



The Children's Aid Society  
La Société d'aide à l'enfance  
Sudbury & Manitoulin

## 2024-2025 Operational Plan Report Card

### Strategic Priority:

CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES - Keep Children and Youth with, and Connected to Their Families, Language, and Culture

#### Objectives:

#1. Address increase number of complex needs cases

#2. Decrease number of children in care

#3. Enhancements to child youth and family supports

#4. Honour identity and language of our families

Strategic Initiatives	Areas of Focus	April 1 to September 30, 2024	October 1 to March 31, 2025	Comments / Status / Details / Examples
<b>STRENGTHEN Families Through Early Response and Prevention</b>				
Objective #1	Goal: to improve management of growing needs of children and youth with complex special needs. Create a new position as coordinator with support of designated staff.			Complex needs coordinator position was added to a current Supervisor portfolio and this team shifted priorities with a focus on youth, community partnerships and early prevention. The addition of a dedicated worker to the complex needs portfolio was also completed. Next year will allow for more opportunity to develop scope of work for this position and transfer of some areas of responsibility to these specialists.
Objective # 3	Goal: to Review the Family Support Program (FSP) to determine if it is achieving the objectives of the organization; meeting needs of the families; and bringing efficiencies and value added.			FSP was reviewed to determine whether program objectives are being met through services provided. Review was intensive including interviews with staff and supervisor. The report is complete but not yet presented to senior management. The recommendations and any action items will form part of the 2025-26 operational plan.
<b>INCORPORATE the Voices of Children and Youth</b>				
Objective # 3	Goal: the Education Liaison position is a critical position that supports the educational needs of children and youth in care. The position at present is not full-time. Enhanced the Education Liaison position to full time			The Education Liaison position was increased to full time enhancing the services and advocacy for youth.
Objective # 3	Goal: New regulations involving oversight of children in care of the Society to be rolled out and staff trained.			The roll out and training of new regulations. These new regulations require enhanced oversight and planning for children and youth in care. These were successfully rolled out, policies revised to include new regulatory requirements and staff trained.
Objective #3	Goal: Idea of creating a partnership with youth along side a community agency to involve the voice of youth in our new location.			Idea presented for a mural to be painted in the building at 303 York Street. The Education Liaison worker, Youth Advisory Committee and in collaboration with Live Love Laugh are partnering to create a youth mural in the CAS building. The artist was able to obtain a grant to cover costs of material. Planning is underway in the design of the mural. Anticipate that the mural will be developed in 2025-26.
<b>SUPPORT Connections Between Caregivers</b>				

Objective # 3	Goal: Connecting children and youth who are in care under an Extended Society Care order Continued with family is an important goal. The agency entered into an agreement to hire two staff as Wendy Wonderful Kids program (not fully funded). However, the scope of work is controlled and after many years of operating this program, we find it is not accomplishing what we would like it to accomplish. This is a result of the limitations put on it through the WWK USA model. Plan is to seek a solution preferably one that will allow a broadened scope.			In the past, efforts were made to have the WWK program allow for an expanded mandate/scope. This was denied. While this was a valued program, the limited scope is no longer supporting the needs of children and youth in today's reality. Rather than losing the program, leadership decided to enter into a new round of negotiations for an expanded scope. This time we were successful. The traditional role of the WWK workers has been expanded to better align with our agency's priorities.
<b>BUILD Lifelong Relationships</b>				
Objective # 2	Goal: to decrease number of children in foster and group care and look to Increase the number of children in kin service placements			We added another worker to Family Finding and through these efforts and through Rapid Case conferencing, we are seeing success. In 2024-25, we saw positive change from these efforts and for the first time have more children and youth in kin service placements than children in care.
<b>CREATE Resilience Though Identity and Belonging</b>				
Objective # 4	Goal: With FLS requirements and oversight of designated agencies, we have been focused on the opportunity to ensure FLS requirements are met. Through quality improvements, opportunities for improvement and compliance are being identified.			Through a review of our FLS compliance, it was noted that our agency vision and mission was silent on FLS. In reviewing how other designated agencies addressed FLS reference in the vision and mission, we landed on a way to add it to the Strategic Plan - Five Year.
Objective # 4	Goal: Enhancing our profile and partnership in the communities Francophone community. FLS community service collaboration			CAS and other FLS community partners are collaborating to educate each other on each of their services
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strategic Priority:</b> <b>PARTNERS - Build and Strengthen Relationships</b></p>				
<b>Objectives:</b>  <b>#1. Increase capacity to respond to newcomers</b>  <b>#2. Community collaboration to support local service systems for children and youth with complex needs</b>  <b>#3. Increased collaboration with community partners</b>  <b>#4. Increased capacity to communicate efficiently and effectively with service recipients and community partners.</b>				
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<b>COLLABORATE Through a Shared Vision</b>				

Objective # 1	Goal: Need to build partnerships Partnership with Thriving African Families to engage with members from the African community.			<p>Thriving African Families worked in partnership with us to host the first engagement session with African community members. It was great success and is leading to other steps.</p> <p>One initiative built from this new partnership between CAS and Thriving African Families was on the consent of an African family intersecting with the Society entered into a partnership to increase our relationship with newcomers and provide each other learning opportunities.</p>
Objective #1	Goal: Enhance staff skill set in child maltreatment investigations.			Agency supervisor partnered with police to deliver forensic interviewing training.

#### MEET the Needs of Children, Youth, and Families Within a Local Service System

Objective #2	Goal: In the growing pressure of increasing number of children/youth with special needs, and the residential crisis we are experiencing, there is the need to find new solutions with increasing partnerships at the table.			<p>We took the lead at establishing a table with partners from the children's system as well as the adult developmental sector to seek alignment on how we work together to finding solutions. As a result, a collaboration of multiple partners has united to better understand and better service complex needs children and youth. Currently, there are more than 11 different agencies sitting in partnership building on ideas of how we can address the issues and find solutions. CASDSM created this table in response to the urgent residential/treatment crisis for children and youth who have special needs. Children and youth have had to be placed in hotels in the absence of any other option. The table is now made up of multiple providers from the adult developmental sector. In response, one agency had their mandate changed in order to deliver services to children under 18. They are now seeking a residential license for children/youth under 18 so they can serve more than 2 at a time.</p> <p>The table is a successfull collaboration to date.</p>
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#### IMPROVE Communication to Increase Understanding of Roles

Objective # 3	Goal: Several years ago, CASDSM led the creation of a child maltreatment table with police, hospital and Indigenous CAS. One outcome was strengthened and updated processes during a child maltreatment investigation and touchpoints. The goal for this year is to deliver Deliver child maltreatment sessions arising from this multidiscipline Child Maltreatment Committee.			<p>CAS/GSPS/HSN partnered to deliver training to staff of all sectors to improve the service delivery of high risk, abuse cases. Increasing collaboration. All some the benefit of sitting with partners around a training table, helping build relations. Critical to this were the new identified touchpoints during the investigation.</p>
Objective # 4	Goal: Arising from the Residential Planning Table, a need was identified to commence planning for youth presenting with special needs by time they are 14 years old.			<p>A decision was made to create a committee made up of children and adult service providers in the delivery of developmental services. The vision was to plan without the artifically set boundaries established by funders through mandates and instead to see the youth and their needs on a continuum. This committee reports to the Residential Planning Table. Recommendation arising from that table to form this sub-group made up of the children's system and the adult development sector. Terms of Reference developed. Inaugural meeting pending. In 2025-26 we anticipate that the inaugural meeting will have taken place and that some continued modification of the TORs will take place as the committee is able to navigate gaps and needs.</p>

#### Strategic Priority: STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, & FOSTER PARENTS - Live Our Values

##### Objectives:

#1. Creation of comprehensive reimbursable process

#2. Increased leadership throughout the organization

#3. Creation of feedback mechanisms

#4. Increasing and promotion of child welfare staffing opportunities

Strategic Initiatives	Areas of Focus	April 1 to September 30, 2024	October 1 to March 31, 2025	Comments / Status / Details / Examples
<b>PROMOTE Safety &amp; Wellness</b>				
Objective #2	Goal: Need to revitalize leadership meetings that were placed on hold until purpose could be identified.			Monthly Leadership meetings have been re initiated with a focus on leader development. Increased participation. Strengthening of 'team'. Building on concept of Juice. Leaders will be required to present at the meetings, each being scheduled.
Objective # 2	Goal: Build solutions to address staffing pressures and challenges of case assignments.			To address the pressures at the investigative stage, an overflow roster for case assignments was created. This means that child protection staff in other functions within the agency are placed on a roster and would be called upon to respond to a referral requiring investigation. This roster has enhanced our ability to respond to calls in a time sensitive manner as well as provided an opportunity for cross training of staff.
Objective # 2	Goal: To support the Wellness Committee strengthen its organizational and planning structure.			The Wellness Committee was supported by moving them to formalize some of their processes, develop a workplan for the year and a budget. The mandate of the Wellness Committee has been revitalized and redefined with a formal Terms of Reference, accountability structure, and dedicated budget requiring it to operate more independently.
<b>ENGAGE Through Communication &amp; Partnering</b>				
Objective # 1	Goal: Foster Parent's reimbursements have not been reviewed in many years. In discussion with the Foster Parent Association, a commitment was made to enhance our partnership.			As a result of the meetings with the FPA, we engaged with them to create a new and streamlined reimbursable process. While a model was developed, it was determined that more time was necessary in order to fully understand the financial model and the financial implications. This will not be completed until 2025-26.
Objective # 4	Goal: The number of university and college social work and social service students seeking a placement have continued to decline. Not only is this an obligation we have to the profession and to our local university and college, it is also beneficial to recruit new staff. University and College student placements need to be rejuvenated.			Increased collaboration with local post-secondary establishments is expected to increase the number of student placements and potential employees. Result is the agency has been able to accept high number of students on placements.  End result is that this winter term we have 7 students on placement. This coming summer we expect 10. Some of the students have interviewed for positions with the agency. Hiring individuals who come with some understanding of the work of child welfare is helpful in retention.
Objective # 4	Goal: Enhance agency's profile as potential employer			As the agency has struggled with recruitment, the decision was that we needed to increase our visibility in the community. As a result, the agency has increased our presence at job fairs enhancing exposure of our agency and promoting child welfare as a rewarding profession.
Objective # 4	Goal: to increase agency's profile and image through a positive social media presence			The agency moved into social media a couple of years ago. With the hiring of a communication coordinator, we have been able to establish a positive and proactive presence on digital medium platforms (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn)
<b>EMBED Values to Promote Responsiveness to Family &amp; Community Needs</b>				
Objective # 3	Goal: We have not had a mechanism for client feedback in years.			The Anti-Oppression committee and the Parent Advisory Committee partnered to create a client feedback survey. The survey has been created but it has not yet been rolled out. That will be a goal for 2025-26.
Objective # 3	Goal: increase opportunity for staff voices and ideas to be heard. While we have a suggestion box, it is a physical set-up and therefore not immediate			The Remote Work Committee has established a virtual suggestion box to facilitate internal suggestions and ideas. By moving to an electronic format, staff are able to submit suggestions anytime throughout the year when previously they were held to submissions when in person at Staff Forums.
<p align="center"><b>Strategic Priority:</b> <b>FINANCIAL - Ensure Financial Stability</b></p> <p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <p><b>#1. Advocate for funding stability</b></p>				

#2. Streamline financial reporting tools

#3. Review and explore cost cutting measures while minimizing impact on service delivery

#4. Enhance data reliability

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<b>INFLUENCE Funding Model Through Provincial Advocacy</b>				
Objective #1	Goal: The ongoing issue of our funding pressures need to be balanced with data to support an understanding of these funding and cashflow pressures			Presentation of the agency's current and projected financial position has taken place on many occasions throughout the fiscal year. The agency has presented these financial positions by using data to illustrate where the pressures are coming from. For example, through data analysis, the cost of serving Metis and Inuit was arrived at two years ago. The agency is now able to articulate the cost of delivery of these services through updates reflecting the increase cost as a result of increased wages, and other costs. This year, through analysis of data involving children and youth with special needs, the agency was able to present the very real impact of meeting the medical and specialized needs of these children. Further, through data, the agency is able to show the increasing costs over the past five years.
<b>UTILIZE Informed Decision Making Process</b>				
Objective #2	Goal: In a lean staffing model, keeping up with the every growing demands in financial reporting has required that we develop streamlined tools for efficient, timely and effective financial reporting			Work continues of automating many manual financial reporting processes, while trying to overcome limitations existing within CPIN.
Objective #4	Goal: Development of data reporting tools for decision-making purposes (specifically tied to financial impacts of decisions)			Work was initiated in the current fiscal year on providing automated data analysis reports leveraging PowerBI to ensure decisions were supported by data. Particular focus on financial analysis at an operational level (for example, analysis of high-cost children/youth in care). Work will continue for some time on this initiative but progress has been good to date.
<b>EXPLORE Financial Efficiencies</b>				
Objective #3	Goal: Constant review of potential cost cutting measures			Some savings have been found in peripheral areas of the organization to help with financial constraints. Some have been implemented while others are in the process of being implemented and will be activated in fiscal 2026. This line by line review was completed 3 times this fiscal.
Objective #3	Goal: Reviewing current internal processes for workload efficiencies			Many processes in the organization continue to be modernized while leveraging existing technology. While not cost savings in terms of absolute dollars, these efficiencies can lead to more value added by employees. Paperless; reducing number of hands a document pass through;
<b>GENERATE Revenue &amp; Cost Sharing Alternatives</b>				
Objective # 4	Goal: The agency needs to find ways to raise dollars to address its financial pressures. The goal is to establish a Fundraising Committee			A Fundraising Committee has been established. As a result of this committee, a donation presence has been created on the Canada Helps digital platform. A comprehensive fundraising strategy is being developed.
<b>Strategic Priority:</b> <b>INTERNAL SYSTEMS - Continuous Quality Improvement</b>				
<b>OBJECTIVES:</b>				
#1. Increased service compliance				
#2. Revision of specialized positions and services				
#3. Standardization of communication tools and procedures.				
#4. Enhance service delivery practices.				

Strategic Initiatives	Areas of Focus	April 1 to September 30, 2024	October 1 to March 31, 2025	Comments / Status / Details / Examples
<b>COMMIT to Service Excellence</b>				
Objective # 1	Goal: Roll out of contact log and affidavit training			Legal and Service partnered to deliver training which will increase contact log compliance.
Objective # 3	Goal: The agency has wanted for many years to establish a Communication Strategy. This has been difficult without the staffing resources to support communication goals within the agency. The decision was made to hire a communication coordinator using internal resources.			A Communications Coordinator has been established and phase 1 of a comprehensive communication strategy has been completed.
Objective # 3	Goal: Consistent utilization and application of digital tools.			As new tools are provided, they offer opportunities for more efficient operations. This includes the New Outlook application, Teams and Decisions, and SharePoint.
Objective # 3	Goal: To build a learning management system that can capture and record Staff Training, Learning & Development (TLD)			A Learning Management System (LMS) has been implemented that tracks each employee's training, learning, and development needs and accomplishments.
Objective # 2	Goal: Develop strategies to strengthen child skills and knowledge in the investigation of child maltreatment.			Creation of a new position, Child and Youth Safety and Wellbeing Coordinator. A services supervisor has been reassigned to this specialized position that has as its primary objective to identify and respond to the knowledge and skill development needs of protection delivery personnel.
<b>INCREASE Use of Data Analysis to Support Informed Decision Making</b>				
Objective # 2	Goal: identified the need to have staff rely on data to support their decision making.			Monthly data analysis days have been instituted for service supervisors to enhance their decision making skills. The creation and implementation of PowerBI, supervisors can now access automated data analysis reports. Next year, further development of the use of data analysis available through PowerBI will further strengthen decision making.
<b>ENHANCE Efficiency and Effectiveness Through Ongoing Service Review &amp; Evaluation</b>				
Objective # 2	Goal: Following the decision to move to 2 instead of 3 service managers, the need has been identified to streamline the Service Manager positions			The streamlining of protection and resource oversight to help strengthen and focus key areas, creating a specialization. To do this meant to return to a Senior Counsel position there for moving some responsibilities to the senior counsel to support one reduced service manager. Other realignments allowed this restructuring as well.
Objective # 2	Goal: Review of the Family Support Program			A review of the FSP will inform approaches to maximizing the usefulness of FSP staff expertise.