



Burnaby Association  
for Community Inclusion





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for Community Inclusion



dia\*

rethinking the development of people

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## Introduction to the Project

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The aim of Project Impact is to develop in nonprofits the ability to do credible self-studies of their impact.<sup>1</sup> As such, this is a capacity-building project. The reports in this compendium are written by the nonprofit teams and represent the findings from their data collection and analysis.

This project follows the traditions of participatory evaluation. In a participatory evaluation approach, those who are doing the work also become the evaluators of the effects of the work. This requires capacity-building for the teams, for a self-study form of evaluation requires the development of skills, theoretical understanding, practice in the techniques, and attention to fidelity of implementation in order to ensure the proper level of rigor.

The development of evaluation capacity takes time and iteration. It requires both instruction and practice – training in some of the leading techniques of research accompanied by ongoing applications and practice.

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1. This project is primarily focused on developing the ability of staff teams to implement self-studies about the effects of their programs. It is not designed to provide an experimental or quasi-experimental version of impact evaluation. Instead, it is an effort to upgrade the existing capability of each organization and give them tools to gather data on the attributed impact both qualitatively and quantitatively from the subjects they serve.

This project recognizes the power of partnership, the enrichment of cross-pollination of ideas among like-minded organizations, the durable impact of a learning community, and the potential inspiration for a sector when exemplars are developed and elevated.

Project Impact takes teams of leaders from nonprofits through a process of discovery about the power of evaluation. The idea is to develop the ability to see and communicate the effects of the programs on the people they are designed to serve. There are three primary movements to the project: (1) Intended impact, (2) Inquiry, and (3) Implication.

## **Project Design**

The project begins with a focus on the work of identifying and clarifying the intended impact of each of the participating programs. Once the ideas have been developed and indicators identified, the teams then design a questionnaire to collect data about quantitative measures and a qualitative interview protocol to collect qualitative data. These data are analyzed. Themes are identified and then translated into findings. From the findings, the teams develop program responses and communiques of their impact.

The fundamental elements of the Project Impact follow an arc of evaluation design:

### **Part 1 - Intended Impact**

This project begins with the identification and clarification of what effects are intended through the work of each of the projects. Each team develops an articulation of intended impact to include the components necessary for evaluation design.

#### **A. Main Ideas of Impact**

Each team identifies and crafts ideas of impact to frame the intention of direct impact for the program. In some cases, these ideas are mapped in relation to the secondary and tertiary impacts

of the program to gain clarity about the fundamental notions of desired effect as a direct consequence of the program or service rendered.

B. "What We Mean"

From these primary ideas, the teams then develop a brief explication of the meaning of their ideas of impact. This translates ideas that are occasionally technical and into messages accessible to all.

C. Quantitative Indicators

Teams then identify Quantitative indicators for each of the ideas. The aim is to generate five or six of the most critical indicators for each idea, paying attention to the data power, proxy power, and communication power of each of the key ideas. As well, the intent in this step is to identify a range of cognitive, affective, and behavioral indicators that can be measured through metrics.

D. Qualitative Indicators

Teams also identify qualitative indicators in this stage. These indicators are articulations of the structural and qualitative elements of growth and development that signal progress toward key ideas of impact. The qualitative indicators become the basis for the protocol construction to inform the in-depth interviews in the inquiry phase.

This section of the project leads each team to develop a clear theory of change, including the outcomes, indicators, and principles embedded in the particular approach that is implemented by each team.

## **Part 2 - Inquiry**

In the inquiry stage of the project, each team designs and implements a strategy for data gathering. These take two forms: a questionnaire



to collect quantitative data and an in-depth interview to gather qualitative data.

#### A. Quantitative Data and Analysis

For each of the quantitative indicators, teams construct items for a questionnaire. Since these projects are not intended to provide experimental or quasi-experimental inquiry, the attribution of effect is built into the questionnaire items. The questionnaire is deployed, in most cases, to the entire population of recipients the program reaches. Data are analyzed mostly using measures of central tendency. The teams then design displays of the data and narrative for their report.

#### B. Qualitative Data and Analysis

The development of a qualitative design encompasses a number of steps, including the following:

1. Protocol Design. Each team designs an in-depth interview protocol that uses the *Heart Triangle*<sup>™</sup> method of question design. These produces a protocol of about nine sequences of questions (18 questions in total) to be used as a guide for seeking data about the awareness and reflection of subjects' structural shifts and developments of growth and progress.
2. Sample. Each team identifies a sample of subjects using a purposeful stratified technique to identify a selection representative of the population being served.
3. Data Collection. Interviews are convened, most lasting between 45 minutes and 1 hour in length. Data are collected via notes during the interview, and then augmented immediately following the interview to provide a substantive rendering of the interview.
4. Data Analysis. Team members apply a four-step model of analysis to each of the interviews. This process provides them

with an accessible version of analysis and interpretation to illuminate the primary themes from each interview. While the process is accessible, working through the data from each interview four times using different lenses of analysis each time provides a rigor to the analytical process that yields insight far beyond what is overt and obvious in the data.

5. **Thematics.** Through a guided and facilitative process, the entire data corpus is then examined. Themes are mapped through meta-analysis of the emerging insights.
6. **Findings.** The teams then examine each of the themes to discover and communicate the findings. These are rendered with explanation and illustration from the raw data.

### **Part 3 - Implications**

The intent of the project is not to leave teams simply with a report about their program's effects, but rather to use the insights from the evaluation to guide the further development of the program. This takes two forms:

#### **A. Program Adjustments**

The team then takes each of the findings from the evaluation and considers possible program adjustments informed by the discoveries of the evaluation. This keeps the evaluation relevant for program application and improvement.

#### **B. Program Experiments**

In addition, the teams work to identify potential design experiments that they might run as an implication of the insights gained through the evaluation.

In this stage, the teams also begin to develop a report of the evaluation findings as well as other possible communiques of their

discoveries to staff, stakeholders, funders, and other members of the community.

### **The Reports**

The reports from the organizations in this cohort are included in the following compendium. These include highlights from the three movements of Project Impact. For each participating organization, there is an explication of the primary findings from the evaluation accompanied by the programmatic responses of strategy and design. Since each organization has unique strategy and ethos, each report exhibits unique character and personality. Each report also includes both “prove” findings (evidence of impacts being achieved) and “improve” findings (areas for attention and further development). These reports are windows into the effects of the work of these organizations in the lives of the people they serve.

# Infant Development Program

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Krista Moldowan

## Program Overview

The Burnaby Infant Development Program (IDP) serves Burnaby families with a child or children with additional developmental needs, aged birth to three years old. Our program is a free, voluntary program funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). We are a primarily home-based, in-person visiting program, where Infant Development Consultants visit infants and children with their primary caregivers at home. Infant Development Consultants are generalists. That is, they are experts in observing, evaluating and assessing infant and children's overall development including the areas of personal-social, cognitive, fine motor, gross motor and communication development. The Infant Development Program provides information about children's developmental stages, screening and assessment of all domain areas of development, connection to community partners and community resources, and suggestions for the promotion of development within the infant and child's daily routines.

## Intended Impacts

Just like other programs operating out of the Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion (BACI), we are grateful to endeavor to improve

the impact that we make on families including parents, caregivers and their little ones. It has been our privilege to have the opportunity to explore our impact.

The program team developed the following Intended Impacts of the Infant Development Program:

1. **Parents understand infant and child development, particularly their own child(ren)'s.** As a result of IDP, parents learn more about developmental milestones, learn more about the developmental stage their child or children are in, and know more about their child's developmental strengths and stretches as an individual.
2. **Parents engage in community, make new friendships, and gain meaningful support.** As a result of IDP, we aim to ensure parents have multiple opportunities, in a variety of ways, to connect with other parents and children with additional needs. We also intend that diversity and inclusion become part of the culture and language of IDP families. We also mean that we intend to bring awareness to parents of resources available to them and their children in the community. We also mean we want parents to better advocate for their child's needs. Finally, we intend that parents will be able to expand their toolbox of resources and parenting ideas.
3. **Parents advocate for services in a way that maximizes the child's opportunities for inclusion and meeting their full potential.** Signifying the impact of IDP in that parents better understand and navigate the system (they learn the strengths and limitations of the systems that support children). This also means that the community is aware of the IDP program and its offerings. Finally, it means families are active in community advocacy and feedback (ask for more of what they need, name gaps, are committed to the participation of their child in spite of the hurdles).
4. **The family feels reassured, listened to, supported and empowered as they move through their early parenting**

**journey.** As a result of IDP, families and parents feel supported, listened to and reassured.

## **Evaluation Methodology**

The aim of our evaluation was to see what kind and quality of impact the Burnaby Infant Development Program (IDP) is having on the infants, children and their families in our program here in Burnaby.

To understand this, we explored two broad evaluation questions:

1. What kind and quality of impact are we having for families?
2. What aspects of our program are causing this impact?

Over the course of the project, we (a) developed and refined our ideas of intended impact and indicators, (b) designed and implemented a mixed methods outcome evaluation using both qualitative and quantitative means to collect and analyze data, (c) identified themes and findings, and (d) considered the implications to those findings for program improvement and innovation.

This project began by identifying and clarifying the intended impact of the Infant Development Program (IDP). Once the ideas of impact had been developed, we used the Heart Triangle™ model to identify qualitative and quantitative indicators of impact on the mental, behavioral, and emotional changes in IDP parents. We used these indicators to design a qualitative interview protocol and a quantitative questionnaire to evaluate progress toward achieving our intended impact.

## **Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis**

For the qualitative portion of the evaluation, we designed an in-depth interview protocol to gain data about the structural, qualitative changes resulting from our program. Each IDP Consultant invited an increasing number of families for whom they had a close rapport with to participate in the qualitative interview. Our population size for this evaluation was 197 families. We used a purposeful stratified sampling

technique to select a representative sample from the population we serve. Our sample size was 10 families, drawn from the following strata of our population:

- Parents of all ages
- Parents of a variety of ethnicities
- Most parents (90%) who speak English as an additional language
- Parents of children of a variety of ages (children aged 12 months to 5 years old)

Our interview team consisted of the team of Infant Development Consultants. We convened one-on-one interviews lasting from between 45 minutes and one hour in length and collected interview data using voice recording and transcription via Microsoft Teams.

We then analyzed the data inductively using a modified version of thematic analysis. Each interviewer analyzed the data from their interviews individually to identify initial themes. Together, we developed common themes from all of the interviews and brought them forward as findings.

### **Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis**

For the quantitative portion of the evaluation, we designed a questionnaire to collect data on our quantitative indicators of impact. We administered this instrument to 197 families and had a response of 39, a 19.3% response rate. The data were analyzed primarily using measures of central tendency. We identified key insights, patterns, and gaps within the data and incorporated these discoveries into the related findings. The most significant insights from the quantitative data are described in the following narrative.

### **Limitations**

- One of the IDP Consultants was away on medical leave during the launching of the quantitative survey. Her

families were invited to participate with a little bit less notice.

- This is the first time many families have been asked to participate in a process like this; both quantitative as well as qualitative.
- Relatively small qualitative interview sample. Consultants will have to commit to building qualitative interviews into their ongoing practice.
- Language barrier for nearly all families participating. We understand them well when in the interview, but transcription and gathering of evidence is a little bit more difficult with the translation. We are intentional about using clear and plain language.

## Findings

### Finding 1: Step by Step

Families go through a process of acceptance of the uniqueness of their baby.

This is a process that follows a different trajectory and length of time for each parent. Each baby develops in their own time, and parents and professionals alike just help the babies achieve the next step as the development progresses. Many families come to the program with an expectation that their baby has “missed” or is “behind” on achieving milestones, and they seek to “catch up”. Over time, and with the support of the expertise of their Infant Development Consultant, most families arrive at the conclusion that they just needed to get to know their baby better; that they can now understand development more by following baby’s cues, spending more quality time, and by allowing their child to be their unique self.

Infant Development Consultants aid in this by showing families the simplest ways to promote those visible motor developmental stages that children can do more quickly if given the tools (for



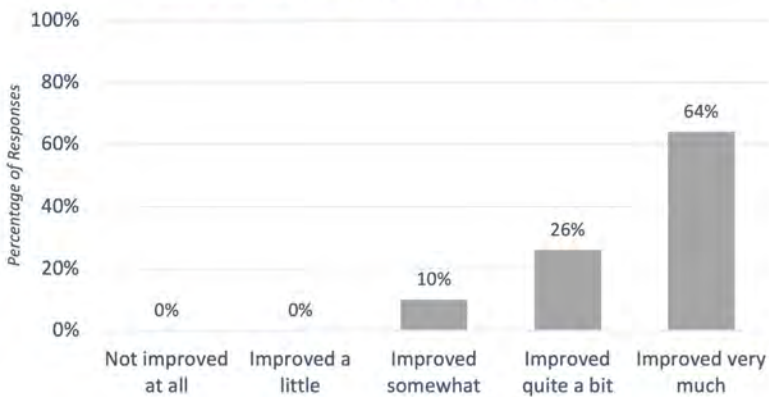
example, rolling over), while showing families many avenues of the nuances of other developmental areas. For example, language acquisition is achieved by simply hearing the sounds and voices of others at the grocery store and doesn't need to be taught by watching a "developmental" television program or buying a particular toy.

Key Takeaways

Some families note that they become calmer, more present parents once they learn to focus just on the next developmental stage for their child instead of comparing their child to other children or to the copious charts and graphs that demonstrate "normal" infant development.

Survey respondents report that their growth in a number of areas related to development and milestones has improved significantly since participating in the program (see Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 1. I can see the small developmental changes in my child and recognize their successes and milestones.



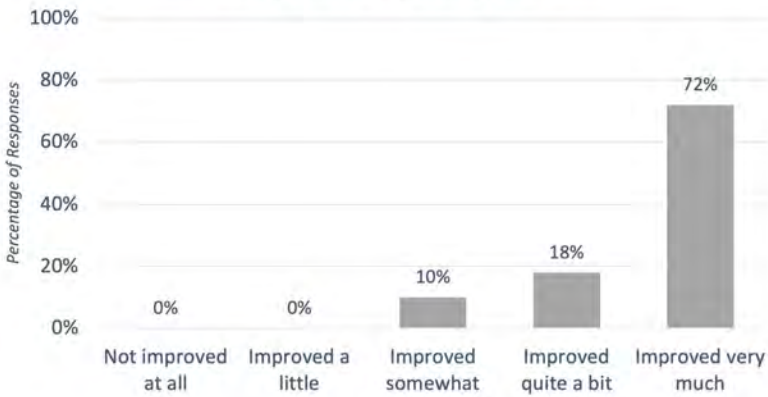
Interview Quotes

*She can do everything she wants to do.*

*...show him I am always his safe place.*

*Every step is just sometimes a new milestone, for me and for them.*

Figure 2. I understand the expectations and limits of my child at their age and level of development.



*I will have the autistic test done and many thing[s] ... wouldn't be possible to access the correct support for my daughter without your support and your program.*

*Given me a lot of direction as to what the next steps are.*

*Just shows...how the different kids developed [in] different time.*

#### Possible Responses

- We will continue to be neurodiverse affirming and share our knowledge and expertise in this area. We note that having been early stewards of this culture and these conversations for at least the past ten years in our program, this has really allowed us to support families in supporting their infants and children without harm, and in accepting and loving their child for who they are. This has had a ripple effect of having professionals and partners ask us how to have these conversations and impacting the culture of the community at large.
- We will respond to families' feedback and unique needs and practice using the Nipissing screening tool which includes

activities to try as a very family friendly way to share suggestions to promote development, and to keep families as the leaders of the work with their children.

## **Finding 2: This is Hard**

It is difficult to parent children with additional needs.

Parents report often that they did not expect to have a child with additional support needs. Many first-time parents are learning how to parent in the first place and on top of this, they are often managing a great deal of challenges with their child's health and developmental needs. Parents are realizing that they are all their children have; no one else will do the work for them or their child. They have to stay strong and consistent in order for their child to improve and succeed.

### Key Takeaways

- Recognition of the “why” behind the difficulty in parenting very young children with additional needs.
- Many IDP families have and continue to experience trauma.

### Interview Quotes

*I wasn't expecting this much work that I have to do with my child, but at the same time, I wasn't aware of how it will be difficult.*

*I didn't expect to be like a medical mom.*

*It's my duty as his mom.*

### Possible Responses

- We are dedicated to building rapport with families and developing quality relationships. We will ask parents how they are feeling, not just what they are doing.

- The team will be “closing the loop” in our communication and recommendation of mental health resources for families. We have long since been referring families to mental health supports like Postpartum Support Society, Family Support Institute (FSI), counseling and parenting classes, etc. However, perhaps in an effort to preserve families’ privacy, we often do not check back in and ensure that families have connected with these resources. We will commit to doing so. This will hopefully further destigmatize accessing such services and will allow us to further identify how much impact we can make as a program in this area.

### **Finding 3: IDP Over Instagram**

Families interviewed are finding it difficult to sift through an abundance of information, primarily on social media, about how to help their child achieve their milestones.

In the recent decade, there have been a growing abundance of online infant development resources and apps for families to access. Unfortunately, much of this information is inaccurate, misleading, or incorrect. There used to be little to no sources of information for families with children with particular needs, now it can feel sometimes as if there is too much information. Families are faced with a unique challenge of deciding which advice to take, and which information is best to ignore. Comparing oneself as a parent to the vast number of parents online is a relatively new phenomenon for all parents.

#### Key Takeaways

- The importance of being incredibly mindful of the content on the IDP Instagram page.
- Having guest speakers and experts, as well as staying up to date and well trained on best practice in the field, is

as important as ever, so as to give the most current and valuable information to families.

#### Interview Quotes

*We were not knowing a lot of things. We...were going with an Instagram mama, Instagram data. But after coming to see you...you made it clear that's not the way.*

*Before I would look at Instagram pages...and see like how they try to correct it...until we were referred to IDP. Then I learned how to deal with it.*

#### Possible Responses

- Emphasize the importance of in-person interactions and home visiting.
- Experts and guest speakers continue to be integral to our in-person gatherings.

#### **Finding 4: The Power of Patience**

Many families report that they have to change their expectations for their child and learn patience in the process of having a child with additional needs.

Families put a great deal of pressure on themselves to “develop” their children well. Part of the work of the Infant Development Program is to ensure that parents are aware that their baby is developing always, even without our undivided attention. For example, children are learning when they are moving independently on the floor, they are learning at the grocery store, and they are learning and developing well under the care of grandparents or childcare.

A trend has emerged where parents are increasingly focused on their children’s performance in achieving milestones, and how this compares to norms or peers. The program has aided in highlighting what developmental stage comes next, easing a great deal of anxiety in

parents. Similarly, IDP Consultants routinely share with families that they note the nuanced changes in their babies and this modeling allows parents to recognize the small milestones and not just the big ones.

#### Key Takeaways

- Celebration does not come naturally to all families, particularly those that are under a great deal of stress.
- Patience can be learned, and the capacity of parents to change for their babies' needs is often swift and inspirational.
- Many families note that their Infant Development Consultant is ever so reassuring that they are doing the right thing.
- Education about developmental expectations, particularly social emotional expectations of very young children, is often surprising to families, and helps to ease anxiety about achievements.

#### Interview Quotes

*We have learned that we need to be more patient with [her]; that the way we're going to grow her up is going to be different to the way we did with her...brothers; that we need to.*

*Give her more time, more time.*

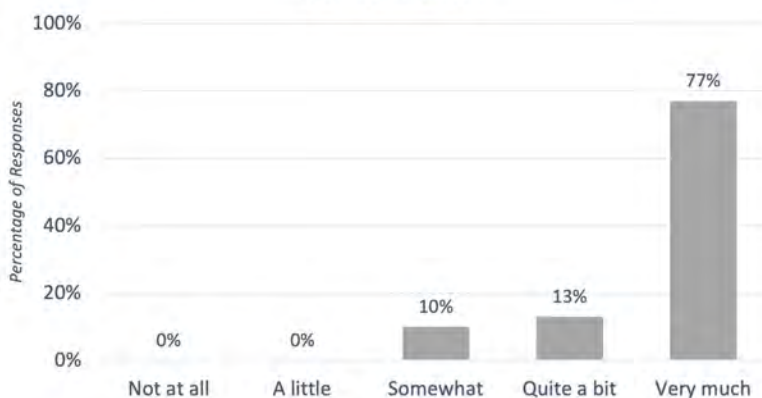
*I've learned to be more patient and repeating, repeating, repeating. And...I have to be OK with that.*

#### **Finding 5: Getting Out**

Accessing and attending community groups, whether offerings of the program or elsewhere, is vital to feelings of success and healthy parenting for families.

There have been significant challenges throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond in enticing families to bring their children out in the community, and also in attempting to facilitate well-attended group offerings. Families are increasingly anxious about bringing their child out in public. While we have an assumption that perhaps fewer families find value or are interested in bringing their children out in community to interact with peers of their own age, the quantitative data reveals that 90% of families rated 4 or 5 of 5 that they feel it is important to include their child with their peers in community (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. I feel it is important to include my child with their peers in the community.



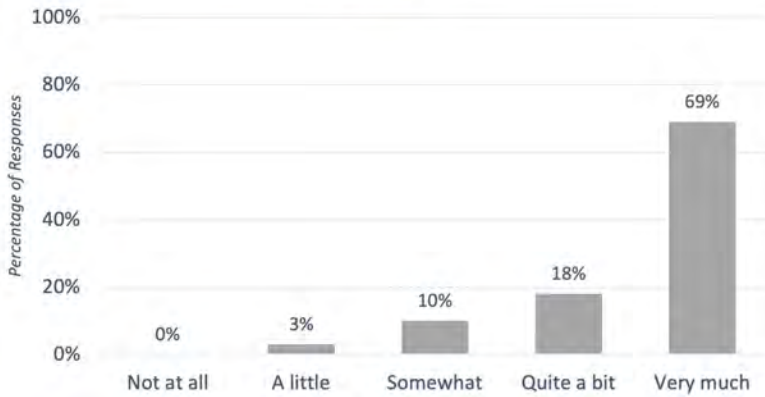
#### Key Takeaways

- In spite of relatively low attendance at our weekly playgroup, 87% of surveyed families feel that they can bring their child to an IDP playgroup because it is inclusive (see Figure 4). However, we should be considering what we can do to improve so that more families are rating this 5 of 5.

#### Interview Quotes

*Well last week they [went]... to the strong start and the family place on the same day.*

Figure 4. I can attend an IDP playgroup or event because it is inclusive.



*It was difficult to try to make her ...play with other kids or to integrate or to take a toy or play something. But I think that was...a turning point.*

Possible Responses

- How do we support families to build their network and make quality friendships that will support them for the lifespan; well beyond IDP? Historically, we have seen some of the most lasting friendships amongst IDP families via attending our IDP-only playgroup regularly. We believe strongly that having a community location where families feel safe to be vulnerable and authentic is linked to making successful connections and friendships and then having more confidence to do non-IDP community things together.

**Finding 6: Fight for Your Kid**

Families learn early that they will have to speak up and advocate for their baby and their family if they wish to access all things that they need.

Connected to feelings of hardship and difficult times, families are learning to navigate a system of scarcity and advocate in many ways for their child and family. While this looks different for every family,

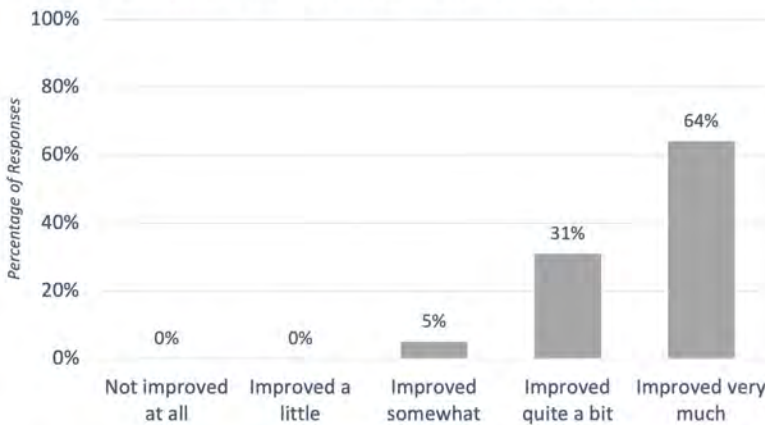


most families report that they have to work very hard to get the things they need for their child. This work and advocacy enters families into a new kind of stress and build some very tough, resilient, gritty parents and families.

Key Takeaways

- Families spend a lot of time and energy advocating for their children. They learn from the regret and mistakes of not advocating and having waited too long, or not getting adequate services or support for their child.
- Families learn a great deal about the scarcity, waiting lists, and advocacy they will need to engage in from the Infant Development Program.
- Families surveyed report significant learning in how to speak up for their child and family as a result of participating in the Infant Development Program (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. I have learned to speak up for my child and family.



- The Infant Development Program’s commitment to as short of a wait time for families as possible is important, as we are one of the only services able to engage with families as quickly as we do.

### Interview Quotes

*I'm thinking like I can't...I can't give up on her.*

*Our philosophy ...has been we will try to get the help we can get either publicly or privately if we need to...rather than have them say, "No she doesn't need the help."*

*You just have to be persistent...and I'm glad I did. ...I think it has made a big difference for her.*

*Having the experience that we need to advocate...and by advocating, we do get services. I think that's what helps.*

*Kind of pushing for getting more services as well.*

### Possible Responses

- Advocacy within the government to improve funding and wait time for families is needed. BACI and Burnaby IDP have already begun to be more proactive in this area, and we commit to continue.

### **Finding 7: Where's the Inclusion?**

Families continue to experience a pattern of many types of exclusion.

Families are experiencing a whole host of exclusion, primarily based on their challenging and unique experiences of having a child born or developing with support needs and having to access programs and services with extraordinarily long wait times and lots of barriers to access. Families are simultaneously experiencing other types of exclusion - barriers impacting their childcare, housing, employment, cost of living and transportation as well as racism, language, and cultural barriers. Most families feel that there is room to improve in our community so that they feel more included, and the culture of inclusion is more prevalent in Burnaby for their children.

Key Takeaways

- The difficulty in accessing services, for example, additional physiotherapy, surprises families. Until one has a child with additional needs in our community, many families have no idea that funding for publicly offered services is very limited.
- Due to many factors, including the increase in population, inflation and the long-term impact of COVID-19 closures, the waiting lists for almost all services have grown exponentially.
- More families are not eligible for services and find themselves with only the option of accessing private services. However, as expected, not every family has this option due to financial restraints.
- Families continue to report that they are shy, isolated, or fear that their children will be judged for their appearance or behaviours.
- As seen in the quantitative data, many families do not feel they are accepted by friends, family and community (see Figures 6 and 7).

Figure 6. I have increased friendships and connections with other parents in my community, if that is something I needed and didn't have.

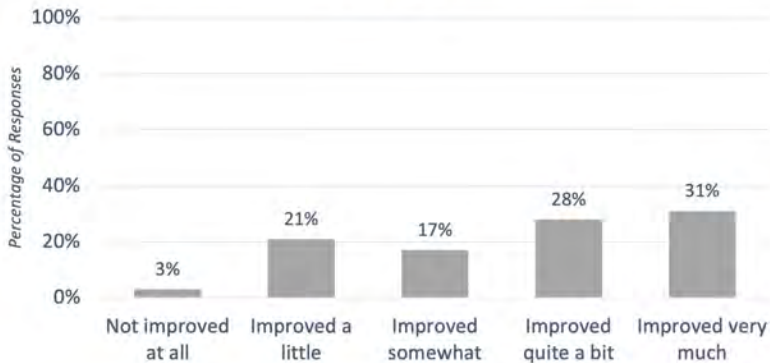
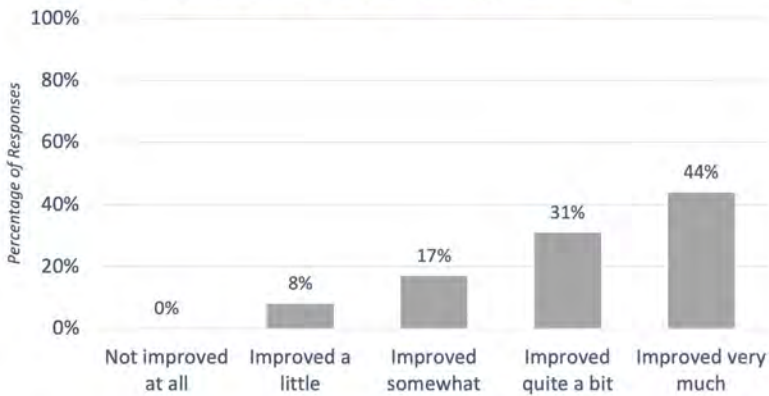


Figure 7. I am accepted in my community and having more of my needs met as a parent by unpaid supportive adults.



#### Interview Quotes

*The thing is that they were racist. I felt so... really sad about that.*

*Some parents (don't) like the other kids mingling.*

*It's often become so hard to just get in the community out there.*

*Integrating the culture in the beginning, it was hard.*

*It was difficult in the beginning...now we have to wait for all the other things. We have to wait some time for the family doctor and the pediatrician.*

*Have to wait for six to eight months... it's too much.*

#### Possible Responses

- Build on our community presence and demonstrate inclusion and acceptance. We will plan to always be creative and adaptive in finding out where families are going and meeting families where they are at to inform them about our program and model diversity-affirming developmental

approaches for young children. Last year, we started an effort to visit malls, because this seems to be where families visit with their children in the winter. We will do this again, and engage more deeply with families, asking them what they would attend and what they need.

### **Finding 8: We Can't Do This Alone**

All families thrive when they have a support network and quality connections.

A predominant theme throughout the surveys was support and connection. Relationships matter, and families reported that their relationship with their Infant Development Consultant has been the kickoff impact that they needed to become more confident, better advocates, and more attuned parents. Some families reported being shy, or not having the need to go out and engage in new community programs with their child. However, all families reported that the home visiting connection they made with their flexible, supportive, inclusive IDP Consultant had a positive impact. We aim to facilitate and support families in making other quality connections, strengthening their relationships with their partners, parents, siblings, neighbours and fellow parents.

#### Key Takeaways

- The Infant Development Consultant relationship with the family plays an encouraging and complex benefit for families built on trust and care.
- Unsurprisingly, families are very satisfied in this area and experience a great deal of support and strength from their IDP Consultant. Nearly all survey respondents reported feeling significantly supported by their IDP Consultant (see Figure 8). Survey data also showed that families feel their IDP Consultant prioritizes their family's needs and that

they can communicate their needs and preferences openly with their consultant (see Figures 9 and 10).

Figure 8. My IDP Consultant is there to support my child and family and can be reached with questions and concerns.

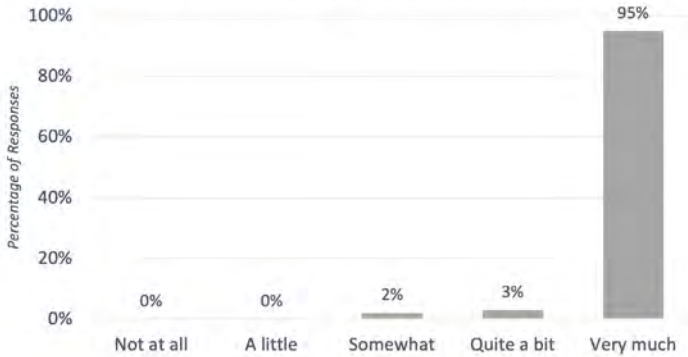


Figure 9. My IDP Consultant prioritizes my child and family's best interests.

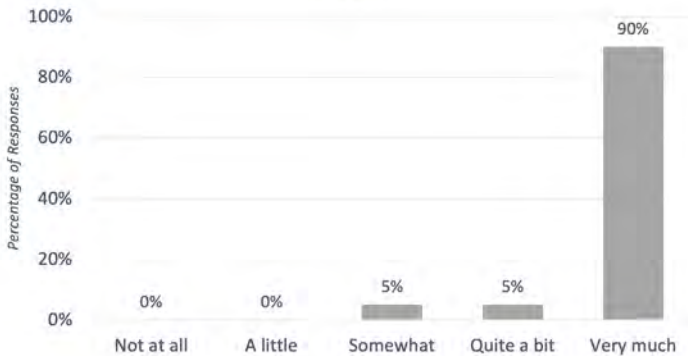
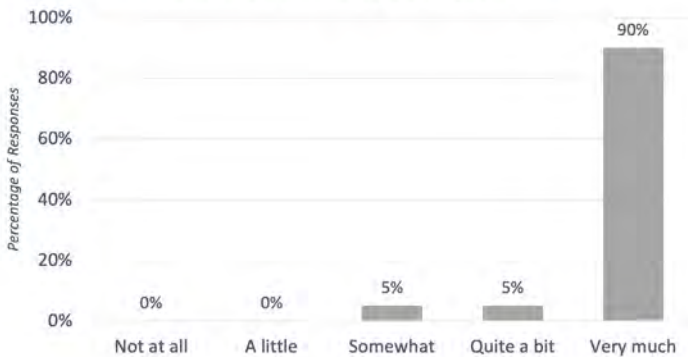


Figure 10. I can tell my IDP Consultant if my needs change, or if I would like them to change their approach.



### Interview Quotes

*We realized...you really care. For us that means a lot.*

*This program help(ed) me to overcome a lot of obstacles. I really appreciate you and the program, and all the people involved in this [have been] amazing.*

*[We] couldn't have gotten through a lot of stuff without you. I so appreciate your help and your support.*

*I'm really asking questions to other people and...the families that I know really close[ly]...even all my friends.*

### Possible Responses

- We will perhaps add a question about belonging and friendship, because we want to encourage a support network for families outside of IDP. This helps families in many areas, especially in their transition as their child ages.

### **Finding 9: Confidence**

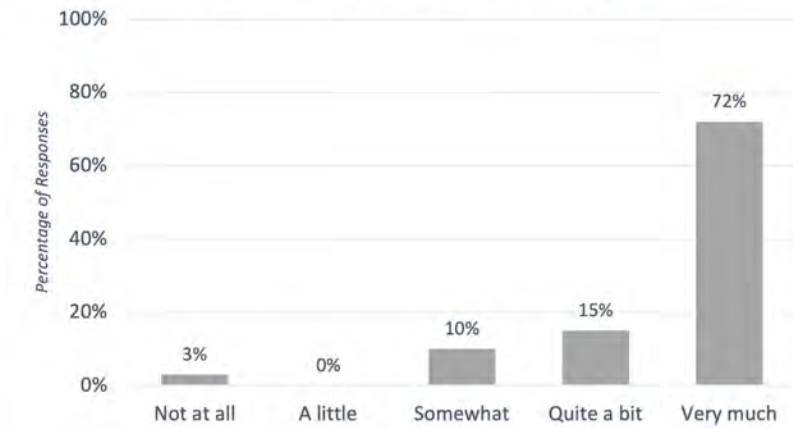
In order to best develop their children, and as a result of the support given by the Infant Development Program, our aim is that families experience increased overall confidence that they are the perfect person for the job of parenting their baby.

We asked families how they carry confidence into their choices for their child. Many families gave specific answers related to anecdotes and examples about routine. It turns out families have a hard time answering this question. Because improved confidence is one of our intended impacts, and because our role is to develop parents to develop their children through increased capacity, it is important to leave it here and note it as a finding, though data is limited from qualitative interviews.

Key Takeaways

- The quantitative survey resulted in more concrete information about families’ feelings of increased confidence in parenting their child (see Figure 11).
- This may be a language and cultural barrier also. Perhaps the word “confidence” is difficult or the idea of sharing the positives of one’s parenting experience is still challenging while families are going through hardship with their children.

Figure 11. I have confidence that I can parent my child.



Interview Quotes

*I think as he...grows up...I feel more confident. As he grows up, I start to understand him more, and then I also start to understand about me more too.*

*Reassuring us [has allowed us to carry confidence into other choices]. We [now know] we’re ...doing the right things and [that] just helps us. ...Before, we were just kind of guessing...now it’s OK.*

*I’m trying to let her do her thing and not be too careful about it. I’m there to catch her but I try not to direct her too much. Trying to not expect a problem if that makes sense.*



### Possible Responses

- We will review the question in the qualitative survey and adjust it.
- We will continue to try to ascertain families' feelings of increased confidence in different ways.

## **Conclusion**

Our team has learned a lot from the interviews we've conducted so far in this first phase this spring. We are looking forward to honing our skills as qualitative interviewers and hearing from a larger sample of IDP families about the impact the program has had for themselves and their family. We have learned about areas where we aim to improve, and we will plan on having the qualitative interview and quantitative survey be a working document that we change periodically in response to the findings and the actions we take to address any gaps or growth required. It has been a privilege to hear some of the beautiful insights families have made about themselves and their babies. We are moved to hear that families are feeling an impact from our program and becoming better versions of themselves for their children.

## **Insights Into Impact**

We learned that there will always be room to improve in supporting the mental health of families and their children, and that all efforts in this area are valued and needed. We will continue to advance action plans in this area.

Our data reveals that while families know that community engagement is vital to their health and the health of their children, there are still barriers, including discrimination and exclusion in community that prevent families from fully immersing and having full opportunities. IDP-only groups have been a cornerstone of our work, and we will continue to maintain these safe spaces for families to feel most welcome and ease into other community spaces.

Families will always be challenged to maintain and build upon confidence as their family grows and they learn more about what their child needs and how best their child learns and develops.

**Some Final Interview Quotes:**

*Show him I'm always his safe place.*

*Your program... helped tremendously.*

*Reassuring...we're doing the right things.*

*Playing with him and trying to...incorporate the exercises instead of just...testing him.*

*Sometimes I used to get overwhelmed. Right now, I can see him. I see him as the little sweet child he is and I'm not thinking about anything else...I'm living in the moment with him and it's amazing.*

**Steps Forward**

Our developmental parenting practice should be reviewed, and we will attend training as a team with the intention of learning to build capacity in families. We will also look into making Now and Next family goal planning training available to families in Burnaby.

As mentioned above, IDP will develop a mechanism to ensure we close the loop on referring families to counseling, mental health, and family connection support. We may add a question in the quantitative survey, something like “my IDP Consultant has offered me counseling or postpartum support that I have engaged with and benefited from, if needed”.

We will be reviewing our impact at playgroup using an informal family survey to see if there are changes that can be made to become more inclusive and supportive and remove any unknown barriers to access.

Further to this, we will be inviting volunteer or student interpreters to our playgroup and events in future.

We will also meet regularly to discuss the theme of inconsistent attendance at IDP groups and find ways to include each individual cohort of families.

As we did this year and last year, we will be inviting IDP families into the fold of attending wider BACI events, like the annual Barbeque. This aims to connect families to other BACI families and the community at large.

We will create an IDP Instagram policy and rotate through staff to update Instagram as per the policy.

### **Opportunities for Future Evaluation**

We will conduct 30 or more additional interviews before the end of 2024 to gather a more statistically significant sample.

In 2025, we will build in a practice of re-interviewing previously interviewed families after 12-18 months of service.

We will create a group opportunity to be interviewed at our fall family night in October or November 2024.

## Childcare Centres

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Lesley Cannon, Anna Tran, Ellie Jeong, Sharon Lin,  
Samantha Young, Jen Ghioda, Tanya Sather

### Program Overview

**B**ACI owns and operates five childcare centres: three 0-5 programs and two Out of School Care (5-12yrs) programs. We have been offering childcare and out of school care services for almost 30 years.

We believe that play is the essence of our program. Through play, children learn to take appropriate risks and accept challenges, while interacting with the environment in a safe manner. Our children's programs offer high quality childcare for all children and provide nurturing, responsive and individualized care. We believe that all children have the right to develop to their fullest potential emotionally, socially, physically and intellectually. We believe that inclusion is beneficial. BACI recognizes all children as distinct individuals with a variety of strengths, needs, talents, and interests. Inclusion is the opportunity for all children to accept each other and work together in the community. We encourage and support the child's natural curiosity. BACI encourages multiculturalism and supports children from all ethnic groups. Many of our employees are bi-lingual and bi-cultural. Being part of a multicultural and inclusive program offers unlimited benefits. We believe in the importance of understanding, accepting and empowering all children. We encourage the development of a healthy self-awareness and value inclusivity, multiculturalism and respect for others.

At BACI, Children's Services we:

- Recognize the intrinsic value of every child.
- Provide quality, inclusive childcare and endeavor to meet the individual needs of all children.
- Maximize children's opportunities to grow physically, socially, cognitively & emotionally.
- Recognize and value the diversity among families and children.
- Encourage and recognize family and community contributions.
- Recognize the value of our staff and support their growth through training opportunities.

### **Intended Impacts**

1. **Children are caring and considerate.** Children can communicate effectively and are kind and empathetic to others.
2. **Children become lifelong learners.** Children continue to develop and learn new skills and seek opportunities to further their education and well-being.
3. **Children are independent and self-reliant.** Children don't have to depend on others to have their personal needs met, such as self-dressing and self-care.
4. **Children are actively inclusive within the community.** Children will have the skills and confidence to try new activities.
5. **Children will be explorers.** Children will have the skills and confidence to try new activities.

### **Evaluation Methodology**

The aim of our evaluation was to see what kind and quality of impact BACI Childcare Centres is having on the 151 children and 131 families we are serving. To understand this, we explored two broad evaluation questions:

1. What kind and quality of impact are we having on the children and families we serve?

## 2. What aspects of our program are causing this impact?

Over the course of the project, we (a) developed and refined our ideas of intended impact and indicators, (b) designed and implemented a mixed methods outcome evaluation using both qualitative and quantitative means to collect and analyze data, (c) identified themes and findings, and (d) considered the implications to those findings for program improvement and innovation.

This project began by identifying and clarifying the intended impact of BACI Childcare Centres. Once the ideas of impact had been developed, we used the Heart Triangle™ model to identify qualitative and quantitative indicators of impact on the mental, behavioral, and emotional changes in the children we care for. We used these indicators to design a qualitative interview protocol and a quantitative questionnaire to evaluate progress toward achieving our intended impact.

### **Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis**

For the qualitative portion of the evaluation, we designed an in-depth interview protocol to gain data about the structural, qualitative changes resulting from our program. Our population size for this evaluation was 131 families. We used a purposeful stratified sampling technique to select a representative sample from the population we serve. Our sample size was 13, nine from the 0-5 program and four from the Out of School Care program, drawn from the following strata of our population:

- Ages 0 to 3
- Ages 3 to 5
- Ages 5 to 12 (Out of School Care)

Our interview team consisted of the supervisors of our Childrens Centres. We convened one-on-one interviews lasting from between 45 minutes and one hour in length and collected interview data using the Otter voice-to-text transcription app and handwritten notes.

We then analyzed the data inductively using a modified version of thematic analysis. Each interviewer analyzed the data from their interviews individually to identify initial themes. Together, we developed common themes from all of the interviews and brought them forward as findings.

### **Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis**

For the quantitative portion of the evaluation, we designed a questionnaire to collect data on our quantitative indicators of impact. We administered this instrument to 131 families and had 59 responses, a 45% response rate. The data were analyzed primarily using measures of central tendency. We identified key insights, patterns, and gaps within the data and incorporated these discoveries into the related findings. The most significant insights from the quantitative data are described in the following narrative.

### **Limitations**

We conducted this survey to a broad age range to all of our centres. Our survey questions were too vague in order to allow responses from all age groups. Scheduling was also a factor as both program staff and families are busy and work the same hours. Families were also quick to determine the reasons for the project and wanted to give pleasing answers. This may have resulted in several limitations including smaller qualitative and quantitative sample sizes than originally intended.

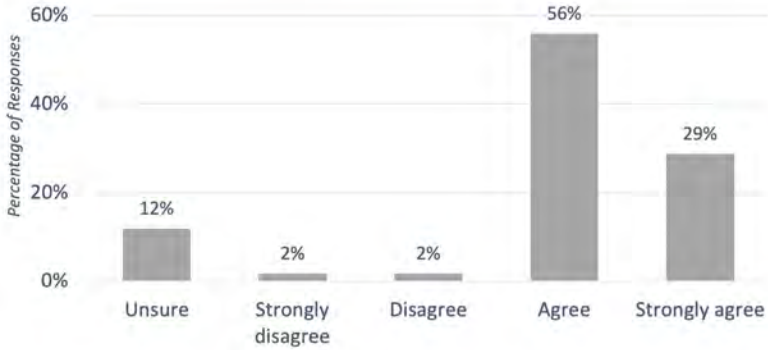
## **Findings**

### **Finding 1: Blossoming Relationships**

Friendship is a recurring theme and intertwines with other themes we discovered in the data. Children are building relationships and trust with adults and peers, and building friendships that continue outside the childcare centre.

In the survey, 85% of families reported that their child is building relationships and feeling a greater sense of belonging (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. My child feels a greater sense of belonging as a result of their participation in the centre. (n=59)



### Key Takeaways

As a result of the program:

- Children are making friends/having real friends.
- Children have more opportunities for socialization.
- Children are experiencing a sense of belonging.
- Children are building trust.
- Children are building relationships with staff.

### Interview Quotes

*Before, when I picked him up, he would run to me and want to leave right away, but now he doesn't want to leave and wants to play more with [other children].*

*At home he likes to repeat his friends' names.*

*He talks about his friends. He recognizes his friends when we're out.*

*I'm really grateful to have all the staff there that are so caring. You guys are attentive, and she does feel that it is a super safe space and I think that's fabulous.*



*At daycare she's able to interact with a variety of other children and I see really how much she loves all the staff.*

*I love that she can find and feel acceptance everywhere she goes.*

Possible Responses (Amplifying or Intervening)

- Recognize cliques and try to expand the social circle.
- Step back and let the children deal with their own issues.
- Encourage children to take responsibility for their own actions.
- Teach kids to take ownership of their program.
- Team building games.
- Split up into random groups - connecting children who don't normally connect.

## **Finding 2: Look at me grow! (Growth and Development)**

The data reveal that children's vocabulary improves as they become more confident through the program. With these growing skills many other aspects follow such as social interactions with other children and adults, independence, and understanding how to manage their own emotions and communicate effectively.

The quantitative survey data also support the finding, showing that children are growing and learning at their childcare centre. Ninety percent of parents reported an improvement in their child's communication skills as a result of the program (see Figure 2) and 88% reported their child is gaining a greater sense of independence. Furthermore, 87% of the parents reported their child is more excited to learn as a result of their participation in childcare (see Figure 3). Interestingly though, 15% of parents reported their children cannot get ready independently, and another 22% were unsure (see Figure 4). This is something to possibly analyze further, though it should be noted that this question was asked of all families, and we do not/cannot expect the babies to be able to prepare themselves for the day.

CHILD CARE CENTRES

Figure 2. My child's communication skills have improved as a result of their participation in the child care centre. (n=59)

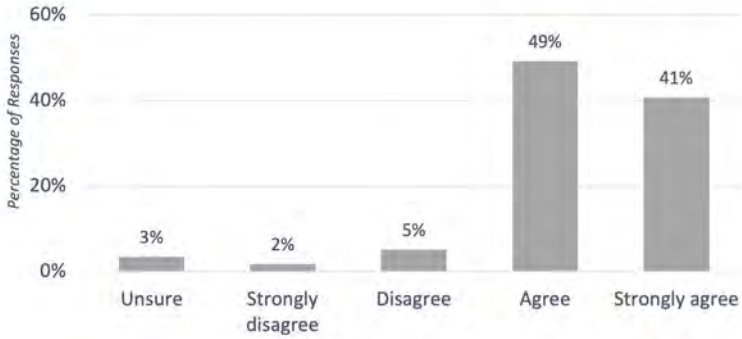


Figure 3. My child is more excited to learn as a result of their participation in the child care centre. (n=59)

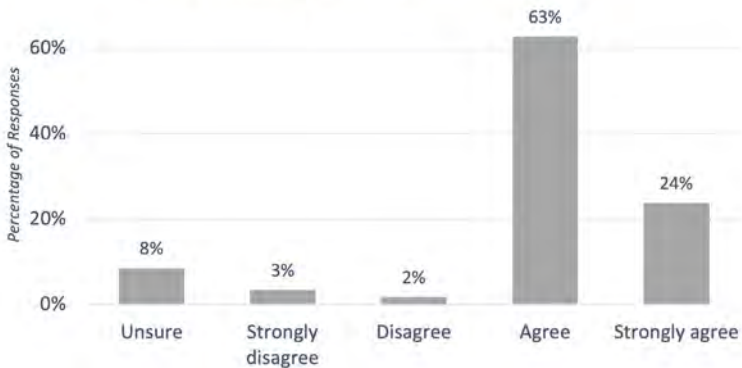
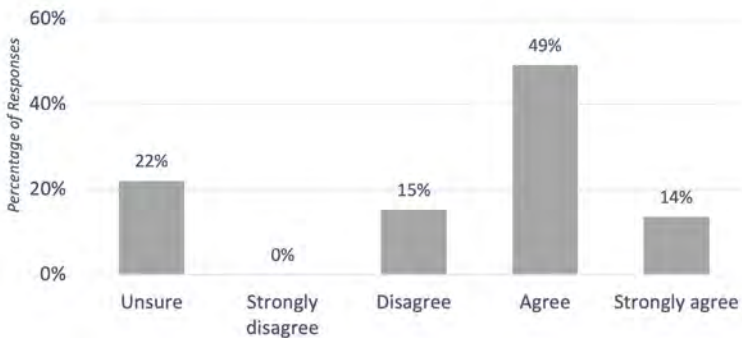


Figure 4. My child prepares for their day more independently as a result of their participation in the child care centre. (n=59)



### Key Takeaways

As a result of the program, children are developing greater:

- Speech/language
- Social skills
- Independence
- Emotional intelligence

### Interview Quotes

*Before they attended daycare, they had limited English vocabulary; but after coming to the daycare, they build up very rapidly in their language.*

*She is independent and starts doing things for herself where she does not [at] home before.*

*He's learning at a faster rate than when he was at home how to interact with people.*

*It's been really lovely to see that there's been some emphasis on creating friendships. I've noticed that she has gained some genuine friendships while being at daycare.*

*Being at daycare she builds up that resilience and her social interactions, and her first response being kindness instead of anger or spreading rumors and drama.*

### Possible Responses (Amplifying or Intervening)

- Encourage children to speak up in front of their peers (circle time, show and tell).
- Out of School Care - talent shows, leading an activity; have children explain rather than adults.
- Let children do things on their own and only step in when they ask for help.

- Ownership of their program – child-led curriculum.
- Out of School Care time management - set timers or cues to trigger kids to move on to next activity.
- 0-5 time chart – Provide a visual chart to help children identify what comes next and give them the opportunity to determine when and how to move on to the next activity with minimal teacher prompts.

**Finding 3: I got this. (Confidence)**

Children are showing a confidence in themselves that wasn't apparent prior to joining daycare. They are doing things on their own and declining help from adults. They are proud and excited to practice their learned skills and show their adults what they are capable of.

Parents also confirmed their children are growing in their confidence and independence. As noted in Finding 2, 88% of parents stated their children are gaining a greater sense of independence (see Figure 5). Also, a high number of parents - 80% - reported their children are offering to help others more (see Figure 6).

Figure 5. My child has a greater sense of independence as a result of their participation in the child care centre. (n=59)

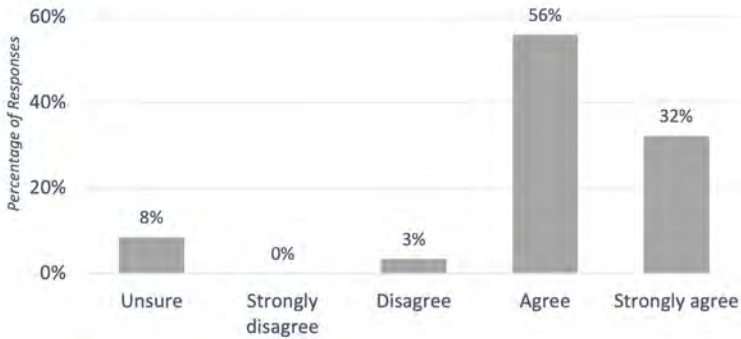
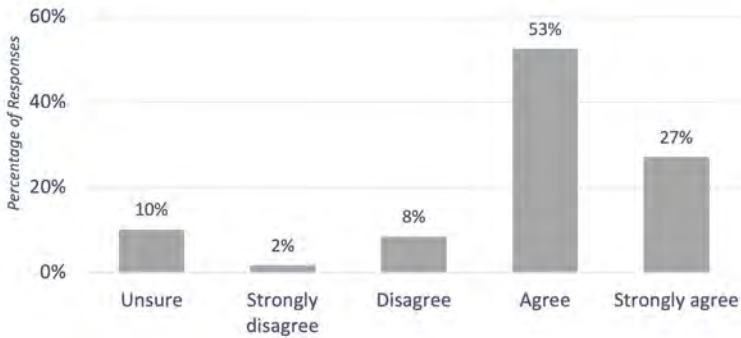


Figure 6. My child offers to help others in need more as a result of their participation in the child care centre. (n=59)



### Key Takeaways

As a result of the program:

- Children are developing increased confidence in their abilities.
- Children are more comfortable doing hard or new things.
- Children are offering more help to their friends.

### Interview Quotes

*Daycare presume confidence. They always say, “No, no, she can do it.”*

*What impressed me is that they are eager to do it and show they want to do it.*

*Since she started daycare, she has brought up, “I’m a big girl at home and I can do it by myself.”*

*She (pushes) herself to do monkey (bars) and she finally can do it by herself. She observed a big children’s activities carefully and she was trying to do [it] day by day. She kept trying it and got a physical confidence.*

## Possible Responses (Amplifying or Intervening)

- Snack and lunch: Have children be responsible for collecting dishes and utensils they need to eat. They need to decide what plate, bowl, or utensil is best to use for their lunch.
- Wait for children to ask for help instead of jumping in and offering help .
- When going outside say, “The weather outside is...What do you need?”
- Out of School Care – Incorporate child-led activities.
- Give children the opportunity to mess up - We fix too many things; we are too prepared.

**Finding 4: One foot in, one foot out. (Emotional Development)**

Children are emotionally and socially developing at a faster rate. There has been a trend of children being more sensitive and emotional as they continue to navigate the world around them. They are learning how to coexist with peers and moving away from the only child mindset.

The survey didn't share further insights regarding emotional development per se. However, some questions, discussed in previous findings, conveyed information about children gaining a sense of independence and trying more things - which could mean confidence and emotional growth. This is another area to potentially pursue further analysis and/or interviews.

## Key Takeaways

As a result of the program:

- Children are developing greater emotional control.
- Children are becoming more sensitive.
- Children are developing increased social skills.
- Children are developing greater emotional intelligence.

### Interview Quotes

*The most significant lesson she has learned is that she can't always have what she wants or always be number one.*

*She wants to treat others the way she wants to be treated but she's very sensitive and is upset and doesn't understand when friends don't choose her over others.*

*A benefit of being at [daycare] is that she is an only child and doesn't have any sibling rivalry and doesn't have things to work through with a sibling on a daily basis.*

*I feel like it's wonderful that at [daycare] she is connected daily with all different ages, both boys and girls, and has to work through stuff and figure things out and figure out a way through those kinds of interactions.*

### Possible Responses (Amplifying or Intervening)

- Continue to encourage children to resolve issues on their own with their peers.
- Talk/teach about emotions.
- Incorporate teamwork and team building activities.
- Let children have conflict as long as no one is getting hurt.

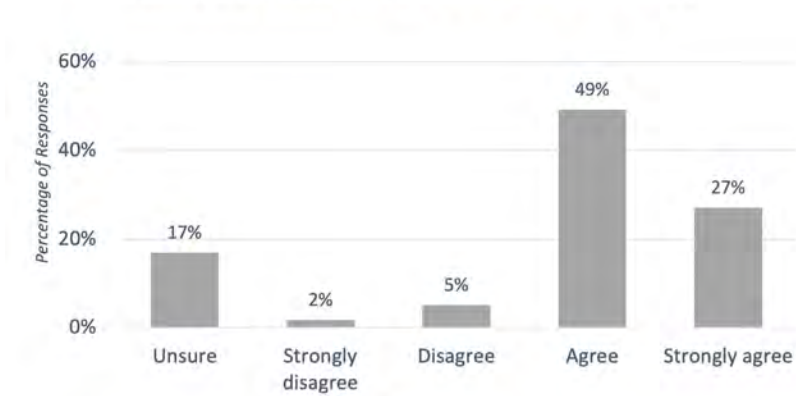
### **Finding 5: Inclusion - We don't need to talk about it.**

The data show that the understanding and acceptance of diversity and inclusion is no longer talked about, but rather just practiced naturally throughout the day. "Friends" are all the same regardless of age, race, gender, or ability - they are all simply just friends.

As the Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion, this is a key intended impact and finding for our childcare centres. Interestingly, one of the learnings is that we don't have to necessarily ask about inclusion anymore - something we've repeatedly done in the past. That said, we still asked about children celebrating inclusion and diversity

and 76% of the families confirmed their children do so (see Figure 7). However, a number of families - 17% - weren't sure and 7% disagreed they are celebrating. Although this question doesn't necessarily ask the question of 'inclusion' it's something to consider that families may not know or agree that the centres are celebrating diversity and inclusion.

Figure 7. My child celebrates inclusion and diversity more as a result of their participation in the child care centre. (n=59)



### Key Takeaways

As a result of the program:

- Children are becoming more accepting of each other.
- Children are showing a great understanding diversity.
- Children are being treated equally, and treating others equally, in class.

### Interview Quotes

*They're always his friends, and he seems to treat them equally. He's not picky about their gender.*

*He has as many friends that are girls that are boys and everyone is the same to him.*

*I like that the staff makes sure that she puts all her [things] away and cleans up. You make sure she doesn't get a pass.*

*He is still very egalitarian.*



### Possible Responses (Amplifying or Intervening)

- Continue to implement multicultural activities.
- Adapt activities to meet the needs of everyone at all times.
- Use gender-neutral language - refrain from boys vs girls.
- Use open communication/truth - don't try to sugar coat topics.
- Ensure the program is safe space for questions.
- Continue to model inclusion.

## **Conclusion**

### **Insights Into Impact**

Independence and confidence are highlighted throughout our findings showing that the children in our care are taking their learned skills from daycare, into their home and community. We are helping raise strong, kind, and independent children. Inclusivity is no longer focused on, but rather comes as a natural teaching. Children see one another as equals with differing abilities and have learned to adapt choices and activities to benefit everyone within the group.

### **Steps Forward**

To continue to promote independence, self-regulation, and empathy towards others. To encourage children to believe in themselves and what they can do and encourage them to learn new skills and adapt them to everyday life.

### **Opportunities for Future Evaluation**

Create three different surveys, in order to focus on individual age groups (currently too broad). Check in with families more often and reminders to families of our play to learn theories and child-led curriculum.

## Community Inclusion

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Carolyn Davey, Krista Maniezzo, Juian Avelino, Frankie Unrau,  
Chris Coon, Michelle Nestoruk and Nicole Zipursky

### Program Overview

**B**ACI offers a range of services that aims to meet the interests and needs of many people. One of our main goals is to build the skills necessary for people to participate fully and confidently in community life, to create and maintain relationships, to volunteer or work, and to have fun. We support people in small groups and on a one-to-one basis, to participate in a range of events and activities in their local community. Supports are usually provided Monday through Friday during the daytime; however, we try to be as flexible as we can to meet the needs of participants.

For our Project Impact we focused on our one-to-one program, where 75 people are supported one to one. Typically, staff start and end their day at the person's home. People are supported to participate in a range of events and activities focusing on recreation, personal growth, relationship building, and volunteering.

For our data collection, we focused both our qualitative and quantitative efforts on the people we support within the one-to-one program and their networks, including family members and caregivers. This approach allowed us to gather comprehensive insights from both the individuals directly receiving support and those closely involved in their lives.

### Program Outcomes

- People are learning and trying new things.
- People feel connected and have a strong sense of belonging in the community.
- People are building meaningful and resilient relationships.
- People are invested in their physical and emotional health, fitness, and safety.

### Intended Impacts

1. People have a strong sense of self and are comfortable taking the lead in directing their lives.
2. People served feel fulfilled engaging in their chosen communities.
3. People feel empowered to live the life they choose.

### Evaluation Methodology

The aim of our evaluation was to see what kind and quality of impact Community Inclusion is having on the people who receive our one-to-one services. To understand this, we explored two broad evaluation questions:

1. What kind and quality of impact are we having on the people who are receiving One to One services?
2. What aspects of our program are causing this impact?

Over the course of the project, we (a) developed and refined our ideas of intended impact and indicators, (b) designed and implemented a mixed methods outcome evaluation using both qualitative and quantitative means to collect and analyze data, (c) identified themes and findings, and (d) considered the implications to those findings for program improvement and innovation.

This project began by identifying and clarifying the intended impact of Community Inclusion. Once the ideas of impact had been developed, we used the Heart Triangle™ model to identify qualitative and quantitative indicators of impact on the mental, behavioral, and

emotional changes in our participants. We used these indicators to design a qualitative interview protocol and a quantitative questionnaire to evaluate progress toward achieving our intended impact.

### **Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis**

For the qualitative portion of the evaluation, we designed an in-depth interview protocol to gain data about the structural, qualitative changes resulting from our program. Our population size for this evaluation was 75 people served in our one-to-one program. We used a purposeful stratified sampling technique to select a representative sample from the population we serve. Our sample size of 19 people was drawn from the following strata of our population:

- Years within service – we interviewed those who have started within the year and have been with BACI 3 years plus.
- A well-rounded age group of participants between 18-35, 35 -45, 45+.
- A variety of communication supports, ensuring we included people with varying levels of communication supports.

Our interview team consisted of the manager and coordinator team of Community Inclusion. We convened one-on-one interviews lasting from between 45 minutes and one hour in length and collected interview data using handwritten notes and the Otter.ai voice to text app.

We then analyzed the data inductively using a modified version of thematic analysis. Each interviewer analyzed the data from their interviews individually to identify initial themes. Together, we developed common themes from all of the interviews and brought them forward as findings.

### **Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis**

For the quantitative portion of the evaluation, we designed a questionnaire to collect data on our quantitative indicators of impact.

We administered this instrument to roughly 75 people supported and their networks. We had a response of 22 people served, a 29% response rate, and 24 network responses, a 32% response rate. The data were analyzed primarily using measures of central tendency. We identified key insights, patterns, and gaps within the data and incorporated these discoveries into the related findings. The most significant insights from the quantitative data are described in the following narrative.

### **Limitations**

As this was a new process for some members of our team, while we all gained valuable learning experiences, we occasionally struggled with communicating the questions in alternative ways. Building props was new for us, and although some were effective in clarifying the questions, others missed the mark and became confusing for some participants.

Given more time, we would have revisited and refined some of our interview questions, as certain questions did not provide the responses we were hoping for, likely due to a misalignment between the intent of the questions and the answers we were seeking.

### **Findings**

#### **Finding 1: Staff hold the key.**

The people we support need help researching and planning out their own schedules. Often times, the people we support don't know where to look for new experiences or how to go about accessing a different part of their community. Over the years initiatives have been formed to help with this, things like online catalogues (Curiko), newsletters, and emails. Despite this effort, when interviewed, the people we support, indicated that they are often doing similar things they have been in years prior. New activities being introduced often relate back to what staff are interested in themselves – or places that staff are comfortable and know well. Staff often report that they struggle to

come up with new activities because they worry about the various risk, safety, and accessibility factors.

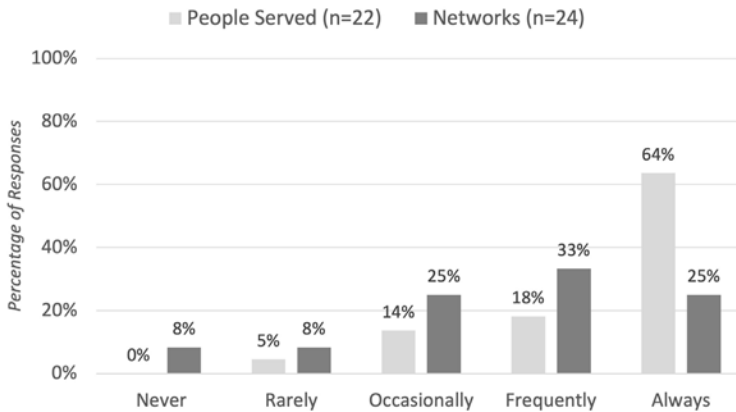
As an organization we have tried to find staff who have a variety of skills in different areas and train them with people who would benefit from those skills. A lot of our casual community support worker pool are trained with several different people. If the staff does well with one type of person, we may pair them with people we support who are similar. However, what we have come to realize is that this is only scratching the surface of what people want and need. In order to break the cycle of “Staff holding the key” we need to also look at what staff are interested in, where they feel most comfortable, their chosen communities. Give them permission and encouragement to bring those parts of themselves to work, helping that happen by pairing staff with people who want to experience similar things. We suspect that if we can do more pairing of support in this way, it will lead to people having greater access to the things they are most interested in learning or trying. When staff feel confident in a space, they are more likely to feel prepared for the various ‘what if’s’ around the logistics.

Some of the people we support have difficulties with verbal communication. This often means that it is up to the staff to initiate the use of these communication systems, to prompt the use, and to be familiar with them themselves. These communication systems also range from person to person. Some people use iPads or cell phones, some people use picture exchange communication systems, some people use sign language or gestures. When staff are working with a variety of people, keeping up on the various communication strategies can be a challenge, and can lead to them not being used or implemented in daily tasks. This, in turn, limits how the people we support can interact with the community without staff assistance.

We compared the interview data to a question on both of our quantitative surveys and found that the majority of people surveyed felt that people served had input on what is in their schedule (see Figure 1). We wonder if this may run contrary to our finding. Does

this require further exploration, or perhaps should we have altered our qualitative interview question in a way that is able to capture what's going on here?

Figure 1. I have input on what is on my schedule. / My loved one has input on what is on their schedule.



#### Interview Quotes

*Michelle helps me a lot. She helps me socialize, she sends me messages, and I like that she checks in with me.*

*Human nature is to take sort of the easy route. (Referring to finding new things.)*

*I am not good at swimming, but I want to try swimming. (Staff person doesn't swim.)*

#### Possible Responses

- Intake /planning: deep dive into personal expectations regarding staff support.
- Pair questions with personal interests.
- Provide additional support for staff around risk taking - new activities, new interest.
- Create intentional check-ins with the person served, network, and staff to ensure the voice of the person continues to be heard/followed.

- Provide access to training, to increase capacity with augmentative communication.
- Rhythm for person served/networks part of the onboarding process - history, impact, better understanding of processes.
- Have opportunities for staff to meet network in the first couple of weeks.
- PF for 1:1.
- Community connections, once a month coming together and discussing possible activities/outings, with the focus on providing staff an opportunity to deepen their skills on how to support the activity.

### **Finding 2: Broken Link**

As we know, meaningful employment is significantly connected to a person's independence, confidence, and freedom of choice. We have heard from the people we support that they express a strong desire for autonomy but may lack a clear understanding of how achieving and maintaining employment can help them reach that goal. Historically, the people we support in the one-to-one service have not had an emphasis of support around gaining employment or skills training. We suspect this may influence their sense of what they can achieve and the path to reach some of these goals.

Additionally, we have heard from people who feel comfortable within BACI-known spaces or frequently visited locations when supported by their staff. We need to explore further how to support people in building their confidence and create resilient safeguards so that they can explore and navigate their community independently.

Upon reflection, our quantitative survey did not include questions that provided sufficient insight to compare or disprove the above statement. However, we feel confident in the statement based on the qualitative interviews conducted.



### Interview Quotes

*I want to go far away. (Followed with a lack of enthusiasm about getting paid employment.)*

*I enjoy learning from friends, not my staff.*

*I need help, that's why I'm here.*

*When I don't go to work, I tell my mom" (Then mother calls in sick for her.)*

### Possible Responses

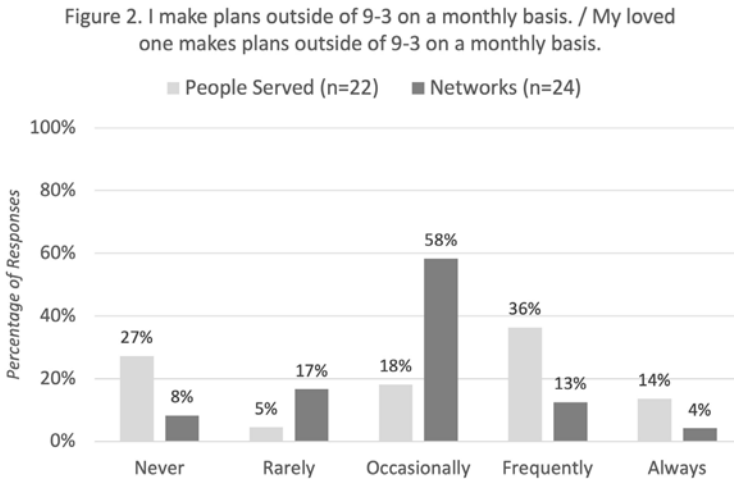
- Have an Employment Specialist dedicated to CI.
- Peer to peer support - show a friend their workplace.
- Peer-led training/ provide resource.
- Group session led by peer talking about the unintended difference of having employment. Maybe bring in professionals to speak.
- In-Service learning day for people supported and for networks to attend.
- Paid work experience program with rotational jobs to try out.
- More of a focus on where you want to be in ten years - discovery to employment.

### **Finding 3: Anxiety isn't just internal.**

Though COVID restrictions are a thing of the past, we still see people who have latched on to these as safeguards. Many of the people we support who used to take transit to our Community Inclusion center are no longer taking transit independently. They have become reliant on transportation through their staff. We have found that people are also reluctant to go to new places as they have gotten so comfortable with the status quo over the last four years. People are feeling most secure in places they know, and transitioning to new spaces is particularly challenging for the younger generation of the adults we support.

In speaking with families and caregivers of youth aging into CLBC services (19+) there has been a common theme of challenges with community access or leaving the home. Families report that their loved ones have become comfortable over COVID, especially when school was delivered online, and that it has been hard to create the expectation of going back out again. There is a particular increase of people saying they feel anxious about trying new things, or leaving their known spaces who fall within this age group.

We have found that people find they are doing lots of new things in Community Inclusion. Networks don't feel the same way - but across the board, people and networks surveyed report that people are not really making plans outside of the 9:00 – 3:00 timeframe (see Figure 2). So, is this a COVID implication and symptom, or is it boredom with what people are doing outside of BACI and is that increasing anxiety? We have more to inquire about.



Interview Quotes

*...his preference right now is not to participate.*

*I feel there are more people looking out for her, not just us anymore. We can relax and have a normal retirement.*

### Possible Responses

- Emphasis on planning based on specific demographics and natural growth that occurs with moving through life.
- Better transition plans for people who are aging out. Start before they finish high school - cut out the CLBC middleman.
- Additional support provided to the networks to help us take our time in transitions with people who are moving into adult services
- Mycompass - using the platform to actively communicate with networks around challenges.

### **Finding 4: Link between anxiety and communication.**

As people we support in the one-to-one services will often use different forms of communication to express their needs and wants, they've let us know that when they're not feeling heard, they'll find other ways to get what they need. Typically, this comes off to others as being disruptive or getting loud.

The people we support utilize the tools they have at their disposal to express to their staff that they're angry, frustrated, or anxious. We've found not only that "behaviour is communication," but also that this significant link between a person served's anxiety and what they're trying to communicate to us requires further exploration and perhaps, new methods or tools to help people communicate their needs before they get anxious or frustrated. Feeling heard is a large part of what drives most human behaviour. Creating systems that the staff can easily adopt and use in daily life will help us get there and help the people we support feel more confident in being heard.

From the perspective of the networks surveyed, we are not always listening when someone says no. However, survey responses from people served showed the opposite (see Figures 3 and 4). Perhaps what requires further thought is looking into what forms of communication the person served feels is communicating their wants and needs, as

this may be the reason for the difference in opinion between person served and their network, i.e., “I get angry when I’m not heard.” The family says, “We’re not furthering the communication of figuring out wants and needs,” while person served is saying, “I’m not going to do it.” We have not yet figured out the why or the alternative.

Figure 3. I say no when I don't want to do something. / My loved one will say no when they don't want to do something.

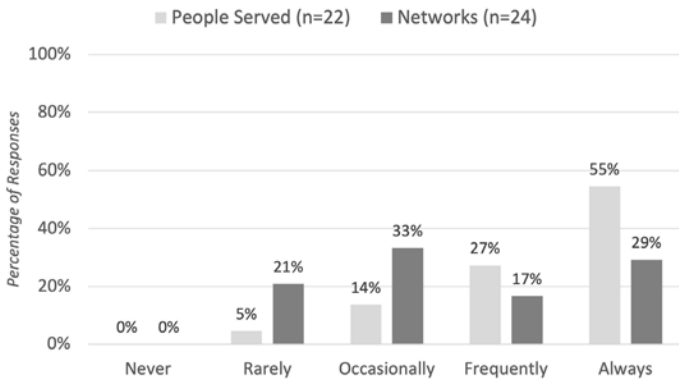
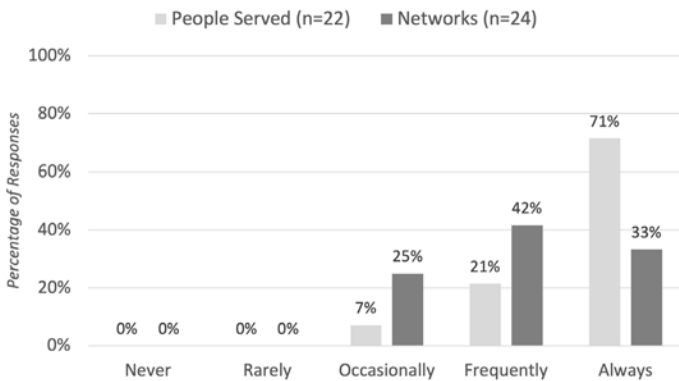


Figure 4. People in my life listen when I say no. / People listen when your loved one says no.



Interview Quotes

*I put my foot down when I don't want to do something. I turn angry when I want something different.*

*I journal every day. (In response to asking about what he does when he is upset or how he asks for help.)*

### Possible Responses

- Create training for staff when they are new hires around basic support strategies including a basic in PBSP.
- Offer a workshop to help create a culture shift around risk aversion to risk tolerance for staff - permission to be flexible and creative.
- Compile training videos and resources around communication systems.
- Support networks in understanding that we support people's decisions not theirs.
- Universal translators that translate body language, maybe use of AI?

### **Finding 5: It's the people not the place x3.**

The people we interviewed indicated that some of their favourite places to go are not because they enjoy the place or what's happening there, but because of the people who they see or who they go with. People identified that they like coming to BACI because of the friends they have made, and if they stop coming, they worry that they will be missed.

A common theme across most of our interviews is that the people we support are motivated by their friends and the staff they feel they most connect with. One person changes how they prepare to come into BACI based on which days they will see which friends. When asked about community people spoke of the people in their lives and spending time with them. This is something that appeared to really matter.

We had a strong response that people and their loved ones feel that BACI staff help them feel welcomed in community. And from the quantitative survey, that community is defined as "the people" rather than "a place." Further inquiry is required to see how much of this welcoming community is brought about by staff, and how much is organically happening between people served, without the support of the staff that work with them.

### Interview Quotes

*I don't want to miss coming because he will miss me. Seeing people is important to me. More important than where I go.*

*[Person served] went to music class twice even though she didn't enjoy the program but just to meet up with people.*

### Possible Responses

- More intentional matching of activities based on relationships that have been formed.
- Focus activities more on strengthening and deepening relationships between people.
- Give Staff access to R&D time to be able to research places and activities that people want to go.
- Explore options for service outside of regular day program hours, so people served can meet more people.
- Connect networks to help facilitate activities with one another outside of regular day program hours.
- Find more support for people served to help them better seek out their chosen community based on interests (i.e., meet ups, Curiko, events and adventures).

## Conclusion

Through this process we identified three realms of impact that we hope to achieve:

Impact 1 - People have a strong sense of self and are comfortable taking the lead in directing their lives.

Our first finding - "Staff Hold the Key" - relates to this impact statement in a number of ways. We recognize that we have a lot of work to do to be able to make it so that rather than the staff holding the key to program participation, we get to a place in which the folks we serve have their own set of keys.

A key part of this impact for us is that people choose what resources they want access to, but if “Staff hold the key,” then how are we making this possible? Further exploration and work is required to make it so that people have the opportunity to take the lead.

Furthermore, people served should know that their services are adaptable and can address what’s needed in different stages in their life. If we’re seeing people struggling with communication, are people able to articulate their changing interests and priorities? Or do they need to rely on their networks to do so? Again, further exploration is needed in order to provide the necessary communication tools for the folks we serve to more effectively communicate their changing priorities.

Lastly, Finding #4, “Link between anxiety and communication,” shows that people served are confident and comfortable expressing when they don’t want to do something. One person interviewed highlighted this saying, “When I want something, I put my foot down, I get angry.” However, the networks have a different perspective. We need to further explore how communication is being expressed and generalized across other individuals and how we are supporting alternative solutions and ideas.

### **Steps Forward**

- Creating intentional check ins with the person served, network, and staff to ensure the voice of the person continues to be heard/followed
- Rhythm for person served/networks part of the onboarding process - history, impact, better understanding of processes.

### **Impact 2 - People served feel fulfilled engaging in their chosen communities.**

It is essential that people served are confident to lead the lives they want. However, we discovered we have not done a good job supporting the folks we serve in seeing that independence and freedom of

choice must always be linked to work. It will be important, moving forward to establish new rhythms and routines to ensure that, upon entering service (ideally even earlier), people served not just know and understand this link, but we do a good job ensuring they appreciate it's value.

We noticed through both our interviews and surveys that many people served have a strong attachment and sense of ownership to their chosen community. Which, as mentioned before, is not a place, but rather the people. We feel this is a great step in the right direction at achieving this impact. Though more work is required to bring about a stronger sense of fulfillment, and to broaden the idea of “community” to more than just the other people served here at BACI.

### **Steps Forward**

- Focus activities more on strengthening and deepening relationships between people.
- More intentional matching of activities based on relationships that have been formed.

### **Impact 3 - People feel empowered to live the life they choose.**

In Finding 3, “Anxiety isn’t just internal,” we found that people entering adult services are not always seeing their potential. We recognize the need to further explore how we can build capacity to support this.

As a department, we’ve made some meaningful strides to bring about this impact within the lives of the folks we served. However, this finding highlights that some individuals advocate for themselves by getting angry, using this as a method of communication to get what they want—or to avoid what they don’t want. We question if this behavior truly reflects empowerment and the ability to live the life they choose. While we’ve stated our commitment to helping people make their own lifestyle choices and adapt services to their changing interests and priorities, this finding suggests there may be more to explore.



### **Step Forward**

- Create training for staff when they are new hires around basic support strategies, including a basic training in PBS and augmentative communication.
- Community connections, once a month coming together and discussing possible activities/outings, with the focus on providing staff an opportunity to deepen their skills on how to support the activity.

# Employment Services and Training

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*BEST*

Jerome S. Nicol, Manager of Inclusive Employment and the BEST Team

## **Program Overview**

BEST matches job seekers - adults with developmental disabilities who are referred by Community Living British Columbia- with employers who have unmet business needs.

## **Intended Impacts**

1. **Persons create a path to realize their dreams.** Persons supported are self-reflective and aware of the skills, strengths, and experience that they possess which are relevant to the needs of employers.
2. **Persons harness their internal motivation.** Persons can name and can take tangible steps towards what they want for themselves, and they know when they do or don't need support. They are accountable for the changes they want in their life. Persons take initiative, but this does not mean they are on their own.
3. **Persons build resilience and independence.** Person's sense of agency and self-concept is enhanced through the support provided.

## **Evaluation Methodology**

The aim of our evaluation was to see what kind and quality of impact name of program is having on the population we are serving. To understand this, we explored two broad evaluation questions:

1. What kind and quality of impact are we having on our participants?
2. What aspects of our program are causing this impact?

Over the course of the project, we (a) developed and refined our ideas of intended impact and indicators, (b) designed and implemented a mixed methods outcome evaluation using both qualitative and quantitative means to collect and analyze data, (c) identified themes and findings, and (d) considered the implications to those findings for program improvement and innovation.

This project began by identifying and clarifying the intended impact of BEST. Once the ideas of impact had been developed, we used the Heart Triangle™ model to identify qualitative and quantitative indicators of impact on the mental, behavioral, and emotional changes in our participants. We used these indicators to design a qualitative interview protocol and a quantitative questionnaire to evaluate progress toward achieving our intended impact.

### **Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis**

For the qualitative portion of the evaluation, we designed an in-depth interview protocol to gain data about the structural, qualitative changes resulting from our program. BEST delimited our population to persons seeking employment vs. persons who are employed as it allowed for a particular set of questions to be asked, as BEST is more interested to learn from persons who are currently looking for work as the job search process is taking longer and is more challenging for a variety of factors. The current number of job seekers is 44 but that was delimited further to those who have been with BEST for six months, as we were able to speak more fulsomely about the process. Therefore, the population size for this evaluation was 38. We used a purposeful stratified sampling technique to select a representative sample from the population we serve. Our sample size was 15 drawn from the following strata of our population:

- Age Range (20-60)
- M/F - 6F/9M (40% - F/60% -M) (Pop. size of 38 - 14F/24M - 37%F/M- 63%)
- Race/Ethnicity - varied.
- Urban - Metro Vancouver Area

Our interview team consisted of the five Employment Specialists who work directly with the persons from their caseload. We convened one-on-one interviews lasting from between 45 minutes and one hour in length and collected interview data using handwritten notes or voice recording or the Otter voice-to-text transcription app.

We then analyzed the data inductively using a modified version of thematic analysis. Each interviewer analyzed the data from their interviews individually to identify initial themes. Together, we developed common themes from all the interviews and brought them forward as findings.

### **Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis**

For the quantitative portion of the evaluation, we designed a questionnaire to collect data on our quantitative indicators of impact. We administered this instrument to 65 and had a response of 43, a 66% response rate. The data were analyzed primarily using measures of central tendency. We identified key insights, patterns, and gaps within the data and incorporated these discoveries into the related findings. The most significant insights from the quantitative data are described in the following narrative.

### **Limitation:**

The main limitation was in trying to connect with persons to complete the survey - due to holidays or other circumstances.

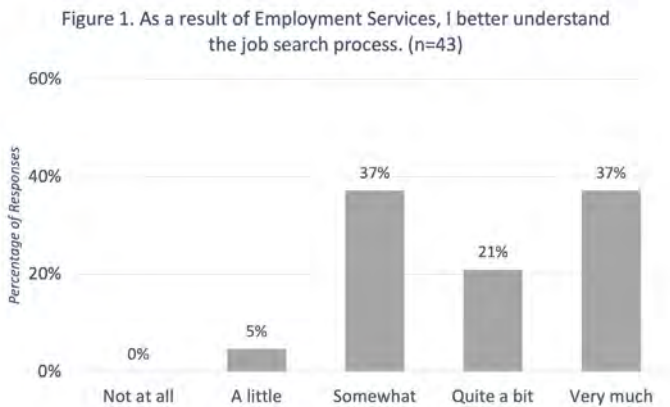
## Findings

### Finding 1: “Working 9 to 5” (to get a job)

The theme of prioritizing the work search was central to the discussion from which all the themes flowed. The data show that persons can better recognize that it takes considerable time, patience, and commitment to find a job. Through the process of discovery (figuring out what you want to do and what you can do), resume/cover letter development, job search, and interviewing is a journey to understand yourself better.

However, the responses from the survey questions are somewhat at odds with the interview findings. Only 58% of respondents indicated that they have a better understanding (very much/quite a bit) of the job search process (see Figure 1).

To create a more collaborative process between the person and the Employment Specialist (ES), and not only what the ES is doing on the person’s behalf, the ESs will need to be introduced to a framework to better understand an interactive model of support.



#### Key Takeaways

- The job search process is a skill.
- Getting a job takes ongoing commitment.
- Persons better understand that the process requires the ability to make a good impression.

## Interview Quotes

*Job Search is a full-time job. A lot of work, a lot of research, by also investigating different sectors. To kind of see, different sectors. And investigating where I fit into those sectors.*

*Yeah, the job searching has definitely, like opened up to more opportunities for me, looking at all these different places. And applications. Yeah, helping me open up to different kinds of jobs.*

*It's more about social skills than actual skills. It's very confusing sometimes still. I'm still trying to get it but it's like, people want you to be [a] good spokesperson more than actually being good at the job for some reason, it's weird. You've got to be a people person, not [just] a good worker.*

## Possible Responses

- Build into BEST process an increased understanding of what is required of the person and the steps necessary to secure a job.
- Work with staff to practice the skills that are required.
- Bring the person and family/caregiver/friend in as a partner.
- Facilitate persons' increased engagement in the process.

**Finding 2: "Get out of your own way"**

The theme of personal growth, self-awareness, and reflection was identified as an integral aspect of the job search process. Interview data reveal that persons have come to better understand that to achieve something, they must put themselves out there, and this requires some courage, flexibility, and fortitude if they are going to find an opportunity.

The responses from the quantitative survey, however, do not quite line up with the interview data. Only 53% of persons indicated that

they are more confident (very much, quite a bit) to try new things (see Figure 2) and just 60% of respondents indicated that they are more comfortable (very much/quite a bit) speaking to prospective employers (see Figure 3).

The fear to try something and the fear of rejection can hold a person back. Part of an Employment Specialist’s role is to build up the person’s confidence to try and then to reflect with the person about the learning gained if it does or does not work out. They are also there to support the person in better understanding that this is all part of the job search process.

Figure 2. As a result of Employment Services, I am more confident to try new things. (n=43)

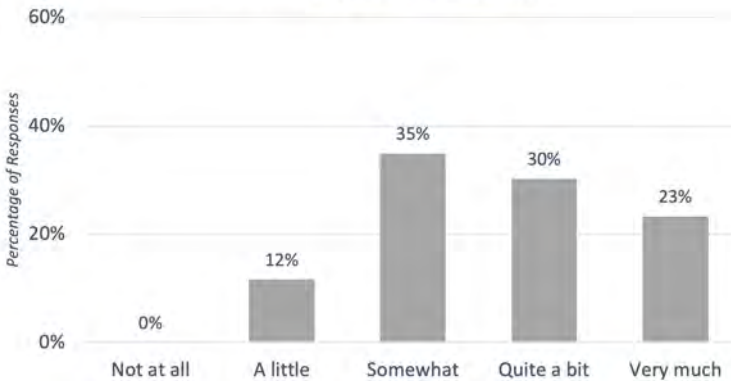
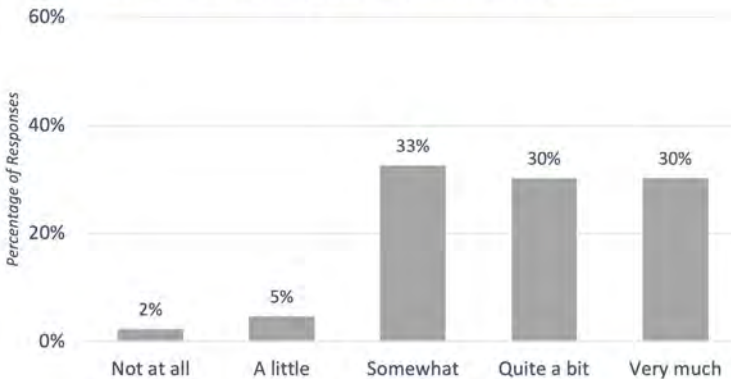


Figure 3. As a result of Employment Services, I feel more comfortable speaking to prospective employers. (n=43)



### Key Takeaways

Persons are developing key attributes that are integral to a successful job search process:

- Flexibility
- Risk Taking
- Forbearance

### Interview Quotes

*Getting confidence after applying to a posting and waiting awhile to get to build up confidence to be comfortable and then, email the employer about like, “Hey, I haven’t heard anything. Is there any opportunity for me?” Yeah, absolutely. Taking a risk like that.*

*You can’t let fear hold you back. You can’t let fear of the unknown hold you back because you’re always going to wonder.*

*Trying something new and have(ing) an experience. I think it’s a really good thing in my lifetime.*

*It was difficult. A couple of times it got difficult for me. Pretty challenging.*

### Possible Responses

- Practice talking to employers (cold calling/information interviews).
- Create opportunities for the person to try new things.
- Group work/practice.
- Foster a positive outlook.
- Small steps toward change.



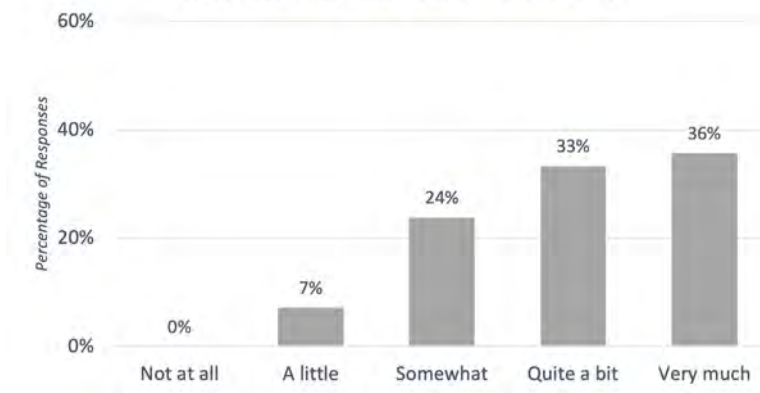
**Finding 3: “I’m Ok, I’m Ok”**

The theme of self-confidence was identified. As persons engage and feel more trusting of the process, they draw from past experiences, become more open, and express eagerness to try something new. There are connections drawn between other aspects of the person’s life.

Throughout the process, the Employment Specialist is there to act as guide - to encourage and support the person. To assist the person to realize their potential, strengths, and to expand/explore areas of interest.

The quantitative survey results match up well with the qualitative findings - 69% of persons indicated that they could identify more (very much/quite a bit) job opportunities in areas of interest (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. As a result of Employment Services, I can identify more job opportunities in my areas of interest. (n=42)



**Key Takeaways**

- Through the job search process, persons come to better understand/realize their abilities.
- Persons are recognizing that new learning is important.
- Persons better understand that challenging oneself stretches a person.

## Interview Quotes

*I would kind of tell yourself, never talk yourself out of something, because it could really be your passion for something in your lifetime.*

*The confidence to go out, and learn anything new, but I have gained more confidence to actually go out and look for work and instead of just being online. I could go out and talk to potential employers.*

*I'm freaked out! You know I learned the process of job search, how to find a job, how to fill out an application, and about different job-related websites. I know my skills and learn that sometimes I must take a course if I want to grow or find a job in a specific area.*

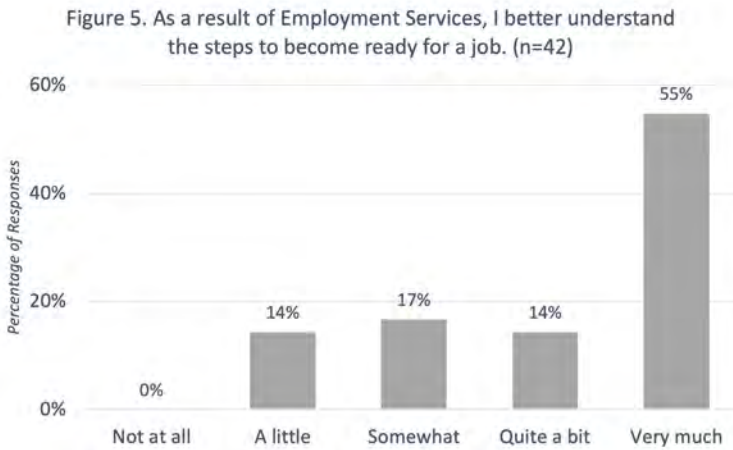
## Possible Responses

- Homework: Get person to try something outside of meetings with ES.
- Exploring interests and how those interest translate to the job market.
- Engaging in research.
- Education/volunteering/training

**Finding 4: “3P”**

The theme of resilience was identified. Persons state that they have feelings of frustration and confusion in this process but as they have more experiences and opportunities - applying for jobs, contacting employers, cold calling or information interviews, interviews, etc. - that the process becomes less challenging. From these experiences come patience, persistence, and perseverance. For the Employment Specialist to support the person to develop an internal locus of control is necessary - as the job search process is externally driven and generally takes several months.

Results from the quantitative survey support the findings - 69% of respondents indicated that they better understand (very much/quite a bit) the steps to become ready for a job (see Figure 5).



#### Key Takeaways

Persons are discovering that the job search process:

- Can be fun
- Is hard.
- Is not straight forward.
- Takes patience, persistence, and perseverance.

#### Interview Quotes

*I'm starting to learn what I want to know with my employment journey. I know what I want to do now, I did not know before. I was pretty down in the dumps before. But since I know what I want to and what kind of person I want to be it('s) making me feel like I can pursue that. Don't do things you can't do - forget it. I am not a typist; I can't do that anymore.*

*Job search is hard and when they invite [you] to interview, then nothing happen, this is not good. It makes me angry. Why no? This is a challenge. I say to myself this is nothing*

*wrong with me. Sometimes market (is) not open and sometimes they find another person. But I can follow my dream and be positive.*

*I think the difficulty would be looking at our jobs, we filled out a certain amount of applications, and none of them accepted.*

*I just remember to have fun.*

#### Possible Responses

- Reflecting with persons on challenges.
- Charting progress - jobs applied for, interviews, offers.
- Follow up with employer.

#### **Finding 5: “Talk Talk”**

Through the job search process, clients identified the theme of creating positive habits and self-talk. Developing skills such as time management, organization skills, grooming/appearance, and communication/presentation skills takes practice. All of them are necessary to attain and maintain employment.

Correspondingly, the highest ranked question from the quantitative survey question, at 77% of respondents, was a better understanding of workplace behaviour (very much/quite a bit), which relates to the habits listed above (see Figure 6).

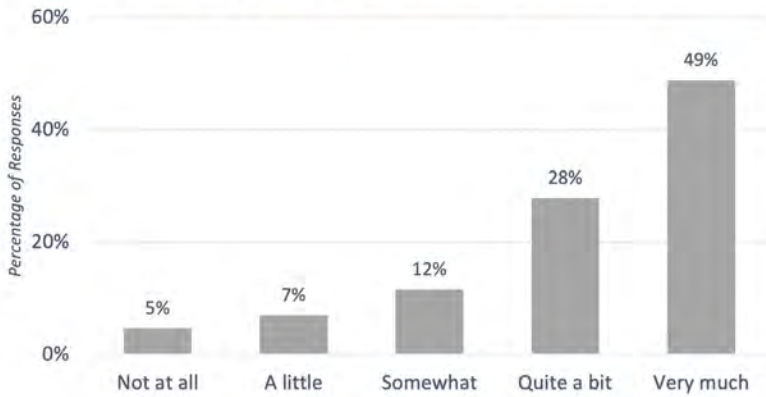
By supporting the person to develop positive behaviours, habits, and skills, the Employment Specialist is assisting the person with being successful in work and in life, now and in the future.

#### Key Takeaways

Persons are developing positive work habit and skills, such as:

- Time Management
- Organization
- Communication
- Managing stress

Figure 6. As a result of Employment Services, I have a better understanding of appropriate behaviour at work. (n=43)



Interview Quotes

*Sometimes, actually, it will be a little frustrating for me. When I can't find any jobs or when there's no openings or job postings and to me it's frustrating ... I take deep breaths again.*

*It has been easier to take care of myself, I've learned lots of life skills and home skills to be able to take care of myself and also do a lot of scheduling for myself, so I can stay on top of them, but it's also really hard to stick to them.*

*Communication skills are part of the skills that I have gained ... II have become more confident in social situations and have learned how to introduce myself and manage my anxiety.*

*The confidence to go out, and learn anything new, but I have gained more confidence to actually go out and look for work and instead of just being online I could go out and talk to potential employers.*

Possible Responses

- Identify with person - what has been achieved and skills developed.

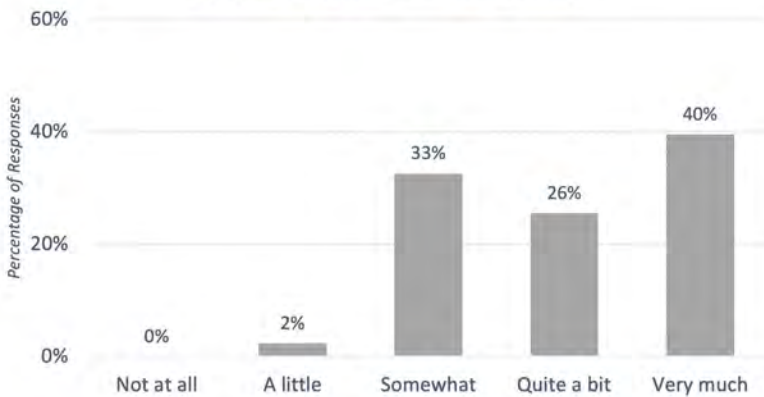
- Landmarks - Interviews/Jobs Applied For/Contacts Made.
- Practice communication.
- Activities/Hobbies/Interests

**Finding 6: “No One Makes It Up Everest Alone”**

The theme of support was identified as persons understanding that this is not a solo journey and that they have the backing of others (family, friends, and agency staff) who want them to succeed. Results from the quantitative survey support the finding - 66% of respondents indicated that they are better equipped to succeed in a job (see Figure 7).

In knowing about a person’s network and potentially connecting with them, the Employment Specialist can tap into other avenues of support in the job search. As networking is underutilized in the current approach in the job search, leveraging this support can be a more effective strategy and crucial to a person’s success.

Figure 7. As a result of Employment Services, I am better equipped to progress in my work. (n=43)



**Key Takeaways**

Persons are better able to recognize the support available to them from:

- Self
- Others - family/friends
- Agency staff

## Interview Quotes

*I mean...talking with you...you're really helping me [with] everything. And communicat(ing) every day really helps me to keep on going at everything I'm doing.*

*Just talking to you guys, your ideas, and your support? Makes me feel like we just have to know how we get those contacts, how we talk to them. How to contact them how we make them listen to us because we're important. You know, this shows you that we're getting a better feel.*

*I do need help, I've noticed that, and that I'm here not just because of what I have been able to do, but because of the people and the connections that I had to help me get [to] this point. It's a joint effort. I had to put [in] the effort, but I also had really good people helping me too.*

*I am proud of myself. I am proud of my family. I am proud of everyone who supported me.*

## Possible Responses

- Share opportunities with the team (internal).
- Mind map a network/community.
- Family/Relatives - Can they provide leads/contacts/connections?
- Friends - Do you they have a job? Can they recommend the job?

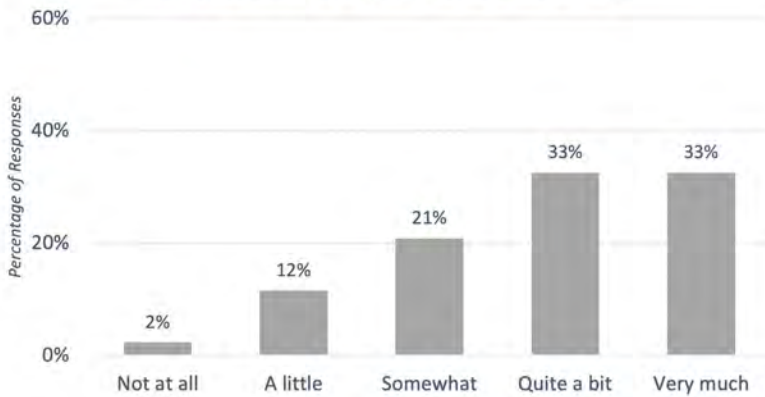
## **Finding 7: "LA Confidential"**

The themes of self-confidence and understanding the value of self were identified throughout the interviews. Through the process, individuals develop their ability to recognize that what they are marketing is themselves - their skills, attributes, abilities, strengths, and knowledge that they have developed through their work, volunteering, hobbies and interests. Personal branding is a guiding concept.

As the Employment Specialist and the person work together, the understanding develops for the person that what they are selling is themselves and not simply applying for a job. When this powerful idea is realized, a person’s self-confidence grows as they understand their value.

Results from the quantitative survey support the findings - 66% of respondents indicated that they are better able to recognize (very much/quite a bit) different ways to use skills (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. As a result of Employment Services, I am better able to recognize different ways to use my skills. (n=43)



Key Takeaways

Through working with their Employee Specialist, persons are developing:

- Determination
- A positive outlook
- Reflection - drawing on past successes/experiences

Interview Quotes

*For me, [my] number one skill has to be communication. I feel like I've communicated better. With anything in general. Like, since I started working, I felt like communicating with people helped me build confidence.*



*I'm not as much of a nervous wreck as I was before. I will be honest, I did have sometimes where I just have [the previous Employment Specialist] at BACI, they would just do the conversations for me because I was just way too nervous. Because I was essentially a shaky little chihuahua, I was so nervous I could barely even talk, but now I'm here, I'm comfy, and I'm enjoying a conversation.*

*Sometimes I find that having a disability can be challenging. But I've also learned that people aren't always accepting; some are. It's kind of a mixed bag. And you just got to know when you're looking for a job, not to get too disappointed when things don't go your way. And to just keep your head up when things kind of go south. And not give up. Just keep that determination. Because as my mom once said to me, sometimes you're gonna get a 100 no's before you get a yes.*

*Learning more about job sites, my potential, and boosting confidence.*

*I can go and find a job. I feel the power of being independent.*

#### Possible Responses

- Support persons to unearth their skills/abilities throughout the process.
- Hard/soft skills/Transferrable skills
- Do exercises with person/identify things that may help

#### **Finding 8: "Connectivity"**

Many interviewees talked about contributing; the value and respect of being seen and having work colleagues. They recognize the importance of having a place to go outside of home and being part of the world. They see value in helping the household and being/becoming more independent.

However, the quantitative results are mixed regarding this finding. Sixty-five percent of respondents indicated that they ask more questions (very much, quite a bit) to help themselves understand what the tasks of the job are (see Figure 9) but only 59% of respondents indicated they are better able to develop (very much, quite a bit) a positive relationship with their co-workers (see Figure 10).

Figure 9. As a result of Employment Services, I ask more questions to help me understand what the tasks of the job are. (n=43)

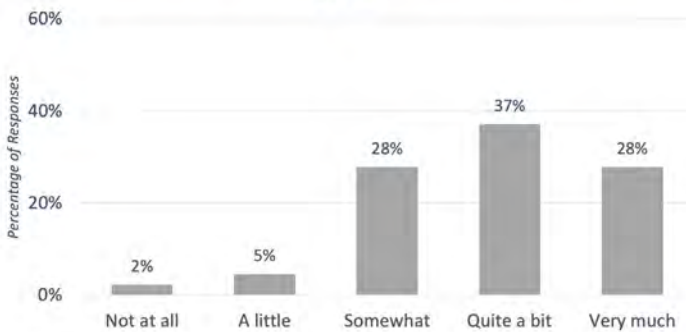
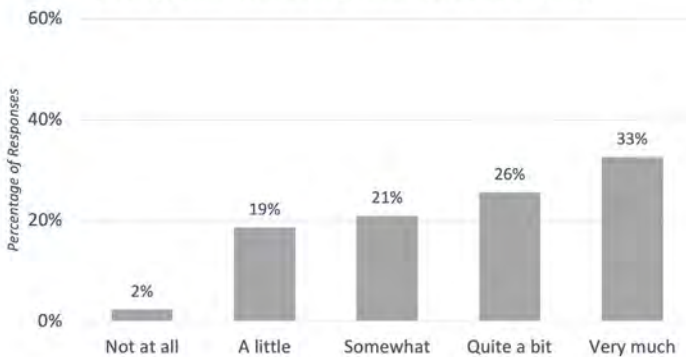


Figure 10. As a result of Employment Services, I am better able to develop positive relationships with my coworkers. (n=43)



Key Takeaways

- Persons are seeing value in being part of a community and contributing outside of the home.
- Persons have seen some improvement in developing positive relationships with co-workers, but there is still work to be done in this area.

### Interview Quotes

*I'd really like to contribute to the community, but it's been really difficult...being a person with disabilities.*

*I realize anyone can contribute, even just in small ways, it's just about what you can do and your limits. It's just learning - because no one starts with every skill they need. It takes time to learn them, and you have to actually put [in] the time to get those skills, and it takes time. It takes a lot of time.*

*Finding jobs was always hard. Nobody believes you can contribute. I can contribute.*

### Possible Responses

- Reinforce the idea that everyone has something to offer.
- Encourage persons to seek out opportunities in unexpected ways (example - volunteering can lead to other opportunities).

### **Finding 9: "You gotta have heart"**

Persons' individual passions drive their employment goals. Interviewees talked about the need to find what inspires them and embrace their true self. Understanding oneself and determining what is important to them is a major step in the job search process.

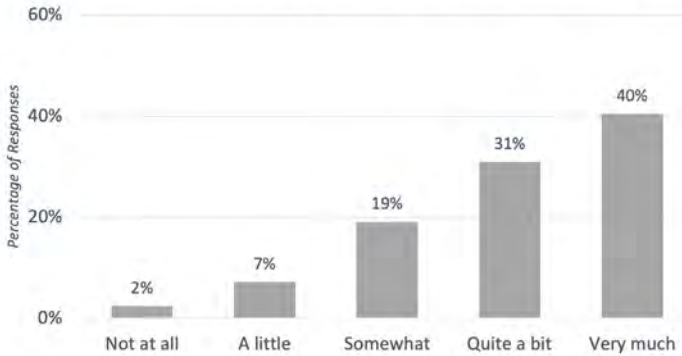
The quantitative survey backs up the findings, as 71% of respondents indicated that they are more confident in their ability to succeed in a job (see Figure 11).

### Key Takeaways

Through their participation in the program, persons are developing:

- Motivation
- Aspiration
- Hope

Figure 11. As a result of Employment Services, I am more confident in my ability to succeed in a job. (n=42)



Interview Quotes

*I've been able to actually focus on my own dreams again.... I have my own interests and I should use those talents and the knowledge that I have that others don't to find my own field.*

*I've always wanted a job where I feel like I'm giving back. I think [that] is really important. And that's why eventually I want to do something in a customer service role, where I feel like I'm helping members of the public because it's also what I'm really good at.*

Possible Responses

- Support persons in finding opportunities for working interviews/trial shifts and informational interviews.
- Support persons in better understanding what is required for each potential position.

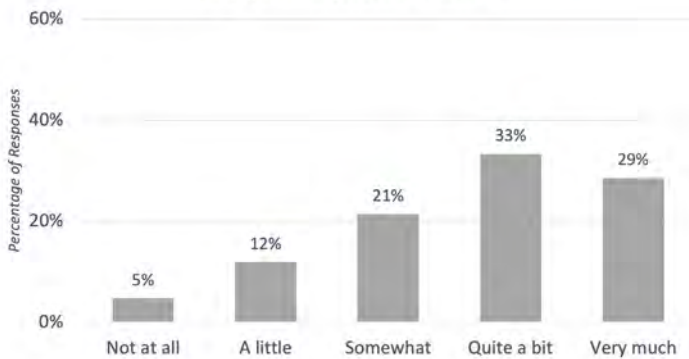
**Finding 10: “Doldrums” (Intertropical Convergence Zone)**

Interviewees shared how the job search process can be a lonely and isolating experience. This thread runs through all aspects of this process including the length of time required, searching for opportunities, submitting applications, employers not following up or contacting them, and interviews that do not result in a job offer.

The challenge for the Employment Specialist and person is in how and when to respond. The average length of a job search at BEST is approximately 9 months (in line with the BC Average for CLBC funded agencies).

Quantitative results also reflect this finding as only 62% indicated that they are more engaged (very much/quite a bit) in their job search (see Figure 12).

Figure 12. As a result of Employment Services, I am more engaged in my job search. (n=42)



### Key Takeaways

The job search can invoke feelings of:

- Rejection
- Boredom
- Loneliness/Isolation

### Interview Quotes

*It can be very discouraging, and I definitely have days where I feel very frustrated. And I feel like I'm really unsuccessful at this.*

*I cannot understand when employers invite me to an interview and then deny hiring. It makes me angry and upset. It is a hard process and some people do not ask questions that fit us. It makes me confused sometimes.*

*We don't always want to look for jobs...sometimes it can be boring.*

*Sometimes (it's) hard to stay engaged or feel motivated, you know, because I've been searching for jobs for a while. I've forgotten how long actually it took. Yeah, it can be frustrating, you know, typical. But, you know, I guess you have to like, make the wait for the opportunity.*

*Sometimes like, why go look for a job and all the jobs have been terrible?*

*What do you do when [you] do not feel motivated, you feel depressed? Yeah, because nothing's working...it's kind of like, nobody's meeting you. Getting prepared for rejection. Yeah. So I think, "Something's wrong with you."*

#### Possible Responses

- Work to close the gap in what clients wants/schedule - times/where - location/skills required.
- Develop addition ways that Employment Specialists can support persons in widening their horizons, identify transferable skills, find opportunities for additional training/development/learning, and volunteer opportunities.
- Support persons in asking the question, "Is this the right option at this time?"
- Goal setting - reassess/reset
- Encourage persons to take a pause when needed.

#### **Conclusion**

Employment Specialists learned much through the interview process about the persons that they support. It allowed for a fuller understanding of the person, as typically meetings are focused specifically on the job search process.

### **Insights Into Impact**

In considering the 3 impacts outlined, there is good evidence in the findings and survey results to suggest that BEST is having the intended results, though there are areas for improvement and new approaches to take.

Impact #1: Persons create a path to realize their dreams.

Persons articulated that self-confidence is important through this process, as they come to understand/realize abilities and passions and connect them to the job market. Persons also understand that it requires commitment and the ability to connect with employers. Persons indicated that they have a better understanding of strengths, areas of growth, and different ways to use skills.

At the same time there is data indicating that there is work to be done to increase persons' confidence in trying new things. The area that can be developed is engaging the person more in the job search process - partly through more direct engagement with employers, cold calling, and informational interviews.

In the context of employment support, there is a challenge to provide opportunities to try a job or have an experience. Volunteer experiences and training opportunities are some avenues to gain experience and skills.

Impact #2– Persons harness their internal motivation.

Persons can identify what they would want to do, but the challenge of getting to that place is difficult as they realize that it may take longer and require more effort than simply applying for jobs. The process also involves creating good habits, positive self-talk, and resilience. Maintaining motivation is tough. Persons are accountable to themselves but understand that support from others is important to success.

Persons indicated that they feel confident to succeed in a job and understand the steps to become ready for a job, but engagement in the

job search process is lower. This disconnect speaks to motivation and will be addressed through a new Introductory process, understanding the collaborative nature of the process, involving support networks as appropriate, and a new annual check in to determine progress.

Impact #3 – Persons build resilience and independence.

Persons indicated in the findings that the job search is frustrating and confusing. However, as they had more experiences and opportunities to engage, were able to develop patience, persistence, and perseverance. This is also reflected in the understanding that learning new things and challenging yourself can stretch you.

The link between job search skills and preparedness was identified as persons connect the search to aspects of their home and personal life. This is somewhat contradicted in the lower survey results for goal setting and self-advocacy. Connecting with external or internal partners can be valuable in supporting a person to gain confidence, try things, and learn, and is identified in steps forward.

### **Steps Forward**

BEST is undertaking a variety of measures to enhance and increase communication, frontload and streamline the process, involve more inter-agency and intra-agency partners, initiate an Annual Review for ES/Job Seekers, and start a monthly job club to bring together ESs/Job Seekers. A few of these initiatives have already been undertaken and others are new initiatives starting in September of 2024 and will be rolled out over the coming year.

- Initiate introductory meetings prior to intake to better understand persons coming to employment services.  
Discuss career ladder.
- To understand the process as more of a joint endeavor and collaboration - creation of new joint email accounts between Employment Specialist/Person, specifically for the purpose of Job Search. This has already been initiated and



will help in communication to ensure that opportunities (e.g., interview invites) are not missed. This will be tacitly discussed in the introductory meeting.

- To better involve person's support networks in the process - identify networks/networking as an underutilized resource in the job search process.
- BEST has initiated a new internal Teams Chat for resource sharing (Jobs/Training/Volunteer) between BEST and other parts of BACI (Stitched, CI, LIFE, Outreach) to widen the pool of potential avenues as all these parts of the agency have individuals interested in/seeking employment.
- Connect persons to external partners/resources to support – e.g., Curiko, Canucks Autism Network programs, Inclusion BC Mentorability program.
- BEST has created and will maintain data bases for volunteer and training/education opportunities - this will help to streamline the process of research when looking for resources.
- Update list of current/recent of Employers that BEST relates to through persons employed to acknowledge those employers and potentially connect them to other job seekers.
- Annual check-in with job seekers to discuss what has been achieved, whether service is doing what is intended, and whether changes are needed.
- Begin Monthly Job Club to bring persons and Employment Specialists together to work on job applications and learn about specific topic areas related to job search, as currently it is a very siloed process. This may help to break down the doldrums (isolation and loneliness) in the job search process and create a greater sense of community through the power of group and shared learning.

**Opportunities for Future Evaluation**

There are many good opportunities for future evaluation based on the changes and additions that BEST will make to the Intake, Discovery, Job Search/Job Finding process.



## Home and Community Services

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### Program Overview

**H**ome and Community services is made up of 17 staff supported homes, supporting adults with disabilities. Each home has between two to five people living together. Staffing is provided 24 hours a day, seven days a week. These homes are located throughout the Lower Mainland and, in most cases, are licensed under Community Care Facilities Licensing and governed by the Adult Care Regulations and the Community Care and Assisted Living Act.

A home is a place where people find comfort, refuge and renewal. It is a place of belonging and a sanctuary for those who reside there. It is also an extension of those who live there, a place where one's personal tastes and preferences are visible. Supporting people to create their genuine "home" includes encouraging people to share and identify their personal expectations to live their desired lives, building relationships, experiencing a comfortable home life, have meaningful contributions in the community, increase personal health and safety, pursue opportunities for growth and development, and increase self-determination.

### Intended Impacts

1. People live a healthy and well-balanced life.
2. People are their own historians.

3. People build and maintain flourishing relationships.
4. People embrace success no matter how big or small.

## **Evaluation Methodology**

The aim of our evaluation was to see what kind and quality of impact Home and Community services is having on adults with disabilities living in staff-supported homes. To understand this, we explored two broad evaluation questions:

1. What kind and quality of impact are we having on adults with disabilities?
2. What aspects of our program are causing this impact?

Over the course of the project, we (a) developed and refined our ideas of intended impact and indicators, (b) designed and implemented a mixed methods outcome evaluation using both qualitative and quantitative means to collect and analyze data, (c) identified themes and findings, and (d) considered the implications to those findings for program improvement and innovation.

This project began by identifying and clarifying the intended impact of Home and Community. Once the ideas of impact had been developed, we used the Heart Triangle™ model to identify qualitative and quantitative indicators of impact on the mental, behavioral, and emotional changes in the people we support. We used these indicators to design a qualitative interview protocol and a quantitative questionnaire to evaluate progress toward achieving our intended impact.

## **Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis**

For the qualitative portion of the evaluation, we designed an in-depth interview protocol to gain data about the structural, qualitative changes resulting from our program. Our population size for this evaluation was 150 people. We used a purposeful stratified sampling technique to select a representative sample from the population we

serve. Our sample size was 36, drawn from the following strata of our population:

- Age (19-30 years old, 31-50 years old, 50-65 years old, 65+ years old)
- Stakeholder Type (Person-supported or Family/Network member)
- Length of time receiving Home and Community services (less than 1 year, 1-5 years, 5+ years)

We chose to stratify based on age to capture generational variances; type of stake holder to determine if impact differences between people directly receiving service versus those interacting with services as a third party; and length of time receiving services from Home and Community to determine help classify our recent and short-term impacts from our historical and long-term impacts.

Our interview team consisted of Supervisors, Coordinator, and Managers from the Home and Community leadership team. We convened one-on-one interviews lasting from between 45 minutes and one hour in length and collected interview data using a combination of audio-transcriptions (provided through Otter AI) and written interviews.

We then analyzed the data inductively using a modified version of thematic analysis. Each interviewer analyzed the data from their interviews individually to identify initial themes. Together, we developed common themes from all of the interviews and brought them forward as findings.

### **Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis**

For the quantitative portion of the evaluation, we designed a questionnaire to collect data on our quantitative indicators of impact. We administered this instrument to 60 individuals and had a response of 17, a 28% response rate. The data were analyzed primarily using measures of central tendency. We identified key insights, patterns,

and gaps within the data and incorporated these discoveries into the related findings. The most significant insights from the quantitative data are described in the following narrative.

### **Limitations**

There were several limitations noted throughout different stages of the evaluation. Firstly, during the quantitative analysis, our findings were overwhelmingly positive. Though this could simply demonstrate affirmative responses however, we assessed that our Likert scale was limited to dichotomous options. Response choices included either yes or no. This could be mitigated in future research by providing a scale selection for “I don’t know” or “neutral” to avoid a forced choice for participants.

A second limitation, specific to the people-supported participants, was emotional and cognitive ability. Several participants interviewed during the qualitative impact interviews can fluctuate their responses based on momentary mood changes, which may provide a variety of responses if interviewed across different settings/interviewers. Following the qualitative interview, we also noted that individuals’ interpretation of questions can be limited to their understanding of a topic (ie. For some people saying “participation in community” could mean going to a specific park). We also support many people who may show recency bias, and it is unknown if this was a factor in the survey as the last option presented (a lot more) was the majority answer to each question.

### **Findings**

#### **Finding 1: We learn, they trust.**

Being supported in Home and Community Services, families and networks place a high level of trust in BACI as an agency. The trajectory of building trust varies significantly between families, especially families of people BACI has supported for many years. As an organization, BACI is always seeking to learn more about the

people we support to enhance our services and the lives of people. According to the data, people are feeling heard when they express their preferences and expectations for their lives.

Through a revolving door of discovery, we continue to grow our ability to better support people to lead the lives they desire. This is done through engaging in familiar and novel activities with people, asking questions, and honoring unique communication styles. BACI can become a knowledge base for families who may have fewer tools and skills to support their loved ones. Providing tools to increase family relationships is the source of deep-rooted trust that we maintain with many families in Home and Community.

#### Key Takeaways

- Families want to learn more about their loved one's support, and skills and tools to support them.
- Families want to participate in family gatherings as a form of discovery to network with other families and share stories.
- Families want to learn the unique skills and characteristics that BACI supports their loved ones to discover, grow, and maintain.
- Knowing that BACI cares about people's history increases families' trust to let go of aspects of support that they were once more involved in.

#### Interview Quotes

*Having someone that knows her history is important.*

*Having people understand the cues by her actions and they will be more in-tune to help her do the things she likes to do.*

*How they connect is how they understand her and acknowledge her.*



*I like her, but because we are both disabled, I cannot do more like her. It doesn't mean we don't understand, we are just slow to learn.*

*There have been tough times in the past, but there were protocols created. I must say we are always very impressed with the staff and management of the house on how they interact with both the clients. We really have no worries or complaints in that department. We have the utmost admiration for them.*

*We were worried about transitioning to CLBC from MCFD and how responsibilities would be done. The program going out is good, and it gave us hope that something new could be built and it didn't need to be the same. We feel that [person-supported] is so well taken care of at BACI. He can make choices and enjoys his time with family and other people.*

*We can count on you guys to be the eyes and ears when we aren't there.*

**Finding 2: Sometimes you want to go where everyone knows your name.**

In Home and Community services, there is a large emphasis in supporting people to access community. Often, when people refer to “community”, they are referring to a place they go. During our interviews, it was evident that for most people having a community does not just refer to their home or place, but also people and activities. Further, a vast majority of people report feeling safe and secure in their lives which may be facilitated by the community they have developed both within their homes and in their chosen community.

Key Takeaways

- People want to go places where they are familiar with systems and routines.

- Going into the community can be about the people who are there, not the activity or place.
- People feel fulfilled when people know them in the community.
- Community can be like an extended family and increases sense of belonging.

#### Interview Quotes

*Going where we belong.*

*They know me!*

*Here I get to meet lots of people every day (staff and people served) and that's why I like this house. I can meet other people.*

*Oakland is his family. He always says I have to call my family when he comes over.*

*He needs...friends who can enjoy experiences in the moment with him.*

*I will pick up some buddies in the program...hang out with my friends.*

#### **Finding 3: Keep it real**

At BACI, we recognize every person's unique potential to achieve their goals and grow. In Home and Community, some families take a key role in supporting their loved ones to do personal planning. Families have unique histories providing support to their loved ones, and at times have knowledge and experiences that can aid in personalized goal planning. Where possible, people we support take a lead in developing goals that meet their needs and desires. It is evident in the data that people see the importance of tailoring goals to people and involving people we support. At times, people can struggle to adapt to changes in abilities.

### Key Takeaways

- People want to aim for realistic goals.
- At times, families' expectations can conflict with the current abilities of the person.
- At times, people can struggle to adapt to changes in their abilities and how this may alter their current or previously accomplished goals.
- Families want their loved ones to participate in planning but may lack tools to support them to communicate their desires.
- People are proud to share their accomplishments when goals are achievable and successful.

### Interview Quotes

*Ask him what he wants. (Said about a person who is unable to communicate verbally and may not be able to communicate how the family identified.)*

*Well, it is clear that goals need to be tailored to what supports are.*

*Learn how to make grilled cheese!*

### **Finding 4: Shooting the breeze**

It is common in Home and Community that we develop professional and personal relationships with people. In Home and Community, it is natural that people can become closely connected and develop, at times, personal relationships with their paid support. The data shows that this goes beyond the people we support and can extend to their families.

People and their families want to share experiences with each other in a way that is not transactional or “business-related.” People strive for a deeper level of connection with their paid support, that goes beyond a typical working relationship. Following the pandemic, it

was a priority in Home and Community to re-engage folks and their families back into a variety of social gatherings and parties. They asked, and we delivered!

#### Key Takeaways

- People want to connect on a social level.
- Having events and parties is important to people supported at BACI and their families and networks.
- People take pride in sharing their experiences.

#### Interview Quotes

*I have always wanted [person supported] to have a friend.*

*It was just very healing to be able to have conversations with other families who were similarly really worried about their loved ones and just to share how things were with each of them at the time.*

#### **Finding 5: Never too late**

We recognize that family relationships can ebb and flow. Our belief is that absence is subjective and does not equate to care or love for the person. Involvement in people's lives is voluntary and welcomed. In Home and Community, we recognize the value that the role of family can play in person's life, while balancing the expectations of the people we serve.

As demonstrated in our data and noted in Finding 1, families at times choose to take a step back due to the level of trust in BACI. They believe that their loved ones are well-cared for and don't require further oversight as they can see the impact of the support provided. Additionally, some families recognize that they may not possess the tools or skills to support their family member and rely on BACI and professionals to guide support.

Alternatively, some families who have been disconnected from their loved ones for an extended time, seek to be reconnected and

reinvolved in their loved one's lives. Families can struggle to initiate reinvolved when they have spent time away, and this is an area where we would like to explore further.

#### Key Takeaways

- Consistency is not possible for everyone. Frequency of maintaining relationships is unique.
- Families want to determine their level of involvement in their loved ones' lives.
- Families are an extension of the BACI support team.
- People being supported are connecting with their families in ways that meet their expectations.

#### Interview Quotes

*No, I can't really comment on that, because we're not in contact with him... But I always felt that staff and management of the house were always on top of this.*

*Everything is in BACI's hand, he spends more time with BACI than us, so I feel that we are not making these decisions or helping him make these decisions.*

*I question if I have done or am doing enough for him.*

*No, I can't really comment on that, because we're not in contact with him on a daily basis.*

#### **Finding 6: You miss 100% of the shots you don't take.**

Testing and trying is a cornerstone of BACI's values. One of our core beliefs is that personal growth is individually determined, ongoing and within everyone's potential. One attribute that appeared in our data consistently was our willingness to continue persevering through challenge or stagnancy. People and their families expressed appreciation around the push to growth.

Additionally, people were impressed by the achievements they made gradually over time. It was clear that people are interested in continuing to experiment and push themselves to reach new heights. According to what people reported in interviews, motivation to persevere was supported by small successes as steps to the large goal.

Alternatively, we aren't perfect and sometimes not achieving a goal can lead to discouragement. We hope to move towards celebrating efforts and "near-wins" over successes.

#### Key Takeaways

- People can surprise themselves and their networks when they persevere.
- Tracking resilience over success to stay motivated (i.e., near-wins).

#### Interview Quotes

*Get him involved with the community a little bit more. I don't think we've tried many things.*

*She's routinely going to things... [staff] and others have been successful in taking her to the theater. I was so happy to hear that. When in large crowds she would never be able to sit though those things when she was little. Looking forward for concerts and other events she can hopefully participate in more often.*

*For [person supported], a big part of it was that it was hard for us to just put him out and let him do things by himself. So, a lot of the opportunities that he now has, we didn't have before. We were concerned that, you know, he may still have issues, not getting along with others. But we were very [relieved] to see that that was not the case... and it definitely took some time to get used to but like overall, like it was such a relief.*

### **Finding 7: Who am I? Who do I want to be?**

As people are learning and growing, they are learning more about themselves and what they want to explore in their lives. People want to learn about themselves in various areas like community, self-actualization, cultural, sexuality, advocacy.

In Home and Community, it is important to people that they have ways to preserve their history, contributing to sense of self. The data shows that people take pride in having opportunities to learn about their history and share it with others. Families also reported that as they have seen their loved ones grow, there's an increased maturity and awareness of self. We strive to stay curious to support people to uncover who they want to be.

#### Key Takeaways

- People are searching for a sense of identity.
- People take pride in sharing their history and having their history shared with loved ones.

#### Interview Quotes

*Culture in terms of music she likes and grew up with ...she got connections that way...her background is UK. When we were growing up – folk music from Scotland and whales was her thing.*

*He's matured, he's grown up.*

## **Conclusion**

### **Insights Into Impact**

Through the evaluation of our quantitative and qualitative results, we found most responses from people we serve were aligned with our intended impact statements. However, findings diverged between people we serve and families. According to the surveys from people we serve, 100% of respondents reported feeling satisfied with how

their personal relationships are maintained and that their expectations are met, 76% reported significant satisfaction. Alternatively, during interviews with families, several people stated that they would like to be more involved in their loved ones' lives. This was an interesting finding to us, as 76% of people-served reported that they also feel their relationships are mutually fulfilling and loving.

Furthermore, a reoccurring trend while interviewing families was references to wanting more people in their loved ones' lives. There seems to be an underlying belief by some that a larger network would equate to a better life. Though this may be true for some, we maintain that each person has their own expectations around who they choose to keep in their close circles. Two families also noted that creating a larger social network for people-served may create support capacity for future care where the family may not be able to provide support. This would be interesting to explore further with families and future planning for people.

In our quantitative interview, people responded 100% that they take pride in sharing their achievements, which we want to maintain. As we continue to support people through changes in their lives, many people demonstrate challenges with understanding how changes to abilities may impact their abilities to reach their previously developed goals. During interviews, families showed greater recognition for how these changes may impact peoples' abilities and will be important that we continue to emphasize small wins to maintain individuals' motivation to grow.

### **Steps Forward**

We strongly believe that we need to focus on future discovery. We want to understand how families wish to be more involved. We want to explore several areas that were outlined by families during surveys such as building capacity for when family is no longer involved, aging, lifestyle changes, etc.

When conducting future surveys, we believe it is important to provide more options for responses. Upon receiving our responses



back from our quantitative survey, we were glad to see highly positive responses, however assessed that this may be due to the tool rather than experience. In the future, we would create a range on our Likert scale allowing respondents to choose a neutral response to avoid a forced choice.

In future interviews, we plan to ask people questions multiple times, in different settings with different interviewers, to see if their responses change over time. Many people we support may respond differently to different interviewers, presentation order of questions or environments. We would like to conduct multiple interviews per participant to analyze the accuracy of these responses.

While we tried to customize interview tools to better suit individual needs, we acknowledge that we could have been more thoughtful. Moving forward, we will place a greater emphasis on preparation before conducting any interviews.

We will change our approach to house and family meetings. Instead of just providing updates, we will use these meetings to gather feedback from residents and families. We will ask for feedback and reflections, collecting data on their responses. We will prioritize creating more social opportunities with families and avoid focusing solely on business matters. We hope to use this to continue maintaining social relationships with the people we serve and their families, as we know how valuable this is.

We will enhance staff training on Person-Centered Practices to help staff better understand how to uncover people's expectations and support them in areas of growth and development.

We will schedule "trial days" to encourage residents to try new experiences.

### **Opportunities for Future Evaluation**

As mentioned above, we strongly believe that we need to focus on future discoveries.

We want to understand the root cause of why some families feel disconnected. Why do they feel disconnected? How do they wish to be involved?

We will do this by conducting annual surveys, providing more opportunities for collaboration, and offering more opportunities for feedback. We will also conduct more impact evaluation interviews when appropriate.



# Life Sharing

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## Program Overview

**L**ife Sharing is a flexible residential option where a person with a disability, their family, BACI, and a Life Sharing Provider commit to being in a relationship. The person with a disability lives with the Life Sharing Provider and the provider supports them to live a full life. Each of the members has a role to play in the relationship and each brings their own hopes, dreams and expectations. Every Life Sharing arrangement is unique.

## Intended Impacts

1. **People live in their desired living situations.** People know and are able to articulate what they want and who they want to live with. People understand what their options are, and their living situation is defined by them.
2. **People are growing in ways that are personally meaningful to them.** Personal growth and development. People have opportunities to learn about things they are interested in. People are able to voice their concerns and opinions. They have more autonomy in their lives. People know who and where to go to get the support and services that they need. People have opportunities to grow their skills and gain more independence.

3. **People are connected and have a strong sense of belonging in the community.** People have access to vote, work, volunteer, contribute to economy and community. People are well known community members. They have places of belonging in the community. They are contributing citizens.
4. **People have relationships that are meaningful.** People are able to choose and set boundaries around their relationships. The people in their lives are not all paid. People are accepted for who they are. They have unpaid supportive networks.
5. **People maintain their health and wellbeing.** LSN providers and others in their network understand their role and have proper training and resources they need to provide the best support for the people they care for. People are able to access these resources on their own initiative and are confident to utilize resources. The network knows when and who to ask for support and resources.
6. **People who care for people are able to provide the best care they possibly can (contractors outcome).** People are able to independently access or are supported to access the health care they need. People receive the appropriate health care at the appropriate time, through all stages of their lives.

## **Evaluation Methodology**

The aim of our evaluation was to see what kind and quality of impact Life Sharing Services is having on the population we are serving. To understand this, we explored two broad evaluation questions:

1. What kind and quality of impact are we having on our participants (both providers and people served)?
2. What aspects of our program are causing this impact?

Over the course of the project, we (a) developed and refined our ideas of intended impact and indicators, (b) designed and implemented a mixed methods outcome evaluation using both qualitative and

quantitative means to collect and analyze data, (c) identified themes and findings, and (d) considered the implications to those findings for program improvement and innovation.

This project began by identifying and clarifying the intended impact of Life Sharing. Once the ideas of impact had been developed, we used the Heart Triangle™ model to identify qualitative and quantitative indicators of impact on the mental, behavioral, and emotional changes in our participants. We used these indicators to design a qualitative interview protocol and a quantitative questionnaire to evaluate progress toward achieving our intended impact.

### **Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis**

For the qualitative portion of the evaluation, we designed in-depth interview protocols to gain data about the structural, qualitative changes resulting from our program. Our population size for this evaluation was 170 people served and 155 providers. We used a purposeful stratified sampling technique to select a representative sample from each populations. Our sample size was 18 people supported and 22 providers, drawn from the following strata of our population:

#### People Supported:

- age
- gender identity
- race/ethnicity
- level of independence
- location

#### Providers:

- age
- gender identity
- race/ethnicity
- level of experience as a provider
- location

Our interview team consisted of the Life Sharing staff team. We convened one-on-one interviews lasting from between 45 minutes and one hour in length and collected interview data using handwritten notes.

We then analyzed the data inductively using a modified version of thematic analysis. Each interviewer analyzed the data from their interviews individually to identify initial themes. Together, we developed common themes from all of the interviews and brought them forward as findings.

### **Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis**

For the quantitative portion of the evaluation, we designed a questionnaire to collect data on our quantitative indicators of impact. We administered this instrument to 170 people supported and had a response of 65, a 38% response rate. The data were analyzed primarily using measures of central tendency. We identified key insights, patterns, and gaps within the data and incorporated these discoveries into the related findings. The most significant insights from the quantitative data are described in the following narrative.

### **Limitations**

Both surveys were quite rushed - Qualitative interviews were completed over the span of a month and the Quantitative survey was over a week. Not every person supported has an email or a computer. This made the completion of their survey dependent on the support of the LSN provider or the family member. It is complex to conduct the survey for people who do not use words to communicate - we need to explore ways for those individuals to express how they are feeling.

## **Findings – Life Sharing Providers**

### **Finding 1: Relationships are the Glue**

All relationships are unique and essential. The data revealed that, through the program, LSN providers have come to better understand that

relationships take time to develop and are a commitment to maintain. It takes an investment from both parties and the creation of trust.

#### Key Takeaways

- LSN providers believe that everyone in the relationships has a different role to play.
- LSN providers recognize that there is an opportunity to broaden social circles on both sides.
- LSN providers understand the need to be present in the moment and give it the time it needs to strengthen the relationship.
- LSN providers believe there is learning from all relationships, even the challenging ones.

#### Interview Quotes

*It takes a village.*

*Leaning on the other relationships in his life more, because this is how he responds best.*

*The main thing I want to do is be a good person, be a good friend, learn more about the person and foster the relationship.*

*When you have a strong connection, it grounds you even on the days you feel apathetic because you have developed that connection, and it means a lot.*

*It takes collaboration with a lot of people because you're supporting every aspect of their life.*

#### **Finding 2: Let it Go!**

The interviews showed that LSN providers are coming to the realization that their way doesn't have to be the way. Their role is to inform and support, not to control the action or outcome.



### Key Takeaways

- LSN providers are recognizing that mistakes are ok; we are committed during good times and bad times.
- LSN providers are developing greater patience.
- LSN providers acknowledge that it's important not to sweat the small stuff!
- LSN providers want mutual acceptance - it goes both ways.

### Interview Quotes

*[The] lesson I learned is to be patient, show empathy and be resilient.*

*Learning through the people you meet and being around people that think differently is interesting.*

*I show up when needed and back off when not needed – I don't hover. I trust they can manage alone to make their own mistakes.*

*Realizing I can't control everything. I can be a bit in the back seat, not setting the course.*

### **Finding 3: People over Paper**

Interviews revealed that LSN providers feel that the increased documentation requirements are taking away from the essence of what home share was meant to be.

### Key Takeaways

- LSN providers are feeling like they are becoming employees and not contractors.
- LSN providers feel that the system isn't natural anymore - it doesn't feel good.
- The burden of documentation requirements is eroding trust with BACI and the system.
- It is already a very big job.

Interview Quotes

*The paperwork load is massive and unnecessary.*

*This has become a part time job itself!*

*The paperwork is challenging!*

*I appreciate there are more options for guidance and training, but sometimes it feels like more pressure.*

*Paperwork is repetitive, it should be more efficient.*

*All these new things that are being implemented, like the insurances and all that stuff, adds to the plate.*

**Finding 4: Strength in Unity**

LSN providers have come to understand that the person they are supporting thrives when the network around them is communicating well, trust each other, and are working as a team.

Key Takeaways

- LSN providers believe that it takes a village.
- LSN providers are recognizing that advocacy is ongoing.
- LSN providers believe that each person in the relationship brings something unique and important to the person's life.
- LSN providers believe that the person being supported needs to be connected with the right person in the moment.

Interview Quotes

*[We] learned how to work better as a team. It is very necessary to have more than one person providing support. Ensuring we all have good communication between us.*

*Now it is nice to see how the whole family is accepting him (my family and my partner's family). He attends all family gatherings; everyone welcomes him and he is a good fit for our family.*

### **Finding 5: Living, Learning and Growing Together**

LSN providers believe that they are not only assisting the person who lives with them to learn new skills, but that they themselves are constantly learning as new things come up or needs change. They are committed to learning and supporting the person even when their needs change.

#### Key Takeaways

- LSN providers are learning to understand and communicate with people who have different ways of communicating.
- LSN providers are learning through trial and error.
- LSN providers are transferring their learning from the program into other relationships in their lives.
- LSN providers recognize the importance of being proud of accomplishments and learning from mistakes.

#### Interview Quotes

*Feeling like you left a positive impact goes both ways.*

*Working with them helped me to grow, as well as emotionally.*

*Personally, I've learned how gratifying it can be to be involved in the lives of others.*

*I know him well, his anxiety and how to manage his anxieties and his OCD; how to teach him to learn new things, to improve his life skills. I am better at communicating and understanding.*

#### Possible Responses

- Ongoing regularly scheduled training and workshops.
- Side-by-side training with caregiver and person supported.

- Showing appreciation and recognition to caregivers.
- Provide the LSN providers with a resource guide so they can better support the folks who live with them.

## Findings – People Supported in LSN

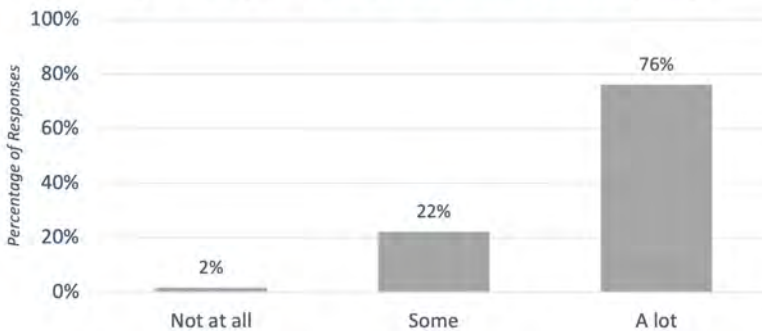
### Finding 1: Unlocking My Potential

The interviews revealed that people being supported by the program are awakening to new experiences and new a way of living. They are adulting - gaining skills and taking on more responsibility. People are better able to recognize what is possible in their future.

#### Key Takeaways

- People being supported feel proud and empowered.
- People being supported know where to go for the help they need.
- People being supported have gained greater self-confidence.
- People being supported are manifesting a more fulfilling life.
- 76% of survey respondents reported that, as a result of the program, they have a lot more opportunities to develop new skills, learn, and become more independent (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. While being in Life Sharing, I have more opportunities to develop new skills, learn and become more independent. (n=63)



### Interview Quotes

*All the goals I mentioned have made my life, self, and future stronger.*

*I have the ability to achieve goals when I have the support of others who care.*

*I believe in myself now and feel strong that I can do many things.*

### Possible Responses

- On-going, regularly scheduled training provided to people we support. Experimenting with training in person by region and virtual.
- People take a lead on their planning. Having a simplified planning process. Coaching them on the steps.

### **Finding 2: Home is Where the Heart Is**

The data reveal that people being supported feel like they are part of the family and their friends and family are welcomed. They have become mindful of others in the home and their relationship with their family has transitioned from a caregiving role to just being their family.

### Key Takeaways

- People being supported feel respected.
- A greater sense of trust has developed between the people being supported, their family, and their LSN providers.
- People being supported feel that they belong.
- People being supported feel cared for.
- 73% of survey respondents reported having a lot more choices in their living situation as a result of the program (see Figure 2).
- 76% of survey respondents reported that, as a result of the program, they have a lot more choice in who they hang out with. (see Figure 3).

## LIFE SHARING

Figure 2. While being in Life Sharing, I have more choices in my living situation. (n=63)

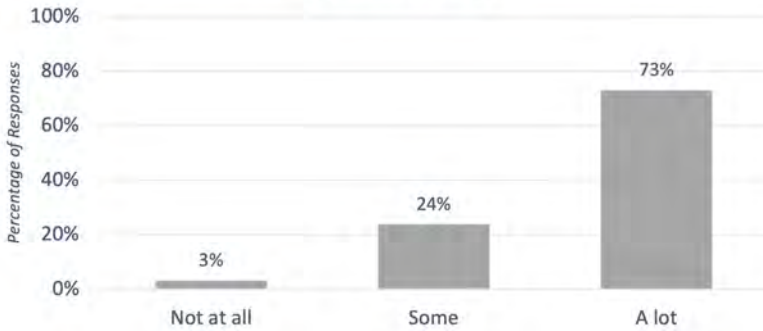
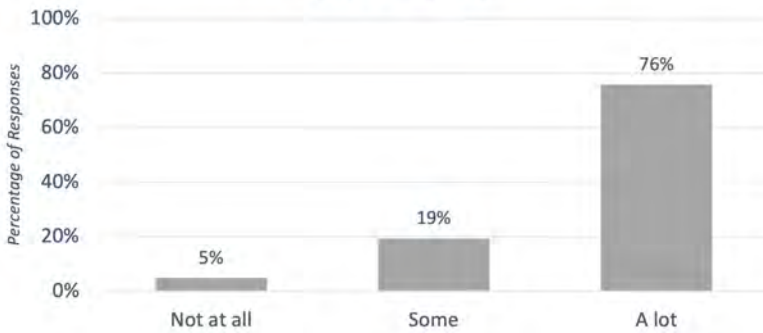


Figure 3. While being in Life Sharing, I have more choice in who I hang out with. (n=62)



### Interview Quotes

*It is important to me to feel like part of the family and be helpful.*

*I am included and important.*

*I have a healthy home where I enjoy being around people who care.*

*I have a nice home. I have my own independent suite, my own TV in my room. I can be by myself when I want to and have company when I want to.*

*I have a place I can refer to as my home... It is important to reside with people who are concerned with my wellbeing.*

### Possible Responses

- Ensure that each person in LSN has a meaningful shared commitment in place.
- Celebrate when things are positive and make some adjustments when negative.
- Make sure the shared commitment is completed at the beginning of the Life Share arrangement to have a clear expectation and celebrate life together.
- Celebrate milestones living together.

### **Finding 3: Health is Wealth**

Interviewees shared that, through the program, they are learning to make healthy choices. They feel supported in maintaining their health and wellbeing.

### Key Takeaways

- People being supported are learning about, and accepting, their limitations.
- People being supported are receiving the support needed to get to appointments.
- People being supported are making healthier choices.
- 90% of survey respondents reported feeling a lot more supported to stay health and well as a result of the program (see Figure 4).
- 75% of survey respondents said that, as a result of the program, they have a lot more confidence to make decisions about their health and wellbeing (see Figure 5).

### Interview Quotes

*[I am] living a healthy life by exploring dietary choices and gaining insight into maintaining my diabetes.*

*I'm making progress on my health...my caregiver helps me book all my appointments. Because of her, I am committed to keep up with all my appointments.*

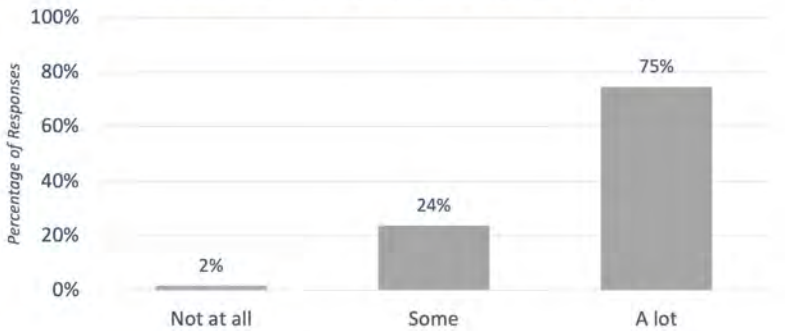
*Exercise has helped with my mobility and strength.*

*When I go to medical appointments, I want to be less nervous and speak up for myself.*

Figure 4. While being in Life Sharing, I feel more supported to stay healthy and well. (n=63)



Figure 5. While being in Life Sharing, I have more confidence to make decisions about my health and wellbeing. (n=63)



#### Possible Responses

- Schedule health care workshops for the people we support (i.e., nutrition, dietitian, advanced care planning), offered once per year or as needed.
- Send out a newsletter including health information.
- Offer a clinic with Gus.



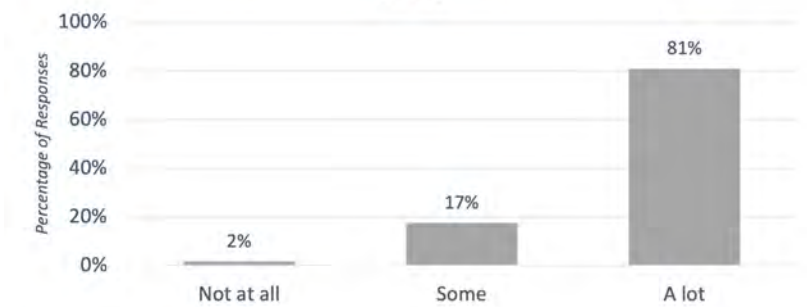
**Finding 4: Community is My Playground**

Interviewees talked about the value of participating in community activities and being with people who have common interests. Through the program, they have been able to have an increased connection to their community, explore new places, and meet new people.

Key Takeaways

- People being supported are making meaningful connections in the community.
- People being supported feel welcomed and included in community.
- 81% of survey respondents reported that, as a result of the program, they have found more welcoming places in their community where they like to go and spend time (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. While being in Life Sharing, I've found more welcoming places in my community where I like to go and spend time. (n=63)



Interview Quotes

*I am building social skills, go out more, see more people, work on goals, and now I volunteer.*

*I meet my friends out in the community.*

*I take the bus independently by myself. I go to my program.*

*I have fun, travel, and see new places...I go to the senior center, play games like carpet bowling and swimming.*

*Being recognized in the community and being treated fairly.*

## Possible Responses

- Follow up on the support people need to make connections in the community. Remove the barriers.
- Develop a script or guideline for home visits.
- Send out a visual blast/calendar for each region of community activities or events to know what's happening.

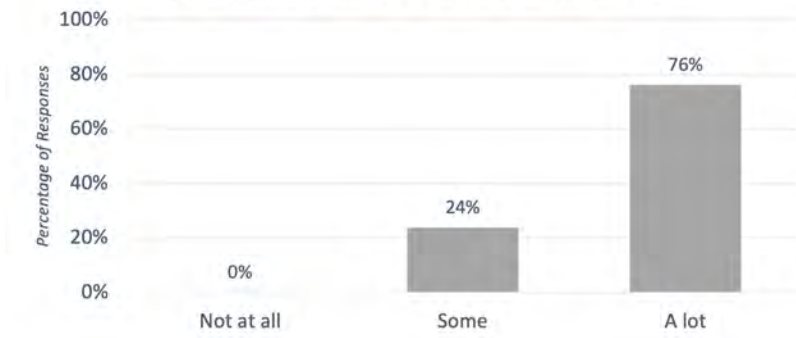
**Finding 5: I Wonder, What if, Lets Try!**

The data show that, through participating in the program, people are stepping outside of their comfort zone and challenging themselves. They are going to new places, trying new things, and having new experiences.

## Key Takeaways

- People being supported have more opportunities for exposure to new places and opportunities.
- People being supported are finding employment.
- People being supported are traveling and going to new places.
- People being supported are learning and growing.
- 76% of survey respondents reported that, as a result of the program, they have more opportunities to participate in activities and try new things (see Figure 7).

Figure 7. While being in Life Sharing, I have more opportunities to participate in activities and try new things. (n=63)



## Interview Quotes

*I discovered that I want to do more things myself. For example, when I go to restaurants I order my own food.*

*I want to get my passport and travel. I can travel because my caregiver will take me.*

*I want to find a paid job... and hopefully I will get the opportunity to get my driver's license.*

*I am really pushing myself to get a paid job so I can have my own (car) in the near future.*

*I've learned that I can still have fun, I can travel.*

## Possible Responses

- Provide resources and information.
- Send out a visual blast of opportunities for new places, things, and experiences.
- Support people who would like to plan to travel independently. Discuss the risks, personal choice, plan.

## Conclusion

### Insights Into Impact

The findings were overwhelmingly positive overall. People being supported felt good about where they lived, who they lived with and felt well supported.

People were very well informed about their own health and prioritized it. They knew where to go to get the support they needed to stay healthy.

People expressed a desire to try new things. They shared that they felt they were trying new things and exploring new places, but the examples given were questionable as to the novelty of the experience. Vacations were interesting, but examples of local activities seemed less exciting and likely were things they had been doing for years.

People expressed the feeling that they were gaining life skills and were becoming more independent. Their confidence was growing.

Relationships are the most important thing to those we support - they need to feel connected, safe and included in the LSN providers' lives. When this happens, they feel well supported.

LSN providers feel that they are learning alongside the people they support and that it is ok if mistakes are made. They expressed an understanding that their role is to guide, mentor and support, not control. However, they also expressed feeling overwhelmed by the requests of the service provider and the funder.

### **Steps Forward**

- On-going regularly scheduled training provided to people we support. Experimenting with training in person by region and virtual.
- Ensure that each person in LSN has a meaningful shared commitment in place.
- Celebrate when things are positive, when milestones are met.
- Schedule health care workshops for the people we support (i.e., nutrition, dietitian, advanced care planning) offered once per year or as needed.
- Visual blast/calendar for each region of community activities or events to know what's happening.
- Ensure we are thoughtful in our interactions with the LSN providers - streamline the paperwork we ask them for and see where we can find efficiencies and ensure what we are asking for is relevant, meaningful, and isn't repetitive.
- Build a profile for each potential LSN provider so we have a better understanding of who they might best support. Improve the matching process.

### **Opportunities for Future Evaluation**

We will conduct surveys for both persons supported and LSN providers annually. We will complete them over the span of four months and set a target number of surveys to be completed. Quantitative surveys will be conducted annually.

# Outreach Services

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Eric Hofer

## Program Overview

**O**utreach, Learning & Growth supports individuals to lead more meaningful lives and take a more active role in their community. This is accomplished by using a person-centered approach to set both short and long-term goals. Whenever possible individuals will lead this planning, along with input from family, friends, and support staff when appropriate. Support is designed around personal goals, and these goals should always be the focus of any connection with support staff.

Individuals are challenged to explore and connect with their community whenever possible. Support is designed to promote a greater sense and understanding of independent living and the associated life skills.

We aim to empower individuals with diverse abilities to better understand the world in which they live and to be the best version of themselves they can be.

### 1. Empowering Independence

**Description:** We aim to empower adults with developmental disabilities to achieve greater independence through personalized support and skill-building initiatives. This means providing individuals with the tools, resources, and guidance necessary to manage their daily lives

effectively. Our approach includes teaching practical life skills, fostering decision-making abilities, and promoting self-sufficiency in various aspects of life.

**Purpose:** The goal is to build confidence and self-reliance, enabling individuals to navigate their daily routines and make choices that align with their personal goals and preferences. By focusing on independence, we help individuals gain control over their lives and improve their overall quality of life.

## **2. Community Integration**

**Description:** Our initiative is centered on helping adults with developmental disabilities connect with and participate actively in their communities. This includes creating opportunities for social interactions, community involvement, and meaningful engagement in local activities. We work to remove barriers to participation and encourage inclusion in community events and organizations.

**Purpose:** The aim is to enhance social inclusion and integration, allowing individuals to become valued and active members of their communities. By fostering connections and engagement, we help individuals build relationships, reduce social isolation, and contribute to their communities in meaningful ways.

## **3. Personal Growth**

**Description:** We support individuals in their journey of personal growth by guiding them towards achieving their individual goals and aspirations. This involves setting personalized objectives, identifying strengths and areas for development, and providing the necessary support to reach these goals.

**Purpose:** The objective is to facilitate continuous personal development, helping individuals realize their potential and pursue their dreams. By focusing on personal growth, we aim to enhance self-esteem, satisfaction, and overall well-being.

#### **4. Enhanced Life Skills**

**Description:** Our program emphasizes the development of essential life skills for supported individuals. This includes practical skills such as budgeting, cooking, time management, and self-care, as well as interpersonal skills like communication and problem-solving.

**Purpose:** The purpose is to equip individuals with the competencies needed to manage their daily lives effectively and navigate various life situations. By enhancing life skills, we support greater autonomy and improve the quality of life for individuals.

#### **5. Family and Community Collaboration**

**Description:** We actively involve family members and community resources to create a supportive network around the supported individuals. This collaborative approach ensures that individuals receive comprehensive support that aligns with their goals and needs.

**Purpose:** The aim is to strengthen the support system for individuals by leveraging the involvement of their families and community resources. This collaborative effort enhances the effectiveness of the support provided and promotes a more holistic approach to addressing individual needs.

#### **6. Self-Advocacy and Leadership**

**Description:** We are committed to developing self-advocacy skills in the individuals we support, empowering them to take control of their own lives and make informed decisions. This includes providing training and support in areas such as self-advocacy, leadership, and personal empowerment.

**Purpose:** The objective is to build confidence and enable individuals to advocate for their own needs and desires. By promoting self-advocacy and leadership, we help individuals become more proactive and influential in their own lives.



## Evaluation Methodology

The aim of our evaluation was to see what kind and quality of impact Outreach Services is having on the population we are serving. To understand this, we explored two broad evaluation questions:

1. What kind and quality of impact are we having on our participants?
2. What aspects of our program are causing this impact?

Over the course of the project, we (a) developed and refined our ideas of intended impact and indicators, (b) designed and implemented a mixed methods outcome evaluation using both qualitative and quantitative means to collect and analyze data, (c) identified themes and findings, and (d) considered the implications to those findings for program improvement and innovation.

This project began by identifying and clarifying the intended impact of Outreach Services. Once the ideas of impact had been developed, we used the Heart Triangle™ model to identify qualitative and quantitative indicators of impact on the mental, behavioral, and emotional changes in our supported individuals. We used these indicators to design a qualitative interview protocol and a quantitative questionnaire to evaluate progress toward achieving our intended impact.

### Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis

For the qualitative portion of the evaluation, we designed an in-depth interview protocol to gain data about the structural, qualitative changes resulting from our program. We delimited our population to include a reflective sample of the diverse population group that Outreach services supports. Our population size for this evaluation was 110. We used a purposeful stratified sampling technique to select a representative sample from the population we serve. Our sample size was 7 participants, drawn from the following strata of our population:

- **Age** - 18-29 / 30-49/ 50+
- **Gender Identity** - Male/ Female/ Transgender/ Gender neutral/ Non-binary/ Pangender/ Genderqueer/ Two-spirit
- **Support Years with BACI** - (0-2 years)/ (2.5 - 5 years)/ (5+ years)

Our interview team consisted of Outreach Counselors, Marilyn Shenton, and Jaskirat Aujla. We convened one-on-one interviews lasting from between 45 minutes and one hour in length and collected interview data using audio recordings and handwritten notes.

We then analyzed the data inductively using a modified version of thematic analysis. Each interviewer analyzed the data from their interviews individually to identify initial themes. Together, we developed common themes from all of the interviews and brought them forward as findings.

### **Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis**

For the quantitative portion of the evaluation, we designed a questionnaire to collect data on our quantitative indicators of impact. We administered this instrument to 110 supported individuals and had a response of 36 participants, a 32.7% response rate. The data were analyzed primarily using measures of central tendency. We identified key insights, patterns, and gaps within the data and incorporated these discoveries into the related findings. The most significant insights from the quantitative data are described in the following narrative.

### **Limitations**

The evaluation was conducted under a shortened timeline. Due to holiday staffing during the survey data collection stage, individuals who were seeking support from their primary staff to complete the survey may not have submitted.

**Recall Bias.** Certain questions required individuals to look back and remember aspects of their support journey - this recall was challenging for some of the participants.

**Social-Desirability Bias.** Some Outreach-supported individuals have a perception of how they should present themselves, this thought process is influenced by many factors such as social network and media. This perception can lead individuals to respond to prompts that may align with that perceived view.

**Emotional-State Bias.** Many individuals supported by Outreach struggle with their mental health and emotional regulation. This lived experience can influence their direct and indirect communication with support staff and their responses can vary drastically depending on their current emotional state.

## Findings

### **Finding 1: Development of problem-solving skills.**

After interviewing and analyzing Outreach clients, we noticed a pattern of the development of problem solving. The clients interviewed gave examples of situations that often come up in their lives where they'd had difficulties problem solving in the past.

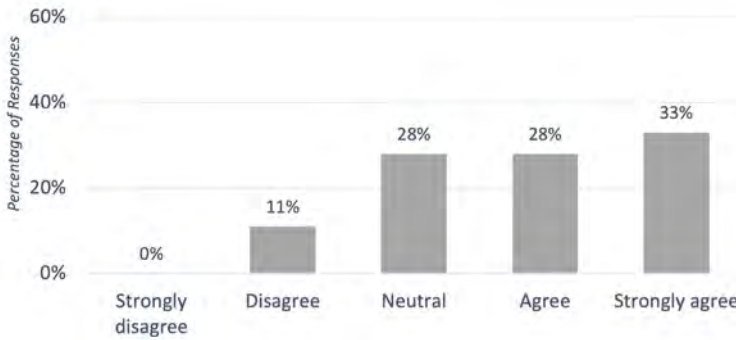
One client said she would get very angry and take it out on those around her. She has learned how to use some new tools and has changed her perspective when things are difficult. She now pays closer attention to how she is feeling and will take a breath a few times or leave the situation before she is able to respond. This way she has reduced the likelihood of damaging relationships around her.

Another client interviewed has learned how to problem solve in regard to what she can do when she needs medication refills or if there is an issue with her insulin pump. She has learned to call the pharmacy ahead of time before she runs out of medication and now knows what to say to the pharmacy and ask for what she needs.

The quantitative data showed that facing a crisis is still difficult for a lot of people. Nearly 40% of survey respondents were neutral or disagreed that they know how to cope with difficult situations after working with Outreach (see Figure 1). By opening up your community and skill sets, education you are more susceptible to the

highs and lows i.e. crisis (losing a job, car accident, friends, partners and family leaving/dying, eviction/roommate issues).

Figure 1. After working with Outreach, I now know how to cope with difficult situations.



#### Key Takeaways

- Person supported learned how to regulate their emotions in stressful situations.
- Person supported learned how to become more in touch with their emotions and have a healthier outlook if things get stressful.
- Person supported has learned how to problem solve when they run out of medication or has an issue with their insulin pump.

#### Interview Quotes

*It has taught me to have a discussion within myself of analyzing where my emotions are. Is it worth it to be super happy or super depressed about what can I do to change it? And if something bad is happening obviously its not the end of the world. You're still alive, you've got clothes on your body, you've got a roof over your head, food in the fridge. You're good.*

*It's ok to get lost on a couple of occasions as long as you can find your way back to the destination.*

*If I need medication, I will call them or go in person to tell them I need more medication or insulin.*

## **Finding 2: Feeling Supported**

The data confirmed that individual participants are feeling supported by the program. One individual spoke of writing a song that helped her express what it felt like to first be on the outside and not have any support and then eventually be on the inside and feel supported. She had been living in a foster home and eventually left. She found the support she needed to get custody of her son and has been raising him ever since. Having another person to talk about her goals with was a big difference in her life and she was able to have a realistic view about her goals.

Another individual explained she felt supported with her health concerns. She was connected to specialists and now the result is an improvement with her health. She learned a lot about her health condition since being a part of Outreach.

### Key Takeaways

- Supported person was aware of how Outreach had made an impact in their life by helping them feel supported. They felt the difference between not having support to what it feels like to have support.
- Supported person was able to plan their goals with a realistic approach due to having one on one support.
- Supported person felt more supported in regards to learning how to manage their health condition.

### Interview Quotes

*Having someone as a sounding board to be like, “I have this idea for a goal.” For example, learning how to get my license. Is it achievable? What can I do to get resources to achieve it?*

*It's good to surround yourself with positive people who care about you, because if you don't it can feel really alone, and you're secluded on your own. The outside looking in. You can be a foster child or a child on the outside looking in the window of a happy family. That's how it feels like when you don't have the support, but when you do, you're in the house with the happy family.*

*I used to feel more negative about my health and current living situation, but now I feel more positive.*

### **Finding 3: Enhanced Confidence in Goal Setting and Future Possibilities**

The interview data reveal a significant increase in confidence related to setting and achieving personal goals. They've learned that breaking goals into manageable steps and having a supportive network have been key to their progress. This newfound confidence influences their belief in what they can achieve in the future, making them more optimistic and motivated.

Survey data shows that 80% strongly or agree that, since using Outreach Services, they are better able to set goals (see Figure 2). This aligns with the qualitative data in terms of increased confidence in goal setting and future possibilities. In addition, 87% of respondents strongly agree or agree that they are better able to track progress toward achieving their goals (see Figure 3).

#### Key Takeaways

- Understanding goal setting has increased the individual's belief in their future possibilities.
- Supportive relationships are crucial for reinforcing their confidence and providing encouragement.
- Personal experiences with goals have taught resilience and the importance of perseverance.

- Achievements in goal setting have significantly boosted self-esteem and motivation.

Figure 2. Since using Outreach Services, I am better able to set goals for my life.

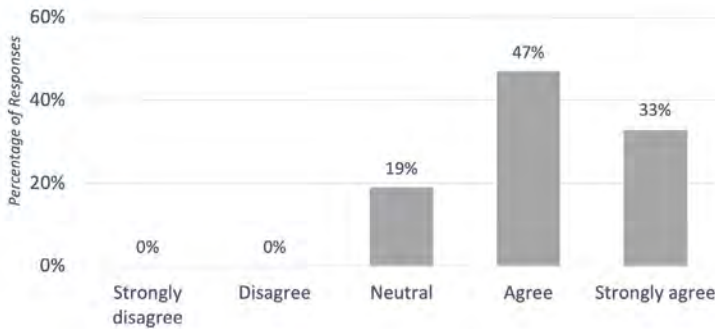
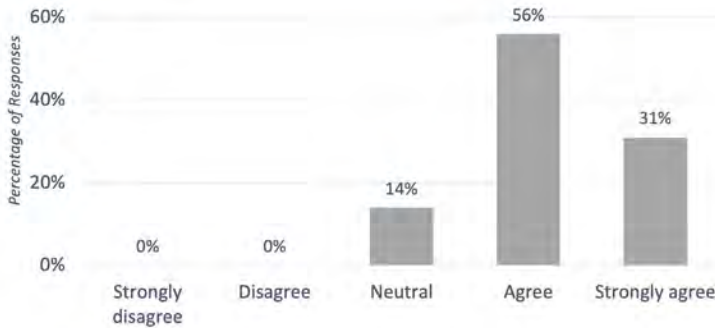


Figure 3. Since using Outreach Services, I am better able to track progress toward achieving my goals.



### Interview Quotes

*I now know that I can set goals and work on them one step at a time.*

*Having my family and friends helps me with stuff; makes me feel like I can do more.*

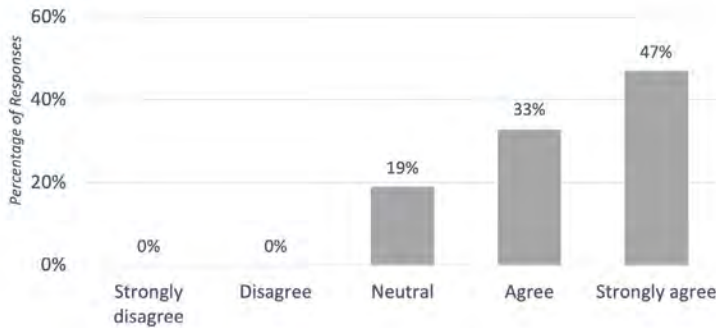
*When I reach a goal, it makes me think I can do even more in the future.*

**Finding 4: Strong Support System Enhances Confidence and Reliability**

Individuals have come to realize the value of a supportive network and feel confident that they can rely on these people in times of need or celebration. This support system plays a crucial role in their ability to handle challenges and acknowledge successes, highlighting its importance in their overall well-being.

The survey data indicates that 80% of respondents agree or strongly agree that since using Outreach Services, they are more aware of their rights, reflecting the qualitative insight that a supportive network enhances confidence and reliability (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. Since using Outreach Services, I am more aware of my rights.



**Key Takeaways**

- A strong support system is critical for emotional and practical assistance.
- Reliable support contributes significantly to feelings of safety and confidence.
- The presence of caring individuals helps manage challenges and acknowledge successes.
- Confidence in support networks reinforces the individual's overall sense of security.



Interview Quotes

*I know my friends and family will help me if I need or if I'm happy about something.*

*It's good to have people who are there for me and celebrate when I do something great.*

*I feel safe because I can share stuff with [Outreach] when I don't want other people to know about it.*

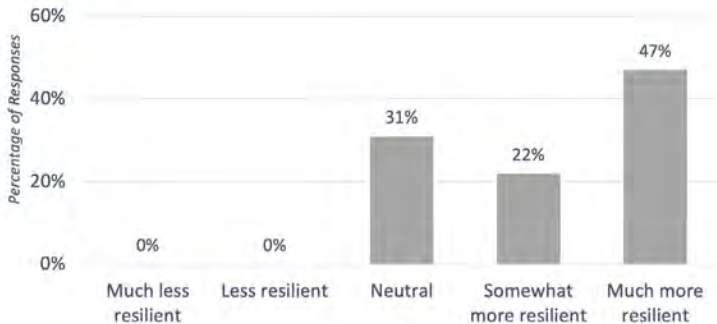
*I know deep down that I'm not alone.*

**Finding 5: Learning from Experiences Shapes Perspectives on Struggle and Success**

The individual's experiences with Outreach services have taught them that life involves a mix of successes and struggles. These experiences have shaped their view on handling challenges and celebrating achievements, fostering a balanced perspective on personal growth.

Survey responses show 69% of respondents agree or strongly agree that they feel much more resilient since using Outreach services (see Figure 5), which supports the qualitative finding that learning from experiences shapes their perspectives on struggle and success. While 31% of respondents selected neutral, this was possibly high due to lack of understanding of the definition of resiliency.

Figure 5. Since using Outreach Services, how much more resilient do you feel?



### Key Takeaways

- Life experiences, both positive and negative, contribute to personal growth.
- Struggles are seen as opportunities for learning and resilience.
- Successes are appreciated more deeply due to the effort and challenges faced.
- A balanced perspective helps manage expectations and maintain motivation.

### Interview Quotes

*I've learned that life has good times and hard times, that's okay. It doesn't bother me that much anymore.*

*When things are hard, [Outreach and] other people remind me that it can help me grow and get strong.*

*When something good happens, I feel really good too because it takes a lot of work.*

## **Finding 6: Proactive Goal-Chasing and Advocacy Enhance Personal Growth**

Individuals' proactive approach to setting and pursuing goals, along with their efforts in self-advocacy, has led to significant personal growth. This proactive stance has enabled them to manage their goals more effectively and influence other aspects of their life positively.

Survey data shows that 86% agree or strongly agree that since using Outreach Services, they are more confident making choices for themselves (see Figure 6) and 89% agree or strongly agree they can change their mind about support (see Figure 7), illustrating the impact of proactive goal-chasing and advocacy on personal growth.

Figure 6. Since using Outreach Services, I am more confident making choices for myself.

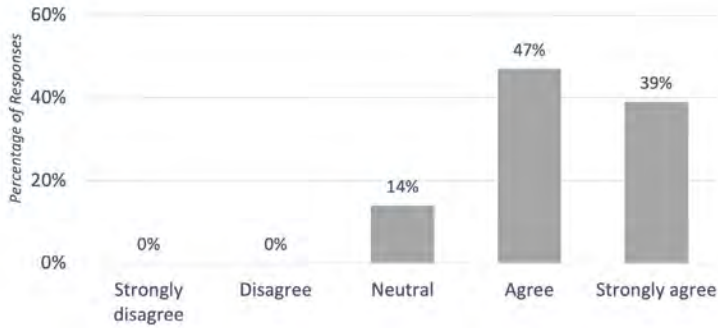
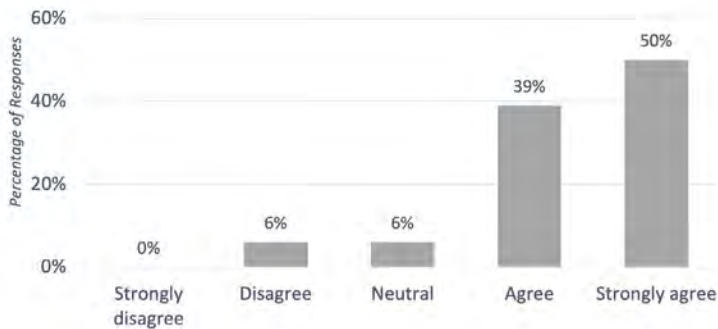


Figure 7. I feel like I can change my mind on what I want support with.



### Key Takeaways

- Actively pursuing goals has improved personal growth and self-efficacy.
- Advocacy efforts have increased confidence and effectiveness in managing various life aspects.
- Reaching out for support and taking initiative are crucial for achieving goals.
- Personal growth is enhanced through a combination of goal-chasing and self-advocacy.

Interview Quotes

*I'm working on my goals, it's one of my biggest focuses.*

*[Outreach] reminds me that I need to ask for what I need and that helps me a lot.*

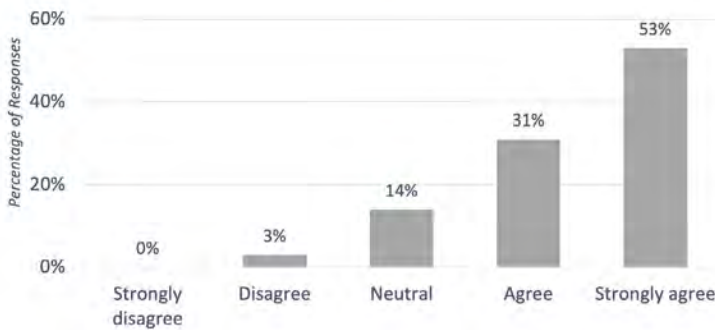
*Trying hard to reach my goals has made me feel more confident.*

**Finding 7: Balancing Successes and Failures through Support and Resilience**

The individual's ability to balance successes and failures is supported by their resilience and the backing of their support network. This balance helps them stay committed to their goals, even when faced with challenges, and maintains their emotional stability.

Survey data reflects that 84% agree or strongly agree that over the past year, they have felt safe trying something new (see Figure 8), and 61% agree or strongly agree they know how to cope with difficult situations, reinforcing the qualitative insight that balancing successes and failures is supported by resilience and a strong support system.

Figure 8. Over the past year, I have felt safe while trying something new.



Key Takeaways

- Support and personal resilience are key to managing life's ups and downs.

- Commitment to goals is sustained through a balanced perspective on successes and failures.
- Emotional balance is maintained by focusing on personal achievements and using coping strategies.
- Support and self-care practices contribute to overall stability.

#### Interview Quotes

*I keep going even when things don't go as planned because it doesn't mean that I'll lose support.*

*When I was depressed, I didn't want to do anything and didn't know how bad it was getting, so just doing something...even if I change my mind, is better for me.*

*I know what to stay away from in my head, so I don't lose all my progress.*

## Conclusion

### Insights Into Impact

This report identified some of the impacts that Outreach Learning & Growth incorporate into the support structure - these are linked to the independence and choice that individuals have in this elective support.

#### Empowering Independence

The findings indicate that support is effectively enhancing individuals' confidence and self-reliance, aligning with the goal of empowering independence. The high levels of resilience and improved goal-setting capabilities reflect the success of the Outreach Learning and Growth personalized support style and skill-building initiatives.

#### Community Integration

The findings suggest that Outreach Learning and Growth has had a successful previous year, with individuals becoming more engaged

and seeking out additional community support. This can be a key component of community integration.

#### Personal Growth

The findings illustrate that Outreach Learning and Growth is supporting personal development by helping individuals to envision their future and develop coping mechanisms, enhancing their personal growth and well-being. However, Outreach Learning and Growth also understands that coping mechanisms are not permanent solutions, and that supported Individuals can deal with crisis at any time.

#### Enhanced Life Skills

The findings indicate that Outreach Learning and Growth has been successful in teaching important life skills such as self-advocacy and personal decision-making, which are crucial for managing daily life effectively.

#### Family and Community Collaboration

The findings indicate that while Outreach Learning and Growth plays a crucial role, there might be additional opportunities to enhance collaboration with families and community resources to create a more holistic support network.

#### Self-Advocacy and Leadership

The finding results demonstrate an upward trend for effectively fostering self-advocacy and leadership skills, empowering individuals to take control of their lives and advocate for their needs.

### **Steps Forward**

#### *Supporting Personal Growth*

##### Adjustment: Support Transitions

- How are supported individuals identifying with these thoughts after leaving supports or transitioning to different supports? Do we look at a more extensive exit process,

survey and follow up interviews with people who have exited support? Currently we do basic check-ins at 3,6, and 12 months, but nothing in-depth or related to impacts.

Experiment: Peer Mentorship Program

- Launch a peer mentorship program where individuals with similar goals and experiences support each other. This program will provide opportunities for shared learning and personal growth. Assess its effectiveness in enhancing personal development and self-esteem.

*Strengthening Life Skills*

Experiment: Skills Application Challenges

- Create monthly challenges where individuals apply newly learned life skills in real-world scenarios, such as managing a budget or cooking a meal. Monitor progress and gather feedback to refine the curriculum and enhance skill application.

*Enhancing Family and Community Collaboration*

Adjustment: Family Engagement Workshops

- Offer workshops and informational sessions for families to better understand and support their loved ones. Topics can include effective communication strategies, navigating community resources, and fostering independence.

Experiment: Community Resource Mapping

- Develop the mapping of local community resources with families and individuals. This initiative will involve creating a comprehensive resource directory and providing personalized referrals. Evaluate the impact on access to and utilization of community resources.

*Fostering Self-Advocacy and Leadership*

Adjustment: Self-Advocacy Training Programs

- Enhance self-advocacy training programs to include leadership development components. These programs will be tailored to various skill levels and personal goals.

Experiment: Leadership Roles in Program Activities

- Create opportunities for individuals to take on leadership roles within program activities, such as leading group discussions or organizing events. Track their experiences and growth in self-advocacy and leadership to assess the program's effectiveness and make necessary adjustments.

These planned adjustments and experiments are designed to further align Outreach Services with the intended impacts of the program.

**Opportunities for Future Evaluation**

As Outreach continues to advance its mission of supporting adults with developmental disabilities, identifying and exploring future evaluation opportunities is critical for refining our programs and maximizing our impact. Here are several key areas for future evaluation to enhance our services and outcomes:

- Outreach Learning and Growth will look to adjust and improve the evaluation process during the next review period by enhancing both the design and implementation of the survey to better capture the feedback of supported individuals and ensure that the data collected is actionable.
- With a department focus on individuals' connection to external supports and networks - it is important that those external perspectives be included in the evolution process.
- Long-term Impact studies: Outreach Learning and Growth has the unique opportunity to be in a support role for



many life stages of the served individuals. Continued and long-term evaluations could help expand and validate trends that may have been identified during this preliminary evaluation period.

- By exploring these future evaluation and survey ideas, Outreach Learning and Growth can gain a more comprehensive understanding of our impact, refine our programs, and ensure that we are effectively meeting the needs of the supported individuals. These insights will guide us in enhancing our services, advocating for our clients, and continuously improving our organizational practices.

## Stitched Services

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Amanda Lemaigre, Co-Pilot Practice Lead & Emily Sproule, Co-Pilot

### Program Overview

**S**titched Services is a program at Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion that launched in 2016, currently supporting 29 participants. Since the program's inception, the Stitched team has created innovative approaches to navigating services that involved designing new staff roles (i.e. co-pilot) and well-coordinated, adaptable supports that help people with cognitive disabilities to recognize and reach bigger goals. Stitched combines BEST Employment Services, Outreach Services, and Community Connecting available to participants of Stitched, dependent on their goals and desired outcomes. The co-pilot acts as a participant's point person throughout their Stitched journey, helping them identify meaningful goals, deciding together upon the best mix of services to work towards these outcomes and providing ongoing check-ins and support to adjust as needed. This means we expect the mix of services to change over time as participants learn and grow and their desired outcomes evolve.

#### Intended Impacts

As a person-centered program, Stitched Services strives to work towards significant impacts that are dependent upon and informed by each participant we serve. In 2018 Stitched Services worked with

SHIFT Collaborative in a yearlong process to understand the impact we were and weren't having and develop a theory of change to identify the intended impacts of our program.

The six principles that inform *how* Stitched Services is implemented are:

1. Focus on outcomes: We want to see the people we support dreaming big and we challenge ourselves to find new ways of supporting these big goals.
2. Learning and growth: We know that everyone can learn and grow, and we know that with growth comes change.
3. Expecting change: We expect people can make the desired change they want in their lives and over time their supports will also evolve.
4. Flexible hours: We believe in providing more support when it is needed, and less when it is not. This way we can support emergent opportunities or potential challenges, and permit independence and autonomy when support is not needed.
5. Right time, right service: The flexibility to access different services depending on the specific (and changing) circumstances and goals of an individual allows us to capitalize on opportunities and respond to changes quickly.
6. Working as a team: Engaging with families, participants, networks and staff collaboratively is critical to achieve outcomes. We are creating new systems of collaboration to make goals easier to achieve.

## **Evaluation Methodology**

The Stitched Services team conducted interviews earlier in the year using our own process created amongst the co-pilots using previous interview techniques learned, and tools designed with SHIFT Collaborative and our previous service designer, Charlotte Secheresse. Thus, our sampling method was unique to our service but utilized stratification. As a group, the co-pilots came together dividing

participants along an x-axis and a y-axis. This was done three times using different criteria on each axis. We used the axes as a spectrum to scale each participant in relation to criterion.

- First, we identified participants using multiple services within Stitched, or little to no services (outside of the co-pilot) (y-axis). This was compared against participants who regularly attended Stitched groups or who infrequently attended or didn't attend at all (x-axis).
- Our next groupings were participants with a high frequency of contact with their co-pilot and staff team or low frequency of contact with their co-pilot and staff team (y-axis). On the other axis, we compared participants who seem content with their services (either expressed by participants or perceived by staff) and who don't (x-axis).
- The last groupings we compared were participants with a big support network (outside of paid supports) or minimal support network (y-axis). This was compared to participants who we perceived were benefiting from Stitched or the benefit seemed questionable (x-axis).

We included participants from each of the above groupings in interviews, so a diverse mix of participants were able to share their opinions on what impact we were or weren't having and where we can make improvements. We identified 19 participants to interview and two declined. Overall, the co-pilots conducted 17 one-on-one interviews over the span of three months. The approach for each interview looked different depending on participants' accessibility needs and unique thought processes.

Our interview team consisted of Anna Krawagna, Emily Sproule, and Amanda Lemagire. We convened one-on-one interviews lasting between one hour to an hour and a half, depending on people's preferences. We collected data using handwritten notes on our interview tools.

We then analyzed the data inductively using a modified version of thematic analysis. Each interviewer analyzed the data from their interviews individually to identify initial themes. Together, we developed common themes from all of the interviews and brought them forward as findings.

### **Limitations**

Interviews were conducted by co-pilots who are the primary supports of participants. This means participants may have felt pressure to answer questions in ways that would reflect positively on the service in hopes they would not offend their co-pilots.

Although a lot of intention was put into making the questions accessible, we cannot guarantee they were. Questions and tools were not designed by people with the same disabilities or needs as the participants who were asked the questions. This could lead to different understandings of the questions being asked.

The co-pilots tried to cater the interview to the needs and wants of participants; however, the structure of interviewing is overall inaccessible as it requires a lot of time, focus, and attention.

### **Findings**

#### **Finding 1: Connections Beyond Paid Support**

Participant-led initiatives within Stitched have led to participants having bigger social circles and spending time with friends and peers outside of paid support.

Participants have reported developing friendships in Stitched Services groups, including young adults (YAY) club, song writing club, and cooking skills. These groups were not a part of Stitched Services when it started but were created based on consistent feedback from participants wanting spaces to meet other young adults, work on media projects, and to learn how to cook. While the groups are facilitated by staff, conscious effort is made to have them be as participant-led as possible; participants help in the planning, logistics, communication and choosing of activities.

These groups have led to building confidence and skills that have transferred into their own lives by planning personal hangouts and community excursions without staff, including going to a karaoke bar every Thursday evening, hosting basketball hangouts through the summer, organizing movie nights, and communicating with friends in their own group chats, video calls, and one-on-one texting.

#### Key Takeaways

- Having groups be participant-led helped people develop skills like planning and communicating logistics and confidence meeting people and deepening connections that no longer require staff facilitation.
- The flexibility built into the staff role permitted staff to identify the need and desire for the groups and take on the facilitation of these participant-led groups.
- Some of these friendships have led to participants being connected to the community in deeper ways. One participant has successfully encouraged three other Stitched Services participants to join his Special Olympics soccer and basketball team.
- Participants who don't participate in the groups are not having the same success in building their social circles. It is important to determine ways that the success we're having in the groups live beyond those spaces.
- 76% of participants interviewed said they went to new places in the community because of Stitched Services.
- The following is data collected on where people feel the most connected:
  - 4 participants feel the most connected in BACI Spaces (YAY club, Song Writing Club, Cooking Skills etc.)
  - 5 participants feel the most connected in the community
  - 5 participants feel the most connected in both the community and BACI spaces

- 1 participant feels the most connected at home
- 2 participants feel the most connected nowhere

#### Interview Quotes

*Became better friends with people [redacted]. Became friends with new people [redacted] and [redacted.] Started going to karaoke every Thursday!*

*Became close to [redacted] and [redacted]! And made new friends like [redacted] and [redacted].*

*I have social circles and people that trust me... I'm working well with new staff. I'm a lot more sociable, even with my roommates. We spend time together and never used to do that.*

#### Possible Responses

- Co-pilots have tools for event/host planning that we can pass on to folks to use to take more ownership of their connections (for people for who this is still a barrier).
- Rotate participants hosting their own activities/events at yay club.
- Quarterly meetings between staff involved to assess what's working and what isn't and then can act quickly to make changes and help the group evolve.
- Broaden to other agencies to get more interest/attendance at YAY club to grow social circles.
- Give participants research roles to find new/fresh ideas of activities to do at YAY club.
- Help a participant build skills to host the planning of the space entirely on their own.
- Stitched Services is involved in a dating project with dating profiles that could similarly benefit people who want to meet people in a friend capacity. Could we create a friendship version?

**Finding 2: Increased Independence and Self-Awareness**

People are doing things on their own that they weren't before and learning more about themselves.

Participants are doing things out of their comfort zone and learning new skills that have led to greater independence. Participants are transiting independently, which has helped build their community and their access to different opportunities. Two participants have moved out on their own into subsidized housing through BACI and another organization. One of these participants has obtained full-time work, a lifelong dream of his.

Some participants, as mentioned in the previous finding, organize their own social events with friends. There seemed to be a direct correlation between the high numbers of participants who reported improvement in their planning and scheduling skills and connecting with people and attending the participant-led groups in Stitched. These groups were fundamental in helping people develop these skills and providing an opportunity to meet new people.

Participants are articulating insights about themselves, their preferences, and identifying relationship dynamics in their personal networks that are positive or where they want to establish boundaries.

**Key Takeaways**

- Participants reported having a staff who could challenge and encourage them to try things outside of their comfort zone and increase their confidence to do new things, leading to some of the increased independence.
- Participants being able to get around on their own offers new opportunities and allows them to engage in more activities without support.
- Participants advocate for themselves and have increased agency in their lives.
- Life participants interviewed have reported improvement in their lives by developing the following skills and areas:



- 82% planning and scheduling, connecting with people, life skills (grocery shopping, cooking, chores etc.)
- 76% going places
- 71% advocating and speaking up, asking for help and support, setting goals, exercising
- 65% trying new things, communicating, using technology
- 59% taking care of my health, reflecting, job skills
- 53% recognizing emotions, getting out of my comfort zone
- 47% coping with stress, persisting, problem solving, booking appointments
- 41% budgeting

#### Interview Quotes

*Sometimes things are my fault, but I don't need to shame myself to grow. BACI staff have presented me with different options and to get out more, but I have to commit to change and work to get something out of this.*

*Feeling like I have a greater sense of independence.  
Hangouts...went to PNE with my friends and enjoyed the XMAS hangout at Glow in Surrey.*

*Self-improvement. I've been pushing myself to go to the gym and looking for work. I do [things] now instead of just thinking [about them].*

*The way I learn is sometimes incompatible with the way I'm taught.*

*I trust my roommate a high amount. I know because we have our differences but we're just different people. We still trust each other now [different from before] and help each other out a lot.*

## Possible Responses

- Create booklet of people sharing their stories of doing things on their own and overcoming challenges that can be given to participants and families when they're feeling fearful of trying something new or accessing spaces on their own.
- Create peer roles within the service to have peer support for people who are struggling to try new things or feeling fearful.
- Create a rolodex of community resources/findings that people have connected to successfully outside of services that can be shared with participants and networks.

**Finding 3: Change Can Halt Progress and Build Resilience**

Seven participants reported that the staff changes in Stitched Services were something significant in their lives over the past year; this is 41% of the population interviewed. For two of these participants, this was a moment of building resilience and reflecting on how much they've grown and changed. While working with a new co-pilot felt overwhelming, it turned out to be a positive challenge and a way to build confidence so they could think about what's next in their lives.

For three others, this had a negative impact on their well-being and even caused one participant to report feeling isolated. For the remaining two they noted this change was significant, but the transition was fine. Participants also report that co-pilot and staff support is one of the elements of Stitched they like the most.

## Key Takeaways

- A positive rapport with co-pilots to navigate the service journey is essential to participants' growth in Stitched.
- Change in staff was disruptive to some people's services and raised questions of dependency on staff for growth and change as opposed to confidence built and self-reliance.

- Change can also lead to momentum and confidence in oneself, especially when recognizing growth that's led to change being easier to navigate (resilience).

#### Interview Quotes

*New co-pilot, ... change was scary, but it was good for personal growth too.*

*My co-pilot left this year; it was confusing and disappointing because I had to get another co-pilot. I started working with a new co-pilot and it wasn't my thing because they were new and it's hard to work with people I don't know. I made a switch to work with a different co-pilot I've known longer. It's been okay.*

*Friendly outgoing staff; they help me set my goals. They listen and value my opinion.*

*I like that I have a co-pilot I'm comfortable around; someone easy to talk to who understands me and I can talk about my problems.*

#### Possible Responses

- Have participants introduced to and familiar with more than one co-pilot to make staff changes and absences less disruptive to participants and decrease likelihood of participants feeling isolated.
- Write case studies or stories with participants who said the changes within Stitched were moments of reflection and opportunities for growth that could be shared with others as a peer-to-peer resource.
- Further understanding needed: are there indicators that a participant has become too dependent/reliant on one staff/support? If so, could we develop a practice of making a

staff change or setting boundaries to ensure their working relationship is meaningful but not creating reliance?

## Conclusion

This was a year of big changes for Stitched Services, the impact of which was felt by participants. Two co-pilots who'd worked with the service for two and seven years left, and two new co-pilots were hired. As the co-pilot works as the main point of contact for someone within Stitched, the loss of these staff was significant. As shown in Finding 3, this inspired reflection of growth and change, and for others this halted progress and led to isolation.

The co-pilot role is a key part of Stitched Services strategy in supporting participants to achieve larger outcomes, have more seamless service journeys and support participants' advocacy of what they want for their lives. Participants reported feeling listened to and understood by their staff in Stitched and this led to better outcomes for them.

While this data is encouraging, it also encourages us to find ways to increase participants' confidence and autonomy and to feel and recognize they are doing most of the work beyond their paid support and propelling the change that is happening for them. Can the skills/ qualities and practices that make the co-pilot role effective be recognized and instilled in participants to take on for themselves? There's more work, reflection and thought to be had here! The data also shows that in some instances the role created dependency and perhaps lessened autonomy for people by the loss of that staff. Further thought and intention can be had to prevent this outcome for participants.

It was also a year of flourishing friendships and increased autonomy for the people we support. There are some key parts of Stitched Services that have allowed this growth to happen, the first being the flexibility of the role and encouragement of acting on ideas that come up for staff when noticing persisting themes in their supports. Through staff initiative, the participant led groups were created and

people are more connected than ever and have built essential skills that have allowed them to see and spend time with their friends and peers outside of paid support. As we move forward, we are asking ourselves - how can the success we've had with these participants also be had with participants who don't attend the groups, who did not report increased social circles?

Our next steps as a team are to meet and review the possible responses of this evaluation report and take some tangible steps forward to make adjustments, try new strategies or test new ideas. As we expect growth and change for the participants we support, we must also expect growth and change for ourselves, in our practices, our approaches and in being open to taking up new and different ideas.



Teams from Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion programs came together in 2024 to evaluate their impact. Over the course of seven months, they defined their impact, collected data about their impact and are using what they discovered through evaluation to expand and deepen their impact. These reports represent some of their most compelling insights.

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rethinking the development of people



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