

Families

THE HEART OF COMMUNITY

THE INCLUSION ALBERTA
VIRTUAL FAMILY CONFERENCE
April 16+17, 2021

WORKSHOP

Friday, April 16 | 9 am – 12 pm

The Problem with Behaviour Problems: Supporting Students with Autism & Other Disabilities

Presenter: Paula Kluth, Ph.D., educator, author and consultant

Come and explore fresh ways to think about "behavior problems" in inclusive schools. We will examine where problems come from, who "owns" them, and how our language and approaches can both create behavior struggles and minimize them. We will discuss how educators can avoid challenging moments by listening, teaching, collaborating, including and thinking out of the box. Specific strategies that will be highlighted include video modeling, building on strengths, and encouraging movement.

Dr. Paula Kluth is a consultant, author, advocate, and independent scholar who works with teachers and families to provide inclusive opportunities for students with disabilities and to create more responsive and engaging schooling experiences for all learners. She is a former K-12 special educator who has served as a classroom teacher, co-teacher, and inclusion facilitator. Paula has also been a university professor and has taught courses on both inclusion and disability studies. Most recently, Paula's work has centered on helping teachers and administrators educate all students in their schools and classrooms. She also frequently works with families and advocacy groups to support goals related to inclusion. In addition to inclusive education, her professional interests include Universal Design for Learning, co-teaching, and educating students with complex support needs.

All In: 18 Ways to Include All Students in Virtual Classrooms is Paula's newest book. She is also the author or co-author of 15 other titles including Universal Design Daily, 30 Days to the Co-Taught Classroom, Don't We Already Do Inclusion?, and "You're Going to Love This Kid!": Teaching Students with Autism.

in Inclusive Classrooms. She is also the author of a few books for children including Coaster, a story of a puppy with wonderful wheels.

Paula has won several awards in her field. She is the recipient of the PEAK Parent Center's Ally for Inclusion Award; The PEAL [Parent Education & Advocacy Leadership] Center's Inclusive Education Champion Award; The National Down Syndrome Congress's Educator of the Year; The Belle Center of Chicago's Inclusion Advocate of the Year; and the University of Wisconsin's "Forward Under 40" Award.

More information can be found on Paula's website: www.paulakluth.com

"...educators can avoid challenging moments by listening, teaching, collaborating, including and thinking out of the box."

Accessibility

If you experience any barriers in attending this year's Virtual Family Conference, please contact us. We will do our best to provide support and assistance in areas such as (but not limited to):

- Access to technology required to experience the virtual conference
- Financial assistance to cover Conference fees
- Assistance in securing childcare, enabling parents to attend worry-free

Please contact tlarose@inclusionalbarta.org if you require assistance.

In addition to the workshops and sessions listed, the Virtual Family Conference will also offer several fun opportunities for you to socialize, network and build relationships and connections with Conference attendees as well as speakers.

Register now at www.inclusionalbarta.org

Friday, April 16 | 9 am – 12 pm

WORKSHOP

The Unique Role of Support Staff in Enabling a Meaningful and Inclusive Life

Presenter: Janet Klees, Executive Director, Durham Association for Family Resources and Support

Janet will offer a *practical* and *reflective* workshop designed specifically for support staff focused on their unique and essential role in the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities. Janet will provide a guiding framework for powerfully and effectively taking up the role of a support staff in advancing the quality of an individual's life regardless of their current circumstances. This workshop will also be of value to those responsible for leading and directing support staff, such as supervisors, managers and directors, including family members who may be in this position when utilizing or planning to access Family Managed Supports (FMS). The workshop will offer a meaningful and satisfying way to think about the support role as a committed and enduring approach to enabling a good life in community rather than viewing the role as just another job.

Janet will share strategies on the support role as a bridge to relationships and participation in community life, including the critically important work in supporting individuals with

"... supporting individuals with developmental disabilities in decision-making and in making the place they live a true home."

developmental disabilities in decision-making and in making the place they live a true home. She will use examples of working in complex situations and others where capitalizing on the wisdom of families can be of immense value. As the vast majority of adults with developmental disabilities in Alberta rely on staff as their primary means of support the content of this workshop is important and relevant. Don't miss this opportunity to learn, share and discuss how people in this unique and critical role can make an invaluable difference.

***Janet Klees** has worked in the field of developmental disabilities for over 35 years. Janet is the Executive Director for Durham Association for Family Resources and Support which is a values-based organization that supports families to design and implement good lives in neighbourhoods and communities for and with their sons and daughters. Supporting over 300 families and individuals by providing: long term planning, budgeting guidance, assistance with recruiting staff, learning*

events, training for support teams, building circles and networks, crafting and holding valued roles and more.

Until 2014, she was with the family-governed Deohaeko Support Network in Ontario, almost from its beginnings when families designed and built a 105-unit inclusive housing co-operative which seven of their sons and daughters with disabilities now call home, and from which they live typical and full lives in community.

She is the author of three books: We Come Bearing Gifts; Our Presence has Roots; and Deohaeko Decades. Janet has also written countless published articles and other documents. Janet's work centers on individually-designed arrangements and she is especially concerned that families, their allies and support workers are well-supported to think through practical, principled ways to ensure that individuals with developmental disabilities live meaningful, involved and secure lives within their communities. A focus on nurturing and building unpaid, deep personal relationships with a focus on the contributions that all people have to offer are at the heart of her work.

President's Reception

Friday night, from 7pm – 8:30pm, Inclusion Alberta hosts its annual President's Reception. There will be an awards ceremony to honour several individuals and organizations that have made extraordinary contributions to the lives of children and adults with developmental disabilities. Many find the President's Reception to be an inspiring celebration of community inclusion.

Register at www.inclusionalbarta.org

OPENING PLENARY

Saturday, April 17
9 am – 10 am

Inclusion Benefits All

*Presenters: Paula Kluth, Ph.D
and Janet Klees*

Our keynote presenters will share this opening plenary providing an inspiring start to a day of exciting learning and engagement. Paula and Janet will link their individual perspectives,

knowledge and experiences to create a bridge between the benefit of inclusive education for all students and the benefits of inclusive communities for all its members.

YOUTH FOR INCLUSION

Saturday, April 17
10 am – 3 pm

(ages 16-22)

Youth for Inclusion members continue to develop their knowledge and capacity in pursuing advocacy and action related to the promotion of inclusion of youth with intellectual disabilities. Building on themes from the Fall 2020 Youth Conference, youth participants will

explore the impacts of COVID-19 and the importance and value of relationships during these uncertain times. Youth participants will explore the intersectionality of other current social movements and the necessity of ensuring the voice of youth with intellectual disabilities

are heard. We welcome youth with and without disabilities committed to social justice, action, advocacy and inclusion to join us virtually for this day! Space is limited so please ensure any interested youth register through the Eventbrite link.

CLOSING PLENARY

Saturday, April 17
3:30 pm – 4:30 pm

We Come Bearing Gifts

*Moderator: Trish Bowman, CEO,
Inclusion Alberta*

The effort to ensure inclusion and belonging for children and adults with developmental disabilities in all that our communities have to offer is often thought of as being solely for the benefit of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. The

truth is that time and time again we hear stories of how community member's lives are deeply enriched by the presence of classmates, team members, colleagues and neighbours with developmental disabilities. Come and hear stories of the gift of inclusion and how all our lives are strengthened and enhanced when children and adults with developmental disabilities are valued and participating members of all our lives and communities.

The Closing Plenary will follow the Afternoon Sessions.

See page 6 for details.

Saturday, April 17
10:30 am – 12 pm

MORNING SESSIONS

Don't We Already Do Inclusion? Creating Better Schools for All

Presenter: Paula Kluth, Ph.D., educator, author and consultant

Are you trying to grow the inclusive schooling model in your community? Do you feel like you have tried everything to create change in your school? Do you want to "sharpen the saw" and become reenergized as an advocate or educator? This workshop is focused on addressing all these goals and is designed to help

a range of stakeholders learn new skills and ask new questions.

This presentation is not only filled with ideas for teaching diverse learners but is also focused on change itself and, more specifically, on how those invested in inclusion can create opportunities that allow all learners to thrive. Come and learn tried and true techniques (e.g., creating a culture of differentiation, focus on benefits for all) as well as some out-of-the box solutions (e.g., "radical" role sharing, using social media to inspire inclusion). Ideas for virtual inclusion will be addressed as well.

Fostering a Family Led Movement for Inclusion: Taking Action Collectively

Presenter: Bruce Uditsky, M.Ed., CEO Emeritus, Inclusion Alberta; Trish Bowman, CEO, Inclusion Alberta; Robin Acton, President, Inclusion Canada and Past-President, Inclusion Alberta

The social change required to enable children and adults with developmental disabilities to live fully inclusive lives is largely dependent on a continuously revitalized family-

led and allied movement for inclusion. Given the need for multi-generational collective advocacy there is also a pressing need to engage new potential actors and develop their capacity for leadership. Inclusive, good lives must continue to become more of reality regardless of fiscal constraints, cuts or uncertainty, inclusion challenges in schools, the risks associated with reduced safeguards to Medical Assistance in Dying or navigating bureaucracies. These challenges require us to build and sustain a movement. Inclusion Alberta is contributing to this need on multiple national and international fronts. There is a place for you in this movement for inclusion – come join us.

Enabling Hopeful and Inclusive Lives in Difficult Times

Presenters: Billie Jack, Provincial Director, Advocacy & Community Engagement, Inclusion Alberta; and Charmaine McIntyre, Provincial Director, Inclusive Post-Secondary Education, Inclusion Alberta

In times of economic constraints, global pandemic and uncertainty, families and individuals with developmental

disabilities may fear the future or believe an inclusive life is not possible or sustainable. It is vitally important that the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities not be placed on hold or slip backwards given the inevitable ups and downs of the economy or government policies. Using examples and proven strategies this session will illustrate how a life-enhancing vision and a meaningful life can still be realized by capitalizing on community capacity, relationships and community connections.

First Nations: Challenges, Progress and Aspirations

Presenters: Arnold Fox, Director, Blood Tribe Social Development, Kainai First Nation; Kathleen McHugh, Director, Siksika Nation Disability Services; Tracy McHugh, Councillor Siksika Nation; Barbara Nish, Inclusion Alberta

Centuries ago, before the arrival of Europeans, many First Nations held positive views of children and adults with disabilities seeing them as having "gifts" they brought

to their communities. However, some of that history and cultural understanding has been lost given past practices, such as residential schools, and the lack of culturally relevant support for families and their family members with disabilities living on Reserves. Inclusion Alberta is working with a number of First Nations to enable families to have support and children and adults with developmental disabilities to have meaningful opportunities for an inclusive life. In this session come hear from First Nations advocates and family members about existing challenges, progress to-date and future aspirations all can contribute to.

Register at www.inclusionAlberta.org

AFTERNOON SESSIONS

Saturday, April 17 | 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Housing, Home and Support

Presenter: Janet Klees, Executive Director, Durham Association for Family Resources and Support

Across Canada, families are thinking and re-thinking housing, aiming for real home in ordinary ways. The National Housing Strategy includes a commitment to create housing for individuals with developmental disabilities and efforts are underway to ensure inclusive housing options are created. In this timely session Janet will share the critical distinctions between housing, which is the structure in which people live, and a home,

which is built intentionally and continuously from actions of the heart and the support which enables home to be realized. More and more families are looking at ways to secure affordable housing, but this also requires thoughtful consideration of what nurtures home and the patterns of individual support needed to build a personal lifestyle. Despite little real federal and provincial inputs at the moment, families continue to re-assess their assets and take their own steps. Using real life examples designed by ordinary families, this session will help others re-imagine housing possibilities that can lead to real home.

How to Find and Retain Quality Staff, Including Supportive Roommates

Presenters: Barb MacIntyre, President Inclusion Alberta; Orvella Small, Parent, Executive Director of Inclusion Foothills; Pat Winter, Darrell Cook FMS Resource Centre Coordinator, joined by others

A too constant dilemma for families and their loved ones with developmental disabilities are the challenges in finding and keeping quality staff, whether through FSCD or FMS funding. And for those adults and their families seeking a supportive living roommate, this can be added complexity. In this session, experienced families will share their strategies for finding, supervising and retaining the very important staff supports needed to enable a good and inclusive life

Pathfinders: Building Your Network

Presenters: Wendy McDonald, Chief Operating Officer, Inclusion Alberta; Charmaine McIntyre, Provincial Director, Inclusive Post-Secondary Education, Inclusion Alberta; Kim Guay, Parent, who will be joined by others

What will happen when I am no longer here? How do I create a meaningful, inclusive life for my family member with a disability? These are questions that are constant for those who support individuals with

developmental disabilities. Creating a network of a small group of people, typically committed family, friends and community members, can significantly impact the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities in enabling community membership, employment, belonging and well-being. It can be difficult for families to think of ideas, make plans and implement those plans on their own. This interactive session will walk you through the "how" of creating a network, what to do when you have a network and illustrate the difference that has been made to individuals and their families who have used this model in planning.

Creating & Sustaining Employment – The Power of Family Expectations and Actions

Presenter: Trina Steed, Provincial Director, Employment, Inclusion Alberta

Having a job and a reason to get up in the morning is one of the key avenues to a life of belonging and inclusion. However, the majority of adults with

developmental disabilities are unemployed when many could be meaningfully and inclusively employed in interesting jobs and careers. Advancing employment often requires a conscious and planful effort by families from childhood through to adulthood. This interactive session will provide families with useful and practical ideas to increase the likelihood of employment being realized and sustained. The session will illustrate how families can tap into their personal resources and networks to create valued jobs.