



ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

Family and Children's Services of Renfrew County



Family & Children's Services
of Renfrew County

Services à la famille et à l'enfance
du comté de Renfrew

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR



Hello, Kwey, Bonjour,

This annual report is a short sample of the expertise, creativity, compassion, integrity, trust, transparency and honesty that are hallmarks of Family and Children's Services of Renfrew County. I invite you into the report and to dig deeper into what you value and how you see these being represented in these pages. As we move through time, it is important to reflect on past stories to continue learning and growing as we move into a future that can only be crafted by us.

This past year has brought the continued challenges of a pandemic, budget realities, a new strategic plan and many changes in staff. Our journey does continue, especially in areas incorporating equity, diversity and inclusivity. We are thankful each day for the dedication dynamic of all of our families, staff, volunteers and Board; it is a measure of the respect we hold for each other that we challenge our thinking to be our best in service to our residents. As you read these pages, kindly reflect on your role and service. What will be in next year's report? That is being determined as of now. Make a difference so that when the moment is upon us to reflect again, we'll see the impact of your choices in the smiles and appreciation of so many people that benefit from the programs and unique characteristics of a multi-service agency such as Family and Children's Services of Renfrew County.

Ivan Saari, Board Chair

ACKNOWLEDGING THE LAND ON WHICH WE STAND

We at Family and Children's Services of Renfrew County wish to express our ongoing commitment to formally recognize and acknowledge the traditional lands on which we live and work. We find it essential to honour that for time immemorial, and long before our arrival, Indigenous Peoples lead fruitful and full lives on these lands.

We acknowledge that the land we are standing upon is the traditional territory of the Algonquin People. The citizens of the Algonquin Nation did not relinquish title to their land to the government by treaty or otherwise. The Algonquin way of living has resulted in great stewardship of this land and preservation of the beautiful landscape and bounty provided by Mother Earth

OUR PRIORITIES

Equity, Diversity and inclusivity are the foundation of our work, and Signs of (an adaptation from Signs of Safety) is the framework in which we operate.

The following strategic priorities are the “load bearing walls” of our strategic plan.



Priority #1: Caring Services

Provide preventative, protective, and socially inclusive services that empower and strengthen everyone

We are invested in delivering the best possible support and service we can. The pandemic has exacerbated the stress on families and resulted in increased demands for service support.

Priority #2: Caring Culture

Become an employer of choice cultivating a team-oriented work environment where everyone thrives

The work we do is demanding, and employees deeply feel the stories and experiences of the families we serve. We want to care and provide for our employees as they do for the families. Employees are the heart of an organization.

We know that there is a parallel process to organizational culture and service delivery. A psychologically safe work environment where employees feel valued and included fosters health, wellness and positive outcomes for families of Renfrew County.

Priority #3: Caring Community

Value, strengthen and develop collaborative partnerships to increase availability, accessibility, and quality of care

We are a remote rural area with unique and diverse communities. People are biologically wired to connect, and community is an important part of identity, support and healing for the families we work with. We cannot do this work alone and we recognize the ways our community can contribute to our vision and mission.

OUR COMMITMENTS

Establish reciprocal and restorative Indigenous relationships

Our Restorative Practice Team have focused on building a safe culture space and building community at the Wākā-Ehi Lodge, located at our 464 Isabella Street office in Pembroke. Weekly Men's groups are held that includes drumming, teaching and circles. The team also secured 13 kits through Skills Ontario for a First Nations, Inuit and Métis workshop for Indigenous clients with the focus on trades. The workshop was facilitated at the Lodge and was very successful.



The team organized a Drum opening and Potlach for community. The Lodge's drum was opened along with two other community drums. The drum opening was supported by community, staff and Indigenous groups. Those attending were asked to bring a food item and/or gift for a blanket bundle (i.e. children's clothing, toys, blankets...). There was approximately 60 people who attended the drum opening.

Monthly circles on Saturdays were initiated and the circles are open to community with various themes (for example building dream catchers and medicine bundles). The Lodge has seen approximately 100 people from community connecting to the Lodge from the middle of February 2023 to the end of March 2023.

The Restorative Practice Team continues to focus on working with families and building connections to Elders. The team has been actively connecting families to Elders, Knowledge Keepers or the Lodge. The Restorative Practice team has met with the Nigig Nibi Ki-win Gamik Team and Elders to build connections.



In addition, the Restorative Practice supervisor, Steve Fortin, focuses on bringing teachings to staff. Teachings have included drum teaching and feather teachings. The team offers teaching at various agency functions, for example, team meetings, staff meetings, etc.

The agency has resumed implementation of Heart and Spirit and will be looking at train the trainer in the fall of 2023. The team will continue to work customizing the program to meet the Indigenous community we are serving.

Written by Suzanne Elliott, Director of Service/Local Director

Artwork by Kerry Fortin, Community and Family Engagement Worker

OUR COMMITMENTS

Develop a sector leading integrated service model that incorporates Signs of Something (SOS)



We have been actively implementing the philosophy, principles and practices of “Signs of” throughout our agency over the past five years. This service philosophy is rooted in family engagement and belief that all of our service users have capacity to change and improve the situation for themselves, their children and their family.

Our Implementation Team meets on a regular basis to set annual goals to continue along the path to full integration of the practice throughout our service. The four pillar areas of implementation are Learning, Organizational Alignment, Meaningful Measures and Leadership. Thank you to Bobby Keefe, Beckie Kenrick, Stephanie Murdoch, Dave Ingram and Suzanne Elliot for championing this philosophy and contributions to our agency’s Caring strategic goals.

Our **Learning** has grown from consultant-led boot camps to staff delivered in-house training on a regular basis. We have committed to regular training opportunities overseen by our Clinical Development Facilitator. Our learning opportunities enhance staff knowledge and skills of how to utilize the model within each and every area of our service delivery.

Organizational Alignment is the process of ensuring that all areas of our organizational responsibilities are supported through the “Signs of” model. The undertaking of alignment includes reviewing policies and procedures to reflect that this model is to be applied in all service areas, as well as the review of existing clinical tools compared to those of the “Signs of” model to find the best quality fit to enhance our Caring Services.

“Signs of” implementation has been supported by our existing commitment to the use of data to improve and measure service outcomes and progress towards our overall Agency goals. **Meaningful Measures** has brought us Fidelity Surveys that can be conducted annually with front-line staff in all departments and management staff around their daily use of the model and their confidence. As well, we have undertaken specific client-feedback surveys annually to gather quantitative and qualitative feedback on the service user experience.

Finally, the implementation has been supported through **Leadership** and a firm commitment from the Executive Director and the Leadership Team that this is the model of practice that will help us achieve better outcomes with our service-users. Our management group have been given the same training as our front-line staff, so that they can effectively oversee our mandated clinical services and support of families.

Overall, there have been many successes to date with our “Signs of” implementation journey. We have seen evidence of the clinical tools being used with families in our case documentation, heard positive stories from families that they are more engaged in their own service trajectories and goal-setting and continue to meet with community agencies to educate about our approach to work. We are following the advice of our final practice principle, “Treat the practice principles as aspirations for continuous reflection regarding our practice rather than assuming there is no need for change”.

Written by Billy Russell, Supervisor, Team SUCCESS - Services Unifying Clinical and Community Education Safety and Support

OUR COMMITMENTS

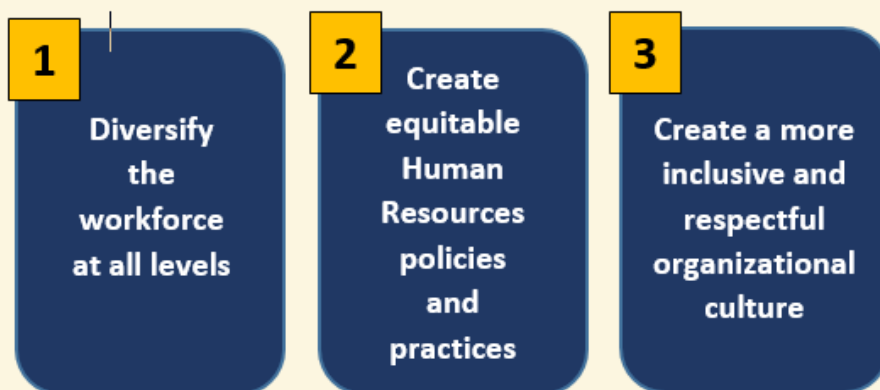
Strengthen FCSRC as an Equitable, Diverse, and Inclusive Organization

In 2022, the agency contracted a third party consulting group to conduct an Equity Audit. The goal of the audit was to assess the organization and provide recommendations to increase diversity, create equitable policies and practices, and create a truly inclusive organization. While the consulting team was open to exploring any issue of equity that arose in the course of conducting the Equity Audit, the research inquiry was focused on issues affecting the groups that have been identified as experiencing persistent and systemic discrimination in the labour market, namely Indigenous peoples, racialized people (visible minorities), persons with disabilities, women, and those who identify as LGBTQ2S+



The consulting team reviewed employment policies, procedures and related documents, held 12 focus groups (in which 78 employees participated), conducted an online Workplace Equity and Inclusivity Survey distributed to all employees (in which 52 employees participated), and one-on-one interviews with senior leaders and Human Resources Staff.

From the results, three key priority areas were identified:



Our commitment of creating an equitable, diverse and inclusive organization is a priority, and we look forward to the journey ahead.

CELEBRATING THE WORK WE DO

Dress Purple Day 2022



Thursday October 27, 2022 was Dress Purple Day to help raise awareness of the supports available to families in Ontario's communities. This is an opportunity to educate communities on the changes families are facing, how we work with them and the important role that their own families, all social service agencies, and economic and social systems play in providing help and ensuring children's safety and well-being. On Dress Purple Day Children's Aid Societies across Ontario raise awareness about the important role we all play in supporting vulnerable children, youth and families. In recent years this campaign has been more important than ever due to the COVID-19 pandemic creating additional stressors for families as well as increased risk for the safety and well-being of youth. This year we participated in numerous activities pictured above to help this message sound throughout our community. Overall our staff and community partners did a wonderful job of showing our commitment to this campaign.

CELEBRATING THE WORK WE DO

Holiday Gift Program



Family and Children's Services of Renfrew County has long recognized the growing needs of the families served by our organization. We have endeavored to support our families by providing for their children during the holiday season. Our Holiday Gift Program helps families across Renfrew County and provides gifts to children from birth to age 16. It also assists youth between age 16 and 21 who reside independently and would not otherwise receive a gift. Pictured here is our Board Chair Ivan Saari (to the

right) thanking Dean Burchart of the Renfrew County Real Estate Board for their continued support and generous donation of gifts and toys for the children in our community.

This year we also benefited from the kind partnership of Nomada's Tacos who generously donated a taco to anyone who brought a present for our Holiday Program. We would like to thank all of those who continue to support this wonderful program enabling us to give back to our community during the holiday season.



CELEBRATING THE WORK WE DO

Holiday Meal Program

Each year we run a holiday meal program that provides members of the community with nutritious, precooked, frozen feasts to allow flexibility for families to decide when to celebrate. This year we were able to provide 100 meals to 100 families supporting approximately 300 children. Each meal included turkey, mashed potatoes, carrots, stuffing, gravy and a pie. Many families appreciated that the meals were precooked which reduced stress around having to prepare these dishes themselves during an already stressful and busy holiday season. Many families shared that they were grateful to not have to worry about feeding their families during the holiday season

as it is already an expensive time. This program also offered the opportunity for Continued Care and Support for Youth (CCSY) youth to share a holiday meal with their families and one youth shared he was extremely grateful for the opportunity to have a meal with his dad. These efforts have been possible due to the many staff, volunteers and community members who work hard to ensure we are able to spread joy during the holiday season to all who live in our community. This year a special thanks to our Board for their donation to help support the program.



CELEBRATING THE WORK WE DO

EarlyON

The first 6 years of life set the stage for life-long learning, behavior, health and well-being. Our EarlyON Child and Family Centres in Pembroke and North Renfrew offer numerous early learning activities for families and caregivers of children from birth to 6 years of age. This past year our EarlyON Centres in both Pembroke and North Renfrew hosted 555 distinct programs for our community!

Thank you to our staff for providing a warm and welcoming environment.



CELEBRATING THE WORK WE DO



18 fathers attended our Caring Dads Program, facilitated in partnership with Bernadette McCann House.



9 youth in care received FCSRC Millennium Scholarships for post-secondary education or training.



300 grocery bundles delivered supporting over 600 children in our community.

SERVICES OVERVIEW

Child Welfare	2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023
Investigations Completed	806	853	706	648	628
Ongoing Child Protection Cases Closed	141	145	121	99	74
Children in Care at Year End	114	93	94	97	70
Referrals to Community Links	229	335	407	398	473
Total Adoptions Completed	4	6	6	6	1
New Foster Homes Approved	2	2	0	25	31
Children in Kinship Service at Year End	36	46	23	24	20

Developmental Services	2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022	2022 - 2023
Adult Behaviour Program Service Recipients of Service	111	89	70	76	76
Adult Protective Service Recipients of Service	218	229	179	212	206
Adult Residential Service Recipients of Service	48	54	55	60	61
Children's Service Coordination Recipients of Service	439	483	459	524	586
Complex Special Needs Program Recipients of Service	16	18	17	17	17
Coordinated Service Planning Recipients of Service	46	78	64	77	113
Children's Behaviour Service Recipients of Service	193	195	117	128	203
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Recipients of Service	23	40	36	49	60
Infant and Child Development Program Recipients of Service	126	177	88	188	175
Adult Urgent Response Service Recipients of Service	19	26	10	20	25

FINANCIAL NUMBERS 2022 - 2023

Program	Revenue	Expenses
Child Welfare	\$12,963,453	\$13,249,928
Developmental Services	\$12,341,536	\$12,397,936
EarlyON	\$380,473	\$349,460
Other Funds	\$109,327	\$119,109
Supervised Access	\$167,590	\$167,590
Trust Funds	\$581,925	\$532,184
Capital	0	\$202,582
Total	\$26,544,304	\$27,018,789
Budget	\$26,504,863	\$26,504,863
Variance	\$39,441	\$513,926



Contact

77 Mary Street, Suite 100
Pembroke, Ontario
K8A 5V4
613-735-6866

114 Argyle Street South
Renfrew, Ontario
K7V 1T5
613-432-4821

464 Isabella Street
Pembroke, Ontario
K8A 5T9
613-735-6866

www.fcsrenfrew.on.ca