



SARNIA-LAMBTON
CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY

Annual Report

2021-2022

Why we do what we do...



**Our
Stories**



**Journey
Beside**



**Chasing
Zero**



**All At
The Table**



**Free To
Be Fully
Me**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



President - Kim Godin
Vice President - Lynn Rosales
VP Finance - Todd McNeil
Secretary - Kathy Alexander
Past President - Ryan Bell



Directors:
 Adam Kilner
 Bri Dubowski
 Deborah Munroe
 Kaitlyn Stravato
 Lo-Anne Chan
 Mark Williams

We are a Board that is comprised of diverse identities.

We strive for membership that is representative of the people and communities we serve.

Annual Business Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, September 27, 2022 at 6:00 pm

1. Welcome and Call to Order
2. Land Acknowledgement
3. Approval of the Agenda
4. MOTION to approve the Minutes from September 28, 2021
5. MOTION to approve the President and Executive Directors Report
6. MOTION to approve the Actions of the Board
7. MOTION to appoint the Auditor
8. MOTION to elect and re-elect terms
9. Acknowledgement of Departing Board Members
10. ADJOURNMENT

Executive Director and Board Presidents Report

We have been truly honoured to work alongside each of you over the past year and are grateful for the strengths and wisdom that you have shared to help children and youth be safer and live their lives well. We see your incredible dedication and service to children youth and families. We are proud of the work we do together and the care and compassion that you bring, seeing the humanity in each other and the people we serve.

Over the past year, Equity & Reconciliation remained at the forefront of our minds and in our work every day. We value our relationships and partnerships with Aamjiwnaang First Nation, Kettle and Stony Point First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation as we work together to support their children, youth and families. On the first National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, we required all staff to participate in learning and reflection. We know that Reconciliation and Social Justice work are collective and societal responsibilities, and we are grateful to be working with other community partners, sectors and agencies to be part of the changes. We provided additional training this year to Board members and staff including Indigenous; Diversity Equity & Inclusion; Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression; and Racial Trauma.

The pandemic and its impacts have taken their toll on many, including children youth and families. At the same time, we have also seen enormous resilience and communities coming together to support each other. We responded to the constant changes and re-adjustments as new information emerged. We wanted to ensure that we continued to provide a responsive service for children, youth and families and to be flexible to their individual needs and circumstances. A new vaccination policy came into effect; we adjusted to the Omicron variant and monitored staffing levels; mask mandates were lifted and rapid antigen testing became another tool in the battle against the virus. We also recognize the continued importance of staff wellness and supported things like the Peer Support Program, the disconnect from work policy, the Employee Assistance Program, a flexible hybrid working model and a micro aggressions process.

We experienced our first funding shortfall in 10 years. We continue to advocate for a funding model that supports prevention, children and youth remaining safely with their families and in their communities and the discontinued use of group care. These all align with the province's child welfare Redesign priorities. Our gratitude to the Board of Directors and staff who were actively contributing ideas for cost savings and ways of addressing the funding shortfall.

We celebrated the success of the last strategic plan and worked with a team of amazing young people to create a new one. Taking their vision, we sought further input from the local First Nations,

We are excited to report that the Board of Directors approved 5 directions which build upon the previous plan. We thank everyone who contributed to the new plan providing a future full of hope and opportunity for children youth and their families.



Chasing Zero: We will work together so that children and young people grow up safer, healthier and happier with their families and in their communities.



Journey Beside: We will work together and support Indigenous-led changes. We will continue to learn from our mistakes and not repeat them. We know our work must be different with Indigenous peoples and be part of healing.



All At the Table: We have a table where everyone belongs and will be heard, seen, understood and valued. We make plans and decisions together.



Free to be Fully Me: We care about people and their ability to be their true and whole selves. That means we will:

- Stand up for people's rights.
- Be anti-racist.
- Be anti-transphobic.
- Celebrate all the different parts that make someone who they are.
- Take care of ourselves and each other.



Our Stories: We will share stories, information and the changes we are making in a way that is easier for children and young people to understand.

Child welfare happens in the community and involves everyone. It is only when we work together that meaningful changes happen. A heartfelt thanks to staff, resource families, volunteers, Board members, and community partners for your amazing support and commitment to children youth and families.



Kim Godin
Board President



Dawn Flegel
Executive Director



Congratulations 2022 Graduates

Grade 8:

Sara, Shyla, Lyam, Dominic

Grade 12:

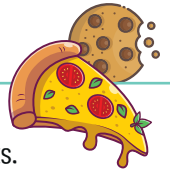
Caroline

Youth Holiday Party

This year's holiday celebrations continued in 'COVID style' due to the emergence of a new variant. With feedback from the young people from the previous year, the agency decided to recreate last year's celebrations and the young people attended the agency which was once again transformed into a Winter Wonderland! Santa made a special appearance this year and although it would have been ideal to eat food with one another, a warm turkey "to go" meal was provided to everyone in attendance. Baked goods were enjoyed in good company outside and socially distanced where staff and young people were able to spend time together over a warm cup of hot chocolate. Although safety measures were in place, holiday spirit was present in full force.



Youth In Care Day



On May 13th we celebrated youth in care day once again with pizza kits from Giresis' and cookie kits from Just Plain Sweets. These were delivered by the Children's Services Team to the young people throughout Lambton County and for those who reside in another jurisdiction, gift cards were sent to various restaurants.



This year we partnered with Sipkens nursery to provide Forget Me Not plants to children and youth in care - we even spent some time gathering as a department and planting some amongst the agency as a daily reminder of our agency's continued commitment to children and youth in care.



COVID Connections

We continued this program throughout this year and recently wrapped up in the summer of 2022. In the fall, the Children's Services department will be revamping the program to 'Connection' dropping covid and moving to face to face supports and opportunities where possible.

Other Programs

- New this year was the birthday card program –all children and youth in care are receiving personalized birthday cards from their respective workers.
- This year we offered to assist to complete Income Taxes for all youth who were interested and willing to work 1:1 with one of our youth support workers.

Our Stories: Prevention & Early Help



The society received a referral which appeared to be discriminatory and malicious in nature.

A society worker followed up by visiting the household and completing the safety assessment using an equity focused lens where she quickly identified the worries and concerns that were stemming from religious and cultural differences. The society worker remained attentive to the family and listened to their worries and highlighted their strengths to enhance their relationship with the society.

As part of the initial assessment process, the society worker also sought resources pertaining to equity related questions when concerns arise for discriminatory, and/or oppressive referents/collaterals. Identifying that the assessment process may be traumatizing to the family, a decision was made to discontinue the initial assessment to prevent causing further harm. As a follow-up, the society worker did try to contact the referent to discuss and provide additional education, but unfortunately this contact was unsuccessful.

This file also highlighted the importance of having a library of related questions or statements that assists workers in challenging discriminatory/oppressive referents and collaterals . The involved department plans to review this case situation so that the learning can be shared with all.





Truth and Reconciliation...

Where are we today?

Calls to Action:

The Calls to Action were released in 2015. The first five (5) calls to action deal with Child welfare.

"The child welfare system is the residential school system of our day."

-The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada - Volume 5 - The Legacy

1

Reduce the Number of Children in Care

- We had 25 Indigenous children in care in 2015.
- At year end 2021/2022, we had 15.

2

Publish Statistics on Children In Care

We share our statistics:

- Directly with First Nations
- With our staff and Board of Directors
- With CASs and First Nations in the annual Southwest Gathering
- With the public using our new Commitments Template

3

Implement Jordan's Principle

Funding:

- Applications for this funding are made in consultation with the First Nations for costs not covered by Child Welfare funding

Services:

- Applied when there is a question of which CAS has jurisdiction and when there is a question about which service agency should respond.

4

Enact Federal Child Welfare Legislation

- Federal Legislation was passed in 2019

5

Develop Culturally Appropriate Parenting Programs

- We have shared resources with Indigenous partners so that they can develop/deliver programming that meets the unique needs of their children and families.
- We partnered with First Nations and ANCFSAO to pilot the Indigenous designed and delivered Heart and Spirit program for alternate care homes.



Our Stories: Kinship Services

Story Number One:



This is a story of a sibling set of five children. The children were all different ages and they all had different needs. The children had a Nana and Grandpa who did not live together but supported each other. The Nana and Grandpa also had a sister-in-law on the grandfather's side who loved these children very much. When it was no longer safe for the children to remain with their parents, the three oldest children went to live with their grandfather, and the other two went to live with their grandmother. Together with the Great Aunt, this network worked together in the most beautiful way to ensure the children had spaces to go before and after school and

on weekends when caregivers had to work. They also worked together to ensure the children attended important appointments such as counselling and medical appointments. Even though the two youngest siblings do not live with their older siblings, this family is always together celebrating holidays and birthdays together. The eldest child even babysat her two younger siblings for her Nana when she had to work during the summer months. This network is strong and will continue to do whatever needed to keep the family unit together.

Early Help
Supports

278
2021-22
235
2020-21

Children & Youth
In Group Care

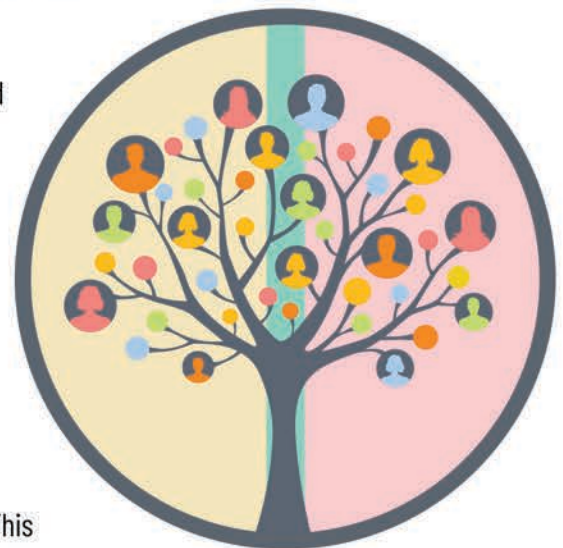
0
2021-22
0
2020-21

Number of
Open Kinship
Homes

77
2021-22
92
2020-21

Story Number Two:

This is a story about an aunt and uncle who had a blended family of their own consisting of four children. When they learned that the maternal Grandfather, who had been caring for his Granddaughter could no longer care for her, his daughter, the child's aunt stepped in and brought the child home. There, the little girl flourished in a safe, protective, and loving home. They would do anything to ensure her safety and well-being. One year later the little girl's parents had another baby. The baby was born early and was very small. Even though the aunt and Uncle were very busy with their family, as all of the children in the home were under seven years old, they offered their home to the little girl's sister, their new niece. They were unable to accept the idea of the baby not being with her kin, and her sister. This little girl, like her sister has also flourished in their care and turned One year old this past summer. They are both happy, healthy, and safe children. This family is the true definition of blended, in the most beautiful way.



Expenditures	2021	2022
Salaries & Benefits	11,151,042	11,604,086
Travel	206,174	291,711
Training & Recruitment, Promotion & Misc.	279,961	276,847
Building Occupancy	272,252	272,954
Professional Services - Clients	635,101	470,751
Board Care	1,836,303	2,082,857
Personal Needs - Clients	1,160,390	722,395
Health & Other Related - Clients	83,367	102,659
Office Administration Supplies & Professional Services	514,510	431,785
Technology	129,602	91,743
Total Expenditures	16,268,702	16,347,788
Revenues	2021	2022
Expenditure Recoveries & Other	603,784	895,313
Provincial Subsidy	15,212,931	14,592,907
Total Revenues	15,816,715	15,488,220
Net Surplus (Deficit)	(451,987)	(859,568)
(a) Balanced Budget Fund (Contribution) - Utilization Ministry Managed Fund	0	0
(Deficiency) excess of revenues versus expenditures per audited statement	(451,987)	(859,568)
Add back expenditures recognized for GAAP Audit Compliance	451,987	(446,201)
Net Operating Surplus/ (Deficit)	0	(1,305,769)

(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.

