

PolicyWise for Children & Families exists to improve child, family, and community well-being by leading, creating, and mobilizing research and evaluation for evidence-informed policy and practice.

Lead Create Mobilize



PolicyWise
for Children & Families

Supporting Wise Decisions

Improve the well-being of children, families, and communities by developing and integrating evidence to inform, identify, and promote effective public policy and service delivery for Albertans.

What's Inside

Here's what's inside our 2019 winter newsletter:

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A message from our President & CEO

Happy New Year! We hope everyone enjoyed their holidays. In December, we were fortunate enough to have our full team together and one of the engagement activities involved a visit to the new Royal Alberta Museum! There, we were able to learn about Alberta's past, present, and future, represented by different relics, traditions, and cultures in the museum. The theme of our meeting was "reflection," something we often forget to do. Reflecting on where we come from teaches us not only how far we've journeyed but also how far we have yet to go.

With the new year comes a fresh beginning, making way for new ventures and new projects for PolicyWise. We strive for success for our clients as we did in 2018, while also growing and learning even more in 2019. This year will mark our 16th anniversary as a company and we are looking forward to sharing some of the exciting projects we are working on with all of you soon. Thank you all for your continued support. - Robyn Blackadar



The PolicyWise team at the new Royal Alberta Museum (taking on yet another MAMMOTH task of a group photo!)

We're hiring: Project Coordinator



PolicyWise is looking for a new Project Coordinator to join our Edmonton team! You will be leading data-related initiatives while helping to develop innovative messaging and approaches to engage our stakeholders. Learn more about the role and how to apply [here](#).

What's new?

- On November 27, 2018, we had the opportunity to host a [press conference](#) for the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters (ACWS) in our Edmonton office with Executive Director, Jan Reimer.
- [The Integrated Hubs 2nd Call for Application](#) are due January 28, 2018. To learn more, please access the following [webinar](#) that was hosted on December 5, 2018.
- Blog updates:
 - [SAGE in Review](#)
 - [Consent, Privacy, & Data Governance](#)

Welcome to our new staff!

Jennifer Medlock, Project Manager - Calgary

Jen joined PolicyWise as a Project Manager in December 2018. Previous to this, she worked as the Project Manager for All In for Youth, a city-wide collaboration led by United Way of Calgary and Area aiming to improve high school completion rates in Calgary. Jen enjoys designing and implementing complex projects, and has developed a strong background in evaluation, stakeholder engagement and project management. She has a Bachelor of Science in Physics from the University of Guelph, and a Master's and PhD in Communication from the University of Calgary. Outside of work, Jen loves to hike and ski in the mountains with her family, and spend lots of time outside with her dog.

Kelsey Duebel, Project Manager - Edmonton

Kelsey has a Political Science degree from the University of Victoria and a Master's in Public Policy and Governance from the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Sydney, Australia. She previously worked for the Government of Alberta in strategic policy roles primarily focused on child intervention, poverty reduction, service delivery integration, and gendered violence prevention. Kelsey lived in Australia in 2017 and part of 2018 where she completed her master's degree and worked as a researcher for the UNSW Gendered Violence Research Network. In her spare time, Kelsey enjoys traveling, exploring Edmonton's river valley, cross-country skiing, and trips to the mountains.

Rinita Mazumder, Research & Evaluation Associate in Edmonton

Rinita recently completed her Master's in Rehabilitation Science at the University of Alberta. Her background in Psychology inspired her research focus on understanding attitudinal and contextual barriers to community participation for children with Autism. As a research assistant in the Supporting Kids Inclusion and Participation (SKIP) lab at the U of A, Rinita had the opportunity to develop her skill set in qualitative research methods and enjoyed engaging with different community stakeholders. Outside of work, she is a member of the Accessibility Advisory Committee with the City of Edmonton, where she is invested in helping make our city more livable, inclusive, and accessible for people living with disabilities. Rinita enjoys mountain biking and cross-country skiing in the River Valley, and is excited for summer hiking and camping in the mountains.

2017/18 Annual Report and Generating New Evidence Report

Want to learn more about our work and the projects we do? You can now access both the PolicyWise 2017/2018 Annual Report and Generating New Evidence Report on our [website](#).



PolicyWise-C5 Collaborative Data Linkage Project

The Collaborative Data Linkage Project is a partnership between PolicyWise and C5. A collaborative between five community-based agencies; C5 includes:

Objectives



Identify priorities and explore data across agencies



Link and integrate data across agencies



Analyze client journeys and services across agencies



Make recommendations for a shared intake process



Build capacity within agencies to continue linking, sharing, and using data

- Boyle Street Community Services
- Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society
- Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers
- Terra Centre for Teen Parents
- Norwood Child & Family Resource Centre

The Collaborative Data Linkage Project aims to link and integrate data between the C5 agencies to enable closer integration of decision making, service evaluation, and planning. PolicyWise and C5 agencies will investigate the type of data collected by the agencies to assess how data can be anonymously linked and shared. To learn more about this project, visit our [website](#).

Spotlight: Meet Laurie and Robert

Every newsletter, we feature two members from our PolicyWise team. We ask each of them to answer some questions and share their responses here.

Laurie Vermeylen

What is your role at PolicyWise and how long have you been with the company?

I am a Research and Evaluation Associate and I also manage some of our grant competitions. I have been with PolicyWise for just over 4 years now.



What are you working on currently that you're excited about?

I am currently managing the Maternal, Newborn, Child & Youth, Strategic Clinical Network (MNCY HOIF II) grant competition and it is very interesting to read all of the unique applications that range across many important topic areas.

What is your most memorable moment at PolicyWise so far?

It's not really a "moment" but it has been amazing to see how much we have grown in the last 4 years. When I started, there were only a handful of us in the Calgary office, and now we have a beautiful (and larger) office and triple the amount of staff. It has been wonderful to get to know so many incredible team members.

What is your greatest pleasure(s) in life?

Relaxing with my partner, dog, and cats, reading a good book while drinking a glass of wine.

What is one thing your colleagues don't know about you?

Some of my colleagues do already know this, but I am a huge book nerd. I love reading most genres and am always happy to discuss book recommendations!

Robert Jagodzinski

What is your role at PolicyWise and how long have you been with the company?

I am a data analyst here at PolicyWise. That title belies all of the interesting projects I get to engage in though. I am doing a lot more than data analysis these days. I have been with PolicyWise for 3.5 years.



What are you working on currently that you're excited about?

These days, I am really excited about the work we are doing with not-for-profits. There is an appetite for change around the way data is collected and handled within the sector. Projects such as C5 show a real desire to work together. These initiatives will not only make it easier for agencies to collaborate with but will also really benefit the clients they serve.

What is your most memorable moment at PolicyWise so far?

Within the first few months of starting at PolicyWise, I just remember my mornings coming into work and feeling a real sense of gratitude. I realized I landed in a really great workplace with a very positive work culture.

What is your greatest pleasure(s) in life?

I love hiking, backpacking, and kayaking in the mountains. It's a really incredible feeling being far from civilization in the middle of nature. I'm also very happy to connect with my friends and family in my spare time.

What is one thing your colleagues don't know about you?

Some may already know this but I used to be a serious musician. I wrote, recorded, and sometimes even performed my own compositions. There were a few times I even had jam sessions with local Folk Fest celebrities!

Upcoming events

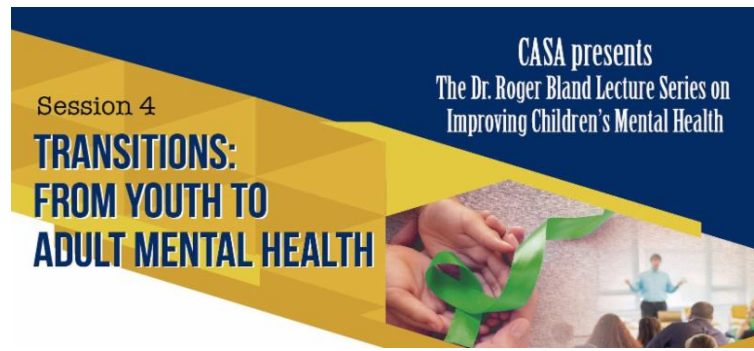
The following are a list of upcoming events that are still open for registration:

CASA Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health Lecture Series

January 24, 2019 (Edmonton)

- Register now for the final session of the CASA Lecture Series. The sessions deal with important issues around children's mental health.

Dr. Ian Manion will be the keynote speaker, and he will be joined by an expert panel to lead discussions and answer questions from the audience.



Alberta SPOR Support Unit Summer Institute 2019: Impact & Opportunities

May 13-15, 2019 (Edmonton)

- Join the Summer Institute 2019 where researchers, patients, clinicians, students, policy makers and more, gather to share insights, connect with colleagues and promote patient-oriented research.
- **Call for Abstracts** is open until February 25, 2019.

Dates to remember:

January 30: **Bell Let's Talk Day**

February 27: **Pink Shirt Day**

March 8: **International Women's Day**

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