

111th

ANNUAL REPORT

for the fiscal year 2016 / 2017

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DURHAM
Children's Aid Society

Message from the Board President and Executive Director

Our vision, *building hope and opportunities with children, youth and families* and mission, *working with families and communities for the safety, stability and wellbeing of children and youth* provides direction to all we do at Durham CAS. It is the commitment of our exceptional staff, caregivers, volunteers and Board of Directors that

make our vision and mission a reality. We are pleased to present the annual report for 2016-17 and have highlighted some of our accomplishments of the past year.

Our strategic plan for 2016-20 with its strategic priorities was publicly launched at our 2016 Annual General Meeting. It aligns with and supports work underway across all CASs in partnership with the OACAS and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services in the implementation of the Provincial Call to Action plan. Durham CAS embraced this work within our agency, and contributed to and supported the provincial initiatives.

Service delivery to children, youth and families is our paramount priority. We continue our many programs and services to achieve positive outcomes. In November 2016, the Community Advisory Council was established. The Council is an outcome of the Anti-Oppressive Practice work

and the *Building Bridges* work we have done in collaboration with leaders of the African Canadian community over the past two years. It is focused on systemic issues that impact service provision to African Canadians and other oppressed children, youth and families. The Council is comprised of community members, board members and agency staff. A sincere thank you to the community leaders for their tireless commitment to the Council.

Child welfare provincially is committed to the devolution of the child welfare mandate to Indigenous Child Well-Being agencies. Durham CAS is working in partnership with Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child and Family Services (DBCFS) to support their work towards becoming a mandated agency. Our Indigenous Services Team will be instrumental in the transfer of knowledge and transition of services to DBCFS. We are committed to Indigenous and First Nations' communities having jurisdiction to protect and care for their own children, youth and families.

The Ministry is implementing the Child Protection Information Network (CPIN) across the sector with all CAS's scheduled to be on the system in 2019. CPIN is a single information system that integrates service, financial and accountability systems. The primary service outcome of CPIN is enhanced safety of children through efficient and comprehensive access to information.



Bryan Buttigieg
Board President



Our VISION

Building hope and opportunities with children, youth and families.

Our MISSION

Working with families and communities for the safety, stability and wellbeing of children and youth.

Preparing for CPIN implementation in June 2017 was a massive undertaking and a primary focus of attention during 2016-17. Essential to successful implementation was the establishment of a CPIN team and the dedication of significant financial and staffing resources, as well as change management support, in collaboration with the Ministry's CPIN team.

Shared Services is a Ministry initiative supported by the sector under the Provincial Call to Action to improve the structure and efficiency of the child welfare system. Initial services will include a sector procurement and contract management program, a sector-wide data service and some service delivery components. The Leadership Team and the Board of Directors spent significant time evaluating the program, and are confident in the value of coming together as a sector to ensure consistent, system-wide service delivery, efficiencies and accountability measures.

As we look forward to 2017-18, many of the initiatives highlighted here will continue to evolve. On the immediate horizon, is the new Children, Youth and Families Act. There are far reaching changes in the Act that will be proclaimed in two phases. Increasing the age of protection to 18 years is a change for which the sector has advocated for many years. This part of the Act will come into effect in fall 2017. The remainder of the Act will be proclaimed in spring 2018.

There has been much activity and we have had many accomplishments in 2016-17, with much more to come in 2017-18 and beyond. As always, the success of our agency is the result of the critical work of our staff, volunteers, and foster, kin and adoptive families; as well as the expertise and leadership of our Board of Directors. A sincere thank you to all for your steadfast commitment to the safety and wellbeing of Durham's children, youth and families.

Bryan Buttigieg
Board President



Wanda Secord
Executive Director

Wanda Secord
Executive Director

Anti-oppressive practice DIRECTIONAL STATEMENT

We are committed to anti-oppressive practice in which we challenge the impacts of power and privilege, eliminate barriers, and are inclusive of the broad range of diversity in our community.



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Improving service to support families

In October 2016, our Intake Reception Team (IRT) launched a new system that not only improves the intake process for staff, it streamlines and refines our ability to provide good service to those who are calling us with concerns about a child or are seeking assistance.

The automated call centre has meant a significant reduction in the time that it takes for a caller to speak to someone, ensuring that we can help people in the most efficient manner. We are now able to get to almost all callers with virtually no wait time.

When someone calls Durham CAS with a concern about a child at risk or is seeking assistance, the call goes directly into a queue to be answered by a member of the IRT. Not only are calls answered more quickly, we can also track the details of each call. At any given moment, we know how many callers are waiting, how long they have been waiting, and who is next in the queue.

We are able to track how long calls take, which helps us in planning to ensure that we meet the needs of those seeking assistance.

In addition to streamlining our intake process, we have also modified our approach when receiving new referrals to help us better understand each individual family. We are using an approach that is more positive and constructive, which enables us to build on the strengths of each family to support them in keeping children safe right from the moment the concern is brought to our attention.

When we receive a referral, we ask about the support network a family already has and we gather as much information as we can so that we have a more comprehensive view of the family. We have also integrated an anti-oppressive practice approach in all stages of our work. We gather as much information as we can on any cultural or religious factors that may impact how we work with the family, and that can help us to enhance the family's support network. We want to ensure that we are supporting the family in a way that is both responsive to and inclusive of their needs.



Child Abuse Awareness Campaign 2016

Child Abuse Prevention Month is a national campaign held every October to inform the public about everyone's role in preventing child abuse. The campaign is symbolized by the purple ribbon, which has been in use since it was launched by Durham CAS in 1992.

For the 2016 campaign, several schools and organizations across Ontario took part by wearing purple, sharing information with families, taking

photos and sharing messages on social media. We were especially pleased that the administrators, trustees, staff and students of the Durham Catholic District School Board enthusiastically participated in a variety of ways. At Sir Albert Love Catholic School in Oshawa, staff and students wore purple and came together to form a giant purple ribbon in the yard (in photo).

This year the campaign grew significantly in terms of an online presence. Schools, police departments and other organizations joined CAS in raising awareness by participating on social media.

Customizing our approach to help families

Over the last few years we have incorporated more diverse approaches to our work both because it respects and honours the culture, heritage and needs of individual families but also because it leads to positive outcomes for children, youth and families. Supporting parents as they develop skills and working from their strengths is a more positive, comprehensive and effective way of helping families build their own strong foundations for their children.

Part of that process has been enhancing and expanding the ways we work, using techniques such as Signs of Safety, Family Finding, mediation and facilitation. These processes are solution focused and respect the input of each member of the family and their support network. Each person is valued as a fundamental voice in the creation of the safety network, plans and outcomes.

Throughout this year we have focused on developing the knowledge and skill set among our staff on our journey of fully implementing these techniques. Each approach offers opportunities to work in a constructive, supportive way that respects the contributions of every participant.

With each approach we are ensuring that we incorporate anti-oppressive practice principles at every step. Not only does this allow us to customize the process for each family, it also ensures that we respect their cultural and religious needs, and it provides additional tools by incorporating the diverse strengths and attributes of each family's heritage and support network.

By diversifying our approaches in working with families we are helping families build strong foundations, keeping children out of care and doing it in a positive and collaborative manner.

Board of Directors and Senior Staff 2016-2017

Officers

President - Bryan Buttigieg
Vice-President - Sonia Munoz
Treasurer - David Wade
Secretary - Jody Bowskill
Past President (Honourary)
Michelle Davis

Other Directors

Naveen Balakrishnan
Aisha Delpeache
Gloria Duke-Aluko
Yan Fu
Natalie Perryman
Mehvish Rizvi
Robert Royer
Lisa Sarsfield
Peter Spratt
Aysha Syed
Crystal Yaki

Senior Management

Executive Director - Wanda Secord
Director of Services - Dawn Walcott Parris
Director of Child and Youth Services - Diren Narendra
Director of Family Services - Barbara Gracey
Director of Intake Services - Isabel Khalaf
Director of Residential Services - Christine MacPhee
Director of Finance and Administration - Martin Smith
Director of Human Resources - Melissa Beckette-Batchellor

Honourary Society Members

Recognized for their distinguished service to the Society.

George Ainsworth
Norma Ainsworth
Don Bain
Eleanor Bain
Bernadine Birchall
Pat Boon
Suzanne Bradbury
Bob Brozina
Rick Bunt
Bertha Chipman
Sharon Clark
Barbara Clarke
Donald Curran
Patricia Curran
Jim Dubray
Florence Dykstra
John Dykstra

Rick Felstead
Wendy Felstead
Martine Fournier
Joyce Fuller
Peter Fuller
Judy Gallagher
Kevin Gallagher
Craig Green
Laura Green
Lynn Gyltyiuk
Stan Gyltyiuk
Oswald Harmon
Patricia Harmon
Jodi Hewett
Deanna Hill
Lucy Hudson
Mary Jameson

Wayne Jameson
Ben Jarvenpaa
Tony Johnson
Jackie Kent
Gabe Kozma
Karen Lelievre
Leonard Lelievre
Dean Lewis
Eric Lewis
Barb Luciano
Sam Luciano
Rob MacFadden
Dorothea MacQueen
Ron MacQueen
Jim McConnell
Valerie McConnell
Beverly McDougall

Charlie McDougall
Carol Martel
Sylvia Martone
Gary Mason
Sharron Morrison
Ted Morrison
Beverly Muir
Tracey Newall
Dennis Norton
Mike Peace
Sue Pelyk
Tim Pelyk
Cecil Perryman
Carol Povinsky
Wendy Sue Reid
Bob Roche
Ron Rollauer

Bud Ross
Kathy Ross
Maret Sadem-Thompson
Dario Savio
Joan Skelton
Tim Smart
Howard Smith
Arlene Snyder
Ed Snyder
Jacqui Steer
Kathie Steffler
Marie Steiner
Kevin Sullivan
Sharon Swain
Bev Swartz
Howard Swartz
Brian Thornton

Marilyn Thornton
Julie Vendetti
Jackie Vieira
Blair Walters
Jeff Wood
Wendy Wood

People We Served

2016 / 2017 2015 / 2016

Services to families	New child protection investigations	4,365	4,361
	Open child protection cases at year end	870	852
	Families served by Prenatal Support	97	92
Services to children	Children admitted to care	173	176
	Children discharged	203	192
	Children in care served during the year	765	784
	Children in care at year end	562	592
	Adoptions finalized	22	15
	On-site health clinic visits	816	864
Days care provided	Total child days care	202,015	212,396
	Total foster and kinship days care	62,563	72,979
	Purchased foster days care	37,796	35,107
	Total group days care	26,607	23,767
	Continued Care and Support for Youth	50,372	58,859
	Independent living days care	7,511	7,055
	Total adoption days care	9,858	7,396
	Other days care	7,308	7,233
Volunteer services	Total number of volunteers (at year end)	146	134
	Total kilometers driven	1,332,227	1,380,348
	Volunteer drives completed	19,155	19,803
	Total volunteer hours of service	24,350	27,855

Statement of Child Welfare Fund Operations

Operating revenue	2016 / 2017	2015 / 2016
Province of Ontario	64,203,873	65,712,937
Balanced Budget Fund	0	1,522,795
Other	6,458,449	5,759,844
Total	70,662,322	70,995,576
Operating expenses		
Salaries and benefits	36,837,199	33,907,752
Boarding and client services	29,924,952	28,524,107
Administration	6,588,512	6,764,787
Total	73,350,663	69,196,647
Fund balances, beginning of year	9,306,031	7,507,102
(Deficit) / Surplus for the year	(2,688,340)	1,798,929
Fund balances, end of year	6,617,691	9,306,030

A summary from 'Statement of Revenue and Expenses' audited by Roberts, Marlowe, Jackson, Jackson & Associates, Chartered Accountants.

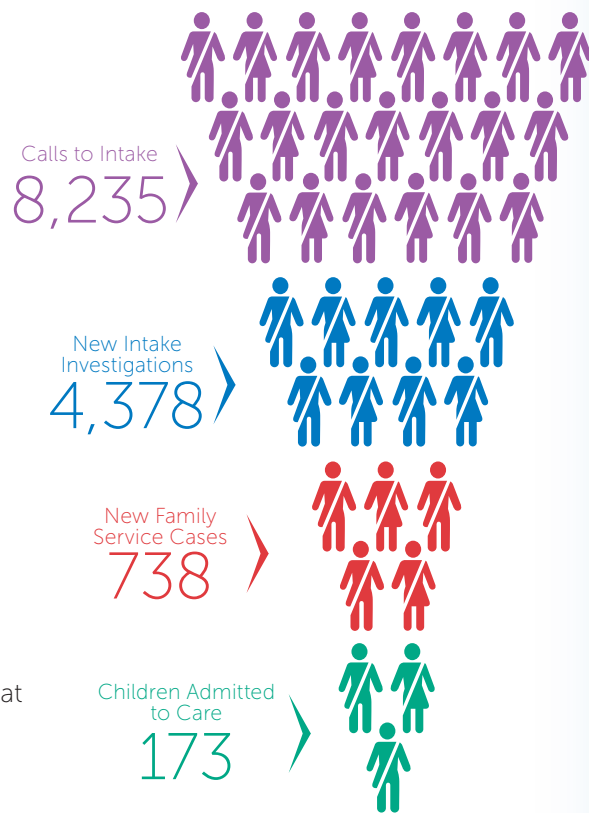
Supporting families to keep children safe

When we become involved with a family, our initial goal is to keep children safe, ideally without bringing them into our care. We work to support families in building solid foundations to keep children and youth safe and healthy in their own homes.

We strive to work with families in a manner that is respectful of and informed by their culture and heritage. In addition to introducing new programs within our own services, we also build relationships with new community partners that can provide additional, sometimes culturally specific, services.

Occasionally, we may need to bring a child or youth into care, but with more responsive and innovative services those numbers are declining. And when we do bring children into care, our goal is always to place the child in family based care, whether with kin or in a foster home.

All families face challenges, and sometimes they may need a helping hand. We are here to help and we are committed to continually enhancing our services so that we can provide that help and prevent the need to bring children into our care.



Our commitment to efficient and quality services

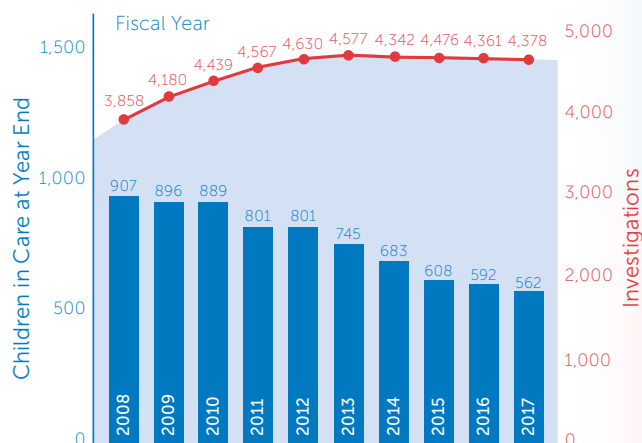
All Children's Aid Societies are legally mandated to sign an accountability agreement with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services to ensure a commitment to service quality, good governance, fiscal responsibility and value for money. We are accountable for delivering effective and efficient services that support positive outcomes for children and youth.

The agreement outlines our responsibilities for performance, including measuring key indicators and identifying excellence and implementing quality improvement. It includes both measurable service objectives as well as our legislative and regulatory responsibilities.

Along with CAS's across Ontario, we have taken a proactive and strategic approach to data collection and public reporting. New systems have ensured that we are now collecting consistent province-wide data for identifying gaps and making effective decisions about how to improve services.

We are committed to continual improvement of services through data and analysis. By measuring and reporting on our performance, we are taking an important step in enhancing our services and providing better outcomes for the children, youth and families we serve.

Children in care compared to investigations, 2008 to 2017



Over the years, the number of investigations has increased, however the number of children and youth in care has decreased because of our admission prevention strategies and focus on family-based care.

Continuing our Journey to Reconciliation

This year, our ongoing journey to reconciliation involved continuing to build relationships with Indigenous organizations and individuals. We maintained our efforts to provide culturally based services that recognize multi-generational trauma and incorporate the healing power of a family's community and heritage.

We are especially proud of the strong relationship we have with the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation. Our Indigenous Team is dedicated to collaborating with Scugog Island representatives as we work together toward the goal of strong, healthy families while also respecting and honouring the history, culture and needs of Indigenous families.

Another important relationship is with Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child and Family Services (DBCFS). DBCFS is now in the final stages of being officially mandated as the child services and protection agency for families served by seven First Nations communities in Durham Region and surrounding areas. Our Indigenous Team has been and will continue working to assist DBCFS during the transition. We have incorporated many holistic Indigenous values and culturally appropriate approaches in our services, however, we are committed to supporting the transition of the devolution of services to Indigenous agencies as it is their inherent right to care for their own children. We are honoured to support them in every way we can on their journey.



In addition to this ongoing work, our unique, multi-disciplinary Indigenous Team introduced some new programs to support the Indigenous families we serve. We held our first Indigenous parenting program in collaboration with the YMCA. The twelve week program is based on Indigenous traditions and involved elders while sharing information in a supportive and collaborative way. The program incorporates the seven grandfather teachings: love, wisdom, respect, courage, honesty, humility and truth. The program was very well received by participants, and plans are underway to host the program again.

Another new initiative that was a great success was a partnership with author, teacher and storyteller Raven Murphy in presenting a group program for youth in care. The youth met over several weeks to explore Indigenous culture, traditions and teachings. The sessions are based on traditional Anishinaabe teachings to inform, inspire, and invoke pride. The program helped to foster self-esteem and encouraged the youth to engage with their community.

Our work with Indigenous families is always evolving. It is a complex sector-wide process to address the historical devastating impact of the colonialism and the child welfare system on generations of Indigenous families. We are committed to continuing our work with the local Indigenous communities on the journey to reconciliation.

Building Bridges: Community Advisory Council launched



This year we formally launched our Community Advisory Council. The Council is one of the initiatives resulting from the *Building Bridges for the Success of our Children and Youth* consultations, our ongoing collaboration with members of the local African Canadian/Black community.

The Council is comprised of staff, board and community members, and will meet a minimum of six times per year. It provides a collaborative forum to discuss challenges and opportunities around systemic issues relating to child welfare in Durham Region's Black and/or other oppressed communities, and to make recommendations to improve the service experience of children, youth and families. The Council will also host a public consultation forum annually (currently planned for the spring).

The Council works in a collaborative and positive way for the enhancement of high-quality service delivery by identifying and prioritizing issues, providing feedback on service and governance, and developing community consultation.

This is one more step on our journey to engage our diverse community and to integrate anti-oppressive practice into all aspects of our service delivery. This is an evolving process, and we are committed to working with the Black community to ensure an ongoing open and transparent dialog.

To learn more, please visit our website, where we are committed to making available updates and notices of upcoming opportunities to get involved.