

# SpecialLink Symposium:

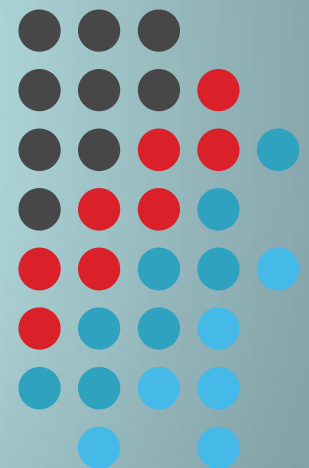
## Winnipeg

### August 2008

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## Meeting the Inclusion Training Challenge

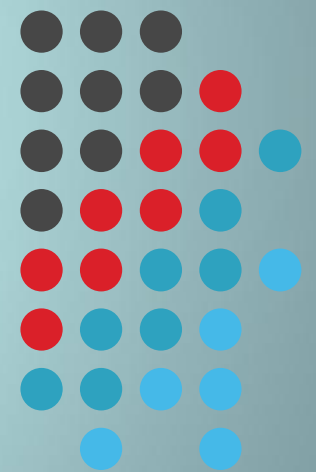
Sina Romsa  
Red River College



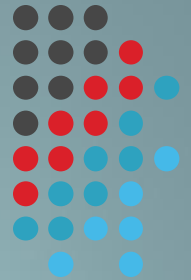
# Education & Training

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Agent for Change  
toward  
Inclusive Practice



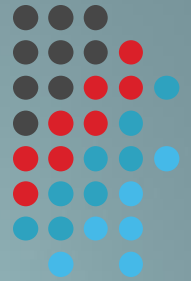
# Historical Contexts



## College Training:

- 70s-early 80s – reflected American special education focus, approaches & deficit models
- Mid 80s – **CCEPAC** Child Care Education Program Approval Committee
  - ECE programs externally approved
  - Program reviews every 4-5years
  - Annual updates if significant change to program

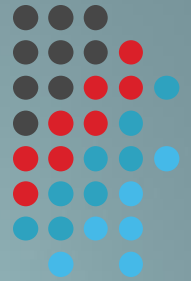
# Historical Contexts (continued)



- Late 80s – Dr. Laura Mills at MB Child Day Care set framework & promoted new inclusive approaches to policy & practice (Sharon Hope-Irwin)
  - RRC embarks on CBL in ECE diploma; focus in special needs is inclusion
  - Post-diploma developed
- 1980s,90s & into the new millennium
  - little adoption of inclusive practices in the field
  - dependent upon centre leadership

# The Challenge

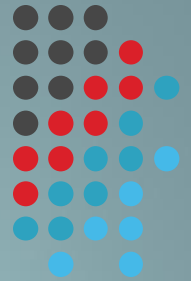
Knowledge, skills & attitudes in training  
is not transferring to field



## Considerations:

- Grads unable to sustain “new” learning, practices among status quo practitioners (is this realistic at novice/entry level?)
- Policy guidelines & inclusive practices not enforced
- Post- diploma training is too theoretical and not specifically practice/action/outcome based

# Diploma Level



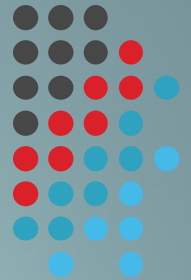
**Course:**

## **Support Children's Special Needs**

**Focus:**

- Attitudes/values supporting inclusion
- “Everyone” works with the child with special support needs
- Developmental context
- Adapting environment so every child can participate in all activities, actions throughout day

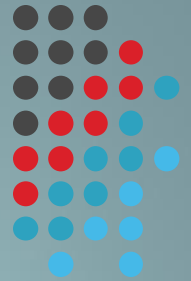
# Diploma Level



## Skill development:

- Observing developmental variations among children
- Documenting children's diverse abilities & gifts
- Practice simple adaptations in the environment to allow all children to participate in all activities

# Diploma Level: Delivery methods



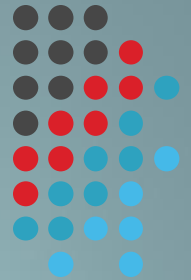
## Day Programs:

Practice in both year 2 practicum - all activities, routines, etc., must be planned to accommodate the inclusion of children with diverse needs

- Emphasis is:
  - Everyone works with all children with special needs
  - Everyone welcomes, includes children to participate in all aspects of the program (NO specialized programming or IPPs)



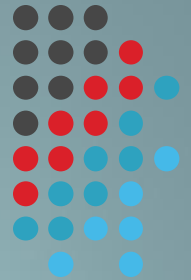
# Diploma Level: Delivery methods



## Workplace Program:

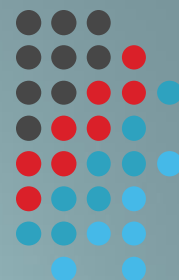
- Students work 3 days a week & attend classes 2 days a week
- Practice in year 2 occurs throughout the year- all activities, routines, etc., must be planned to accommodate the inclusion of children with diverse needs
- Students will support IPPs of children in their centre

# Post Diploma: Studies in Special Needs Child Care

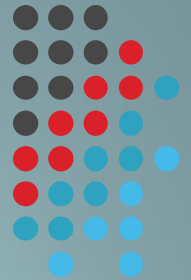


- 2007 – creation of new RRC post diploma
- Definition of special needs broadened - more inclusive of range of special support needs
- Focus on:
  - developing skills specific to building inclusive practice
  - scaffolding of knowledge through assignments that build practice
  - applying specific tasks, skills to the workplace
  - demonstrating skills over a 6 month practicum

# Post Diploma has 6 courses



1. Foundations of Inclusion
2. Families and Partnerships
3. Core Practice in Special Supports
4. Advanced Practice (in Assessment, Planning and Guiding Children with Special Support Needs)
5. Leading Inclusion
6. Practicum: Leading Inclusion



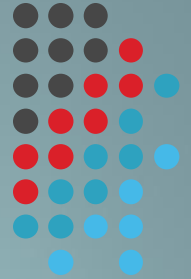
# Post Diploma

...Is structured in conventional learning outcomes and objectives.

**However**...all assignments are designed for specific and progressive skill development.

Assignments are opportunities to practice the tasks, skills required of an inclusion specialist or one who leads inclusion in a centre.

# Foundations of Inclusion

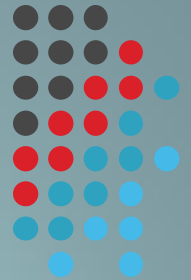


## Focus

Students can:

- Clarify values inherent in centre philosophies, public and centre policy and social contexts
- Analyze whether practices are inclusive
- Develop clear action plans to affect changes supportive of inclusion

# Families and Partnerships

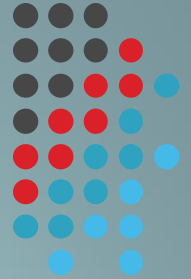


## Focus

Students can:

- Articulate relevance of family systems approaches
- Facilitate family interviews and write report
- Create accurate family profiles
- Create and evaluate parent/family support plans

# Core Practice in Special Support Needs



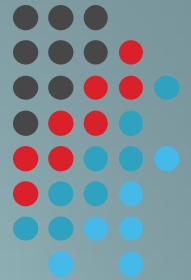
**Focus...** Students can:

- Accurately create child development profiles (based on observational data)
- Assess basic inclusion strategies for children with a range of exceptionalities
- Create inclusion plans for children of varying abilities based on developmental profiles

**Note:** Due to experience level, depth is considerably higher than novices in the diploma program

# Advanced Practice

in Assessment, Planning  
and Guiding Children with Special Support Needs

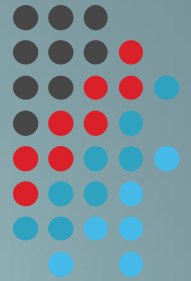


## Focus...Students can:

- Critique a range of development assessment tools
- Create IPPs/IEPs based upon developmental profiles, team consultations
- Implement IPPs; document observations; evaluate effectiveness of IPP
- Critique tools/programs used for challenging behaviours
- Create behaviour support plans based on case studies



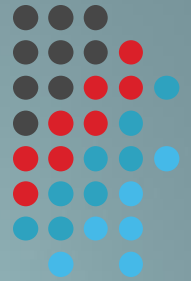
# Leading Inclusion



**Focus...** Students can in their centres:

- Assess quality & inclusive (ECERS & SpecialLinks) practices
- Assess transition & communication systems
- Recommend inclusion policies, philosophy, practices for centre
- Practice leadership/supervisory tasks
- Plan for change to support staff in inclusive practice
- Assess own ability to “lead” changes for inclusion

# Practicum: Leading Inclusion

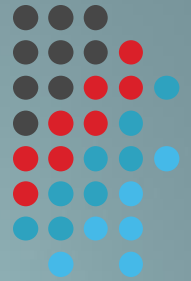


Student will lead inclusion. Within 6 months:

- Draft a baseline of current practice and subsequent 6 month review following implementation of changes in practice
- Develop, maintain 4 developmental profiles & child portfolios
- Develop an inclusion practice plan
- Create IPs, Inclusion, behaviour and family support plans
- Hold parent/family meetings

# Practicum: Leading Inclusion

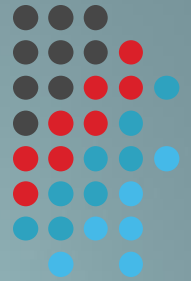
(continued)



- Assess ongoing inclusive practice and outcomes of changes
- Model & coach all practices for inclusion
- Facilitate family interviews & meetings, staff meetings, mentoring, coaching & supervision of staff inclusion practice
- Create & facilitate effective communication system to support staff learning & engaging in inclusive practice

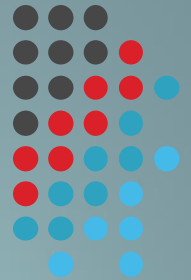
# Practicum: Leading Inclusion

(continued)



- Manage systems supportive of inclusion: case management files, assessments, TEAMS, supervise development of child profiles or portfolios, family profiles
- Complete Practicum Skills Assessment at a satisfactory or proficient level

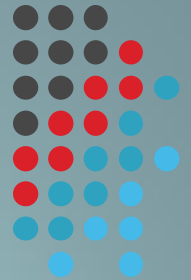
# Post Diploma Delivery



## Continuing Education:

- 42 hour in class courses
- conventional delivery in evening, speakers, workshops
- 6 month practicum at their workplace

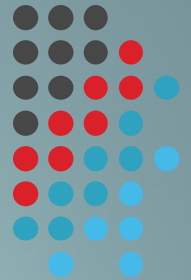
# Post Diploma Distance Delivery



## SharePoint Distance Education

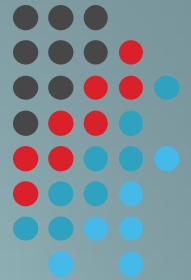
- Independent study
  - Snail mail: course orientation, outline module 1 of course, and SharePoint guide
  - SharePoint: contacts, links, group sights and discussion boards, outlines and document repository, schedule, instructor bio, announcements, photos, etc.

# Post Diploma Distance Delivery (continued)



- Administratively not too challenging as college has existing platforms and software
- Students have access to tech support if needed from 12-8 daily
- Supplemented with e-mail & individual phone tutorial, if needed
- Feedback has been positive

# Education as Change Agent



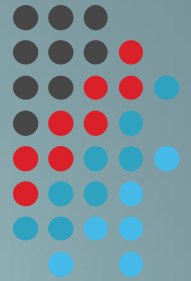
What is a reasonable expectation of the graduate... a novice practitioner?

Can we expect novice grads to “implement” active inclusive practice when they are still “new” to all the complexity of the field, basic practice and understanding children’s development? OR...

Can we expect that novice/grad can begin to commit to children’s rights...for inclusion?

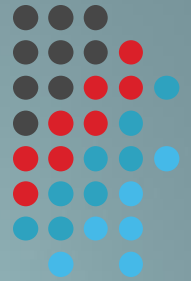


# Education as Change



- Diploma level focuses on:
  - developmental context
  - social equality context
  - child-centred approaches
  - welcoming environment in which all children feel they “belong” and can participate
- Raise consciousness of values, attitudes of inclusion

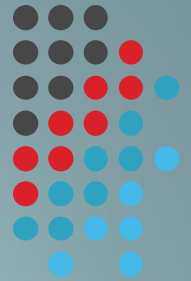
# Post Diploma as Change Agent



## Assumptions:

- Students are well acquainted with:
  - the ECE field
  - basic ECE practices
  - variations in child development
- Students have experience and confidence in their work with children; less fear of challenges
- Students are seeking ways to meet range of diverse needs and create a more inclusive program

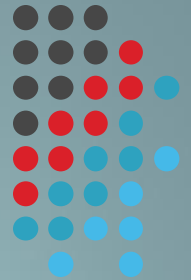
# Post Diploma as Change Agent



Post Diploma focuses on:

- Developing skills for specific tasks related to facilitating inclusion
- Centre support for staff to practice implementing inclusion changes (contract)
- Providing 6 months practice in managing inclusive practice
- Mentoring, coaching & supervising colleagues in inclusive practice

# Post Diploma as Change Agent



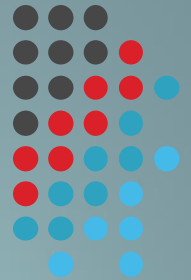
Potential Outcome:

Generating a sustained period of inclusive practice that may be retained following practicum.

Thereby....

Creating positive change in ECE centre practice for inclusion of children with special support needs.

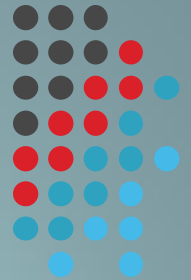
# Lessons Learned



## Diploma Level

1. It's about the basics...attitudes/values & understanding development
2. Clear practicum expectations (of what to do)
  - For students
  - For centres
3. Remember what is realistic for novices/grads

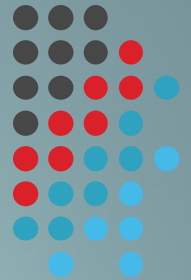
# Lessons Learned



## Post Diploma

3. Build upon basics of diploma & student experience
4. Not “for the faint of heart”: have **high expectations** for
  - child centred practice & advocacy
  - high level skill sets
  - concrete, practical outcomes for specialty, supervision & leadership

# Lessons Learned

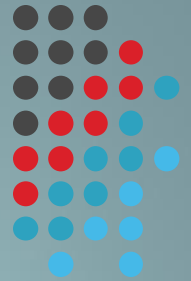


## Post Secondary Education

### 5. Preempt the status quo!

Be the catalyst to move practice beyond  
what may be accepted by  
government and/or the field

# Agents for Change & Inclusive Practice



Education and training can be  
the means,  
the catalyst,  
to ensure that  
ECEs create inclusive programs.