



SARNIA-LAMBTON
CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY

Annual Report

FUTURRING

2020-21

Sarnia-Lambton Children's Aid Society is a trusted ally to families, communities & cultures in creating safe, nurturing environments for children and youth to grow and succeed.



2020-21

SARNIA-LAMBTON
CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President - Kim Godin

Vice President - Lynn Rosales

VP Finance - Todd McNeil

Secretary - Kathy Alexander

Past President - Ryan Bell

Directors:

Johann Lewis

Adam Kilner

Anne Marie Cosford

Bri Dubowski

Mark Williams

Nadia Young-Sherlock



ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA:

Tuesday, September 28, 2021 at 6:00 pm

1. WELCOME & CALL TO ORDER
2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
3. MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM September 29, 2020
4. MOTION TO APPROVE THE PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT
5. MOTION TO APPROVE THE ACTIONS OF THE BOARD
6. MOTION TO APPOINT THE AUDITOR
7. MOTION TO ELECT AND REELECT TERMS
8. MOTION TO ELECT OFFICERS
9. MOTION TO ELECT BOARD COMMITTEE MEMBERS
10. MOTION TO ELECT COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES FOR BOARD COMMITTEES
11. ADJOURNMENT



Executive Director and Board Presidents Report:

We start off this year's report by extending a deep and heartfelt thank you to all the staff, resource families, Board members and volunteers for their steadfast commitment and unwavering support to children, youth, families, and communities. We have witnessed compassion, kindness, caring, creativity, and strength as we all navigated another year of a worldwide pandemic. It hasn't been easy, and it's taken a toll on us and the people we serve, and we are getting through it the best way we can. Through it all, we are very proud of the service and the work being done. We have stayed true to our core values and ensuring that families receive the services and supports needed to care for their children, which is particularly needed during these challenging times. Child welfare happens in the community, and we do not do this work alone. We are honoured to work as partners alongside Aamjiwnaang First Nation, Kettle & Stony Point First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation. We are also fortunate to work closely with so many other community agencies dedicated to improving the lives of children and families. We thank all of you and look forward to continuing our relationships and collaboration.

We collectively grieve the loss of all the children found buried at the former residential schools. Survivors of Residential Schools have told this truth for years. The injustices and genocide are heartbreaking and a national outrage. There is a direct and current connection between what happened at Residential Schools and the involvement of child welfare in the lives of Indigenous people and communities. We will continue to advocate for change, for truth, for justice and remain committed to answering the Calls to Action regarding child welfare made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Calls to Justice from the inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and 2SLGBTQ+ people.

Our commitment and work on equity, diversity and inclusion continues. We have made progress this year. For example, we changed our recruitment and hiring practices, changed our policies, created a new micro aggressions process, advocated for Bill C-6 (an Act that would ban activities related to conversion therapy) and worked alongside others in the community on anti-racism. We strongly believe making these kinds of changes will greatly improve our services to children, youth, and families. There is work still to be done. Thank you to all the Black, Indigenous, racialized and 2SLGBTQ+ employees and Board members for the ongoing courage and commitment in pushing for

the needed change and justice for such a long time and often at great personal expense. Thank you to the white employees and Board members for your efforts to deepen your understanding and being willing to do the personal and professional work necessary for change and justice. Working together will create lasting changes for the people and communities we serve today and for future generations.

Over the past year, we also started on the creation of a new strategic plan. We tried something new and enlisted an incredible group of young people to lead the process. We asked them for their vision and ideas on our agency's priorities and directions over the next 3 years. They talked to staff, community partners, resource parents and other young people and brought forward a proposed plan. Their enthusiasm and empowerment were inspiring to watch, and we look forward to creating more opportunities for youth leadership and meaningful involvement.

One of the young people on the strategic planning team has suggested "Futuring" as one of the agency's directions. We are indeed in a Futuring time - building on the past successes and continuing to learn from our mistakes. We remain committed to embracing the shifts needed within the organization and ourselves in creating authentic inclusion for all and valuable supports for the families and children we serve. On behalf of the Board of Directors we applaud the incredible dedication and efforts each of you have made over this past unprecedented year and we look forward to continuing our collective journey together on improving the lives of families, children, and our community.



Kim Godin
Board President



Dawn Flegel
Executive Director



Congratulations 2021 Graduates



Michael V-W. - Grade 12



Taylor K. - Grade 12



Tanisha C. - Grade 12

Youth Holiday Party COVID Style:

This year's Holiday Party was a creative one 'COVID Style'. The CCSY Youth look forward to this event every year and cancelling was not an option. So, the team along with amazing volunteers from the Rotaract Group came together to create a 'Walk through Winter Wonderland'.

To follow safety measures with the Pandemic each youth was given a walk-through time and when they arrived, they were greeted by staff dressed up for the holidays, rooms transformed with holiday décor and music playing in the background. It was magical! The youth walked through to different stations where they received a gift, from hygiene bags to water bottles hanging on trees with Starbucks gift cards, and stuffed animals, and a ballot to win more prizes. As they continued to walk through the spaces they eventually came to the final stop where they received their holiday tote filled with items from their wish lists and topped up with additional items donated to the agency for this event and a Holiday dinner all packed up to take home and enjoy.

43

Youth were sponsored



Given the circumstances the event was still a success. The youth loved and appreciated the creative way to have some 'normalcy' during the holidays. This event is made possible by the generous donations received from the community, sponsors, and volunteers.

Completed Investigations

902
2020-21
1,122
2019-20

All Inquiries Received

1,473
2020-21
2,137
2019-20

Families Served

1,386
2020-21
1,493
2019-20



Youth In Care Day:

91 Pizza Kits were assembled by

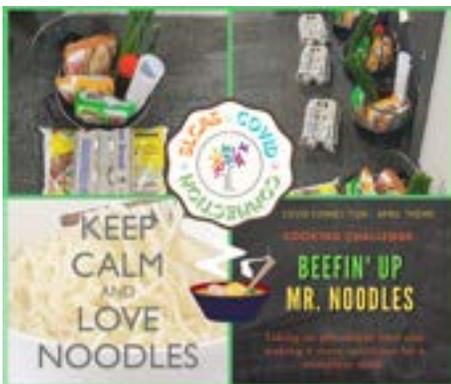
On May 14, 2021, we celebrated Youth in Care Day and ordered pizza kits from Giresi's Pizza along with cookie kits that were delivered to all children and youth in care. Some of the youth who reside outside of Lambton County received a gift card to various restaurants or Uber Eats.



COVID Connection:

We have greatly valued and appreciated the partnerships with many local businesses who helped to make the vision a reality. Listening to feedback from the young people helped inspire many of the packages, and we look forward to offering another year of monthly deliveries.

Monthly themed COVID Connection packages that were delivered to youth in care. March was spring cleaning and a plant for clean healthy air; April was focused on eating healthy and providing ideas along with all ingredients to make a meal. Additional themes included art kits, baking supplies and special treats for Valentine's Day.



Every Child Matters

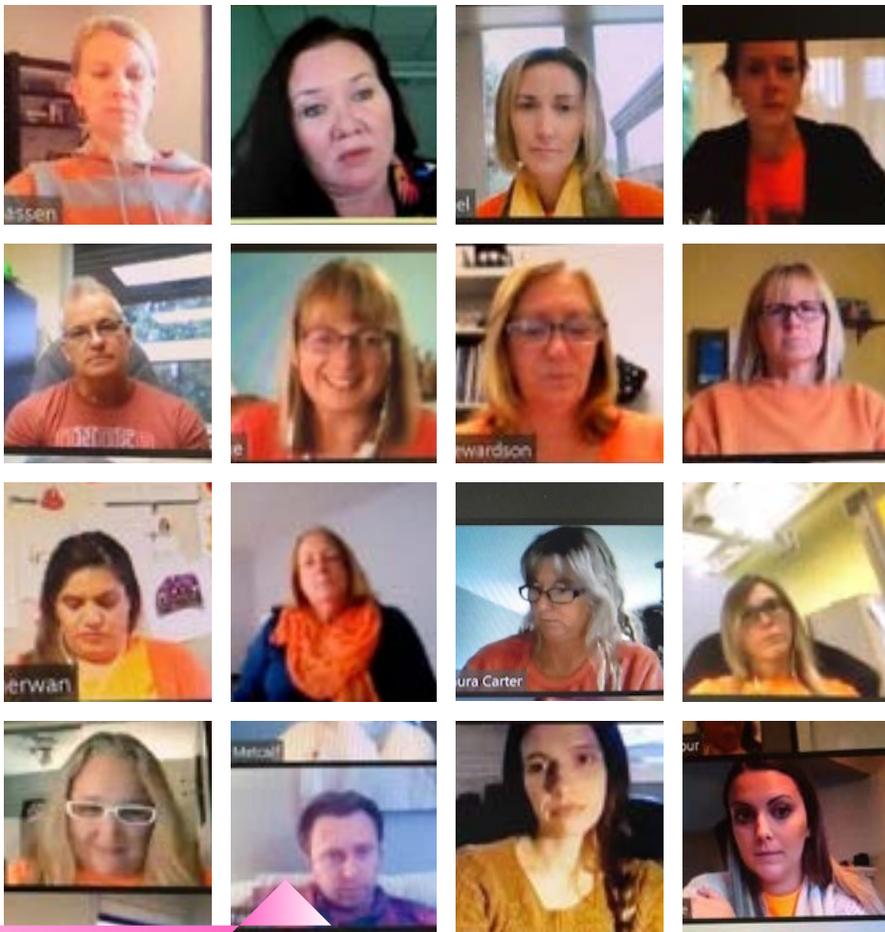


At the Sarnia Lambton Children's Aid Society, we are holding ourselves accountable to the provincial commitments made to Truth & Reconciliation. To address the over-representation of Indigenous families involved in child welfare, we know the identities of the First Nation, Inuit and Métis children and families that we are working with, and we are working closely with their respective Indigenous communities to ensure they grow up safe with their families connected to their community and cultures. We continue to develop working relationships with local Indigenous communities. We continue to participate in annual Indigenous learning opportunities as staff, volunteers, and Board Members. We know we still have a lot of work to do to overcome the legacy of child welfare.

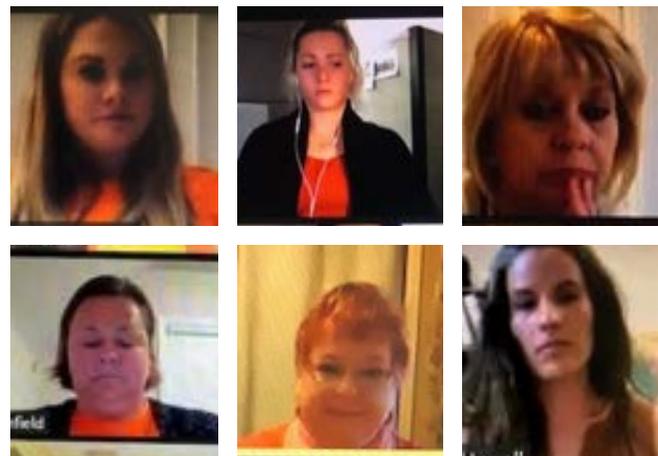
The discovery of the remains of Indigenous children and youth at residential schools over this last year has uncovered some of the dark secrets of Canada's history. These unmarked graves remind us that the voices of First Nation, Inuit and Métis children and youth and their families have been repeatedly ignored. Child Welfare has much to account for in our role of perpetuating systemic racism and the oppression of First Nation, Inuit, and Métis peoples. On Orange Shirt Day, September 30, 2021, we will wear orange to support the survivors of residential schools, to acknowledge the inter-generational trauma on individuals, families, and communities and in the light of these tragic findings, to especially remember that Every Child Matters.

As Orange Shirt Day approaches, read about Phyllis Webstad's personal story of her orange shirt, make a commitment as an individual or an organization about what you can do to make sure that Every Child Matters now, and in the future.

- Andrea Dalziel, Director of Services



Staff Meeting



Youth In Charge: The Genesis of the Sarnia-Lambton CAS Strategic Plan

We are proud of the goals we met in our last strategic plan and we are excited to share a new direction the agency went in developing our next strategic plan. It was an entirely youth led process in partnership with Lambton College and Ryerson University.

"Participating in developing a strategic plan was very new for me. I came across the position through a Facebook ad to 'change the world'. Ever since then it's been a huge learning experience. Throughout the process COVID had a great impact and made it challenging to be in person for the group work, but we found a way. Through this experience I have made many important relationships with people and have been offered a variety of empowering opportunities, such as being a head position for planning as a youth. Always having my voice and opinion heard in every meeting while learning everyone else's thoughts as well and having the opportunity to be part of the change that I talk so much about wanting to see. When the group first got together there were many eager members. We didn't set roles, and as we developed the tasks everyone had the opportunity to sign up for what they were interested in taking part of. We organized meetings with youth, community members, staff, board members and the First Nations communities to provide their ideas and thoughts on the new plan. Our main goal throughout the entire process was to ensure a non-bias outcome"

- Ryan Kozlof, Co-Youth Lead

FIRST Monday September 2021

Meet the Team:



Jordan Rajaram, Andrew Muirhead, Oshaia Rombough, Kaitlyn Stravato, Zibby, Eliya Murtuza, Gabe Brokenshire, Ester Guidos, Lisa Draper, Madison Joseph, Nashauna Robinson, Terri Burgess-Glover, Richard Marcano, Ryan Kozlof, Sarah Sugunachandran, Shannon Cherry, Dyan Roy, Richard Teskey, Michelle Holbrook, Kiaras Gharabaghi

For many decades, adult professionals have developed the strategic plans for children's aid societies that end up governing, determining, and shaping the lives of young people involved in child welfare. Sure, sometimes young people are consulted in that process; and sure, professionals want to do right by young people and think strategically with their best interests in mind. But ultimately such plans are adult and professionally driven, reflecting not the voices of young people but the priorities, including the compromises, necessary to sustain the organization. It therefore represents an enormous act of courage when Sarnia-Lambton CAS asked me and Michelle Holbrook, the Coordinator of Sarnia-Lambton College's Child, and Youth Care program, to assemble a team of young people in order to produce the agency's next strategic plan.

The team we assembled was quite extraordinary. It included three young people recruited by Sarnia-Lambton CAS, students from Ryerson University's Child and Youth Care program, and students from Lambton College's Child and Youth Care program. The team was coordinated by Shannon Cherry, herself a person from care, and we recruited Richard Marcano-Henry, also from care, to consult on Black Youth voices. Amongst the students, more than half were either from care or had close associations with child welfare in some form; three were Indigenous young people; two were Black Youth and five were racialized youth; several identified outside of binary gender constructs. The mean age of the team was 20 years. Truly a youth-driven team deeply committed to hearing out young people from across the Sarnia-Lambton community and formulating priorities that matched those voices.

Our process had challenges, with the need to operate virtually given the pandemic. Using various virtual platforms, we managed to spend 60 hours as a whole or small team in discussions. We were able to connect with over 70 people in the community, Indigenous youth, staff, foster parents, and other service providers.

The team reviewed all strategic plans from across Ontario's Children's Aid Societies, researched emerging trends in child welfare, and read reports that featured youth voices from care and engaged in deep analysis of the many voices heard through the interview processes.

The team took great pride in presenting a plan and priorities first to the senior management team of the agency and then to the agency's Board of Directors. We understand, of course, that the agency must take what we delivered and shape it according to its relationships within and beyond the agency, and in particular its relationships with the local First Nation communities. Whatever comes of it, Sarnia-Lambton CAS has set a precedent for innovation in child welfare. Youth-driven processes work - not smoothly - but they work!

-Kiaras Gharabaghi, PhD, Professor of Ryerson University





Financials

Expenditures	2020	2021
Salaries & Benefits	11,128,167	11,151,042
Travel	467,211	206,174
Training & Recruitment, Promotion & Misc.	52,118	58,158
Building Occupancy	287,986	272,252
Professional Services - Clients	233,878	635,101
Board Care	1,792,370	1,836,303
Personal Needs - Clients	772,907	1,160,390
Health & Other Related - Clients	146,520	83,367
Office Administration Supplies & Professional Services	426,638	736,313
Technology	98,989	129,602
Total Expenditures	15,406,784	16,268,702
Revenues	2020	2021
Expenditure Recoveries & Other	701,896	603,784
Provincial Subsidy	14,730,581	15,212,931
Total Revenues	15,844,608	15,816,715
Net Surplus (Deficit)	25,693	(451,987)
^(a) Balanced Budget Fund (Contribution) - Utilization Ministry Managed Fund	0	0
(Deficiency) excess of revenues versus expenditures per audited statement	25,693	(451,987)
Add back expenditures recognized for GAAP Audit Compliance	83,722	451,987
Net Operating Surplus/ (Deficit)	109,415	0

^(a) The Ministry of Children and Youth Services has created the "Balanced Budget Fund" to support Children's Aid Societies in meeting the balanced budget requirement set out in Regulation 70 and to proactively manage the risks associated with a multi-year budget planning process. During the year end May 31, 2018, The Sarnia-Lambton CAS generated a surplus that may be eligible for access in subsequent years under the Balanced Budget fund. *** Audited Statements are available on the agency website

Types of Referrals

