



The Children's Aid Society
OF HAMILTON
La Société d'aide à l'enfance
DE HAMILTON

**Service Plan Review
and Update:
2020-2021**

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INTRODUCTION

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 supporting families by building on their strengths while valuing diversity and promoting equity. The agency has operated for 127 years and continues to evolve to meet community and provincial needs with a vision that every child in the community is a gift to be valued, nurtured, and kept safe.

In 2019, The Children's Aid Society of Hamilton approved a five-year strategic vision. The strategic vision provides a blueprint for leading the agency through 2024. This document "Service Plan Review and Update: 2020-2021" highlights the **priorities, strategic goals and objectives** and lays out a plan of how the agency aims to achieve the goals within the current provincial landscape and agency's strategic vision.

This document is comprised of two sections:

- Context
- Priorities, Strategic Goals and Objectives

How do we measure progress?

- Progress on strategic goals and objectives will be reported to the board twice a year
- Key performance indicators will be reported to the board in September
- The measurement and progress on key performance indicators will aid in the evaluation of our progress towards our objectives and will be used to inform further refinement of objectives over time to respond to the changing context and current progress

Appendix A: Operational goals and progress for 2020-21

Appendix B: Operational Goals and progress for 2021-22

Appendix C: Service Volumes and 2020/21 Financials

Context

Demographics:

Hamilton CAS provides child welfare services to the amalgamated City of Hamilton which consists of both urban and rural landscapes comprised of 1138 km². The socio-demographic composition of the City of Hamilton provides the context within which services are provided to families and underscores the complexity of families we serve. City of Hamilton has two children's aid societies, Hamilton Catholic Children's Aid and Hamilton CAS, that provide services to the community.

Population

- The 2016 Census found that 536,917 people lived in Hamilton
- Hamilton CAS provides service to approximately 67% of the population in Hamilton
- The population of Hamilton grew by 3.3% over a five-year period from 2011 to 2016
- Approximately 20%, or just over 105,000 0–17-year olds live in the City of Hamilton.

Aboriginal Identity and Visible Minorities:

- 2.3% of Hamilton's population identifies as First Nations, Inuit, or Metis
- Hamilton continues to see a rise in the diversity of its population. The 2016 census identified that 20% of Hamiltonians identified as visible minorities. In the upcoming census that number is likely to rise further. Currently; 5% identify as South Asian, 4% as Black, and 2% as Chinese, Filipino Latin American, and Arab.

Immigration:

- Hamilton has become a major Canadian destination for immigrants and since February 2014, city council voted to declare it a sanctuary city
- Immigrants comprise a quarter of the total population of Hamilton (25%), with 5% having arrived within the last 10 years.

Language:

- 84% of residents in Hamilton speak English most often at home and 73% have English identified as their first language.

Poverty:

- Using the Low-income after-tax measure, 21% of children under 18 in Hamilton live in low-income households. This is higher than the provincial (18.4%) and national (17%) averages for children under 18.

COVID-19:

A state of emergency was declared by the Province of Ontario on March 17, 2020, due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). This resulted in the closure of non-essential businesses in Ontario and many of our business processes changed. The agency saw an immediate decline in service volumes following the declaration of the state of emergency. Service volumes did increase as the year progressed, though they remain below pre-pandemic levels.

Hamilton Children's Aid Society mobilized quickly to provide additional clinical and financial supports to families and youth who faced challenges due to COVID-19. Many of the in-person programs and supports for families in the community were closed during the pandemic. Due to

closures of these programs and in-person learning at schools, the agency was not always connected to families to offer early support when needed. As a result, by the time the agency was involved, it was often an emergency. The agency also saw an increase in the number of referrals due to caregivers experiencing problems with mental health & addictions.

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services directed that all youth that were part of Continued Care and Support for Youth (CCSY) remain in their current placements rather than aging out of care to ensure they received ongoing support. Hamilton CAS is supportive of this directive. As a result, several youths remained in their placement and are reflected in the number of children in care. Excluding the youth over the age of 21, as of March 31, 2021 there were 385 children in care, which is a reduction from 436 the previous year.

Strategic Vision 2019-2024

Priorities, Strategic Goals, Objectives, 2019-20 Year in Review

Priorities and Strategic Goals:

The agency has identified six areas of focus to guide our journey over the next several years. Our priorities and strategic goals will support us in achieving our vision for the agency and provide a map of what we aim to do and how we aim to do it. Twenty objectives across the six strategic goals are outlined below. An assessment of the current achievements for each priority is presented.

Priority 1: Safety and Well-being

Strategic Goal 1: Children and youth safety and well-being will be increased within the family through good assessment and planning, capacity building and accessing the assets of the family itself and their community.

Objectives:

- a. Shared understanding with others of how we can best contribute to supporting families in the community
- b. Increased capacity of families to provide for their children in their own home and reduce the risk of need for protection through early help and support by CAS and by accessing help from others
- c. Expanded range of strategies used with families to reduce the use of mandatory intervention wherever possible and increase the proportion of voluntary participation in service
- d. Services and other interactions with ethno-specific and linguistic communities reflect well-informed and appropriate practices including with Afro-Canadian and Indigenous people and organizations

Assessment

The Duty to Report presentation was updated so that it aligned with our strategic vision and captures a community approach to safety and well-being for children. The presentation has been rolled out to several community partners. The next step is to review the presentation and language through an Equity & Inclusion lens and to customize it for community organizations.

Agency staff continue to reach out and engage with our community partners, to gain an understanding of how we can collaborate to better support children and families in the Hamilton community. Discussions and planning for a greater presence in community organizations, more collaborative approaches to the work, including inviting community partners to be part of planning, was delayed due to COVID but is resuming this year. Specialized teams have made progress in developing partnerships and are co-developing approaches to work alongside communities, and community organizations to keep children with their families. Gaps have been identified where outreach to community partners is required and staff have begun reaching out to these organizations. Several key areas include racialized and newcomer groups, Indigenous partners, Mental Health and Addiction services. To better support families in intimate partner violence situations, an internal committee was

formed with front line staff and supervisors who have been meeting regularly to explore gaps in work and to develop a workplan that will include outreach to key stakeholders.

A key community partner, Empowerment Squared, has moved into the building and work continues to identify other community organizations with ethno-specific community services the agency should connect with, to build partnerships, gain an increased understanding of services that affirm Black children and families' identities and support more culturally aligned services. An initial conversation with the Afro Canadian Caribbean Association (ACCA), along with Hamilton Catholic Children's Aid, has also taken place.

To help identify family support systems & utilize the strengths of the family, while also reducing risk for children, it is now expected that staff will complete genograms on all files opened at the agency.

Work continues to lower the number of cases being taken to court. However, the percentage of court cases remains constant due to the decreased number of files opened during the pandemic. Directors of Service, along with Chief Legal Counsel, reviewed all current court cases and developed a plan for each case. Consultation happens regularly between legal staff and case workers, including supervisors. Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) is explored for all open court cases to decrease the need for court involvement, as well as early resolution.

Finding solutions without taking cases to court improves outcomes for children and families and efforts are being made to utilize Indigenous Alternate Dispute Resolution and Indigenous Child in Care (CIC) reviews. In the coming year the agency will be developing a cross functional committee to explore ways that court can be avoided through increased family and local community engagement.

A Community Relations Specialist was hired in 2020 and a new customer service framework was developed including principles and core competencies that will illustrate our passion and commitment to the safety and well-being of children. This is an opportunity to redefine how clients and external parties experience the society. As part of this framework, a new formal complaints process was also developed and established. The process was rolled out to the Board, Senior Team, Supervisors, and staff across the agency. Of seven (7) Child and Family Services Review Board (CFSRB) complaints, 6 were resolved through mediation services, with only 1 going to the Review Board. Next steps include engagement, feedback, process development and rollout of the broader customer service framework.

Equity training continues to be rolled out to all agency staff. Twenty-three percent of staff have completed equity training & 53% of staff have completed the Hamilton Regional Indian Centre (HRIC) training Honouring Relationships. We hope to have all staff trained by the end of the next fiscal year. Indigenous Training is being rolled out across the agency for staff as part of the agency's Truth and Reconciliation journey.

A data framework related to racialized, Black & Indigenous children in care has been developed and has been shared with the senior team and various staff groups, such as the Black Affinity group and the Equity & Inclusion Steering Committee. The director of Equity, Inclusion and Community Development is working on an approach to share this data regularly with staff. In the coming year, the agency will be focusing on reviewing the eligibility spectrum to identify specific ways of offering early help and support when a family meets eligibility for service.

Priority 2: Permanency and Potential

Strategic Goal 2: Enable children and youth in care to find permanency and reach their full potential.

Objectives:

- a. Children in care safely transition to a permanent and stable out-of-care arrangement as soon as possible following admission
- b. Children in care are most often served in family-based settings as close to their homes as possible
- c. Improved educational achievement for all children and youth in care
- d. Plans and decisions are fully informed by youth voice and their input is reflected in service
- e. All transition-aged youth receiving service get the supports they need to reach their full potential as adults

Assessment

A new process was developed and implemented to review each child's case when they enter care to ensure better outcomes for children & families and help find permanent solutions earlier for children. In the coming year, the organization will be developing an updated set of permanency principles to further identify pathways to early permanency.

The Kin Connects facilitators engaged in Family Engagement and worked alongside many staff during recent months, organized a readiness assessment with Waterloo Family & Children Services (FACS), attended all team meetings to present the philosophy and practice, completed in-service presentations with foster parents and continue to be involved with zone and provincial groups.

The Kin Connects partnership with Waterloo FACS will continue with a commitment to train-the-trainer sessions for internal staff and continued coaching and mentoring. Integral to family engagement training is an understanding and integration of an equity lens, perspective, and practice in child welfare integrated with Signs of Safety practice. The immediate next step is the development of an implementation team with staff, supervisors, and legal representation with a cross section of practice roles and perspectives followed by train-the-trainer sessions.

A joint workplan with the Foster Family Association (FFA) to better support children in our internal foster care system was co-developed and is being implemented in partnership with the FFA. Work is underway to develop and implement a new targeted foster care recruitment strategy for the organization to ensure new recruits are reflective of the children in care and the Hamilton community.

Data is being utilized by staff to improve the outcomes for children. This included data on Children in Care (CIC) to ensure they are in family-based care when possible, and data specific to Black, Indigenous and newcomer communities to ensure family-based care will reflect the child's culture and race. This is especially important for Black & Indigenous children who continue to be overrepresented in care.

The educational needs of children in care, and those placed with kin continue to be supported through the work of the agency's Educational Liaison. The Educational Liaison continues discussions with Supervisors on each file to ensure all children in care have an educational success plan as per Joint Protocols for Student Achievement. Through the support of generous donors, the agency supported 45 bursaries for youth pursuing post-secondary education.

When needed, tutoring supports are established and provided to youth. More work is being explored on linking youth with ethno-cultural tutoring supports. To support youth 18+ who are working to the completion of their secondary school credits, they are connected to employment resources, provided with bursaries, connected to post-secondary fee reimbursement programs, and provided assistance such as the development of a bursary bank, grants OSAP and the living and learning grant.

The Youth Success Coordinator continues to work on the development of a youth advisory committee. This committee will be critical to developing a strong youth voice at the agency to help to guide staff in providing the supports and resources needed to ensure youth success. Through the Summer Jobs program, youth were hired to work on the creation of the Youth Committee. This work included collecting feedback from youth including their thoughts on the purpose and role of the committee, topics to cover and their interest in participating. Next steps include hiring two youth to work on the formation of the committee along with the Youth Success Coordinator.

To ensure that all youth in care will have a documented transition plan and an established support network once they transition out of care, workers are conducting individualized skill inventory and goal setting assessment with youth. Hamilton CAS will continue to work with the Ministry and OACAS to establish specific criteria for transition plans and will update its process once this work is completed.

Youth in care who are transitioning to adulthood experience unique challenges and require specific supports to be successful. A team of specialized workers has been developed and their work focusing on supporting youth continues. This includes a referral process for Youth in Transition (YIT) for YMCA and HRIC which has been established and continues to be revised as needed; connecting youth to the Learning Independence for Future Empowerment (LIFE) Program and other community supports to assist with the development of life skills. Also, staff work with youth to assist them in the development of their own support network using Family Group Conferencing (FGC) and Kin Connect. More work is required with community partners to develop informal ethno-cultural supports and work is being done to develop a mentorship program including community partners.

Priority 3: Engaged and Inspired

Strategic Goal 3: Agency staff, foster parents and volunteers will be engaged and inspired in a healthy workplace

Objectives:

- a. Adequate staffing and skill levels are available to serve the needs and volumes of families and children served
- b. An agency-wide learning and development strategy that supports the agency as an evidenced-based place of learning
- c. Develop and implement a Healthy Workplace Strategy

Assessment

Throughout the last fiscal year, the Human Resources Department began to implement the Employment Equity Plan. To do this, bias-free hiring training was provided to all Management Staff, the recruitment process and practices were revised to remove barriers to hiring diverse candidates, and equity competencies were embedded in job descriptions, postings, and interview questions. The HR team worked with community partners to engage with a more diverse talent pool. Additionally, an implementation plan is being developed by the Grand River Zone to roll out a Staff Census Survey to collect demographics.

The Human Resources Department has developed and implemented a self-directed onboarding plan that involves meeting with department leads and directors to receive a comprehensive overview of the agencies service delivery model and strategic vision. Onboarding and training guides are now available electronically.

To support succession planning at the supervisory level, supervisors are providing coverage in the absence of a Director of Service, job descriptions were updated to include revised leadership competencies, a complete succession plan project matrix was created, and a supervisor skills matrix was completed. This is part of a plan to equip staff for leadership opportunities and growth. Additionally, this is an opportunity for diverse staff, who may otherwise be missed or overlooked, to move into leadership roles through learning and growth.

The agency remains committed to providing opportunities for staff, foster parents, and volunteers to participate in training and professional development opportunities. Foster parents and volunteers will participate in Hamilton Regional Indian Centre Training and bias-free training. A volunteer training needs assessment survey will be rolled out in January 2022, working collaboratively with the Foster Parent and Kinship Care Trainer, to determine their training needs.

The HR Department has developed a performance appraisal template that incorporates the principles of the leadership competency framework. It will be used in a pilot with the Senior Team in the 2021 Performance Appraisals.

Work by the agency to develop and implement a Healthy Workplace Strategy continues. The HR Department worked with a Healthy Workplace Consultant to gather feedback from staff. From that work, three themes emerged: Communication, Trust with Senior Team, Equity of Work Assignments. A summary of themes along with all the healthy workplace initiatives that the agency completed in 2020 was provided to staff. A new staff wellness survey was conducted and a wellness campaign that included a fitness challenge "Walk Across Canada" was rolled out to staff. Finally, work to recruit a Health and Wellbeing Coordinator was started.

The Health and Well-being Coordinator will work to ensure the agency has a supportive attendance management program for staff including developing supportive strategies to address absence management and reviewing attendance policies and initiatives to support staff and enhance attendance support programs, all through a healthy workplace lens.

Priority 4: Strategic Partnerships

Strategic Goal 4: Develop and maintain strategic partnerships within the community and across the province that assist in supporting vulnerable children and families.

Objectives:

- a. Strategic partnerships with Indigenous and Black communities to support them in keeping their children safe at home
- b. A multi-level strategy (provincial, local, and case level) that supports advocacy, with specific roles defined for each level of the agency including staff and the Board

Assessment:

The Agency has continued to engage with community service agencies from across several sectors including education, violence against women, children's mental health, Indigenous, legal, health & city government. Currently, there are regular meetings with Indigenous Child Welfare Collaborative (ICWC). Work continues with Quality Assurance and staff to identify other opportunities to collaborate with Indigenous partners.

Empowerment Squared moved into the Agency building earlier this year. Staff continue to develop relationships with Empowerment Squared and other Black and Indigenous community partners to develop culturally aligned programs and supports that will focus our efforts to address the disproportionality and disparity of Black and Indigenous individuals who are involved with our agency.

In the coming year the agency will focus on further engagement with the LGBTQ2S+ community with the goal of developing a joint collaborative to better support families and youth.

Work continues with OACAS to develop an advocacy strategy workplan and develop a supportive relationship with provincial & local government officials.

Priority 5: Continuous Improvement

Strategic Goal 5: Enhance systems to support continuous quality improvement, transparency, and accountability.

Objectives:

- a. High levels of compliance are achieved on service standards and strategic outcomes are measured
- b. New provincial requirements are implemented
- c. Support is maintained for CPIN integration

Assessment:

Self-service operational reports continue to be added to increase transparency and accountability. This year, new foster home profile forms and reports were produced and implemented. Additionally, new visualization tools and reports are added regularly, along with training for staff as needed.

Part X is a new section of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act (CYFSA). It sets out a legislative privacy framework for Ontario's child and youth sector. Part X sets out rules for

service providers regarding privacy and access to personal information. With limited exceptions, service providers must have consent to collect, use or disclose personal information. The Part X workplan was completed and implemented, including the development of policies that are reflective of Part X practice and to ensure a culture of privacy is established. The Agency is currently working on the implementation of a system to help disclosure clerks to track requests, completions, and shared documents.

The CPIN support team continues to be important agents in supporting regular and ongoing changes in CPIN and are in the process of changing to a self-service training model by developing a library of standard training modules. Implementation of CPIN is complete and the Agency is now continuing with the sustainment plan.

Priority 6: Resources and Sustainability

Strategic Goal 6: Ensure that valuable resources are in place to support service outcomes and ensure financial sustainability.

Objectives:

- a. Maximize revenue available including securing and allocating resources for the best possible organizational design, staffing and mix of placement resources
- b. An Information Technology Implementation Plan has been developed and reviewed

Assessment:

Hamilton CAS has been focusing on working with the community to support children remaining in their communities and finding early permanency options for children in care. As a result, the organization has seen a reduction in costs. The goal is to continue to reinvest in supports to reach the strategic vision of the organization.

The financial performance for fiscal 2020/21 was consistent with the budget and long-term planning forecasts. The variance between the budgeted expenditures and actual expenditures was minimal. In this last fiscal year HCAS was able to eliminate its historical debt which puts the agency in a good position for the coming years.

Four houses that were no longer needed to support operations were sold (one in fiscal 2020/21 and three in fiscal 2021/22). The proceeds will be reinvested in private funds to support ongoing initiatives that are not funded by the Ministry and to support future capital needs of the Society.

Reports for staffing complement and boarding analysis have been developed and are being utilized to support operations. Work continues on report development, specifically for departmental budgets and management reporting.

The organization continues to assess and monitor risks to ensure future sustainability. The Ministry completes an organizational risk assessment, and the agency is rated as “low” risk by the Ministry.

A Communications and Fundraising Coordinator was hired in 2020. A fundraising plan has been completed which identifies key areas for fundraising over the next year. The plan has been presented to the senior team and Board of Directors.

While the original 3-year IT plan has been completed, staff continue to look for ways to optimize systems and platforms to reduce costs, decrease complexity and implement systems that fully or partially automate manual processes. Highlights this year include a successful transition to fully support work from home, the implementation of the legal access database, the SMS to email pilot for case workers and the new coverage calendar. IT is currently setting up meeting rooms so hybrid (in-person and virtual) meetings can happen in the future. This will benefit staff and allow for engagement with our community partners in safer and more accommodating ways. A fully functional disaster recovery site has been configured and went live on August 1, 2021.

Conclusion

In November 2019 Hamilton CAS successfully launched a new strategic vision. As a part of this plan, in March 2020 service delivery was realigned to support the agency goals with service staff re-allocated to several new programs and positions which included the creation of several specialized teams. Building on that work helped to support the work of the agency to keep children safe with their family and in their community. Services are centering decisions on the needs and voice of children, youth, and families. Hamilton CAS is pleased to provide this report which documents the success of the organization in achieving its strategic vision to better support vulnerable children, youth, and families in the Hamilton community.

Appendix A: Operational Goals and Progress (2020-21)

Progress on operational goals is recorded and is graded as follows:

Completed Progressing In Development

Priority 1: Safety and Well-Being			
Children and youth safety and well-being will be increased within the family through good assessment and planning, capacity building and accessing the assets of the family itself, and their community			
Objective	Operational Goals	Progress	Lead Director/Senior Manager
a. Shared understanding with others of how we can best contribute to supporting families in the community.	1. Update the duty to report presentation to reflect the new strategic vision	Completed	Director of Service - Assessment & Support
	2. Create opportunities for staff outreach and engagement within the community and increased presence in the community.	Progressing	Director of Service - Assessment & Support
	3. Develop outreach strategies to connect with community partners to identify opportunities for collaboration around supporting families.	Progressing	Director of Service - Assessment & Support
b. Increased capacity of families to provide for their children in their own home and reduce the risk of need for protection through early help and support by CAS and by accessing help from others.	1. Implement a strategy to utilize Signs of Safety during initial and ongoing assessment including the use of genograms and meetings with family supports in order to reduce risk.	Completed	Director of Service - Assessment & Support
	2. Develop and implement kinship workplan to support timely assessment to keep children in their families whenever safely possible.	Progressing	Director of Service - Assessment & Support
	3. Develop partnerships and knowledge in the identified specialized areas to support children safely remaining at home.	Progressing	Director of Service - Assessment & Support
	4. Explore opportunities to engage and support families in intimate partner violence situations.	Progressing	Director of Service - Assessment & Support
c. Expanded range of strategies used with families to reduce the use of mandatory intervention wherever possible and increase the proportion of voluntary participation in service.	1. Develop and implement a systematic review of cases in court to identify resolution pathways.	Completed	Director of Service - Assessment & Support
	2. Develop a process to support early consideration of Alternate Dispute Resolution and Family Group Conferencing.	Progressing	Director of Service - Assessment & Support
	3. Hire a complaints resolution lead and develop a process to support the early resolution of complaints.	Completed	Senior Manager, Communications
	4. Implement a process to capture informal Alternate Dispute Resolution processes such as Indigenous talking circles and family group conferences.	Progressing	Director of Service - Assessment & Support
	5. Develop and implement a Customer Service Model that embodies the values of the agency, encompasses diversity equity and inclusion practices and strengthens service to children, youth and families	Progressing	Senior Manager, Communications
d. Services and other interactions with ethno-specific and linguistic communities reflect well-informed and appropriate practices including with Afro-Canadian and Indigenous people and organizations.	1. Implementation of Equity training for staff across all levels of the organization.	Progressing	Director of Equity, Inclusion and Community Development
	2. Development of a data framework related to racialized and Black children in care.	Progressing	Director of Equity, Inclusion and Community Development
	3. Newcomer and racialized specialization team is developing relationships with ethno-specific community services.	Progressing	Director of Service - Assessment & Support
	4. Implementation of Indigenous training to all levels of the organization.	Progressing	Director of Equity, Inclusion and Community Development
	5. Utilization of Indigenous Alternate Dispute Resolution and Indigenous child in care Reviews.	Progressing	Director of Equity, Inclusion and Community Development
	6. Development of a framework for data related to Indigenous children in Care	Progressing	Director of Equity, Inclusion and Community Development

Priority 2: Permanency and Potential			
Strategic Goal 2: Enable children and youth in care to find permanency and reach their full potential			
Lead: Director of Service - Permanency & Resources			
Objective	Operational Goals	Progress	Lead Director/Senior Manager
a. Children in care safely transition to a permanent and stable out-of-care arrangement as soon as possible following admission.	1. Develop and implement a process to review children when they enter care.	Completed	Director of Service – Permanency and Potential
	2. When children need to come out of the care of their parents, find kin placements.	Progressing	Director of Service – Permanency and Potential
	3. Increase opportunities for children to be placed with kin when temporary placements out of the care of their parents is necessary.	Progressing	Director of Service – Permanency and Potential
	4. Enhance kin options when an out of home placement is necessary.	Progressing	Director of Service – Permanency and Potential
b. Children in care are most often served in family-based settings as close to their homes as possible	1. Develop a joint workplan with the FFA to support children in our internal foster care system.	Completed	Director of Service – Permanency and Potential
	2. Develop and implement a targeted foster care recruitment strategy for the organization.	Progressing	Director of Service – Permanency and Potential
	3. Children in care will be in family based care.	Progressing	Director of Service – Permanency and Potential
	4. Family based care will reflect the child’s culture and race for Black and Indigenous children.	Progressing	Director of Service – Permanency and Potential
c. Improved educational achievement for all children and youth in care.	1. Continue to fund the Educational Liaison position and participate in Joint Protocol for Student Achievement (JPSA).	Completed	Director of Service – Permanency and Potential
	2. Ensure all children in care have an educational success plan as per JPSA.	In Development	Director of Service – Permanency and Potential
	3. All youth will have access to tutoring programs.	Completed	Director of Service – Permanency and Potential
	4. For youth 18+ their placement will be supported pending completion of their secondary school credits.	Progressing	Director of Service – Permanency and Potential
d. Plans and decisions are fully informed by youth voice and their input is reflected in service.	1. Development of a Youth Advisory Committee.	Progressing	Director of Service – Permanency and Potential
e. All transition-aged youth receiving service get the supports they need to reach their full potential as adults.	1. All youth in care will have a documented transition plan and established informal support network.	Progressing	Director of Service – Permanency and Potential

Priority 3: Engaged and Inspired			
Strategic Goal 3: Agency staff, foster parents and volunteers will be engaged and inspired in a healthy workplace			
Objective	Operational Goals	Progress	Lead Director/Senior Manager
a. Adequate staffing and skill levels are available to serve the needs and volumes of families and children served.	1. Implement the Employment Equity plan.	Progressing	Director of Human Resources
	2. Enhance the organizations onboarding and training.	Progressing	Director of Human Resources
b. Create an agency-wide learning and development strategy that supports the agency as an evidenced-based place of learning.	1. Continue to enhance succession planning program at the supervisory level.	Progressing	Director of Human Resources
	2. Develop a training plan for foster parents and volunteers.	Progressing	Director of Human Resources
	3. Revise performance appraisals to incorporate the principles leadership competency framework.	Progressing	Director of Human Resources
c. Develop and implement a Healthy Workplace Strategy.	1. Consultation and development of a healthy workplace excellence framework	Progressing	Director of Human Resources
	2. Development and implementation of an absence management support program.	Progressing	Director of Human Resources

Priority 4: Strategic Partnerships			
Develop and maintain strategic partnerships within the community and across the province that assist in supporting vulnerable children and families			
Objective	Operational Goals	Progress	Lead Director/Senior Manager
a. Strategic partnerships with Indigenous and Black communities to support them in keeping their children safe at home.	1. Continue to deepen the relationship with members of the Indigenous Collaborative Working Group and expand membership to include Indigenous team.	Progressing	Director of Equity, Inclusion and Community Development
	2. Development of relationships with Empowerment Squared and other community partners to support the Racialized & Newcomer specialization team's work in the community.	Progressing	Director of Equity, Inclusion and Community Development
b. A multi-level strategy (provincial, local and case level) that supports advocacy, with specific roles defined for each level of the agency including staff and the Board.	3. Develop the advocacy strategy workplan.	In Development	Executive Director
	4. Develop a plan to meet with local government officials to discuss the agency's strategic vision.	In Development	Executive Director

Priority 5: Continuous Improvement			
Strategic Goal: Enhance systems to support continuous quality improvement, transparency and accountability			
Objective	Operational Goals	Progress	Nov. 25 th update
a. High levels of compliance are achieved on service standards and strategic outcomes are measured.	1. Transition to a self-service reporting model by developing a library of standard reports and interactive Business Intelligence dashboards.	Progressing	Director of IT
	2. Explore additional visualization tools and training supervisors and senior team on utilization of tools.	Progressing	Director of IT
b. New Provincial requirements are implemented.	1. Implementation of Part X and development of workplan.	Completed	Directors of Permanency and Resource
	2. Develop policies that are reflective of Part X practice.	Completed	Directors of Permanency and Resource
	3. Enhance education and skill development regarding protection and disclosure of personal information.	Progressing	Directors of Permanency and Resource
c. Support is maintained for CPIN integration	1. Continue to provide support for successful training and utilization of CPIN.	Progressing	Director of IT
	2. Transition to a self-service CPIN training model by developing a library of standard training modules.	Progressing	Director of IT
d. Embed equity throughout the organization and build strong community relationships.	1. Develop a 5 year equity plan that is focused on equity within the organization and community engagement	Progressing	Director, Equity Inclusion and Community Development

Priority 6: Resources and Sustainability			
Strategic Goal: Ensure that valuable resources are in place to support service outcomes and ensure financial sustainability			
Objective	Operational Goals	Progress	Lead Director/Senior Manager
a. Strategies are in place to maximize revenue available including securing and allocating resources for the best possible organizational design, staffing and mix of placement resources.	1. Strategic use of surpluses to support strategic vision and address historical deficit.	Completed	Director of Finance
	2. Resource back office to support service more effectively.	Progressing	Director of Finance
	3. Develop a plan to maximize donations and revenue generation.	Completed	Senior Manager, Communications
	4. Review assets in private fund to maximize utilization, diversification and return on assets.	Progressing	Director of Finance
b. Develop and review an IT Implementation Plan	1. Optimize systems and platforms to reduce cost and decrease complexity.	Completed	Director of IT
	2. Continue to implement systems that fully or partially automate manual processes.	Progressing	Director of IT
	3. Successful implementation of the Microsoft Teams based system to replace the current aging phone system.	Completed	Director of IT
	4. Successful implementation of business continuity plan and disaster recovery site.	Progressing	Director of IT
	5. Transition to a mobile first workforce.	Completed	Director of IT

Appendix B: Operational Goals and Progress (2021-22)

Priority 1: Safety and Well-Being			
Children and youth safety and well-being will be increased within the family through good assessment and planning, capacity building and accessing the assets of the family itself, and their community			
Objective	Operational Goals	Progress	Lead Director/Senior Manager
a. Shared understanding with others of how we can best contribute to supporting families in the community.	<p>Seek opportunities to co-locate and/or develop integrated service strategies with at least 2 community service providers in the next year.</p> <p>Develop a clear service approach including definitions of early help and support in consultation with families, children, staff members/partners and communities.</p>		Directors of Service
b. Increased capacity of families to provide for their children in their own home and reduce the risk of need for protection through early help and support by CAS and by accessing help from others.	<p>Specialized teams will develop relationships with key community supports to help families earlier and reduce the need for more intrusive protection services and share this work with colleagues across the organization through consultation and collaboration.</p> <p>Develop a committee to identify strengths and gaps within our agency to better respond to women facing intimate partner violence and to provide recommendations related to engaging men who are perpetrators of domestic violence.</p> <p>Family safety support networks will be identified for all families during intitial involvement and will be involved during ongoing invovlement.</p> <p>Develop a process to support early consideration of Alternate Dispute Resolution and Family Group Conferencing</p> <p>Develop a rapid response model in collaboration with the family's cultural community to find out of court resolution prior to initiating a court application</p> <p>Develop and implement a Customer Service Model that embodies the values of the agency, encompasses diversity equity and inclusion practices and strengthens service to children, youth and families</p>		<p>Directors of Service</p> <p>Senior Manager, Communications</p>
c. Services and other interactions with ethno-specific and linguistic communities reflect well-informed and appropriate practices including with racialized and Black people and Indigenous people and organizations.	<p>Implementation of Equity training for staff across all levels of the organization.</p> <p>Development of a data framework related to racialized and Black children in care.</p> <p>Implementation of Indigenous training to all levels of the organization.</p>		

Priority 2: Permanency and Potential			
Strategic Goal 2: Enable children and youth in care to find permanency and reach their full potential			
Lead: Director of Service - Permanency & Resources			
Objective	Operational Goals	Progress	Lead Director/Senior Manager
a. Children in care safely transition to a permanent and stable out-of-care arrangement as soon as possible following admission.	<p>When children need to come out of the care of their parents, find kin placements.</p> <p>Increase opportunities for children to be placed with kin when temporary placements out of the care of their parents is necessary.</p> <p>Enhance kin options when an out of home placement is necessary.</p>		Directors of Service
b. Children in care are most often served in family-based settings as close to their homes as possible	Implement the joint workplan with the FFA to support children in our internal foster care system.		Directors of Service
	Develop and implement a targeted foster care recruitment strategy for the organization.		Directors of Service & Director of Equity, Inclusion and Community Development
	<p>Family based care will reflect the child's culture and race for Black and Indigenous children.</p> <p>Build on kin Connect Work through family engagement and trauma focussed work</p>		Directors of Service
c. Improved educational achievement for all children and youth in care.	<p>Continue to fund the Educational Liaison position and participate in Joint Protocol for Student Achievement (JPSA).</p> <p>Ensure all children in care have an educational success plan as per JPSA.</p> <p>All youth will have access to tutoring programs.</p> <p>For youth 18+ their placement will be supported pending completion of their secondary school credits.</p> <p>Develop and implement a strategic plan to track student success and implement strategies to increase success for children & youth in care.</p>		Directors of Service
d. Plans and decisions are fully informed by youth voice and their input is reflected in service.	Development of a Youth Advisory Committee.		Directors of Service
e. All transition-aged youth receiving service get the supports they need to reach their full potential as adults.	<p>Clearly define permanency principles for the organization and develop a strategy to support outcomes related to this definition.</p> <p>All youth in care will have a documented transition plan and established informal support network.</p>		Directors of Service

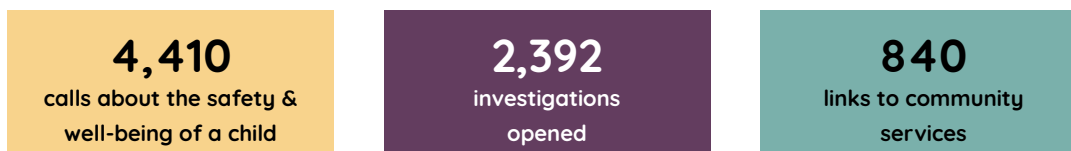
Priority 3: Engaged and Inspired			
Strategic Goal 3: Agency staff, foster parents and volunteers will be engaged and inspired in a healthy workplace			
Objective	Operational Goals	Progress	Lead Director/Senior Manager
a. Adequate staffing and skill levels are available to serve the needs and volumes of families and children served.	Implement the Employment Equity plan.		Director of Human Resources
	Enhance the organizations onboarding and training.		
b. Create an agency-wide learning and development strategy that supports the agency as an evidenced-based place of learning.	Continue to enhance succession planning program at the supervisory level.		
	Develop a training plan for foster parents and volunteers.		Director of Service, Permanency and Resource/Director of Human Resources
	Revise performance appraisals to incorporate the principles leadership competency framework.		Director of Human Resources
c. Develop and implement a Healthy Workplace Strategy.	Consultation and development of a healthy workplace excellence framework		Director of Human Resources
	Development and implementation of an absence management support program.		

Priority 4: Strategic Partnerships			
Develop and maintain strategic partnerships within the community and across the province that assist in supporting vulnerable children and families			
Objective	Operational Goals	Progress	Lead Director/Senior Manager
a. Strategic partnerships with Black, Indigenous and racialized communities to support them in keeping their children safe at home.	Continue to deepen the relationship with members of the Indigenous Collaborative Working Group and expand membership to include Indigenous team. Development of relationships with Empowerment Squared and other community partners to support the Racialized & Newcomer specialization team's work in the community.		Director, of Equity, Inclusion and Community Development
b. A multi-level strategy (provincial, local and case level) that supports advocacy, with specific roles defined for each level of the agency including staff and the Board.	Work collaboratively with OACAS and Executive Directors within the province to support system redesign		Executive Director

Priority 5: Continuous Improvement			
Strategic Goal: Enhance systems to support continuous quality improvement, transparency and accountability			
Objective	Operational Goals	Progress	Lead Director/Senior Manager
a. High levels of compliance are achieved on service standards and strategic outcomes are measured.	Transition to a self-service reporting model by developing a library of standard reports and interactive Business Intelligence dashboards.		Director of IT
	Develop and integrate next generation interactive dashboards into standard practice.		Administration
	Update policy manual for easy of utilization and equity lens.		
b. New Provincial requirements are implemented.	Enhance education and skill development regarding protection and disclosure of personal information.		Directors of Service
c. Broaden the awareness, knowledge and understanding of Hamilton CAS within the Hamilton community	Research and create a new brand for Hamilton CAS to reflect strategic vision, customer service focus and Equity and Inclusion commitments of the organization.		Senior Manager, Communications
	Revamp agency website to reflect new brand, new hosting platform and content management system		
d. Provide quality service that embodies the strategic vision of collaboration, strengthening of families and well-being of children	Develop a Customer Service Model that embodies values of Hamilton CAS. Create and collect statistical data to create trends, develop learning opportunities, and better practices. Include client feedback in process.		Senior Manager, Communications
e. Foster a culture focused on data driven outcomes to support continuous improvement in our work	Enhance QA capacity for report development, analysis, support of service staff and research and education		ED & Director of IT
	More holistic framework for client feedback & client survey to enhance customer satisfaction		Senior Manager, Communications
f. Implementation of Electronic Legal processes	Transition to a digital online legal file; implementation of LAD legal process software; Improved electronic legal processes		Legal
G. Develop a 5 year equity plan that is focused on equity within the organization and community engagement	To embed equity throughout the organization and build strong community relationships		Director, of Equity, Inclusion and Community Development

Priority 6: Resources and Sustainability			
Strategic Goal: Ensure that valuable resources are in place to support service outcomes and ensure financial sustainability			
Objective	Operational Goals	Progress	Lead Director/Senior Manager
a. Strategies are in place to maximize revenue available including securing and allocating resources for the best possible organizational design, staffing and mix of placement resources.	Strategic use of surpluses to support strategic vision.		Director of Finance
	Resource back office to support service more effectively.		Director of Finance/HR
	Review assets in private fund to maximize utilization, diversification and return on assets.		Senior Manager, Communications Director of Finance
b. Develop and review an IT Implementation Plan	Continue to implement systems that fully or partially automate manual processes.		Director of IT
	Successful implementation of business continuity plan and disaster recovery site.		

2020-2021 Stats at a Glance



Top 3 reasons for working with families:



2020-2021 Financials

Hamilton Children's Aid Society has reported a surplus for the fiscal year. The surplus will be used to pay off the accumulated historical deficit from child welfare operations. We are in a strong financial position to ensure financial sustainability and to promote the agency's strategic vision.

	2020-2021 (in '000s)	2019-2020 (in '000s)
Total Revenue	50,832	48,652
Total Expenses	47,175	48,744
Surplus (Deficit) for the year	3,657	(92)

This is a summary of details in the 2020-21 audited financial statements prepared under Public Sector Accounting Standards (PSAS) and audited by MNP LLP. [Contact us for a full audited financial statement.](#)

Expenses - Breakdown by Category (%)

