



**Réseau de Savoir sur L'Équité | Equity Knowledge Network**

# **Building Inclusive Schools Toolkit: Video and Discussion Guide**

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**Table of Contents**

About RSEKN .....4

Instructions .....4

Group Guidelines.....5

Privilege.....6

Video Links .....7

    Racial Exclusion:.....7

    Income Inequality:.....7

    Gender Exclusion: .....7

    Disability Exclusion: .....7

Restorative Practice in Education .....8

    Restorative Practice Mindset and Characteristics .....9

    A Restorative Culture Shift .....10

Part 1: Racial Exclusion.....11

    RACIAL EXCLUSION RESOURCES.....13

Part 2: Income Inequality.....14

    INCOME INEQUALITY RESOURCES .....16

Part 3: Gender Exclusion .....17

    GENDER EXCLUSION RESOURCES .....19

Part 4: Disability Exclusion .....20

    DISABILITY EXCLUSION RESOURCES .....22

Glossary .....23

References .....24

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## About RSEKN

“RSEKN is committed to developing systemic, sustainable, and transformative equity networks, processes, and structures to mobilize research and community knowledge and practices with K-12 schooling stakeholders. Together, we will continue promoting equity and diversity as a priority in our schools and communities” (<https://rsekn.ca/about-us/>).

## Instructions

This toolkit accompanies a four-part video series (<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL88FQ4naeNOTB3s9zUWq1qh6GpocBIJ1M>) that highlights the barriers and intersectional challenges that students face in schools today. The four central pillars that the video demonstrates are racial exclusion, income inequality, gender exclusion, and disability exclusion. This toolkit will allow viewers to familiarize themselves with the inequalities, exclusions, and complex situations students in Ontario experience. It opens the opportunity to analyze how to collaboratively shift a school’s culture to become more inclusive.

There is a brief background of each topic for the facilitator to review before each session. There are discussion questions to use before and after viewing the videos. The discussion questions can be communicated in small groups or as one large group, depending on your audience's size and structure. At the end of each section, there are prompts available to help develop an action plan moving forward.

Key terms are **bolded**, and definitions are included in the glossary section. There is a list of resources at the end of each section with relevant websites, articles, and infographics to assist in your learning of the topics.

**IMPORTANT:** These topics may be uncomfortable for some participants and may stir up some overt reactions. Please check the resources in advance of each session and be mindful of possible concerns that may be raised.

## Group Guidelines

Before beginning the discussions, please take time to establish the following guidelines with the participants:

### A. Confidentiality

What is shared here stays here. Speak from your own experience. If a person is not here to tell their own story, we do not share it on their behalf. Sharing with the group about racism, discrimination, gender identity, economic struggles, or disability challenges is a personal choice. Sharing experiences is essential to learning, and here are some examples for sharing while maintaining the confidentiality of those involved:

- *Instead of “My trans nephew/family member/friend,” try “Someone I know/someone close to me with lived experience told me...”*
- *Instead of sharing a story with every detail of an event, take the time to consider what is essential. This might mean leaving out identifying details about the individuals involved. For example, instead of “a poor kid in my class,” try “a child/youth I know of...”; “My disabled teaching partner...”, try “A colleague with lived experience...”*

### B. Be Mindful of Language and Tone

To keep this space as safe as possible, we will not be using slurs as part of our sharing. We can communicate the severity of an incident without repeating the exact words used to cause harm.

- *Instead of “A person I know was called ABC-XYZ...” try, “A person I know was called a racial slur.”*
- *Instead of “a parent wrote an email calling agender people ABC-XYZ...” try “a parent wrote an email expressing some discriminatory views regarding gender diversity...”*
- ***If you accidentally use a slur, try the sentence again without it.***

### C. If You Do Not Know, Ask!

Sometimes we do not have the language that we need. We are here to learn together.

- *If you have a question about a specific term, try “I heard a term, and I’m not quite sure what it means. I think the term means \_\_\_ and I wonder if someone in the group has a more accurate definition.”*
- *What is a more inclusive/appropriate word for \_\_\_\_\_?*

D. Watch for Assumptions

Be mindful of the assumptions and statements we make in the group. Be attentive as to where these thoughts are coming from.

- *“All poor people are lazy” “Parents from low SES backgrounds do not care about education.”*
- *“Accommodating a student with a disability means lowering my standards”; “Accommodations give students with a disability an unfair advantage.”*
- *“Kids in the applied streams are not smart and are not destined for university.”*

E. Be Respectful

We must remain respectful at all times. We are all here working towards the common goal of making schools more inclusive. We must support each other in this work.

## Privilege

In each of the four sections, privilege is a term that is mentioned repeatedly. For educators and facilitators to be successful in analyzing their privilege, it is crucial to understand the concept of privilege. **Privilege** is obtaining an *unearned* benefit or having an *advantage* that is only available to a particular social group or person. To expand on that definition, below are some key points on what having privilege means and what it does not mean (Johnson, 2015):

- Having privilege doesn't mean you haven't been oppressed in other ways.
- Privilege can come in more than one form – and so can oppression.
- Having privilege doesn't mean you didn't work hard, or you should feel bad about your good fortune.
- Having privilege means we all participate in discriminatory systems in different ways.
- Having privilege means a lot of people can't access what you have, no matter how hard they work.
- Having privilege means you have a choice about what to do with it.

It is essential to highlight that talking about and exploring privilege may elicit feelings of discomfort. This discomfort may stem from being aware of inequalities that you may not have realized before. To be able to make meaningful change in areas of injustice, individuals must be able to address, discuss, and analyze privilege without getting defensive or denying the mere existence of it. Indeed, it is a learning process, and with ongoing learning, self-exploration, and awareness, we can become better allies and educators to our students.

## Video Links

As mentioned, this is a 4-part video series (<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL88FQ4naeNOTB3s9zUWq1qh6GpocBIJ1M>). The videos do not have to be played in sequential order; you can play in whichever order suits your audience best.

**Racial Exclusion:** <https://youtu.be/47P8nWbnxY4>

**Income Inequality:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4sZRbtsWY\\_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4sZRbtsWY_4)

**Gender Exclusion:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9R\\_dOMvPZp8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9R_dOMvPZp8)

**Disability Exclusion:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KgaAYhGjOp8>

## Restorative Practice in Education

Before examining the four sections, we highlight a restorative practice approach to education. The RSEKN Southern Team supports restorative practices for managing conflict in an educational setting. It is the framework from which we worked in developing the stories for the videos. According to Pollock et al. (2017), marginalized groups are overrepresented in suspension and expulsion in Ontario schools. Notably, Black students from low socioeconomic households and those who receive special education services are more likely to encounter suspension or expulsion. Thus, using an equity lens with the restorative process may reduce the disproportionality.

A restorative approach originated from Indigenous communities and was used in moments of conflict. They viewed harm and pain as a community issue rather than solely that of the affected individual. Indigenous peoples believe that all individuals impacted need to be involved in the resolution process. Thus, they created this inclusive, equitable and holistic technique that would bring value to those participating and restore healthy relationships (Lalonde, 2019; The Restorative Practice Consortium, 2017). Schools have begun to adopt this framework.

Restorative practice can build a positive school climate as it is a framework that helps resolve conflict in a healthy way (Butterfield, n.d.; The Restorative Practice Consortium, 2017). It is valuable in preventing, responding to, and resolving incidents at school. The restorative process allows all sides equally to have a say about what occurred. With the help of an adult, students' voices, perspectives and experiences can be heard and understood. Once everyone has had a turn, the group collaboratively determines a healthy, respectful, and agreed-upon solution. A restorative approach involves human connectedness, caring, collaboration, open and honest communication, and equality and respect amongst students (Lalonde, 2019; The Restorative Practice Consortium, 2017). The aim is to restore relationship rather than engage in punitive actions. We must build relationships rather than tear them down.

There are four principles to a restorative approach (Butterfield, n.d.):

- Relationality: treating each individual with the same amount of respect and care.
- Contextualism: considering how context plays a role in relationships and understanding other people's perceptions about the situation.
- Dialogism: ensuring everyone's input is heard and is involved in the resolution process.
- Future orientation: learning from present challenges and using the new knowledge to help in future situations.





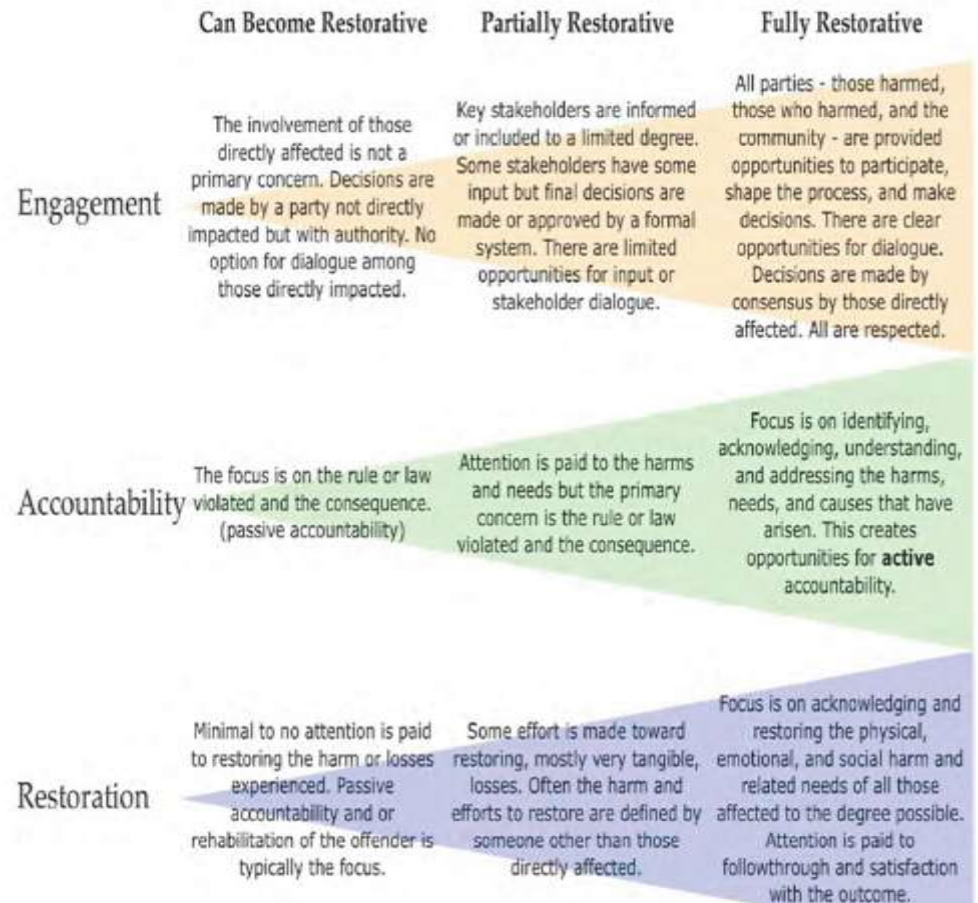
## Restorative Practice Mindset and Characteristics

The following images provide an example of a restorative mindset and its characteristics on a continuum. These are suggested for the school as a collective as well as educators and students.

A Restorative Mindset...	A Non-Restorative Mindset...
* Looks at the whole person in the context of the situation	* Looks at negative behaviour as defining the person
* Focuses on needs of all parties	* Assigns blame to a person/s
* Links deterrents to relationships/personal accountability	* Links deterrents to punishment
* Demonstrates empathy	* Demonstrates a judgmental approach
* Focuses on problem solving for learning	* Focuses on guilt/compliance/punishment for learning
* Focuses the consequences on learning	* Focuses on consequences as punishment
* Repairs harm and builds relationships	* Focuses on removing the problem/ exclusion
* Focuses on the violation of relationships and making things right	* Focuses on the violation of rules and requires compliance
* Values that the process takes time	* Expects immediate results
* Practices a collaborative approach	* Practices autocratic decision making

Source: Peel District School Board, n.d.

### Restorative Justice Continuum: Characteristics



Source: Jon Kidde, 2011

### A Restorative Culture Shift

For schools to participate in restorative practices, they have to go through a culture shift (Lalonde, 2019; The Restorative Practice Consortium). Some suggestions include:

- Reshaping the school community and adopting restorative practices throughout the school
  - Having peer mediation support groups.
- Incorporating and ensuring that students' voices are heard
  - Present opportunities for students to be involved in decision-making and create space for feedback
- Having restorative ambassadors
  - Designate a teacher/administrator who oversees this process
  - Have teachers model the process
- Dismantling power dynamics in adults
  - Educators should become non-judgmental, less in control of the restorative process, aware of their personal biases, engage in active listening, be supportive, empathic and flexible, and lastly, believe in the restorative process.



Source: Rawpixel, n.d.

# Part 1: Racial Exclusion

Video Link: <https://youtu.be/47P8nWbnxY4>

## FOR THE FACILITATOR:

Discussing race can be extremely challenging as people grapple with their own biases. You are not expected to be an expert in racism, discrimination and white privilege to facilitate this conversation, but having an understanding of the following points will be helpful:

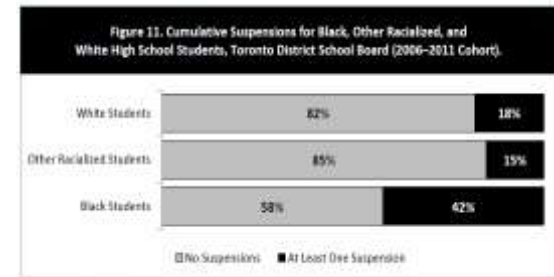
- Being aware of Black and Indigenous youth's overrepresentation in applied streams and their high suspension and exclusion rates.
- Being familiar with how white privilege shapes teaching, disciplinary measures.
- Knowing the common misconceptions that Black and Indigenous youth face.

Please refer to the list of resources at the end of the section to prepare for this discussion.

## BACKGROUND

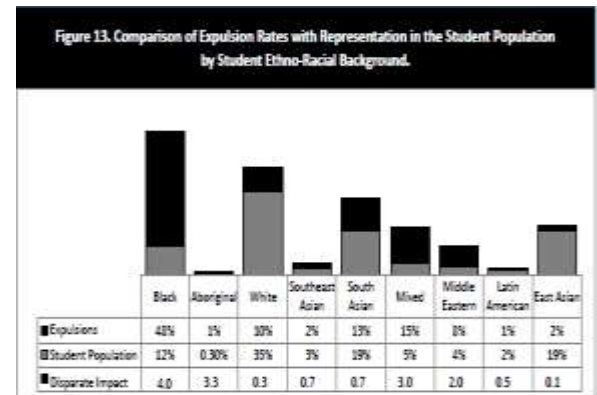
### *Statistical Differences in Representation of Indigenous and Black Students*

- 20% of elementary principals and 34% of secondary principals reported having **Indigenous** staff at their school (People for Education, 2019).
- Ontario's teachers do not reflect the school's community (Turner, 2014).
- 26% of Ontario's population are **racialized** individuals; however, only 9% of elementary schools and 10% of secondary schools have racialized teachers.
- 47% of Toronto's census metropolitan area (CMA) population is racialized; however, only 18% of elementary schools and 20% of secondary schools have racialized teachers.
- By 2031, it is anticipated that 63% of Toronto's CMA population will be racialized.
- Regarding the suspension rates, Black students are twice as likely (42%) to be suspended at least once during high school compared to their White (18%) and Other Racialized peers (15%) (James & Turner, 2017).



Source: York Centre for Education and Community/Toronto District School Board, 2015.

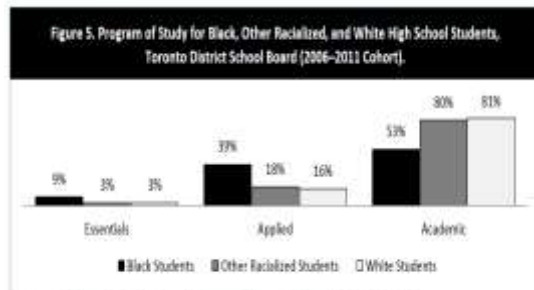
- The expulsion rates of Indigenous and Black students are immensely disproportionate (James & Turner, 2017).



Source: Toronto District School Board, 2017.

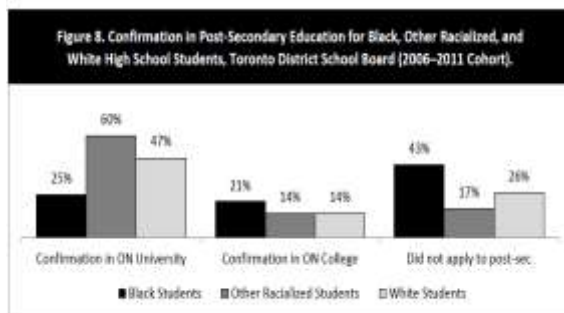
- Black youth are being expelled four times their representation in the school.
- Likewise, Indigenous youth are expelled three times their representation in the school, and they account for less than 1% of the school's population.

- There is a significant portion of Black youth in the applied **track/stream** compared to White and Other Racialized Students (James & Turner, 2017).



Source: York Centre for Education and Community/Toronto District School Board, 2015.

- Black youth were registered in an applied program more than two times the rate of their peers. As for essential programs, they were three times more likely to be enrolled.
- The graduation rate for Indigenous students in 2019 was 26% lower than the provincial average (James & Turner, 2017).



Source: York Centre for Education and Community/Toronto District School Board, 2015.

- The rate of students applying to a post-secondary school and receiving acceptance also vastly differs among students.

- The rate of White students (47%) being accepted into an Ontario university is similar to the percentage of Black students (43%) not applying to higher education.

Evidently, there are significant disparities amongst Ontario's students. It is the hope that these statistics can help reveal how **systemic racism** occurs in our educational institutions.

### BEFORE YOU WATCH PART 1: RACIAL EXCLUSION

- What are some examples of systemic racism?
- How would a **racial equity** lens look like in education?
  - As an educator? A principal?
- In what ways does education magnify racial inequality?
- How would you define **allyship**? When do you think allyship is needed?
- What message do you give to your students in your class? Or at your school?
- What is occurring in our schools that are perpetuating Systemic Racism?

### AFTER YOU WATCH PART 1: RACIAL EXCLUSION

- In the video, the speaker said: "In this situation, I felt I was totally forgotten as a Black student. No one asked me if I have been OK. If I have been harmed." She

also mentioned, "This incident shattered any sense of belonging that I had left" and "They didn't value me. Because they didn't stop to look back and to see if I was OK."

- How can we, as educators, practice allyship for students who are negatively impacted in education systems (e.g. Black and Indigenous youth)?
  - What does active support look like?
  - What are some strategies to identify and debunk **microaggressions**?
- It was mentioned in the video that no one was held accountable for the incident. Nobody asked how to make it right.
  - How can we hold ourselves and our colleagues responsible for offensive acts?
- The speaker voiced that she did not feel that her community could keep her safe. How can we make our students feel safe in our schools?
- What are the dangers of a **Racial Color Blindness** perspective?

### MOVING FORWARD

- The story that was shared in the video is not an isolated event. The speaker mentions, "It is a part of a culture of **Anti-Black Racism**. It is in my school, my school board, and my community."

- How can we, as educators, **decondition** ourselves?
- How should we confront and abandon **stereotypes**/misconceptions? In what ways would they appear in our classrooms?
- Considering the racial disparities in suspensions, expulsion, streaming and graduation rates in racialized youth, how should we approach school discipline?
- How does our privilege become blinders in education? How can we stay cognizant of our privilege? What are the dangers of not addressing our privilege? How can we do better and stay in the discomfort?
- Sometimes people may feel they are not a part of the problem because they do not **actively discriminate** against another individual. However, without **actively** combating the issue or making changes, the cycle will continue.
- Considering our new learning, how can we help change the school's culture?

## **RACIAL EXCLUSION RESOURCES**

### **A Leader's Guide to Talking about Bias**

<https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/20/08/1eaders-guide-talking-about-bias?s=09#.Xyt270oVHGE.twitter>

### **White Fragility and the Rules of Engagement**

<https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/diangelo-white-fragility-and-the-rules-of-engagement.pdf>

### **Guidelines for Being Strong White Allies**

<https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/kivel3.pdf>

### **Calling IN: A Strategy for White Teachers Who Want to Disrupt Racism**

<https://theeducatorsroom.com/calling-in-a-strategy-for-white-teachers-who-want-to-disrupt-racism/>

### **Indigenous Ally Toolkit**

[http://reseauumtlnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Ally\\_March.pdf](http://reseauumtlnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Ally_March.pdf)

### **Being Antiracist**

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/being-antiracist>

## **Social Identities and Systems of Oppression**

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/social-identities-and-systems-of-oppression>

## **FOR FURTHER LEARNING**

### **How to be an Ally**

<https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/spring-2018/how-to-be-an-ally>

### **Whiteness**

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/whiteness>

### **Bias**

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/bias>

### **Beyond Celebrating Diversity: 20 Things I Will Do to Be an Equitable Educator**

<http://www.edchange.org/handouts/20things.pdf>

### **Microaggression in K-12 Education**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oFQJTBsC9pE&feature=youtu.be>

### **Call It Out**

<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/learning/elearning/call-it-out>

## Part 2: Income Inequality

Video Link: [https://youtu.be/4sZRbtsWY\\_4](https://youtu.be/4sZRbtsWY_4)

### FOR THE FACILITATOR:

**Systemic discrimination** plays a prominent role in child poverty. Families without adequate housing supports, employment, childcare, mental health care, and education face significant barriers (Calabro, 2020). This section sheds light on some of the struggles that children face before entering school doors.

Key ideas to remember:

- Ontario has the highest rate of child poverty, and this rate is more significant for marginalized youth.
- Children who come from low-income housing tend to experience more aggression and emotional/physical challenges in the classroom.
- Poverty is a massive barrier for kids to succeed in school, especially when their basic needs have not been met.

Please refer to the list of resources at the end of the section to prepare for this discussion.

### BACKGROUND

*Ontario's Child Poverty Rates in 2017*

- Ontario has the highest percentage of children in poverty and the only province to experience an increase in rates over the last 30 years (Calabro, 2020).



Source: Ontario Campaign, 2000, 2018.

The rates of poverty for racialized youth in Ontario are more significant than the 1 in 5 children (Wilson et al., 2018).

For example, 1 in 2 for West Asian /Arab children and 1 in 3 for Black children.

- 15% of Ontario families with children live in poverty.
- Locations with the highest child poverty rates also have the highest unemployment, number of renters, and individuals who spend more than 30% of their finances on housing (Khanna & Meisner, 2018).

- 32.1% of children in Windsor West live in poverty. Windsor West is ranked the highest in the Southwestern region.
- 40% of children in the Toronto Centre area live in poverty.
- In Ontario, childcare costs are 40% higher than the national average (Calabro, 2020). In areas such as Thunder Bay and Sudbury, parents have to pay a monthly childcare fee that resembles the cost of rent for a one-bedroom apartment. Having to pay such a high monthly fee makes it very difficult for parents to work outside their homes.



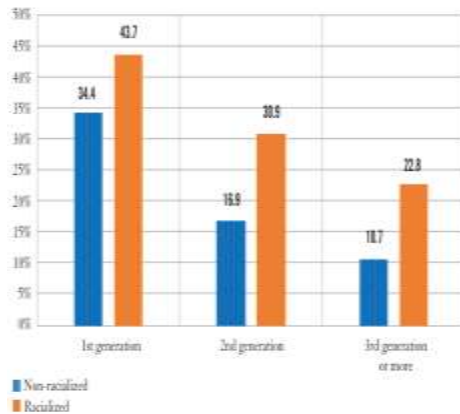
Source: Children's Aid Society of Toronto, 2018.

### *Statistical Differences in Child Poverty*

- Children who come from **Indigenous, Racialized**, first-generation and single-parent female-led households experience significantly higher rates of poverty (Calabro, 2020).

- These high rates can also be viewed in households where someone is living with a disability.
- In terms of generation status for Racialized and Non-Racialized children, there is a noticeable difference in poverty rates for each generation.
  - Black and West Asian children had the highest first- and second-generation poverty (Wilson et al., 2018).

Figure 4. Child Poverty Rates by Generation Status for Racialized and Non-racialized Groups, City of Toronto, 2015



Source: Children's Aid Society of Toronto, 2018.

### *Mental Health & Child Poverty in Ontario*

- Studies have revealed that children living in poverty tend to have more aggression and experience more emotional, cognitive, and physical challenges (Dilworth, 2006; Sharkins et al., 2017).

### **BEFORE YOU WATCH PART 2: INCOME INEQUALITY**

- When planning for classroom instruction, how can you consider your students' socioeconomic backgrounds?
- What are some barriers that families and students living in poverty experience?
- How can educators recognize, listen, accommodate, support, and advocate for students and families who experience poverty?
  - How can we adapt our classrooms and schools to meet their needs?
- How does **food insecurity**, unstable housing, and mental health barriers affect students at school?
  - How does this influence their learning? School experience? Academics? Participation?

### **AFTER YOU WATCH PART 2: INCOME INEQUALITY**

- In the video, one of the students discusses the expectation of printing a brochure in colour: “teachers expect us to do the best we can, but they do not give us the proper resources in school.” Another student said: “Teachers always say there’s nothing they can do about it, but they can.”
  - What are the resources that we can make more accessible to students at school?

- How can we ensure that the learning and assignments are accessible to all students?
- How can we acquire/show a deeper understanding and be responsive to our students' socioeconomic backgrounds?
- In the video, one teacher mentioned that he ensures that his students are given alternative means of output and assessment.
  - How can we incorporate differentiated instruction and assessment into our classrooms?
  - What strategies can we use to determine the resources students have at home? (e.g. the one teacher said she does a checklist at the beginning of the year).
- How can you facilitate a school environment where students feel comfortable and safe?
  - How can we “show that we are human” in ways that demonstrate care for all students but with an awareness of our own privilege?

### **MOVING FORWARD**

- The story that was shared in the video is not an isolated event.
  - How can we, as educators, **decondition** ourselves?
  - How should we confront and abandon **stereotypes/misconceptions?** Inequities? Judgemental attitudes? (e.g.

some individuals believe families in poverty do not value nor care about education. How can we address that?)

- Taking into consideration the marginalization differences, how should we approach school discipline and policies?
- How does our privilege become blinders in education? How can we stay cognizant of our privilege? What are the dangers of not addressing our privilege? How can we do better and stay in the discomfort?
- Sometimes people may feel they are not a part of the problem because they do not actively discriminate against another individual. However, without actively combating the issue or making changes, the cycle will continue.
- Considering our new learning, how can we help change the school's culture?

### **INCOME INEQUALITY RESOURCES**

#### **What Works? Research into Practice:**

[http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynum/eracy/inspire/research/ww\\_mindsetpractice.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynum/eracy/inspire/research/ww_mindsetpractice.pdf)

#### **Building Understanding about Classism:**

<https://www.etfo.ca/SupportingMembers/Resources/ForTeachersDocuments/Building%20Understanding%20About%20Classism.pdf>

### **CAMPAIGN 2000 INFOGRAPHICS:**

#### **Poverty Hurts Children and Families:**

[https://campaign2000.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/ON\\_C2000\\_PovertyHurtsOntario\\_Nov20\\_Final.pdf](https://campaign2000.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/ON_C2000_PovertyHurtsOntario_Nov20_Final.pdf)

#### **2018 Report Card Overview:**

<https://campaign2000.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/C2000InfographicOverviewNov2018.pdf>

#### **2018 Report Card Childcare:**

<https://campaign2000.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/C2000InfographicChildcareNov2018.pdf>

#### **2018 Report Card**

**Inequality:** <https://campaign2000.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/C2000InfographicInequalityNov2018.pdf>

#### **Child Poverty Knows No**

**Boundaries:** <https://campaign2000.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/C2000-Infographic-for-web-June18.18.pdf>

#### **To-Do List for a Poverty-Free Canada:**

<https://campaign2000.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/FINAL-FULL-INFOGRAPHIC-NATIONAL-NOV-17TH.pdf>



## Part 3: Gender Exclusion

Video Link: [https://youtu.be/9R\\_dOMvPZp8](https://youtu.be/9R_dOMvPZp8)

### FOR THE FACILITATOR:

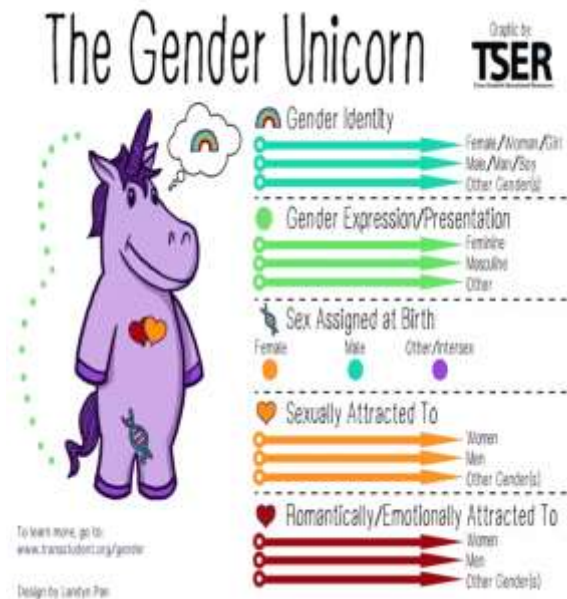
There are many misconceptions about gender identity and gender diversity. This is a topic that may elicit very strong feelings. The discussion around gender-neutral/all-gender washrooms can be extremely tense as people grapple with their own biases. You are not expected to be an expert in gender diversity and identity to facilitate this conversation, but having an understanding of the following points will be helpful:

- The difference between sex (including intersex) and gender
- Gender identities and pronouns beyond the binary of man/woman he/she
- Be familiar with local, provincial, and national trans-affirming policies
- Common misconceptions about gender-inclusive washrooms

Please refer to the list of resources at the end of the section that will help you prepare for this discussion.

### BACKGROUND

- When we talk about gender, we are talking about a felt sense of who we are.



- This is not the same thing as sex: the term ‘sex’ refers to the different biological components that determine whether a person is assigned female or male at birth. The components are:
  - Genitalia, Internal sex organs, Secondary sex characteristics, Gonads, Hormone production, Hormone response and Chromosomes.

### *Terminology*

- The term **transgender** refers to someone whose gender identity does not align with their sex assigned at birth (Eagle Canada, 2020).
- **Trans** can also be an umbrella term for other gender identities that do not align with a person’s sex assigned at birth.
- **Cisgender** refers to someone whose gender identity *does* align with their sex assigned at birth.
- When a person is in **transition**, they might:
  - change their name, pronouns, gender expression (Social transition);
  - change their legal documents such as a driver’s license or birth certificate (legal transition);
  - access gender-affirming medical treatments, for example, hormone therapy (medical transition).
- People of all ages are aware of their gender identity.
  - “59% [of people who are transgender] knew that their gender identity did not match their body before the age of 10, and 80% had this knowledge by the age of 14” (Bauer & Scheim, 2015, p.4).
- Transitioning is different for every single person.
  - A person may do **some, all, or none of these** and identify as trans.

- There is no right or wrong way to identify on the trans spectrum.
- It is the person and not the processes they go through who determines gender identity.
- Transphobia has very real impacts on the lives of trans and gender diverse people (Bauer & Scheim, 2015). This includes:
  - Lack of job opportunities; physical and sexual assault; negative experiences with health care; and barriers in everyday activities.

*Trans and Gender Diverse Youth Well-Being*

- About 40% of homeless youth in Canada identify as LGBTQ (Homeless Hub, 2019).
- 47% of trans youth have considered suicide (Scanlon et al., 2020).

*Trans and Gender Diverse Youth in Schools*

- According to a 2011 national report on homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in Canadian schools (Taylor & Peter):
  - 90% of trans youth reported hearing transphobic comments daily or weekly from other students.
  - 37% reported being physically harassed or assaulted because of their gender expression.

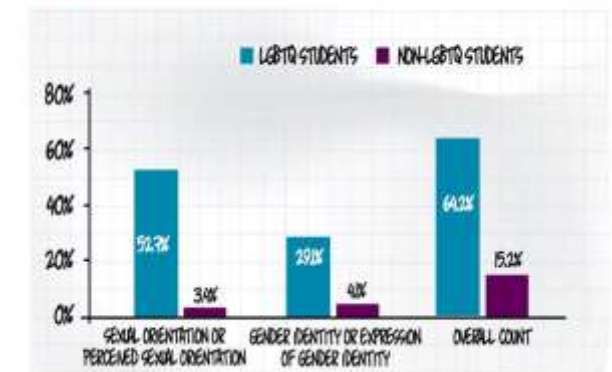
- 23% reported hearing transphobic comments made by teachers.
- 74% of trans students reported being verbally assaulted about their gender expression.
- 78% reported feeling unsafe at school overall.
- 44% of trans youth reported missing school due to feeling unsafe.



- Regarding trans youth feeling safe at school:
  - 49% of trans students reported experiencing sexual harassment (Taylor & Peter, 2011).
  - 37% of trans students reported experiencing physical harassment.

- 74% of trans students reported experiencing verbal harassment.
- 52% of trans students reported feeling unsafe in changerooms and washrooms.

FIGURE 11: FEELINGS OF NOT BEING SAFE (LGBTQ/NON-LGBTQ STUDENTS)



Source: Eagle Canada Human Rights Trust

There are two principles that can help educators create a safer space for trans and gender diverse students in their classrooms. These are the *Axioms for the gender-friendly classroom* (Airton, 2019):

1. Teach like it's a given that all of your students' relationships with gender are ambivalent and will change over time.
2. Teach like you already have transgender-spectrum students, or students with transgender-spectrum friends, family, or loved ones, in your classroom

Following these two axioms will ensure that you are not making assumptions about students' gender identity, that you are mindful of the gendered language and practices you currently use (e.g., addressing the class as "boys and girls")

or gender-segregating particular lessons), and that you to proactively seek out resources that authentically represent the gender spectrum (Airton, 2019).

### **BEFORE YOU WATCH PART 3: GENDER EXCLUSION**

- Think about a typical day in your life. How many times are you aware of your own gender identity?
  - Of *other people's* gender identity?
- In the day-to-day functioning of your school, where does binary gender show up? (e.g., attendance, report cards, group work, overnight field trips?)
- What initiatives are taking place at my school right now to support and affirm trans and gender diverse students?
- How do I perceive safety for trans and gender diverse students at my school? How might this be different from what students themselves experience?

### **AFTER YOU WATCH PART 3: GENDER EXCLUSION**

- What were your initial reactions to the video? Is this a familiar story?
- At one point in the video (2:33 mark), the character whispers “white privilege” in an aside comment about the barriers to students accessing the gender-neutral washroom. Why do you think this was included?

- How can you bring an intersectional lens to discussions about gender equity at your school?
- What is your school’s policy for supporting trans and gender diverse students? Find it online and discuss what it covers. Is anything missing?
- How might trans and gender diverse students’ school experience change if they *didn't* have to request special accommodations?
  - For example, on the attendance list? Washrooms?
- Think back to the statistics discussed before the video. Which one had the biggest impact on you?

### **MOVING FORWARD**

- The story that was shared in the video is not an isolated event.
  - How can we, as educators, **decondition** ourselves?
  - How should we confront and abandon **stereotypes**/misconceptions? Inequities? Judgemental attitudes?
- How does our privilege become blinders in education? How can we stay cognizant of our privilege? What are the dangers of not addressing our privilege? How can we do better and stay in the discomfort?
- Sometimes people may feel they are not a part of the problem because they do not **actively discriminate** against another individual. However, without **actively**

combating the issue or making changes, the cycle will continue.

- Considering our new learning, how can we help change the school’s culture?

### **GENDER EXCLUSION RESOURCES**

#### **The Gender-Friendly Classroom**

<https://www.edcan.ca/articles/gender-friendly-classroom/>

#### **How to be an LGBTQI2S Ally**

<https://egale.ca/awareness/how-to-be-an-lgbtq-ally/>

#### **GLSEN Safe Space Guide**

<https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2019-11/GLSEN%20English%20SafeSpace%20Book%20Text%20Updated%202019.pdf>

#### **Inclusive and Affirming Language Tips**

<https://egale.ca/awareness/inclusive-and-affirming-language/>

### **FOR FURTHER LEARNING**

#### **Supporting Students who identify as Transgender in Our Catholic Schools**

<https://iceont.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/ICE-Monograph-FINAL-Supporting-Transgender-Students-5.pdf>

## Part 4: Disability Exclusion

**Video Link:** <https://youtu.be/KgaAYhGiOp8>

### FOR THE FACILITATOR:

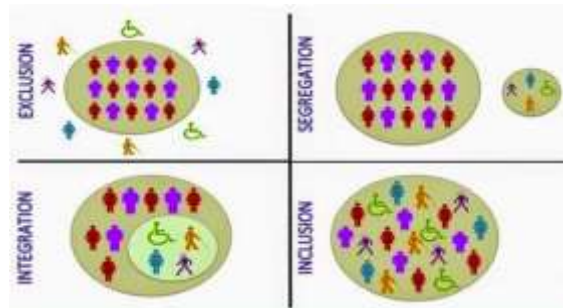
Classrooms are diverse, and it is important that we create warm and welcoming environments for everyone. These are referred to as inclusive classrooms because everyone feels valued, feels like they belong, and feels important. A few things to keep in mind with respect to the content of the video:

- Good communication between home and school is key to meeting families where they are at. Educators have the expertise, but so do families; they know their children best.
- We must collaborate for the best outcomes for their children. True collaboration means listening to their ideas rather than telling families what they need to do.
- Always presume competence. When students do not communicate their learning to us in a way that we understand, it can be easy to say they do not know anything. We should have high expectations and know that all our students will learn in their own time and at their own pace.

Please refer to the list of resources at the end of the section that will help you prepare for this discussion.

### BACKGROUND

*Difference between Exclusion, Segregation, Integration and Inclusion*



Source: Le Pôle Éducation, n.d.

**Exclusion** refers to students who are denied entry to their community schools or an educational program.

**Segregation:** refers to students with a disability being educated in a separate environment than their typically developing peers.

**Integration:** occurs when students with a disability are physically placed in the same classroom as their peers, but they must adjust to the mainstream classroom

**Inclusion:** refers to students with a disability fully participating and learning alongside their peers in the same classroom. Barriers

are removed, adaptations and accommodations are made for the students to succeed in a regular classroom.

### *Academic Exclusions for Students with Disabilities*

Often there are barriers in place for academic learning because students are not in school (Reid et al., 2018).

- 45% of parents claimed that their school had a lack of accommodations and services, and they had to keep their child at home.
- 23% of parents reported that their child had been suspended due to disability-related concerns, and 11% of parents stated that their child was expelled for similar reasons.
- Some students experience partial exclusion where they are required to have shortened school days, such as leaving school early (54%) or arriving at school late (39%).
- Despite the Ontario Human Rights Code, which mandates students have the right to receive appropriate accommodations, in a recent survey:

- 53% of parents felt that their child did not receive adequate academic accommodations,
- 32% stated that their child did not have access to additional support when needed (e.g. Educational Assistants [EA]), and
- 65% reported that their child experienced bullying from peers, parents and school staff related to their child's disability.

#### *Social Exclusion of Students with Disabilities*

When thinking of how to include students with disabilities, we must be mindful of academic outcomes and social outcomes. There are spaces where children and adolescents come together to enjoy shared interests. Unfortunately, students with disabilities are often excluded.

- 63% of parents indicated that their child had been excluded from extracurricular activities (Reid et al., 2018).
- 72% reported having to accompany their child on school field trips.
  - 50% had to provide a separate mode of transportation for their child
- Regarding school activities;
  - 64% of parents had to leave work for their child to participate in the school activity,
  - 50% had to provide a separate mode of transportation for their child,

- 72% reported having to accompany their child on school field trips, and
- 38% mentioned paying for additional support for their child to attend the activity.

We don't expect parents of students without disabilities to participate in field trips for their children to attend – it is important to collaborate with families to make school life more inclusive.

#### *Strategies for an Inclusive Classroom*

- Examine what students can do rather than focusing on what they cannot do (New Brunswick Association for Community Living, n.d.).
- Ask what their needs are
  - Educators should have an ongoing discussion with students about their needs and be mindful of those needs while instructing/lesson planning (Barber, 2019).
- Examine your resources to ensure it reflects the students in the classroom.
- Understand that creating an effective inclusive classroom is a learning process.
- Practice backward planning:
  - Beginning at the end is an excellent way to ensure that daily instructions align with year-end goals (Special Education Guide, 2020)
- Embrace a universal design

- This type of design makes the curriculum accessible to all students (Special Education Guide, 2020).

#### **BEFORE YOU WATCH PART 4: DISABILITY EXCLUSION**

- Is there a difference between integration and inclusion?
- Why is inclusive education so important?
- What are the benefits of inclusive education?
- How can we better support students with disabilities when there is limited access to special education services?
- What training would be useful for teachers and administrators to receive regarding inclusive education?

#### **AFTER YOU WATCH PART 4: DISABILITY EXCLUSION**

- The mother stated in the video: “The message is, He’s not welcome here.”
  - What are some other messages that educators send out when they send students home due to behaviour or lack of accommodation?
- The mother communicated that she felt teachers and administrators do not say anything nice about her child. “Always doing something wrong.”

- What does this tell us about how we communicate with parents? Is there a particular way to approach these issues?
- How can the school take more of a leadership approach when interacting with parents?
- How can we ensure, as educators, that we are inclusive to students with disabilities in our classrooms? In our schools?
- How can we be more accommodating for students who have behaviour, social, and learning needs?
- The principal in the video indicates, “we have to adopt a sophisticated and coordinated approach.” What does that look like in our classrooms? At the principal’s office?

### **MOVING FORWARD**

- The story that was shared in the video is not an isolated event.
  - How can we, as educators, **decondition** ourselves?
  - How should we confront and abandon **stereotypes**/misconceptions? Inequities? Judgemental attitudes?
- Students with disabilities may experience partial exclusion from the school (e.g., being told to arrive late to school, to leave school early or not to come to school at all

for the day). What are the consequences of these decisions?

- E.g., pressure on families, kids not going to “behave better” just by being excluded for \_\_ number of days.
- Instead, what are some approaches or programs we can implement to support learning?
- How does our privilege become blinders in education? How can we stay cognizant of our privilege? What are the dangers of not addressing our privilege? How can we do better and stay in the discomfort?
- Sometimes people may feel they are not a part of the problem because they do not **actively discriminate** against another individual. However, without **actively** combating the issue or making changes, the cycle will continue.
- Considering our new learning, how can we help change the school’s culture?

### **DISABILITY EXCLUSION** **RESOURCES**

#### **Understanding Inclusive Education**

<https://www.inclusiveeducationresearch.ca/about/inclusion.html>

#### **Inclusion: Myths and Misconceptions**

<https://inclusiveeducation.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2018/10/Catalyst-Myths-and-Misconceptions-FINAL.pdf>

#### **10 Reasons to Support Inclusive School Communities for ALL Students**

<https://ici.umn.edu/products/briefs/inclusive-school-communities-10-reasons/#Cover>

#### **Together We Learn Better: Inclusive Schools Benefit All Children**

<https://inclusiveschools.org/together-we-learn-better-inclusive-schools-benefit-all-children/>

#### **If inclusion means everyone, why not me**

<https://www.inclusiveeducationresearch.ca/docs/why-not-me.pdf>

### **FURTHER LEARNING**

#### **5 Moore Minutes**

<https://fivemooreminutes.com/strategies/>

#### **Teaching Strategies for the inclusive classroom**

[https://www.rickhansen.com/sites/default/files/downloads/sch-35908udlworkshopflipbooken\\_0.pdf](https://www.rickhansen.com/sites/default/files/downloads/sch-35908udlworkshopflipbooken_0.pdf)

## Glossary

- **Allyship:** An individual with privilege working in solidarity with a marginalized group.
- **Anti-Black Racism:** Policies and practices in institutions such as education, health care, and social justice that reinforce stereotypes, attitudes, prejudices, and discrimination towards people of Black and African Diaspora.
- **Cisgender:** Someone whose gender identity does align with their sex assigned at birth.
- **Decondition:** To decrease a conditioned response.
- **Discrimination:** The unfair treatment towards groups of people based on characteristics such as age, race, gender, sexual orientation and/or disability.
- **Food Insecurity:** The inability to have or acquire a sufficient amount of food to survive or have uncertainty to achieve food security.
- **Indigenous Peoples (Aboriginal Peoples):** Individuals who have descended from the Original Peoples of Canada. They may identify as First Nations (status / non-status), Métis and/or Inuit, and may have any related identities.
- **Microaggressions:** Indirect, subtle or unintentional statements or actions that insult members of a marginalized group, such as racial/ethnic minority or women.
- **Privilege:** Obtaining an *unearned* benefit or having *an advantage* that is only available to a particular social group or person.
- **Racial Equity:** Fair treatment and equitable opportunities/outcomes for all people.
- **Racial Color Blindness:** To deny and ignore the lived experiences of racial and ethnic minority groups. It indicates that skin colour is insignificant.
- **Racialized:** To add a racial meaning towards an individual or group of people. It is rooted in racial prejudice of society, and the attribution is not the product of their identity.
- **Special Education Services:** Providing services such as assessments and instruction to students who are different from the general education population. The assessment and instruction may provide accommodation (e.g. assistive technology) and/or a modified educational program in a course.
- **Stereotypes:** A fixed and oversimplified generalization or idea of a type of person or a thing.
- **Systemic Racism:** Practices, policies, organizational culture or procedures that create unfair barriers for marginalized groups to access opportunities and benefits.
- **Tracking/Streaming:** Separating students by academic ability (applied vs. academic) within a school.
- **Transgender:** Someone whose gender identity does not align with their sex assigned at birth.
- **Trans:** An umbrella term for other gender identities that do not align with a person's sex assigned at birth.

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