

BUILDING STRONG INCLUSIVE & CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

where all children belong.

This year, with the generous support of TD, Equitas continued to support and strengthen the capacity of community organizations in their effort to build more inclusive communities and welcome refugee and newcomer children and their families.



In November, the **Play it Fair!** team launched a national Community of Practice with **25** partners from across Canada. 3 theme areas were identified by partners as priorities: including newcomers and refugees, childhood wellbeing, and children in leadership and decision making spaces.

The Community of Practice for including newcomers and refugee children decided to use the **Play it Fair!** toolkit to help staff create more welcoming and inclusive

program spaces and to develop an understanding of diversity among **100+** children in Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia. One participating partner from British Columbia runs a program for girls from immigrant families.

"After facilitating activities from the Play it Fair! toolkit, the children ask more questions about diversity, they never asked prior to trying out activities. It helped the girls realize that they have a lot in common even though they come from different places." - Youth Worker, Vancouver, BC

With Equitas' support, partners in Alberta were able to create a 1 year mentoring partnership with a local school for newcomer children. In Manitoba, children visited the Human Rights Museum and shared their learnings with peers, parents, and staff of their afterschool program site. Overall, partners expressed an increased understanding of diversity among staff and children through the partnership and support from Equitas and the **Play it Fair!** toolkit.



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In Quebec City, Evasion St-Pie X is a community organization located in a low-income housing complex of 446 units that mainly welcomes newcomers and diversified families. 40% of the population of the housing complex is made up of young people under 18 years of age. In 2018, after several years of interruption, Evasion had the opportunity to offer youth programming again in its community and decided to use Equitas' human rights educational approach. For this first year, Evasion took on the mission to develop the young people's sense of trust and belonging towards the organization and among themselves.

Through activities from the **Play it Fair!** toolkit, children aged 10-14 identified the need for a safe and collaborative spaces dedicated to them where children with different life experiences can meet and develop friendships, while participating in community life and learn to live together. In order to strengthen their friendship and create an inclusive community

where mutual respect, solidarity and respect for diversity prevail, the young people decided to organize several activities that allowed them to get to know each other better, strengthen their self-esteem and learn about human rights and how they are actualised in their community. More than 10 activities were organized by the young people, including a group meal at the end of the project where the youth were able to reflect on their learning and continue to build bridges between each other.



"We organised a lot of workshops with the youth of Evasion, focussed on the Equitas activities. Those activities gave us the opportunity to engage the children in discussions around bullying and violence, self-esteem, their abilities and ambitions and their personal interests. At first, the children were very shy, didn't express themselves much and didn't know each other. The Equitas activities really allowed them to build strong relationships and engaged the children to act on issues that affect them. For example, after a simple activity from the Play it Fair! toolkit that aims at developing team spirit by finding collective and creative solutions, a spontaneous discussion was initiated by the youth on different forms of violence, such as bullying and racism and how using social medias can help solve and expose different conflicts." - Youth Worker, Evasion St-Pie X

