

# IECSS Communiqué No. 14

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## **From the Project Director**

Welcome back to another school year. Unfortunately, we are still coping with the COVID-19 pandemic – it is hard to believe. Many of our team members, research participants and advisory committee members have been personally and professionally affected by the pandemic. I wish to share my deepest concern to those who have been ill, lost family members, or who have been coping with stressful circumstances for such a long time.

With another school year beginning under the conditions that the pandemic has either caused or exacerbated, we are working to document the experiences of disabled children and their families. We are pleased to share that we have two new publications. The first was led by Co-Investigator Dr. Tricia van Rhijn, and co-authored by the full complement of Co-Investigators who founded the IECSS project. This article outlines the role of childcare in creating inclusive communities. Further, it highlights the reality that exclusion continues throughout services systems and that childcare is affected by the many sites of practice in which disabled children and their families interact. A link to this article is found in the new publications section below. The second publication I want to bring your attention to is an article analyzing interviews between March 2020 and

November 2020. These interviews present a unique lens on the pandemic and what we have learned about inclusions and exclusions through the disruption of services. Again, the link can be found in the new publications section.

I am pleased to welcome Devika Govindarajah as our new Administrative Manager. Devika has been working hard to learn all the procedures associated with University and funding compliance as well as supporting our staff and research team as we continue in a remote environment. I would also like to welcome Dr. Joanne Weber, Canada Research Chair in deaf education at the University of Alberta. Joanne joins us officially after having supported our Youth Advisory committee activities since the beginning of our Partnership Grant. Joanne will be leading development of a deaf-specific youth advisory page, to go along with our forthcoming children's webpage. More details to come in a future communiqué.

Finally, I want to raise the fact that the host institution for IECSS is beginning the process of changing its name. This is an important step in reconciliation but will require more than a name change to actually address structural and systemic discrimination in educational institutions at every level. As partners with this institution, I welcome your thoughts on the process. I also wanted to bring your attention to the [X-University campaign](#), which provides more information and an explanation of the use of the term X-University in the interim.

I wish everyone good health and good care,

Kathryn Underwood, Project Director

## **News from the Office**

As we reflect on the past year, we are reminded of the resilience of our research team, advisory committee members and the research community as a whole. We are committed to ensuring the continuity of our research through a focused approach on boosting engagement and recruitment. We were hoping to be back in the office by this time, however, that is not the case. The University remains closed from most physical activities. However, we are still active. We have shifted towards biweekly zoom meetings for the duration of the Fall 2021 semester.

So far this year, we are seeing a lower response rate from participants. You may remember that we had a very strong response last year. We believe this may be due to the fatigue people are experiencing from the ongoing closures and disruptions in their communities. We currently have n=141 participants in the study. Our team of project coordinators have been working diligently on a recruitment push in many of our key research communities. Thank you to our staff team and the many partners, people and

community organizations who have supported our ongoing recruitment and retention efforts.

Congratulations to Katie MacEachern, who successfully defended her Master's Research Paper, titled "An Institutional Ethnographic Analysis of the Organization of French Healthcare and Disability Services for Francophonie in Canada". We will post the MRP on our website shortly.

We also want to welcome back Alison Smith, who rejoins us after being on a maternity leave.

### **Doctoral Research**

Alison Smith is a PhD student at the University of Toronto, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education in the Social Justice Education program. As a Project Coordinator on the IECSS project for the past 7 years she has been involved in recruitment, interviews, transcription, and mapping, as well as contributing to Policy Brief No. 8 on Black experiences and disabled childhoods. Under the supervision of Dr. Kathryn Underwood and Dr. Diane Farmer, Alison will be working with data from the IECSS project for her dissertation. Specifically, analyzing data from families who identify as Black. Through an intersectional analysis, she also aims to examine how anti-Black racism and ableism affect the experiences of Black families and children. Alison hopes to begin analyzing this data starting in the spring of 2022.

### **Master Research**

Thanh Thanh Chung is currently pursuing her MA in the Early Childhood Studies program at "X" University. Thanh Thanh is focusing on the institutional interactions of assistive devices and understanding how they are processed as they enter into each system. Thanh Thanh has been working for the IECSS project for 6 years and hopes to use her knowledge as well as practical experiences as a teacher, therapist, research assistant, and support worker to analyze the data at a more critical standpoint.

### **IECSS Website**

We are pleased to share that our COVID-19 resources page is live in English and in French. This page includes articles from our team as well as reports from government, organizations, media and other theory and commentary resulting from experience in the pandemic. You can access this page in English on the [COVID-19 and Childhood Disability page](#) or in French on the [COVID-19 et Handicaps Chez les Jeunes Enfants page](#).

## **Coming Soon: New Website from our Youth Advisory Committee**

We have almost finished our 6 child friendly pages. We are working with the Centre for Communicating Knowledge (CCK, one of our partners) to design the web pages. Sullivan Dymont, a community illustrator, has created a beautiful collection of illustrations we are incorporating into the design of these pages. We hope to highlight these images in a series of poster displays across our community. We would like to thank Sullivan and his team for their contribution and terrific collaboration on this project. In addition, Dr. Joanne Weber is working with some of the deaf Youth Advisory Committee members to develop content for web pages designed for deaf children. We are excited to launch this series later this Fall.

## **Website Analytics**

Over the last quarter, our webpage has had a total of 1,935 page views with 780 sessions. On average, 2.48 pages are viewed per session with an average session duration lasting 2 minutes and 14 seconds. The top 3 most frequently accessed pages included the homepage, publications and First Nations and Métis Perspectives. Forty-one percent of our audience arrived on our website via a direct search, as opposed to 53.2% of users who used an organic search with queries including “iecss” and “inclusion early childhood” via an array of search engines. Our average user is female, living in North America and is accessing our page from a desktop device. Interestingly, 100% of our visitors since July 15, 2021 have been identified as female. The majority of visitors are from Canada, but we have also seen visitors from Mexico, India and South Korea.

## **UN Day of General Discussion (DGD) on Children’s Rights and Alternative Care – September 16 and 17, 2021**

The IECSS Youth Advisory Committee was launched in October 2018. Since then, the youth advisors have been involved in different activities such as writing research briefs, translating some of our work into child-friendly language, and working on a kids’ page for our website. Additionally, IECSS is sponsoring two of our youth advisors, Munashe Z. Nyenya and Grace Sweetman, who are a part of the Children’s Advisory Team for the Day of General Discussion (DGD) on the theme of Children in Alternative Care. In total, 30 young people were selected to be a part of the advisory committee from 250 applicants.

You can find more information on the [2021 Day of General Discussion: Children’s Rights and Alternative Care](#) on their official website.

## Recent and Forthcoming IECSS Publications

We are pleased to update you about the following new publications from the IECSS project:

Davies, K., Doucet, G., Atwal, A., & Underwood, K. (2021). [Systemic knowledge at school entry: Learning from disabled children and their families](#). Community, Work & Family, 1-5.

IECSS Youth Advisory Committee. [IECSS Project]. (2021). DGD Communications Video [Video File].

IECSS Youth Advisory Committee. [IECSS Project]. (2021). Fatima Disability Rights Video+Audio May 2021 [Video File].

IECSS Youth Advisory Committee. [IECSS Project]. (2021). Mustafa Disability Rights Video+Audio May 2021 [Video File].

Parekh, G. & Underwood, K. (2021). [The pandemic's wake-up call for accessibility in the Early Years Here's how we can make early education more inclusive](#).

Underwood, K., Haché, A., & Douglas, P. (2021). IECSS policy brief no. 11: Submission to the Day of General Discussion on Children's Rights and Alternative Care: Disability and childhood. Inclusive Early Childhood Service System project.

Underwood, K., & Snoddon, K. (2021). IECSS policy brief no. 10: Deaf childhoods and inclusive early childhood education and care. Inclusive Early Childhood Service System project. Underwood, K. [IECSS Project] (2019, February). Inclusive Early Childhood Service System Project. Check it Out Launch, Toronto, ON.

van Rhijn, T., Underwood, K., Frankel, E., Lero, D. S., Spalding, K., Janus, M., Friendly, M., & Haché, A. (2021). [Role of Child Care in Creating Inclusive Communities and Access for All](#). Canadian Public Policy,47(3), 399-409.

Xu, F. [IECSS Project] (2018). Shaking the Movers. [Video File]. Ottawa, ON.

## New Resources from Team Members

Our research team members hold a wide range of expertise and are active in many research projects across Canada and the globe. We have featured publications

and research from our team members that may be of interest to other team members, partners and staff.

- Balter, A., Gores, D., van Rhijn, T., Davies, A. W., & Akers, T. (2021). [Supporting the development of sexuality in early childhood: The rationales and barriers to sexuality education in early learning settings](#). *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*.
- Davies, A., Maich, K., Belcher, C., Cagulada, E., Dewelles, M., & Rhijn, T. V. (2021). [A critical examination of the intersection of sexuality and disability in Special, a Netflix series](#). *Disability Representation in Film, TV, and Print Media*, 44-64.
- Douglas, P., Runswick-Cole, K., Ryan, S., & Fogg, P. (2021). [Mad Mothering](#). *Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies: Volume 15, Issue 1 Journal of Literary & Cultural Disability Studies*, 15(1), 39-56.
- Goodley, D., Lawthom, R., & Runswick-Cole, K. (2021). [Disability, technology, and health](#). *Routledge International Handbook of Critical Issues in Health and Illness*, 209-220.
- Goodley, D., Lawthom, R., Liddiard, K., & Runswick-Cole, K. (2021). [Key Concerns for Critical Disability](#). *International Journal of Disability and Social Justice*.
- Hughes, M. T., Magaña, S., Gonzales, W., Núñez, G., & Moreno-Angarita, M. (2021). [Colombian parents of children with autism spectrum disorder: Perceptions, experiences, and expectations](#). *Journal of International Special Needs Education*.
- Janus, M., Reid-Westoby, C., Raiter, N., Forer, B., & Guhn, M. (2021). [Population Level Data on Child Development at School Entry Reflecting Social Determinants of Health: A Narrative Review of Studies Using the Early Development Instrument](#). *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(7), 3397.
- Lumia, C. M., Arbour-Nicitopoulos, K. P., Moola, F. J., & Mcpherson, A. C. (2021). [Using photo-elicitation to explore health promotion concepts with children and adolescents with disabilities: A rapid scoping review](#). *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 1-11.
- Saunders, N. R., Janus, M., Porter, J., Lu, H., Gaskin, A., Kalappa, G., & Guttman, A. (2021). [Use of administrative record linkage to measure medical and social risk factors for early developmental vulnerability in Ontario, Canada](#). *International Journal of Population Data Science*, 6(1).

- Siddiqua, A., Janus, M., Mesterman, R., Duku, E., Georgiades, K., Saxena, F., ... Saunders, N. (2021). [Primary Care Provider and Child Characteristics Associated with Age of Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Population Based Cohort Study](#). *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*.
- Snoddon, K., & Weber, J. C. (2021). [Introduction: Plurilingualism and \(In\)competence in Deaf Education](#). *Critical Perspectives on Plurilingualism in Deaf Education*, 1-13.
- Spadafora, N., Reid-Westoby, C., Pottruff, M., & Janus, M. (2021). [Family responsibilities and mental health of kindergarten educators during the first COVID-19 pandemic lockdown in Ontario, Canada](#).
- van Rhijn, T., Osborne, C., Ranby, S., Maich, K., Hall, C., Rzepecki, L., & Hemmerich, A. (2019). [Peer Play in Inclusive Child Care Settings: Assessing the Impact of Stay, Play, & Talk, a Peer Mediated Social Skills Program](#). *Child Care in Practice*, 27(3), 224-238.

## **Research to Watch:**

- Buliung, R., Hess, P., Flowers, L., Moola, F. J., & Faulkner, G. (2021). [Living the journey to school: Conceptual asymmetry between parents and planners on the journey to school](#). *Social Science & Medicine*, 284, 114237.
- Koller, D., & Stoddart, K. (2021). [Approaches that Address Social Inclusion for Children with Disabilities: A Critical Review](#). *Child & Youth Care Forum*.
- Slee, R., Corcoran, T., & Best, M. (2019). [Disability Studies in Education – Building Platforms to Reclaim Disability and Recognise Disablement](#). *Journal of Disability Studies in Education*, 1-11.

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