo Region [WWR] First Nations, Métis, Inuit Advisory and Advocacy Circle).

As in the near future, a new Community Co-Chair will need to be appointed, attendees completed an exercise in which they wrote down one characteristic or quality they feel is important for the next CYPT Community Co-Chair to have. The characteristics and qualities shared by Voting Members will be taken into consideration as part of the recruitment process.

Belonging Theory of Change

This conversation is a continuation of the Collective Impact conversation from the [November 20, 2019 Voting Member meeting](#), at which Voting Members reflected a strong commitment towards Collective Impact and that the focus specifically be on belonging for children and youth. Prior to today's meeting, Taylor Bulstrode, a student on placement with Sage Solutions, helped create a working draft of a Belonging Theory of Change. In delving deeper into belonging, three (3) pillars or bucket areas stood out: equity; attachment; children and youth feeling valued, heard, and included.

At their individual tables, attendees discussed, reviewed, and provided feedback on the draft Belonging Theory of Change. Attendees also at times paused their discussion to feed thoughts to Devon Kerslake, a graphic designer who visually captured the Belonging Theory of Change conversation and thinking in the room. The visual graphic of the conversation can be viewed [here](#).



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Next steps for Belonging Theory of Change include reflecting on the input provided today, potential prioritization, and measurement (via the support of the Data, Research, and Evaluation team).

Moving Towards Inter-Agency Coordination; Enhancing the Child, Youth and Family Experience

Jennifer Hesson is a consultant from Hess Consulting, currently supporting the work of the Children and Youth Services Planning Council. The Council's focus is on Inter-Agency Coordination, to make it transparent to families in the community which organizations are doing what. To aid with this, the Council has been working on creating learning webinars.

The training webinar series is broken into three modules. The first webinar revolves around understanding the history and philosophy of collaboration and coordination in Waterloo Region. It is especially helpful for those who are new to their role, their organization, or the Region. The second webinar outlines roles and responsibilities in coordinating effective service. The third webinar is training specific to those who fulfill the role of Lead Contact and outlines what it means to "hold the baton."

At their individual tables, each of the attendees discussed and answered questions that will provide feedback regarding the webinars and help shape next steps.

Sense-Making of Annual Survey Data

Shannon McIntyre, Social Planning Associate for CYPT, provided a brief highlight of Annual Survey Data, which reflects an increase in Voting Member representatives that have been with CYPT for a year or less. At their individual tables, attendees reviewed and made sense of Annual Survey data based on four (4) question categories: Smart Waterloo Region; CYPT member engagement going forward; depth of engagement within Voting Member organizations; the levels of trust within CYPT. A summary report of the Annual Survey will be shared with all members in the spring.

Connecting the Dots with Spring Learning Events

At the time of writing, Dr. Jean Clinton's workshops have been cancelled due to COVID-19. Ann Douglas' workshops on parenting and mental health on April 21st and Dr. Nicole Sherren's The Brain Story workshops on May 20th and 21st are still planned. However, future COVID-19 developments may impact this. CYPT Backbone Staff will endeavor to keep the [CYPT Calendar](#) up-to-date.

Closing & Updates



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Jennifer Astley-Kinsey, Executive Director of the Astley Family Foundation, provided an update that the Foundation has partnered with CYPT to add a new full-time Young Engagement role to the CYPT Backbone.

Deb provided other updates, including that the 2018/2019 Annual Report will be completed and distributed in the near future. The next CYPT meeting is an all-member meeting on May 21, 2020. Deb welcomed all first time attendees. She also thanked the presenters, and all those in attendance for their time and commitment to ensuring all children and youth in the Region are happy and healthy.



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Welcome

Barb Cardow, Co-Chair of the Children and Youth Planning Table (CYPT), welcomed everyone.

The following statement was provided to acknowledge the land:

“We acknowledge that the land on which we gather today is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Anishnaabe and Neutral People. We acknowledge the enduring presence of the Indigenous people with whom we share this land today, their achievements and their contributions to our community. We offer this acknowledgement as an act of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples of Canada.”

Barb provided the reasoning for why a territorial acknowledgement is done:

“It is a way of honouring the land on which our successes have been built, and the Indigenous people who have been living on and caring for this land for thousands of years. As well, it is a longstanding protocol among Indigenous peoples that honours their spiritual connection to the land. Today we offer it as an act towards reconciliation between non-Indigenous Canadians and the Indigenous peoples of Canada.”

The above acknowledgement was created by the created by the Wellbeing Waterloo Region Indigenous Working Group, and Deb thanked them for granting permission to use at CYPT meetings.

Barb explained that in the near future, Debbie Engel will step down as the Community Co-Chair of the CYPT and a new Community Co-Chair will need to be appointed. The attendees completed a table introductions exercise in which they answered the question: What's one characteristic/quality that you think is important for the next CYPT Community Co-Chair to have? The most common characteristic/quality mentioned include: Being a team player and strong community collaborator, having knowledge around various systems, having leadership skills such as being reflective, being open minded, goal driven, and having soft skills that include being passionate, understanding and having strong communication skills. The characteristics and qualities shared by Voting Members will be taken into consideration as part of the recruitment process.

Belonging Theory of Change

Guests: Devon Kerslake; Taylor Bulstrode

Alison Pearson, Manager of the CYPT, introduced Devon Kerslake from Thinklink Graphics, a graphic designer who visually captured the conversation in the room. Alison also introduced Taylor Bulstrode, a student on placement with Sage Solutions.

On November 20th, the conversation between Voting Members reflected a strong commitment towards Collective Impact and that the focus specifically be on belonging for children and youth. Steering Committee met in January 2020 and also recommended moving forward with the belonging lens and dedicating 70% of CYPT time towards it.



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The first steps on the path include creating a Business Case which outlines why belonging for children and youth was chosen and how CYPT got here. The Business Case is being completed by Shannon McIntyre, Social Planning Associate for CYPT, and is expected to be done by the end of this month.

The next step is creating a skeleton Theory of Change. This includes defining meaningful work done to-date by members, outlining a scan of activities and opportunities at member organizations/Nested groups, outlining a scan of activities and opportunities at community collaboratives (e.g. Wellbeing Waterloo Region), and as well, research to determine what makes a difference and impact in terms of belonging.

The scan of activities and opportunities at member organizations or Nested groups was completed earlier this month by means of a survey and it indicated:

- 75% (45) of Voting Member organizations and Nested groups are already intentionally focused on belonging.
 - 50% (of the 45) had ideas that could possibly be focused on collectively or scaled up as a collective.
 - 48% (of the 45) had some measurement work already underway

The discussion today will provide further feedback and brainstorming regarding what's roughly right and what's missing in the Belonging Theory of Change. Before beginning the discussion, the attendees reviewed UNICEF Canada's [definition of belonging](#).

Prior to the meeting, Taylor Bulstrode helped create a working draft of a Belonging Theory of Change. In delving deeper into belonging, three pillars or bucket areas stood out:

1. Equity
2. Attachment
3. Children and youth feeling valued, heard, and included

As well, research shows that foundational needs (housing, food, etc.) related to “We Secure” stood out as absolutely necessary for belonging to be in place.

At their individual tables, attendees discussed, reviewed, and provided feedback on the draft Belonging Theory of Change. Attendees also at times paused their discussion to feed thoughts to Devon Kerslake, who visually captured the Belonging Theory of Change conversation and thinking in the room. The visual graphic of the conversation can be viewed [here](#).

After the table discussions, reflections from the room included:



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- There is a lot of energy in the room, even if there aren't quite as many solutions
- It's okay if the work is messy and incomplete
- Data is vital across all three pillars
- One table felt that the third pillar should be reworded to reflect that children and youth have power (which contributes to them being valued, heard, and included)
- There was a concern brought up about including in the Belonging Theory of Change the intersection between CYPT and the rest of the community
- One table brought up that the Belonging Theory of Change should reflect the need for communication and specifically, the necessity for youth to loop back and provide their feedback

Next steps for Belonging Theory of Change include reflecting on the input provided today, potential prioritization, and measurement (via the support of the Data, Research, and Evaluation team).

Moving Towards Inter-Agency Coordination; Enhancing the Child, Youth and Family Experience

Guest: Jennifer Hesson

Jennifer Hesson is a consultant from Hess Consulting, currently supporting the work of the Children and Youth Services Planning Council. The Council has been working on creating learning webinars, and today's discussion will provide feedback regarding the webinars and help shape next steps.

Before beginning this discussion, Jennifer briefly informed attendees about [umind](#), which was developed in part through a series of Canada-wide visits to child and youth mental health treatment and resource centres. The website has an extensive database of resources, as well as webinars on topics of interest to mental health professionals.

The Council's focus is on Inter-Agency Coordination, to make it transparent to families in the community which organizations are doing what. The analogy is "holding the baton". Each organization itself that's "holding the baton" has the responsibility to communicate effectively in passing the baton to another organization.

The training webinar series is broken into three modules. The first webinar revolves around understanding the history and philosophy of collaboration and coordination in Waterloo Region. It is especially helpful for those who are new to their role, their organization, or the Region. The second webinar outlines roles and responsibilities in coordinating effective service. The third webinar is training specific to those who fulfill the role of Lead Contact and outlines what it means to "hold the baton."



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In answer to a question, Jennifer clarified that the webinars are designed so that the first webinar is applicable to all, the second applies to a smaller group of people, and the third provides an even more narrow focus for a specific set of people.

In answer to another question, Jennifer clarified that there is no support in place right now for e.g. a facilitator's guide, but that in future they could look into webinars hosted by a facilitator.

At their individual tables, each of the attendees discussed and answered the following questions:

1. Will this method suit the learning needs within your organization?
2. What do you feel is missing from the content that would strengthen the learning for participants?
3. Can you provide any tangible examples of when coordination amongst partners has worked well? This will help us incorporate some examples into the session.
4. Is there anything else we should consider?

Sense-Making of Annual Survey Data

Shannon McIntyre briefly reviewed some data highlights from the Annual Survey:

- With a total of 140 responses, the response rate was 22%
- 18.5% of Voting Members who completed the survey have been a Voting Member representative for one year or less. This has increased in comparison to 2017's survey
 - As a result, members from Voting Member organizations that completed the survey have been a CYPT member longer than their organization's representatives

At their individual tables, attendees reviewed and made sense of Annual Survey data based on the following question categories:

1. Smart Waterloo Region
2. CYPT member engagement going forward
3. Depth of engagement within Voting Member organizations
4. Levels of trust within CYPT

A summary report of the Annual Survey will be shared with all members in the spring.

Connecting the Dots with Spring Learning Events

At the time of writing, Dr. Jean Clinton's workshops have been cancelled due to COVID-19. The CYPT Backbone staff will provide updates to the membership if the workshop is rescheduled.



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Dr. Jean Clinton is a Clinical Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurosciences at McMaster, division of Child Psychiatry. Dr. Clinton's special interest lies in brain development and the crucial role of relationships and connectedness play therein. Dr. Clinton's workshops help parents/caregivers and professionals with understanding the importance of connection in healthy brain development for our children and youth.

Please note that while the following workshops are still planned, future COVID-19 developments may impact this. CYPT Backbone Staff will endeavor to keep the [CYPT Calendar](#) up-to-date.

April 21, 2020:

Ann Douglas sparks conversations that matter about parenting and mental health. She is the weekend parenting columnist for CBC Radio and a bestselling parenting book author. On April 21st at the Kitchener Public Library Central Branch, two sessions will be provided. One in the afternoon for parents/caregivers, and one in the evening for professionals.

May 20 and 21, 2020:

Dr. Nicole Sherren is a Scientific Director of the Palix Foundation. She has a PhD in Neuroscience from Carleton University and her research focus includes experience-based brain development, neurodevelopmental disorders, and brain plasticity. On May 20th, Dr. Sherren will share and workshop their effective and innovative program, the Brain Story, designed in partnership with The Harvard Centre for the Developing Child and the Frameworks Institute. Attendees will learn how brains are built, what kind of experiences promote healthy brain architecture, what kind of experiences derail it, and how these experiences get "under our skins" to affect learning, health, and social outcomes across the life span. This information has profound implications for health care professionals across all aspects of the care continuum.

A question was raised regarding if these learnings will be available to those not able to attend. In answer, Deb answered that the organizers are working to have some videos and resources from the workshops available after the fact.

Closing & Updates

Jennifer Astley-Kinsey, Executive Director of the Astley Family Foundation, provided a brief history of the Foundation, which began with focus on vulnerable youth and helping them realize their full potential. As they continue to partner with organizations in the community that support vulnerable youth, the Astley Family Foundation has also partnered with CYPT to add a new full-time Young Engagement role to the CYPT Backbone.



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Deb Engel provided CYPT updates:

- The 2018/2019 Annual Report is in process and will be out in the near future.
- The next CYPT meeting is an all-member meeting on May 21, 2020. The second half of the day will be Dr. Nicole Sherren's The Brain Story workshop.
- On Saturday, February 22nd, CYPT hosted youTHINK, a youth event to help inform the [Community Child and Youth Well-being Survey](#). The next step is a pilot survey, which requires 300 volunteers. CYPT Backbone Staff will be reaching out organizations to help gather volunteers.

Deb welcomed all first time attendees. She also thanked the presenters, and all those in attendance for their time and commitment to ensuring all children and youth in the Region are happy and healthy.

WE BELONG DEFINITION

Belonging for children and youth means feeling loved and supported, and having mutually caring and fulfilling relationships. Feeling supported by and connected to family, friends, teachers, people in the community and, for some, their pets, contributes to a sense of belonging and to many aspects of well-being including health, learning and protection. Supportive connections with others—even just a few others—can reduce loneliness, which can occur even when young people are participating in groups and social activities. Critical to belonging is fostering healthy family relationships from birth, reducing the separation of children from their families and restoring relationships that are damaged by trauma, stress, poverty and other factors. Belonging also means building relationships with young people who are disengaged, disenfranchised and furthest from protective and supportive environments, including eliminating youth homelessness, providing rights-enhancing environments for children in care and making every effort to provide positive pathways for youth in contact with justice systems.