

2025/26



Children's Aid Society
La Société d'aide à l'enfance
NIPISSING & PARRY SOUND

Annual Report

Meeting Today's
Challenges. Preparing for
Tomorrow's Opportunities.

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Reflections from the Board Chair

I am pleased to reflect on what has been a productive and significant year for both the Board of Directors and its Committees.

Throughout the year, the Board remained focused on ensuring the long-term stability and sustainability of the Society through strong governance, sound financial oversight, and ongoing advocacy for appropriate funding and system improvements. A key achievement was the development and approval of a new Strategic Plan, which will be launched in the new fiscal year and will guide the Society's priorities and direction over the next three years. The Board also advanced and completed numerous initiatives arising from the Operational Review workplan, further strengthening governance, operational effectiveness, and accountability across the organization.

We continued to work collaboratively with the Ministry, maintaining a constructive and solutions-focused relationship aimed at improving outcomes for children, youth, and families. These discussions, together with our ongoing advocacy efforts, remain critical as the sector continues to navigate increasing service demands and complex challenges.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to my fellow Board members for their dedication, expertise, and commitment throughout the year. Your thoughtful leadership, engagement in governance, and steadfast focus on the needs of the children, youth, and families we serve have been invaluable in helping guide the organization through a demanding environment. I would also like to thank Nancy and her leadership team for their professionalism, perseverance, and commitment to accountability and transparency. Their efforts have provided the Board with the information, insight, and support necessary to make informed decisions and effectively fulfill its governance responsibilities.

In addition, I wish to acknowledge the contributions of our staff, volunteers, and resource parents. Your dedication, compassion, and resilience are the foundation of the services we provide. The positive impact made in the lives of children, youth, and families across our communities is a direct reflection of your commitment and care.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to building on the progress achieved this year while continuing to address emerging challenges and opportunities. Together, we will maintain our focus on service excellence, organizational sustainability, and continuous improvement in support of the children, youth, and families who rely on us.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Society's success over the past year. Your commitment and partnership are deeply appreciated.

Kim Kanmacher, Board Chair

Our Mission, Vision & Values

This year marks the final year of the 2021–2025 Strategic Plan, with development of the next multi-year plan now underway. We are building on this strong foundation as we advance into the next chapter of the Society's work.

MISSION

Working together to build communities where families are strong and all children and youth are safe and resilient.

VISION

Families and Communities Keeping Children and Youth Safe, Nurtured and Strong.

VALUES

Mutual Respect | Inclusiveness | Integrity
Courage | Accountability | Innovation

Year in Review

This past year has been one of meaningful achievement and steady momentum for the organization, realized in the context of ongoing financial constraints and broader pressures affecting the child welfare sector across Ontario. Despite these challenges, the organization has remained focused on strengthening services, building long-term sustainability, and deepening its impact within the communities it serves.

Over the past year, the organization successfully transitioned the Arbour House facility, formerly the Near North Youth Centre, to Northern Youth Services and further established Elmwood as a valued resource for child welfare and the broader community. A sustainability plan for Elmwood was developed, alongside the formation of a Youth Collaborative to help shape a future vision grounded in prevention and community-based service delivery.

Community partnerships also continued to grow in meaningful ways, with collaboration across community organizations, service clubs, municipalities, other sectors, and philanthropic partners, all guided by a shared commitment to improving outcomes for children and families. Internally, the organization restructured its finance department and pursued opportunities to strengthen capacity through shared service arrangements with NEOFACS and a new collaboration with Toronto CAS through the Signs of Safety project. Advocacy efforts also remained a priority, particularly in response to funding inequities affecting northern Ontario child welfare agencies.

Innovation in service delivery remained a central focus. A collaborative community model was developed with HANDS and One Kids Place to better support children with complex special needs, creating a foundation for future implementation. The organization also invested in its people and workplace culture through the establishment of a Culture Committee with a defined workplan, the introduction of a staff wellness framework, and the launch of a Beautification Committee to enhance the functionality and environment of its physical spaces.

Program enhancements included the implementation of an Intake pilot focused on Family Navigation and preventing admissions to care, while also supporting timely placements with families. The organization also advanced a new concept for the Kehoe property by actively recruiting for a house parent model intended to support more local placement options and reduce the number of children leaving the community due to a lack of available local resources. In addition, the STEP program was transitioned to a home-based model, allowing children and parents to receive extended support and hands-on coaching in their own home environment rather than in an office setting. At the same time, the organization engaged with a Nipissing University marketing class to explore new approaches to foster home recruitment, as part of broader efforts to reduce reliance on costly out-of-community placements.

The organization is also engaged in negotiations toward a new collective agreement. These discussions are progressing in a respectful and constructive manner, with ongoing attention to both organizational sustainability and the needs of the workforce.

This year also marked the conclusion of the previous strategic plan and the launch of a new one. The new plan reflects the current realities of the sector while also recognizing the resilience, adaptability, and innovation that continue to define the organization.

Sincere appreciation is extended to the Board of Directors for its leadership and commitment over the past year, including the additional work required in overseeing the Operational Review Workplan. The Board's efforts in advancing a new governance manual, updating by-laws, participating in training, and realigning committee structures have further strengthened the foundation of the organization.

Deep appreciation is extended to frontline staff, coordinators, service supervisors, and colleagues across management, human resources, legal, and information technology for the professionalism, care, and dedication they bring each day in support of children, youth, and families. Their commitment to one another and to the families served is the heart of the organization's work.

Sincere gratitude is also extended to the senior management team, a small but exceptionally strong group whose collaborative, efficient, and thoughtful leadership continues to move the organization forward.

To caregivers and volunteers, sincere thanks are also due. Their contributions remain invaluable, and the organization is fortunate to benefit from such a dedicated group of individuals working together in support of children and families across the communities served.

Together, these efforts have positioned the organization well for the year ahead, with clarity of purpose and a continued commitment to serving children, youth, and families with care, strength, and integrity.

Nancy Lafrance Rich, Executive Director

Child Welfare

Service Data



Intake Received

3300 

This includes personal information requests, brief services, and other related matters.

Investigation Completed

814 

Only 8% of investigation cases were transferred for ongoing services.

Monthly Average Children & Youth in Care



Monthly Average of Kinship Service Cases

58 

Links to other Services

 418



Monthly Average Number of Homes

2

Kin Care

10

Adoption

12

Customary Care

40

Foster Care

47

Kinservice

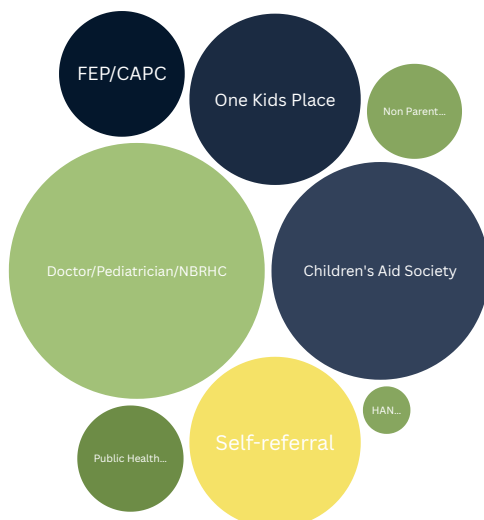
Early Intervention Services

Supporting Families Earlier

Infant & Child Development Program (ICDP)

Funded by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, the Infant and Child Development Program is part of Ontario's early years continuum, providing prevention, early identification, and early intervention supports for families of infants and young children with developmental concerns. These concerns may be associated with a range of factors, including medical, psychosocial, family-related, and broader social determinants of health.

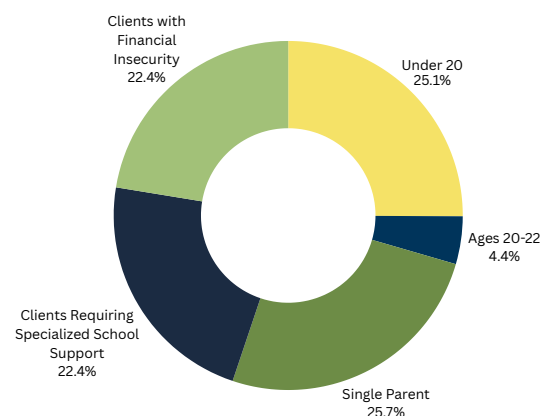
Main referral sources to the ICDP program can be found below, with community mailouts occurring yearly to ensure our partners are well informed about our services and mechanisms to access our supports.



Community Action Program for Children (CPAC)

The Nipissing District Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) supports young parents aged 13 to 23 who are pregnant or have children under six years of age. The program focuses on promoting healthy pregnancies, strengthening parenting knowledge, supporting understanding of child development and social determinants of health, and facilitating access to education, employment readiness, and community resources.

The chart below presents a breakdown of service users.



Caring Dads

The Society is pleased to have secured funding to implement the Caring Dads Program, which will be launched in the next fiscal year. This important initiative will support fathers in developing safer, more positive parenting practices and strengthening family relationships.



Partnerships & Collaborations

Among the organization's many partnerships this year, staff continued to play an active role in several key community tables and collaborative initiatives that support the safety and well-being of children, youth, and families. This included participation in the new Assessment of Risk to Others Protocol (ARTO) alongside school boards, community partners, and police services, as well as the delivery of numerous Duty to Report presentations to strengthen community awareness and shared responsibility. The organization also contributed to the Children and Youth Planning Table, Gateway Hub, the Addictions and Mental Health Committee, the Community Safety and Well-Being Committee, the Health and Social Services Network of Parry Sound, and the Child and Youth Advocacy Centre. Through these partnerships, the organization continued to strengthen coordinated service planning, enhance cross-sector collaboration, and promote earlier, more integrated responses to the needs of children, youth, and families.

Community Support Team (CST)

The Community Support Team (CST) provides collaborative, trauma-informed support to youth involved in the criminal justice system, working closely with families and community partners to promote positive outcomes. Over the past year, the team expanded its reach to include youth in detention who have not yet been sentenced, offering early, proactive programming aimed at reducing future system involvement.

In addition to direct service, the team contributes broadly across the organization by supporting the development of sexual safety plans, creating practice resources, and delivering training to foster and kinship caregivers. Their work is grounded in ongoing professional development, including advanced training in clinical approaches and trauma-informed care. Through strong partnerships with probation services, the courts, community agencies, and school boards, the team ensures coordinated and comprehensive support. During the reporting period, the team served 39 youth, with 36 not re-offending, reflecting strong outcomes in reducing recidivism.





Elmwood Community Hub

Throughout the year, Elmwood hosted a variety of prevention-focused programming that aligns with the objectives of the Ready, Set, Go Guide and supports youth transitioning to independence. Programs focused on mental wellness, mentorship, recreation, life skills, cultural connection, and community engagement. The Ripple Effect Mentorship Program continued to offer youth training and professional development opportunities, while community partners delivered specialized workshops and supports that would not otherwise be possible.

Elmwood also remained an important community gathering space. The VON Nurse Practitioner Clinic continued to provide accessible primary care services to a now 300+ caseload, while educational partners delivered alternative education programming through two on-site classrooms. EarlyON programming, partner meetings, youth transition planning, access visits, and parenting programs such as Mothers in Mind and Circle of Security continued to utilize the space regularly, reinforcing Elmwood's role as a central point of access for children, youth, and families.

The Hub remained actively engaged in broader community initiatives, including Planet Youth Nipissing, Community Safety and Well-Being planning, Mental Health Week activities alongside CMHA, and regional youth service planning discussions. These collaborations continue to strengthen service integration and ensure that youth and families have access to coordinated supports.





Elmwood *Continued*

A significant achievement this year was the implementation of Elmwood's Cost Allocation Model. This model has substantially reduced Child Welfare's financial contribution toward building operations and has shifted Elmwood toward a community-supported funding approach. Through increased rental activity, partnership contributions, grants, sponsorships, and fundraising efforts, Elmwood continues to move toward long-term sustainability as a shared community asset.

Facility utilization continued to grow, with more than 30 organizations utilizing Elmwood's spaces for programming, meetings, recreation, training, and service delivery. Rental revenue increased significantly over the past year (doubling the original projected annual amount), demonstrating both community demand and the growing sustainability of the Hub model.

Elmwood also expanded its fundraising and sponsorship efforts. New community sponsorships and funding support were secured from organizations including United Way North East Ontario, Redpath, OECT Enbridge and numerous local donors and supporters. Elmwood was proud to continue its partnership with Chat4Chad through youth mental health programming. With this \$30k funding we were grateful to host 20 registrants for a piloted Roots of Resilience group; a 6-week therapeutic group for those struggling with caregiver substance misuse, filling a gap in our community and providing programming so needed to the youth we serve. We were also able to fund some brief counseling services for youth involved with the agency and support our Tuesday night youth led mental health programming. Elmwood was also included in the organization's Impact Video project.

Another incredible addition to Elmwood this year was the installation of a new playground in the courtyard. Generously donated by the Rotary Club of North Bay, the playground was brought to life through a community build involving volunteers from Stantec and the City of North Bay. The project reflects the spirit of collaboration that has become synonymous with Elmwood and provides a new recreational space for children and families accessing the Hub.

Volunteerism also remained a vital part of Elmwood's success. Volunteers supported youth transportation, the clothing boutique, special events (such as the Joy Project which brought in \$58,000 in funding support to purchase toys and household items for ALL families involved with agency) and day-to-day operations, helping ensure that services remained accessible to children and families across the district.

As Elmwood enters another year of growth, it continues to demonstrate how partnership-driven service delivery can reduce barriers, strengthen communities, and improve outcomes for children, youth, and families. Through collaborative leadership, innovative funding approaches, and strong community support, Elmwood remains a model of integrated service delivery and a cornerstone of prevention-focused work within Nipissing and Parry Sound.

Looking Ahead

As we move into the coming year, the Society will launch a new three-year Strategic Plan that will guide our priorities and direction over the next planning cycle. This plan reflects a renewed commitment to responsive, high-quality services and will provide a clear framework for strengthening outcomes for children, youth, and families.

The new strategic direction will build on the progress achieved to date while responding to ongoing system pressures and evolving community needs. It will support continued efforts to enhance service delivery, strengthen partnerships, and ensure long-term organizational sustainability.

With this renewed framework in place, the Society is well positioned to move forward with clarity and purpose, grounded in its mission and the needs of those it serves.



Board of Directors

The Board of Directors provides governance, oversight, and strategic direction to the Society in support of its mandate to serve children, youth, and families. Board members bring a range of professional expertise and community perspectives, contributing to strong stewardship, accountability, and informed decision-making. Throughout the year, the Board has continued to support the organization through a period of ongoing system pressure and operational change, with a focus on service quality, financial sustainability, and alignment with provincial expectations.

Kim Kanmacher
BOARD CHAIR

Dr. Christina DeRoche
CHAIR-ELECT

Ryan Jeffers
TREASURER

Cindy Males
DIRECTOR

Wendy Prieur
DIRECTOR

Tammy Malcolm
DIRECTOR

Dr. Taylor Loughheed
DIRECTOR

Ofonime Bassey
DIRECTOR

Jamey Byers
DIRECTOR

Autumn Tignanelli
DIRECTOR

Steven Featherstone
DIRECTOR

Robert Messacar
DIRECTOR

The Honourable Jean-Gilles Lebel
DIRECTOR



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Contact Us



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