

ANNUAL  
REPORT

2020  
2021

# EMBRACING CHANGE

*A new path forward*



**Family and Children's  
Services** OF FRONTENAC,  
LENNOX and ADDINGTON  
Safety. Comfort. Hope. **Together.**





# Embracing Change

It was a year of remarkable change in almost every aspect of our lives. Families, communities, and many of our partners faced enormous challenges as we adapted to a new way of living day-to-day. The pandemic required our agency to pivot, analyze and in some cases, redirect our energies towards a proactive plan to support families in need. Some aspects of our service model may have changed, but our core mission always stayed front and centre; focus on the wellbeing of children and help families and kids in crisis. We are committed to hearing the voice of the people we serve and learn more about their experiences. Through this collaborative partnership, we hope to learn and grow in the work we do.

We are here to **listen,**  
**support** and  
**serve.**

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Family and Children's Services of Frontenac, Lennox and Addington honours and celebrates these traditional lands as a gathering place of the Original Peoples and their Ancestors. We recognize the longer history of these territories that predates the establishment of the European Colonies. We recognize since time immemorial the roots of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee in these territories and the significant contributions of all Métis and First Peoples from other Nations across Turtle Island that have been and are here today.

Indigenous Nations of Turtle Island have had unique practices, values, approaches, and knowledge around raising healthy and thriving children and youth. We acknowledge these practices and the strength and resilience of Indigenous families, communities, and Nations. We recognize the colonial approach to child welfare causes harm to all Indigenous Peoples and communities, and we are open to continuous learning as we strive to change this approach with humility, authenticity, and honouring spirit.



# Welcome

This annual report captures a year in our agency like no other. Like many of you, we adapted to a new way of interacting with the world. As Board Chair and Executive Director, we are proud and humbled by the enormous effort we witnessed as community partners, agency employees and the families we service, gathered together to support each other during the pandemic. It wasn't easy. Change often requires an enormous amount of tenacity, perseverance and most of all, patience. As we all dug in and navigated new territory, something started to emerge. New opportunities began to present themselves in remarkable ways. Like so many other organizations, we challenged ourselves to rethink old ways of doing things. What emerged was a chance to embrace a new path forward.

In recent years, we have been transparent about our commitment to change our approach to the work we do. The wellbeing of children and youth has always been our top priority, but we have acknowledged our role in contributing to a culture of systemic racism and other forms of oppression. We thought we knew better. Not anymore. We are being clear about our desire to change, listen, support, and serve. Our main focus is now on amplifying the diverse voices of children, youth, and families. We have charted a new path forward this year with our equity work and outreach to First Nations, Inuit and Métis Bands and communities. We are having ongoing conversations with partners on equity, diversity and inclusion issues and inviting them to share with us how we can best support families together.

Listening is key but so is action. That is why we launched our first-ever Environmental Equity Scan. The goal is to engage with employees, board members and the diverse communities at large including equity seeking groups, to learn ways we can magnify their voices. We want to understand the strengths and gaps in the agency and how we work. We will use the feedback and insight to continue adapting how we provide services, so we better meet the needs of our diverse communities.

It was an important year for us as our new dedicated First Nations Inuit and Métis service team was up and running at full strength along side our first-ever Indigenous Cultural Coordinator. The Kewaywin Circle, an Indigenous Circle that fosters support and guidance, continues its important work advising the agency on its commitment to Truth and Reconciliation.

This past year has provided many of us with the chance to "place new steps for change". We are ready to seize that opportunity with children, youth and families and brave a new path forward together.

Warm wishes,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sonia Gentile".

Sonia Gentile



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "N. J. Barrett".

Norma Jean Barrett

“The horizon leans  
**forward** offering you  
space to place new  
steps of **change**”.

- Maya Angelou



## OUR ORIGINS

The first Canadian Children's Aid Society was started in Toronto in 1891 by John J. Kelso with the goal of protecting children. Between 1891 and 1912, 60 Children's Aid Societies were formed across Ontario.

In 1894, Children's Aid Society of the City of Kingston and County of Frontenac began operations. In 1899, Lennox and Addington Family and Children's Services was created. On April 1, 2012, both organizations amalgamated to form Family and Children's Services of Frontenac, Lennox and Addington.

## FAST FACTS

 **212** *staff*

 **54** *volunteers*

 **56** *foster homes*

 **5** *locations*

Kingston, Napanee, Sharbot Lake,  
Northbrook and Sydenham







## *Calls to action*

One early spring day, Laura Maracle stood proudly on the lawn of the Division Street office, surrounded by a group of eager staff members, as she talked about the power of drumming circles and traditional songs. It's just one of many learning opportunities Laura has organized since joining the agency as a Cultural Coordinator. The new position is part of our organization's commitment within the larger context of the Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action. The intent is to include the Indigenous voice and perspective regarding policies and decision making. The Cultural Coordinator and creation of the First Nation, Inuit, Metis (FNIM) team supports the crucial work surrounding Truth and Reconciliation. Laura partners regularly with the Kewaywin Circle to provide services that are inclusive of the Indigenous experience while acknowledging the multi-generational trauma and harm caused in the past. (The Kewaywin Circle was formed in June 2019 with the intent to connect with and seek counsel from Indigenous community members in the KFL&A area on how best to (re)build and strengthen relationships between Family and Children's services and Indigenous peoples). The agency's goal is to move towards changing the way in which child welfare services are delivered to FNIM families by reducing the number of children in care and offering support to FNIM communities to care for their own children. Providing support for staff with creating cultural plans for children and youth that are in receipt of services is also a top priority. Laura and the Kewaywin Circle also work closely with the Queers and Allies committee helping the agency understand the multiple sectionality of identity that exists to make us all unique. One such example of the two groups working together included a two-spirit pronoun workshop for staff facilitated by members from the Kewaywin Circle.

Nothing **about you**  
**without you.**

There is much more to do. A priority moving forward is to nurture stronger connections within the Indigenous community to recruit Indigenous caregivers and learning for non-Indigenous foster parents. We are also committed to ongoing work internally to review agency practices and policies to better support cultural services.



## OUR VISION

We believe the best place for kids to grow up is with their own family, within their own culture(s) and communities. That's why our primary goal is to keep families in crisis together. Foster care will always be a last resort and temporary as we search for permanency and connection to family and community. If children cannot be returned to their parents, we first look to extended family and family friends and only then do we consider adoption and customary care. We'll preserve and promote the culture and community of the child's family. They will know where they come from and who they are connected to. Our goal is for every child in our care to experience a safe and nurturing family.



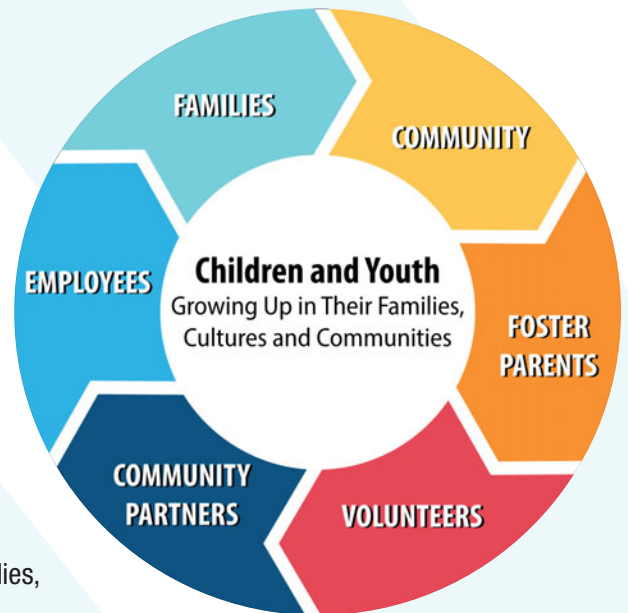
# OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

## Guiding Principles

Nothing about You without You and Your people...

Inspired and Inspiring learners...

Wellness in every step of the journey



### » Family Engagement

- Safety and wellbeing through a collaboration with families, their networks, and community services.

### » Connections and Opportunities

- Children and youth being socially connected, having a sense of belonging, and equipped for a promising future.

### » Culture of Wellness and Growth

- A learning organization that promotes wellness and professional growth.

### » Accountable and Transparent

- Take responsibility for our work, relationships, and results.
- Voices of those we serve and employ evident in our evaluation.
- Publicly report our results.

### » Anti-racism/Anti-Oppression

- We acknowledge that racism, anti-black racism, and social inequality negatively impact outcomes.
- We will be guided by our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusivity.

### » Truth and Reconciliation

- We acknowledge that our colonial approach causes harm to FNIM families and communities.
- We pledge to be guided by FNIM communities as we move forward in humility and hope.



# Equity in action

Watching Msenwa Mweneake talk to a group of high school students about their personal experiences is truly inspiring. Our Manager of Equity and Transformation is exceptional when it comes to connecting with people. What's his secret? The ability to listen. Msenwa and the Limestone District School Board have forged a new partnership establishing a Black Advisory Committee with the goal to engage members of the Black community. This is just one of many examples of charting a new path forward for the agency and the people it serves. The discussions and feedback from this new advisory committee will help inform our equity work as we reevaluate best practices.

Our focus on diversity and equity is deeply rooted in our Strategic Plan. We started with three employee resource groups: the Anti-Racism/Anti Oppression Committee, the Anti-Black Racism Staff Coalition and the Queer and Allies Committee, that engaged with each other on ways to improve our workplace culture and encourage open discussion and collaboration on new ideas.

Msenwa's position as a Manager of Equity and Transformation is a recently created role within the agency, and it speaks to our commitment to change. We recognized a pressing need to better serve our diverse communities. When the goal is transformation, it requires making change from the inside out. That is why, under Msenwa's leadership, we launched a major initiative called the Environmental Equity Scan. The purpose of the scan is to engage with employees, board members and the diverse communities to better understand the strengths and gaps in our work. We are asking for help in evaluating our progress to ensure we are becoming a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive workplace at all levels. This is more than just a survey. These are first steps along our path to change. We will be sharing the results of the Environmental Equity Scan with the community in 2022. We will focus on our commitment to hearing the voice of the people we serve. Our goal is to engage with all communities with an openness to truly hear their experience and learn from it. There is much equity work to do but there is a sense of excitement as we embrace our new path to engage with staff, families, and communities in creative and innovative ways.



# Delivering services in new ways

Our work is rooted in personal connections with families. In the early weeks of the pandemic, we relied heavily on technology to help maintain crucial relationships with those we help and serve. Cell phones, tablets, and other devices were rolled out to stay in touch. As the situation evolved, we quickly pivoted to a hybrid model that allowed safe, in-person visits and virtual check-ins. Using feedback from our recipients, we continued making adjustments with an emphasis on flexibility. Our connections with partner agencies have always been important but navigating the layers of COVID-19 was made easier by expanding our collaboration with other organizations. For example, with the increased emphasis on mental health awareness during the pandemic, we reached out to Providence Care for new training for our staff involving a wide variety of issues including working with people with borderline personality disorder. Plans are underway to survey service recipients about our pandemic response with the hope of maintaining some of the new ideas that worked most effectively.



## BY THE NUMBERS



**8237** families received agency services



**1 in 5** calls to our referral center does not require an investigation and moves to a community partner



Kin service placements are up **21%** this year and 68% from 2019



Number of children in care has dropped by **44%** since 2016



Caregiver Capacity make up **18%** of calls to the agency





## *The voice of youth*

As we continue to search for ways to improve our work through a more inclusive and respectful lens, the focus on youth services has become an integral part of the story. The Ontario government made a significant update to youth eligibility in 2020. Continued Care and Support for Youth (CCSY) is a service that is currently available for youth 18 years of age. These services are being revised to move away from an aged-based discharge to a needs-based, youth informed service delivery model. The government has further announced an extension on the moratorium on aging out of these services until September 30, 2022. Developing a new model that is more responsive to the needs of young people in and from care will occur over the next year with new programming announcements expected prior to the fall of 2022.

At our agency, there is also a growing emphasis on connecting youth with each other. We received thoughtful feedback suggesting youth were looking to spend time with peers who may have experienced similar struggles and successes within their lives. The bottom line? Youth wanted to learn from youth. With that in mind, we hired a postsecondary student in a culinary program to lead discussions and demonstrations centred around meal planning and kitchen skills. The event allowed for youth-led planning and peer-to-peer knowledge sharing. The work continues to create more opportunities for youth mentorship with young people in charge.



# YOUTH SPOTLIGHT—Charles

Growing up, Charles didn't always feel comfortable in an academic setting. As a youth in care, the 18-year-old worried he wasn't the same as his peers. With the desire to help others who may be struggling with the same doubts, Charles was intrigued when he heard about FACSFLA's new Educational Success working group. The focus of the committee is to find ways to improve retention rates in postsecondary. As the working group took shape, it was clear a youth perspective would be critical to unpack the complicated issue of why more students weren't graduating from their postsecondary programs. Two teenagers were invited to join as researchers and key team members. Charles was eager to contribute to improving outcomes for youths in college and university. He also liked the idea of working with people with rich academic

backgrounds. Charles is currently focusing on a literature review for the committee. He's examining other relevant studies that highlight the educational success of youth in care. He also provides a voice from a youth's perspective when research methods for the project are being developed. Charles is in the midst of his own academic journey as a university biology student.

“Personally,  
I hope this work leads to a  
**comprehensive  
understanding**  
of youth's needs”.





# OUR FINANCIALS

Latest data is from fiscal year 2020-2021, which ended in March 2021.

REVENUE	2020-2021	%
Province of Ontario	\$27,173,559	93%
Recoveries and Income	\$1,926,367	7%
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$29,099,926</b>	<b>100%</b>

EXPENSES	2020-2021	%
Salaries and Benefits	\$16,557,679	57%
Boarding (Residential) Costs	\$3,465,073	12%
Client Personal Needs	\$667,836	2%
Client Health and Related	\$125,789	0%
Client Professional Services	\$1,493,742	5%
Training and Recruitment	\$268,583	1%
Client Programs & Financial Assistance	\$1,389,793	5%
Building Occupancy	\$1,398,094	5%
Transportation related to agency service	\$260,135	1%
Administration Expenses	\$1,218,123	4%
Amortization of Capital Assets	\$1,019,479	4%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$27,864,326</b>	<b>96%</b>

Provincial Funding adjustments \$0

**Excess of revenue over expenses\*** **\$1,235,600**

\*Includes adjustments for non-cash items.





## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2020-2021**

**Dan Corbett**  
*Past Chairperson*

**Norma Barrett**  
*Chairperson*

**Daphne Mayer**  
*Vice-Chairperson*

**Darren Seymour**  
*Secretary*

**Christa Walsh**  
*Treasurer*

**Dr. Kate Brennan**

**Elizabeth Coates**

**Matthew Funnell**

**Dr. Sarosh Khalid-Khan**

**Constantin Mugenga**

**Dr. Mona Rahman**

**Paul Smith**





# *A new path forward*

We are committed to changing how we approach our work. Daily, we challenge ourselves to do better. The voice of children, youth and families are front and centre in all we do. Never before have we been so focused on honouring and learning from the people we serve. This will require intention, focus and accountability. We've learned some hard lessons in the last 125 years. Nothing about you without you and your people; these words are now woven into our agency's culture. We are embracing change and we will do it together.

*Follow us on social media and stay connected with us!*



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Services**  
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LENNOX and ADDINGTON  
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