



OUR SHARED VISION

**Safe and
thriving children
and youth**

**Empowered
families**

**Stronger
communities**

ANNUAL REPORT to the Community

2016–2017

Catholic
Children's Aid Society
of Hamilton



Société d'aide à l'enfance
catholique
de Hamilton

The Year in Review

REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Providing high quality service which is responsive to the needs of children, youth and families is essential to delivering on the promise of the Vision and Mission of the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton (CCASH). Our Anti-Oppressive Practice (AOP) approach is foundational to this work. It is CCASH's goal that children and youth stay with their families, where possible. Family court is used only when required. CCASH continues to increase its efforts on 'family finding' and ensuring children and youth in care achieve permanency. We continue with our key strategies of strengthening and supporting families through admission prevention activities, emphasizing family-based care for children who require it, and supporting our children and youth in care to be successful. CCASH continues to work with our community partners to advocate and develop innovative programming focused on positive outcomes for our most vulnerable Catholic children, youth and families.

This year we continued our preparation for the implementation of the new Child Protection Information Network (CPIN), a single enterprise provincial database to be introduced at CCASH in April 2018. Once fully implemented, CPIN will allow for the timely sharing of information and data among all CASs with regards to children who have, or who are currently receiving services. CPIN will help the provincial government oversee the system by providing consistent data on demand, for services, costs and outcomes.

This past fall, the Government of Ontario introduced Bill 89, Supporting Children, Youth and Families Act, 2016. Bill 89 calls for changes to the child welfare system across Ontario and will help to ensure we provide the best possible services to the children, youth, and families in our care. One of the highlights this year for CCASH was a visit from Minister of Child and Youth Services, Michael Coteau in February 2016. With respect to Bill 89, Minister Coteau stated, "The most important part of the legislation is that the child will be at the centre of decision-making." CCASH welcomes this fundamental shift for the provincial system, a shift we believe has been a part of our culture for many years. We pride ourselves on being a faith based organization that listens, seeks input, and welcomes change to help meet the needs of our Catholic community. We look forward to working with the Minister's office, our partners and stakeholders as we continue to work to build on a system that puts the voices of our children at the forefront of our work across Ontario.

We remain committed to working with the Ministry of Child and Youth Services (MCYS) and the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) on a collective "Call to Action" working towards an improved and culturally responsible system provincially, keeping children safe and ensuring their well-being is at the heart of our work and decisions. The Call to Action plan aims to deliver the best outcomes for families and create a stronger, more efficient and effective child welfare system.

This year the Board of Directors, as part of its work plan, updated its bylaw, governance policies and practices. The goal was to bring our governance model in line with that recommendation by OACAS and to ensure alignment with the new Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act.

We would like to thank all those involved in building a safe and strong community for our children – our community partners for their support and strong relationships; our foster and kin caregivers who look after our children; our many volunteers and donors who contribute in varied ways to the lives of children and youth; and to our dedicated staff who work tirelessly to ensure children are safe. It is often said that we can't do this work alone. We rely on the support of and partnership with many others. It is important to acknowledge the support of the Ministry, in particular, our Program Supervisor Kyra Augustyn and the Diocese of Hamilton, especially, his Excellency Bishop Crosby.

Three board members will be stepping down from the board. CCASH acknowledges and thanks Father Peter Ciallella, Ms. Santina Moccio, and Mr. Jérôme Pépin for their contributions in advancing CCASH's strategic objectives.



John Lewis, Chair of the Board, CCASH



Rocco Gizzarelli, Executive Director, CCASH

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY OF HAMILTON

John Lewis, President
Anna Maria Brownlow,
1st Vice President
Larry Di Ianni,
2nd Vice President

Laurence Kavanagh,
Treasurer
Santina Moccio, Treasurer
(to Dec. 2016)
David Hennick, Secretary

Jackie Bajus
Father Peter Ciallella (to
June 2017)
Dr. Cynthia Cupido
Rosaline Dean

Dr. Marilyn Gregus
Antonietta (Toni) Kovach
Deborah Lancaster
Jérôme Pépin (to Apr. 2017)
John Spatazzo

MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP

The work of the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton (CCASH) is all about saving lives! I've said it before and I will continue to say it. The dignity of each person is a fundamental tenet of the Church, and the work of CCASH assures that such dignity is experienced by every child entrusted to their care. I have met young adults who have told me they are "success stories" of CCASH - and indeed they are.

Everyone experiences challenging times in life. Children need extra help to get through such times. That is when the staff of CCASH "lean in" to help children find their way through the challenges.

CCASH works hard to keep families together, to keep families strong. To do so, families occasionally need the help of foster parents. The time and attention provided by foster parents helps children through the upsetting times that their families might be experiencing. And when necessary, adoptive parents can provide the stability that gives a child a foundation for a full and happy life.

CCASH puts attention where it belongs - on children and young adults. They are the future - and they have everything to offer the world! I honour the work of CCASH staff! Never stop doing what you do so well!




**Most Reverend
Douglas
Crosby, OMI,
Bishop of
Hamilton**

We are pleased to report the Board achieved a balanced budget. Our service strategies and financial stewardship resulted in quality services for children and families. As we look to the next year we remain committed to ensuring children, youth and families receive excellent services and that we demonstrate accountability for our work through performance indicators and the achievement of positive outcomes.

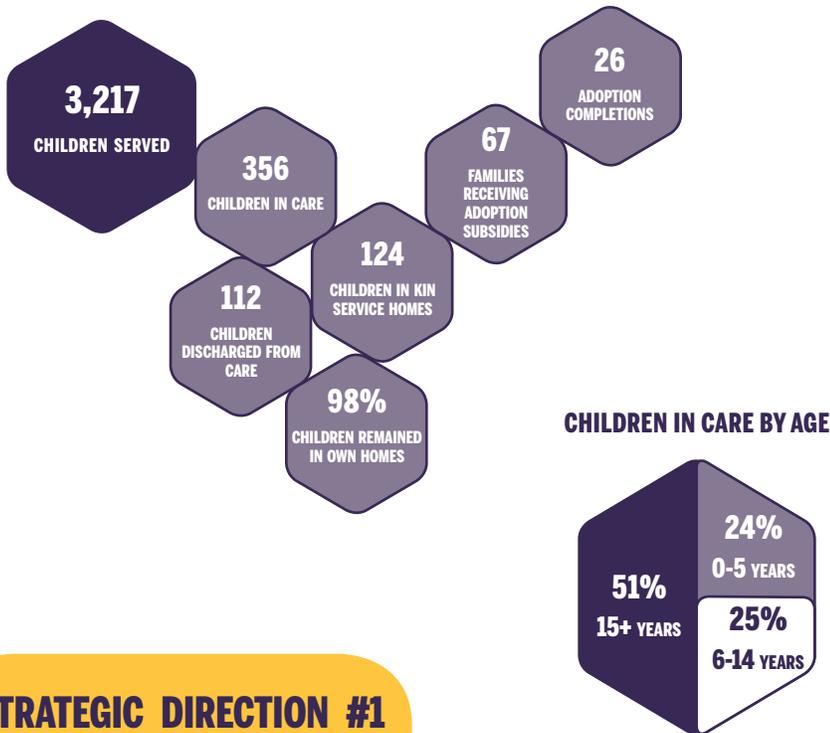
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2017

2016/2017

Amounts received from the province of Ontario	25,634,256
Other revenue	1,907,712
Total revenue	27,541,968
Salaries and wages	12,282,368
Benefits	3,376,731
Travel	750,687
Training and recruitment	95,085
Building occupancy	402,615
Professional services - non-client related	278,558
Program expenses	637,026
Boarding rate payments	6,434,076
Professional services - client related	468,294
Client personal needs	792,607
Health and related	445,568
Financial assistance provided	34,885
Promotion / publicity	85,661
Office administration	140,830
Targeted subsidy	360,070
Minor capital	219,557
Other	259,480
Technology	215,238
Total expenditures	27,279,336
Excess revenue over expenditures before amortization	262,632
Amortization	104,700
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expense	157,932

Our Mission and Accomplishments

Guided by Catholic values and teachings we serve children and youth within the Hamilton community by protecting their safety and well-being, strengthening their families and nurturing lifelong relationships. To achieve this, we pursue 4 strategic directions.



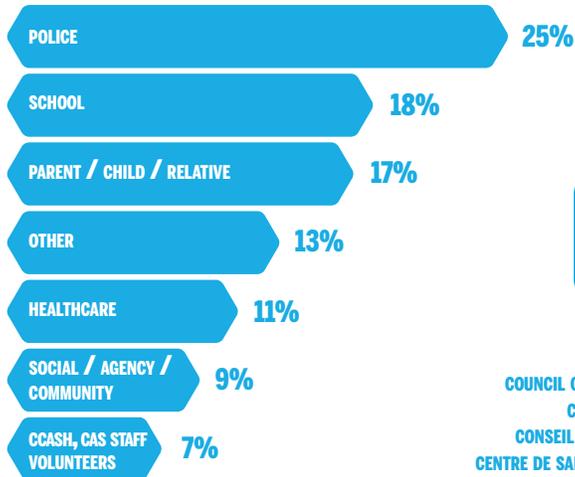
7	YOUTH WHO ATTENDED THE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
21	YOUTH WHO ATTENDED LIFE SKILLS CLASS
8	WEEKLY AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO ATTENDED THE DROP-IN PROGRAM
26	CHILDREN WHO ATTENDED OR ENROLLED IN POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION
208	CHILDREN ATTENDING CAMP
23	CHILDREN IN THE TUTORING PROGRAM
2	NUMBER OF SCHOLARSHIPS
14	NUMBER OF BURSARIES

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #1 Brighter futures

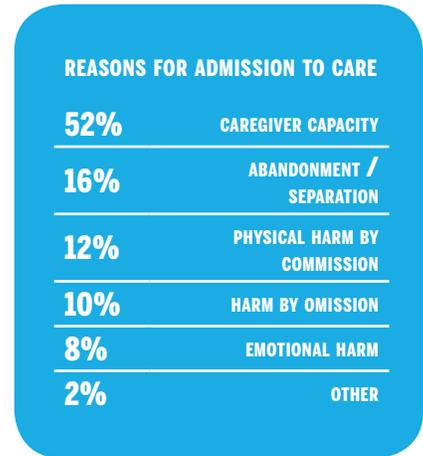
STRATEGIC DIRECTION #2 Excellence in all we do



INVESTIGATION REFERRAL SOURCES



- COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS
- CONSEIL SCOLAIRE VIAMONDE
- CONSEIL SCOLAIRE CATHOLIQUE MON AVENIR
- CENTRE DE SANTÉ COMMUNAUTAIRE HAMILTON-NIAGARA
- HAMILTON POLICE SERVICES
- HAMILTON WENTWORTH CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
- FAMILY HEALTH TEAM
- LYNWOOD-CHARLTON HALL
- CHILD ADVOCACY AND ASSESSMENT PROGRAM
- DAWN PATROL
- THRIVE



STRATEGIC DIRECTION #3 Public and stakeholder confidence

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #4 Passionate and prepared team

PROGRAMS THAT INVOLVE VOLUNTEERS

- YOUTH DROP-IN
- YOUTH LIFE SKILLS
- TUTOR PROGRAM
- VOLUNTEER DRIVING
- SPECIAL EVENTS
- BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND ITS COMMITTEES

TOTAL KILOMETRES DRIVEN BY VOLUNTEER DRIVERS



Supporting Children, Youth and Families

WHAT WE'RE DOING TO SUPPORT CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN FINDING LIFE-LONG CONNECTIONS

Permanency

Achieving permanency for children and youth whose families are child-welfare involved is a central commitment of CCASH. While permanency is most often achieved by strengthening the capacity of the birth family to safely and securely raise their own children, some children require alternative plans. CCASH is committed to achieving permanency for children and youth within their own kinship and community networks wherever possible.



The kinship unit assesses and supports kin who come forward to care for children and youth as kinship foster parents, or in kinship service arrangements. Kin include grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, teachers and close family friends. Increasingly, where adoption is the permanent plan, children are being adopted by someone known to them, either by kin or by their foster parents. CCASH continues to rely on committed foster parents who provide both short term, and in some cases, long term care to children and youth, as well as the many families who come forward from our community seeking to adopt.

Permanency planning involves the concurrent consideration of all the various options available, and the achievement of the most legally and emotionally secure permanency plan available to each child and youth in our care. As a result, CCASH has

significantly reduced the number of children under the age of 12 whose long term plan is foster care, while continuing to reduce the number of children in care overall.

Practicing Achievable Collaboration and Efficiency (PACE)

PACE is a model of service that improves communication and facilitates sharing of information. It encourages foster and birth parents to meet, enabling relationship building across CCASH, increasing trust, and improving working together.

An introductory meeting for members of the child's Caregiver Team occurs within 7 days. The foster parent is encouraged to drive the child to the first access visit. After that, there are joint visits at 30 days and 6 months, including all team members.

Parents find this approach helps them to provide better care for their children. Comments include:

- "Liked meeting the person who was going to take care of my baby, I had less anxiety when we could put a face to a name."
- "Appreciated being able to text foster mom to ask questions about my baby."
- "Thankful that my baby was well taken care of in foster care, we have heard bad stories about foster care."

An initial PACE evaluation highlighted the following outcomes:

- Children returned to parent earlier
- Fewer judgments between parents and workers
- Children Services Worker assigned within 48 hours or sooner
- Better communication/working relationship
- Increased collaboration.

Family Finding

The Family Finding model offers methods and strategies to locate and engage relatives of children living in out-of-home care. The goal of Family Finding is to connect each child with a family member, so that every child may benefit from the lifelong connections that only a family can provide.

CCASH has a defined position in Family Finding that is embedded in the Kinship Unit. Intensive search and engagement techniques identify family members and other adults close to a child in foster care or a child who may be admitted to care. The family members are provided opportunities to participate in developing and carrying out a plan for the emotional and legal permanency of the child.

Working with families to keep children and youth safe in their own homes is always our primary goal. To support this we use Family Finding and kin searching to enhance our admission prevention initiatives. When necessary, we may need to admit children and youth into care, however, with more responsive family finding, family connections are identified in the earlier stages of our involvement.

This model offers us a pathway that will ensure that children have strong and stable connections to their communities and have life-long relationships with a caring and nurturing family or community member.



WHAT WE'RE DOING TO SUPPORT FAMILIES AND KEEP CHILDREN AND YOUTH SAFE

Spiritual Care

Through our Spiritual Care initiatives, we strengthen the culture of care and community that has been nurtured here. Our Ethics Resource Group has been formed to develop greater clarity in implementing our vision and values as a Catholic agency in the morally complex world of child welfare. We have begun a new and exciting collaboration with our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion staff that grounds anti-oppressive practice training in the social teaching of the Catholic faith. We have also formed a Spirituality Resource Committee to help us discern new initiatives in self-care and spiritual formation appropriate to the needs of a religiously diverse staff. We are beginning to explore ways in which we can better identify, track and address the spiritual needs of our children, youth and families.

Our Board, management, staff and resource parents are truly amazing people who are coping with ever-increasing levels of pressure and stress in their work. One of our top priorities is to support them in meeting the many challenges they face in their work. By communicating the love and compassion of God in small ways with each other, we trust that the Spirit of Jesus will be there to lead us and guide us in our mission to serve the children and families of our city.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The child welfare sector is under increasing demand to provide equitable and inclusive services for all, while increasing accountability and improving performance. To help in achieving this, the Anti-Oppressive Practice Committee implemented Employee Resource Groups (ERGs).

ERGs are independent, voluntary groups of employees who share common interests. The objective of the ERG approach is to create and foster an inclusive environment in which staff members feel empowered, challenged and supported in developing and maximizing their personal potential and value to the organization.

Five ERGs were established in August 2016 that are consistent with current provincial focus and initiatives:

- French Language Resource Group
- African-Canadian Resource Group
- Indigenous Resource Group
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Two-Spirited, Plus Resource Group (LGBTQ2S+)
- Newcomer-Immigrants Resource Group

All resource groups are governed by principles that ensure inclusivity and good governance, and are open to both self-identified members of the group and allies. Each group creates a mission statement and annual objectives that support CCASH's mission and further its anti-oppressive practice objectives.

ERGs can be resources for employees they represent and a voice to surface issues and areas for improvement for working more effectively with children, youth and families. Creating a sense of community and belonging, ERGs can help employees engage and gain support for each other, foster professional networks and enhance resource development within CCASH. ERGs are known to build a creative, innovative work atmosphere that supports a diverse workforce and work environment, that respects individuals and their contributions, regardless of their backgrounds. (*Canadian Centre for Diversity & Inclusion, Employee Resource Groups, July 2015*)



Homelessness Partnership Initiative

This initiative provides youth who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless, with supports and services in finding and maintaining housing. This includes youth formerly involved with child welfare. The program is funded federally in partnership with the City of Hamilton, with CCASH as the lead agency that administers the funding and financial reporting. Other partner agencies are: Good Shepherd Youth Services, Wesley Youth Housing, and Living Rock Ministries.

Parenting With Love

Parenting With Love is an eight week evidence-informed, attachment-based series suitable for parents with children of all ages, offered in partnership with Hamilton Public Health. The program provides parents/caregivers the skills required to practice self-compassion, care and regulation that result in positive outcomes in a healthy parent-child relationship. The program is currently running consecutively at CCASH, co-facilitated by the Family Resource Department. The success of the program has resulted in it being offered to foster parents, adoptive families and staff.

Gratitude and Grace

We are very grateful for the kindness shown by so many people in our community who help us support the families, children and youth in our care. You make a positive difference in the lives of so many. Your contributions enable us to support those who need help, resulting in miracles happening every day.

2016 Serendipity Auction

Each November, CCASH hosts our annual Serendipity Auction which raises money to help our children and youth reach their full potential. Last year, over 450 guests attended the "Joy of Christmas" Serendipity Auction. It was our 27th annual event – a night of fun, good food, raffles, silent auction, grand prize draw, and entertainment.

CCASH will be hosting the 28th annual Serendipity Auction on Thursday, November 23, 2017. This year's theme is the "Nutcracker".



2016 Dr. Peder Larsen "Care Beyond Belief" Golf Tournament

Once again, CCASH was proud to host our annual golf tournament at Copetown Woods Golf & Country Club. The day honoured our friend Dr. Peder Larsen who gave countless volunteer hours to CCASH. The tournament brought many people together for a fun day of golf and friendship, while raising money for the youth served by CCASH. This year's tournament is scheduled for Tuesday, September 12, 2017.

2016 Christmas Hamper Program

Through the kindness of schools, churches, businesses and individuals, CCASH was able to provide Christmas hampers to over 500 families. We are truly grateful for a wonderful community that comes together to help make a positive difference in the lives of those we serve. The support we received reminds us of the true meaning of Christmas and the giving spirit of the Hamilton community.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR MAJOR SUPPORTERS IN 2016 ...

Ancaster Self Storage Inc.	HGK Partners LLP
Attridge Transportation	Ippolito Fruit & Produce Ltd.
860 Dental	McCallum Sather Architects
Beatrice Kemp	Norstar Windows & Doors
Bergmanis Preyra LLP	Ruth Larsen
Carol Larsen & Family	Ross & McBride LLP
Crystal Homes	RBC Dominion Securities
Desjardins Financial	RBC Royal Bank
Diocese of Hamilton	Spallacci Group
Dr. Valerie Nicholson	Taylor Chrysler Dodge
Ersilia DiNardo & Family	White Rabbit Treatment Homes
Grant Thornton LLP	Urbancore Developments
Hamilton Halton General Contractors Association	

The Final Word ... from Victoria

The Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton has helped me so much over the years by making my dreams possible. Because of the constant support and youth-focused programs, I was able to complete my post-secondary degree at McMaster University. I have always been grateful for my worker and everyone who assisted in breaking the barrier that many foster children face. The emotional and financial support was so beneficial and helped me get to where I am today.

In fact, without it, I doubt that higher education would have been an option for me.

I will forever be thankful to CCASH and all they have done for me.

I am currently employed at CCASH and will continue to work hard every day to be a role model and a mentor to a brighter future for our youth.

