



**T**ORONTO  
**NEIGHBOURHOOD**  
**CENTRES**

# Earning The Rainbow: Strengthening Inclusive Practice in the Workplace (Management)

This workshop series and materials were prepared by William Porter in collaboration with members of the Rainbow Affinity Group for Toronto Neighbourhood Centres (TNC). You are free to use/adapt the materials as long as they are credited to: William Porter and Toronto Neighbourhood Centres.

## ABSTRACT:

This workshop series focuses on our workplace environments, exploring how we can strengthen inclusive practice. These are experiential workshops to help identify challenges and explore solutions.

## BACKGROUND:

This series was built over many meetings of the Toronto Neighbourhood Centres' Rainbow Affinity Group and informed by the lived experience of front-line workers, agency staff, managers and executive directors. The Rainbow Affinity Group is a Toronto based network of 2SLGBTQIA+ services providers who collaborate on policy development, evaluation, education, celebrations and mutual aid efforts.

## RATIONALE:

Utilizing an experiential approach to facilitation, this series aims to improve inclusive practice through evaluation and mutual understanding of the unique challenges faced in our workplaces. The designers of this series agreed that we often learn the most from our mistakes and strived to build a safer learning environment where our mistakes can be modeled for collective advancement.

## PROGRAM STRUCTURE:

This is a 4-part workshop series designed for both individual agency implementation and broad multi-agency engagement. Designed as “building blocks,” the series moves from the practical aspects of client experience, to the staff experience, to the management and upper management experience, and then concludes with a learning exchange.

## WORKSHOPS:

- #1 – Don't Assume (Front Line)
- #2 – Strengthening Inclusive Practice in the Workplace (Staff)
- #3 – Strengthening Inclusive Practice in the Workplace (Management)
- #4 – Learning exchange (All)

## ROLES:

### *Co-Facilitator #1:*

- Lead Topic Introductions/Transitions
- Modeling Behaviours (Vulnerability, Compassion) to Promote Participation

### *Co-Facilitator #2:*

- Dramatic Reading of Scenarios
- Modeling Behaviours (Vulnerability, Compassion) to Promote Participation

### *Co-Facilitator #3:*

- Dramatic Reading of Scenarios
- Modeling Behaviours (Vulnerability, Compassion) to Promote Participation
- Chat Monitoring

### *Co-Facilitator #4:*

- Dramatic Reading of Scenarios
- Modeling Behaviours (Vulnerability, Compassion) to Promote Participation
- Slide Management

### *Evaluation Team:*

- Manages pre-post evaluations
- Transfers & Shares evaluation insights.

## SLIDE 1: EARNING THE RAINBOW: STRENGTHENING INCLUSIVE PRACTICE IN THE WORKPLACE

### LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

### WELCOME:

Toronto Neighbourhood Centres' Rainbow Affinity Group (RAG) is thrilled to welcome you to our third workshop in the Earning the Rainbow series. There are so many collaborators on this project, and this has been a very dynamic process. We will specifically thank these fantastic individuals in our final slide.

These workshops focus on our workplace environments, exploring how we can strengthen inclusive practice in areas from hiring, to meetings, to community programming. This workshop is exclusively for management staff, and reflects the input of front line staff from previous workshops. We hope you will also join us in [ ] for our learning exchange, sharing the insights and impacts of this series.

These are experiential workshops to help staff identify challenges and explore solutions from real life scenarios. We will give participants an opportunity to explore the gaps between policies and practices and day to day realities with the hope of enhancing a safer and welcoming workplace for everyone.

## SLIDE 2: AGENDA

### FACILITATOR INTRODUCTIONS (*DROP OUT OF SLIDES*): (2min each)

Name, Pronoun (NOT required, no outing), Agency & Role. Share one story of a mistake or challenge that models the vulnerability and honesty needed for the workshop.

#### **Prompts:**

What/who inspired this workshop? (RAG context)

Why – personally – are we here? (Lived experience)

Who are we? (Front line workers/there are no managers here).

- Modeling Vulnerability (what makes it unsafe for me?)

## SLIDE 3: COMMUNITY GUIDELINE STATEMENT

We invite everyone to turn on their camera, as this is NOT recorded. Everyone in this workshop has unique experiences, knowledge and ways of knowing. In support of that reality we ask that everyone strive to share time equitably, built off our fellow participants' ideas and – when we do not have consensus – challenge the idea and not the individual. This is a learning environment with no prerequisites, and these can be very personal stories. If you want to share, but want to distance or keep a story confidential please feel free to say “someone told me” or “I heard that”, and remove any gender/agency/time markers... If anyone would like to add to the community guidelines, please drop your ideas into the chat as we walk through introductions.

#### **Prompts:**

“one mic, one diva”

“one step forward to speak, one step back to listen”

## PARTICIPANT INTROS (DROP OUT OF SLIDES):

Name, Pronoun (NOT required, no outing), Agency & Role. What brings you to this workshop?  
Thank you all for sharing!

## SLIDE 4: SCENARIO 1

**At a community program, a participant complains to a staff member they are close with about one of the facilitators. The facilitator identifies as gender fluid.**

**Participant:** That staff is using the wrong washroom!

*All in the room hear the complaint, including the facilitator under discussion.*

**Other Staff:** Our washrooms here are inclusive of all genders. Let's step aside and discuss this more.

**Participant leaves hesitant but agrees to continue to learn and stay committed to the agency's values of safety and inclusion. The two staff involved have a quick debrief after the program.**

### **Prompts:**

What would you expect from your staff in this situation?

Should policy dictate this, or do we rely on individual staff practice?

Who needs to consent before taking action? (Has the gender diverse staff been provided agency or consultation?)

What are your obligations in this scenario? (Both legal and professional)

## SLIDE 5: POLICY vs PRACTICE

### **Potential Quotes:**

- Utilize quotes from your previous workshops & evaluations

### **Prompts:**

What are the barriers to improving policy and practice?

The staff take this on, but should they?

Is consent needed from staff prior to community education?

## SLIDE 6: SCENARIO 2

Your part-time contract worker is burning out and has a tense relationship with their direct manager. The worker has been taking on more duties due to staff turnover and redeployment, and they identify as a member of the community they serve. They have a tense call with their manager that runs after hours:

**Manager:** This is an issue of time management. If you are not proficient in this work, we need to get someone in place who can commit to the project.

**Staff:** [Silent...]

**Manager:** And you are working after hours again. We need to have a meeting next week about this.

**Staff:** Ok.

The staff goes to HR and is told to speak with their manager first. The staff goes to the union, and are told to document the interaction first. Staff goes to colleagues after hours and commiserates.

### **Prompts:**

What pathways are available for this worker?

- And how much time do you think this process would take?
- And who decides?
- Regardless of contract status, role or identity, how do you ensure staff are aware of their rights and understand that complaints will not lead to repercussions?
- What if you don't have a union?

## SLIDE 7: ACCOUNTABILITY

### **Potential Quotes:**

- Utilize quotes from your previous workshops & evaluations

### **Prompts:**

What are the barriers to making accountability a reality?

What are the barriers to personal and agency wide self-care/well-being?

## SLIDE 8: BREAK - 5min

### SLIDE 9: SCENARIO 3

In late April, an ED realizes that Pride is fast approaching, and no staff have shared any program planning. They call a meeting but are not thrilled about having to follow up. They identify with the 2SLGBTQIA+ community but are not a fan of crowds and usually choose to celebrate by participating in talks and workshops.

**ED:** “Thanks everyone for joining. With Pride just around the corner, there is a lot to do and little time. The 2SLGBTQIA+ program will take lead on this, but we need to have broad commitment. Who would be open to supporting?”

[Silence...]

**Chorus:** “I have World Refugee Day” “I have National Indigenous History Month” “I have too many clients!”

#### **Prompts:**

How do you navigate your own intersectionality in these scenarios?

- What are your expectations for staff to be aware of your intersectionality?

How do you select staff for community events?

Are staff usually “volun-told”? Are they usually the same people?

### SLIDE 10: ALLYSHIP

#### **Prompts:**

What are the barriers to equity in delegation of duties?

What kind of spaces does your agency have for staff to debrief and speak freely?

- Prioritizing Safety & How to Respond

### SLIDE 11 - POTENTIAL QUOTES:

Utilize quotes from your workshops & evaluations

### SLIDE 12 - RECAP OF FRONTLINE QUOTES

Explain how evaluation has taken place (“Capturing the story”)

Introduce the upcoming learning exchange

### SLIDE 13 - THANK YOU

## CREDITS:

Prepared by:  
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Alex Brodovsky  
Ranjith Kulatilake  
Sree Nallamothu  
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Alexia Anderson  
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Miranda Saroli

We are thankful for the support of members of the Rainbow Affinity Group. In particular, the following members for their contributions throughout the development process:

Nickie D’Cunha  
Pam Gawn  
Ingrid Palmer  
Abinna Subramaniam  
Chi Cheng Wat





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# Strengthening Inclusive Practice in the Workplace

Earning the Rainbow Series

# Agenda:

- Land Acknowledgement
- Community Guidelines & Introductions
- Managing Incidents
- Managing Conflict

-----Break-----

- Delegation
- Evaluation

# Community Guidelines

- This workshop isn't recorded, we invite everyone to turn on their camera if they feel comfortable
- Be conscious of everyone's unique experiences, knowledge and ways of knowing
- Share time equitably
- When challenging a point, make sure to challenge the *idea* and not the *individual*
- This is a learning environment with no prerequisites of knowledge or experience
- If you want to share, but want to keep a story confidential, please feel free to say: "someone told me" or "I heard that" and remove any gender/agency/time markers
- If anyone would like to add to the community guidelines, please drop your ideas into the chat





At a community program, a participant complains to a staff member they are close with about one of the facilitators. The facilitator identifies as gender fluid.

Participant: That staff is using the wrong washroom!

*All in the room hear the complaint, including the facilitator under discussion.*

Other Staff: Our washrooms here are inclusive of all genders. Let's step aside and discuss this more.

Participant leaves hesitant, but agrees to continuing to learn and staying committed to the agencies values of safety and inclusion. The two staff involved have a quick debrief after the program.

# Managing Incidents...

**“We need folks who are white, with more power and weight in the agency, to speak up (with consent)”**

## Policy vs Practice

**“I think staff in agencies often feel that they are the only ones experiencing the challenges”**

**How do we promote inclusion?**

**How do we ensure staff safety?**

Your part-time contract worker is burning out and has a tense relationship with their direct manager. The worker has been taking on more duties due to staff turnover and redeployment, and they identify as a member of the community they serve. They have a tense call with their manager that runs after hours:

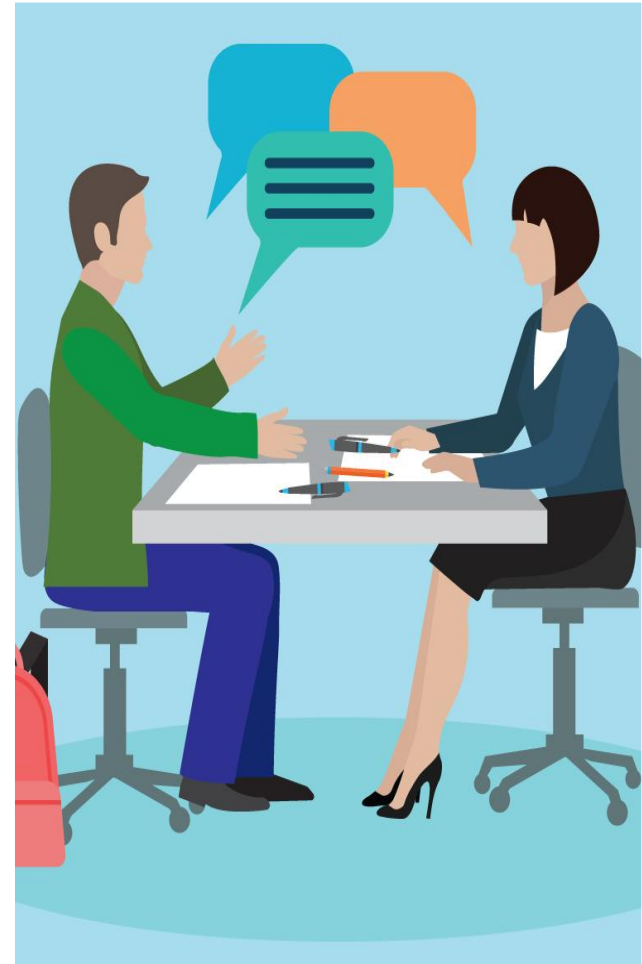
**Manager:** This is an issue of time management. If you are not proficient in this work, we need to get someone in place who can commit to the project.

**Staff:** *Silent...*

**Manager:** And you are working after hours again. We need to have a meeting next week about this.

**Staff:** Ok.

The staff goes to HR and is told to speak with their manager first. The staff goes to the union, and are told to document the interaction first. Staff goes to colleagues after hours and comissorates.



# Managing Conflict...

**Accountability**

**Policy vs Practice**

**“When [management] mess up, the little microaggressions trickle down into the field and impact the services we provide... Be willing to be accountable, stop your white fragility, and be more willing to hear us”**

**“Ensure employees are heard when they approach management with concerns and reassure them that there will be no repercussions to them”**

**How do we promote inclusion?**

**How do we ensure staff safety?**

**BREAK**  
**(5 min)**





In late April, an ED realises that PRIDE is fast approaching and no staff have shared any program planning. They call a meeting, but are not thrilled about having to follow up. They identify with the 2SLGBTQ+ community, but are not a fan of crowds and usually choose to celebrate by participating in talks and workshops.

ED: “Thanks everyone for joining. With Pride just around the corner, there is a lot to do and little time. The 2SLGBTQ+ program will take lead on this, but we need to have broad commitment. Who would be open to supporting?”

[Silence...]

Chorus: “I have World Refugee Day” “I have National Indigenous History Month” “I have too many clients!”

# Delegation...

Accountability

Policy vs Practice

Allyship

How do we promote inclusion?

How do we ensure staff safety?

**“Cultivation of trust”**

**“Ask for consent from staff before depleting their time and energy”**

**“There are too many full-time staff who have experienced long-lasting trauma, and are afraid to lose their stability. Full-time folks who are not safe in these spaces seriously require the help of more privileged staff. We *need* folks who are white, with more power and weight in the agency to speak up (with consent)”**

**“Agencies desperately need a space for queer folks/queer visibility”**

**“Find our own power”**

**“We have these conversations, and then wait years for change”**

# Post-Workshop Evaluation

# The Earning the Rainbow Workshop Series is the product of the efforts and expertise of many contributors

## Prepared by:

William Porter

## Collaborators:

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