



The Children's Aid Society  
OF HAMILTON



2016-2017

# ANNUAL REPORT



# LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

Early in the 2016-2017 fiscal year, The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton launched a new strategic plan to guide the agency in achieving its overarching goal of working as a unified system, in collaboration with the Ministry of Children & Youth Services, the provincial association, peer agencies and community partners, to improve the quality of services and outcomes for children, youth and families.

Through this organizational road map, the Society has continued to demonstrate our commitment to enhancing services and increasing transparency, while addressing the unique needs of our diverse community. We are pleased to share some highlights of this work with you through this Annual Report.

In reviewing the statistical data, the number of referrals received from the community remains consistent, however, we have seen a growing number of referrals specific to child exposure to partner violence. As such, the agency's ongoing collaboration with Interval House and, employment of on-site anti-violence counsellors, continues to be of extreme value in addressing this multi-dimensional issue.

The agency's front line services saw the development of a specialized service unit for young moms/moms-to-be, ages 13-25 years, through the Young Parent Team. This team has seen significant growth over the year and is currently working with 46 young moms to ensure the safety and well-being of their children.

The opening of an Indigenous Resource Room has fulfilled the need for a culturally appropriate and reflective space for First Nations, Inuit and Métis children and families working with the agency.

Providing permanency for children and youth continues to be a primary focus for the Society. The Flexible Resources Family Program dually approves caregivers to foster or adopt thereby establishing early permanency where it is likely a child will become a Crown Ward.

The Wendy's Wonderful Recruitment Program, funded through the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption Canada, is another unique permanency program implemented over the past year to help find forever homes specifically for older children and those with special needs.

Another area of continued growth is kin care. Through the development of family initiated safety plans, a growing number of children are able to remain outside of Society care and instead are being taken in by kin caregivers while the family works to address child welfare issues. During the 2015-2016 fiscal year, 108 families provided kin care while during the 2016-2017 fiscal year, this number rose to 146 families providing kin care.

Increasing transparency and accountability has also been a top priority. The agency participated in Ministry led Quality Improvement Plan reporting which, having consistently scored higher than the provincial average, has shown continual strength in our staff to meet standards and provide a high level of child welfare services.

The Society is one of 26 child protection agencies across the province collecting numerical data to measure performance in five areas of child welfare which includes: safety, permanence, well-being, organizational capacity and governance effectiveness. Three of these service outcome focused areas are publically reported annually through Performance Indicators and available online.

**Our Vision:** A community where every child is a gift to be valued, nurtured, and kept safe.

**Our Mission:** The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton, in partnership with families and our community, is committed to the safety, protection, and well-being of children and the strengthening of families, while valuing diversity and promoting equity.

It was pleasing to see the results of the annual Client Satisfaction Survey echo the data retrieved through other measures indicating an overall satisfaction among service recipients has increased from 80 percent in 2015 to 85 percent in 2016. It is significant to note that fair and respectful treatment of service recipients has seen a significant upsurge in client satisfaction, as did staff's work in respecting the unique cultural, linguistic or religious needs of families.

Great strides have also been made over the last year in addressing the needs of the francophone school community and working to minimize the disconnect felt between schools and child welfare professionals. The Society, in partnership with the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton, Family and Children's Services Niagara, and the Centre de santé communautaire Hamilton/Niagara continue to work together with the Conseil scolaire Viamonde and Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud school boards. This collaboration has enabled child protection agencies to improve capabilities to better service the large francophone community, develop strong partnerships and overcome the identified disconnect that formerly existed.

While staff continued to respond to referrals and provide top quality child protection services to the 1,240 families working with the Society during the year, there was a great deal of preliminary work being undertaken behind the scenes to prepare the agency for impending change.

The agency underwent a number of technological upgrades over the last year and, as a result, the organization is ready to move forward with the implementation of the Child Protection Integration Network (CPIN). CPIN is a Ministry developed provincial child welfare database that, upon completion, will serve to link data from child welfare agencies across the province. A vast quantity of resources will be

devoted to CPIN preparation during the coming year as the agency works in partnership with the Ministry, to embrace this new whole enterprise change.

As we look toward the future, we are optimistic the field is moving in a positive direction. The accountability measures in place, the analysis underway, and system improvements on the forefront, will all serve to enhance the Society's ability to provide better service to the families we work with on a daily basis, and improve outcomes for the children and youth who are at the heart of all that we do.

At this time, we would like to extend sincere thanks to staff for their compassion and steadfast commitment to the work of the Society. We would also like to extend thanks and appreciation to the Board of Directors, foster parents, volunteers, community partners and donors for your ongoing dedication and support. Working together, we can realize our vision for a community where every child is a gift to be valued and kept safe.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'D. Verticchio'.

Dominic Verticchio  
Executive Director



A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Victoria Walzak'.

Victoria Walzak  
President, Board of Directors

# We Value

Children developing to their full potential within a safe and healthy environment.

# INTAKE SERVICES

If a person has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is, or may be in need of protection, they have a duty to report these concerns to the Society. Intake Services is the first point of contact at The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton, responding to concerns about a child's safety and well-being 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The Society received **6,986 calls** from the community about a child's safety and well-being.

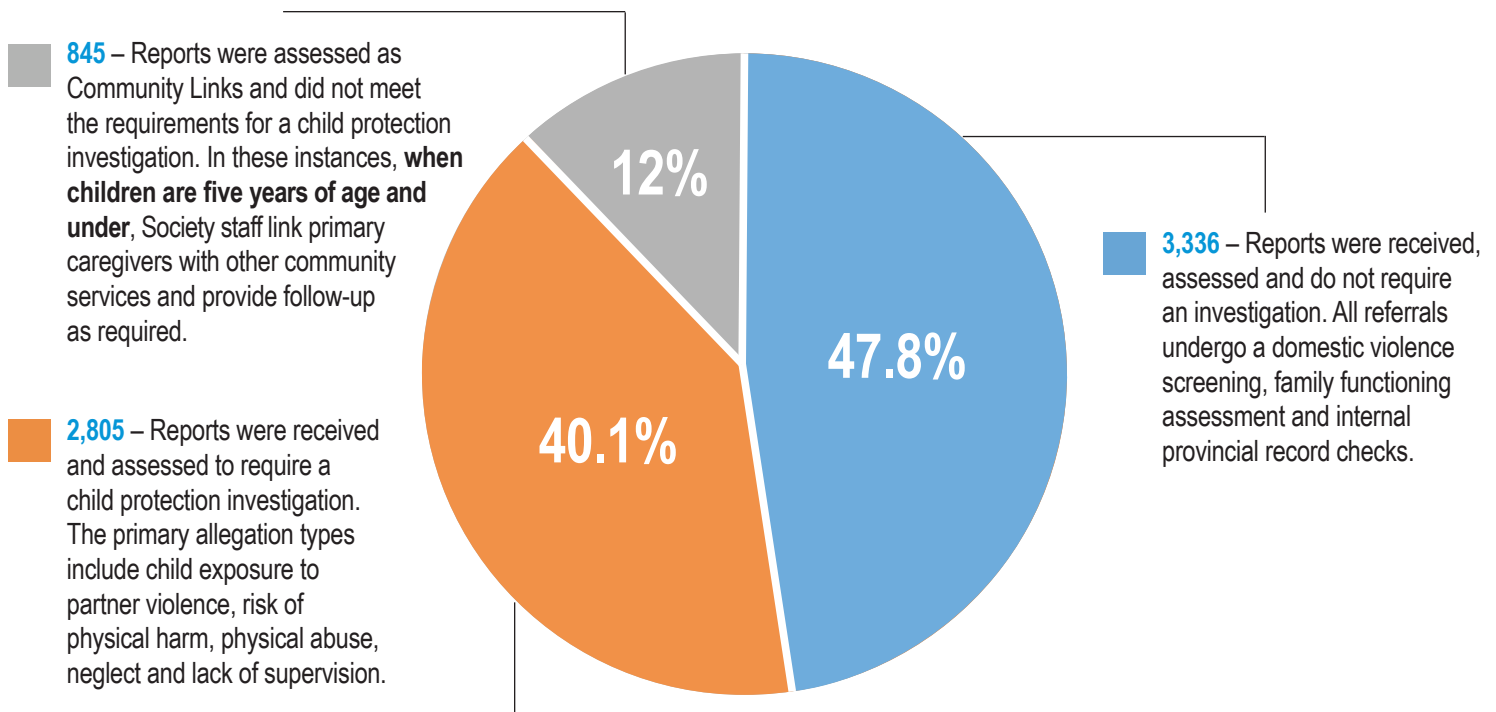
**2,805 calls** resulted in a child protection investigation.

**845 calls** did not require a child protection investigation and were linked to community services due to the age of the child (0-5 years).

**After Hours Emergency Services (AHES)** is a collaborative service between the Society and the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton to provide emergency child protection services outside of regular office hours including weekends and holidays. AHES staff received **8,441 calls**.

## TOTAL CALLS RECEIVED 6,986

The agency receives referrals from varying sources including schools, medical professionals, police, and community members, as well as self-referrals from parents seeking support.



# We Value

# CHILDREN'S SERVICES

*The Society makes every effort to keep children in their own home. However, if the safety and well-being of a child is at risk, a child may need to come into the Society's care for a short-term or long-term basis. Children who cannot stay in their own homes are provided with a safe, stable, and nurturing environment.*

*Children's Services Workers are responsible for ensuring the emotional, behavioural and developmental needs of all children in the Society's care are being met, and for arranging for any services that may benefit the child such as counselling, psychological assessments, speech therapy, etc.*

During the year, the agency cared for a total of **792 children and youth**. Currently, there are **543** youngsters in the Society's care and **226** of these young people are Crown Wards.

At the end of the fiscal year, **174 foster families** were providing stable and supportive homes to children and youth in the Society's care.

There were **146 children** being supported by kin caregivers (extended family or friends) to prevent children coming into care, as the family worked with the agency to address concerns.

The Society has **10 Flexible Resource Families** approved, whereby caregivers are dually approved to foster or adopt

as a means to establish potential permanency for a child and limit caregiver changes.

The Society finalized **32 adoptions** over the past year, thereby providing permanency in supportive and loving families.

At the end of the fiscal year, the Society was providing financial assistance to **111 youth** between the ages of 18-21 years of age through the Continued Care and Support for Youth (CCSY) Program.

Significant focus continues to be placed on encouraging academic success and providing educational opportunities to Crown Wards. Last year, the Society awarded **31 bursaries** to youth pursuing a post-secondary education.

<b>792</b>	Children and youth cared for
<b>174</b>	Foster families
<b>146</b>	Children supported by kin caregivers
<b>10</b>	Flexible resource families
<b>32</b>	Adoptions
<b>111</b>	Youth receiving financial assistance
<b>31</b>	Bursaries awarded

# FAMILY SERVICES

*Family Services staff work with families experiencing difficulties to help resolve problems and develop skills for coping with crises so that parents can provide their child(ren) with a safe and nurturing home environment. Families working with Family Services may have a child(ren) residing in their own home, with extended family or friends, or in foster care.*

Family Services provided support to **1,240 families**, with **508 cases opened** during the year.

The Society is committed to working with families and children in a collaborative, voluntary matter whenever possible. In the past year, approximately **69% of families** receiving ongoing services were doing so through a voluntary service plan.

**535 families** received ongoing service through the Family Support Program, and **321** of those families engaged in family visits at the agency's on-site Dofasco Family Visit Centre.

At beginning of the fiscal year, the agency created a Young Parent Team to focus on prenatal and ongoing support for young mothers aged 13-25. During the past year, **49 investigations** were completed for this demographic, resulting in the opening of **46 young parent cases**.

## Legal Services

*While the majority of our work is voluntary, at times the Society is unable to work with a family without the support of our legal services and court involvement. This past year there were 38 new CFSA applications with a total of 249 cases before the courts. We received 34 final orders, 33 of which were uncontested.*

# We Value

Respectful communication and collaboration with children, families, agency colleagues and community.



# VOLUNTEER SERVICES

The agency is supported by a team of **190 volunteers** who contributed an incredible **38,123 hours of service** to the agency over the past year. Volunteer roles include special event assistance, tutoring, mentorship, child-minding, and driving. Our volunteer drivers travelled **1,677,613 km** transporting children and youth.

## DONOR SPONSORED PROGRAMS

**31 youth** received bursaries for post-secondary education for the 2016/2017 academic year..

The agency provided 267 summer camp experiences to **227 kids**.

The Christmas Hamper Sponsorship Program provided **329 hampers** to families working with the Society.

There were **60 youth** supported through the Holiday Prep event.

The agency's Market 26 provided additional assistance to **82 youth** receiving Continued Care and Support for Youth (CCSY) Program.

### *What is Market 26?*

*Market 26 helps our Crown Ward youth living independently, by supplying household and pantry staples that aren't always accessible on a tight budget. It is a donor-driven initiative that provides youth 16-21, with the opportunity to access non-perishable food, household supplies and personal hygiene products once a month, free of charge.*



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2016 - 2017

President - Victoria Walzak  
Past President - Marg Bowman  
1st Vice President - Gareth Llewellyn  
2nd Vice President - Neil McMahon  
Treasurer - David van der Woerd  
Secretary - Dominic Verticchio

Directors  
Anne Bono  
Brad Clark  
Denise Christopherson  
Ryan Diodati  
Rev. Victoria Ingram  
David Mifsud  
Brian Mullen  
Dr. Anne Niec  
Andrew Ottay  
Michael Schuster  
Gary Sims  
Karen Turkstra

## ABOUT US

Full-Time Staff: 257  
Part-Time Staff: 41  
Student Placements: 20  
Speakers' Bureau Presentations: 25

# We Value

# STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS & CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES

for the year ending March 31, 2017

## Revenue

Province of Ontario.....	\$48,097,278
Children's Special Allowance and Benefits.....	2,227,684
Other Children's Aid Societies .....	327,878
Special Purpose Grants .....	281,250
Donations and Fundraising .....	314,895
Investment Income .....	86,384
Miscellaneous.....	615,731

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\$51,951,100

## Expenses

Client Services .....	\$40,403,593
Legal Services .....	2,490,390
Administration.....	8,347,490
Special Purpose Grants .....	281,250

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\$51,522,723

## Excess of Revenue over Expenses .....

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\$428,377

## Fund Balance

Fund Balance April 1, 2016 .....	\$10,440,104
Excess of Revenue over Expenses.....	428,377

## Fund Balance March 31, 2017 .....

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\$10,868,481

## Individual Fund Balances

as at March 31, 2017

Child Welfare Fund.....	\$(521,526)
Ontario Child Benefit Fund .....	339,599
Capital Fund .....	8,078,934
Private Funds .....	2,971,474

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\$10,868,481

Auditors: Deloitte LLP

A full audited financial statement for the year ended March 31, 2017 is available online.

# We Value

Effective and efficient use of resources.



The Children's Aid Society  
OF HAMILTON

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After Hours Emergency Service: 905-522-8053

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Charitable Business No. 11885 2136 RR0001

*A French version of the Annual Report is available upon request.*