

Hi, just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in PolicyWise for Children & Families. Don't forget to add [acaster@policywise.com](mailto:acaster@policywise.com) to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.

## Lead ♦ Create ♦ Mobilize



### Our Vision

Alberta is a leader in creating and mobilizing evidence to ensure the well-being of children, families and communities.

### Our Mission

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.

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## What's Inside

1. **Feature:** PolicyWise' Hesam Izakian wants everyone to be a data lover
2. **CYDL launches** findings from Experiences of Children & Youth over Time on January 27, 2017
3. **Cathie Scott**, PolicyWise COO, nominated for AHS President's Excellence Award
4. **GOA Ministry changes** align PolicyWise with Alberta Children's Services
5. **Apply for a \$5K Secondary Data** Use Funding Grant
6. **Technology** and early childhood development: The benefits
7. AUMA launches **Housing Hub** for municipalities
8. **Calgary Homeless Foundation** hosting Research to Action Symposium

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## Data Scientist wants to make you a data lover

Dr. Hesam Izakian immigrated in 2010 to Canada with a Masters in Computer Science from the [University of Isfahan](#) (Iran).

He was accepted into the University of Alberta's Software Engineering and Intelligent Systems program by Prof. Witold Pedrycz. On his arrival in Edmonton, Hesam says, "I was in utter shock when we got off the plane. I felt this bone chilling cold. And to think it was +5 that day!"

After working for two years as a research and teaching assistant, Hesam received a generous two-year scholarship from [Alberta Innovates: Technology Futures](#). He successfully defended his PhD in 2014 and within the week began working as a data scientist at the Child and Youth Data Lab, a PolicyWise

managed initiative. "I wanted to work in a non-university environment. I like practical and research work. PolicyWise is a perfect fit." Hesam said.

[Forbes.com](#) reported in April 2015 that data scientists like Hesam are in high demand. "Data science is increasingly being adopted by all companies in all industries."

Hesam agrees. "Data generation is growing exponentially. Companies are using data to maximize their gains. And, the technology to capture data is becoming increasingly affordable."

The CYDL's most recent study, *Experiences of Albertan Children and Youth over Time, 2005/06 to 2010/11*, is a longitudinal, cross-ministry study that analyzed over two million Albertans and their use of government services over the span of six years. The first deliverable from the project was the Program Overlap Matrix.



L-R: Hesam and his colleagues, Hitesh Bhatt and Robert Jagodzinski, discuss The Program Overlap Matrix.

With the support of his colleagues, Hitesh Bhatt and Robert Jagodzinski, Hesam designed a program to extract frequencies from the data. The automation ensured 100% accuracy and a speedy process.

Hesam also developed the CYDL Data Extractor.



L-R: Navot Lamba, Research Scientist at The CYDL, and Hesam Izakian discuss data extraction.

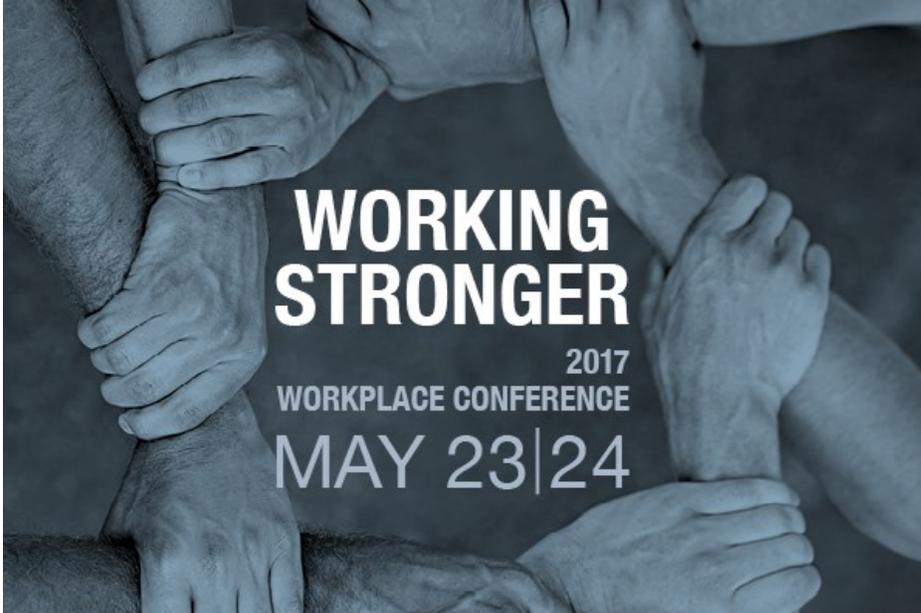
"It's painful when you're asked by researchers to extract data. Now, using the Data Extractor, our scientists can extract the data themselves, save it and begin their analysis. It's fast, easy and modifications to the extraction can be made easily." Hesam beamed.

Hesam is also proud of the study's [Dashboard](#). "Each interactive component is easy to use and understand. Real numbers are available. If you're not using these tools, you're underestimating the findings from this study."

Looking ahead, Hesam is excited to be collaborating with Australia's [Curtin University](#) and implementing their linkage software. Once this software is piloted and tested, it will provide PolicyWise with the means to link data from a variety of sources while preserving privacy. "It's exciting, ahead of the curve and there's nothing like it out there. PolicyWise is in an envious position to be collaborating on this project." Hesam elaborated.

Access all of the [products](#), including the [Program Overlap Matrix](#), [Dashboards](#) and reports from the study, *Experiences of Albertan Children and Youth over Time, 2005/06 to 2010/11*.

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## Early findings released from Experiences of Children & Youth over Time, 2005/06 to 2010/11

On January 27, in collaboration with key Alberta social-sector Ministries, the Child and Youth Data Lab shared the first results from its longitudinal, cross-ministry analysis of over two million Albertans and their use of government services over the span of six years.

### Be a change maker.

#### 1. Access the [Dashboard](#) and Population Profiles

- Criminal Offences
  - A profile of youth and young adults with criminal offences
- Income Support Recipients
  - A profile of income support recipients
- Post Secondary Students in Alberta
  - A Profile of Post-Secondary Students in Alberta
- FSCD - Family Support for Children with Disabilities

#### 2. Watch the presentations from the launch

- [CYDL History & Longitudinal Study Background](#)

- **Matrix & Profile Visualizations and Significance**
  - Access [The Matrix](#) , The Program Overlap Matrix
  - Review the Program Overlap Matrix [Tutorial Video](#)
- **Question and Answer Period**
- **FASD Panel**
- **Concurrent Session: Justice and Solicitor General**
- **Concurrent Session: Disability Services**
- **Concurrent Session: Education Theme**
- **Concurrent Session: Power of Cross-Sector Longitudinal Analysis**

3. [Schedule](#) a tailored workshop for you and your colleagues with CYDL Scientists.

**Discuss the findings with your team.**

**Individuals**  
with offences  
**meeting** or  
exceeding  
educational  
**expectations**  
increased  
between 2005 to 2011

from Experiences of Albertan Children & Youth over Time by The Child and Youth Data Laboratory

PolicyWise  
for Children & Families

Want to dig deeper?

[Schedule](#) a tailored workshop with our CYDL Scientists!



### PolicyWise' Cathie Scott nominated for Alberta Health Services President's Excellence Award

Cathie Scott, PolicyWise' Chief Operation Officer, was recently nominated for an Alberta Health Services President's Excellence Award by colleague Jason Gibson, for her work on the IMPACT Lethbridge project. Cathie is nominated for Outstanding Achievement in Patient and family Centred Care. Alberta Health Services' President and CEO, Dr. Verna Yiu said, "the team's nomination is an example of the outstanding work we aspire to every day."

IMPACT is a five-year research program that provides opportunities to build upon Local Innovation Partnerships and research to co-create models of care that enhance access for vulnerable populations. Local Innovation Partnerships represent communities with complex challenges to the delivery of Primary Health Care (PHC). Set in three Australian states (New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria) and three Canadian provinces (Alberta, Ontario and Québec), IMPACT has created learning networks of decision makers, researchers, clinicians and members of the vulnerable communities in the six local health

regions. A LIP is a community of stakeholders who share a common concern around vulnerable populations that are at increased risk due to limited access-to-care.



**ESL students**  
were just as likely  
to enrol in  
**post-secondary**  
as the general population  
and had  
**less involvement**  
in the **justice** system

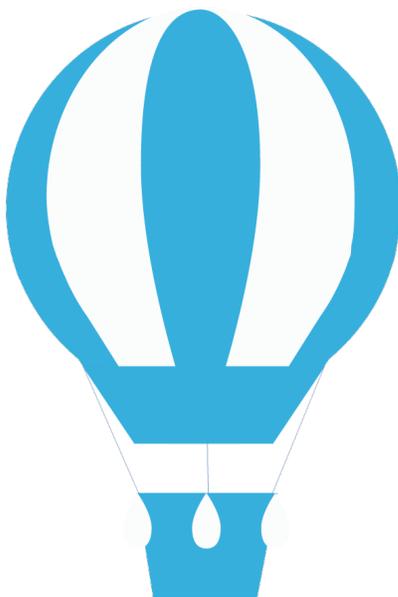
*from Experiences of Albertan Children & Youth over  
Time by The Child and Youth Data Laboratory*

Want to dig deeper?  
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## PolicyWise aligned with Alberta Children's Services

On January 19, 2017 Premier Rachel Notley replaced Alberta Human Services with two new ministries: [Children's Services](#) and [Community and Social Services](#).

PolicyWise for Children & Families will be aligned with Children's Services, and the Deputy Minister, Darlene Bouwsema, will be appointed to our Board of Directors. PolicyWise deeply appreciates the contributions provided by David Morhart over the past five years. He has been a visionary leader and strong supporter of PolicyWise' mandate. He remains a champion and PolicyWise will continue to have close ties through his new Ministry, Community and Social Services, given PolicyWise' work in the areas of FASD, children with disabilities, family violence prevention and housing and homelessness.



## Funding opportunity available for secondary data use through SAGE initiative

Secondary Analysis for Generating Evidence (SAGE) is a data initiative at PolicyWise for Children & Families. This data and research platform enables the secondary use of data related to child and youth development, health and well-being.

SAGE is requesting proposals for their Secondary Data Use Grant. This grant provides \$5000 to five successful applications to undertake research utilizing research data that is stored and managed by SAGE.

For more information about this grant, please go to our [website](#). Deadline for this grant is February 27, 2017 at 4:00 pm.

If you have any questions about the SAGE Secondary Use Grant, please contact the SAGE team at [data@policywise.com](mailto:data@policywise.com).



## Technology in early education

Do you know that educational technologies effectively support learning about language skills; emergent literacy; vocabulary; story structure and meaning; concepts of print; phonological awareness, and word reading?

Children are able to learn from screens (ex. tablets) when they are older than 2 years of age because their learning becomes more flexible as they get older. When their language and cognitive skills improve and their social awareness and experience with screens grows, children can transfer learning from screens to the real world.



Parent Information Sheet

[Young children and technology: Finding the right balance](#)

"Children are more likely to learn from digital media when the content is age appropriate, engaging and educational."

Expert Papers

- [Infants, Toddlers and Learning from Screen Media](#)
- [Learning in the Digital Age: Putting Education Back in Educational Apps for Young Children](#)

All resources can be accessed on the Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development [website](#).

**50%**  
of **FSCD**  
clients accessed  
**AISH** services  
at some point between  
**2005 and 2011**

from Experiences of Albertan Children & Youth over  
Time by The Child and Youth Data Laboratory

Policy Wise  
for Children & Families

Want to dig deeper?  
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2017  
PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE  
MAY 9|10

NOW  
WE ARE  
STRONGER



### Housing Hub launched to advance Alberta's affordable housing

The Alberta Urban Municipalities Association [Housing Hub](#) enables small and mid-size municipalities to advance affordable housing through strategy development, tools for tracking progress and information on available funding from other levels of government.

AUMA recently hosted a [webinar](#) discussing affordable housing and featuring four speakers.

- Darren Reedy, Manager of Welcoming and Inclusive Communities, AUMA. Darren provided a tour of AUMA's new housing hub. This hub is an online source of information, resources, and strategies that AUMA has gathered to support municipalities looking to develop affordable housing locally.
- Kelly Wagar, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). Kelly provided details on supports and services CMHC offers to municipalities, including assistance with housing needs' assessments.
- Dee Ann Benard and Joshua Benard, Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN). Dee Ann and Joshua spoke about the Sustainable Housing Initiative and ARDN's work to support the development of affordable housing in rural areas.



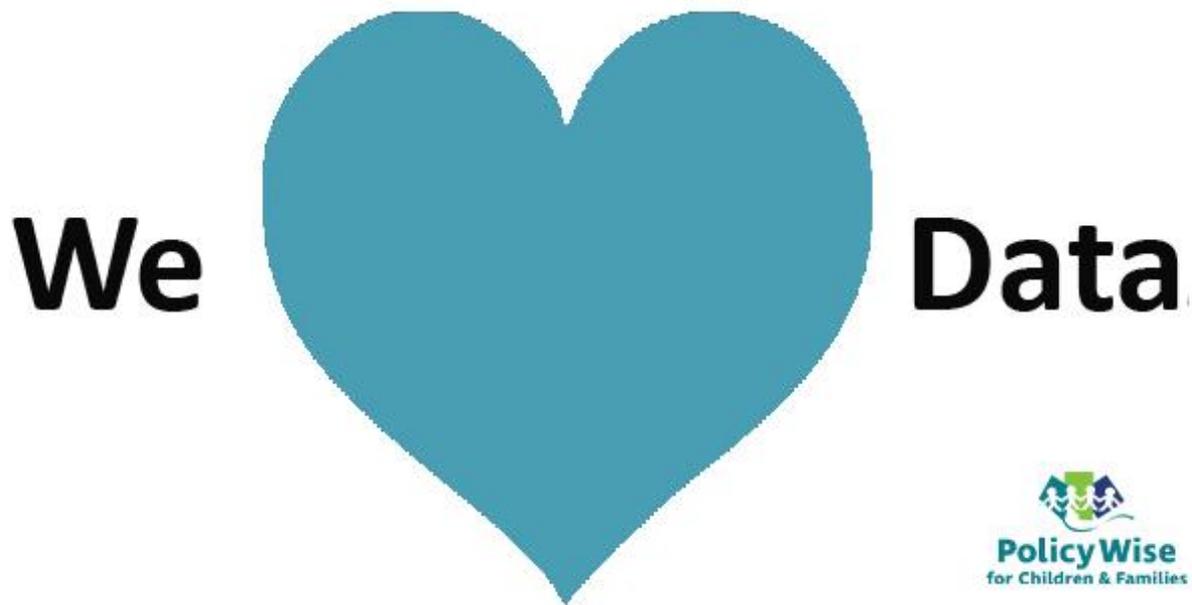
## Calgary Homeless Foundation to host Research to Action Symposium April 19-20, 2017 ~ Fort Calgary

Every two years, the Calgary Homeless Foundation organizes a community research symposium to share knowledge, showcase local research, and connect members within the homeless-serving sector. As data quality improves, communities around the province continue to explore new ways to research and enhance our community, while also gaining new insights into programmatic and individual outcomes.

This year, the Homelessness Research Symposium will bring together researchers, service providers, government officials, and our community to discover ways to transform Research to Action.

This year's symposium will showcase recent local research and translate it into improved practice, identify gaps in knowledge, and discuss possible directions for future research. Network with colleagues, peers and sector professionals for future research collaborations as we share the methods, findings, and practical implications of our collective work.

[...more information](#)



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