# **Logo Toronto Child and Family Network Toronto - Together for our childrenToronto Child & Family Network**

**Steering Committee Minutes**

Date: Friday, October 15, 2021

Time: 2:00 pm – 4:00pm

Webex meeting

| **Present** | **Regrets** |
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| * Sherri Rennie (Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services) (TCFN Co-chair) * Karen Gray (Children’s Services) (TCFN Co-chair) * Aly Velji for Diane Banks (Toronto Public Library) * David Willis (Strides) * Paula Carrie (Aisling Discoveries) * Connie Giorando (Toronto Catholic District School Board) * Michelle Clarke for Jennifer Miles (Catholic Children’s Aid Society) * Nancy Hendy (Children’s Services) * Brenda Weitzner (Primary care physician) * Jeffrey Schiffer (Native Child & Family Services of Toronto) * Pam Blanchfield (Parks, Forestry & Recreation) * Siobhan McCarthy (AAPC Co-Chair , Native Child & Family Services of Toronto) * Margaret Howard (Surrey Place) * Leanne Nicolle (Big Brother Big Sister of Toronto) * Cheryl Webb (Lumenus) * Jillian Sewell (YMCA) * Pamela Hart (Native Women's Resource Centre) (AAPC Co-chair) * Matthew Lee (Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services) * Ashley Burger (Toronto Children's Services) * Annique Farrell (United Way of Greater Toronto) * Michele Lupa (Mothercraft) * Trevor McAlmont (Macaulay Centre) * Eunice Lee (Toronto Children's Services) * Lee Soda (Agincourt Community Services Association) | * Anne Lambert (Viamonde) * Isilda Kucherenko (Ministry of Education) * Terri Hewitt (Surrey Place) * Cynthia Grundmann (Toronto District School Board) * Anna Patola (Humber College) * Patricia Chorney-Rubin (George Brown College) * Marie Klaassen (Public Health) |

**Staff Support:** Kelley Baldwin (Toronto Children’s Services), Kelly O'Gorman (Toronto Children’s Services), Joe Rock (Toronto Children's Services), Caroline Wai (Toronto Children's Services), Najma Kahiye (Toronto Children's Services)

**Observers/Guests:** Selina Young (Director, Indigenous Affairs Office, City of Toronto), Lynn Fergusson (Social Impact Advisors)

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| **Agenda Topic & Lead** | **Action** |
| 1. **Welcoming remarks and land acknowledgement (Lead: Karen Gray)**  * Karen started the meeting with a land acknowledgement * Spoke to reason for rescheduling meeting originally on Sept. 30 to allow members to deepen learnings and reflect on truth, justice and reconciliation, and then come together as a group to discuss how we can personally and professionally support our agencies on this journey on reconciliation |  |
| 1. **Introduction to new TCFN co-chair Sherri Rennie, Toronto Regional Director, MCCSS (all)**  * Introduce new co-chair Sherri Rennie as new Regional Director of MCCSS * Round table introduction of members |  |
| **3. Approval of minutes and agenda (Lead: Karen Gray)**   * Review of the agenda and purpose of the meeting   + Learn about the City's reconciliation action plan to discuss how we can support and advance this work   + Sharing our respective work, actions and commitments on truth, justice and reconciliation   + Highlight the work of the AAPC and Indigenous led member agencies | Agenda approved |
| **4. Deepen learnings and knowledge on truth, justice and reconciliation**  **4.1 Moment of silence**   * Moment of silence for the Indigenous children who have been and continue to be discovered in unmarked graves across Canada   **4.2 City of Toronto Reconciliation Action Plan (Selina Young)**  **i. Presentation on action plan (Selina)**  Introductions   * Karen welcomed and introduced Selina Young, Director of Indigenous Affaires Office at the City of Toronto * Selina introduced herself, her traditional territory and where she currently lives, her personal connection to work with children, and the obligation to ancestors, children, and future generations of keeping children in hearts and minds, and her background in multi-levels of government   Presentation on the City's reconciliation action plan (copy of presentation slides under Resources in minutes)  Indigenous Toronto   * Start with Indigenous Toronto and grounding in community * Over 100,000 Inuit, First Nations and Metis people in Toronto * Important to think about large urban Indigenous community and needs for services to support that community   Overview   * Action plan is a way to connect/weave the existing work at the City of Toronto together while also finding a better way to focus and expand those efforts; each division has a role of play in working with Inuit, First Nation and Metis communities * Increase significant over the pandemic given economic and health impact on Inuit, First Nation and Metis communities, and the need to act in a meaningful way after hearing lots of input from communities for decades * Indigenous peoples are in almost every risk category from health outcomes to under employment to over-representation in the correctional, mental health and welfare systems * Importance of visibility/invisibility of urban Indigenous community in the action plan * Many visitors/residents of Toronto are unaware of vibrant Indigenous communities as well as treaty and territorial partners who have cared for and are caring for Toronto for millennia * When there is no cultural representation, Indigenous peoples can feel like they don't belong to a particular space/place, which can impact how Indigenous people access services and access what is needed to prosper * The actions are to increase visibility and further self-determination as well as truth, justice and reconciliation and what is means to decolonize * Action plan as a foundation to drive meaningful change   Context   * Number of past reports/commitments telling the City what the Indigenous community needs and responsibility of government * Important to not lose sight of these commitments and key piece is what we do with those * The action plan is bold and ambitious because the City needs to be bold in support of Indigenous prosperity and self-determination   Earlier Development   * Journey started after Indigenous Affaires Office (IAO) created in 2018 * IAO started having conversations with Indigenous leaders, Elders, Knowledge Carriers, and hosted community events and sharing circles to understand what leaders and community wanted * Shared draft early 2020– heard from TASSC that the draft was not bold enough and did not push boundaries enough, so went back to rewrite * Been holding engagement and community of practice sessions   Values   * Values outline embedded in the action plan, and everyone contributing to the action plan has to act with these values   27 Actions Through 5 Themes   * Five themes: Restore Truth, Right Relations and Share Power, Justice, Make Financial Reparations, Actions for IAO * Still developing and engaging on the actions, and will most likely have 29 actions by end * Also adding action of advocating for good relations with other levels of government like province and federal governments * Centres on prosperity, self-determination, health, well-being and big focus on access to land, water and essential programming for children and families, and access to the land for healing and wellness * Highlight key pieces for IAO:   + Building momentum and need to keep engaging. IAO will support the City in engaging with Indigenous community on a regular basis   + Accountability is a big piece, and working with Indigenous community on accountability mechanisms using an Indigenous world view and lens   Specific Actions   * Presented to TDSB group focussed on children and families recently to connect similar actions and focus – identified action around addressing racism that pulls other pieces of work * Conversation with Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers about addressing racism. * Diane Longboat talks about movement of reconciliation around more and more non-Indigenous organizations and governments creating action plans, and the City needs to be part of and have a role to play in this movement in the right way and in response to community * Highlight support for revitalization of Indigenous languages and the EarlyON programs doing great work with Indigenous children and youth   Examples of expected actions   * Examples of expected actions, such as City supported Indigenous led prosperity plan, workforce that reflects diverse, vibrant Indigenous community   Next steps   * Doing engagement, editing based on great feedback and trip to Council targeted for December * Staff report being worked on that lists the recommendations and gives City staff direction to do the work   **ii. Discussion on how to support and advance the action plan**  Questions. comments, or points of clarification   * Michele (Mothercraft) recently had Board approved strategic plan, with development of truth and reconciliation as an objectives. * What extent can community organizations can engage and leverage the work at the IAO?   + Specifics will be determined by City Council in December   + Important to continue to use this circle at TCFN to share (what is working and what is not working) and learn collectively to support the movement. Perhaps as a standing item on the agenda * Consider how TCFN members can support individually and collectively the staff report to Council in December (letter to Council deputations) * Jeff (NCFS) great work of the reconciliation action plan dovetails and informs the City's new Community Safety and Well-being Plan.   + Focus on the broad strategies for children's mental health and children's services;   + Ensure that Indigenous services are designed/delivered by Indigenous agencies; and ensure that Indigenous innovation gets to mainstream spaces and supports * Selina (IAO) responded to comments that the action plan is a living document and the need to continue to listen and respond to Indigenous community and leaders * Cheryl (Lumenus) think through the lens of collective impact, and what we can do as a group once this gets past Council and all of us thinking about our actions and plans to link our actions/strategies to this work. Lumenus is starting strategic planning process, and excited about possibilities to focus on the collective impact possibilities of this work   **ii. Share commitments and actions across TCFN members to advance truth, justice and reconciliation**   * Cheyl (Lumenus) has Indigenous Peoples Committee (Indigenous representation and allies) to help direct the agency; lots of work to do and just starting out. Had several events on 9/30 with Dwight Ballantyne leading three sessions with staff * Jillian (YMCA) established a Reconciliation working group that created priorities on 1) Awareness Education and Training, 2) Relationships, 3) Representation, 4) Collaborations. During COVID-19, the Reconciliation group has continued to work on the following issues: 1) Current events, 2) Land Acknowledgments, 3) Partnerships * Michelle (CCAS) does not have a current reconciliation action plan, but recognizes the need to get started. Focus on 1) awareness and training being rolled out for every staff member 2) around direct service and role as Truth and Reconciliation Worker to work with staff and clients that identify as Indigenous to follow through on commitment to have NCFS service these clients; 3) work with clients who were part of 60s scoop to work on disclosures and walking them through the process * Aly (TPL) (full overview document shared by Aly under resources in minutes) started work to ensure the libraries were a safe and relevant space for Indigenous individuals as well as help facilitate education and awareness; board endorsed the strategies at TPL in response to Calls to Action, and created Indigenous Advisory Council. Work includes Elders in Residence, increase online information and access to content, incorporating Indigenous design into new branches, training for all staff, and Indigenous programming year round * Karen (Children's Services) suggested this group could support negotiations and accountability for the national child care plan, and funding dedicated for Indigenous programming * Ashley (EarlyON) offered to connect with organizations around the table on what the changes in policies and practices have looked like in consultation with Indigenous partners (i.e. changes in procurement and shifting decision making power)   **4.3 Review of resources and learnings**   * Kelley reviewed resources and learnings recommended by the AAPC members to deepen understanding on truth, justice and reconciliation * Reviewed [Indigenous Resources](https://nativechild.org/community/Indigenous-resources/) page from NCFT, which highlight Indigenous resources and ways to support and amplify Indigenous voices * Also reviewed TPL blogs and reading lists:   + [Orange Shirt Day Blog Post](https://torontopubliclibrary.typepad.com/bookbuzz/2020/09/orange-shirt-day.html)   + [Truth and Reconciliation: One Year Later](https://torontopubliclibrary.typepad.com/north-york-central-blog/2016/06/truth-and-reconciliation-one-year-later.html)   + [Truth and Reconciliation: 5 Years Later](https://torontopubliclibrary.typepad.com/bookbuzz/2020/12/truth-and-reconciliation-5-years-later.html)   + [Remembering the 215 Children Found in an Unmarked Mass Grave at Kamloops Indian Residential School](https://torontopubliclibrary.typepad.com/arts_culture/2021/06/remembering-the-215-children-found-in-an-unmarked-mass-grave-at-kamloops-indian-residential-school.html)   + [Orange Shirt Day Reading List](http://lists.tpl.ca/shared/orange-shirt-day/oWuHRQaE3iJNBRKsPuyqrr5aMwOvKCY4Ws0P24MqFAdZ4K3SQ3)   + [Reading for Reconciliation](https://account.torontopubliclibrary.ca/shared/june-2019-read-indigenous/p5IIdWsTQqFU2UzS1rtuW9Cetf1hA8h3mFYDlcgCa87PiJRtld)   + [Read Indigenous](https://www.tpl.ca/readindigenous/) * Decision from chairs to deferred watching video together after running behind schedule to give enough time for AAPC members * Members encouraged to watch the video, featured on the NCFST's Indigenous Resources, of [Tanya Talaga discussing the Indian Act](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vxoooxGzoi8) and focusing on the government’s position of deciding who is Indigenous and who is not.   Question for TPL   * Are children's books available? Yes, the resources listed include children's books   **4.4 Highlight AAPC and Indigenous led child and family programs**  AAPC   * Siobhan as co-chair of AAPC provided an overview of the AAPC * Reviewed the purpose, principles and roles and responsibilities of the AAPC * Importance of gathering together those who support Indigenous children and families specifically and supporting each other in meeting those needs in best possible capacity. * Importance of being mindful of residential school experience and inter-generational trauma, and continued impact of Toronto's large urban Indigenous community * Working together to develop community based planning and consultation, and make sure we are reflective of the needs of Indigenous children and families – being responsive and providing equity of access * Lots of growth in services provided for Indigenous children and families through Journey Together funding, and importance of working collaboratively * COVID-19 impact on AAPC as many members were re-deployed and unable to come together, so working to bring members back to the table * AAPC even scheduled Oct 21 to invite all AAPC members to engage in a recommitment ceremony to come together and embrace strategic planning that happened in 2019 before COVID as the plan begun to be implemented   AAPC Members and Indigenous led child and family services   * Joe Rock, Indigenous Consultant with City of Toronto, EarlyON, and Kelley highlighted AAPC members and Indigenous led child and family services * Information and description gathering from [Tkaronto Indigenous Peoples Portal](https://live.indigenousto.ca/) * Agencies highlighted: TASSC and Tkaronto Indigenous Peoples Portal, Aboriginal Legal Services, Anishnawbe Health Toronto, ENAGB Indigenous Youth Agency, First Nation School of Toronto Kapapamahchakwew - Wandering Spirit School, Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training, Native Canadian Centre of Toronto (NCCT), Native Child and Family Services of Toronto (NCFST), Native Woman’s Resource Centre of Toronto (NWRCT), Ojibiikaan Indigenous Cultural Network, Seventh Generation Midwives, Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre, 2-Spirited People of the First Nations, Wigwamen * Updates that 2 floors of Indigenous EarlyON and child care centres will be open at new employment and training centres being constructed at Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training * 2 new centres also recently opened in Malvern and Mt. Dennis with NCFST | **Resources**  Copy of slides from Selina on the City's reconciliation action plan    Link shared by Cheryl for The Ballantyne Project <https://truenorthaid.ca/the-ballantyne-project/>  Overview of TPL Indigenous initiatives shared by Aly |
| 1. **Wrap up and next steps (Karen)**  * Thank members for coming to the rescheduled meeting * Going forward, ask members to reflect on what was said and share, and reflect on work you are doing and how it can better re-align with the truth, justice and reconciliation action plans * Recognize that this is the beginning of the process, and proposed the on-going commitment and standing agenda item at the TCFN   Discussion of next steps and how to continue conversation   * Suggested it would be helpful for this committee to start going through the TRC Calls to Action, in particular the ones that address child and family needs * Having conversations on processes we've doing through and learnings from what has went well and what didn't go well * And bringing back the City's reconciliation report back to the committee * Suggest that each member commits to read a section of TRC among members, and reflect on how it impacts children and families | **Decision**  Have standing agenda item for TCFN SC meetings to share learnings and review TRC Calls to Action |

**2021 Meeting Schedule:** Tuesday, November 23, 2-4pm (Webex)