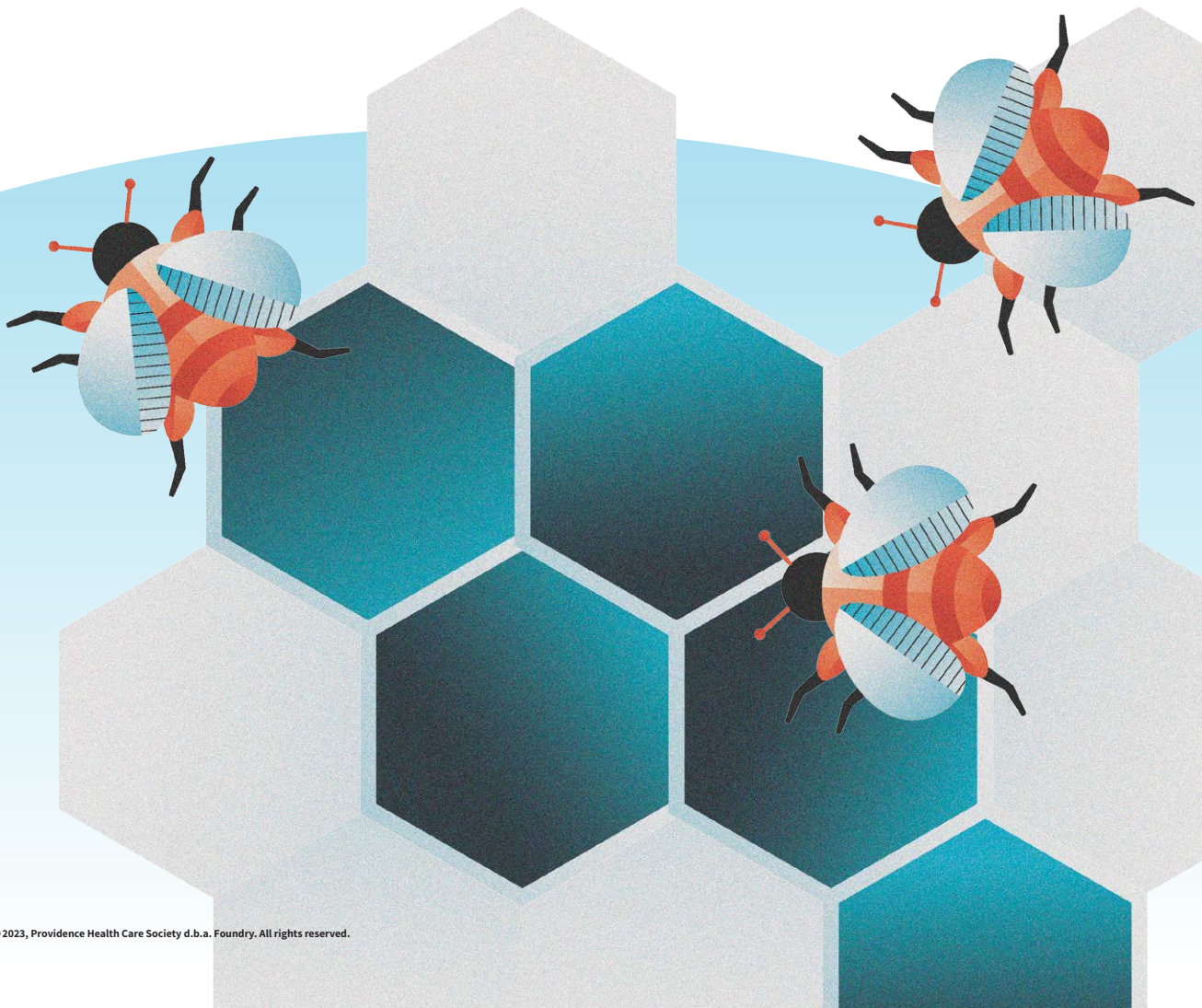


·FOUNDRY·

Community Development Workbook

May 2023



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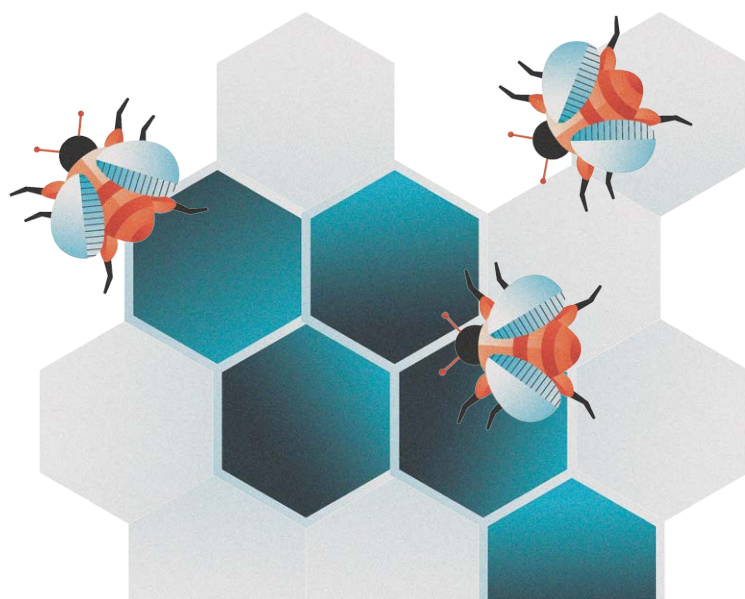
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Acknowledgements

We acknowledge, with much gratitude, that our work takes place on the traditional, unceded territories of Indigenous Peoples. We recognize and respect First Nations, Métis peoples and Inuit as the traditional stewards of this land that is steeped in rich history.

Foundry is built on strong partnerships. We wish to thank everyone we work closely with — community organizations, government, health authorities, youth, caregivers, donors and many others who are committed to empowering young people.

We are grateful to an anonymous donor for providing funds for community development work. Their generosity will allow us to build knowledge and partnerships in communities across British Columbia, as we all work together for a better future for young people.

Together with our fundraising partner St. Paul's Foundation and host Providence Health Care, we thank and recognize our lead funders and partners for their leadership in creating and sustaining the Foundry provincial initiative:

- Anonymous
- Bell-Graham Boeckh Foundation Partnership
- Diamond Foundation
- Goldcorp
- Government of Canada
- Graham Boeckh Foundation
- Michael Smith Health Research BC
- North Growth Foundation
- Province of BC
- RBC Foundation
- Robert L. Conconi Foundation
- Wheaton Precious Metals
- Y.P. Heung Foundation

For building and powering Foundry's online platform foundrybc.ca, we thank and recognize:

- BC Children's Hospital, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority
- BC Children's Hospital Foundation
- Canucks for Kids Fund

For bringing Foundry centres to their communities, we thank and recognize:

Phase 1 Foundry Centres

- **Foundry Abbotsford:**
Archway Community Services
- **Foundry Campbell River:**
The John Howard Society of North Island
- **Foundry Kelowna:** Canadian Mental Health Association — Kelowna Branch
- **Foundry North Shore:**
Vancouver Coastal Health
- **Foundry Prince George:**
YMCA of Northern BC
- **Foundry Vancouver-Granville:**
Providence Health Care

Phase 2 Foundry Centres

- **Foundry Victoria:**
Victoria Youth Clinic Society
- **Foundry Ridge Meadows:** Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows Community Services
- **Foundry Penticton:**
One Sky Community Resources
- **Foundry Richmond:**
Vancouver Coastal Health
- **Foundry Terrace:** Terrace and District Community Services Society

Phase 3 Foundry Centres

- **Foundry Burns Lake:**
Carrier Sekani Family Service
- **Foundry Comox Valley:**
John Howard Society of North Island
- **Foundry East Kootenay:**
Ktunaxa-Kinbasket Child and Family Service Society
- **Foundry Langley:**
Encompass Support Services Society
- **Foundry Sea to Sky:**
Sea to Sky Community Services Society
- **Foundry Surrey:**
Pacific Community Resources Society
- **Foundry Port Hardy:** North Island Crisis and Counselling Centre Society
- **Foundry Cariboo Chilcotin:**
Cariboo Chilcotin Child Development Centre Association

Phase 4 Foundry Centres

- **Foundry Fort St. John:**
Fort St. John Friendship Society
- **Foundry Tri-Cities:** SHARE Family & Community Services Society
- **Foundry Kamloops:**
Interior Community Services
- **Foundry Sunshine Coast:**
Sunshine Coast Community Services

Together, we are changing the way young people access health and social services across British Columbia. Thank you for sharing your voices and perspectives and for inspiring us with your visions of a better future — one where all young people have the resources and supports they need to fully achieve wellness.

We also wish to acknowledge our Foundry Central Office team for providing invaluable feedback, guidance and leadership in creating this guide.

Introduction

Welcome

We all want the youth in our communities to be able to live healthy, well-balanced lives. We know that one organization or set of service providers will not be able to meet their every need. We also know that youth from equity-denied communities will face more barriers, and we have a responsibility to make health and social services safe for Indigenous young people.

What if it were easier for young people to find answers when they need support? What would it look like to create more equitable, youth-driven health and wellness services that reflect what youth in our communities want and need?

In British Columbia (BC), we have a vision to transform access to services for young people, by coming together within our communities to build on our strengths and redesign our systems, with youth at the centre.

If your community is ready to begin this work, we welcome you to join us on this journey. If you have already begun, we are happy to provide support and share ideas as you take the next steps.

What does equity-denied mean?

It's important to centre equity in all of our work with youth and families/caregivers and that means understanding which groups may be equity-denied. The Government of Canada's [Guide on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Terminology](#) shares this definition of "equity-denied":

"A group of people who, because of systemic discrimination, face barriers that prevent them from having the same access to the resources and opportunities that are available to other members of society, and that are necessary for them to attain just outcomes.

In Canada, groups generally considered to be equity-denied groups include women, Indigenous people, people with disabilities, people who are part of LGBTQ2+ communities, religious minority groups and racialized people. The types of equity-denied groups may vary based on factors such as geography, sociocultural context or the presence of specific subpopulations.

Some people may prefer the term "equity-deserving group" because it highlights the fact that equity should be achieved from a systemic, cultural or societal change and the burden of seeking equity should not be placed on the group. Others argue that this term could be seen to imply that not all people are deserving of equity."

About Foundry

Foundry is a leader in the Canadian integrated youth services space, supporting young people ages 12-24 and their families/caregivers in BC through our network of integrated health and wellness services. Our services include mental health, substance use services, physical and sexual health care, youth and family peer support, and social services.

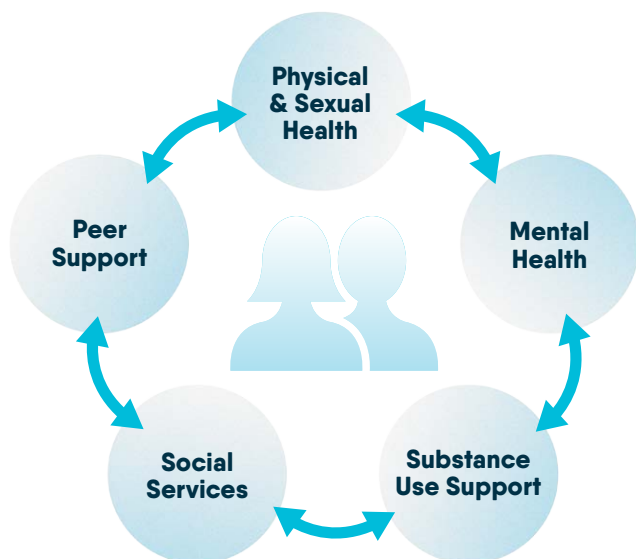
Young people can access our integrated services by walking into one of our [many community-based Foundry centres](#), exploring our online tools and resources at [foundrybc.ca](#) or connecting with our provincial virtual services through the free Foundry BC app. Services are also available for their families/caregivers, including groups, workshops, counselling and peer support.

We work with youth, their families/caregivers and over 200 partner organizations across BC and Canada to develop best practices and standards for integrated youth services.

Our work includes ensuring we create culturally safe and respectful environments for equity-denied groups including IBPOC (Indigenous, Black and People of Colour) communities. We recognize our role and responsibility as a white settler organization in calling out and dismantling colonialism and racism in the work we do.

We deeply value community-centred decision making, and relationships are the heart of everything we do. We are grateful to be able to learn from the organizations that lead our centres and especially from the youth and families/caregivers in those communities.

We want to share what we've learned, so that other communities across the province can be part of the exciting changes that we've seen.



Cultural Agility, Safety and Humility

We all have a collective responsibility to create safer spaces, learn about others' experiences and adapt to cultural uniqueness. Shifts in personal and organizational perspectives are necessary, and these begin with cultural agility, safety and humility (CASH).

Cultural agility is the ability to work respectfully, knowledgeably and effectively with people. It is noticing and readily adapting to cultural uniqueness in order to create a sense of safety for all. It is examining one's own culture and worldview and the culture of Foundry, and noticing their commonalities and distinctions with Indigenous cultures and worldviews. It is recognition of the ways that personal and professional values may conflict or align with those of people whose experience differs from one's own.^[1]

Cultural safety is an outcome based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address power imbalances inherent in colonial systems that provide care, education and service. It results in an environment free of racism and discrimination, where people feel safe when receiving care. Safety is determined by youth and families/caregivers in our centres and network.^[2]

Cultural humility is a process of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another's experience.^[2]



About Integrated Youth Services

Integrated youth services (IYS) models are an exciting innovation that provide comprehensive, person-centred and coordinated care for young people. Rather than developing new services and resources in a community, existing non-profit and publicly administered services are reorganized through an asset-based, community development approach. While partners do collaboratively identify gaps in community resourcing, the approach fundamentally reshapes and integrates existing services to make them more welcoming, easier to navigate and ultimately more accessible.

At the heart of IYS is a commitment to ongoing engagement with youth and families/caregivers. Creating accessible and transformative services starts with building strong and trusting relationships with those who have lived experience. To truly understand youth's needs and meet them where they are, we must listen and learn from them and their families/caregivers. We involve them in shaping the services we deliver, the decisions we make and the priorities we set. Bringing young people into shared decision making in these areas also supports the broader goal of empowering them as care-seekers in their health journeys.

It is important to remember that young people's needs are always changing, so we need to ensure that we have processes and structures in place for ongoing, meaningful and reciprocal engagement. As service providers, we get used to doing things the way that makes sense for ourselves and our organizations. Working with youth and families/caregivers helps push us away from what is comfortable to what is truly needed.

In IYS, service providers work together to treat a young person holistically, considering their individual needs and preferences. It is important to understand that integration is different than co-location, where various service providers may work in the same location but don't come together to share information or make decisions. When services are integrated, they are linked and coordinated, with all service providers communicating and working together to provide a seamless experience for young people and families/caregivers.

As we come together in relationship to change the way our systems work together — while also making sure we centre youth voices — we can be a part of changing colonial systems and creating a more equitable future.

Foundry's values

Different IYS initiatives will have different values, which are co-created in each community. At Foundry, our values are the cornerstones that guide us in the workplace and in our communities. As we learn and develop as a team and as individuals, we are all working towards living these values:

Learn and Evolve

Foundry will succeed by constantly adapting and growing to keep up with the rapidly changing needs of BC's youth. We believe in reciprocity and shared ways of knowing and validate our understanding with each other to learn more and get better at what we do.

Appreciate Individuality

We know that no two experiences and needs are ever alike. Each young person has a unique need, story and journey that we want to understand.

Celebrate Community

While each centre is a reflection of its place and people, Foundry is more than that. We are a network of partners. From centres to virtual care to schools to social media, each touchpoint is part of a united effort for young people.

Share the Load

Every staff member, service provider, agency, partner, parent or caregiver helps carry the weight for a young person who comes in.

Committed to Youth

We're here for youth. Every parent, caregiver, partner or agency makes their decisions or provides resources with young people at the core.

Embrace Nuance

There's no one right way. Health and wellness are as personal and subjective as anything. We are a response to the labels and rigidity of traditional services and understand that needs and people can change at any time.



Purpose of This Workbook

The path towards IYS may look different for different communities. You may be at the beginning stages of collaborating with other organizations in your community, or you may already be closer to an integrated model.

This Community Development Workbook is intended to support anyone who is a leader in youth services — whether non-profit, health, wellness, social services or government — who is interested in building stronger partnerships to improve care for youth in their communities.

By sharing our experiences and offering processes, templates and reflective questions, we hope to inspire and guide you as you work towards a more integrated system of care. We will discuss the following:

- **Community Assets and Communication:** What is asset mapping? How well do you know the youth in your community and what can you do to understand them better? How do you make sure you're involving all the right people in the work? How do you get the word out so everyone who wants to participate can? How do you create a safe, open and inclusive space for everyone to collaborate? How do you share what you learn across your community?
- **Leadership:** Are you the right organization to lead the move towards IYS? What does collaborative leadership look like? What governance support will you need? How can you learn from the change-makers in your community?
- **Community Partnerships:** Why are community partnerships important? How can you build reciprocal relationships? What makes partnerships strong? How do you create a decision-making group to move forward with IYS in your community?
- **Youth and Family Engagement:** What is engagement and how do you do it well? How can you include equity-denied voices? Why is paying honoraria important? How can you adapt your way of working to make space for youth to take the lead? How do you overcome common challenges like lack of funding and staff capacity?

We recognize that a fully integrated service model like what Foundry uses may be a challenge without additional funding and resources. We hope that these tools and resources will support your community, as we share what we have learned working alongside communities across the province. We encourage you to use this in a way that works best for the strengths in your community, keeping in mind the importance of fully engaging youth and families/caregivers throughout the process.

Foundry is Here to Support You

Foundry Central Office is here to support you and your partners when you have questions. You can reach out to expansion@foundrybc.ca. We would love to hear from you!

Tools and Resources

Additional materials

Transforming Access to Care: Foundry's Integrated Youth Services Model

This evidence brief outlines the core principles and components of the Foundry model, in addition to key evidence and rationale supporting various interventions and offerings within Foundry's service framework.

foundrybc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Foundry-IYS-Evidence-Brief-January-2023.pdf

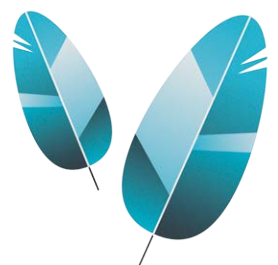
Growth and inspiration

For inspiration about the impact IYS can have, watch Foundry's Impact, a compilation of the thoughts and experiences of youth, families/caregivers, leaders and staff:

youtube.com/watch?v=_WPmMoxcw1E

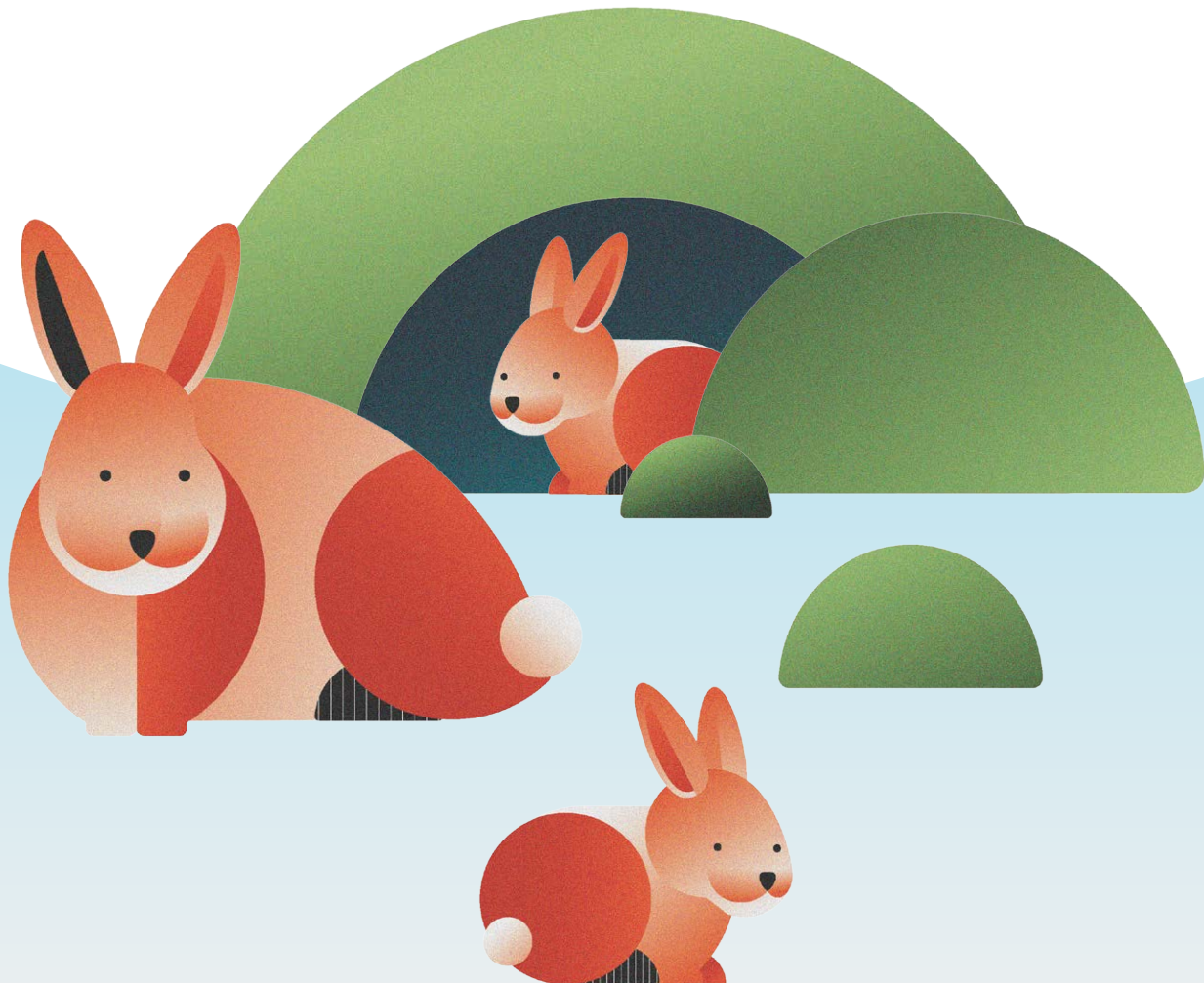
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1. Adapted from Government of British Columbia. Indigenous Relations Behavioural Competencies. Available at: gov.bc.ca/gov/content/careers-myhr/job-seekers/about-competencies/indigenous-relations
2. First Nations Health Authority. Creating a Climate for Change. Available at: fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Creating-a-Climate-For-Change-Cultural-Humility-Resource-Booklet.pdf



Community Assets and Communication

Your community is already doing so much to support youth health and wellness. As you move towards integrating services, understanding where you want to go starts with knowing where you are right now, how stable that is and how you can manage a constantly shifting landscape.



Where Are You and Where Do You Want to Go?

Asset mapping is a process that you engage in with others in your community to understand the services that are available as well as the potential for change.

We suggest asset mapping for two reasons:

- It gives you and your community partners a shared understanding of your strengths, barriers and gaps; and
- It mobilizes your community to start the process of change.

Asset mapping and communication go hand in hand, as the more you understand your community strengths, the better you can use communication strategies to engage across multiple levels of partnership. We recognize that the asset mapping needs to move at the speed of trust and transparency. We recommend not rushing and ensuring that you are communicating every step as you make decisions.

We pair asset mapping with designing a vision for youth services alongside youth in your community, to create shared ownership and leadership as you break barriers and improve the quality of services available.

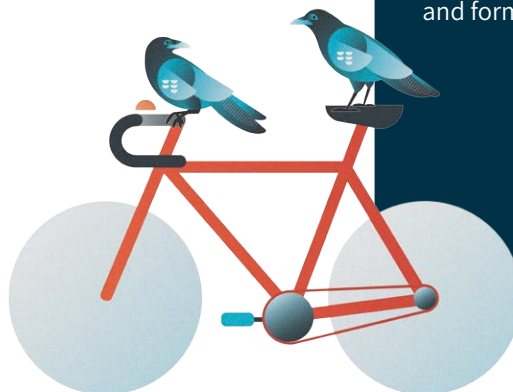
According to Chavis and Lee

“First and foremost, community is not a place, a building, or an organization; nor is it an exchange of information over the Internet. Community is both a feeling and a set of relationships among people. People form and maintain communities to meet common needs.

Members of a community have a sense of trust, belonging, safety, and caring for each other. They have an individual and collective sense that they can, as part of that community, influence their environments and each other.” ^[3]

According to the Falls Brook Centre

“Assets are the attributes and advantages of a community which are considered essential for the maintenance of its quality of life. Assets are what we want to keep, sustain and build upon for the future. They come in many shapes and forms.” ^[4]



Getting to Know the Young People in Your Community

Foundry aims to serve young people ages 12–24, to support youth transitions to adulthood. Consider if this age range is a priority for your community and why.

You understand your community and who lives in it — but if it's been a while since you looked at the demographics, we recommend revisiting them and questioning what you know. Who makes up your youth population? Things may have changed, and you will want to make decisions using the most current information. Consider factors such as:

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Religion
- Gender diversity
- Indigeneity
- Ability
- Sexual orientation
- Immigration status (international students, young migrant workers)
- Employment status and income

For help with understanding the youth demographics in your community, you could connect with your school district, local post-secondary institutions and municipal government. You can also refer to [Canadian Census data](#) and the [McCreary Centre Society's BC Adolescent Health Survey](#) for information about your community or region.

In addition to the demographics, think about the strengths of the young people in your community. What makes them unique? What makes your community unique? Knowing these more personal aspects can help bring life to the statistics.

Common challenges

Once you've taken a fresh look at the demographics of the youth in your community, take care not to make assumptions based on these characteristics. When we group young people together, it can be easy to forget how dynamic and diverse they are as individuals.

It can also be challenging to find ways to focus on the specific needs of small populations. If we ignore their needs or assume they have the same needs as others, we can unintentionally create barriers to access. One area where this comes into play is smaller age ranges within the overall range of 12–24. Young people ages 12–14 are in a much different developmental stage than older teens or those in their twenties. Each group will have specific needs for services and support, so be sure to consider this complexity.

This is why mapping young people's journey and experience alongside them is important to understanding how they experience services and the world.

The Asset Mapping Process

Because asset mapping is such an important process, we recommend allowing **two to eight months** for it, depending on the size of your community and the current level of engagement of various partners. This timeline includes the planning process, gathering information, analyzing what you learned and visioning the next steps.



Step 1: Pre-planning

The first step in asset mapping is pre-planning, when you form a small planning committee who will socialize the idea of asset mapping in your community and get the work started.

Creating the planning committee

As you build your committee, aim to invite 4-7 other people, including:

- Service providers who are champions of the IYS concept;
- Decision makers in your community;
- 2-3 youth with different ages, experiences and perspectives; and
- A family/caregiver, if this works well for the youth who are involved.

When selecting members, it is important to consider who has trusted relationships with youth and families/caregivers in your community. The committee needs to be a safe space where those from equity-denied groups and those with living experience feel comfortable participating. The onus of discomfort lives with those with the most privilege.

If you want to take a deeper look at the key players in your community and how their power relationships may affect your work, consider doing a power mapping analysis, like this one provided by The Commons: commonslibrary.org/guide-power-mapping-and-analysis/

Think about which committee member can take on the key role of coordinating the whole process —keeping everything moving, managing communication and developing a report at the end. Rather than assuming that you as the organizer of the committee will be the leader and facilitator, invite the committee to decide together who would like to co-lead and co-facilitate. This more equitable and shared approach will lay the foundation for going forward with the work in a good way.

When you’re thinking about who to invite to join the committee, it can be helpful to map out their involvement in a table like the one below. See [“Tools and Resources”](#) on page 28 for a template for planning committee membership.

We recommend that youth and families/caregivers are compensated for their time with honoraria.

For more information, please see [“Youth and Family Engagement”](#) on page 44

TEMPLATE: PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Name	Organization	Role	Scope of Influence (e.g., able to get decision makers on board, able to engage youth, is a decision maker with a vested interest in progress, has strong communication and engagement skills, is a creative thinker, is a get-things-done individual)

When asking people to join the committee, think about why this is important to them and why it is worthwhile for them to add this to their busy schedules. Provide a simple mission statement for why you would like to gather the group and go down the asset mapping path.

Defining the scope of the work

For most communities, the way you will move forward is hosting collaborative workshops to engage the community in the asset mapping process. Your committee can discuss how many workshops you want to have to gather enough information to make recommendations for change.

The committee will need to define the scope of the conversations you intend to have in the workshops. Think about how much needs to be determined in advance versus how much you want to emerge naturally in the process. When communicating the scope to participants, be careful not to over-promise what will be achieved, as that can reduce trust and commitment to the work.

Here are some examples of possible scopes:

- To create a shared understanding of the services available for youth ages 12-24 in our community;
- To create a shared understanding of gaps in services for youth ages 12-24 in our community;
- To create a shared understanding of what youth in our community want or need for health and wellness services;
- To create a shared understanding of what families/caregivers in our community want or need for youth health and wellness services; or
- To connect youth and service providers with reciprocal understanding of what's happening in their community so they can advocate for change together.

It's also important to define the community and neighbourhoods that you want to impact. Consider how youth access services. How far are they willing to travel? Which locations are walkable and safe? What transportation options are available? Based on that knowledge, you may want to choose a geographical area to focus on to start the planning process, or you can break the larger area into regions to shape the conversation.

When your committee meets, there are a few decisions that will help everyone understand the scope of the asset mapping:

- What resources do you have to support the work, including in-kind resources such as venues and staff hours?
- In what spaces can you bring up asset mapping to socialize the idea and get buy-in?
- How will youth and families/caregivers be involved in this process?
- How many workshops will you hold?
- How will you promote the workshops and reach different audiences?
- Will you focus on specific age groups or the full age range? Youth ages 12-14 have very different needs than young adults ages 18-24. Consider whether you have youth from the appropriate age groups on your planning committee.

It can be helpful to develop Terms of Reference for your planning committee, so that everyone has a shared understanding of the work and the roles. See [“Tools and Resources” on page 28](#) for a sample Terms of Reference.

Now that you have a stronger understanding of what you want to achieve, you can move into the workshop planning phase of the asset mapping process.

Step 2: Workshop planning

The second phase in asset mapping is workshop planning. Based on your budget and scope, your planning committee can now move into selecting who will participate, coordinating the logistics, deciding how the workshops will flow, promoting the workshops and planning how you will collect feedback.

Figuring out who should be involved

When choosing partners to involve in the asset mapping workshops, think about who the trusted service providers are in your community.

Besides the health care sector, who provides services for youth? Consider non-profit agencies, schools (public, private and alternative), local First Nations, the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development, your municipal government (including recreation services) and committees that are focused on youth health and well-being. Improving services for young people is a collaborative process and it's important to have broad representation from your community.

In some communities, it may make sense to consider including key employers in the asset mapping workshops. Are there companies who tend to hire a lot of young people or who are already champions for mental health initiatives? If this is relevant for your community, involving these folks can help socialize the idea of IYS.

Create a list of these organizations and service providers, considering physical health, sexual health, mental health, substance use, social services, peer support and other wellness services. It can be helpful to use an environmental scan template as you explore who else to add to your list (see Tools and Resources). This template will help you map out which services each organization offers, the age groups they serve and the scope of the role they can play in the asset mapping and the overall vision. You will also be able to see at a glance where there are gaps — age groups or types of services that aren't represented yet. Some of the contacts may be service providers doing the day-to-day work and some may be leaders who are able to make changes to the way people work — it's important to involve both.

Your committee could use this as an opportunity to reach out to some of the organizations to gather information about the services they provide and to socialize the idea of the asset mapping workshops and IYS.

Collecting this information before the workshops will help the participants engage quickly in the discussion. The group will likely appreciate that you are not spending your time together simply gathering commonly known information.

As in all aspects of this work, engaging youth is top priority. They are the experts in their journeys and experiences. The youth on your planning committee can begin to socialize the idea of asset mapping in their schools and social groups. When it is time to invite people to your workshops, the committee can take a deeper look at how to engage all the different youth demographics in your community. See [“Promoting your workshops”](#) on page 23 for more details.

For rural, remote and mid-sized communities, it may make sense to gather the whole community together to do asset mapping, rather than inviting specific organizations.

At Foundry, we are engaged in ongoing learning from people and organizations in smaller communities about how they work together, and we will share our learnings as we go forward.

Creating the workshop flow

Next your committee will collaborate on the actual content of the workshops. You’ll start by considering how many workshops you want to have. The simplest way to start is by hosting one workshop and allowing next steps to emerge before doing any further planning.

You could also plan several workshops that build on one another, with different topics or increased depth at each session. Consider the time you will need between workshops for you and your partners to process the knowledge you’ve gained and put it into action.

Here is a sample workshop flow to use as a starting point:



Using the environmental scan that you started when you were creating your invitation list, you can map the services and gaps as a group. This exercise can take a considerable amount of time, depending on the complexity of services in your community and the group's knowledge of what services are available. It is important to leave space for the rich dialogue that is likely to occur.

Next you can move on to mapping other spaces where youth gather that are not related to accessing health and wellness services (see Tools and Resources for a template). This exercise will help you understand how to meet young people where they are, which environments they already feel safe in and what makes a space appealing for them. As you move forward to create a vision for IYS, keep these ideas top of mind.

When you're mapping youth spaces, you can consider spaces that youth gather:

- Schools (e.g., secondary and post-secondary, including trades, technical and private schools);
- Religious or sacred spaces (e.g., longhouse, mosque, church, synagogue, gurdwara, temple);
- Parks;
- Activity spaces (e.g., arcades, gyms, skate parks, malls, community centres, dance clubs, art studios, recreational leagues);
- Committees that involve youth (e.g., post-secondary, municipal, faith-based, volunteer organizations); and
- Online spaces (e.g., locally popular WhatsApp groups, Instagram accounts, Discord servers and channels, graduating class pages, school/community focused meme pages).

“Asset mapping was a critical first step in our process of service planning for Foundry Sea to Sky. It brought many community partners together to better understand the resources available in our community and how Foundry Sea to Sky could potentially fill gaps. This process also provided a foundation of understanding for future discussions about our care model. Over two years later and we still find ourselves referencing the learnings from the asset mapping workshop we hosted in the developmental stages of Foundry Sea to Sky.”

Krista, Director of Clinical Service Delivery at Foundry Sea to Sky



Coordinating the workshop details

As you move into the event planning stage, it is important to consider how to embed the values of IYS into your workshops. This means thinking through how to create a safe, inclusive space for collaboration. (For examples of IYS values, check out [“Foundry’s values” on page 10.](#))

The first consideration is time of day. The after-school hours might suit young people, and this timeframe also overlaps with the workday of many service providers. Families and caregivers may prefer a slightly later time to accommodate their work schedules. Consider whether you are able to provide childcare so that families with young children can fully participate. Each community is different, but your committee can share ideas of what will work best for your particular participants.

Next consider possible locations for the workshops. What venues might be available within your budget? Are they easy for young people to get to? Are they fully accessible? You may also want to consider the historical context of a particular location and whether that may impact how comfortable people are attending.

When planning food for your workshops, be aware of the needs and preferences of the participants and try to include culturally-relevant food, depending on the demographics of your community.

We often set up events that focus on those who speak English as their first language, rather than considering the local Indigenous languages, other languages that are common in our communities and the languages of newer immigrants or refugees. It is critical to consider families/caregivers who do not speak English. We believe that if you make events and spaces accessible for the most equity-denied groups, you make them accessible for the rest of the community too. What can you do to improve access to your event for non-English speakers? Are there sub-workshops you need to host to support this access?

When you’re choosing facilitators for the workshops (ideally two co-facilitators), think about leaders in the community who already have trusting relationships with equity-denied youth and families/caregivers. Facilitators with experience in cultural agility, safety and humility and collaborative decision-making processes will have the skills to lead open and honest discussions that prioritize listening and making space for diverse voices. (See [“Cultural Agility, Safety and Humility” on page 8](#) for definitions.)

Consider inviting one or two counsellors to participate and offer support when intense emotions arise for anyone, which can happen during discussions of lived experiences of health and wellness systems.

Thinking through these all of these factors will help you design an inclusive and welcoming workshop.

Promoting your workshops

You are now ready to promote your asset mapping workshops in your community.

Ideally, you already have representation from key groups on your planning committee — service providers, decision makers, youth, families/caregivers — and they could each manage the communications with their group.

Before beginning to invite people, regroup with your committee around the messaging. You will want to share the purpose for gathering and the scope of the work, and the way you do this may be different for each audience. Consider what each group needs to know and what will be meaningful for them based on their interests and values.

Besides sending personal invitations by email, consider the communication tools available to you and which one best suits each audience. Where would that group usually go for information?

- Social media
- Websites
- Newsletters
- Listservs
- Schools
- Parent Advisory Councils
- Local newspapers
- Community events
- Interagency meetings of service providers
- Posters or announcements in community facilities, religious or sacred spaces, and cultural spaces

When promoting your workshops, be sure to share your message in religious and cultural spaces.

People from non-white backgrounds often gather in these spaces to create cultural community, and if we miss the opportunity to promote our work there, we end up partnering with mostly white people and deepening the inequities in the system.

To engage a broad youth audience, revisit your demographics (see [“Getting to Know the Young People in Your Community”](#) on page 15) and consider where different groups of young people gather. The answer will be different for different age groups, particularly those young people who are transitioning to adulthood. Meet people where they are, leveraging the trusting relationships that already exist. Lean on the expertise of your youth committee members. There is also an opportunity for the youth members to involve other young people in promoting the workshops — it could be a project for their class at school or their youth group in their religious community.

Collecting feedback

When planning how to collect feedback about your asset mapping workshops, keep it simple. Instead of using a long survey, ask the questions that are most important to your values and next steps.

For youth, families/caregivers and general community members, you may want to focus on questions related to safety, accessibility and whether they felt their voices were heard. Ask what would improve their experience, as well as how they would like to be involved in the future. For service providers and other partner organizations, you may want to focus on use of time, what worked well and what didn't, and how they would like to be involved in the future.

Step 3: Community workshops

The third phase in asset mapping is actually hosting a community workshop. Rather than discussing the logistics of a workshop, we will focus on the feelings you want to create among the attendees.

Creating a safer space

Discussions about health and wellness, particularly the barriers and gaps in the system, can be hard and heavy, or they can be inspiring and hopeful. How can you be prepared for uncertainty and possible negative energy, so you can hold space for everyone in the room? How can you show up with your heart and with hope? How do you embrace conflict and the reality of the pain that may arise in these spaces?

You can start by inspiring folks with the story of why this work is important and how it will move us towards a shared vision. Along with that, you emphasize that you want to create a safer space where youth and families/caregivers are empowered, supported and heard.

Gathering with intention

Priya Parker's book *The Art of Gathering* can be a helpful resource as you reflect on why you are gathering and how to do it meaningfully. They prompt you to consider new ways of coming together, focusing on purpose and connection. [Their website](#) includes newsletters and free resources such as "The Gathering Toolkit" and "The New Rules of Gathering Guide."

Among their rules for gathering with intention is "Ditch etiquette for rules (and create a more playful world)." This means writing your own rules for the space, rather than following rigid norms for behaviour. There isn't one right way to be, and you will want to encourage openness.^[5]

In the context of an asset mapping workshop, this could mean adding creative elements, rather than conducting it like a business meeting. Youth have amazing ideas about how to inspire folks and get them excited, so try to lean into their expertise. We have seen communities create unique and engaging processes by:

- Energizing folks through music or dance;
- Creating connections through storytelling opportunities;
- Getting the group moving around the room by posting topics or questions where they can share their input on sticky notes;
- Incorporating drawing or other forms of art;
- Sharing food together during small-group discussions;
- Using collaborative online tools like Miro boards or real-time polling sites; or
- Livening up the discussion through games or puzzles.

For all of these activities, be mindful of offering alternatives for folks who may not be comfortable moving around the room or who may prefer to interact in a different way.

Another of Parker's suggested rules for gathering is "Close with intention." You will want your attendees to leave feeling inspired and confident that the time was well spent. Talk to your facilitators about how you can close your workshop in a good way.

"Ending your time together well is a crucial way to shape the feelings, ideas and memories you want your guests to take with them. Endings are a reminder of WHY you gathered in the first place, and give guests a chance to make sense of the time they spent together. ... Closings are a moment of power."

Priya Parker, The New Rules of Gathering



The planning committee's role

You will likely have two people facilitating the workshop, but the planning committee is still involved in managing things that arise. It's great to plan in advance who you can go to for what. Is there someone who is best positioned to deal with crisis situations? Who is the tech savvy person? Who will be gathering notes and themes from the session?

As a group, you will bring so much strength and support to everyone who is participating.

Step 4: Knowledge to action

The final phase of asset mapping is knowledge to action. After your asset mapping workshops, a key part of the process is pulling together what you've learned and sharing it with your community, so you are well-positioned to move the work forward with intention.

Gathering your learnings

You will likely have many learnings from your asset mapping workshops that you can capture in a report. It's important to include:

- The purpose of the workshops;
- Who was involved;
- What you did to gather information;
- How many workshops you held;
- How many people attended;
- A summary of learnings — try to come up with three or four key takeaways;
- A summary of comments from the evaluation;
- Follow-up actions; and
- Invitations to continue the work together.

Sharing learnings with your community

The learnings from your asset mapping are valuable for many groups in your community. Think about how you can share the information, either by sharing the written report, doing in-person or virtual presentations, or creating a video for Instagram or TikTok. Groups who may be interested include:

- The asset mapping workshop participants;
- Key leaders in your community;
- Youth and families/caregivers;
- Service providers;
- Divisions of Family Practice
- School districts;
- City council;
- Local committees related to youth health or well-being; and
- Potential local funders.

Consider the purpose of sharing the information. Are you asking for support, involvement or resources? What does each specific audience need to know and how can you make your message resonate with them, based on their interests and values? When you share your report, invite their feedback and thoughts and let them know about opportunities to continue to be involved in the work.

The next steps in the work will vary, depending on what you learned in your asset mapping process and what opportunities you discovered as a community. It may be time to select an organization to lead the next steps. The next chapter explores leadership styles and challenges.

Tools and Resources

Additional materials

Visit the Community Development Workbook section at foundrybc.ca/expansion to access these tools and resources:

- Template: Planning Committee Membership
- Template: Planning Committee Terms of Reference
- Template: Environmental Scan
- Template: Mapping Youth Spaces

Growth and inspiration

Consider using Power Mapping Analysis to understand who the key players are in your community and their power: commonslibrary.org/guide-power-mapping-and-analysis/

To learn more about health care workers' experiences of racism, take a look at this video by Michelle Danda—'Where are you really from?' Why nurses must confront the racism in health care: youtube.com/watch?v=FgT8dyAjR80

We recommend looking at *The Community Development Handbook: A Tool to Build Community Capacity*. This handbook from 1999 holds more detailed information and questions that you can dig into to further your planning: publications.gc.ca/collections/Collection/MP33-13-1999E.pdf

You can go deeper into an asset-based community development approach to improving services for youth in your community. We recommend the resources designed by the Tamarack Institute: tamarackcommunity.ca/library/guide-asset-based-community-development-at-a-glance

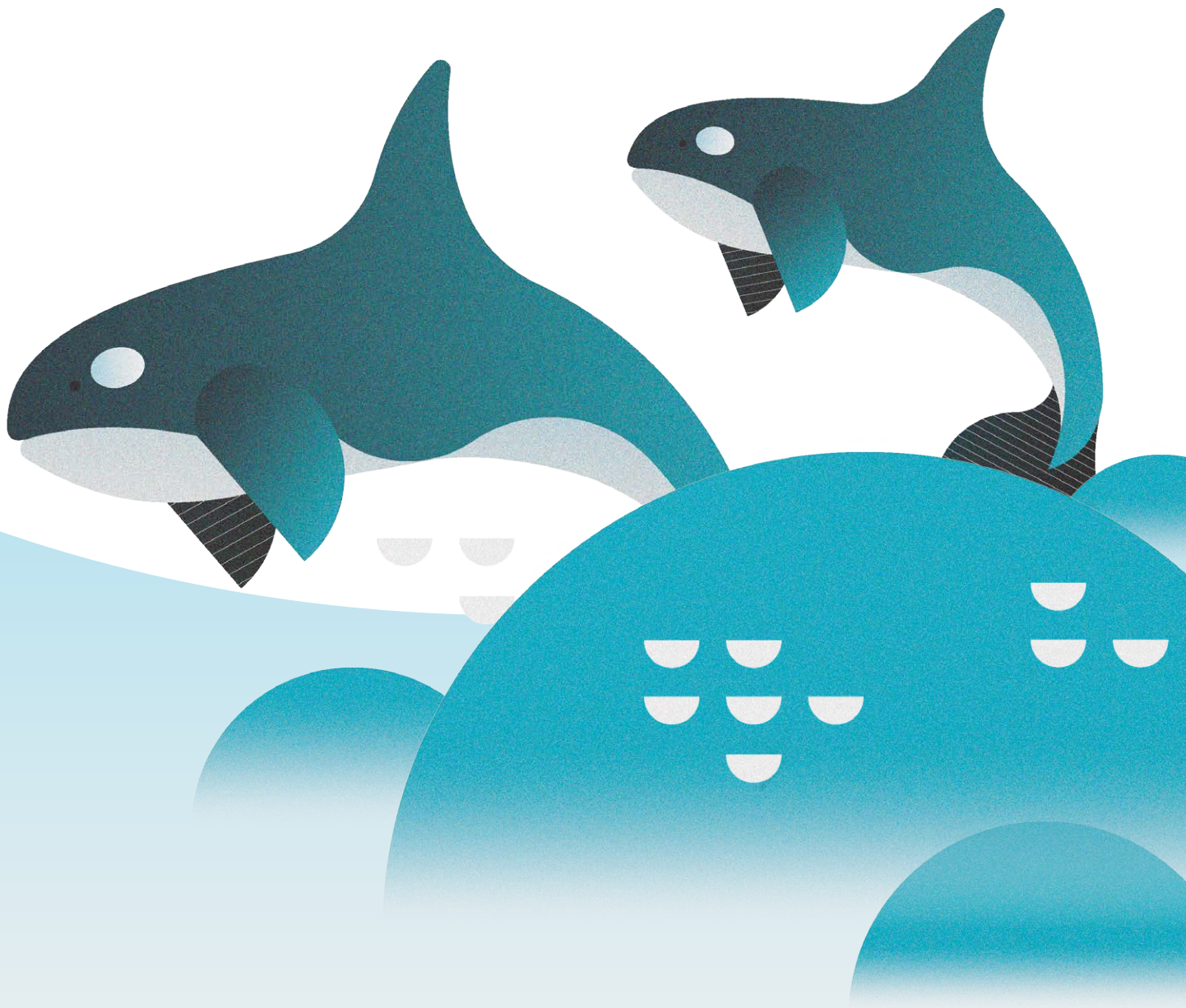
To learn more about advancing racial equity in your organization, we recommend the article "How to Build a Culture of Accountability": ssir.org/articles/entry/building_a_culture_of_accountability

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4. Falls Brook Centre. Sustainable Communities: A Guide to Community Asset Mapping. Available at: tamarackcommunity.ca/library/a-guide-to-community-asset-mapping
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Leadership

Once the asset mapping is complete and you have a better idea of the direction your community has chosen, it is time to consider whether your organization is the right one to take the lead on next steps towards IYS.



Are You the Right Organization to Lead?

In our experience, a non-profit organization, an Indigenous-led organization or a health authority will typically lead the movement towards IYS.

Organizational capacity to lead is highly linked to the organization's commitment to and passion for youth well-being, as well as having the structural support to be able to work through the challenges of integration. The organization needs to understand the systems of care in their community and needs to be trusted by partners across the community, particularly equity-denied community members.

We have learned that an organization that has strong partnerships with Indigenous nations, communities and organizations (or is Indigenous-led) is better equipped to create culturally safe, agile and courageous partnerships for transforming access to care for youth. We have also seen the importance of being comfortable working with both non-profit and government (health) service providers. It is critical for the organization to have a strong belief in amplifying youth voices and working alongside young people with lived experience.

If your organization is interested in leading the development of IYS, we welcome you to consider your organizational leadership culture, your experience with collaborative leadership, your governance structure and your commitment to justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, all of which are explained in more detail below.

The benefits of Indigenous leadership in IYS

In three Foundry communities, an Indigenous organization is taking the lead — Ktunaxa-Kinbasket Child and Family Service Society at Foundry East Kootenay, Carrier Sekani Family Services at Foundry Burns Lake and the Fort St. John Friendship Society at Foundry Fort St. John.

We heard feedback in Burns Lake that having an Indigenous organization, Carrier Sekani Family Services, leading the way felt familiar and safe and made the Foundry centre a place where Indigenous youth and families/caregivers felt they could belong.

They also felt free to have spaces that were reflective of their culture and values visually, rather than having the feel of a government building, which is a reminder of something generationally harmful.

From a leadership perspective, local chiefs and Elders from different nations are key members of Leadership Advisories. They shared that they might have shown up differently, had the initiative been led by a government agency.

The mandate of Carrier Sekani Family Services also shifted how services were developed. As shared on their [website](#), “All of our holistic wellness programs and services are provided through the Carrier life cycle approach. The Life Cycle provides a foundation for all Carrier Sekani Family Services programs and services. The life cycle model acknowledges that there are multiple determinates of holistic health and well being for people at all life stages. The health and well being of all Carrier individuals affects the health and well being of everyone else in that person's life and community.”

Collaborative Organizational Leadership

Leading a complex initiative like IYS requires sustained long-term commitment, enthusiasm and involvement. We encourage a collaborative approach to organizational leadership – breaking down barriers, building trust, listening to diverse perspectives and fostering an environment where decisions are made together.

As you consider whether your organization is the right one to lead, reflect on your organization's experience, leadership style and capacity to:

- Hold a vision for a large collaborative initiative in your community;
- Work alongside other leaders in your community to make collective decisions;
- Lead with humility and embrace intentional, reflective action;
- Develop trusting relationships with Indigenous Peoples and organizations in your community or begin learning from others who have;
- Work with new immigrants or refugees, racialized people in your community, gender and sexually diverse people, people living in poverty, people who use substances and people who have disabilities — notice that this is “work with” and not “serve”;
- Be adaptable, as transformational change requires leaders to be agile;
- Forgive and work towards repairing relationships and trust, rather than avoiding conflict or endorsing blame and shame in the community;
- Be accountable for mistakes that come from venturing into new frontiers;
- Understand yourselves as learners;
- Hold an abundance mindset rather than a scarcity mindset;
- Get formal feedback from your staff about the culture of your agency and act on what you hear;
- Oversee a diverse portfolio of programs, including some that may be new to you; and
- Support transparent and strong governance structures in your organization and across the community.

If your organization has led a collaborative community project before, what was rewarding about it? What was challenging? What did your organization learn?

Larger government agencies are often less suited to serving as leaders of the IYS process because of common community perceptions around their lack of transparency and flexibility, which can be barriers to collaborating well. This isn't true of all government agencies, but it is important to consider your community's perspective.

Your partners may perceive you like this:

“I think like it really feels like it’s like [agency] and then it’s like everyone else, and they’re like not really a part of it but we’re like all partners in it and it is just like hitting a wall.”

A centre staff, as part of the 2018 Developmental Evaluation of Foundry’s Proof of Concept

Or they may perceive you like this:

“Politics doesn’t get in the way hopefully. I think [agency] does things right that way any way, this Foundry is pretty lucky to have things done the [agency] way. A lot of times with projects, politics get in the way, money gets in the way, but I don’t see that happening here.”

A centre staff, as part of the 2018 Developmental Evaluation of Foundry’s Proof of Concept

When trying to change the system, choosing a large player in the system as a leader can be seen as endorsing hierarchies. A non-profit organization may be able to be nimble in the way they operate and more easily able to embrace change.

When the vision is greater than any one organization, that is where we see transformation. With a strong culture of leadership, you will continue to see transformation in the years ahead.

Common challenges in collaborative leadership

As leaders of complex initiatives, we may encounter challenges such as:

- Existing in systems that discourage collaborative efforts and perpetuate scarcity mindset for survival, particularly in health and social services sectors that provide community care;
- Feeling like you are an expert and therefore don’t need to learn;
- Inability to repair trust in relationships after making mistakes, because of challenges in forgiveness or feelings of being betrayed;
- Inability to have direct, kind communication; and
- Making assumptions of others based on your own perceptions.

If you find yourself running into these barriers on a regular basis, you could do some skill building or take a pause to consider whether you are ready to lead such a complex initiative. If necessary, you can step back and recommend someone else as the leader, while offering them your skills and support going forward.

Questions to consider about governance

Another valuable type of leadership comes from the governing board (or equivalent) of your organization, as they embrace and invest in the vision for transformed access to care for youth.

You will need governance support and a governance structure to guide you in a good way as you lead a complex initiative. Here are some questions to consider about your governance:

- **How many seats are on your board and how many vacancies do you have? What are the skill sets of your members? How diverse are the life experiences of the board members?**
 - » Ideally, you have a full board with a good depth of skills and wide variety in life experience. A strong, well-connected board can support your initiative by opening doors for fundraising or helping bust through other barriers.
- **How do you evaluate the performance of your organization's leader?**
 - » It is the board's responsibility to stay informed about the leader's performance and provide feedback as needed.
- **How does your board seek feedback from and interact with employees of the organization?**
 - » Strong feedback mechanisms that inspire continuous growth are an important cultural fit in IYS.
- **Do you have people with lived experience on your board and/or leadership team?**
 - » Having the voice of lived experience in place already or understanding how to honour the experience of those you serve is integral to planning and implementing a successful IYS initiative.



Rethinking Leadership

Communities who want to offer the best services and supports for young people often get frustrated with the pace of change and the lack of resources to make those changes.

At Foundry, we've taken the approach of rethinking leadership and where we go for answers. Rather than going to those who are embedded in the system, we recommend trying to look within your community for the change-makers and organizers.

Change-makers could include groups who are championing rights for gender and sexually diverse folks, groups focused on anti-racism and any groups led by young people. Youth and families/caregivers are often the most passionate and informed about what's happening in your community and are keenly aware of what's missing. For more information on involving youth and families/caregivers, please see [“Youth and Family Engagement” on page 44.](#)

Integrating Indigenous perspectives

We acknowledge that Western colonial perspectives and approaches have been prioritized in health and social services in BC.

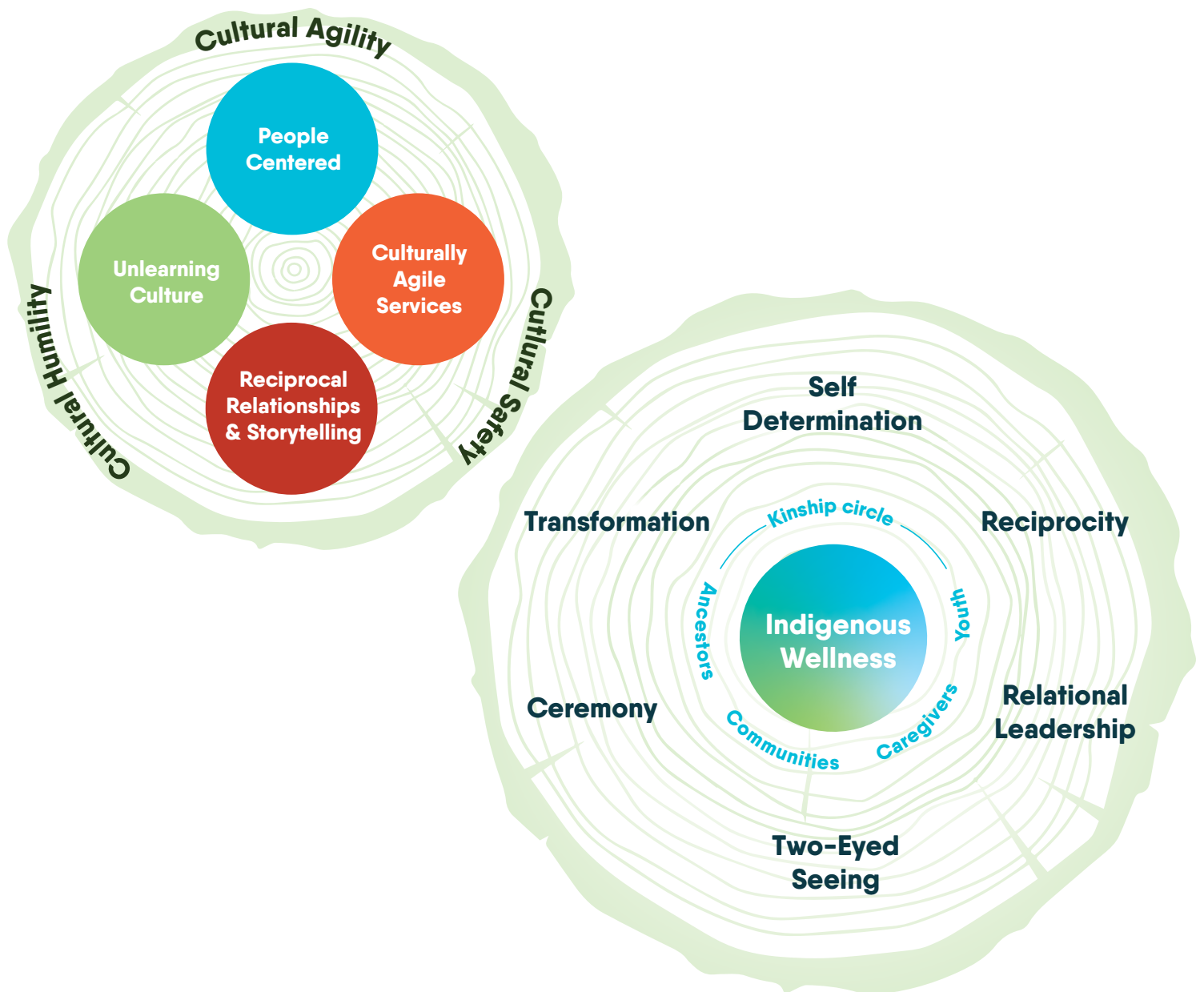
This approach has been detrimental to those accessing services, service providers and their communities. It has been particularly harmful for people from equity-denied groups. To truly provide healing, care, wellness and medicine, we must look beyond the narrow scope of our colonial experiences and learn from the wisdom and knowledge of Indigenous Peoples. This includes Indigenous knowledge of well-being as a balance of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health, with an understanding that holistic wellness must also include the broader social, economic, cultural and environmental determinants of health.

Equity in care is an ongoing challenge in communities and requires attention from all of us. This has been articulated many times, most recently in the report “In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in BC Health Care” in November 2020.^[6] We recognize the rights of Indigenous families/caregivers and communities to retain shared responsibility for the upbringing, training, education and well-being of Indigenous youth, consistent with the rights of youth.^[7] We recognize how that lives in tension with our systems, policies and methods of care.

Locally, the need to build trusting relationships with Indigenous youth, families/caregivers and Elders is a necessary component of this work. If you as a leader struggle to develop these partnerships, we highly recommend that you seek out others in your community or region who have been able to form strong relationships to learn from them. You can also consider who to partner with to support this work moving forward.

At Foundry, we have committed to improving cultural agility, safety and humility (CASH) at a systems level and an individual level. To support this ongoing work, we have created an Indigenous Wellness Framework and a Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Strategy, which include definitions, commitments and principles. We understand that the changes need to happen within culture (how we show up), policy (what we allow to happen) and process (how we make decisions and what we actually do).

Our JEDI Strategy and our Indigenous Wellness Framework inform our organizational commitments to improve CASH, and they give us a path forward that challenges our current colonial lens. We are pleased to share these for you to review (in [“Tools and Resources”](#) on [page 37](#)), recognizing that we still have a lot to learn from others across the province.



Are you a leader for everyone?

In addition to creating a culturally safe environment for Indigenous young people and families/caregivers, it is important to think about other groups in your community who are likely to experience inequity.

Are you creating a safe space for their participation? Who in your community do these groups trust and can you invite them to be involved? Can you create virtual ways for them to connect with you, to increase opportunities for folks with barriers around mobility, transportation or social anxiety?

To explore who these groups are and find ways to bring them into the work, you could start by revisiting the demographics of your community (see [“Getting to Know the Young People in Your Community”](#) on page 15). If you keep in mind the broad range of people in your community — race, ethnicity, religion, gender and sexual diversity, ability, immigration status, employment status and income — you will be able to lift your focus from what’s familiar to what’s actually happening for folks in your community.

As you work to become a leader for everyone in your community, not just those you already know and can easily relate to, consider Frank and Smith’s teachings about being effective collaborative leaders — be open to ideas, believe that a community can create its own vision and move towards it, and share power.^[8]

Now that we’ve explored leadership styles and challenges, we can move into building partnerships. The next chapter considers how to create intentional partnerships to support change in your community as you move towards IYS.

Tools and Resources

Additional materials

Visit the Community Development Workbook section at foundrybc.ca/expansion to access these tools and resources:

- Foundry's Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy
- Foundry's Indigenous Wellness Framework

Growth and inspiration

For more reflective tools about racial equity for organizations who lead, we recommend the Racial Equity Toolkit from The Collective Impact Forum: collectiveimpactforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Racial-Equity-Toolkit.pdf

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Community Partnerships

At Foundry we use a broad definition of “partner” that refers to all organizations and people working with us towards a shared vision. We have partners at the local and provincial levels.



The Importance of Partnerships

Designing IYS requires intentional partnerships – the relationships built among people and organizations over time. Partnerships that support transformative change go beyond sharing meetings, ideas and work; rather, our partnerships involve sharing and integrating organizational resources, as well as a collective responsibility to improve the wellness of young people across the province.

It's important to think about partners more broadly than just health sector partners. In IYS, we collaborate across sectors, bringing in the voices and knowledge of many providers who support youth, including areas such as social services, employment, education, recreation and wellness.

This need for strong partnerships is the essential learning from our 2018 [Developmental Evaluation of Foundry's Proof of Concept](#). The ability of a community to develop better IYS hinges on relationships, both locally and provincially. In the early stages of partnership development, we recommend that you consider how and when your community partners are already meeting, to see where discussions around IYS can fit.

Youth and families/caregivers should also be thought of as full partners as your community moves towards IYS. Consider ways you can embed their voices in your processes and learn from their experiences. See [“Youth and Family Engagement”](#) on page 44 for more details.

We also encourage you to partner with those who are different than you, think differently than you and can bring a fresh perspective to supporting youth in your community. If everyone looks similar to you, has a similar level of education and is in similar income brackets, you will be missing important voices.



Building Reciprocal Relationships

An important part of building relationships is making sure they are mutually beneficial and not one-sided.

This concept of reciprocity is especially important when engaging with Indigenous Peoples. We are all learning and unlearning in this area and can practice focusing on:

- Approaching relationships with humility;
- Creating safe ways to gather information and share experiences;
- Learning about the all the Indigenous nations and organizations in your area, acknowledging their individual uniqueness and not seeing Indigenous Peoples as one voice;
- Following through on our commitments;
- Communicating clearly and openly; and
- Committing to changing our behaviour patterns.

We sometimes hear that an Indigenous group is too busy to work with us. Consider reframing this perspective in the following ways that have been shared by leaders across the Foundry network:

- What could you be doing differently to make it easier for them to work with you?
- How safe is your organization for Indigenous youth and families/caregivers?
How do you know?

Drivers of Strong Partnerships

Over the years that Foundry has been operating, we have identified the following drivers of strong partnerships, which can smooth the path to IYS:

- Focusing on developing strong and trusting relationships, both locally and provincially;
- Spending time creating a shared vision;
- Being willing to collaborate and work through the challenges that will come up;
- Committing to meaningful youth and family engagement, including them as decision makers at the governance, leadership and community levels, and removing leaders' egos from the decision-making process;
- Defining clear roles and responsibilities among local partners;
- Encouraging curiosity and openness to change, while understanding that change is hard;
- Having the humility to examine, disrupt and change established ways of working; and
- Being aware how much time, effort and organizational capacity is needed to work towards IYS.

Creating a Leadership Table

Once you've reached the point where you have some resources and partners dedicated to moving forward with IYS in your community, the next step is creating a decision-making group called a leadership table.

This is when you would move the conversation from other meeting spaces into a specific space dedicated to talking about IYS.

The central role of a leadership table is promoting a broader understanding about the relationships and partnerships required to develop IYS. A leadership table can support your community in thinking through how you can collaborate across sectors to improve the quality of services that are available for youth and families/ caregivers in your community.

The formation of a leadership table in each Foundry community was critical for creating the sense of “we” in decision making and ensuring that diverse perspectives informed the development of Foundry centres.

If you don't have the resources to support moving forward with IYS right now, it may be helpful to map out which community tables already exist.

You can focus your energy on supporting conversations about IYS in these spaces and make sure you keep the momentum of the discussion going.

“I think how we do it also is that we have and will continue to attend to the fact that there needs to be a ‘we.’ This can't just be a one organization initiative. So trying to have a strong leadership council and building that leadership council and making sure those members understand that this is about Foundry.”

– a centre staff, as part of the 2018 Developmental Evaluation of Foundry's Proof of Concept

Composition of leadership tables varied between communities, and “getting the right people” on board from the beginning was highlighted by current Foundry communities as beneficial for shifting to collaborative decision making and a shared vision for better care.

Again, we believe in having youth in the leadership spaces. This will require some coaching and mentoring from your organization, both for the youth and the other members of the leadership table, so that everyone has the opportunity to share and be heard. It is also important to debrief with the young people after, to find ways to continue improving the experience.

In terms of efficiency, some staff indicated in the Developmental Evaluation that fewer “high-power” members were necessary because collaborative decision making was efficient, and the group was able to optimize productivity with fewer people involved.

Under the guidance and support of a couple of leaders from different organizations, each Foundry leadership table worked towards effectively shaping processes to address their community’s specific needs. The value of the leadership table was ensuring forward momentum towards creating IYS while handling roadblocks along the way.

Questions to consider

- Who are the partners who need to be involved from a services lens?
- How do you name and work through power dynamics across community partnerships? For example, how would you support health authorities to join the partnership without taking over? Cultures vary across health authorities, and they are hierarchal systems. Similarly, hierarchies within the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development have a huge bearing on service.
- Is there an openness to collaboration, rather than competitiveness, especially when services are dependent on funding and organizations in your community are used to competing for the same funds?

Next Steps

At this point, you have come a long way towards IYS in your community. Depending on the resources available, this may be where you stop the process for now.

If you have resources and partners who are committed and ready to take the next steps, it may be time to consider putting agreements in place that define what you’re working towards and list the roles and responsibilities.

The first step is often a Community Partnership Agreement. These documents outline how your organizations will work together. Money is not exchanged with these agreements, however sharing knowledge, resources, in-kind services and office space are discussed at this level. These documents can be useful particularly if you are starting with a short-term pilot program.

A more formal Memorandum of Agreement may come later as you grow, especially if you are going to contract another organization for services. This type of agreement defines the services and staffing that you will put in place. It also sets out how the agreement can be terminated.

We know that consistency is a cornerstone for building trust with youth, so working out these details in advance is important.

Throughout this workbook, we have talked about engaging youth and families/caregivers in every aspect of the work. The next chapter dives into more details about why we do engagement and how to do it well

Tools and Resources

Additional materials

Visit the Community Development Workbook section at foundrybc.ca/expansion to access these tools and resources:

- Template: Community Partnership Agreement

Growth and inspiration

This post from author Lee Maracle, who was a member of the Sto: Loh nation, speaks of story ownership vs. the western view of academia owning knowledge. This is an important ongoing lesson for us on how data and information on Indigenous populations is handled and how vital it is that partnerships embody different ways of thinking. [Lee Maracle Conversation 10: On Appropriation](#)

This anthology shares research, stories and wise practices focused on Indigenous leadership and community growth: Voyageur C, Brearley L, Calliou, editors. *Restorying Indigenous Leadership*. Banff Centre Press; 2015.

In this book, thought leader adrienne maree brown explores equity-based community development and facilitation strategies with real examples of how to frame your thinking for collaborative decision-making: Brown AM. *Holding Change: The Way of Emergent Strategy Facilitation and Mediation*. AK Press; May 2021.

Youth and Family Engagement

Everything we do in IYS is for the betterment of young people's lives. We typically do this by striving to offer the best services we can for our communities. But there are further steps we can take. If we put young people and their families at the centre of all of the work – the planning, the decision making, the evolution of what we offer and how we offer it – we can build a system that truly works for everyone.



Getting Started with Engagement

Youth and families know their experience best.

Lived experience is the key to effective and comprehensive care. We need to understand young people's experiences and offer them agency in their care for them to feel invested, involved and in charge. More than listening, it's about hearing them and empowering them. This may mean taking a step back from your own power, which can be new and difficult.

If you don't have a lot of experience with engagement, you can start in simple ways. Consider how you can create space for youth and families in your organization or in your collaborations with partner organizations. Some ideas for entry points into your work include:

- Hosting a social event to build connections and trust;
- Inviting them to share their thoughts and experiences on your social media; and
- Forming an advisory committee to explore how they might like to be involved in your work.

Once engagement work is more established in your community, the youth and family role could include things like:

- Reviewing documents and plans and giving feedback;
- Adding the voice of lived experience at meetings or events;
- Creating communication plans or running social media accounts;
- Sharing their experiences through focus groups, surveys or 1:1 conversations;
- Informing ongoing improvements to policies and practices;
- Shaping service delivery;
- Co-designing wellness activities; or
- Leading an asset mapping project.

Some of the organizations in your community may already be doing this work. Lean on their experience as you find ways to build rapport and relationships as you involve young people in your move towards IYS.

There is much to learn about engagement. We encourage you to explore the information below and reflect on the intention of engagement, the various levels of engagement, the importance of paying honoraria, how to let youth step into their power and how to overcome common challenges when doing this work.

Foundry's Definition of Family

At Foundry, family is defined uniquely by each young person. Family is considered to be an integral part of a young person's circle of care. Family and caregivers — whether by birth, choice or circumstance — hold a significant role in supporting a young person by fostering a sense of belonging and connection through their shared experience.

Because we have this co-created definition of family, at Foundry we intentionally speak of engagement as “Youth and Family Engagement” rather than specifying “family/caregiver.” You will notice the intentional use of the word family throughout this section.

The Intention of Engagement

Engagement is always for the benefit of the youth or families being engaged, though that is not how it's often been practiced.

When asking for opinions or support, think first about whether you are doing it to meet your own needs (like to make your project look better or to meet a funder's requirements) or if you are going to improve the experience for those you are engaging. If you are asking because you need someone's expertise, but the work will not benefit them, that is not engagement.

In engagement work, participants are always compensated for their expertise and contributions. It is not a volunteer role. See [“The Importance of Honoraria”](#) on page 49 for more details.

In IYS, the intention of youth and family engagement is to:

1. | Establish and maintain relationships with young people and families that are reciprocal and support your community's services and goals;
2. | Amplify, support and incorporate the voices and perspectives of young people and families with lived experience;
3. | Provide a formalized opportunity for those who have accessed systems of care to inform and shape how care is designed and accessed; and
4. | Create opportunities for young people and families to continue their journey as emerging champions and leaders in their communities.



Levels of Engagement

Foundry's Provincial Youth and Family Engagement network developed an engagement framework to illustrate meaningful engagement approaches.

The starting point for the framework was Roger Hart's Ladder of Participation, which laid out eight levels of children's participation in projects, with the higher steps of the ladder indicating more engaged participation.^[9] By combining the voices of young people and families with Hart's ladder, the Foundry group was able to outline levels of engagement that make sense for IYS. This framework may be helpful as you consider how to begin engaging with youth and families in your community or how to engage with them more meaningfully.

FOUNDRY'S ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Approach	Description
Co-Leading	To have youth and families assume a leadership role in decision-making processes in collaboration with Foundry centre staff
Co-Producing	To work in a equal and reciprocal relationship with youth and families to implement, deliver and evaluate Foundry centre activity
Co-Designing	To work alongside and to create a plan with youth and families that meets the needs, expectations and requirements of those who participate and those who will be affected
Involving	To work with youth and families to ensure voices and perspectives are included in various levels of decision making
Consulting	To obtain feedback from youth and families for future decision making
Educating	To provide opportunities for youth and families to learn more about their Foundry centre and the Foundry network and also to provide opportunities to build their capacity in areas of interest to them
Informing	To provide information to youth and families to let them know what has been decided and what is going to happen

As you move forward with engagement, you will not be on the top rung of the ladder of engagement all the time. You may have the drive and desire to co-design, but maybe you are only ready to consult and involve on certain projects. It is better to be transparent and allow the youth and families to authentically engage at that level than to claim your engagement practices are stronger than they are.

Including equity-denied voices

Part of engaging meaningfully is creating space for everyone to be involved. When deciding on engagement approaches, consider the different youth audiences in your community, especially equity-denied groups.

Think about ways that you can tailor the engagement opportunity to make it relevant, appealing and accessible. For example, Foundry Abbotsford hired Punjabi interns and that representation helped increase awareness and usage of Foundry by Punjabi youth in their community.

What does meaningful engagement feel like?

Marlow, a Project Manager with Foundry Central Office, shared:

“I had the opportunity to be part of an amazing engagement session with the community of Burns Lake as they came together to collaborate on ideas for their future Foundry centre.

For a community of around 1,700 people, it was incredible to see more than 250 folks participate in the session! Almost the entire high school attended, along with 30 family members, close to 60 elementary school students, local hockey players and service providers working in the community.

The goal of the session was to listen and learn as they shared their perspectives on how they want to feel when they access services at Foundry and how they imagine the look and feel of the physical space.

The architects and entire team from the Lead Agency, Carrier Sekani Family Services, did a phenomenal job of offering creative ways for the entire community to provide feedback. We had all different stations — with games, surveys, PowerPoint presentations, drawing activities and floor planning exercises — along with opportunities to simply engage in meaningful dialogue.

There was so much energy in the room! It was amazing to see the community so excited about their future Foundry, and I felt jazzed to be a part of it.

Engagement is everything. These are the folks who will ultimately use the centre and bring it to life. It's important that we do everything we can to make sure their voices are heard.”

The Importance of Honoraria

Honoraria is an important element of meaningful engagement with young people and families.

Paying honoraria is a way to recognize the importance of their lived experience and show that you value their time and input. Financial incentives have also been found to increase recruitment and retention of participants.

We encourage you to move beyond the minimum wage, to recognize that besides the actual tasks involved in the work, there is extensive emotional labour. The standard recommended honoraria amount is \$25/hour. If that does not work for your community, do what you can to offer fair compensation, especially if they are missing workable hours to participate in your projects.

Also consider in-kind supports to encourage youth and families from a variety of lived experiences to engage with your work, such as offering childcare, transit passes and culturally relevant food options.

Foundry developed the following principles for honoraria:

- **Connection:** Initially, financial incentives can be a great method of bringing in young people and families. If they decide it's valuable to continue to engage in your work, connect with them to determine what works best for them going forward.
- **Clarity of Purpose:** The intention of the honoraria should be clearly communicated. Is it as an appreciation for participation or a reward for their time and effort? Be sure to establish and maintain clarity to avoid confusion, because honoraria need to be more than a transaction. The exchange of money for the services they offer does not negate the importance of relationship and reciprocity that needs to accompany the honoraria.
- **Flexible Payment Options:** Not all young people and families have bank accounts. Think about ways you could compensate them, such as cash, pre-paid credit cards or gift cards to places of their choice.
- **Establish and Maintain Equity:** Conflict may arise when a participant does more work but receives the same amount as others who do less. Work with the participants to define policies on what is fair for everyone and when the honoraria amount may be reduced.
- **Honoraria is Taxable:** Ensure that participants understand that the Canada Revenue Agency only allows \$500 of honoraria to go untaxed. Above that amount, they will need to set aside a percentage of their honoraria for income tax and declare it when they do their taxes.

Above all, honoraria are a thank you to young people and families for their time, energy and capacity. Providing honoraria does not mean we should stop finding ways to value their experience in other ways such as letters of recommendation, gifts, community connections or opportunities to participate in training or research projects.

Youth Taking the Lead

Once you've begun engaging with youth in your community, think about ways you could pass the responsibility for the engagement work to them. This allows for more authentic recruitment and co-design as they will fully be in charge of their own processes.

Make space for the youth to take the lead. Instead of asking “What would you like to do?” rephrase and ask them “What would you like me to do?” and have them delegate work back to you. This puts the power in their hands. If they want to be responsible for the engagement work, that's amazing. Give them the opportunity to tell you what capacity they have and let them step into the power they are seeking.

In relationships between staff and community members, especially young people, it can be easy to assume that power rests with the staff and the young people shouldn't take on too much because they don't want to step on anyone's toes. In effective engagement processes, the power should gradually move away from the staff and into the hands of youth and families. The staff can be there to guide and support but not regiment or control.

Youth and families could take on the following responsibilities:

- Creating meeting agendas;
- Facilitating meetings;
- Participating in events like health fairs and other community initiatives;
- Speaking at events on behalf of other youth and families;
- Co-creating youth or family workshops;
- Developing policies and processes; and
- Creating community agreements for committees and other shared spaces.

If we intentionally make space for youth and family voices, our services and our communities will be stronger.



Common Challenges

As you grow your engagement work, you may encounter challenges with things like expectations, funding and staff capacity. Across the Foundry network, we have had these challenges too, and we can share some ideas to support you.

Transparency

While it would be ideal to always co-design alongside young people and families, that high level of engagement isn't possible in every situation. How can we offer a meaningful engagement experience within the constraints of our projects?

It is better to be transparent and honest about the boundaries and limits of your project and be consistent about your expectations, rather than promising more than you have the capacity to support.

Make sure young people and families know exactly where they fit in the equation. What is within their role? What is being asked of them? What do they have responsibility for? What can they change? What can they only comment on? Do they have final decision-making power on anything? This transparency will help foster a stronger reciprocal relationship.

Capacity building

We want to have the capacity to do meaningful engagement, but our staff are already stretched thin.

Engagement is often something that is done off the side of someone's desk as part of an already busy day. If you only have a small capacity for engagement, that is okay but make sure to do it proactively instead of as an afterthought. Lean into the skills and interests of your youth and families—they may be ready to take on more of a leadership role.



Money

We understand the importance of paying honoraria, but we just don't have the budget right now.

If your budget is tight, don't worry. Reciprocity with young people comes in many forms, including reimbursing them for transportation costs, offering a meal during the engagement work, providing a letter of support or completion to acknowledge their contributions or offering training relevant to their interests. If you can work towards paying an honorarium, that is best practice, but the heart of this practice is reciprocity. If you do your work with the spirit of reciprocity, you are on the right track.

Recruitment

Recruiting young people for engagement work can be an ongoing challenge. Youth grow beyond our organization's age group, they move on to other programs or they no longer have capacity to participate. How can we stay on top of recruitment?

Awareness is key to recruitment. Make sure you are in the spaces where young people gather. Is the swimming pool the place to be for a young person in your community? The skatepark? The ice rink? Their religious or sacred spaces, like a longhouse, mosque, church, synagogue, gurdwara or temple? Those are the places to make connections and share posters or handouts. You can also promote your engagement opportunities on social media and through partner organizations.

For recruiting families, you can take a similar approach and meet them where they are. Consider where they go for information and where they already gather. In communities that are mostly white, racialized communities often gather in religious spaces, and it is important to build relationships there to reach people with a variety of life experiences.

It may also be a good time to revisit your reasons for engaging, beyond it being good practice. If you consider specific areas where you want and need engagement, you can tailor your recruitment.



Commitment to curiosity

In spaces where youth and families are sharing their lived experiences, emotions can be very intense. What can we do to support the participants and ourselves?

The first step is a commitment to curiosity. If everyone who participates is open to hearing others' experiences without judgment, it is more likely to feel like a safe space. Engagement is an incredibly rewarding experience but one that requires those involved to show up in their full selves, with open hearts and open minds.

Consider identifying an ally who can provide support to the participants before, during and after the meeting. This could be a staff or community member the young people have identified as a safe person for them. This action is meant to create low barrier access to information and advice. If a youth is entering a meeting with lots of jargon or institutional context, their ally can offer explanations, background information or definitions in the chat or in a pre- or post-meeting check in, as well as emotional support.

Authentic relationships

How can we build authentic, trusting relationships with the youth and families we engage with?

At the end of the day, everything in engagement comes back to relationship building and trust. If you have limited time to work on engagement, use it to have conversations. It doesn't always need to be work talk. Find genuine connections whether that be through going for coffee or giving them an office tour. The relational work done within engagement is essential.

Accessible language

In health care, we tend to use jargon, complex language and acronyms, which can be a barrier to connection.

Language is how we connect. When you're sharing written materials with youth and families as part of engagement work, take some time to think about the language you're using. Can you revise your materials to make them accessible for folks with different backgrounds and levels of education? Can you explain terms they may not be familiar with and provide context? There may be topics where youth and families know more about relevant terminology than you do, so it's important to be open to their feedback.

Everyone has different language levels and needs, so there isn't one right way to communicate. Listen to youth and family feedback and ask for their ideas about how you can get your message across in a way that fits each specific purpose and audience.

You will know you are engaging well when youth and families feel a sense of community, belonging, ownership and appreciation. Keep the lines of communication open so that they feel comfortable giving their feedback. Keep learning and evolving!

Tools and Resources

Additional materials

Visit the Community Development Workbook section at foundrybc.ca/expansion to access these tools and resources:

- Supporting Youth and Families on Leadership Tables

Growth and inspiration

For inspiration about how engagement can look and feel, check out this video from Foundry's 2019 Linkup event with youth and families from across the province: youtube.com/watch?v=ga2lBTn_b3w

We aren't the only experts in BC around youth and family engagement. You might want to dive into *Mapped! A youth community mapping toolkit*: youthrex.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/mapped_vancouver_final1.pdf

References

9. Hart R. Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship. UNICEF International Child Development Centre. 1992. Available at: unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/childrens_participation.pdf

Thank you for joining us on this journey to transform access to services for young people. As we continue to come together to celebrate the strengths of our communities, we will find more ways to build on those strengths, create services that youth want and need, and reduce barriers to access.

We hope you've seen the power of community, the power of bringing folks together, the power of really listening. At the heart of the work is engaging youth and families/caregivers in everything we do and truly putting them at the centre and in the lead.

• **FOUNDRY** •

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