



Special Needs Resourcing in Children's Services: Assessing Opportunities and Charting Paths Forward

A Reflection on Intersectional Equity

Toronto Children's Services - Every Child Belongs

Dec 1, 2023



Overview

1. The Service Model
2. The Changing Landscape
3. Equity in Disability
4. Current Projects Underway

Services to Licenced Early Learning and Child Care Programs

1. Resource Consultation Service
2. Specialized Consultation Service
3. Enhanced Staffing: Child Care Support Funds
4. Indigenous-Focused Service



Changing Landscape

- We have a responsibility to uphold a commitment to Truth and Reconciliation and Confronting Anti-Black Racism
- There has been a rapid increase in the number of children requiring health and wellbeing supports
- Staff are leaving the system creating pressures on recruitment, retention, and capacity building



Equity in Disability: An Intersectional Approach

How institutions and society allow or limit full participation of members based on disability

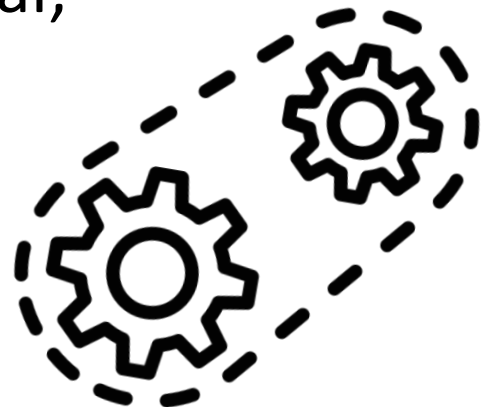
Intersection of how race, gender and class impact lived experience

Shifting away from pathologizing towards a holistic worldview

Challenging the dominant status quo

Current Projects Underway: Systems Transformation

- Two projects underway are:
 1. Indigenous-Focused Resource Consultation Services
 2. A review of ECB Services as they Relate to Serving Black Children with Extra Support Needs and Their Families
- These projects focus on **systems level shifts**
- It involves listening, reflecting, learning and being intentional;
- It uses targeted universalism as a means for improvement



Indigenous-Focused Service Foundational Principles

Centering Family/Child Experience

Amplifying Family Voice

Respecting the Importance of Community

Relational versus Transactional

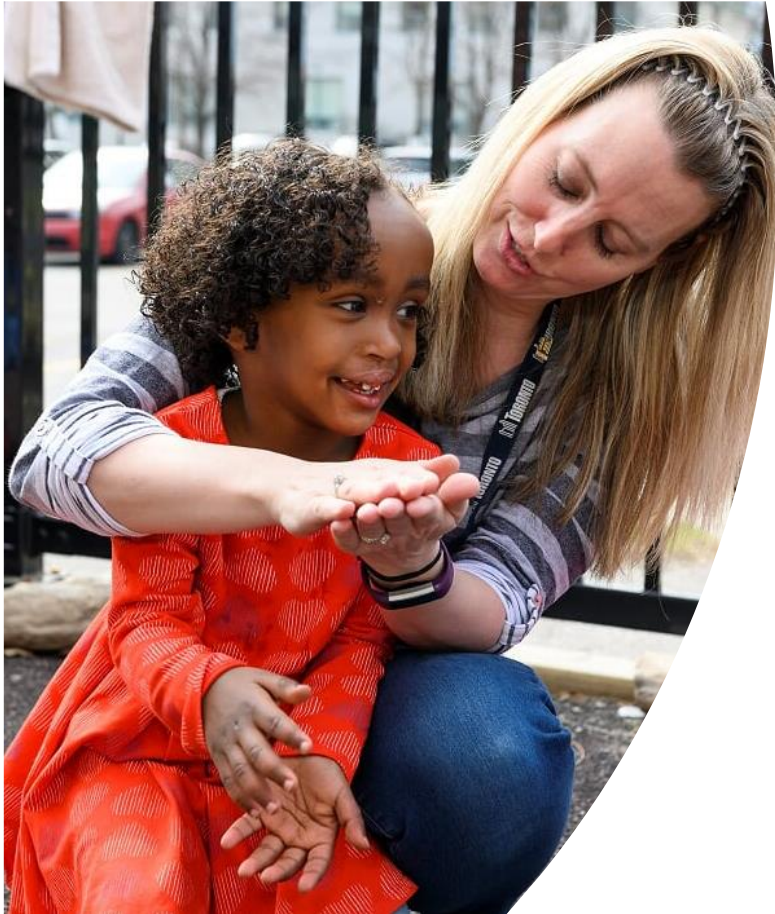
Culturally Safe and Collaborative Approach

Review of ECB Services for Anti-Black Racism: Project Objectives

Identifying how anti-Black racism may be embedded in the service model and the ways in which service providers interact with Black children to combat anti-Black racism will lead to recommendations around:

- Culturally informed practices, supports and services
- Ways to effectively support Black Resource Consultation
- Steps to respond to anti-Black racism within the ECB model

In Summary



To understand how diverse children and families engage with our services, we need to hear their stories and pay close attention to how our embedded practices and policies do or do not support equity. This will help us to transform to better serve children and families.