ESFP Equity and Inclusion Framework
(Sep 2021)

5 Family Places Vision Statement:
Children reach their full potential within a supported family environment.

ESFP Mission Statement:
To foster a community of connection, well-being and support for children, families and caregivers in East Vancouver.

ESFP Values:
Community
Relationships and connections
Respect, diversity, and inclusion

Policy Statement

Eastside Family Place is committed to creating a diverse, inclusive and equitable space where all employees, volunteers, and participants, regardless of their race, ethnicity, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, religion, education, mental or physical disabilities or socio-economic status feel valued and respected.

We acknowledge that systems of oppression create barriers and result in ongoing disparities for marginalized communities. We acknowledge the limitations of a nonprofit organization to address them while recognizing that we have an opportunity before us to create positive systemic change within our organization. We are committed to cultivating a safe(r) space that proactively fosters allyship and a culture of compassion, respect, and learning in relationship. This supports our mission of strengthening a community of connection, well-being and support for children, families, and caregivers in East Vancouver.

Policy Scope

This policy extends to all staff, volunteers and members of the public that use our services. It includes all in-person interactions (encompassing policy, planning and program delivery) within the Eastside Family Place facility, as well as extending to our virtual spaces. It also extends to any interactions that happen outside of work hours and the physical location of Eastside Family Place if staff, volunteers and participants are participating on behalf of Eastside Family Place.

Policy Goals

To this end, Eastside Family Place will:

- Provide a safe(r) space for all where:
  - Your true, authentic self is embraced

- There is an understanding that good intentions do not mitigate the harm caused
- Allyship is practiced

- Apply an equity and inclusion lens to our work to help us to be consistent and coherent in our efforts to move equity and inclusion forward in our services to the benefit of our Grandview-Woodland community. This framework guides our policies, planning and program delivery at Eastside Family Place. By approaching our work this way, we can
  - Become more aware of the diversity around us
  - Take active steps to address systemic barriers and promote authentic inclusion of marginalized folks
  - Take active steps to reflect on our role in creating these barriers.
  - Create a welcoming and caring environment for all
  - Foster a team and services that are representative of our community
  - Hold ourselves accountable to our own biases and further our own learning

Policy Action

To promote equity and inclusion in our Family Resource Centre, Eastside Family Place will abide by the following:

Engaging community, staff, and board, we strive to
- Use approaches and outreach that supports full participation
- Have a team that is representative of the diversity of the population we serve, including marginalized folks.
- Actively engage in reconciliation and practice allyship with Indigenous peoples.
- Support board-level thinking about how systemic inequities impact our organization's work, and how best to address them in a way that is consistent with our mission.
- Develop a baseline for respect and protection for everyone who comes into our space
- Approach conflict and or/contentious situations through restorative practices where possible.

Gathering information and communicating, we strive to
- Commit time and resources to educate our team on what it means to apply an 'equity lens' to our practices and how to approach this work with the goal of reconciliation and anti-oppression.
- Use imagery throughout our website and social media that reflects the diversity of our community.
- Use our website and newsletters to share applicable resources on inclusion and diversity with children and adults in our community.
- Ensure that the mode of communication we use is easily accessible and understood by the full diversity of our target audience.
- Reach out to community organizations and networks that serve marginalized folks.
- Use communications that are inclusive, respectful, truthful, and equitable across all audiences.

Planning (services, projects/programs, and events), we strive to
- Promote equity and inclusion in both strategic and operational planning.
- Consider the needs of people from historically marginalized groups in our long-term planning. This includes an awareness of their intersecting identities that may create additional barriers.

- Contribute to more equitable access to resources and benefits in the wider community through our services and programs.
- Where possible, design our services, projects, programs, or events to ensure that accessibility needs are provided for.

Accountability

Monitoring and Evaluation, we strive to
- Make space for families from marginalized groups to participate in our programs.
- Create opportunities for people least likely to be heard to ensure they are able to share their specific concerns.
- Use intentional practices when collecting data (use of inclusive language, etc.)
- Develop mechanisms for employees, volunteers, and participants to provide feedback and/or share their concerns with no repercussions.
- Periodically review existing policies and procedures and make necessary changes to ensure they are equitable.

Recruiting and Hiring, we strive to
- Intentionally incorporate equitable practices during the hiring, promoting, or evaluating process.
- Identify systemic and other barriers to employment including identifying unconscious biases that we may have and commit to, *where possible*, redressing and/or removing these barriers.

Definitions Section

Ally - describes someone who supports a group other than one's own (in terms of racial identity, gender, faith identity, sexual orientation, etc.) Allies acknowledge disadvantage and oppression of groups other than their own; take risks and supportive action on their behalf; commit to reducing their own complicity or collusion in oppression of those groups and invest in strengthening their own knowledge and awareness of oppression.

Anti-oppression
Anti-oppression is a lens and practice of noticing, naming, and dismantling oppression. It is an umbrella term that encompasses all expressions of oppression - points to the fact that all are connected and work to reinforce one another. Anti-oppression is both expansive and specific; systemic and small scale.

Diversity
Diversity is about what makes each of us unique and includes our backgrounds, personality, life experiences, perspectives and beliefs. Diversity is also about recognizing differences that may include race, ethnicity, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, class, and/or socio-economic situations. Recognition of difference alone does not equal justice or inclusion.

Equity
Equity means to treat everyone fairly. An equity emphasis seeks to render justice by deeply considering structural factors that benefit some social groups/communities and harms other social groups/communities. Sometimes justice demands, for the purpose of equity, an unequal response.

Equity as distinct from Equality
Equity considers the current, future and historical barriers that negatively impact an individual's opportunity to participate and prosper as a member of the community. While equality suggests that we treat everyone the same, equity suggests that we identify populations most affected by social, economic, and political discrimination and provide them with a higher level of support so that they can participate in their community.

Hidden, unconscious or implicit biases
These are social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness. Everyone holds unconscious beliefs about various social and identity groups, and these biases stem from one's tendency to organize social worlds by categorizing.

Unconscious bias is far more prevalent than conscious prejudice and often incompatible with one's conscious values. Certain scenarios can activate unconscious attitudes and beliefs. For example, biases may be more prevalent when multi-tasking or working under time pressure.

Intersectionality/intersecting identities
Intersectionality refers to a way of seeing people's experiences as shaped by (but not limited to) their race, socio-economic background, sex, gender, and sexuality all at the same time. This overlap or combination of differences makes up a person's unique identity. Identities within an individual may come, go or converge, depending on time or place (for example life stages). The point of understanding intersectionality is to also understand the variety of privileges and/or forms of discrimination or exclusion that one may experience simultaneously at any given time (for example gender and race together).

Restorative practices
The aim of restorative practices is to develop community and to manage conflict and tensions by repairing harm and building relationships.

Safe(r) space
A safe(r) space is a supportive, non-threatening environment where all participants can feel comfortable to express themselves and share experiences without fear of discrimination or reprisal. The word 'safe(r)' acknowledges that safety is relative: not everyone feels safe under the same conditions.

Social justice
Social justice includes a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure. Social justice involves social actors who have a sense of their own agency as well as a sense of social responsibility toward and with others and the society as a whole.

Systemic barriers
Systemic barriers are policies, practices or procedures that result in some people receiving unequal access or being excluded.

Reconciliation in Action
Where possible, advancing the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.
http://trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf