

## **Project Coordinator for Research Study: Position Available**

**Study Short Title:** Pathways to Belonging

**Study Full Title:** Moving Beyond Inclusion: Pathways to Belonging for Young Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

**Project Website:** [voicesofyouthresearch.com](http://voicesofyouthresearch.com) (*see page 2 for description of research project on which this new Pathways to Belonging research builds*)

**Funding:** This grant is funded through a three-year Insight Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and will run from May 2018 – April 2021.

### **Research Team:**

*Investigators:* Dr. Rebecca Renwick and Dr. Debra Cameron

*Collaborators from Community Organizations:* Sharon Gabison, Ontario Federation for Adults with Developmental Disabilities, Melissa Ngo, Hand Over Hand Community Organization, and Dave Hingsburger, VITA Community Living Services

*Project Consultants/Community Members:* Zoe Stanley and TBD

### **Research Sites**

This ongoing research project is based in downtown Toronto, at 500 University Avenue at the University of Toronto. Some travel will be required to various community sites in the Greater Toronto area.

### **Project Coordinator Qualifications**

A Masters degree (or equivalent) in an appropriate discipline with a strong theoretical understanding of participatory and inclusive research methodologies and critical disability perspectives; experience with project coordination and conducting qualitative research interviews; strong interpersonal, organizational, written/oral communication skills (i.e., Experience with communication to lay/disability audiences and knowledge mobilizations strategies preferred); direct experience with experience with SPSS-supported data analysis and qualitative analysis using NVivo software (e.g., analyzing video or image/text data is a strong asset); experience with people with intellectual/developmental disability (IDD) and/or current or previous extensive knowledge of and networks Ontario's Developmental Sector is strongly preferred. Having access to a car, as needed, would also be an asset.

### **Major Responsibilities**

The role will be supervised by the Principal Investigator (P.I.). Responsibilities include:

- Participate in training with and by investigators;
- Day-to-day management of project (i.e., correspondence, maintenance of files/budget records; liaising with research team and other community members);
- Facilitation/co-facilitation of monthly team research meetings (e.g., arranging meetings, setting agenda and preparing slides/content as needed in conjunction with P.I., sending out minutes, liaising with research team members re: agenda / attendance);
- Recruiting participants; coordinating data collection;
- Management of digital (video) data;
- Participation in qualitative interviewing and data analysis;
- Preparation of project reports;
- Coordination of knowledge mobilization activities;
- Act as a **knowledge broker** between the academic institution and community collaborators in the IDD sector

**Term of employment:** 3 years; number of hours per week is variable (on average 12-15 hours per week)

**Remuneration:** Based on qualifications and experience (\$25.00+)

**To Apply:** Please contact Dr. Rebecca Renwick ([r.renwick@utoronto.ca](mailto:r.renwick@utoronto.ca)) and attach a cover letter, your current cv, and the names of and contact information for 3 academic and professional references. **Apply by June 30, 2018**

**Please note that a minimum commitment of 12 months to work with this project is essential.**

### **Description of Research Project:**

Social inclusion is a major goal for people with intellectual/developmental disabilities (IDD). Yet, recent research indicates that policies and programs aimed at inclusion have not had the desired or expected outcomes for people with IDD. Researchers and policymakers have begun to recognize that *belonging* may be a more useful concept to consider, particularly for young adults (YA) with IDD who are leaving the education system and progressing through young adulthood, often supported primarily by family and community-based organizations. Accordingly, the objectives of this inclusive research study are to examine: (a) how YA with IDD achieve belonging (or not) and; (b) how particular contexts and conditions (e.g., people, places, activities, strategies) foster and support belonging (or not) from the perspective of YA with IDD, family members, and community organizations.

Previous research (e.g., Voices of Youths project) conducted by the current team, identified a framework of 4 components of belonging. This framework provides a foundation to build on and expand theoretical and practical knowledge about how YA with IDD achieve belonging and the conditions and resources that support it from multiple perspectives. Currently, community living for Canadian YA with IDD presents several challenges for which an expanded, multi-perspective framework will provide theoretical guidance. Specifically, aging parental carers, a growing population of YA with IDD, and longer lifespans with complex disabilities for adults with IDD,

combined with a community residential system in crisis indicate the need to better understand pathways to belonging for YA with IDD living with their families. Research on belonging for this group, however, is quite sparse.

Existing research is limited by the use of proxy-report measures/surveys with: (a) underdeveloped and narrow conceptualizations of belonging; (b) minimal perspectives from YA with IDD; and (c) measures/tools created for other populations. This body of research has also focused primarily on adults with IDD who live in group homes, rarely including those living with family. Yet currently, most YA with IDD live with their families well into adulthood. This study takes a collaborative, inclusive approach by: (a) including YA with IDD, family members, and partners from community organizations on the research team, and (b) using innovative methods to ensure accessibility and active involvement for all research team members and study participants (e.g., filmed community-based interviews, socio-spatial mapping). Forty-five participants will be recruited, 15 participants from 3 groups: (a) YA with IDD (18-35 years) living with family, (b) family members of YA with IDD; and (c) service providers of community organizations serving YA with IDD. Groups b and c will participate in individual, voice-recorded interviews. YA with IDD will participate in 2 filmed sessions allowing those who communicate in different ways to respond, to draw a personal socio-spatial map showing key people/relationships/places they associate with belonging. The multimodal data for the 3 participant groups will be analyzed, using constructivist grounded theory methods, to produce a theoretical framework of pathways to belonging.

This framework will guide/inform about how to approach practical challenges for YA with IDD and their families. Specifically, findings will have implications for (a) researchers focused on inclusion and belonging, policymakers, community organizations, and families; (b) new community-based approaches/programs for YA; (c) developing inclusive research methodologies; (d) potential applications with other marginalized groups; and (e) foregrounding the voices of YA with IDD.