



We Value

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

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR THE PERIOD OF January 30th, 2019 - February 26th, 2019

We have planning underway for the 19/20 fiscal year – both the annual Operational Plan as well as the Budget. The Board will be asked to provide input during the February Board meeting. Approval of the internal Budget will be requested at the March 2019 meeting.



To learn more about local resources and events, check out these links:

- [Chatham-Kent Underground railroad receives provincial recognition](#)
- [Congress of Black Women of Canada](#)

To learn more about Black history makers and Black Canadian writers, check out these links:

- [10 Modern day Black History Makers](#)
- [6 Black Canadian writers to watch in 2019](#)

BLACK HISTORY MONTH



Hello Everyone,

In February, we celebrate and honour the historical and current contributions of Black Canadians. The Honourable Jean Augustine was the first Black woman elected to Parliament and she introduced the motion to recognize Black History Month in Canada. It passed unanimously.

Specific to Child Welfare Work...

I'd like to recognize and applaud the very important work of the One Vision One Voice team under the leadership of Kike Ojo. During one of her many public interviews, she said "when I first started working in child welfare it wasn't uncommon to hear members of the sector say that "they don't see colour," or that



To have gone from a fringe group to having legitimacy within the sector is a testament to the child welfare system's capacity to change

— Kike Ojo
Program Manager
One Vision One Voice

they treat all families "the same," despite the grave disparities pointing to the contrary. All these years later, that thought process seems outdated, almost archaic."



Nicole Bonnie, CEO OACAS

Nicole Bonnie is the first Black person to hold the position of Chief Executive Officer at the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies. She started the role in January 2019. She won a 2018 Award "Women Worth Watching" and provided this inspiring quote:

"What ignites my passion is social justice. My starting place is a deep understanding that this is not an equal playing field for all communities and identities due to historical legacies of oppression, such as slavery, patriarchy, and colonization. These legacies of oppression continue to impact marginalized communities today and contribute to compounding effects of disparities for disenfranchised groups. I am very aware of my own areas of privilege and the ways that I benefit from historical and present patterns of injustice. I am committed to using areas where I have the societal advantage to challenge and change outcomes for parents and youth on the margins."

And finally a quote by Malcolm Gladwell to reflect upon...

"It is those who are successful, in other words, who are most likely to be given the kinds of special opportunities that lead to further success. It's the rich who get the biggest tax breaks. It's the best students who get the best teaching and most attention. And it's the biggest nine- and ten-year-olds who get the most coaching and practice. Success is the result of what sociologists like to call "accumulative advantage."



— Malcolm Gladwell, *Outliers: The Story of Success*



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.

Over the past month, we achieved zero young people in group care. Many people have contributed to ensuring family based options for children and young people and we are so pleased that young people are experiencing the positive results of those efforts.

Following a presentation to 100 Women Who Care on February 6th, we were successful in receiving a substantial donation to purchase furnishings for the youth housing initiative underway at the former ABC Day Care on London Line. We have worked closely with Gary and Tammy VandenHeuvel (from Preferred Towing) who purchased the building and are renovating it for housing. We pleased to partner with them again for the furnishings.



[Dr. Kiaras Gharabaghi](#) has agreed to attend our community and present on Residential Treatment and Care. He is a well-known expert in this area, one of the panel members of Because Young People Matter and the Director of the school of Child and Youth Care at Ryerson. His latest book has just been released: *A Hard Place to Call Home: A Canadian Perspective on Residential Care and Treatment (2019)*. We will be working with community partners to confirm a date and will be extending the invitation to attend widely. All Board members are welcome to come.



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.

Signs of Safety continues to be implemented as the framework for service.





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.

Current status of our success marker of training/learning completed:

Board – 92%

Staff – 62%

Foster Parents – 33%

Volunteers – 75%

Other training is being offered in February and March so we can achieve our minimum expectation of 80%.

The Human Rights Commission will be attending the agency and providing training on Protecting Indigenous Spirituality on April 17th, 2019. Board members are welcome to attend – let Nicole Hillier know.

I attended the Ogwadenideo celebration of their one year designation as an Indigenous Child Well Being organization and receiving the mandate from the Ministry to provide child protection services.



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.

I have reviewed the 19/20 Communication Plan. We have done what we set out to do in terms of sharing more information with the community, particularly through our website and social media. We still need to make the Board Committee reports available.



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:

“I am committed to building strong, working relationships with families to empower and strengthen, meeting them where they are so that all families are successful in reaching their goals.”

Becky Mitchell
In Home Support Worker

“Assist with the ‘business’ portion of the Sarnia-Lambton Children’s Aid Society. Bringing my education & background to the table to help keep finances & goals on track.”

Lila Palychuk
Community Representative
Corporate Services Committee



Getting Better Together

Wellness in our workplace continues as a priority for our agency and we believe we are making progress. I will continue to report on this area in my monthly reports to the Board.

We have started the spring hiring progress based on known and anticipated vacancies for the year. We’ve had applications from excellent candidates. The bulk hiring allows us to plan more proactively and provide the new worker authorization training at the same time. As was identified previously, having stable staffing levels and an ability to quickly fill leaves is directly connected to the wellness of our workplace and the quality of our service.

The Getting Better Together Working Group has continued its work under the leadership of new co-chairs Leena Singh and Christina Jolliffe.

We have come to an agreement about a revised sick leave adjudication process. This was done in partnership with the Union. The new process will provide employees with more choice and clear guidelines about when external adjudication will be used.



The first staff recognition breakfast was held on January 30th. The staff participation in the event exceeded our expectations and we have received lots of positive feedback about it. I am grateful that three Board members, Ryan Bell, Lynn Rosales and Kim Godin, were able to attend and help out. It was meaningful for Board members to be present.

Submitted by:
DAWN FLEGEL, M.S.W., R.S.W
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.



Thank You!

We would like to thank the Zone 1 Egg Farmers for the generous donation of 15 dozen eggs for our Staff Years of Service Breakfast Event. We also loved the pens and shopping lists they were a hit!

