



Our Shared Vision

**Safe and
thriving children
and youth**

**Empowered
families**

**Stronger
communities**

ANNUAL REPORT to the Community

2017-2018

Catholic
Children's Aid Society
of Hamilton



Société d'aide à l'enfance
catholique
de Hamilton

Turning change into opportunity

This past year has seen significant changes at the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton (CCASH) and in the child welfare sector as a whole. In order to continue to provide excellent faith-based child welfare services in Hamilton, we are turning change into opportunity. This means that we are building upon what makes us unique, while continuing to provide excellent service in accordance with the standards set for us by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

The Government of Ontario updated the legislation that governs child welfare across the province this year, introducing the most significant reforms in 30 years. The new Child, Youth and Family Services Act responds to current realities in child welfare, and emphasizes the importance of providing care that is responsive to the physical, emotional, spiritual, mental, developmental, cultural, and linguistic needs and differences of each child. We strongly support this change. However, we are concerned by the removal of the former language that identified religion as one of the specific needs requiring consideration.

OUR SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM:

Karen Perry, Director of Finance
Shelley Wright, Director of Human Resources
Donna Zan, Director of Child Welfare
Trevor Allen, Service Director
Susan Clowes-Chisholm, Service Director (retiring)
Julie Horning, Service Director
Crystal Mark, Manager of Diversity, Inclusion & Equity
Mona Anis, Senior Legal Counsel
Andrey Tsurulnikov, Manager of IT Services

In response to this change, we have developed a Statement of Faith that articulates what it means to us to be a Catholic child welfare society, which you can find at <http://www.hamiltonccas.on.ca/about-ccash/our-faith/>. We strongly believe that faith-based child welfare services, with their holistic focus on mind, body and spirit, have an important contribution to make to the well-being of children, youth and families who interact with the child welfare system.

We have put our commitment to equity, inclusion and empowerment into action in a number of ways:

- pursuit of designation under the French Language Services Act of Ontario, to acknowledge our



Rocco Gizzarelli
Executive Director

ongoing commitment to provide French-language service on an active, permanent basis.

- a commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous communities, including creation of a staff position to provide leadership for our reconciliation work. We supported Ogwadeni:deo, the new Indigenous child welfare society at Six Nations, as they pursued and received their official designation to provide child protection services.
- programming for LGBTQ2S+ youth in care that has been recognized as a best practice.
- participation in the *One Vision One Voice* provincial project to eliminate the disproportionalities and disparities in outcomes faced by African Canadian families in the Ontario child welfare system.
- anti-oppression training for all staff, and the continued development of our Employee Resource Groups to educate and address issues relating to Newcomers, the LGBTQ2S+ community, African Canadians, Indigenous people, and Francophones.

All of this happened while we implemented a new information management system, CPIN (the Child Protection Information Network), that connects us to sister agencies across the province, making Ontario a safer place for children and youth.

I am truly grateful to the professional, compassionate and skilled team of staff, volunteers and colleagues I have the honour of working with to keep children and youth safe and thriving, to empower families, and to strengthen communities.

Empowering families and keeping children and youth safe

As the Director of Child Welfare for CCASH, I oversee all aspects of the child welfare service that we provide to service recipients and the community. In 98% of cases, children remain with their families while we work with their caregivers to help them develop the skills necessary to keep their children safe and increase their well-being. This forms the majority of our work.

When children and youth cannot remain with their families, we ensure they are cared for within their extended families and communities. If this is not possible, they are placed in foster homes or other settings that can meet their individual needs. We work closely with children, youth, their families and their care providers:

- to reflect the child's unique needs and wishes in their plans of care
- to provide care that reflects the child's culture, identity and language
- to connect children and youth to the services and activities they need to thrive
- to strengthen and maintain important relationships through access and openness
- to ensure that they find permanency and stability, where they cannot return home, through adoption or legal custody with kin, foster parents or adoptive parents
- to work with youth who are in care to achieve success in their educational and life goals.



Donna Zan
Director of Child Welfare

In the vast majority of cases, children and youth are able to return to their own families, or remain with extended family or community members. This is our primary

goal and is reflected in the decreasing numbers of children in foster care. We are equally committed to ensuring that the children and youth who require our care have a voice and are well supported.

In addition to this daily work, we addressed these priorities over the past year:

- **Increase in the age of protection** - In January 2018, the Government of Ontario introduced legislation, as part of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, that increases the age of protection from 16 to 18. This means that 16- and 17-year-olds are now able to receive the full range of protection services that we offer. We have developed the SYNC Team (Supporting Youth and their Networks in the Community) to ensure that young people in this age range are well supported.
- **Youth homelessness prevention** - We are the lead agency for the Youth Housing Support Project (YHSP), a project of the Street Youth Planning Collaborative, to reduce youth homelessness and support youth without stable housing. Our project partners are the Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton, Good Shepherd Youth Services, Living Rock Ministries, and Wesley Urban Ministries – Wesley Youth Services. Since the project began in 2015, close to 1,000 youth have obtained and maintained safe and stable housing.
- **Foster recruiting and new webinars** - We are putting a renewed emphasis on the recruitment of foster parents, given the complex needs of children in care and a decline in the number of current foster parents.

Change has truly become the norm in the child welfare system, and I am honoured to work with a staff that embraces change and rises to the many challenges they are handed. They do so much to keep children and youth safe and to empower families in Hamilton.

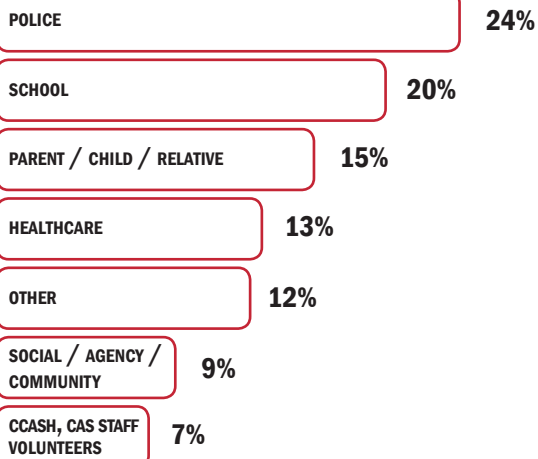


Our Mission and Accomplishments

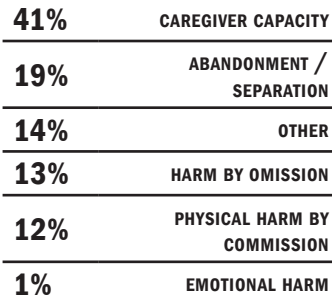
Guided by Catholic values and teachings, we serve and offer bilingual (English/French) services to children, youth, and families within the Hamilton community to protect their safety and well-being, strengthen families and nurture lifelong relationships.

Intake services

INVESTIGATION REFERRAL SOURCES



REASONS FOR ADMISSION TO CARE



2,573

CALLS RECEIVED CONCERNING THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF A CHILD

765

INVESTIGATIONS OPENED

775

INVESTIGATIONS CLOSED

1,900

AFTER HOURS CALLS

Family and children's services

1,247

FAMILIES SERVED

2,927

CHILDREN SERVED

98%

CHILDREN REMAINED IN OWN HOMES WHILE RECEIVING SERVICE

FAMILIES WITH NO RECURRENCE OF CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS WITHIN:

86%

12 MONTHS OF AN INVESTIGATION

83%

12 MONTHS OF ONGOING SERVICE

26

ADOPTION COMPLETIONS

664

FAMILIES WHO RECEIVED ONGOING SERVICES

48

FAMILIES WHO RECEIVED SERVICES IN FRENCH

66

FAMILIES RECEIVING ADOPTION SUBSIDIES

Human and community resources

231

RESOURCE
FAMILIES

153

KIN HOMES

78

FOSTER HOMES

28

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS INCLUDING

COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS
HAMILTON EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS' ABORIGINAL COALITION
CONSEIL SCOLAIRE CATHOLIQUE MON AVENIR
HAMILTON WENTWORTH CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
CENTRE DE SANTÉ COMMUNAUTAIRE HAMILTON-NIAGARA
CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY OF HAMILTON
STREET YOUTH PLANNING COLLABORATIVE
CHILD ADVOCACY AND ASSESSMENT PROGRAM
IMMIGRANTS WORKING CENTRE
HAMILTON POLICE SERVICES
HAMILTON FAMILY HEALTH TEAM
HAMILTON YOUTH POETS
DAWN PATROL
THRIVE

5

CASES REVIEWED
BY THE
COMMUNITY CHILD
ABUSE TEAM

25

PRESENTATIONS
MADE TO THE
COMMUNITY

PROGRAMS THAT INVOLVE VOLUNTEERS

YOUTH DROP-IN
YOUTH LIFE SKILLS
YOUTH TUTORING

VOLUNTEER DRIVING
SPECIAL EVENTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
AND ITS COMMITTEES

186

VOLUNTEERS

15

BOARD
MEMBERS

657,198

KILOMETRES DRIVEN BY
VOLUNTEER DRIVERS

179

STAFF

7

PLACEMENT
STUDENTS

315

CHILDREN IN CARE

CHILDREN IN CARE BY AGE

45%

15+ YEARS

28%

0-5 YEARS

27%

6-14 YEARS

84%

DAYS CHILDREN ARE
IN FAMILY BASED
CARE

47%

CHILDREN
DISCHARGED FROM
CARE WITHIN 12
MONTHS

152

CHILDREN IN KIN
SERVICE HOMES

7.1/8

QUALITY OF THE
CAREGIVER/YOUTH
RELATIONSHIP

112

CHILDREN DISCHARGED
FROM CARE

18

YOUTH WHO ATTENDED LIFE
SKILLS CLASS

9

WEEKLY AVERAGE NUMBER
OF CHILDREN WHO
ATTENDED THE DROP-IN
PROGRAM

21

CHILDREN WHO ATTENDED
OR ENROLLED IN POST-
SECONDARY EDUCATION

202

CHILDREN ATTENDING
CAMP

10

CHILDREN IN THE TUTORING
PROGRAM

4

NUMBER OF SCHOLARSHIPS

14

NUMBER OF BURSARIES

Kinship an important means to permanency for children and youth

When family and community members step forward to provide nurturance and protection to children or young people who need them, the child welfare sector uses the term “kinship”. Kinship is not new, but the active recruitment of kin to care for children is becoming a bigger part of the child protection picture.

In some cases, kin provide support to parents during difficult times; in some cases, kin become full-time caregivers for children. Relying on kin and community builds on the strengths and capacity of extended families and communities to care for their young people, and reduces our reliance on our foster care system. It is the first and preferred option for children and youth, reducing the trauma of separation, maintaining culture and familial connections, and incorporating the children/youth's informal and formal support systems. And it works! Kinship results in stability and in many cases permanency for children and youth, with someone known to them.

The Society currently has 64 kinship families providing care to 90 children. Kin step forward because they are



grandparents, aunts and uncles, godparents, neighbours, friends, coaches, mentors and teachers who know a child, youth or family in need of their help. Many of the kin we work with make significant financial and emotional sacrifices to step forward but the lives of many children and their parents are positively changed because of the love and commitment they provide.

If you know a young person or family in need of support, consider whether you could play a direct role to assist them. You can contact us with any questions.

Reflections on 30 years at CCASH

I walked into CCASH 30 years ago armed with a passion for children, two degrees and what I thought I knew. I was humbled almost immediately by the lived experiences of the children, youth and families we work with and how very much I had to learn.

I have learned that there is no one answer, no one way of knowing or being or understanding that is “right”.

I have learned that this work is filled with stories of courage, strength, resilience and hope.

That even the youngest children have something to say, if we choose to listen.

And that families and children are the best experts in their own lives.

I have seen governments and practices come and go, but what has never changed is that families are greatly impacted by poverty, marginalization and trauma, and that children and youth want to be safe and loved in their own families and communities.

I have learned that families can be built and love can be a choice.

I have learned to lead and to follow, to question and support.

And that CCASH is exactly where I was meant to be.



**Written by
Susan Clowes-Chisholm,
retiring Service Director**

Catholic leadership in action

In 2015 I was granted the opportunity to participate in the Information to Transformation Program for emerging Catholic leaders within Catholic organizations, a two-year program of the Diocese of Hamilton.

Initially I wondered if I was “Catholic enough” to participate, despite having been raised Catholic and proudly working for a Catholic organization. But I knew this was an opportunity I could not turn down, and so I committed to jumping in feet first and allowing myself to be honest and vulnerable throughout the process.

At the first session, there were approximately 40 participants, the majority of whom were principals, teachers and administrators from various school boards within the Diocese. We dove in, digging deep and exploring who we are and what it means to be a Catholic leader. I left the first session drained and filled with questions.

We heard from various extraordinary Catholic leaders within our communities. Bishop Crosby often attended and shared his journey, which included funny conversations he had with the Pope! We discussed controversial topics within the Church,

we participated in and learned the meaning of faith-based rituals and we reflected on the challenges that are an inevitable part of spiritual growth. More importantly, we explored who we are and what it means to be a Catholic leader and the impact we have on those we serve. We were honest and vulnerable and as a result the room that had once been filled with strangers slowly became a room filled with friends.

At our last session, we had the privilege of listening to the Deputy Minister of Education, Bruce Rodrigues, speak about his faith and his experiences as a Catholic leader. Mr. Rodrigues was questioned about the diminishing number of children and families identifying as Catholic within our Catholic schools and organizations, and how we, as Catholic leaders, should manage this? Mr. Rodrigues responded simply, “It does not matter if they believe, it matters if they believe you believe”. This response summed up the entire program for me and validated my role as a Catholic leader. I may not act or look how I once believed a “good



Written by Krystal Dorion-Buxo,
Child Protection Supervisor

“Every day at CCASH, I am lucky to witness ‘Saints in jeans and tennis shoes’ working to support and strengthen families while ensuring the safety of children in our community.”

Catholic” should, but I now know there is no such thing as a good Catholic, we are what we are, and we are striving and evolving to be better, all of us, including the Church.

Being a Catholic is about compassion, kindness, forgiveness, treating others how you would want to be treated and striving to create positive change for others. Every day at the Catholic Children’s Aid Society of Hamilton I am lucky enough to witness “Saints in Jeans and Tennis Shoes” (a quote from Pope Francis) working to support and strengthen families while ensuring the safety of children in our community. Every day I am amazed by the staff (in all positions and departments) quietly going above and beyond their job descriptions to make a positive difference for the children and families we serve, never expecting or wanting recognition for the good work they do and sometimes unaware of the meaningful impact they are having on so many children and families. This is what I refer to as Catholic leadership at its best.



It really does take a community!

There are many ways to help young people thrive through involvement with CCASH. It can be as simple as attending one of our events, or as complex as adopting a child – and everything inbetween. Here's a few suggestions:

- contribute financially at <http://www.hamiltonccas.on.ca/about-ccash/how-your-gifts-help/make-a-gift-ccash/>
- sponsor, donate prizes to, attend, or volunteer at one of our fundraising events
- create a Christmas hamper for a family in need
- volunteer as a driver or tutor, or on our Board of Directors
- help to raise young people in your family, with our assistance, when their parents are unable to do so
- foster a child who needs a temporary home
- adopt a child who needs a permanent home.

To find out more about how to get involved with CCASH, check out our website at www.hamiltonccas.on.ca, or contact Lisa Hostein at 905-525-2012 x. 3256, lisa.hostein@hamiltonccas.on.ca

Pictured here are Andrew Duong and Ylan Nguyen. They both received awards for 10 years of service at the Ontario Volunteer Service Awards ceremony held in spring 2018. They tutor young people in care once a week, providing guidance, support and a caring presence. We are very grateful to them!

Ylan had this to say about her experience: "Having been a tutor for over 10 years, I've seen a lot of students come in and out of the program. I've witnessed students learn and grow and develop so much

week after week, year after year. They inspire me with all their hard work, positive attitude and openness. I am truly grateful for the opportunity to meet so many amazing young people and to play a small part in their lives through the tutoring program."

Andrew says: "Many of these students are brilliant, but due to circumstances beyond their control, they struggle in school. Sometimes it's academic, but a lot of the times, the issues are more to do with confidence. I've been lucky that many of the students that I've been paired with have shown



**Andrew Duong & Ylan Nguyen,
Volunteer Tutors**

great improvements in school but my goal was always to give them the confidence to be a little bolder in their work and try a bit more."



**Veni Perrotte,
Foster Parent**



Veni Perrotte has been a foster parent with CCASH for 15 years. When asked why she started fostering, she explains that she was called by God to do this work. She has fostered many children over the years, and is known for her strict-but-fair approach.

She has learned a lot from her fostering experience. Through training programs about child and youth trauma, she has come to better understand the challenges that traumatized young people face, which has helped her to be more patient with challenging behaviours.

She has also learned to position herself to the kids in her care as "Mom's helper", lending their mothers a hand at a difficult time. This helps kids to understand her role in their lives, and has led to lasting relationships between Veni and many of the children she has fostered. Thank you Veni for opening your home and heart to children in need!

Mapping a future for CCASH



John Lewis, Chair of the Board

The refresh of the CCASH strategic plan has been the Board of Directors' primary focus for 2017/18. Our last strategic plan was launched in 2013, and it has served us well over the past five years – so much so that we did not think it necessary to create a completely new plan for the next five years. Instead, we opted to refresh the existing plan.

We spoke to 86 stakeholders, including 23 community partners, to find out what they perceive as our strengths and challenges. We were pleased to hear that they feel CCASH has made progress over the past 5 years in a number of areas, including communication and information sharing with volunteers, resource parents, staff, and the community. We are seen in the community as innovative and collaborative, and very dedicated to the welfare of the children we serve.

Generally, we heard that we are on the right path in our approach to the welfare of children, youth, and families in Hamilton. Thanks to Anne Becker of Climb Consulting for leading us through these strategic conversations.

Our staff clearly told us, through a survey with a 68% response rate, that workload balance is a priority for them. The Board is aware that the combination of reduced government funding, increased accountability requirements, and large-scale systemic changes is putting stress on the organization, and especially on the staff. Through the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, we continue to advocate to the

Ministry of Children and Youth Services for a sustainable funding formula that can reduce the pressure that all Ontario children's aid societies are feeling.

We also heard that we need to do more work to ensure that the services we deliver are culturally appropriate. The Board, and the whole organization, is committed to diversity, inclusion and equity, and we have taken steps to ensure that commitment is demonstrated; but we realize that there is more to be done.

The Board held a retreat with diversity, inclusion and equity as its sole focus. As a result of this work, our Nominating Committee has made significant efforts to recruit diverse Board members. The board's gender balance is 50/50, and we are becoming more representative of our diverse community.

This year, the Board also approved changes to its stakeholder policy that clearly express the Board's commitment to equity and to addressing Truth and Reconciliation of Indigenous Peoples and anti-Black racism to reduce the disproportionate representation of these communities in our client population. The Board will receive mandatory and ongoing orientation and training on equity, and on disproportionality and disparities of the African-Canadians, Indigenous Peoples, and any other marginalized groups that are identified.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (to June 2018)

John Lewis, Chair	David Hennick, Secretary	Deborah Lancaster
Anna Maria Brownlow, 1st Vice Chair	Jackie Bajus	Charlotte Muhorakeye
Larry Di Ianni, 2nd Vice Chair	Dr. Cynthia Cupido	Dr. Ian Preyra
Laurence Kavanagh, Treasurer	Rosaline Dean	John Spatazzo
	Dr. Marilyn Gregus	Father David Wilhelm
	Antonietta (Toni) Kovach	

In closing, I would like to thank my fellow Board members for their hard work and inspired stewardship over the past year. We are sad to say goodbye to Dr. Marilyn Gregus, who has completed her time with us. As I move into the Past-Chair role, I am grateful to Larry DiIanni for stepping forward to assume the role of Chair, and look forward to working with him and the rest of the Board to achieve our vision of safe and thriving children and youth, empowered families and stronger communities.

Financial results and support

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR MAJOR SUPPORTERS IN 2017 ...

860 Dental	Life Centre Foster Homes
Ancaster Self Storage	Martin-Stewart Contracting
Anna Ventresca	Murray Peters Electric
Beatrice Kemp	Norstar Windows & Doors
Bergmanis Preyra LLP	Pearson Dunn - A Jones Brown Company
Carol Larsen & Family	Rocco Gizzarelli
Crystal Homes	Ruth Larsen
Desjardins Financial	Ross & McBride LLP
Diocese of Hamilton	RBC Dominion Securities
Dr. Valerie Nicholson	RBC Royal Bank
Ersilia DiNardo & Family	Spallacci Group
Generation Youth	Stackpole International
Specialized Foster Care Services	Taylor Chrysler Dodge
Grant Thornton LLP	White Rabbit Treatment Homes
Hamilton Halton General Contractors Association	Urbancore Developments
Hamilton Spectator Summer Camp Fund	
HGK Partners LLP	

WE EXTEND OUR GRATITUDE TO EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTED OUR WORK THROUGHOUT THE YEAR!

Visit us at www.hamiltonccas.on.ca or on social media @hamiltonccas



Please consider making a donation by visiting our website

AND AN EXTRA SPECIAL THANK YOU!



Bishop Douglas Crosby, OMI, Bishop of Hamilton is one of our most treasured resources. He provides spiritual support to our organization and our clients, and is a strong leader of the Hamilton Catholic community. Thank you!

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2018	2017/18
Amounts received from the prov. of Ontario	25,521,912
Other revenue	2,413,975
Total revenue	27,935,887
Salaries and wages	12,480,490
Benefits	3,625,273
Travel	748,571
Training and recruitment	147,658
Building occupancy	437,101
Professional services - non-client related	211,907
Program expenses	848,813
Boarding rate payments	5,718,778
Professional services - client related	399,423
Client personal needs	865,959
Health and related	339,326
Financial assistance provided	58,736
Promotion / publicity	79,807
Office administration	332,284
Targeted subsidy	501,975
Other	544,315
Technology	260,019
Total expenditures	27,660,435
Excess revenue over expenditures before amortization	275,452
Amortization	99,300
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expense	176,152

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