

# Alberta Healthy Communities Symposium Resource Book

**Explore. Discover. Inspire.**

Your Community Wellness Journey

March 16-18, 2021



# Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge the First Nations, the Métis, and all of the people across Alberta who share a history and deep connection with this land. We dedicate ourselves to moving forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in the spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.



## Dear Community Wellness Champions:

We hope this package finds you well and still feeling energized and inspired by what you learned at the 2021 Alberta Healthy Communities Symposium earlier this month, as we are. At a time when we aren't able to venture far from home, we hope the Symposium provided an opportunity to **explore** the strengths and resources your own community has to offer as well as creative ways to understand your community and the people in it. We hope the "6 P" framework introduced on day two helped you **discover** different ways to get started or to grow your efforts. Finally, we hope the Symposium **inspired** you to lead and take the next steps to bring your community's dreams for health and wellbeing to life.

Throughout the Symposium, we heard powerful messages about the value of diversity and the need to be authentically inclusive. We were also reminded that we have much to learn from our Indigenous relatives, and that continuing our reconciliation journey with them is a key part of wellness. We hope these important lessons guide you towards improving the health of your communities in a way that places equity at the centre of your efforts.

More than anything, we want to extend our sincere gratitude for the precious time you entrusted to us during the Symposium. If there's one thing we know, it's that there is so much passion, creativity, resourcefulness, and resilience among champions like you who help your communities thrive. We hope you left the Symposium feeling more empowered to tap into these strengths, put your ideas into action, and do what is needed to move forward in your community wellness journey. We hope to see you at the 2022 Alberta Healthy Communities Symposium!

Yours in Wellness,



**Lisa McLaughlin**  
Program Manager  
Communities ChooseWell,  
Alberta Recreation  
and Parks Association



**Charlene Mo**  
Manager of Wellness  
Partnerships & Innovation  
Alberta Blue Cross





# What's New at Communities ChooseWell

Communities ChooseWell is a provincial program of the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association, funded by Alberta Health, that supports communities across the province to create programs, partnerships, places and/or policies that foster healthy eating and active living among community members. Communities ChooseWell offers funding, resources, recognition, learning and networking opportunities, and more to enhance the ability of local community wellness champions to take action to improve healthy living in their communities.

Stay connected to continue your wellness journey and learn more about some new and upcoming opportunities at Community ChooseWell:

## Mentorship Program

Communities ChooseWell is developing a Peer Mentorship Program! This program will provide a direct path through a peer-to-peer model for experienced healthy living champions to share their knowledge, skills and experience with individuals new to the field. Keep your eye out for more information coming soon!

## NEW Indigenous Traditional Food Systems eLearning Module

And drum roll please... we'd like to introduce the brand new Communities ChooseWell Healthy Eating in Recreation Settings (HERS) module on Traditional Indigenous Food Systems! Learn from Elders and Indigenous communities across the province why returning to a Traditional Food System is important, how communities are returning to it and what role you can play in supporting Traditional Food Systems.

Visit [communitieschoosewell.ca](http://communitieschoosewell.ca) to start on this important learning journey.



# What's New at Alberta Blue Cross

At Alberta Blue Cross, we passionately believe we have an opportunity to impact lives for the better through our commitment to wellness. Being just over 70 years old, we're most proud of being an organization that works for and with Albertans - helping them live their best lives.

Alberta-based and Alberta-grown, we are an independent, not-for-profit organization. We provide health and wellness plans, programs and services on a viable, not-for-profit basis for the financial protection and well-being of our communities. Alberta Blue Cross is Alberta's largest benefit provider serving more than 1.8 million customers with coverage through more than 5,000 small and large employer group plans, individual plans and government-sponsored programs.

We hope you can also join us at our upcoming Wellness Summit on April 21/22, 2021. Get inspired to explore fresh perspectives about workplace wellness and collaborate on what it takes to create a thriving organization.

Please visit [www.thewellnesssummit.ca](http://www.thewellnesssummit.ca) for more info.

We also invite you to participate in a gratitude challenge, which is included in this booklet. The practice of gratitude is strongly associated with increased happiness and positive emotions. Please take time for self-care, reflection - our gift to you!





APRIL 21 AND 22, 2021 | 8:30 A.M. TO 1 P.M. | VIRTUAL | \$100 + GST

## CONNECTION HAPPENS HERE.

### *Are you passionate about workplace wellness?*

Workplaces look a little different right now, but they're still a powerful influence on personal well-being. That's why this summit will focus on key areas to support your understanding of how psychological safety, inclusive cultures and mental health can impact and shape wellness in the workplace. It will combine resources and information from insightful and passionate thought leaders with the opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals.

### *Take advantage of key learning opportunities including:*

- How action-oriented self-management strategies that directly impact mood, thoughts and behaviours can be used to enhance employee mental health.
- How to put design thinking to work in a health and wellness setting.
- How a healthy culture and inclusive leadership supports employee well-being and performance.

Learn more and register at [TheWellnessSummit.ca](https://TheWellnessSummit.ca).



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# Gratitude challenge

*Every year, Alberta Blue Cross® challenges its employees to express their gratitude for 30 days in a row. Not only does it encourage sharing and reflection, but it can improve mood overall and lead to reduced stress, anxiety and depression. Try it out and use the following prompts to get started.*

*Choose a prompt below to spark conversation with a friend, family member or co-worker each day. Or, try it solo.*

### PROMPT ONE

A healthy sense of anticipation can often energize our lives or get us through difficult times.

*What's something you're looking forward to and why?*

### PROMPT TWO

It's easy to get caught in the traps of comparison and self-criticism. But there's always something to appreciate about every age and stage, so embrace it.

*Share something good about the age and stage of where you're at today.*

### PROMPT THREE

Each year new things come into our life that we often forget to feel grateful for.

*What's something you're are grateful for today and why is it meaningful?*

### PROMPT FOUR

It's not always easy to trust our instincts. Sometimes it is fear of the unknown or what people might think.

*Describe a time where you listened to your intuition and it worked out well.*

### PROMPT FIVE

It takes practice and awareness to be mindful of what we choose to think about.

*Share three things, small or big, that have gone right for you today.*

### PROMPT SIX

Bring a smile to your face and treat yourself to a tasty dessert.

*What dessert are you most grateful for? Describe a special time when you had it.*

### PROMPT SEVEN

A walk or bike ride outside, an at home workout, taking a long cleansing breath. Our bodies allow us to do so much.

*Name three things your body allows you to do that you enjoy?*



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# Walking with Indigenous Communities

## What does a healthy community look like for you?

*A community that prays, sings, and plays together is where the heart will survive!*

- Elder Doreen Healy (Blackfoot), Participant in the Grandmother's Circle

Like with many organizations, the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA), along with the Communities ChooseWell initiative, is on its own journey with diverse Indigenous peoples and communities across Alberta. Our goal is to, through our actions, demonstrate our dedication to moving forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in the spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

## What does a healthy community look like for you?

*A place, a connection where there is trust, safety, compassion, kindness and accountability. A place where ceremony is recognized as a role to healing, resilience, and wellness. A place where all things are related and mother earth is part of our kinship. A place where we can walk through our challenges not live in them.*

- Elder Kerrie Moore (Cree/ Métis), Participant in the Grandmother's Circle

## What does a healthy community look like for you?

*As Métis people, we come from two beautiful communities – the very first First Nation person to marry a European. Sadly, though, our ceremonies were once banned. Now, it's 70 years later and things have changed. And we have to understand that change will keep happening. The important thing is that we remember the past so that we can teach it to our children and to our children's children. We must always remember where we come from. It was the Métis who spoke many dialects and brought communities together by helping build the first roads. So to me, a healthy community is one where our Métis language is spoken, where we know who we are, and where we understand how we are contributing to what the country is today.*

- Elder Edmee Comstock (Métis), Participant in the Grandmother's Circle

In this “Walking with Indigenous Communities” section, you will find resources to help the recreation, parks and wellness sectors with these actions as well as examples of how ARPA is engaging in this important work.

Start your own journey by watching this series of Reconciliation Pop-ups with Janet and Jess! <http://bit.ly/reconciliationpopup>

Learn about Smudge with Blackfoot Elders Dr. Reg and Rose Crowshoe: <http://bit.ly/learnaboutsudge>

Hear Indigenous Elders share their wisdom on various topics as part of ARPA's brand new Oral Knowledge Hub: <http://bit.ly/walkingwithindigenouscommunities>

Check out this amazing resource on allyship from our friends at the Calgary Foundation: <http://bit.ly/allyshiptoolkit>

We would like to give a heartfelt thank you to the Elders and colleagues who helped with this year's Symposium: Linda and Darryl Brass (Midewiwin), Monica Chiefmoon (Blackfoot), Edmee Comstock (Métis), Dr. Reg and Rose Crowshoe (Blackfoot), Doreen Healy (Blackfoot), Alice Kaquitts (Stoney Nakoda), Kerrie Moore (Cree/ Métis), Jessica Smith (Ojibwa)



# Continuing Your Wellness Journey

We enjoyed “**Exploring, Discovering, and Inspiring**” and navigating “**Your Community Wellness Journey**” together through learning, application, networking and connecting. As a way to encourage you to further your wellness journey, we collaborated with a few of our speakers to provide key resources to help you build upon your current resources, while providing tangible ways to grow your impact in your community. We would like to thank our speakers for their contributions!

## Session 1: Community Asset Mapping

In this session, Elise Martinoski from ABSI Connect led an introductory overview of what asset mapping is, the value of it and how you can use it in your community to target specific challenge areas. Here are some key definitions, resources and case studies to start your asset mapping journey:

### Key Definitions

*(Definitions pulled from Participatory Asset Mapping: A Community Research Lab Toolkit. 2012)*

#### Asset

A positive place, program, or person that makes the community a safe, healthy, and good place to live. (Examples are grocery stores, clothing stores, community centers, banks, etc..)

#### Asset Mapping

The general process of identifying and providing information about the strengths and resources of a community on a map. It supports strategic planning efforts to address community issues by building on resources and strengths.

#### Participatory Asset Mapping

A process where community members collectively create asset maps by identifying and providing the information about their own community's assets on a map. It combines the concepts of participatory mapping and asset mapping.

### Resources

You can find a printable, detailed follow-up summary of this session on their website at [www.absiconnect.ca/asset-mapping](http://www.absiconnect.ca/asset-mapping) along with more information about asset mapping, activity sheets, resources, and examples.

### Toolkits & Guides

Participatory Asset Mapping: A Community Research Lab Toolkit:

<http://bit.ly/assetmappingtoolkit>

Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets (Book):

<http://bit.ly/mobilizingassets>

CED Net Asset Mapping Handbook: Rural focused asset mapping:

<http://bit.ly/ruralassetmapping>

A Guide to Community Asset Mapping:

<http://bit.ly/assetmappingguide>

AHS Community Profile Mapping, Asset Mapping, and Action Plan tools:

<http://bit.ly/ahsprofilemapping>

The Asset-Based Community Development Institute (ABCD) (online community, news and blog, events):

<http://bit.ly/abcdinstitute>

Strategic Doing Chapter 4 is Focused on Asset Mapping:

<https://strategicdoing.net>

Rural Health Information Hub. Resources and tools in this kit:

<http://bit.ly/ruralassettoolkit>

### Case Studies

Feasibility study of asset mapping with children: identifying how the community environment shapes activity and food choices in Alexander First Nation:

<http://bit.ly/assetmappingwithchildren>

How can asset mapping improve community health:

<http://bit.ly/assetmappingforcommunityhealth>

## Session 2: Fostering Community Engagement

A healthy community provides opportunities for its members to interact with each other and share information about needs and resources, to participate in the planning and decision-making processes that affect them and to access resources and opportunities that support their wellbeing.

On this panel, we welcomed Stacey Cherry from the Hinton Friendship Centre, Heather Roland from the South Edmonton Primary Care Network, and Tasina Pope from the Municipality of Kinngait to share their secrets to success when engaging diverse community members. Here are the key learnings from the session, three important questions to reflect on and recommended resources to help you successfully engage with your community members.

### Summary of Key Learnings:

- Which community members may need extra support to engage?
- Approaches to communicating with diverse members of the community.
- Methods for welcoming diverse community members to participate.

### Reflective Questions

- What can I do to include community members in the co-creation of wellness initiatives?
- What can I do to ensure all community members are aware of and able to participate in wellness initiatives?
- How can I ensure all community members feel welcome?

### Recommended Resources:

Community Engagement: Definitions and Organizing Concepts from the Literature:  
<http://bit.ly/communityengagementdefinitions>

*Learn more about the theory of community engagement and some of the tools that are available to support your work!*

Tamarack Community Engagement:  
<http://bit.ly/tamarackcommunityengagement>

*Learn how to navigate and avoid pitfalls in community engagement. Check out the Community Engagement Techniques pdf to gain practical and tangible tools to help you start engaging your community!*





## Session 3 & 4: The 6Ps

The 6Ps are core areas where wellness champions and others can take action to create a healthier community. We first learned about The 6Ps during **Session 3: Design Thinking for Community Engagement** with the Alberta Health Services Design Lab, where we examined each of the areas and reported out on the *what? So what? And now what?* We continued this learning journey in **Session 4: Moving Forward with Confidence** with the Government of Alberta's Community Development Unit where we applied The 6Ps into our health and wellness initiatives. These big picture priorities and actions provide a framework for more detailed action planning and may help spark energy in communities.

Read the descriptions below to learn more and to see examples of possible actions.

### Places

"Places" refers to the natural and built environment around us where we live, work and play. Places can be built or modified to encourage healthy behaviours. For example, communities with well-planned and accessible sidewalks make it easier and safer to walk. Look to create "Places" that make healthy choices easier.

Some examples of how you can start making healthier places include:

- Make healthy food options and free water available in public spaces and at public events (e.g. recreation facilities, community centres, municipal buildings).
- Build a community garden in your neighbourhood to create an opportunity for social connection, physical activity and access to fresh produce.
- Encourage decision-makers to develop infrastructure for active transportation, such as connected pathways and bicycle lanes.

**Quick Tip:** You don't need new or updated infrastructure to build healthy "Places". Consider how to use what's already there! For example, use developed park and green spaces for community events and programming.

### Policy

"Policy" is a tool that can shape our environment while sustaining changes over time. In community work, policy can commit to, incentivize, and/or create a foundation for action.

Consider some of the following policy actions that promote community health:

- Include health objectives in park and open space policies (e.g. all residents will live within a 5-10 minute walk of a park or green space).
- Develop a diversity and inclusion policy.
- Create policies that support healthy eating (e.g. in the workplace, in recreation facilities, at community events).

**Quick Tip:** Policies can come in many forms such as guidelines, regulations, strategies, legislation, taxation, mandated education, and fiscal incentives. Consider using a variety of policy approaches and types.

### Promotion

"Promote" healthy choices and behaviours and limit exposure to messages that do not support health, especially in places frequented by children and youth. Keep your community informed of wellness initiatives, resources, programs, and services.

Consider the following communication-oriented strategies to help enhance community health:

- Use social media, posters, billboards, and local media like newspapers or radio to share ads or graphic information.
- Choose appealing healthy products and use pricing and product placement strategies to motivate customers to choose healthier options at concessions.
- Put up posters beside elevators encouraging people to take the stairs, while making it appealing and easy for them to do so.

**Quick Tip:** Look for ways to cross-promote your initiatives via other local organizations.

## Partnerships

“Partnerships”, or less formal collaborations, can be helpful for creating lasting, farther reaching and better developed initiatives. Partnerships can extend between departments, organizations, the private and public sector, and even between municipalities.

Consider some ways by which you can start or build upon partnerships and collaborations:

- Reach out to another organization to find out what their goals are and explore ways you may be able to collaborate.
- Create a map or list of community organizations, businesses, clubs, and engaged community members to help you think outside the box about who you may be able to collaborate with.
- Create or participate in a coalition of organizations and community members to work towards a common goal that supports a healthy community.

**Quick Tip:** Check out the Community Toolbox’s “Creating and Maintaining Coalitions and Partnerships” toolkit at:

<http://bit.ly/coalitionsandpartnerships>

## Programs

Offering formal and informal “Programs” and events that support health are another way to create a healthier community and provide opportunities for community members to participate in health-promoting activities.

Consider some ways you can take your community programming to the next level to better serve your community or extend the reach of your programs:

- Build or expand programs to include diversity, inclusion and equity strategies.
- Consider who in your community you can collaborate or partner with to reach new audiences within your community.
- Create more sustainable programming by using tools like policies, committed funding and community member participation in program development and delivery.

**Quick Tip:** Utilize a community asset map and the results of community engagement to decide what type of programming your community wants and needs.

## Participation

Increasing community “Participation” in your health initiatives and including community members in planning and/or delivering them are important for creating success and sustainability. Addressing health-promoting policies, places, promotion, and partnerships also play a role in increasing participation in your healthy community initiatives.

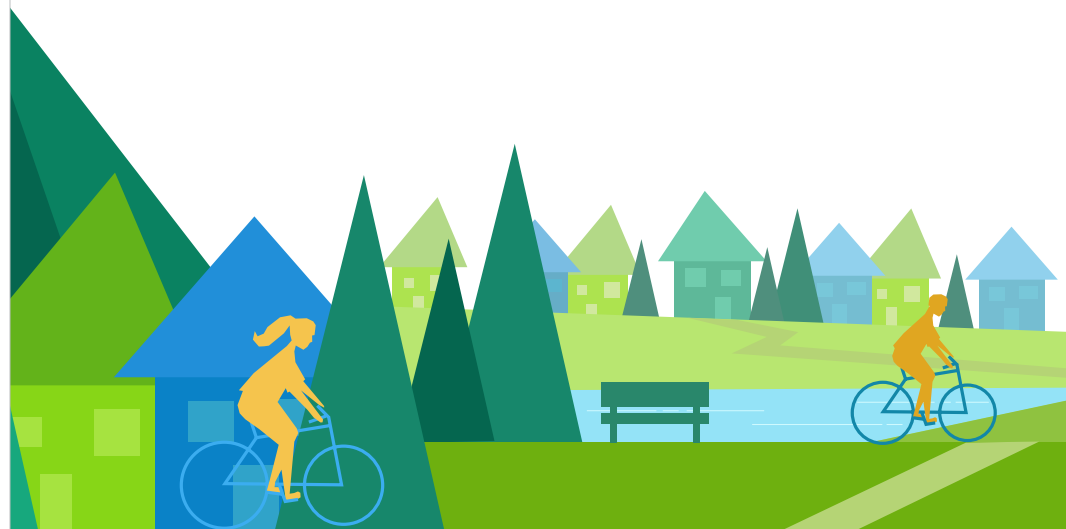
Some things you could do to increase community participation include:

- Consult with members of your program or initiative’s target audience during the planning process, or invite them to be part of a planning committee.
- Host periodic community conversation cafes about community wellness topics at a place where many community members feel comfortable.
- Activate public and community spaces with engaging programs or events to promote their use.

**Quick Tip:** For ideas about how to engage your community members in change efforts and increase their participation in your initiatives, check out the toolkit, “**Increasing Participation and Membership**” from the Community Toolbox:

<http://bit.ly/increasingmembership>

Taking action to address other Ps will also contribute to increased participation.



An important part of the community wellness journey is evaluating your initiatives so you can measure progress, understand the difference your efforts are making, make improvements, and celebrate successes!

## What is Evaluation?

Evaluation is the systematic collection and analysis of information about program activities, characteristics and outcomes to make judgments about the program, improve program effectiveness and/or inform decisions about future programming.

Evaluation answers the following questions:

## WHAT? SO WHAT? NOW WHAT?

### Why Evaluate?

Evaluation monitors progress, determines what results were achieved and improves the design and implementation of programs. Some reasons for evaluating your programs include:

- To monitor progress towards achieving outputs and outcomes
- To provide accountability to funders
- To convince others of the need for a program

## The Building Blocks of an Evaluation Plan

### Evaluation Questions

What do you want to know about your program? Evaluation questions should be tied to the purpose of your evaluation and serve as a guide for data collection, analysis and reporting. Some common evaluation questions include:

- Did the program result in the intended outcomes?
- Which elements of the program were effective, and which weren't?
- Were resources used efficiently?
- Were there any unintended results or positive/negative outcomes?

### Outcomes

An outcome is a short, medium, or long-term change that is likely to take place as a result of your initiative. This can include: new knowledge or skills, changed attitudes or values or behaviour and/or improved conditions.

### How to write an outcome statement:

1. Determine who or what your program is aiming to change
2. Determine what the desired change is
3. Describe the change

### Examples:

- Parents in the program have the skills to plan healthy meals for their families.
- Children in the program improve their flexibility.

### Outputs

An output is a direct product or service that results from an activity carried out as part of a program and is delivered to the target population. Outputs can usually be counted.

### Examples:

- # of participants attending a program
- # of workshops delivered

### Indicators

Indicators should answer your evaluation questions and help you determine whether or not your program objectives have been achieved. They specify how an evaluation question will be answered.

### A good indicator should be SMART:

**Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic/Relevant, and Time-bound.**

### Example:

Evaluation Question: Did the program improve participants' fitness?

Indicator: Percentage of participants who increased their 12-minute run/walk distance by 5% or more since their last test.

Now that you understand what evaluation is, why it's important and what the key parts of an evaluation plan are, remember:

***Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts.***

- Albert Einstein



# Session 4: Moving Forward with Confidence

In **Session 4: Moving Forward with Confidence**, you started making action plans to take back to your community. To continue your action planning, Alberta Health's Community Development Unit has developed a worksheet to guide you.

## Action Planning Template: Priority / Key Focus Area

What we want to accomplish.

Strategy / Action	Lead	Partnerships	Resources
How we get there. Specific strategies, actions or key activities that move us toward meeting our priorities or key focus areas.	Leading can be one champion or many. There is strength in adding the skills of others.	Identifying and building strength. Other partners, organizations, regional communities, business, industry, regional collaborations and more.	Internal resources we need. Not just about money. (Funding, time, expertise, partner support, organizational capacity).

External / Sector Support	Challenges, Considerations	Impact / End Result	Timeline
Others external to the organization may become involved. It is necessary to understand and identify who they are, and what is needed in order to help move forward (Municipalities, funders and more).	Identify the potential obstacles or barriers in order to plan how to address them. Take into account other considerations that may affect you, and do not forget opportunities.	Clearly understand the importance, value benefit and impact. Determine how to measure success.	A realistic timeline, that keeps you accountable, plans regular review and allows for some flexibility.

## Action Planning Template

Questions to ask ourselves as we develop clear, concrete Action Plans.

Strategy / Action	Lead	Partnerships	Resources
How will we get things done?	Who will lead?	Who is / could be involved?	What are the internal resources we have or need?
What are the projects, initiatives, or key strategies that need to be developed in order to move us toward achieving our priorities / key focus areas?	Who could help lead?	(Partners, other organizations or communities, the region, other collaborations)	(Funding, time, tools, expertise, internal capacity, collaborative support, etc.)
What specific actions / tasks / activities need to happen?	What will it look like?	How engaged are partners / clients?	What resources do we have?

External / Sector Support	Challenges, Considerations	Impact / Value / End Result	Timeline
How will others external to the organization get involved?	What are the potential obstacles/ barriers we might face?	Why are we doing this?	When will this happen in realistic increments of time from inception to completion?
How can they help us move forward?	What do we want to keep doing?	Why is it important?	
	What do we want to change or try differently?	What is the long-term benefit?	
	Are our plans realistic and achievable?	What is the impact?	
		How will it help us work toward achieving our vision and fulfilling our mission?	
		What are the indicators of success? What does it look like?	
		How will we evaluate / measure success?	

# Closing Keynote: A Compass to Guide Your Community Wellness Journey

Brenda Herchmer shared her key learnings, how-to's, and resources to provide a clear direction for individuals and organizations willing to serve as a catalyst for implementing the community-led wellness, strategic foresight, and systems-thinking that are essential for the individual, social, environmental, and economic well-being of our communities. Here are a few of Brenda's key resources.

## Key Resources:

1. Community Report Card:  
<https://bit.ly/3aMZilk>
2. Values Worksheet:  
<https://bit.ly/3kdIabE>
3. Community Business in 2030:  
<https://bit.ly/3khYF6E>
4. STEEP Thinking About Change Worksheet:  
<https://bit.ly/3aLSrc0>
5. A Planning Framework Using an Outcome Approach Worksheet:  
<https://bit.ly/3kemjkl>
6. Access Brenda's slide deck at:  
<https://bit.ly/3aN0jKd>

## More Information?

Explore the Campus for Communities website and sign up for their newsletter for resources and information about upcoming learning opportunities!

[www.campusforcommunities.ca](http://www.campusforcommunities.ca)

Connect with Campus for Communities at: [info@campusforcommunities.ca](mailto:info@campusforcommunities.ca)



**“A journey of a thousand miles  
begins with a single step.”**

**-Lao Tzu**

