

Lead Create Mobilize



**PolicyWise**  
for Children & Families

***Supporting Wise Decisions***

*To develop and integrate evidence to inform, identify, and promote effective public policy and service delivery to improve the well-being of children, families, and communities.*

---

## What's Inside

Here's what's inside our fall 2018 newsletter:

- [A Message from our President & CEO](#)
  - [Welcome Mark Dixon!](#)
  - [Diving into Data at the IPDLN 2018 Conference](#)
  - [ACWS 2018 Outcomes Conference](#)
  - [Calgary Thrives](#)
  - [Spotlight - Meet our Team!](#)
  - [From the Desks of the Data Lab](#)
  - [Upcoming Events](#)
- 

## A Message from our President & CEO

*Autumn is here! We hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving with their loved ones and are enjoying the crisp weather fall has given us. We had the opportunity to reflect on our 2017/18 year at our Community AGM event on September 28th. We would like to thank everyone who attended and made the event such a success. A special shout-out to our guest speaker, Menasha Nikhanj, Director of Integrated Community Safety, for her presentation on Integrated Offender Management - thank you, Menasha!*



**Menasha presenting at the Community AGM**

*With the changing seasons, we can't help but to reflect on the future and the year ahead for us. We are excited to share some of the exciting projects we are working on with all of you. Thank you to all of our readers for your continued support. We are thankful to each and everyone of*

---

## Welcome Mark Dixon!



We are very happy to announce that we have hired an Executive Director of Communications, Marketing, and Public Relations - Mark Dixon.

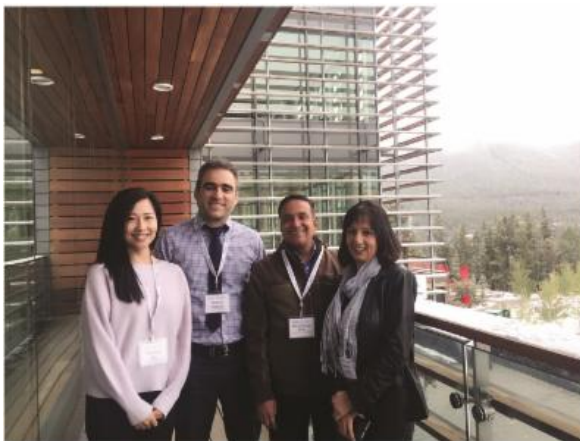
*Mark Dixon has over three decades of broad-based marketing, advertising, and public affairs expertise in the healthcare, post-secondary, and marketing sectors. Mark holds a Bachelor of Commerce (Marketing) degree from the University of Alberta, an Honours Diploma in Business Administration (Marketing) from NAIT, is a Certified Advertising Accredited Professional (CAAP), and earned a Bachelors in Marketing Hamburgerology from McDonald's Hamburger University. Mark's varied marketing and account management experiences have been valuable assets for his clients. His unique perspective and proven branding expertise have provided his clients with a distinct competitive advantage.*

*Mark came to PolicyWise from LPi Group, a fully integrated creative and digital agency, where he headed the Edmonton office as VP/Managing Director. Mark also ran his own business called, Simply MARKeting, and previously held Director of Marketing and Public Affairs roles at Alberta Health Services and Capital Health. Mark is also a former post-secondary marketing instructor (NAIT and Canadian Institute of Retailing and Services from the University of Alberta), which has been instrumental in successfully guiding his clients through the strategic planning, implementation, and maintenance phases of their marketing needs.*

*Mark lives in St. Albert with his wife, two teenage daughters, two cats and a dog, and is an active member of the St. Albert Rotary Club.*

---

## Diving into Data at the 2018 IPDLN Conference



PolicyWise staff presented 14 sessions at the International Population Data Linkage Network (IPDLN) conference in Banff, Alberta, September 12 to 14, 2018. Topics ranged from results and engagement processes from the Child and Youth Longitudinal Project, to data governance, to linkage methodology. It was a great opportunity to connect with the international community to share learnings. Abstracts are available in the [September issue](#) of the International Journal of Population Data Science. Keep an eye on our website and follow us on social media for slides and recordings of PolicyWise presentations from the IPDLN conference!

---

# Alberta Council of Women's Shelters 2018 Outcomes Conference

PolicyWise was invited to present at the [Alberta Council of Women's Shelters 2018 \(ACWS\) Outcomes Conference](#), held in Edmonton from September 19 to 20, 2018.

The purpose of the ACWS conference was to enhance organizational and collective capacity in Alberta's women's shelters in relation to evaluation and measuring impact. PolicyWise led a keynote presentation around data linkage and its potential to provide insights to support sector improvements and shelter service delivery. Our Director of Data Operations, Jason Lau, and Data Analyst, Robert Jagodzinski, talked about the Calgary Thrives project, which you can learn more about in this newsletter. As part of the keynote, we led a discussion with shelter representatives asking them to think about and discuss (from a data perspective) what organizations they would like to partner with and what concerns would need to be addressed. We also asked them to discuss how linked data might be used to further organization and sector interests. The discussion led to interesting ideas from attendees and ACWS leadership and we look forward to more of these discussions and exploring future opportunities with Alberta's women's shelters.



Graphic recording created by [Sam Hester](#)

## Calgary Thrives

With support from the Calgary Foundation, and in partnership with the Centre for Child Well-Being at Mount Royal University, the Calgary Thrives initiative identified and addressed barriers to data sharing within the not for-profit sector. By building strong relationships and trust amongst partners, it provided a successful proof of concept for linking and sharing data. Partnering agencies included the following:

- Calgary Food Bank
- Families Matter
- SouthWest Community Resource Centre
- Calgary Counselling Centre
- Sunrise Community Link Resource Centre
- Calgary Urban Project Society (CUPS)

The 18-month project has now come to completion and the final report is available on our [website](#). PolicyWise will be leveraging the lessons learned from the initiative to help other organizations make the most of their data through collaboration. Please contact us at [data@policywise.com](mailto:data@policywise.com) if you see this potential in your organization!

## Spotlight: Meet Courtney and Xinjie

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

## Courtney Lundy



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

I've been with PolicyWise for nearly 11 years, based out of the Calgary office. My original role of Research Grants Manager involves managing all of the new and ongoing grants and awards that PolicyWise offers to academic investigators. Over the years, my role has evolved to include Business Management for the Calgary office as well.

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

Right now we're working on posters and publications to share the lessons learned through our IMPACT research project in Lethbridge. We were one of six international sites to look at ways to enhance access to primary healthcare for vulnerable populations. Our pop-up model for providing access to health and social services has generated a lot of interest and we are excited to share our findings.

### **What is your most memorable moment at PolicyWise so far?**

Picking up a very large cake for our 2018 Open House and trying to fit it onto the floor of my car without dumping it all over the parking lot.

### **Your greatest pleasure(s) in life?**

Watching my kids play independently while I drink my coffee on a Sunday morning.

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

My family's background is Scottish, and I competed in highland dancing for over 10 years.

---

## Xinjie Cui

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

I've been with PolicyWise for 11 years, based out of the Edmonton office. I was the initial Director for the Child and Youth Data Laboratory (CYDL) and I got to build the team, the infrastructure, and the processes to link and analyze data from child serving ministries to inform policy and practice. Over the last few years, as the Chief Analytics Officer, I am responsible for the overall data and analytics strategies and oversee multiple data and data capacity building initiatives.



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

Right now we're working closely with the Alberta not-for-profit sector and the Indigenous communities in co-designing and co-creating strategies and projects to build and mobilize capacities in data management, analytics, and research. In close collaboration with the Alberta First Nations Information Governance Centre, a 10-month training program, "Using Data Analytics & Visualization to Tell Your Story," is underway with close to 20 participants from the First Nations communities in Alberta.

### **What is your most memorable moment at PolicyWise so far?**

The moment when we received all of the data sets and linking files for the CYDL Longitudinal Project. The team went for a celebration dinner after work!

### **Your greatest pleasure(s) in life?**

Being with my family and watching my children grow.

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

I've formed a book club with nine other Chinese ladies and we have been reading and meeting every month for the last 8 and a half years!

---

## From the Desks of the Data Lab



*The Child and Youth Data Laboratory (CYDL) focuses on understanding the experiences of Albertan children and youth as they develop. This project takes a multi-year, cumulative look at the service use of Albertan children and youth. The trailblazing initiative has produced unique insights into the well-being of Albertans by leveraging cross-sector data linkage and analysis.*

Five new products have been released from the Child and Youth Longitudinal Project:

- The following two dashboards provide an interactive and easy-to-digest overview of clients in the two programs, their experience in other government programs, and key indicators such as mental health:
  - [Persons with Developmental Disability](#)
  - [Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped](#)
- Individuals with disabilities experience several challenges when transitioning from childhood to adolescence. The [Disability Transition report](#) is an in-depth look at the experience of Albertan youth in their transition from childhood disability programs into adult disability programs.
- A new report examines the socio-demographic characteristics and government service use of [English as a Second Language Students](#) in the K-12 education system in Alberta.
- Lastly, a report was released on the characteristics of [Students with Special Needs](#). These students include those that may have received special education programming services for challenges and disabilities, but also students that were gifted or talented.

In the next few months, the Data Lab will be releasing other reports on prolific offenders, mental health in students, and a new series of products produced in partnership with the Alberta First Nations Information Governance Centre.

---

## 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](#)

**October 18 and November 22, 2018, and January 24, 2019 (Edmonton)**

- The free CASA Lecture Series talks about important issues in children's mental health. Each session features a keynote speaker, and an expert panel to lead discussions and answer questions from the audience.

### [Prairie Child Welfare Consortium - Future of Child Welfare in Canada Conference](#)

**October 23 to 26, 2018 (Calgary)**

- The National Conference is an opportunity to gather together researchers, practitioners,

policy-makers, and community members to focus on the future of child welfare in Canada.

### Innovation in Evidence Conference

**November 15-16, 2018 (Regina)**

- Our President and CEO, Robyn Blackadar, will be joining international leaders and innovators in evidence-informed policymaking to share emerging trends, discuss lessons learned, and provide insight into the challenges facing policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and academics in this field.



PolicyWise for Children & Families | T: 780.944.8630 |

[PolicyWise.com](http://PolicyWise.com)

STAY CONNECTED:

