

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

Annual Report 2019



Report from Ashley Thomson, Board President and Elaina Groves, Chief Executive Officer

We are pleased with our new five-year Strategic Plan. This plan was built on the foundation of the Agency's five-core values: Respect, Integrity, Accountability, Kindness and Inclusivity. The process used for development of the Strategic Plan embodied the value of inclusivity, as it ensured that the voice of the Parent Advisory Committee, staff, foster parents, volunteers and community partners was heard. There was integrity to the process ensuring that even when messages were critical, sometimes hard to hear, that they were given a platform.

We are very proud of our new Mission Statement and Vision as it perfectly reflects the direction the Agency has chosen over the last several years. This Mission Statement recognizes that we must work in partnership with families, partners, staff, and the community for children and youth to have safe and supportive families. Respect and kindness were at the forefront when we envisioned what a future might look like. Children, youth and families. Succeeding. Together.

We are committed to strengthened Board of Directors' governance processes by continuing to develop a new Board manual and policies that will guide the Board long into the future. We believe that this work is consistent with one of the Agency's five core values- accountability- to our funders, staff, taxpayers, our partners and most importantly, the families, children and youth that we serve.

We recognize our partners in the community and foster families and volunteers who work alongside us each and every day. We are very proud of the members of the Parent Advisory Committee who took a considerable leap of faith and trust agreeing to volunteer on this committee and who continue to teach and guide us through their candor and kindness.

And we thank the staff at CASDSM for their commitment and dedication to the wellbeing of children, youth and families we serve.



Board of Directors 2019-2020

Ashley Thomson (Chair)

David Vares (Vice-Chair)

Carolyn Jodouin (Secretary-Treasurer)

Natalie Harrison

Vincent Lacroix *

Derek Lalonde

René Lapierre

Diane Pedersen

Dennis Quenneville

René Quesnelle *

Glenn Thibeault

**Will not be continuing as a Director*

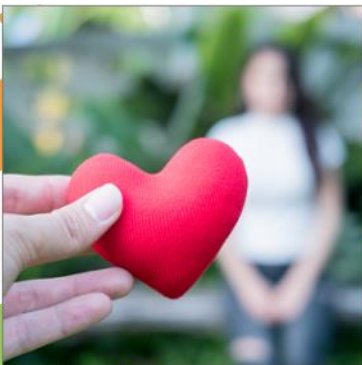


Message from the Foster Parent Association

The Foster Parent Association (FPA) is the collective voice for families who foster children and youth in the care of the Children's Aid Society of the Districts of Sudbury and Manitoulin. The FPA works to support all resource families by acting as a liaison between the families and the Society.

Through funding from the Agency and through fundraising initiatives, the FPA is able to provide additional training and supports to foster parents and is able to organize and host different activities for families, such as the annual Christmas party.

This past October, the Society held the bi-annual foster parent recognition event to celebrate alternative caregivers who open their doors and provide a home to children and youth. The recognition event in October served to highlight and acknowledge all of the hard work done by alternative caregivers and recognize that they play an integral role in the lives of children and youth.



The work we do at the Children's Aid Society is work we cannot do alone. We rely on the hearts of all alternative caregivers who open their doors. We give our heartfelt thank you.

2019-2024 Strategic Plan



MISSION

Working in partnership
for children and youth to
have safe and supportive
families



VISION

Children, youth and
families succeeding
together



VALUES

Respect, Inclusivity,
Accountability, Integrity,
Kindness

Children, Youth & Families

Keep Children and Youth With, and Connected to their Families, Language and Culture

- * **INCORPORATE** the voices of children and youth
- * **STRENGTHEN** families through early response and prevention
- * **SUPPORT** connections between caregivers
- * **BUILD** lifelong relationships

Partners

Build and Strengthen Relationships

- * **COLLABORATE** through a shared vision
- * **MEET** needs of children, youth and families within local service system
- * **IMPROVE** communication to increase understanding of roles

Staff, Volunteers & Foster Parents

Live Our Values

- * **PROMOTE** safety and wellness
- * **ENGAGE** through communication and partnering
- * **EMBED** values to promote responsiveness to family and community needs

Financial

Ensure Financial Sustainability

- * **INFLUENCE** funding model through provincial advocacy
- * **UTILIZE** informed decision-making processes
- * **EXPLORE** financial efficiencies
- * **GENERATE** revenue and cost sharing alternatives

Internal Systems

Continuous Quality Improvement

- * **COMMIT** to Service Excellence
- * **INCREASE** use of data analysis to support informed decision-making
- * **ENHANCE** efficiency and effectiveness through ongoing service review and evaluation



Continuous Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance and Continuous Quality Improvements are foundational to the Agency's growth and development. As such, CASDSM has focused and strengthened the internal processes and structure to support Service Excellence. A strong Quality Assurance structure supports ongoing evaluation and reflection on Agency functions, intersections of internal processes and service delivery model. This links to the overall experience for children, youth and families who are in receipt of services.

Service Activities

2018-2019	
April 1, 2018 to Mar 31, 2019	
Total number of calls	7049
# of completed investigations	1546
# of families served	758
# of children cared for	385
# of adoptions	13
Children in care by status	
Extended Society Care	91
Interim Society Care	84
Continued Care and Support for Youth	44
Temporary Care Agreement	3
Stay Home from School	3
	225
Voluntary Youth Service Agreement	19
	244



Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)

Children, youth and families are at the centre of all aspects of our work, with Agency systems, processes and structure aligned with the Vision of Children, Youth and Families Succeeding Together.

CASDSM celebrated the first year of the Parent Advisory Committee implementation in February 2019. The year has been met with many successes and opportunities to bring the voice of the parents, not only in the development and improvement of business processes but also as guest speakers during a staff forum, foster parents' recognition event and the Family Law Conference hosted by the AFCC-O and Sudbury Manitoulin Children's Aid Society.

The members of the Committee provide critical perspective and offer constructive feedback on subject matters such as alternative placements of children and youth, Agency policies and training priorities. The Society is truly appreciative of the parent members' commitment and interest in contributing to the mandate of the PAC and advancing their knowledge and opinions.

"It is truly an honour to work alongside of the Society and the Committee ,and yes we can! We can be human, we can learn, we can change, we can grow, individually, and as a team."

Parent Member, PAC Committee

Youth Advisory Committee (YAC)

The legislative changes in the Child, Youth and Family Services Act enacted in 2018 include an increased focus on the rights of children and youth, and places an emphasis on their voices. The CASDSM recognizes that youth are better served when they feel heard and supported in shaping the services they received. As such, the Society has begun the process in the developments of a Youth Advisory Committee to capture the Voice of Youth to inform Agency growth and service delivery.



Financial

REVENUES	2018/2019	2017/2018
Province of Ontario	\$27,263,740	\$30,106,229
Ontario Child Benefit Equivalent	50,273	-
Children's Special Allowances	914,648	1,070,927
Other	2,679,295	1,829,178
TOTAL REVENUES	\$30,907,956	\$33,006,334
Salaries	\$14,565,799	\$14,931,012
Benefits	4,106,243	4,112,718
Travel	1,066,642	1,314,327
Boarding	6,597,120	6,773,441
Other Client Costs	2,373,819	2,365,844
Amortization	297,888	310,162
Operating Expenses	2,134,966	3,134,745
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$31,142,477	\$32,942,249
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	\$(234,521)	\$64,085

Shared Services

The organization is participating in the OACAS shared services program. The vision for this program is to enable equitable and sustainable service excellence for children, youth and families. This is achieved through contributing to improved outcomes for children, youth and families through capacity building in services; leadership in accountabilities and sector performance improvements, as well as savings in expenditures. The program has just finished its first year of full operation. CASDSM is committed to exploring further services offered under this umbrella and achieving the efficiencies contemplated by the business plan.



Devolution – Annual General Meeting Report

For over 25 years, this Agency has worked in partnership with our local First Nations to support the transfer of First Nations services to their communities. This past year saw ongoing work in this area and another milestone has been achieved.

History

The community of Sudbury-Manitoulin has been on a long journey to ensure that First Nations people were able to access child welfare services from First Nation Agencies that were supported by their Tribal Councils in providing culturally based services for families, children and youth.

In April 2015 Kina Gbezhgomi Child and Family Services received their designation from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (now Ministry of Children, Community and Social Service). They immediately began providing all services for the members of the First Nations of the United Chiefs and Councils of Mnidoo Mnising Tribal Council and Wikwemikoong Unceded Territory.

In May 2015, Kunuwanimano Child and Family Services became designated to provide services for all First Nations family in the Chapleau district.

In April 2017, Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services received their designation to provide services to all members of the First Nations of Mamaweswen North Shore Tribal Council within the jurisdiction of Sudbury-Manitoulin, as well as within the Algoma jurisdiction.



2018-2019

During this past year another historical milestone has been met. We are happy to announce that Phase II of devolution with Kina Gbezhgomi Child and Family Services has now been completed. Kina Gbezhgomi has now assumed full responsibility within their stated jurisdiction. .

There is one remaining pre-designated Agency within this jurisdiction, Niijaansinaanik Child and Family Services Agency, who are working toward devolution of services for the members of the Waabnoong Bemjiwang Association of First Nations. Their designation will be a final step in the alignment of First Nations services with all local Tribal Councils and we will celebrate this achievement as well. The work toward this final goal will continue between the First Nation Child Welfare Agencies within the Districts of Sudbury-Manitoulin.

Due to the strong First Nations leadership across this jurisdiction there was a united voice to reclaim the inherent rights of First Nations to care for their own children and families, in a manner that is inclusive and respectful of their culture and heritage. To assist in the process of the designation of First Nation Agencies also required the commitment and dedication of so many of our staff members, who believed in this vision and provided the support necessary to complete the transition of services. It has been a long journey, but their contributions in seeing this come to fruition are truly appreciated. They have made a lasting impact on the landscape of child welfare services in this community and we thank them for all of their efforts.



Voice of the Child

Why do we need the voice of the child? There has been a major shift in child welfare following inquests into the death of children involved with the child welfare system. This has led to legislative changes with an emphasis on the “voice of the child” and children’ rights. This shift in legislation is in line with **CASDSM** cores values of Respect, Inclusivity, Accountability, Integrity and Kindness which guides our work with children, youth and families, and community partners. Our Agency views this as a positive change.

How do we elicit the voice of the child? Child Protection Workers’ skills come into play as it is very different trying to elicit the voice of a 5 year old child vs a 12 year old child. Essentially we need to know what the child wants. Our workers were concerned about “setting up” the child by asking them what they want and then not giving it to them. This means that the conversation needs to be done very carefully to ensure that the child knows that we take this into consideration but that it does not mean that this will actually happen. When children do express what they want, we need to not only hear them but also act on it wherever possible. Most importantly, it means we need to be transparent in our approach with children.

Who needs to elicit the voice of the child? This is a collective responsibility. Everyone involved with the family needs to be asking the questions and hearing the child. This includes the CAS staff, foster care worker, kin caregivers, community partners etc.

When is the child’s voice needed? For all major decisions including, services, safety planning, placement if needed, etc. We cannot make decisions for the child without considering the child’s wishes and views. We should be asking the child for their views and wishes often.

What else is relevant? The child’s age and maturity level. If the child is not able to provide their views and wishes we need to document why they are unable.





Katelynn's Principle

- ✓ The child must be at the centre of the decision.
- ✓ The child is an individual with rights. The child must always be seen, the child's voice must be heard, and the child must be listened to and respected.
- ✓ The child's heritage must be taken into consideration and respected. Attention must be paid to the broad and diverse communities the child identifies with, including communities defined by matters such as race, ethnicity, religion, language, and sexual orientation.
- ✓ Actions must be taken to ensure that a child who is capable of forming their own views is able to express those views freely and safely about matters affecting them.
- ✓ The child's views must be given due weight in accordance with the child's age and maturity.
- ✓ In accordance with the child's age and maturity, the child must be given the opportunity to participate before any decisions affecting the child are made, whether the participation is direct or through a support person or representative.
- ✓ In accordance with the child's age and maturity, the child must be engaged through honest and respectful dialogue about how and why decisions affecting them are made.
- ✓ Every person who provides services to children or services affecting children is a child advocate. Advocacy may be a child's lifeline and it must occur from the point of first contact and on a continuous basis thereafter.

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RESPECT • INCLUSIVITY • ACCOUNTABILITY • INTEGRITY • KINDNESS •