



We Value

Safety – Families – Relationships - Collaboration – Being Open & Willing to Change

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR THE PERIOD OF January 31st, 2018 - February 27th, 2018


February is Black History Month. We sent information out to all staff and posted on social media.

A black rectangular graphic with a white border. At the top, the word "About ..." is written in a white, hand-drawn style font. Below this, there are two paragraphs of white text. The first paragraph describes Black History Month as a time to celebrate and remember the contributions of Black Canadians. The second paragraph explains the history of Black History Month, dating back to 1926 in the United States, and mentions Carter G. Woodson as the founder. To the right of the second paragraph is a circular portrait of Carter G. Woodson, an African American man in a suit and tie.

About ...

Black History Month is a time to celebrate and remember all the ways that black Canadians have contributed to Canada's history and culture. Throughout February, this celebration provides a chance to learn about African cultures.

The history of Black History Month dates back to 1926 in the United States. At that time, an African-American historian named Carter G. Woodson founded a week that focused on celebrating the accomplishments of African Americans. He decided on a week in February because two important men were born in that month, Fredrick Douglas & Abraham Lincoln



Mary Ballantyne, the CEO at the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, has announced her resignation effective December 2018. This will be a significant leadership change for our sector.



Chasing Zero

We are chasing having all children and youth growing up safe with families. It is at the heart of everything we do. Success Marker: Zero children & youth growing up in care by 2020.

In the year ahead, we will be prioritizing the remaining children & youth who are at risk of growing up in care. The Board and Management team were aligned in making this a priority.



All at the Table

There is a place for everyone at our table. No one person or group sits at the head. People of all ages, abilities, backgrounds, races, cultures, genders and sexual orientations are welcome to pull up a chair and have their voices help shape our services and decisions. Success Markers: Family involvement in case conferences increases by 10% a year beginning in 2016. Families have a way of telling us if our services were helpful and why.



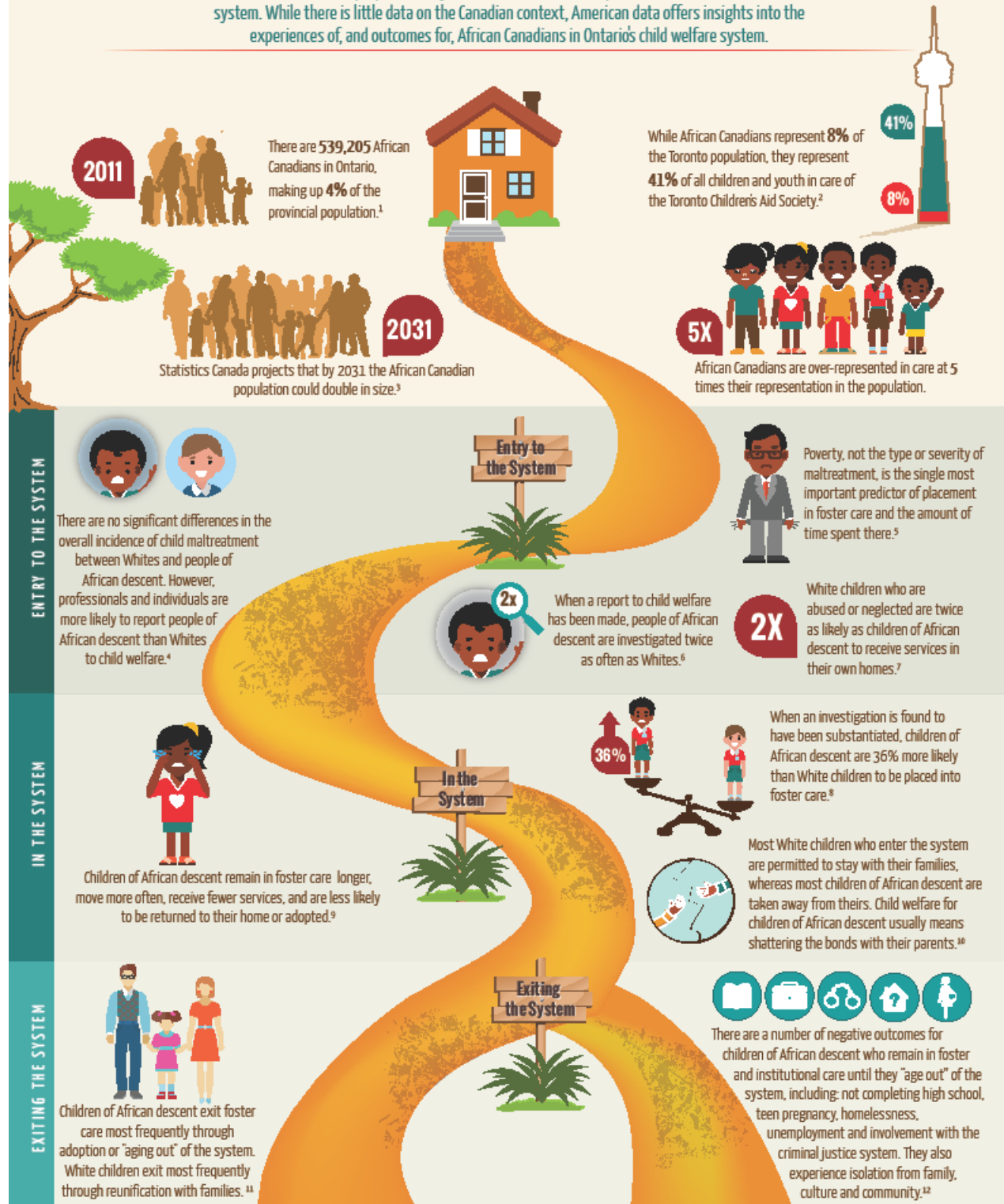
We have started to implement the new Ministry Directive which requires us to ask children and youth about various aspects of their identities. The language contained in the questionnaire is not child or youth friendly. We also consulted with the three First Nations who had concerns with the language and some of the questions. We will continue to address these issues with the Ministry and within our field.



The release of Phase 2 of One Vision One Voice (OVOV) occurred in February. This is the provincial work being done to address the disproportionality of black families in the child welfare system. This infographic below from OVOV explains more. We are having conversations within the southwest about how to work together as a region to implement the practice principles that have been developed.

RACE MATTERS IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

While the reasons for disproportionality are multifaceted and complex, race affects the child welfare system. While there is little data on the Canadian context, American data offers insights into the experiences of, and outcomes for, African Canadians in Ontario's child welfare system.



Data Sources

1- Statistics Canada. W5 Profile, 2013.
2- Children's Aid Society of Toronto. As reported in Toronto Star, "Why are so many black children in foster and group homes?" December 13, 2014.
3- Statistics Canada. Projections of the Diversity of the Canadian Population: March 9, 2010.
4- A. Saelik and D. Broadhurst, Executive Summary of the Third National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect (U.S. Health and Human Services: 1996)
5- D. Lindsay. Adequacy of income and the foster care placement decision: Using an odds ratio approach to examine client variables. Social Work Research Abstracts (1993) 20(1): 29-36

7- D. Roberts. Shattered Bonds: The Color of Child Welfare. New York: 2002 p 17
8- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Child Maltreatment. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2005
9- D. Roberts. Shattered Bonds: The Color of Child Welfare. New York: 2002 p 14
10- D. Roberts. Shattered Bonds: The Color of Child Welfare. New York: 2002 p 17
11- J.E.R. Myers. Child Maltreatment: A Collection of Readings. London: Sage Publications, 2011.



Journey Beside

We will continue to work beside our First Nation partners to ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of their children and youth. We commit to learning from one another and sharing our agency's resources to support First Nations children, youth and families. Success Marker – a minimum of 80% of staff, foster parents, Board members and volunteers have participated in at least one local training or learning opportunity per year regarding Indigenous People.

Ogwadeni:deo (Six Nations) received its designation (child welfare mandate) from the Ministry as an Indigenous Child Well Being agency. We have sent a letter of congratulations and hope to attend their celebration.

Work continues in the southwest with Children's Aid Societies and First Nations to improve outcomes for Indigenous children, youth and families and address the over-representation. Provincial work also continues to meet the commitments that were made. Jennifer Thrasher is the southwest Director of Service Champion and will also be participating on a steering committee for the September gathering which is a follow up to the apology that was made.

We recognized Have a Heart Day again this year which is an advocacy campaign through the First Nations Caring Society.



SARNIA-LAMBTON
CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY
is proud to support

#HaveAHeartDay

Have a heart for First Nations children

Help ensure that First Nations children have the services they need to grow up safely at home, get a good education, be healthy, and be proud of who they are.



Our Stories

By sharing our heartfelt stories, challenges and the changes we are making, we can better educate our community about the valuable work we do with children, youth and families. **Success Marker:** We have an annual communication plan that provides the public with more information about the work we do.

At every staff meeting we recognize staff for the work they do. I'm sharing two of these stories:

A staff member has been providing file disclosure to people who have experienced the 60s Scoop. The Indigenous worker has approached the work with sensitivity and has been a strong advocate for getting people the information they need in a timely manner. She has been helping people process through the difficult information and often hurtful language that is contained in the files. She have taken whatever time is needed with them.

A worker showed care and compassion when a foster parent passed away. There was a young person who had previously been cared for by the foster family but had not seen them in quite some time. The worker took the initiative, contacted the young person and took him to the visitation and the funeral. The foster mother then asked him to sit up front with the immediate family. The worker remained with him for the social time after and then drove him home, stopping to pick up a few groceries that he needed on the way.



My Circle

Each of us has the responsibility to ask ourselves “What role do I play in helping us meet our goals?” and “How am I committing myself to our mission?” This is your circle. **Success Marker:** everyone has a personal goal that helps us achieve our strategic goals.

We have achieved our success marker in this area. Here are a couple of circles:

My hope is to prevent children from coming into care and keeping them within their family and or community. I plan to do this by supporting families that we work with by preparing them and giving them the tools to support their own family independently. I will do this by connecting them with their community, supporting them in their healing journey and assisting them in reaching out for services in their time of need. I will support them by helping them address current protection concerns and preventing future ones by advocating on their behalf and giving them the confidence to care for their families in a safe and protective manner.

Miranda Dockstater

“Bringing more families to the table, recognizing them as experts in their own lives and experiences; respecting that all individuals have inherent strengths/ abilities and deserve supportive, respectful and non-judgemental workers who are willing to meet clients where they are at and walk alongside them as equally important counterparts in a team.”

-Alanna Bingham

DAWN FLEGEL, M.S.W., R.S.W
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.