

Life
After
School



Educator Toolkit
College



About Canadian Business SenseAbility

Canadian Business SenseAbility is Canada's only national, bilingual business network dedicated to helping private and public-sector organizations become more accessible and inclusive of people with disabilities. We connect employers to the resources, tools and expertise needed to welcome people with disabilities as customers, employees and investors.

Why this program is important

Life After School is a program created to meet the needs of employers who understand the value of, and are seeking a pathway to hire, youth with a disability. Life After School is a customized platform and work-integrated learning experience where students demonstrate that they have the skills needed to perform a job. Every student who successfully demonstrates the identified skills required for a position is given an interview. Students with a disability, who often face additional barriers when looking for their first job, now have access to employers seeking diverse talent.

“

In the middle
of difficulty lies
opportunity.”

.....
Albert Einstein

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Why Life After School works for students... and colleges

Never has the job of colleges been more challenging. We live in an era of unprecedented change and technological innovation. Lifelong learning and adrenalized adaptability are constants in this turbocharged environment. How then to prepare today's students to be tomorrow's creators, producers and citizens?

Part of the answer is work-integrated learning (WIL). Work-integrated learning has been called the “future of learning” for good reason. By embracing WIL, schools are giving students a head start in applying their education to the workplace, enabling them to accelerate their learning. Students have the opportunity to practice skills like communication, analysis and problem-solving in the ‘real’ world. They have a chance to gain experience to add to a résumé and start building a network for future job searches.

Ryerson University's Best Practices in Experiential Learning paper has identified that ‘minority’ groups of students have the most to gain from work-integrated learning. As a group that has traditionally lower or no participation in internships or co-ops, students with disabilities can benefit from this program.

According to Statistics Canada, the employment rate of Canadians with disabilities is 49% compared to 79% for Canadians without a disability. In addition to the benefits of WIL, the importance of early work experience, especially for students with disabilities, cannot be overstated. People with disabilities are still marginalized in employment.

The Life After School program has been designed to provide a meaningful pathway and WIL opportunities to students with disabilities. The Life After School partners – Canadian Business SenseAbility™, the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development, and SenseAbility's network of inclusive employers - are combining resources with colleges to offer students with disabilities, who often have greater difficulty securing a first work experience, high-quality WIL experiences.

Life After School is a first step towards employment. By introducing this pilot to students with disabilities while still in college, we hope to break down barriers and open the door wider to the world of work.

Thank you for participating in this pilot.

¹Turcotte, Martin. Persons with disabilities and employment. Statistics Canada, 2015. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2014001/article/14115-eng.htm>

Who's involved?

Close to 1 in 5 Canadians have a disability. They are customers, employees, suppliers and investors and make up a population segment much too large to ignore. People with disabilities are a great source of talent, but face barriers to employment. Life After School is designed to help address this gap.

Who's Involved

Canadian Business SenseAbility™

SenseAbility is Canada's only national, bilingual business network dedicated to helping private and public sector organizations become more accessible and inclusive of people with disabilities. SenseAbility trains business in disability inclusion and will offer employers support for the program's duration.

Employers

SenseAbility's network of employers are dedicated to hiring a diverse workforce. They already employ people with disabilities in their organizations. They are interested in accessing the next generation of workers. They are also interested in developing the competencies of their managers and employees in working with diverse candidates. The pilot offers employers the opportunity to address these goals.

Colleges and students

This is you. Your participation is vital. We look to your expertise in developing and delivering this pilot. The colleges and students participating in this pilot come from Durham, Humber and Seneca Colleges.

The program will be delivered through a variety of pre-identified college faculties and programs.

SenseAbility understands the importance and the role of families in any endeavour involving students. We want to engage families and have literature on the program for them. We are also prepared to provide information sessions if participating colleges deem this necessary or desirable.

The Life After School portal

The portal is a customized online technology that matches students' abilities to the needs of employers. It is a striking departure from the 'résumé-first' and experience-based approaches currently used. It incorporates job descriptions based on actual outputs and skills challenges and provides students with visual career pathways so they can see how an entry-level job leads to a future career.



An overview

College WIL preparation

- College staff deliver work-integrated learning curricula
- Students learn research, job search and interviewing skills
- Workplace expectations and WIL parameters are reviewed

Employer

- Post WIL opportunities on Life After School portal
- Assess students' applications based on skill matches
- Invite matching candidates for interviews

Life After School

- Job postings identify skills matches, not experience or education
- Students complete challenges and apply for jobs
- Students who successfully complete required challenges are interviewed

Training

- SenseAbility trains employers in disability confidence
- Field Placement Advisors support hired student onboarding and training

Support

- Colleges offer on-the-job support to students if needed
- SenseAbility offers employers support if needed

Work-integrated learning

- Students acquire practical work experience
- Employers evaluate student performance
- Pilot is evaluated by employers, students and colleges

In Canada the employment rate is 79%, for people with disability the employment rate is 49%



The Life After School journey

Most people use a résumé to apply for jobs. Life After School is different. It matches students with a disability to work-integrated learning opportunities with inclusive companies that are looking for diverse candidates. Only students with a disability can apply. No résumé is required until the interview stage. The initial internship interview is based on what students can do, or what they know. The employers participating in this program are less interested in keywords or looking at a traditional résumé, and more focused on whether the applicant can do the job.

Students complete the Life After School online skill challenges to demonstrate their skills. All students who successfully complete the necessary challenges will receive a job interview(s). Skill challenges can apply to multiple postings on the portal. The company will not review a résumé until the job interview. There are eight easy steps

Students:

1. Create a profile
2. Search for available job postings
3. Complete the required skill challenges for the job posting
4. Apply to the WIL job posting
5. Are interviewed
6. If hired, complete onboarding and company training
7. Complete the WIL placement

All participants:

8. Evaluate the pilot program

Work-integrated learning (WIL)

Students demonstrate their skills in skill challenges. All students will be invited to a job interview(s) if they successfully complete the required challenges. Students can also use skills to apply for other jobs.

As a college participating in this program, your role is:

- let students know about the program – you may want to book a SenseAbility information session
- encourage students to sign up on the portal
- encourage students to apply to positions
- assist students with interview preparation
- attend interviews with students (if required)
- assist with student on-boarding and employer training programs (if needed)
- oversee the WIL experience
- encourage school staff to book a SenseAbility's Rethinking Disability information session to learn more about employers and disability (we'll come to you)
- evaluate the pilot

Life After School

A roadmap for colleges

SenseAbility will work with your college to ensure a successful WIL.

STEP 1 / Preparing for Life After School

Create a marketing plan for the WIL Life After School pilot. This may include:

- Sending an email blast to all students enrolled in a participating WIL program within your college
- Post WIL pilot details on social media and blackboard platforms
- Print and distribute a hardcopy of the pilot information sheet to participating WIL programs within your college

- Share the pilot information sheet with the Career Centre, Accessible Learning Services and Student Wellness and/or Information Centres
- Arrange a free information session for college staff, departments and interested students/families to review the pilot information

Students complete the work-integrated learning preparation courses

STEP 2 / The Life After School portal

Encourage students to register on the Life After School portal

Prepare students to disclose needed accommodations during an interview

Encourage students to complete skill challenges to guarantee a WIL interview(s)

STEP 3 / The work-integrated learning placement

Participate in student onboarding (if required)

- Review the WIL goals with the employer
- Participate in students' on-the-job training, if needed

Check in with student and employers during placement to review progress and address issues

Provide job coaching, if necessary

Complete the Life After School pilot evaluation

Keep open communication with employer to address ongoing issues

Communicating with parents

Parents have never been more involved in student's education and development than they are today. This is even more true of parents who have students with disabilities. By necessity, these parents are involved, committed and passionate. They have been life-long advocates for their children who now young adults.

It is often challenging for these parents to see their sons and daughters become more autonomous. The prospect of their young adult entering a workplace with adult expectations, on their own, is something entirely new for them. Understandably it can produce anxiety, perhaps greater for the parent than for the student.

SenseAbility is here to help colleges prepare, communicate, and interact with parents of students with disabilities who are considering participating in the Life After School program. We have extensive experience working with employers to support people who have disabilities in the workplace.

Pilot information session

Upon request of the college, SenseAbility will lead a 1-hour Pilot Information Session to introduce the Life After School program.

Content will include:

- The importance of early work experience for students with disabilities, who often have great difficulty securing their first job
- Reviewing the pre-screened employer network offering WIL positions
- Reassurance that student health and safety is a top priority
- Answering key questions and where to go for assistance

This program which has been designed to help students acquire the job experience that they will need post-graduation. This includes building persistence, self-discipline and resilience. Families can support students by taking a hands-off approach.

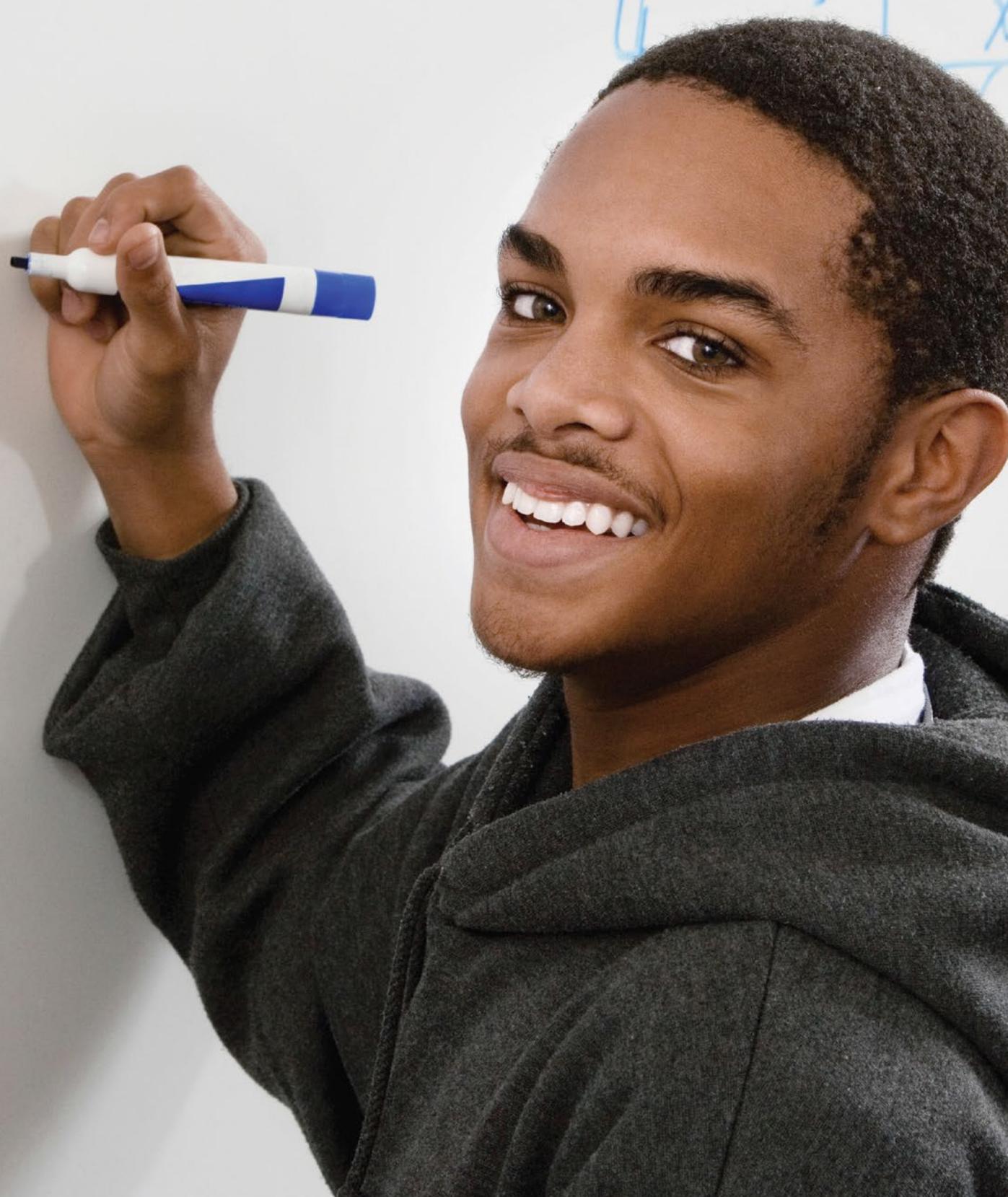
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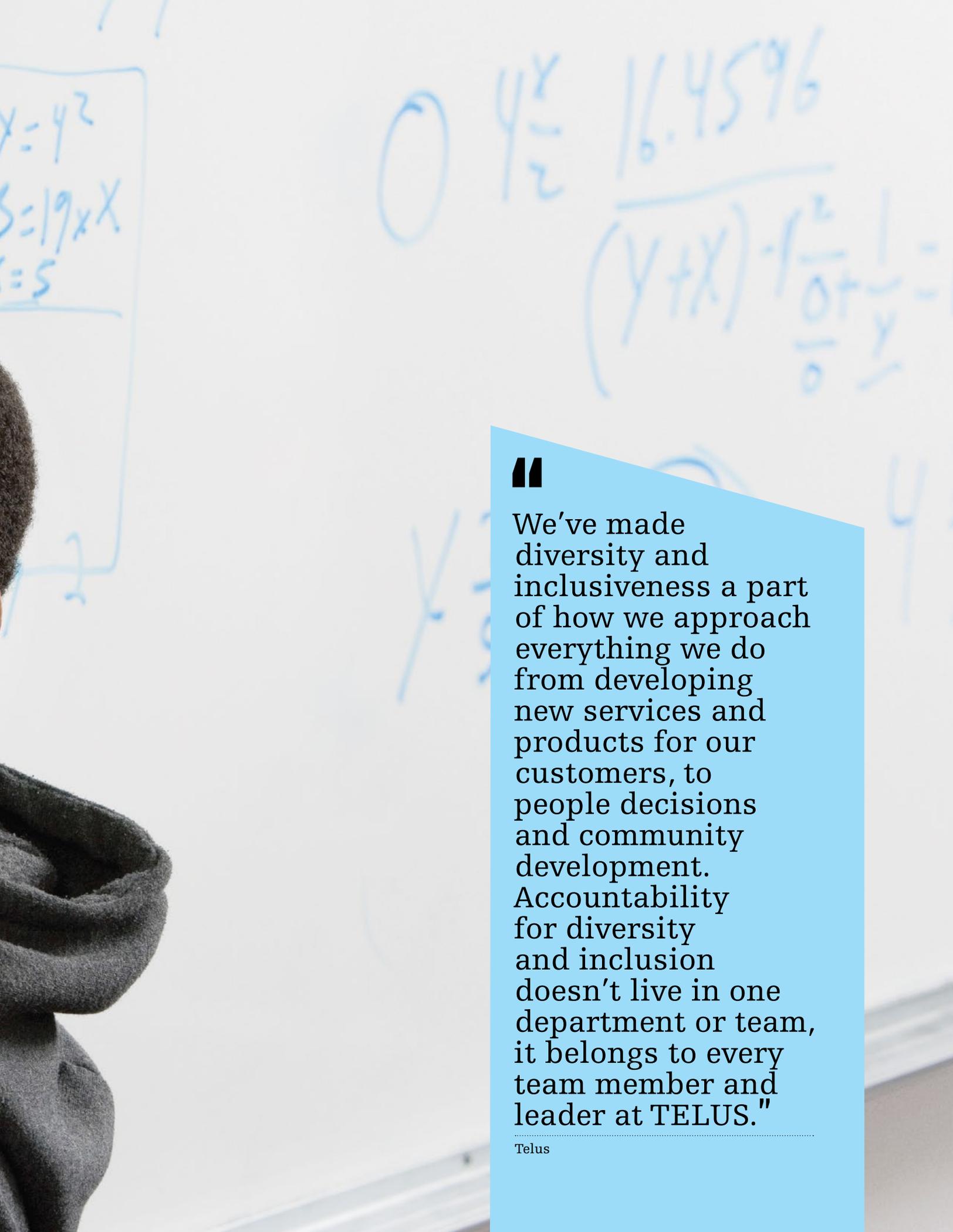
It always seems impossible until it's done.”

.....
Nelson Mandela

$$= (y + A)^2 - Gyx = \frac{MP}{A}$$

$$2$$
$$\frac{0}{+A}$$





“

We've made diversity and inclusiveness a part of how we approach everything we do from developing new services and products for our customers, to people decisions and community development. Accountability for diversity and inclusion doesn't live in one department or team, it belongs to every team member and leader at TELUS.”

Telus

Life After School responsibility chart

	Preparing for WIL	Applying to, and completing WIL
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete WIL preparation course or class • Discuss pilot with parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register on Life After School portal • Review job postings • Complete relevant skill challenges • Apply for jobs
College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and execute a marketing strategy for the pilot • Deliver the WIL preparation course • Provide students with pilot information – emphasize that this is open only to students with a disability • Host an information session to discuss pilot (if needed) • Answer parents' and students' questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage students with a disability to register on the Life After School portal • Prepare students for interviews • Support students on identifying and asking for accommodations • Assist students with interviews (if needed) • Support students with training and onboarding (if needed) • Forward WIL paperwork to employers • Complete pilot evaluation



	Preparing for WIL	Applying to, and completing WIL
Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify placement opportunities within organization • Send a list of opportunities and job descriptions to SenseAbility contacts • Review and approve necessary skills and career path to be hosted on portal • Coordinate interviews with students • Complete Rethinking Disability training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register on Life After School portal • Provide job postings • Interview successful candidates • Extend offers for WIL experience • Complete the college paperwork provided • Complete student evaluation • Complete pilot evaluation
SenseAbility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee Life After School pilot • Recruit employers • Deliver information sessions, if needed • Re-write job descriptions to be outcome based • Create Life After School portal • Create Life After School challenges • Test skill challenges with colleges, students and employers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forward a list of candidates for each job to employer • Coordinate job interviews • Provide employers with support • Evaluate the program

Questions?

Giving students with a disability the opportunity of a WIL experience is something we are all committed to. The success of the pilot depends on everyone reaching out with their questions or when concerns arise. If you have any questions that we have not addressed, please feel free to reach out to us directly.

Contact Deirdre Millin, Program Coordinator
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Thank you to our Advisory Committee

Life After School is a pilot program created through the collaboration of Canadian Business SenseAbility, its college and employer partners and is funded through the Career Ready Fund Stream 2 of the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development, Government of Ontario.

Life After School would like to thank the following professionals for participating in the College Advisory Committee:

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