

Infant and Child Development Association of BC

Annual General Meeting May 2011

President's Report

I've been an Infant Development consultant since 1990 and I consider myself privileged to have been working in this profession at a time when I consider it to be at its height. I've seen the Infant Development program change its focus as we engaged with insightful caring parents and professionals. We grew and become so much more than what we were when we started in the 1970's.

Infant Development consultants were at the table when the Supported Child Development was envisioned. We spent hours in meetings, myself and others, all over the province, working with early childhood educators to hone what supported child development programs would look like.

I also remember going down to Vancouver to work on the competencies, the backbone of the Infant Development and Supported Child Development Programs. There were no cookie cutter approaches. We were powerful, collaborative and thoughtful. That happened because we had a strong provincial and regional network. We often think that it was our leadership which made the difference and for sure Lorraine and Dana and Tanya and Diane Elliott and many other were great. But they were also part of a team, a group of professionals and parents who cared enough to make the effort.

In those days the association had a place, but struggled to find its own identity and purpose. Volunteered, non-mandated organizations are only powerful with a strong membership who can direct purpose. I think consultants both Infant Development and Supported Child Development consultants are still in that past where they cannot see a use for a professional association.

I do think that some consultants are a little bit shell-shocked from past cuts, while others may think that there is nothing that can be done, so why bother. But this has never been our philosophy before and it is not the attitude that we try and instill in our families who have children with extra needs.

I believe that all things evolution and have a lifespan. Maybe we peaked in the 2000's. We were on the cutting edge of our profession. We were leaders and that felt good. So, we evolved, we changed and it wasn't our choice. Does this mean that now we will diminish and in the end, cease?

I don't know. Here's what I do know: If we do not wish to give a service that will gradually become less relevant and useful to those we serve, we need to do something about it. When I say we, I mean you and those you work with and for. Inclusion in child care and school setting was cutting edge when I first started IDP. Can we really afford to go back there? Who will keep our manuals up to date? Who will revise our competencies and integrate new ideas into our practices?

Us, we will.

The Association wants to help, we want to help our professions continue to be a quality service. It is impossible to do without you, all of you. We need you as members, on the executive and in working groups. Several former IDP regional advisors and experienced IDP consultants, including myself, have formed a IDP strategic planning committee. The strategic planning committee's is working on it's terms of reference, but broadly it will be to support the Association in developing a strong voice for consultants working in the Infant Development Program (still in draft).

I strongly advise Supported Child Development consultants, those that have experience, stand up and do likewise, so the Supported Child Development consultants across this province, can continue to grow in their field and be the best if they can be to stay current.

The hope is that these two strategic bodies would be directional voices for their professions. Through them, work can be done on manuals; connections with experts can be re-established. The association newsletter and website can act as a conduit to its members.

We need your support to finance a dedicated website and to have paid for hours to work to work on these essential components.

That's the future of the association and your future, if you will take it.

Thank you

Linda Hunter