

# A Year in Review

The Children's  
Aid Society  
of the Districts of  
Sudbury and Manitoulin



La Société d'aide  
à l'enfance  
des districts de  
Sudbury et de Manitoulin

Building *positive futures*  
for children

2018  2019

TOGETHER



## **A YEAR IN REVIEW 2018-2019**

The Agency's previous operational plan, available on our website, outlined the key goals set by the agency for the fiscal year 2018-2019. These goals were informed by provincial initiatives, community needs and internal organizational needs and initiatives.

During the past fiscal year the Agency focused on three key strategic themes, with a number of large projects and initiatives driving much of this work.

The following report provides an overview of the work completed and goals achieved. As child welfare is a complex and ever evolving field many of these priorities will continue to dominate our work, knowing that these foundational elements are at the core of quality service delivery, which will lead to better outcomes for children, youth and families.

**STRATEGIC THEME:**

Excellence in organizational effectiveness and efficiency with service delivery rooted in a commitment to evidence informed, family centred, and community inclusive practices.

**STRATEGIC RESULT:**

An Agency that consistently demonstrates quality of service delivery that focuses on positive outcomes and resiliency for children and families.



**Area of Focus**

CPIN Implementation - Provincial

**Goal**

Seamless transition to the provincial Child Protection Information Network to enhance child safety and service delivery to families

**UPDATE:**

On April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018 this Agency became the 25<sup>th</sup> child welfare agency to move to the Provincial Child Protection Information Network (CPIN). This successful transition was made possible by intensive training initiatives, data reviews and organizational business practice alignment with provincial harmonization practices. The commitment and dedication of staff in making this journey so successful is to be commended. The focus on the improvements to child safety and family services that are provided by this information system, allowing access to all previous child welfare involvement in a timely manner, remained the focus of the implementation project.

**Area of Focus**

Service Excellence – measuring quality of service delivery with provincial indicators and outcomes

**Goal**

The Society demonstrates quality service delivery to families, children and youth through a number of both qualitative and quantitative measures, which in part are reflected in Key Performance Indicators and Compliance ratings in meeting child protection standards

The Society continues to monitor and embed in practice Family Based Care, 3-5-7 Model, Family Finding and Rapid Conferencing Model.

**UPDATE:**

The Agency has continued to meet provincial requirements for all Quality Improvement Plan measurements, with a focus on service compliance with Ministry standards. As well, the Society continues to embed the principle that Quality (service delivery) + Compliance = Service Excellence. By regularly monitoring and reporting on key indicators of service delivery the Society continues to demonstrate consistent, quality service for children, youth and families.

We continue to evolve and adjust internal agency structure and the service model to meet the needs of children, youth and families. We have continued to practice Family Based Care, with an emphasis on reducing the need for residential care for children and youth. We continue to utilize allocated resources for family finding and rapid case conferencing to reduce the number of children who require in care services or to reduce their length of time in care.

**Area of Focus**

Organizational risk strategy and transfer payment risk assessment (TPRA)

**Goal**

The Society has mitigated organizational risk in key areas identified in the funding agreement with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services

**UPDATE:**

During the past fiscal year the agency focused attention on internal structures and processes required by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (now The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services). This Ministry requirement for all transfer payment agencies identified areas of improvement and required a detailed reporting process to demonstrate agency effectiveness and efficiency in ensuring value for dollar and security in internal management.

The Society has received a “low risk” rating from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services which recognizes the key efforts to enhance processes related to financial management systems, policies and procedures and overall compliance with Ministry expectations for organizational structure.

**Area of Focus**

Shared Services

**Goal**

Provincial (initiative with other identified child welfare agencies to explore identified areas with opportunities for improved efficiencies and cost savings across the organization

**UPDATE:**

There continues to be a provincial priority placed on the development of a Shared Services model for the child welfare sector, with a goal of finding cost savings by aligning various business practices to maximize efficiencies. The Society remains committed to this process.

The Executive Director is a member of the provincial Shared Services Program Committee. One area of focus during the past fiscal year was the Group Procurement and Contract Management Specifications group, on which we were represented by our Executive Director. Our Director of Corporate Services is a member of the Group Procurement and Contract Management Evaluation Panel, through the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies. Through this work the Agency has committed to becoming one of three selected pilot sites for the Shared Services Vendor Discount program. This program will realize benefits in the by reducing financial administrative burden for financial transfers and expense reporting; improve expenditure tracking and management and offer rebates based on total expenditures. We anticipate that these types of shared service opportunities will continue.

We also participated in the Afterhours working group with an expectation that a shared afterhours intake model may be developed provincially.

**Area of Focus**

Bill 89 – Legislative amendments for the Child and Youth Family Services Act

**Goal**

The Society will ensure a seamless, well supported transition to our mandated work under the Child and Youth Family Services Act, taking into consideration staff training needs and organizational resource implications

**UPDATE:**

In January 2018 the first amendments to the Child and Youth Family Services Act were enacted with respect to the increased age of protection to include sixteen and seventeen year olds. The Society developed a comprehensive service model to meet the needs of this population. Through community engagement and education youth are aware of the services and supports that can be provided to them and our outreach has been successful in supporting a number of vulnerable youth in our community.

On April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 the remainder of the Child and Youth Family Services Act was enacted. This new legislation provides the legal mandate of all child welfare agencies to mandatory services across Ontario.

The Society, through our legal services department, has been very involved in provincial initiatives related to training, agency readiness and practice development. We have provided resources that have been adopted for provincial use, primarily in the key area of embedding the voice of the child and Katelynn’ Principle into our work. As well, we have provided training to all staff and developed working groups to oversee implementation and adherence to the new Act.

Katelynn’s Principle was developed following an Inquest into the tragic death of Katelynn Sampson. The Voice of the Child will be reinforced as a guiding principle for the agency as we move forward.

**[Katelynn’s Principle on the CASDSM Website](#)**

**STRATEGIC THEME:**

The Agency promotes competency in cultural service delivery with children, youth, families and service partners, respecting the cultural diversity of our community.

**STRATEGIC RESULT:**

All families, children and youth in our community receive services that recognize their unique cultural identity and that foster cultural connections.



**Area of Focus**

Development of Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

**Goal**

The Society will incorporate the voice of our service users into all aspects of our work including service delivery models, policies and practices, enhancing agency responsiveness to community needs

**UPDATE:**

We are proud to announce that this committee has been formed, with the inaugural meeting having been held on February 28th, 2018. There are five community members on the committee, who are previous agency service recipients. This committee ensures that parents' voices are present in the development and improvement of business processes, policies and programs that impact the lives of children, youth and families.

These community volunteers will enrich the services that we provide by informing a number of key areas for this agency including staff training and the service delivery structure.

**Area of Focus**

First Nations truth and reconciliation

**Goal**

The Society will engage in a meaningful process to acknowledge the impact of the Child Welfare System on First Nations people and communities, including the legacy of the '60's Scoop

The Society supports the full realignment of Aboriginal service delivery to our local First Nation Child Well-Being Agencies

**UPDATE:**

In September of 2017 the Ontario Association of the Children's Aid Society (OACAS), representing the mainstream child welfare sector in Ontario, offered a formal apology to First Nations people and communities, in recognition of the significantly harmful impact of the "60's Scoop". Our agency has actively participated in the ongoing work of the Indigenous Commitments working group. We have provided insights into our experiences of working in partnership with our local First Nation communities as they went through their own child welfare designation process.

We have also continued our work in this area with another pre-designated agency in our jurisdiction that services the Waabnoong Bemjiwang Association of First Nations.

This agency continues to remain fully supportive of full service delivery to all First Nations people by Indigenous Child Well-Being Agencies across the province. We will continue to strengthen our existing partnerships and work with our local First Nations communities on our local truth and reconciliation processes.

Area of Focus

Anti-oppressive practice

Goal

Through the application of an Anti-Oppressive lens in all areas of service delivery and engagement with our community partners, families, children and youth receive respectful, supportive services and greater equity for all will be achieved

The Society will focus on the needs of marginalized groups within the Districts of Sudbury and Manitoulin such as LGBTQ+ youth; newcomers/immigrants; and racialized communities to ensure that their voices and experiences are heard, respected and ultimately help shape our service delivery

**UPDATE:**

The development of an “Anti-Oppression Practice Filter” (AO Filter) has enabled the organization to evolve practices and processes aimed at achieving equitable outcomes for the children, youth and families engaged in child welfare services. The Society will continue to enhance this tool in 2019-2020.

A greater emphasis on the collection of identity based information belonging to children, youth and families has provided the Society an opportunity to attempt to respond to the unique needs and circumstances of all service recipients. This links to provincial requirements to collect and report on this data so that the entire sector has a better understanding of the population we all serve.

In 2017-2018 the Society engaged OPRs, service providers and members of the LGBT2SQ+ community to hear more about and discuss the ways services can better support the lived experiences, safety and wellbeing of LGBT2SQ+ children and youth. We have partnered with our local Indigenous Child Well-Being sister agencies to continue to enhance safe and welcoming alternative care home environments for all children and youth. We continued to partner with other community partners in many areas, including as a one of the host agencies for the annual youth event during Fierté Sudbury PRIDE week.

**Area of Focus**

Community and family engagement

**Goal**

By building strong community partnerships and dedicating internal resources to admission prevention, family based care and promoting life-long connections; the Society will better support families, children and youth, fulfilling the mandate of child protection and Building Positive Futures.

**UPDATE:**

The Society has continued to work closely with community partners to better meet the needs of children, youth and families, recognizing that only through a holistic, community based service model will positive outcomes be obtained. The Society has focused resources on building stronger partnerships to meet the needs of children and youth presenting with complex medical, emotional and mental health needs. Recognizing the need for enhanced supports and access to services to support local and family based care for these children and youth requires a comprehensive model that breaks down traditional silos in service delivery, and enhances intensive in-home support and access to respite services.

There has been an expansion of collaborative efforts in joint planning for particularly vulnerable or high needs children and youth, with increased case conferencing, senior management level planning tables and education between agencies regarding unique roles and expertise. We have also expanded the terms of reference of our internal Child Abuse Review Team to explore more complex cases that impact across a number of service sectors.

The development of our internal Parent Advisory Committee will also ensure that we gain more understanding of the barriers families may face when requiring services from different agencies and now we can ensure a more aligned and seamless model of intervention.

**Area of Focus**

Delivery of French language services

**Goal**

The French Language Services Committee (FLSC) is a standing committee of the CADSM and Board of Directors. The FLSC will maintain an effective organizational structure enabling the access of French language services and ensuring the implementation of the policies and procedures that facilitate the provision of services in French

**UPDATE:**

The recently enacted Child and Youth Family Services Act has given power to the French Language Services Commissioner to investigate and address any complaints from community members regarding their right to French language services. The organization continues to have an active French Language Committee that ensures all aspects of our services and agency business are aligned with the requirements of a designated bilingual agency.

**STRATEGIC THEME:**

Organizational wellness

**STRATEGIC RESULT:**

The Agency fosters a work culture in which individual and organizational wellness is highly valued.



**Area of Focus**

Values driven change management initiatives

**Goal**

An engaged and energized work force, connected to the values and mission of the Society, provide quality services to children, youth and families

**UPDATE:**

The Agency continued to focus on cultural changes across the organization through development of shared values and by defining behaviours that would be reflective of these values. The next step in this evolution is ensuring these behaviours are evident to families, children and youth, as well as our community partners. It is expected that these behaviours would also guide interactions across the organization. There were opportunities for staff members to participate in focus groups to provide feedback to this area of work. As well, an all staff survey was utilized to further evaluate the impact that the change management work was having across the organization. This critical work lays the foundation for so many of the goals set this year as well into future planning. Full staff engagement in the values and behaviours the Society wants to be known for has resulted in greater accountability for and responsiveness to the safety, wellbeing and unique circumstances of children, youth and their families.

**Area of Focus**

Provincial pathways to authorization

**Goal**

A robust recruitment and training plan ensures the success of new employees in meeting the Agency's mandate and best serves the needs of children, youth and families

**UPDATE:**

During the past fiscal year the Society had thirteen employees who benefitted from the Pathways to Authorization training curriculum. This standardized training format provides a comprehensive overview of the key functions of child protection work, ensuring that there is close supervisory oversight and review of a new hire's development. As well, each trainee is required to pass a provincial exam demonstrating their competencies in this field. This is a far more robust training program than has been available in the past across the whole sector. We believe that the majority of new hires are more confident and informed when they begin to carry out independent child protection work than the field has seen historically. This leads to better service experiences for children, youth and families.

**Area of Focus**

Wellness initiatives

**Goal**

A focus on staff wellness, within a supportive and caring environment, leads to quality service delivery rooted in agency values and beliefs

**UPDATE:**

During the Society's CPIN deployment period there was a significant focus on wellness initiatives, recognizing the need to fully support all staff members through such a broad change management process. Opportunities for celebrations at each key milestone were found. A monthly newsletter not only provided regular updates regarding the business processes involved with CPIN and the agency progress, but also offered tips on self-care, fun facts and other health and wellness ideas. This focus on wellness was central to maintaining an energized and committed workforce.

Through our Agency Values work we continue to recognize the value of staff led wellness initiatives to create a strong sense of team, celebrate agency successes and provide some needed respite from the stressful work of child protection. The commitment of those members of the internal Wellness Committee was strengthened this fiscal year as they developed new ideas for garnering more input into planning and increasing participation at all levels of the organization. Some of these initiatives included the return of the annual Halloween Pumpkin Carving contest; a holiday social; the annual flu clinic and celebration of Earth Day.

## IN CONCLUSION

We are proud of the hard work and positive outcomes that were achieved in 2018-2019.

Our goal is to always be evolving and strengthening our organizational foundation and service delivery to meet the ongoing needs of children, youth and families.

We now will carry out our work under new legislation, the Children, Youth and Family Services Act, using a new provincial information system, CPIN, under the guidance and oversight provided by a newly formed Ministry department, the Ministry of Children, Community and Social services. We will also continue to remain connected to the ongoing provincial initiatives that to continue to shape and align the entire child welfare sector.

In the spirit of transparency and accountability and true community partnership we invite you to review our [Operational Plan 2019-2020](#).

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