

Striving to Achieve Service Excellence



ANNUAL REPORT 2013-2014

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2013-2014 was another great year for the Children's Aid Society of the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. The change agenda for child welfare was once again quite busy this year with a new funding model, new accountability framework, cyclical reviews and the development of key performance indicators. With these new changes, we decided to organize a *Community Day* last February to introduce our service framework and discuss the impact of some of the changes that have happened in child welfare since 2006. The event was a great success and we received great feedback from our partners. Since that day we have spent a lot of time meeting partners to improve our working relationships and build new partnerships. We could never achieve our mission without the help of our community partners, and we are so grateful for their assistance and support.

This year we were involved in the launch of two remarkable community initiatives; first, the creation of Koala Place - a Child and Youth Advocacy Centre that officially opened in January 2014. The Centre provides a safe, child-friendly environment where children, youth and their families can tell their story and be supported by a team of professionals from various disciplines including child protection.

Second, after three years of hard work, the Healthy Families Coalition of Eastern Ontario celebrated the official launch of *Triple P* in our community. We are so proud to finally offer this evidence-based parenting program to the families of our communities. There is still a lot of work to do to promote *Triple P*, but as many workers will tell you it is a highly effective and efficient parenting program and we hear amazing comments from families who have taken a *Triple P* course.

Once again this year, we have a lot to be thankful for. We have amazing, dedicated employees who spend their days helping families, children and the youth of our community. Through their passion and hard work we witness great success stories. We have a dedicated Board of Directors who offer judicious leadership and are committed to strong governance. We have wonderful resource families whose dedication to children and youth are admirable and the reason why we have successful children and youth.

As we celebrate the many accomplishments of the past year, we recognize that more work remains to be done. The priorities for our agency will continue to be defined by opportunities, challenges and our collective vision for a highly effective children services system here to help the families, children and youth of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry.

Jeanette Despatie, *President of the Board of Directors*
Rachel Daigneault, *Executive Director*



The Children's Aid Society
La Société de l'aide à l'enfance
of the United Counties of | des comtés unis de
Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry

We are here to help.

CASSDG.ca

SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

In the last year, the Children's Aid Society of SD&G has worked on developing a service delivery model. We are committed to providing excellent service in child welfare and will utilize this service delivery model to continually improve our practices and ensure the best outcomes for the families, youth and children in our community.

The core of our model represents and reminds us of WHY we do the work that we do. This is best described through our logo and what it represents, and our slogan that **WE ARE HERE TO HELP**. We always hold this central to our work, as we are dedicated to helping children, youth and families and ensuring their future success.

The middle circle represents HOW we work with children, youth and families. We chose an approach, program, and tools that were in line with our core values and beliefs, and they all work in unison to achieve the mission and vision of our Agency.

The **Signs of Safety (SOS)** is an approach to child welfare that focusses on a balanced risk assessment and allows the family to remain the expert of their situation.

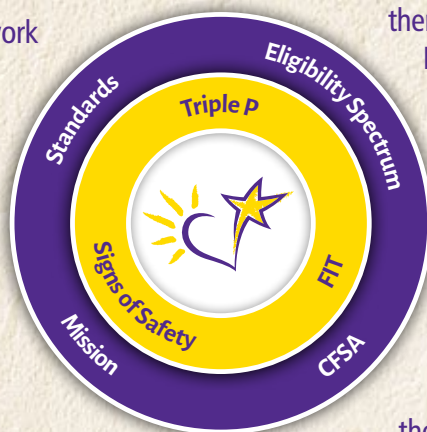
Triple P - Positive Parenting Program offers families parenting tips/strategies and allows them to implement this knowledge in the future as their children age and different struggles arise.

Feedback Informed Treatment (FIT) is the tool that we will use to measure whether we are achieving the best outcomes for families in every aspect of the work that we do.

The outer circle of our model represents WHAT we do; our mission, as well as the laws and standards that guide our practice.

In the early months of 2014, we held a staff development day and a community day. We took this opportunity to present our journey and the service delivery model to our staff and community partners and initiate open communication. Over the next years, we strive towards perfecting our work, our model, and our partnerships.

We were fortunate enough to speak with some families to get their views on the changes. Simone indicated that some of the tools that CAS is now using is helping her children understand the situation better. Simone indicated that after using a words and pictures explanation of CAS involvement her children "were amazed of seeing it that way. They looked at it and saw what the CAS is coming to help mommy and them. It made it more clear to them." Simone indicated that if she had to tell other families about CAS, she would say, "They are there to help you out".



Gwen has been involved with our Agency over the years and she has indicated that her involvement with the Society this time was different. When talking about her past involvement, she said "It would have been different if I had someone like you (referring her current worker) that was willing to work with me and teach me tools. I know that *Triple P* was not around back then, but to teach me that there was a different way that

I could parent. I would have put my all in it." In this new model, we are bringing families to the table, as they are the true experts of their situation.

In reference to a meeting that Gwen attended at the Agency, she said, "I didn't feel judged, I felt very confident. I knew that I had my workers behind me. They didn't judge my beliefs. I didn't feel intimidated. It was positive and achieved what I was looking for. I felt supported; I felt like they all wanted to work for my grandson's best interest and they were willing to listen to different options to ensure that he had the best choices and options".

Gwen's final words: "Thanks for changing the program at CAS".

FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES

Bonjour, puis-je vous aider?

The French Language Services Committee was created in 2013 following a provincial Summit "Passons à l'action : Ensemble pour servir en français". Its mandate is to improve access to French language services to franco-phone families, from entry to exit, and of an equal quality of that provided Anglophone families. French services is not only a legislated service required by the *Child and Family Services Act* and the *French Language Services Act*, it is also one of the two official languages in Canada. An active offer for French language services implies a notion of being *proactive* in offering our services in French to families and children, at all levels. Training to all staff is being provided during the month of June 2014 to highlight the importance of providing French language services to families and children.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

We have all heard the African proverb that “It takes a village to raise a child.” At the Children’s Aid Society of SDG, we know that it is a community’s responsibility to keep children safe. This is not something we do on our own. In this past year we have made a concerted effort to build on existing partnerships and create new ones in order to provide excellent service to children, youth and families. The positive working relationships we have built with our community partners enhance the quality of services that CAS SDG offers to families while ensuring the safety and well-being of children in our region.

Our partnerships are evident from a family’s first contact with the agency. When a family needs support, CAS SDG links them with a variety of community services such as the Cornwall Community Hospital, Victim’s Services, the Eastern Ontario Health Unit, Developmental Services of SDG, L’Equipe Psycho-sociale, Community Integration Services, Counseling and Support Services, and our VAW partners. Together CAS SDG and our partners work with children and families for a stronger, healthier community.

On February 6, 2014, we hosted a *Community Round Table Discussion* which included representation from 31 of our community partners. We reviewed the changes that have taken place in child welfare locally and provincially and welcomed a discussion about what is working well in our partnerships and what can be done to improve them. We have listened and responded to feedback, growing our service to better meet the needs of the children, youth and families in our community. We have identified an agency liaison for our key partners to improve our communication and mutual service to families. We have made several presentations to our community partners and have welcomed them in as they made presentations to our staff to create a better understanding of our mutual work with children and families. We are focused on being helpful, listening, respecting, and caring for children, youth and families, building a safe and strong community while advocating for those with whom we work.

We have continued to be part of the *Children’s Access and Service Resolution Team* to provide a multi-service response or provide access to residential services when all community support and service options have been exhausted and the services system is unable to respond to the needs of children/youth. We have also continued to provide excellent service through our *Adolescent Program* in partnership with the Cornwall Community Hospital and Youth Officers with the Cornwall Community Police Services and our Family Violence Team in partnership with our partners in the Violence Against Women Sector.

We are very proud to be part of two new community initiatives: Koala Place and TLC. We are honoured to be supporting the Child and Youth Advocacy Centre,

Koala Place, with several community partners as a welcoming, child friendly place for families and children victim of abuse. We have also worked in partnership with several community agencies in creating *Teach and Learn with your Child*, a course that provides young mothers between the ages of 16-18 with the opportunity to gain two high school credits while they learn *Triple P* strategies to help them learn to parent their children using a positive parenting approach.

Furthermore, our presence in Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry has grown over the years and seems to be very appreciated by the community. Not only has there been a significant rise in community attendance at our events, but more than ever before, community businesses like the Red Carpet Treatment, Au Vieux Duluth and Shoeless Joes (just to name a few) are supporting our *Send a Kid to Camp* initiative through sponsorships and donations. We want to thank the community for voting the Children’s Aid Society as the “*Charity of Choice*”, recipient of the *2013 Seeker’s Choice Awards* fundraiser. Your confidence in us is inspiring.

This past year has been a very busy one with many events to speak of, but the *Child Abuse Prevention campaign* is the most noteworthy. Many events were organized throughout the month of October to raise awareness, and the community presence at each was over-whelming. Time and again, people united in record numbers to “*Break the Silence*” on child abuse and neglect. In fact, our community action inspired 9 other child protection agencies and their communities across Eastern Ontario to unite with us on *Community Dress Purple day* to show support on the importance of protecting and keeping our children and youth safe. We did it SD&G, the message “*Break the Silence, Use Your Voice*” was heard loud and clear!



Child Abuse Prevention Campaign launch

QUALITY ASSURANCE

This year has seen our organization take on many new initiatives in quality assurance to support and enhance our work and service delivery to children, youth and families in our community. Uppermost have been those areas where not only are we able to demonstrate our service quality and report on key indicators of excellent outcomes for children but we are also better able to align processes and streamline systems to most effectively engage in child protection within the community.

Through the integration of our *Signs of Safety (SOS)* philosophy and *Triple P* tools working with families on positive parenting, we have also started to engage in measurement of our services through *Feedback Informed Treatment (FIT)*. These efforts have taken us into the heart of child welfare transformation, in that we are committed to the priorities of family engagement and family centred practice in child welfare while holding child safety, wellbeing and permanence as integral and our primary focus.

While QA work has evolved with much new technology and programming available we continue to strive to link the numbers to meaning and significance in child welfare. The statistical data available in this year's report speaks to almost 3,500 calls received from the community and almost 1,500 assessments

opened for child welfare reasons. We supported about 350 families through community links and we are actively involved with another 350 families on an ongoing basis at any given time. We have provided service to about 2,500 families in our community this year. While our children in care population is decreasing slightly as expected due to the increased availability of service to families and options to child admission, we are pleased to confirm that we have recently arrived at our goal of 0% of our children in resource settings outside our jurisdiction and continue to work actively in supporting family based care for all children. Finally in the past year while we admitted 75 and discharged 92 children from care, we were successful in reintegrating 61 or 26% of children to permanent (bio or adoptive) family settings.

ANNUAL STATISTICS as of March 31, 2014

Families helped in our community this year	2012-13	2013-14
Total calls received	3327	3476
Family Assessments or Investigations opened	1336	1425
Community Links provided to families	417	347
Assessments/Investigations closed	1020	920
Assessments/Investigations transferred to ongoing family service	277	352
Total Assessments/Investigations completed this year	1297	1272
Number of files opened in Ongoing as of March 31	263	342
Families served this year		2399

Our Children in Care

Total Children in care at March 31	298	281
Total number of Child Admissions this year	66	75
Total number of children discharged	113	92
Number of children discharged to permanency (bio or adoptive family)	75 (38%)	61 (26%)

Types of Placement for children in care

Foster care	138 (46%)	137 (49%)
Kinship care	27 (8.7%)	24 (8.5%)
Outside paid resource	26 (8.7%)	8 (3%)
Medical Foster	4 (1.3%)	4 (1.5%)
Independent Living	67 (22%)	73 (26%)
Adoption Probation	11 (4%)	7 (2.5%)
Extended access with family	16 (5%)	19 (7%)
Other (alternate resource)	6 (2%)	5 (1.5%)

Children Adopted this year	19	14
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Our Resources

Foster Homes	112	105
Kin homes	24	10

FINANCIAL REPORT

REVENUES	2012-13	2013-14
MCSS Transfers	22,784,331	23,405,985
Prior year settlements	(126,234)	(642,710)
Child Welfare Recoveries	788,396	716,884
Investment Income	34,556	44,874
Amortization of deferred contributions	233,031	196,159
Other	729,755	356,863

Total Revenues	24,443,835	24,078,055
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EXPENDITURES	2012-13	2013-14
Salaries and Wages	8,703,781	9,098,720
Benefits	2,835,105	2,320,303
Building Occupancy	540,514	626,422
Office Administration	414,939	332,383
Training & Recruitment	328,546	467,875
Promotion & Publicity	145,053	174,760
Professional Services Non-Client	91,461	302,406
Travel	1,081,598	922,419
Boarding Rate Payments	7,354,029	6,027,075
Professional Services Client	208,015	250,860
Health & Related	589,045	578,446
Client's Personal Needs	1,083,863	1,166,476
Camp/Program Fees	2,586	16,788
Miscellaneous	161,352	155,624
Technology	681,581	620,807

Total Expenditures	24,221,468	23,061,364
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Net Revenues over Expenditures	222,367	1,016,691
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HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

We held a recruitment blitz in early 2014 which resulted in our employee complement increasing slightly to 158 employees, which is a 5% growth from 2013. Most of these are contract employees, hired to support the existing teams in implementing our service delivery model. We were also very mindful of our francophone complement and ensured we hired bilingual employees to help serve our francophone families and youth.

Hats off to you! was the theme of our Employee Recognition dinner this year. April 3, 2014 was our second annual event where we celebrated the success of our employees. This formal event recognized employees celebrating 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years of service as well as our retirees. Our Executive Director recognized Lisa Van Riel and Robert Ladouceur, both Child and Family Workers, for the *Partners in Excellence Award*.

In addition to these organizational awards, our *Peer Recognition Program* was a great success again this year. We received 72 nominations from employees wanting to celebrate their colleagues' positive contributions to the organization. The selection committee had the very difficult task of selecting the following employees for their accomplishments in 2013: Lori Friesen from the Human Resources department received the *Behind the Scenes Award*; Marie-Josée Menard and Stephanie Powis, both Child Protection Workers, received the *Service Award of the Year*; Jeremy Hough, from our Building Management department, received the *Rookie of the Year Award*; Rhonda Van Allen received the *Management of the Year Award*; and Joanne Fortier, from our Quality Assurance department, received the famous *Heart and Spirit Award*. Congratulations to the award recipients and to all of our employees who are dedicated to offering the best service possible to our families and youth.



Our Employee Recognition dinner hosts, Marie-Josée Ménard and Justin Petitpas



From the left: Robert Ladouceur, Rachel Daigneault and Lisa Van Riel



STRENGTHENING FAMILY BASED CARE

It is well known that growing up in a family based setting improves future outcomes for children and youth. This has been our priority since 2011, with a goal of having all of our children reside in family based settings by 2015. This goal was also supported by the *Commission to Promote Sustainable Child Welfare in Ontario*.

We are thrilled to report that as of March 2014, all of our youth have been repatriated to family based settings (Kin, Kith, adoption, family or Foster family). Although this was not an easy journey, there were many lessons learned, which we believe improved our practice and outcomes for our youth.

**THERE IS A FAMILY FOR EVERY CHILD,
AND OUR DUTY IS TO FIND IT.
WE WILL NEVER GIVE UP ON THE NOTION
THAT EVERY CHILD DESERVES A FAMILY.**

We continue to work at ensuring children and youth have a permanent family, whether it be through legal custody, adoption, or going back home to their parents.

YOUTH INITIATIVES

This year has been a busy year for the youth of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. We have been busy attending and creating many opportunities for youth with *WE DAY UK* & *WE DAY Ottawa*, a Christmas reunion, a youth website, Youth Civics Day and many other networking and leadership activities in and around Cornwall.

This year we hired two new youth representatives, Eliane Bergeron and Margaret Prince. These two youth have had the chance to meet with the youth and assist in the creation of all of these fabulous experiences for our young people. In December we celebrated Christmas together at a reunion for older youth at Shoeless Joes in Cornwall and we look forward to continuing this tradition. Angela Giacomini had the pleasure and privilege of receiving the Clarks Bursary award this year and we are so proud of her accomplishments. A group of youth attended Queen's Park for *Youth Civics Day* and to celebrate the proclamation of May 14th as Provincial Children and Youth in Care day in Ontario. This was a great opportunity to meet youth from agencies across the province, learn about the Legislator and to celebrate this milestone for youth in the Province.

This year like other years, we have been very busy travelling the world, experiencing adventure and learning about countries and cultures. Travel your dreams had three editions; Boston Massachusetts, London England for *WE DAY UK* and *Italy/Paris*. When asking the youth about these experiences the words that came to mind were, mind-blowing, amazing, and once-in-a-lifetime! These travelling opportunities proved to be inspiring, motivating, educational and leadership building. *WE DAY Ottawa* and *WE DAY UK* was a new experience for us this year and wow was it a success. A selected group of youth attended these two exciting opportunities. This inspirational event was

packed with speakers, stories and ways to get involved with changing our world to make it a better place.

For a while now, our youth room and youth website have been under construction and we are proud to announce that our youth website and youth room are ready to be launched this summer. We look forward to you checking it out and sharing your talents with all of us. Stay tuned for many new youth leadership initiatives this coming year.



WE DAY Ottawa



WE DAY UK

EDUCATION

Education plays a significant role in the healthy development and wellbeing of children and youths, as such, it remains a primary focus of our service. Education is paramount to future success; and we continue to be committed to better educational outcomes.

This year, educational initiatives, include the *Crown Ward Education Championship Teams (CWECT)* and the *Bookworm Club*. These two initiatives serve to increase assets and skills for children and youth. The bookworm clubs assist children and youth in developing literacy skills, while CWECT provide young people with the opportunity to explore the different options available to them for post-secondary education, while ensuring they have support for this important transition. An educational consultant and tutors are also available for children and youth who would benefit from these services and support them in achieving education success.

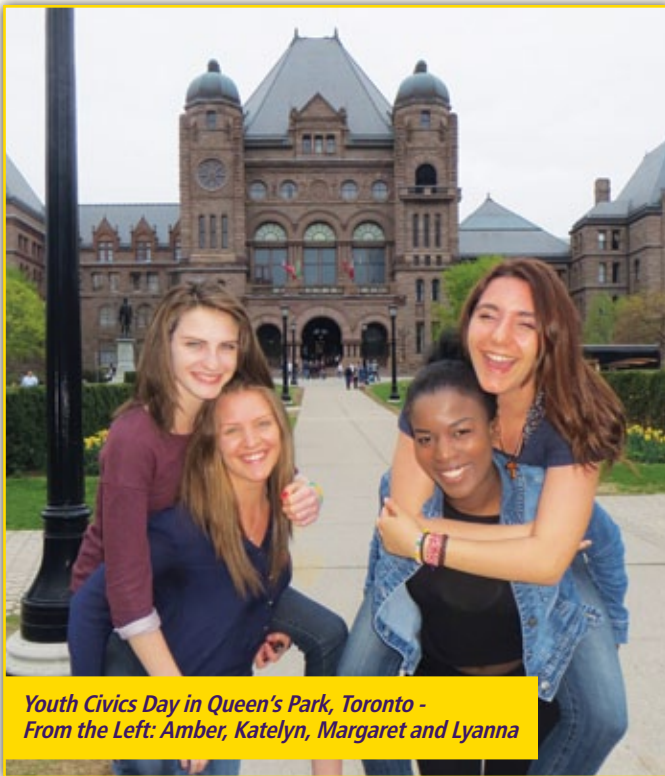
CWECT promoted and facilitated visits to post-secondary institutions, motivational speaker presentations, and experiential learning events such as culinary studies, mechanics and heavy machinery operating; exposing youth to a number of post-secondary options. This year's events have been a success with great participation and feedback from the youth themselves.

Of those who participated in the *Bookworm Club*, results indicate that the child's motivation for reading significantly increased during the six months of participation, as well as the child's self-esteem and the quality of the child-foster parent relationship were fostered.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH, WHO RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM THE EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT OR TUTOR, WERE REPORTED TO EXPERIENCE AN INCREASED IN THEIR SELF-ESTEEM, COMMITMENT AND MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING

The Society is also currently compiling information of surveys conducted with youths attending post-secondary education to understand how we can better support in achieving in their goals and how we can improve practice.

Results from the crown ward review indicate that youths continue to progress in terms of primary and secondary education, and we are committed to ensuring that they achieved the best possible educational outcomes, as this is key to attaining better outcomes in adulthood.



Youth Civics Day in Queen's Park, Toronto - From the Left: Amber, Katelyn, Margaret and Lyanna



Toronto - Angela Giacomini accepting the OACAS Clark Bursary



(CWECT) Campus D'Alfred - Agriculture and Machinery Experiential Learning event