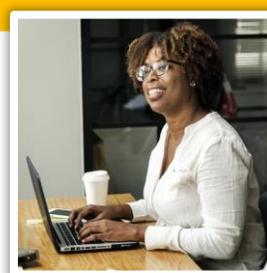


# Community Voices on ‘Tapping into Tech’

**Fostering equity for children with disabilities and/or medical complexity in rural & northern British Columbia**



## NEWSLETTER – JULY 2022

### Rich Discussions at our ‘Tapping into Tech Community Council’

The Community Council met on June 22<sup>nd</sup> and welcomed two new members:

Laranna Scott  
Early Learning & Child Care Engagement Manager  
Métis Nation BC

Lisa Marsh  
Jordan’s Principle Hub Resource Coordinator  
BC Aboriginal ChildCare Society

Council members had an in-depth discussion about the role of technology, as part of a hybrid model in enhancing in-person services for children with extra support needs, particularly for families living in rural and northern parts of BC. A recurring theme in this discussion was ensuring parents and providers have choices about technology-enhanced early child development and intervention (ECDI) services in BC.

### Thank you for a Great Response to our Parent / Guardian Survey!

Thank you to everyone who helped to ensure we received a great response to our parent / guardian survey that was co-developed over the course of several months by members of our Community Council and Parent Advisory Circle. This was no small feat, given everything that is going on for families in our province.

The parent / guardian survey was open April 5 – June 14 2022, and available in English, Arabic, Punjabi and Simplified Chinese. We received a total 87 surveys. An initial scan of the results shows that:

- 82% are mothers
- 36% identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit
- 73% live in the Northern Health Region
- 69% live in a rural or northern communities
- 99% have access to a cellular phone
- 83.5% have a computer or laptop
- 70% have a tablet
- 95% have access to high speed internet

Responses to all 36 survey questions (data) will be analyzed by members of our Community Council over the summer. We want to mobilize this knowledge so that it can be useful for communities and programs and look forward to using multi-media to share the findings in Sept/October 2022.

## Survey for ECDI Service Providers & Leaders Now Open!

We currently have another important survey open to inform this research. This is the first large-scale survey of its kind in BC to gather ECDI leaders, coordinators / managers and providers' (including AIDP/IDP, ASCDP/SCDP, and specialized therapy services) views, experiences and questions about using technology to augment in-person services. This survey is available [online](#) and in [PDF](#). Please also see the [info-poster](#) and [infomercial](#), with project co-lead Alison Gerlach.

## Scoping Review Submitted for Publication

Several members of the Community Council Project and Amarens Matthiesen (doctoral candidate with co-lead Alison Gerlach), completed a scoping review of Canadian research published from 2011-2021 on how information and communication technologies have been used in diverse community settings to support children with extra support needs. The findings of this scoping review reinforce the need for our research and will help to inform our work in year two of our project. The review has been submitted to an international journal and we look forward to sharing with our growing network when published!

## Working with Community Partner Agencies

An exciting research activity underway in year one of our project with community researchers Crystal Kalas with the **Fort St John CDC** and Cheryl Work with the **Northwest CDC in the Smithers region**, is the development of community profiles and environmental scans of their agencies' policies and practices related to the use of information and communication technologies with families and children. This information and findings from our surveys will be mobilized by each of these agencies, along with a \$10,000 catalyst grant from our project, to plan for and enhance their virtual services.

In June, project co-lead Alison Gerlach met with representatives of the **BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres** and **Hiiye'yu Lelum (House of Friendship) Society in Duncan** to begin discussions about a similar partnership project. These are exciting opportunities to partner and learn with these organizations.

## Next Steps in Fall 2022

The information from our surveys and scoping review, along with what we have learned so far with our Community Council will be used to undertake more in-depth discussions with parents/caregivers/guardians and ECDI leaders and providers in rural and northern communities across BC. If you are interested in learning more or taking part – please contact us!

## We Want You to Use the Knowledge from this Project

Both generating and mobilizing knowledge are central to the 'Community Voices on Tapping into Tech' project in year two. In the Fall, we will create a range of knowledge products (e.g., infographics, webinars, research briefs). Please keep us informed about how we can share information so that it can be used in ways that benefit your communities, organizations, programs, families and children.

## For More Information & to Stay in Touch

To learn more or get involved, please contact Theresa, our Project Manager:

**Email:** [tappingintotech@uvic.ca](mailto:tappingintotech@uvic.ca)

Also, please check out our social media sites:

**Project website:** <https://onlineacademiccommunity.uvic.ca/tappingintotech/>

**Facebook page:** <https://www.facebook.com/TappingintoTechCommunity/>

## Community Partners



Aboriginal Infant Development Programs



FAMILY SUPPORT  
Institute of BC  
*families supporting families*



inclusionBC



Aboriginal Supported  
Child Development



PARENT RESEARCHERS  
Brenda Lenahan  
Symbia Barnaby



REPRESENTATIVE FOR  
CHILDREN AND YOUTH

ECD RESEARCHERS  
Crystal Kalas  
Cheryl Work



YOUTH RESEARCHERS  
Kate Gibbs  
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