InclusionWorks! History

InclusionWorks! began in Victoria BC in 2010 as a model of collective family governance in which transitioning youth and their families collaborate during a five year transition period to ensure quality individualized programming in the community for participating young adults. Relying less on "traditional" service provision, families have opted for Individualized Funding (IF) and pooled resources for greater self-sufficiency and to prepare our participants to be contributing Canadians.

InclusionWorks! promotes effective community inclusion through a family governance model by fostering natural, mutually beneficial partnerships with the educational, business, non-profit and government sectors. Working with a wide range of community-based partners, the families, self-advocates and staff create programming with the aim of building experience, independence and inclusion for each participant.

Since the first group started, two more Victoria-area groups have started, a group has started in North Vancouver and others across BC are exploring family-governed models of support. The Victoria groups have been supported by 2 different host agencies – Community Living Victoria and Lifetime Networks.

Since its inceptions, InclusionWorks! has recognized for its innovation and received a number of accolades, awards and grants including a CLBC Wow! Award, a Community Living Venture grant, and BC Ideas Innovation and People's Choice Awards. In 2013, InclusionWorks! received a 3-year grant to pilot a partnership with the WorkBC program to increase the employment of youth with developmental disabilitites. InclusionWorks! participants and their families express appreciation to the **Vancouver Foundation Disability Supports for Employment Fund** for their generous grant supporting our employment project and the creation of the resulting **Guidebook**.

The InclusionWorks! groups have also presented at numerous conferences, including the annual Inclusion BC conference, the Canadian Association for Supported Employment (CASE) conference, the Family Focus conference, and the Pacific Rim Conference on Disability and Diversity. In addition, individuals and family members have done workshop presentations to family groups and organizations throughout BC, and as far away as Ontario and Maryland.

In 2017 having completed the "transition period" that InclusionWorks! was designed for, families in the first two InclusionWorks! groups, InclusionWorks! Victoria and InclusionWorks! Saanich, determined they wished to continue in a family-governed model of support as they moved into the next stage of life. The remaining 11 families in the 2 groups amalgamated and created their own family-governed non-profit agency, Victoria Community Connections, where the participants continue to work, learn and grow in their communities, as well as work towards greater participant direction of the new organization.