



Girl Guides
of Canada
Guides
du Canada

Minutes of the
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE MEETING

held
Wednesday, November 22, 2017
Fraser Skies Area Centre; 7:00 pm

“There is only one way to look at things, until someone shows us how to look at them with different eyes.” ~ Pablo Picasso

Attendance: Marion Weir (Chair), Joanne Senetza (Secretary), Katherine Annets (Peninsula), Sheri Cooper (Langley Valley), Bev Everest (Ottergrove), Tereasa Regehr (Chilliwack), Sandee Hayre (Clover Valley), Paige Labar (Kwantlen), Karen Doolan (FSA), Jenny Hall (FSA), Bev Lindsay (FSA)

Regrets: Nancy Anderson (Telegraph Trail), Deanna Peters (Vedder Mountain), Ramona Abraham (Chilliwack), Tori Kent (Kwantlen), Cindy McInnis (Clover Ridge), Tracy Fenner (Willoughby)

1. Welcome, introductions and recap

Marion called the meeting to order, welcomed new members Paige Labar and Sandee Hayre and Area reps: Bev Lindsay, Jenny Hall and Karen Doolan, followed by a quick round of introductions.

Marion briefly summarized our last meeting and invited the committee to consider again the definition of diversity, the importance of respect and educating ourselves towards how others define respect.

Diversity include religion, culture, language, ageism, socio-economic status, ability, race/ethnicity, gender (SOGI versus LGBTQ+)

Inclusion is about making alterations to or allowances within structures/traditions to accommodate all people.

Q: Do we have this diversity in Guiding?

We strive to be inclusive, but sometimes come up against issues. For example, ageism crops up: ‘aren’t you too old to go tent camping?’ as well as young adult Guiders being disrespected by older members as being inexperienced. We have limited ability to move girls within the age brackets, and should be able to delay or move ahead members based on the needs of individual girl rather than chronological age.

We also need to be flexible to reach different learning styles.

After our last meeting, Lisa Thibault shared Fraser Health links on demographics. Although statistics are from 2011, these are useful indicators. Marion asked if anyone had had a chance to review or discuss at their District level.

We need to be looking for opportunities to share information through community events, festivals. Members can check with City/Township offices or websites for dates of upcoming events.

2. Assessing the landscape

a. Identifying the current state of affairs and perceived barriers to inclusion (survey?)

It was suggested that we conduct a brief survey – of leaders only – to obtain information on the current situation. This would gather anecdotal information about any ability issues they may have faced, race/religion, culture, home language experiences. It would help in identifying barriers (dealing with autism/ADHD, parent participation/adult support). We could perhaps find out what is working – how to engage with First Nations girls – and what are the barriers – such as strategies for dealing with ADHD or other issues.

We need to be looking at educating Guiders to connect with their girls in order to better understand their circumstances.

We need to be selling Guiding to academically-oriented families. What would attract these girls? Scholarship opportunities? Leadership skills? Resume building?

Sometimes we have trouble getting meeting places other than churches, which may give the wrong perception of GGC being a Christian-based organization.

Katherine shared a draft survey of four questions that she has been working on, and also a list of community resources/organizations that we can reach out to. (Information to be forwarded). Katherine, Bev and Paige are willing to work on the survey.

b. Identifying potential community partnerships

Ramona Abraham (Chilliwack) has been working with Big Sisters, to coordinate 'bring a friend' and/or tree-planting shared community events. Big Sisters is a good fit, as their members and foster parents have already completed PRC's.

Marion asked members to see if they can make some connections in their Districts. Please reach out in your communities.

There was a suggestion to connect with Band Managers to learn about Aboriginal opportunities.

There was discussion about developing a Diversity & Inclusion handbook to provide answers to questions *like where do I go in Guiding to get resources on SOGI? on including girls of differing abilities?* The recent Pipeline issues did a good series – a glossary for diversity. We need to consider developing a welcome package at the Area level and ensuring Guiders have mentorship available.

Jenny shared information about another area's 'Festival Crawl Challenge'. Identify cultural festivals in your community; girls would get a crest if their unit visited four different festivals in a year. Provides exposure to diverse populations for our girls and also gives opportunity to get your District level PR / Membership person to come out to promote Guiding. The challenge could piggyback on Membership/PR to get broader exposure. Get kids and leaders involved. Getting kids involved improves the chances to recruit other kids.

3. Committee goals:

a. Identifying ways to communicate/educate/train Unit Guiders

At your District meetings, please put diversity up front – ask questions and solicit input.

We will build on the questionnaire results to determine future direction.

4. Bias Awareness/Equity Training:

Many committee members may have already completed this training. If not, Ottergrove District will be offering a session on Friday, January 12th from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at Area Centre. Please email Marion or Joanne if you'd like to attend.

5. Next steps?

- Review Fraser Health demographic information for your District
- Talk with your District – put diversity on the agenda for your next District meeting
- Look for diversity and inclusivity resources and opportunities within your Districts
- Put feelers out for a possible Festival Crawl Challenge.
- Send your resources lists to Joanne to start compiling a handbook.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Diversity is the who – the representation of many different types of people (gender, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, socio-economic status, etc.)

Inclusion is the how – the behaviours that welcome and embrace diversity; the creation of an environment where all different kinds of people can succeed and thrive.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 17, 2018 – 7pm Area Centre