



2014
2015

Annual Report

Catholic
Children's Aid Society
of Hamilton



Catholique
Société d'aide à l'enfance
de Hamilton

Report from the President and Executive Director



GIULIA GAMBACORTA
President

The past year has been one of many accomplishments at the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton. This report will highlight a sample of these accomplishments brought about through the work of our dedicated staff in fulfilling our mission.

Building on our strategic priority "parents are the best parents they can be", the work of Protection Services enabled over 90% of our children and youth to remain safe within their families while support was provided to their parents. This resulted in a small percentage of youth needing alternate caregivers.



ERSILIA DINARDO
Executive Director

Our active kinship program enabled children and youth to remain within their communities and sustain important relationships. During the past year 132 children and youth were cared for by a trusted member of their family, church or community circle.

In helping children and youth achieve permanency, 29 adoptions were finalized and 18 custody orders were completed.

During the past year we reinforced the critical role our resource families play in providing a safe and nurturing environment for children in care through the "Strengthening the Child Caregiver's Team" project. This project brought staff and resource parents together, reaffirming and enhancing their partnership in meeting the needs of children in care.

Preparing our young people for adulthood and enabling them to become contributing members of our community is an ongoing organizational priority. We completed a review of our programs to ensure our young people are successfully transitioning from foster care to adulthood.

Recommendations from this review guided the further development of some of our programs, including teaching life skills in areas such as financial management, meal preparation and health care. We continue to offer a weekly drop-in program for young adults who are living independently; providing them with an opportunity to come together, share a meal, reflect spiritually and support each other in their life's journey.

We proudly supported more than 20 young people in the Society's care who continue their education in post secondary programs and skills training.

In striving for service excellence we measured our progress and results in several different ways, including through the voices of the children, youth and families we serve. We sought feedback regarding their experiences with the agency, which tells us how we are doing in achieving our goals, particularly the "Brighter Futures" outcomes. Through our Balanced Scorecard, we monitored specific performance and outcome measures for each of the strategic priorities, including provincial Performance Indicators.

Our commitment to accountability and transparency included preparing for public reporting of provincial performance indicators which will lead to community members becoming more knowledgeable about the work that we do.

Our Information Technology strategy resulted in the successful implementation of several systems and processes building on our objective of access from anywhere, at any time, from any device.

We celebrated the CCASH Team, recognizing the value of one and the power of many when aligned on purpose.

“It takes a community to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children” is one of the agency’s guiding beliefs. Community partnerships were evident in the majority of our services and programs during the past year, from the Leadership Development camp for youth in partnership with CYO, to protection workers located at Hamilton Police Services, Child Abuse Branch,

twelve Equal Opportunities schools of the HWDCSB, two French Catholic schools of the Centre De Santé Communautaire Hamilton/Niagara and two Family Health Teams. We firmly believe that a community based service model supports the best possible outcomes for the people we serve.

Our strong community ties were evident in the work of the Board of Directors which ensured the perspective and needs of our community were clearly reflected in decision making and policy direction. The Board’s dedication to its community exemplifies a core strength of the Ontario child welfare system - the local governance model.

Our friends and supporters made possible many value-added programs and services. This included a memorable camp experience for 205 children whose families were receiving protection services, post-secondary educational costs for young people in care, responding to families’ emergency needs and

providing sacramental and graduation gifts. As well, 446 families and young people received Christmas hampers. Parents and youth were supported in pursuing their educational goals through our bursary and scholarship program.

Our caring community expressed their commitment to the Society’s work by participating in our annual Serendipity Auction and Peder Larsen Golf Tournament through corporate sponsorships, generous gifts, organizing third party events and by providing many in-kind donations.

The gift of time was evident in the unique and invaluable role of volunteers who support the Society’s work.

The leadership of Bishop Crosby within the Diocese of Hamilton, his ongoing support of our work and his spiritual guidance nurtured and enriched our faith based work.

Much has been achieved together and we look to the future with hope.

Building a Stronger Community Together



Highlights of Retiring Director **Ersilia DiNardo**

Ersilia DiNardo found her life's calling helping vulnerable children and their families. "I felt a deep connection to social justice and wanted to work in a child-focused, faith-based environment," said Ersilia, whose career with the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton started in 1985. She moved into leadership roles and became Executive Director in 2007. Ersilia is retiring on June 30 after 30 years with the agency.

Her contributions have been recognized by everyone from children and families served by the agency to Pope Benedict XVI, who in 2011 granted Ersilia the honour of Dame of

St. Gregory the Great for her dedication and commitment to the Hamilton Diocese and community. This past year the agency, under Ersilia's leadership, was recognized by the Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board with the Award of Distinguished Service to Catholic Education.

While Ersilia will miss her life's work, she says the time is right for retirement. "We have a very dedicated, hard-working team that's passionate about the work they do. The agency is bigger than just one person." Her retirement plans include spending more time with family, travelling and catching up on her reading.

"On behalf of the Board of Directors, the staff, resource parents and volunteers of CCAS of Hamilton I would like to thank Ersilia for everything she has done over the past 30 years," said Giulia Gambacorta, President of the agency's Board of Directors. "We wish her every blessing in her future endeavors and a happy and rewarding retirement."

Ersilia's many contributions included promoting the importance of timely, clinically-based work with families. She achieved a strong community-based service model which resulted in many successful partnerships and enhanced service to families and committed



to actively building capacity for the provision of French language services.

Ersilia supported kinship relationships for children and youth as a permanency option long before Kinship Care and Kinship Services became part of the provincial model for child welfare services in 2006. "She was visionary in her promotion of permanency planning, embedding this concept as a core practice in our agency almost 20 years ago," said longtime friend and colleague Susan Clowes-Chisholm, Manager of Service. "In every leadership role that Ersilia has held, she has been guided by a passion for the work with children and families."

Ersilia has long championed positive educational outcomes and, prior to government support for post-secondary education, she was instrumental in the agency financially supporting all post-secondary education expenses for young people in the society's care.

Ersilia served on numerous regional and provincial bodies, recently completing a two-year term as President of the Local Directors' Section of Ontario Association of Children Aid Societies. "I congratulate Ersilia on a very well-deserved retirement after a notable, longstanding career in child welfare," said Mary Ballantyne, Executive

Director of the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies.

"At a provincial level she played a leadership role in helping the sector come together and move forward on provincial issues. I appreciated her professional collaboration and friendship over the last several years. She can leave knowing she has made a substantial contribution both to individual children and families and to the child welfare system as a whole. I wish her all the best."



Financial Report 2014/2015

REVENUES	2014/2015
Province of Ontario Allocation	25,067,522
Other Revenue	1,734,869
	26,802,391
Salaries & Wages	11,602,090
Benefits	3,290,204
Travel	795,512
Training & Recruitment	105,522
Building Occupancy	421,680
Professional Services - Non Client Related	159,493
Program Expenses	347,894
Boarding Rate Payments	6,957,516
Professional Services - Client Related	441,099
Client Personal Needs	865,341
Health and Related	509,497
Financial Assistance Provided	25,794
Promotion/Publicity	64,037
Office Administration	110,578
Targeted Subsidy	205,200
Miscellaneous	306,356
Technology	279,799
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	26,487,612
Excess Revenue over Expenditures before Amort.	314,779
Amortization	116,874
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenue over Expense	197,905



CCASH Strategic Plan

The Society has concluded the second year of the five year Strategic Plan. The 'Brighter Futures' plan sets a clear direction for the future of the organization and identifies the goals we want to achieve for the children, youth and families we serve.

An important component of the strategic plan implementation was developing projects to address key organizational priorities. The projects chosen were based upon the feedback from stakeholder consultation. Over the past 17 months, over thirty-five staff from across the organization have participated on three project teams. Staff were highly engaged in the projects and worked tirelessly to successfully complete the project goals. The work of these teams is concluding and we are beginning to implement the recommendations. The work of the projects will result in:

- Improved communication and collaboration within the organization
- Enhanced service planning with families, youth and children
- A sustainable learning culture within CCASH

During the past year we have also experienced a full year of reporting results for our Balanced Scorecard. Through our Balanced Scorecard we monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the Strategic Plan. Through a consultative process, 58 performance indicators were selected which measure what we are doing well and where there are opportunities for improvement. Action plans are developed to address any gaps in performance. The Balanced Scorecard results and action plans are presented to the Board of Directors on a quarterly basis and they are reviewed with staff. Examples of performance indicators on our Balanced Scorecard include:

- Satisfaction Scores (parent/child/youth)
- Participation Rates in Planning & Decision Making (parent/child/youth)
- Children in Care in Family Based Placements
- Educational Performance of Children in Care
- Recurrence of Child Protection Concerns
- Number of Client Complaints

In the coming year we will fully implement the recommendations from the three priority projects and identify new projects to embark upon to continue to build on our strategic priorities. We will continue to evaluate the results from our Balanced Scorecard to ensure that we are fulfilling our commitment to service excellence for the families, youth and children we serve.



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2014 – 2015 CCASH Board of Directors

Giulia Gambacorta, President

John Lewis, 1st Vice President

Anna Maria Brownlow, 2nd Vice President

Larry Dilanni, Treasurer

Santina Moccio, Secretary

Dr. Cynthia Cupido

Marni Flaherty

Dr. Marilyn Gregus

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Msgr. Dan Hinsperger

Laurence Kavanagh

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Deborah Lancaster

Sergio Manchia

Jerome Pepin

John Spatazzo