

## Agency/Association Profile

NAME: Kenora Association for Community Living

### MISSION

The goal of KACL is to ensure that all people with special needs have the opportunity to live a meaningful and satisfying lifestyle and interact as an equal in their community by providing continuing opportunities for personal growth through education, training, support, advocacy and an informed public.

### VISION

A meaningful and satisfying Life for All

### CORE VALUES

Core values of the Association include

RESPECT

INCLUSION

SELF-DETERMINATION

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

IMPORTANCE of RELATIONSHIPS

### MANDATE

The Kenora Association for Community Living Provides a wide range of services within the City of Kenora and Surrounding area and First Nations Territories for Children and Adults with Intellectual Disabilities as well as adults with Serious Mental Illness.

### SERVICE DELIVERY PRINCIPLES

The following service delivery principles guide all services of the Association in the delivery of support to the people of Kenora.

1. Respect of an individual requires recognition of his or her humanity before his or her handicap
2. Everyone is deserving of respect as individuals.
3. All persons have the right to participate in all aspects of living, learning, working and playing in the community.
4. The manner and context within which support is offered should affirm normal patterns of living, learning, working and playing in the community including normal needs, processes, relationships and rhythms of life.

### LIST OF PROGRAMS/SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE AGENCY:

#### CHILDREN SERVICES

### **Infant Development Program**

The primary goal of the Infant Development Program is to assist children, birth to 6 years of age and their families whose children are at risk of a developmental delay to strengthen their abilities. To assist the children and youth to develop to their optimum ability and live, learn and play in an inclusive community.

The Infant Development Program provides intensive case management services using a hybrid combination of the personal strengths model and rehabilitation model. The service is provided within a family centered philosophy.

Infant Development program provides primarily home based supports including Developmental Screening, recommendations and ongoing monitoring and support. When required children are enrolled in the Augmentative education services to enhance their communication and early learning skills. Three Infant Development Consultants provide support to children and their families in Kenora and the surrounding area including 15 First Nations Communities. Individual family support plans are developed for each child and support is given to connect the family with additional formal and informal supports in order to accomplish their goals.

### **Child and Youth Program**

We are in the business of supporting families of children and youth to have a meaningful and satisfying life in our community.

The primary goal of the Child and Youth Program is to assist children and youth, 6 to 18 years of age and their families, who have children with an intellectual disability to accomplish their goals. To assist the children and youth to develop to their optimum ability and live, learn and play in an inclusive community.

The Child and Youth Program provides intensive case management services using a hybrid combination of the personal strengths model and rehabilitation model. The service is provided within a family centered philosophy that at adolescence moves more towards a person centered approach.

The Child and Youth Program provides home, school and community based supports including Educational, Vocational and Recreational/Leisure Supports. When required children are enrolled in the Augmentative Education services to enhance their communication, social, and life skills. Three Child and Youth Consultants provide support to children and their families in Kenora and the surrounding area including 15 First Nations Communities. Individual family support plans are developed for each child and support is given to connect the family with additional formal and informal supports in order to accomplish their goals.

### **Autism Support Services**

The Primary goal of the Autism Support Services is to provide youth on the Autism Spectrum with opportunities to develop skills necessary for their transition to adult life. These skills need to be

generalized to the community so the student is provided with opportunities within their home, school and community to build skills to live within an inclusive community.

Community Support Workers provide one on one or group opportunities to build community living skills including, social skills, banking and money management, vocational skills to name a few. The services are provided within Kenora, however families from First Nations Communities can and do bring their children into Kenora to access this program.

#### **Kid's Zone:**

The goal of the Kid's Zone Programs is to provide children 12 months to 10 years of age with a nurturing inclusive environment in which to grow and develop. Play is the work of children and all children need a safe place where, through play, they can be themselves, learn to know themselves and take steps toward becoming healthy, complete individuals.

Kid's Zone provides an inclusive Early Childhood Education Program for over 80 children within the Kenora area. Kid's Zone includes Kid's Zone Lakeside, Toddler Zone, Kid's Zone SMB and the Zone at the Annex.

#### **Options for Adults**

Options for Adults is the new name of the Department of KACL that used to be called Community Support Services. The old name was causing confusion in the public with similar named service programs. The new name hopefully reflects the diversified, dynamic and innovative department for which it has gained a reputation during the past few years. Its programs include: Residential, Community Access, Literacy, Employment Supports, Art Partners and Fitness Friends

#### **Residential Program Mission**

To enhance the quality of life of developmentally/physically handicapped adults, by offering support and assistance to meet individual and family needs, through utilizing community resources and providing a warm, understanding home environment, while maintaining awareness of each person's rights, choices and individuality

#### **Program Description**

The Residential Services Program of the Kenora Association for Community Living offers a variety of residential options for adults with a developmental handicap, and provides staff support as required. The level of supervision provided is based on the principle of the "least restrictive alternative", in order to encourage the greatest level of independence and autonomy possible, and to assist consumers to develop living skills to their fullest potential. Many of the consumers involved in the residential program live in subsidized housing units, ranging from one bedroom apartments to four bedroom houses. Staff support is determined on the basis of need, and the hours of supervision may vary from one to two hours per week, to total staff support twenty-four hours per day.

#### **Job and Community Placement (Day Supports – Community Access)**

The Goal of the Job and Community Placement Program (Day Supports) is to assist adults with intellectual disabilities participate in community activities they find personally meaningful and that support lifestyle choices

of physical, social and spiritual wellbeing relevant to the individual. Fitness Friends and Art Partners are also supported under this program.

### **Job & Community Placement (Literacy Program)**

The **Goal** of the Job and Community Placement Program (Literacy) is to assist adults with intellectual disabilities develop and maintain skills that support their involvement with a literate community by providing individualized educational opportunities.

The approach to literacy at the KACL Rotary Literacy Learning Centre is a very unique program that is far from the traditional view of literacy. Program development was conducted through an action research model of reflective practice (B. Allan Quigley, Gary W. Kuhne, 1997). Teaching strategies continue to be evaluated through research and collaborative reflection.

Adult literacy is considered to be more than acquiring numeracy and reading skills. People want to communicate with others and be fully included in their communities.

The following elements form the structure of the program.

Literacy Consultants work with each learner individually. Learning is self-directed and facilitated through flexible lessons and activities that meet the learner's goals. Personal meaning provides the motivation for learning. Adults not only want to express their needs and wants, they want to share information and develop social closeness with family and friends.

The Learning Environment is respectful, where learners have a voice to ask questions, make choices, requests and refusals, interact and share points of view, develop self-respect and exercise self-determination.

Community-based learning opportunities are provided whenever possible. These types of learning environments allow people to build their confidence by taking risks and making mistakes.

Learning is facilitated along a continuum, from more traditional literacy skills through to augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) skills for learners who rely primarily on non-symbolic modes of communication.

The following framework for supporting learners with intellectual disabilities is used:

- Multiple levels of text at many different levels of literacy
- Age appropriate and engaging materials
- Electronic text to meet accessibility issues
- Literature that fits in to the curriculum at their readability level.

One level of literacy ('easy') is not enough.

### Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

AAC techniques are used to enable people to efficiently and effectively engage in a variety of social interactions and participate in activities of their choice. AAC techniques are based on the following 4 core principles:

1. All actions and behaviours are communication.
2. Always presume competence when interpreting these actions and behaviours.
3. Non-symbolic actions and behaviours are legitimate forms of communication.
4. Non-symbolic communication skills can be expanded to introduce symbolic communication skills.

### Assistive devices and tools:

Personal successes for people with disabilities often require physical tools or assistive devices in order to work independently on computers and present their work in a mature and competent visual medium. Assistive strategies can be as simple as facilitators performing the gross motor skills for learners (i.e. writing or typing out a person's thoughts and feelings to give them meaning and help share them with others).

If necessary instructors can manipulate most of the technology devices and the learner may use an "access switch" to make the final determination of accepting or refusing the set up. Access switches and talking photo albums make it possible to independently read or listen to electronic books.

### Specialized Software/Hardware:

Computers and software can enhance communication and interaction with family friends and community. Accessibility options aide users with physical, visual or auditory learning needs.

### Social Network Technologies:

Learners are supported in accessing the social network possibilities available through the World Wide Web. As these technologies develop they offer new potential for participation in emerging social realities for people with intellectual disabilities.

## **Job and Community Placement Program - Employment**

The Goal of the Job and Community Placement Program - Employment is to assist adults with intellectual disabilities develop and maintain skills required to explore, secure and maintain competitive and or meaningful employment. Competitive Employment refers to any type of job or activity that results in a consumer being paid at a rate of minimum wage or above for at least 1 hour per week (as per MCSS direction, 2004). Meaningful Employment refers to any type of job activity where: a) the consumer is not paid (generally involves consumers being involved in volunteer placements where they find the activity personally meaningful/gratifying, or, they have the opportunity to develop important job skills); b) the consumer is paid "in kind" (in these cases the consumer receives some other benefit from the employer for the work they do – e.g. lunch provided); or c) the consumer is paid for piece work (for example payment for each bag of shredded paper produced by the consumer on the shift).

## **Fitness Friends**

In line with the overall mission of KACL to ensure that all people with special needs have the opportunity to live a meaningful and satisfying lifestyle and interact as an equal in their community. KACL constantly attempts to engage in new and invigorating exercises. One of the latest is that of Fitness Friends. The goal of this volunteer program is to provide individuals with a developmental disability in Kenora, the opportunity through physical fitness, recreation and leisure, to become participants in the activities that they choose while developing relationships within the community.

## **Art Partners**

KACL provides small group art classes with art facilitators, Jennifer Shumka and Shauna Degagne.

This new art program was designed to provide adults with an intellectual disability the opportunity to express themselves creatively while partnered with another member of the community. Partners are recommended for those who need physical assistance and for social reasons; however, group participation and interaction is

encouraged. Most of the participants work independently within the group setting and enjoy the comfortable, emotionally supportive atmosphere.

The Art Partners groups generally consist of eight to ten people who gather for one to two hours per week, for six to eight weeks. The groups meet at the Kenora Wellness Centre.

Art Partners focuses on the creative process and not the end visual result. Freedom of choice is provided and experimenting with the variety of art materials (acrylics, water colours, pastels and collage) is encouraged. Each art group has a general theme such as wellness, community, and strength. Art activities are suggested by the facilitator at the beginning of each class. For example, one class was asked to illustrate their strengths in a self-portrait. Group discussions are guided by the facilitator and participants are given the chance to share their experiences and insights with the rest of the group. Everyone is constantly reminded that "there is no right or wrong in art." Art Partners provides the opportunity to participate in meaningful visual art activities in a comfortable, relaxed atmosphere. Art is a tool for self-exploration, while increasing self-awareness and understanding of other people.

### **Community Mental Health Support Services**

The primary goal of the Community Mental Health Support Services is to assist persons and their families who struggle with persistent and severe mental illness to achieve their goals, to feel as well as possible and live in the community in a place of their choice

### **Intensive Case Management**

Community Mental Health Support Services provides intensive case management services using the personal strengths model for recovery. Through this intensive case management model we are able to provide flexible and individualized support that varies in intensity, is based on consumer choice and uses their capacities, resiliencies, talents, coping abilities and inherent worth to develop a plan of support.

Priority is given to activities that develop supportive relationships, establish valued roles and encourage participation in our community. Support is provided with the goal that will ultimately prevent the need for future hospitalization.

CMHSS support is characterized by high frequency of contacts, proactive outreach, small caseloads, 24 hour availability, and support based in the community. In order to accomplish this level of intensity the case management model is complimented by community support staff.

### **Dual Diagnosis Program**

Community Mental Health Support Services provides dual diagnosis services to persons in the community of Kenora and to the Kenora/Rainy River District. Persons served by this program are adults with a dual diagnosis. Dual diagnosis refers to the co-existence of a developmental disability and a mental illness.

### **Services include:**

- Access to specialists via videoconferencing and in person consultation
- Support for families and front line staff who work with this population
- The development of strategies to effectively support individuals in a community setting
- Advocacy for individuals and families to receive needed services
- Support to access resources to improve quality of life
- Psycho education for individuals, families, caregivers and service providers

This program will provide the coordination of specialized services for individuals living in the Kenora/Rainy River District who meet the criteria for a dual diagnosis. Through the coordination of services with the individual and other service providers we will seek ways to promote a meaningful and satisfying lifestyle. Individuals will be supported to maintain/regain control over all aspects of their lives. A bio-psycho-social approach will be used to facilitate a comprehensive support plan.

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