



Chatham-Kent
Children's Services

Services pour les enfants
de Chatham-Kent



Annual General Report 2018-2019

Board of Directors

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The annual report is a natural opportunity to reflect upon the past year and consider the journey that has led us to today. Here at Chatham-Kent Children’s Services, it is a chance to be amazed at how quickly time passes.

We have had new legislation with the Child, Youth and Family Services Act and with that fundamental changes in the approach to our work. An increased age of protection, child, youth and family voice and engagement and deepened commitment to Indigenous and racialized communities are at the surface of principles that guide our work.

Relationships with key stakeholders including those we support, community partners, and funders, as well as internally, with each other continue to be a priority. We have placed great emphasis on building relationships with each other because we know that trust is foundational to success. And we extend the need for trust to every child, youth, family member/caregiver that we work beside, to the broad range of community service providers with whom we partner and interface with and those with the responsibility of oversight of our work, including our Board of Directors.

Significant changes are anticipated with calls to a reimagined and outcomes focused child welfare system, a move to the Ministry of Health for child and youth mental health services and the implementation of the regional service plan for our Special Needs Resourcing supports. From a staffing perspective, we have had multiple comings and goings, including the departures of several long term employees. We have also waited for the decision of an arbitration process that was handed down on March 31st. The delivery of this award will allow us to bring closure to a challenging time for our agency and create space to move forward.

We have grounded ourselves in the philosophical values of Signs of Safety, a framework and value system that honours the voice and experience of the child and family. We have committed to family based care as the best kind of care for children. We promise to continuously evaluate our practices to ensure we use our resources to maximize both value and impact and we will apply an equity lens in our words and actions.

What is unchanged in our daily efforts is the unifying force of our compelling vision to help make things better for kids and families in Chatham-Kent. Despite the changes and challenges, the opportunities and innovations in practice, we can all return to a grounding principal that will centre us on common ground. We may have our differences, we may face barriers and we know we will make mistakes along the way. But we will be ok with that because at the end of the day, at the end of the next year, at the end of a career, we will be confident in our actions and intentions.

So as you join us in this annual review, please take a moment to reflect on how you have impacted or have been impacted by the life of a child or youth in our community this past year. I invite you to use that experience, whether it was positive or not, to think about our shared responsibility to make meaningful change happen. Small steps or massive system transformation, grounded in a vision of making things better for kids and families, will always be worth it.

Robin Greenall, Board Chair
Teri Thomas-Vanos, Executive Director

Service Statistics

	2018-2019	2017-2018
Intake/Family Services		
Total Reports Received	2372	2508
Total New Investigations	1105	1021
Investigations Not Required	435	919
Cases Opened	218	262
Cases Open At End of Year	307	373
Children in Care		
Children Admitted to Care	79	118
Children Discharged From Care	108	107
Children in Care At End of Year	148	176
Total # of Children Served in Care	262	283
Total Days Care Provided	59747	63554
Total Adoptions Completed	12	12
Total New Foster Homes Opened	8	8
Total Foster Homes at End of Year	56	63
New Kinship Service Homes Opened	57	62
# of Kinship Service Homes at End of Year	48	44
Adoption Disclosures Completed	26	26
Children’s Mental Health		
Intake Referrals	707	719
Short Term Assessment & Treatment	397	225
# Served - Treatment Services	494	577
Psychological Assessment	150	218
Young Offenders Served	5	5
Child Development		
Children’s Special Needs Resourcing	220	253



Signs of Safety

In 2016, Chatham-Kent Children's Services adopted a Signs of Safety philosophy and practice with our child protection families. In 2019, we decided to reboot our Signs of Safety journey to include all services of the organization. This has included ongoing educational sessions for all CKCS staff, foster parents, the Board and community partners.

Signs of Safety is a strengths-based and safety focused approach to working with the children and families we serve. It is grounded in the philosophy that families are their own experts and know best what needs to change.

Signs of Safety is a solution focused approach. This means focusing solutions around the family's vision. It is based on the belief that problems are best solved by focusing on what is already working and how a family would like their life to be. It is imperative that children and families are an integral part of process and planning. This approach encompasses' strengths and Signs of Safety that can be built to stabilize and strengthen a child's and family's situation.

Implicit in this approach is to bring the family's network together to help facilitate a plan that addresses safety and the overall well-being of the family. Families that come

up with their own solutions and plans are believed to be more committed to the change necessary to move forward.

Traditionally, service providers have taken a paternalistic approach. An approach that the professional knows what is wrong in the lives of the families served and what the solutions are to those problems.

The Signs of Safety approach seeks to create a more constructive culture which include working relationships between professionals and family members; thinking critically; and fostering a stance of inquiry. This in contrast to a conclusive all-knowing driven approach.

Building healthy relationships is the bedrock of human change. We at CKCS are committed to building better relationships with the children and families we serve; and our community partners. We strive to facilitate and not dictate change with each child and family we serve. This is an inclusive and ongoing process of listening; engagement and facilitation. Children and families are at the center and the drivers of our solution focused approach.

Signs of Safety is not a destination but a journey that requires ongoing reflection and change that we at CKCS embrace.

Strengthening Children and Families for a Better Future



Strategic Direction #1

Supportive, collaborative workforce

- Staff survey
- Decrease in grievances
- Succession plan will be in place for management and senior management positions
- Wellness initiatives will be informed by identified staff needs



Strategic Direction #2

Child, Youth & Family Engagement

- Youth Advisor position will be established
- Child's voice is engaged
- Service User survey



Strategic Direction #3

Signs of Safety

- 95% of staff, volunteers, foster parents and Board members will be trained
- Increased kin/family-based care
- Decreased # of children in care
- Decreased court involvement



Strategic Direction #4

Governance

- Development of a menu of Board training opportunities that align to the skills matrix
- Evaluation of new Board structure
- Development of a recruitment strategy
- Development of a community engagement plan



Strategic Direction #5

Equity

- Identity-based information is collected by HR
- Facilities support cultural practices
- Increased collaborative community partnerships with equity-seeking groups

Always ask how our actions will make things better for children, youth and their families.

Financial Information

	2018-2019	2017-2018
Revenue		
Province of Ontario	\$23,307,417	\$24,436,066
Municipality of Chatham-Kent	2,301,966	2,620,898
Hope Housing	80,495	78,327
Catholic School Board	17,600	16,458
United Way	31,250	31,250
Chatham-Kent Health Alliance	200,000	200,000
Other	25,051	21,303
Expenditure Recoveries, Rebates, Interest	825,238	967,971
	26,789,016	28,372,272
Expenses by Program		
Child Welfare	20,364,175	20,685,715
Ontario Early Years and Best Start	-	664,398
Specialized Children's Services	3,017,197	3,030,148
-Infant Development and Other; Special Needs		
-Resourcing and Autism Classroom		
Child & Family Intervention, Children's Mental Health 0-6 and Youth Criminal Justice Act	3,200,963	3,125,908
Other Programs	144,088	866,102
	26,789,016	28,372,271
Operating Surplus (defecit) for the year	\$0	\$1



**Strengthening
Children and Families
for a better future.**