



**SARNIA-LAMBTON**  
CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY

2022-23

# Annual Report

Free to be fully me!



We work alongside families and communities to help children and youth be safer and live their lives well.



2022-23

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**President** - Lynn Rosales

**Vice President** - Kathy Alexander

**VP Finance** - Todd McNeil

**Secretary** - Lo-Anne Chan

**Past President** - Kim Godin



### Directors:

Adam Kilner

Bri Dubowski

Mark Williams

Kaitlyn Stravato

Maureen Cannon

Lila Palychuk

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 26, 2023 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 27, 2022
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 & Board President Report:

We celebrate and honour the work that was done over the past year by staff, resource families, Board members, volunteers and community partners. Together, we helped support hundreds of children, youth and families in our communities. The services we provide are critical and especially important with rising pressures on families due to increases in homelessness, substance misuse, intimate partner violence, mental health concerns, poverty and hate directed at marginalized groups of people. The pandemic, dramatic climate change and economic uncertainties are all impacting society including the people we serve. In this context, we have continued to persevere and provide high quality service. People connected to our agency go above and beyond on a daily basis and stand up for what is right. We are proud of what we do.

Chasing Zero was featured by Global News and highlighted the changes that our organization has made over the past decade. There are more children living with kin and fewer children in foster care. We have not used group care for over 4 years. We supported families so that children did not need to come into care in the first place and could remain safely with their families and in their communities. The coverage also showed how the changes we made negatively impacted our financial situation. We received less funding as result of fewer children in care and that resulted in another year of financial pressures for the organization. We are grateful to the Board, Global News and MPP Bob Bailey for their advocacy and work on this. Thankfully, late in the fiscal year, the Ministry provided \$1.3 million in funding to cover the historical debt which helped address the challenges. We are appreciative of that and the recognition of our work. More advocacy is needed so that we have a funding model that matches the outcomes we want to see in the child welfare system. Prevention and early intervention for children, youth and families is better for them and better financially.

We continued work on Reconciliation, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion including hiring a Manager to help make more progress. We are fully engaged in the important work of restoring child welfare jurisdiction back to the First Nations and are working closely with the communities and the pre-designated agency, Mnaasged Child & Family Services, to make that happen. We are grateful for the privilege and opportunity to partner with Aamjiwnaang First Nation, Kettle & Stony Point First Nation and Bkejwanong First Nation (Walpole Island). Again this year, staff participated in mandatory learning on the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation.

Staff, resource families and Board members participated in a survey so that we would know the different identities of the people who are part of our agency and can compare that to the people we serve and the people who live in our communities. We can use the information to identify and address any under or over representation.

Engagement and involvement of young people is important to us. The Board of Directors worked through dozens of policies this year striving to reflect the organization's values and writing them in a way that is easier for children and young people to understand. Young people reviewed the policies and provided input. The Board also had youth involved at the governance level for the first time. We started a new partnership with the County of Lambton for housing supports specifically for young people in and from care. The program includes a worker who helps young people obtain and sustain safe and affordable housing as well as subsidies. We are grateful for the opportunity to expand the housing services and supports to young people.

The year was another one of Ministry changes with respect to out of home care. The moratorium that was put in place so that no young person aged out of care during the pandemic ended. It was replaced by a new program which started on April 1st 2023. It extends the age of youth leaving care from 21 to 23 and has new expectations for financial supports and service. In addition, the Quality Standards Framework came into effect on July 1st 2023 which intends to address long-standing issues that have been reported by young people in care.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to each of you for the important role you play in working alongside families and communities to help children and youth be safer and live their lives well. The work you do matters.



**Lynn Rosales**  
Board President



**Dawn Flegel**  
Executive Director







## Youth Holiday Party

We were finally able to celebrate in person again. The room was filled with laughter and conversation. Delicious food made by the Taylor family and friends was enjoyed by everyone who sat down together for a holiday meal. The evening picked up with music, dancing, and a special visit from Santa. Everyone went home with smiles, excitement, and appreciation for the wonderful gifts each received from their sponsors.





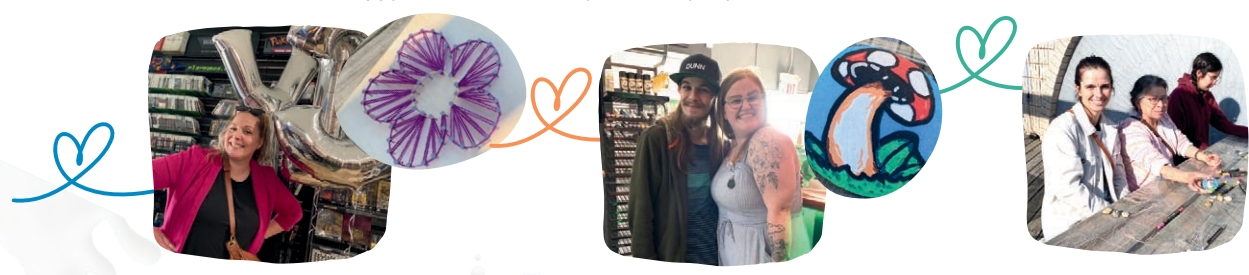
## Youth Housing

We have a new partnership with the Corporation of the County of Lambton for youth homelessness supports and services. The Youth Housing Worker supports young people who are in the care of the Society and are either experiencing homelessness and/or are at risk of homelessness. The Youth Housing Worker works along side community partners to identify specific needs and ensure that no young person leaves the care of the Society without a safe place to live.



## Child & Youth In Care Day

Child, Youth and Care Day was May 14th, and we celebrated young people in care with an event that resulted in lots of happy smiles and mixing and mingling!





## Youth Space

Youth have expressed the need of a social gathering space at the agency, that is child & youth centered and welcoming. Thanks to the partnership between Lambton College Placement students and a few agency staff who gathered information and ideas from young people to ensure that this space will look and feel authentically "theirs". The plan for this space will be for age-appropriate gatherings, sibling visits and other activities for young people.

We look forward to the open house when this project has been completed. We are very thankful for the students and staff who have been working very hard on this project and to the community members who have made donations to support this project.





# Free to be fully me!

## Celebrate all the different parts that make someone who they are...

A worker accompanied 2 children to their First Nation in Alberta. The children and the First Nation were happy they were able to connect with each other and the children were able to participate in an important naming ceremony.

## Stand up for people's rights...

A worker advocated for a racialized caregiver who reported experiencing discrimination by the school. The caregiver believed that the school made repeated referrals to the Society without having discussions with her first. The worker facilitated a meeting with the school and a plan was developed to address the concern.

## Take Care of Ourselves & Each Other

We need to know each other in order to take care of each other. One team has been inviting its members to share more about themselves and who they are during team meetings.

## Be Anti - Racist

All staff participated in mandatory Diversity Equity and Inclusion training with Dr. Tapo Chimbanga. Teams were then required to discuss what was learned and how it will be applied in the services we provide. As part of the Social Services Network of Sarnia-Lambton we partnered with Future Black Female to host a community conversation about Anti-Black Racism. Over 120 people were in attendance.

## Be Anti - Transphobic

The signage in agency washrooms was changed. We now have one male and one female washroom. The remainder are all gender-inclusive. All staff were invited to change their email signatures to include their pronouns. Some staff have participated in Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression training; the remainder will be trained in the upcoming year.

## Employee Highlight

Margaret Price is leading our agency's work in Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Reconciliation (EDIR). Margaret is committed to addressing systemic racism and all other isms on both a personal and professional level. She is enjoying the challenges and rewards of leading this change initiative and for ensuring that SLCAS continues to integrate equity and anti-oppressive practices that align with the Agencies EDIR goals and objectives through practice transformation.



Early Help  
Supports

**319**  
2022-23  
**278**  
2021-22

Number of  
Families  
Served

**1392**  
2022-23  
**1382**  
2021-22

Number of  
Open Kinship  
Homes

**83**  
2022-23  
**77**  
2021-22

## National Day of Truth & Reconciliation

In September a ceremony was held to honour all those who experienced and were impacted by residential schools. We recognize the horrors of what occurred and the direct link to child welfare today. We will never let it happen again. All staff were required to report on how they honoured the day and what they learned.



## Learn ... how will we know it got better?

Our agency's strategic direction "All at the Table" states: We have a table where everyone belongs and will be heard, seen, understood and valued. We make plans and decisions together. One of the ways we said we would know it got better was that people in all parts of our agency would have the same or similar identities as the people we serve. To measure that, we asked all employees to complete a survey about different aspects of their identities and compared this information with the identities of the people we serve and the population of Sarnia-Lambton.

114

staff work at the  
Sarnia-Lambton CAS

128,154

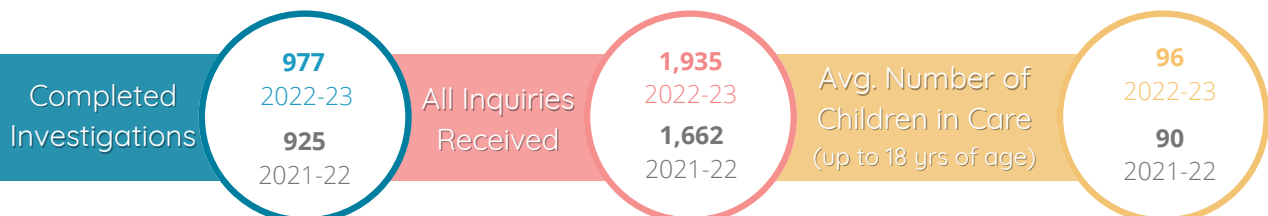
people live in  
Lambton County

### Identity Data:

	Black:	Racialized:	Indigenous:	White:
% of County population who identify as:	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>89.7%</b>
% of investigations with families who identify as:	<b>1%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>48%</b>
% of ongoing service with families who identify as:	<b>1%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>49%</b>
% of children with kin who identify as:	<b>0%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>38%</b>
% of children in care who identify as:	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>49%</b>
% of agency staff who identify as:	<b>9%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>81%</b>

\*where totals do not equal 100%, it is because not all identity information is known.

Source: County data - 2021 census; Staff Identity Data - as of Apr 30, 2023; Agency Race Data (avg.) for the period of April 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023



## Black History Month

In February we celebrated Black History Month at our staff meeting, with two guest speakers, Lambton College Student Dan Edwards and author Vivian Yejide Kilanko who shared a reading from her book "Daughters who walk this Path". Staff were required to report on the learning they took part in.



## National Indigenous Peoples Day

To celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day, we participated in a mini Pow Wow organized by the Sarnia-Lambton Native Friendship Centre. We had a craft center and distributed Freezes.



## PRIDE


We celebrated PRIDE Month by sharing resources with staff through email. Staff also attended the PRIDE flag raising ceremony at Centennial Park. We participated in the first PRIDE Fest in 2022 organized by Diversity ED. Our booth offered, information about fostering with our agency, crafts for kids, and ice-cold Freezes to cool down from the heat. We look forward for more celebrations in years to come.



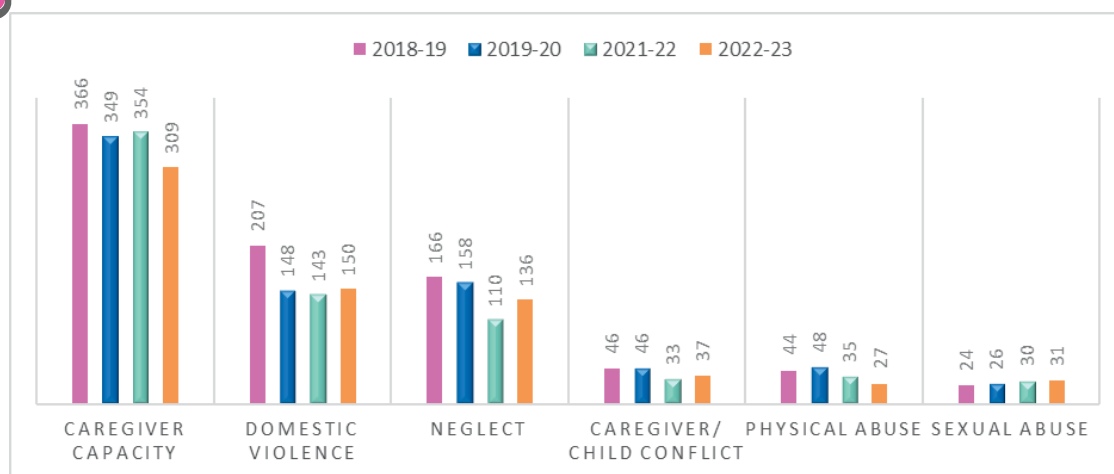


Expenditures	2022	2023
Salaries & Benefits	11,604,086	11,205,849
Travel	291,711	254,729
Training & Recruitment, Promotion & Misc.	276,847	241,418
Building Occupancy	272,954	276,490
Professional Services - Clients	470,751	289,200
Board Care	2,082,857	2,403,343
Personal Needs - Clients	722,395	623,162
Health & Other Related - Clients	102,659	274,672
Office Administration Supplies & Professional Services	431,785	417,971
Technology	91,743	102,842
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>16,347,788</b>	<b>16,089,676</b>
Revenues	2022	2023
Expenditure Recoveries & Other	895,313	936,429
Provincial Subsidy	14,592,907	16,046,512
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>15,488,220</b>	<b>16,982,941</b>
Net Surplus (Deficit)	(859,568)	893,265
<sup>(a)</sup> Balanced Budget Fund (Contribution) - Utilization Ministry Managed Fund	0	0
(Deficiency) excess of revenues versus expenditures per audited statement	(859,568)	893,265
Add back expenditures recognized for GAAP Audit Compliance	446,201	1,300,724
<b>Net Operating Surplus/ (Deficit)</b>	<b>(1,305,769)</b>	<b>(407,459)</b>

<sup>(a)</sup> 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. \*\*\* Audited Statements are available on the agency website



## Types of Referrals



Source: Agency Service Data (avg.) reported for the period of April 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023