

Director of Services Report to the Quality Committee

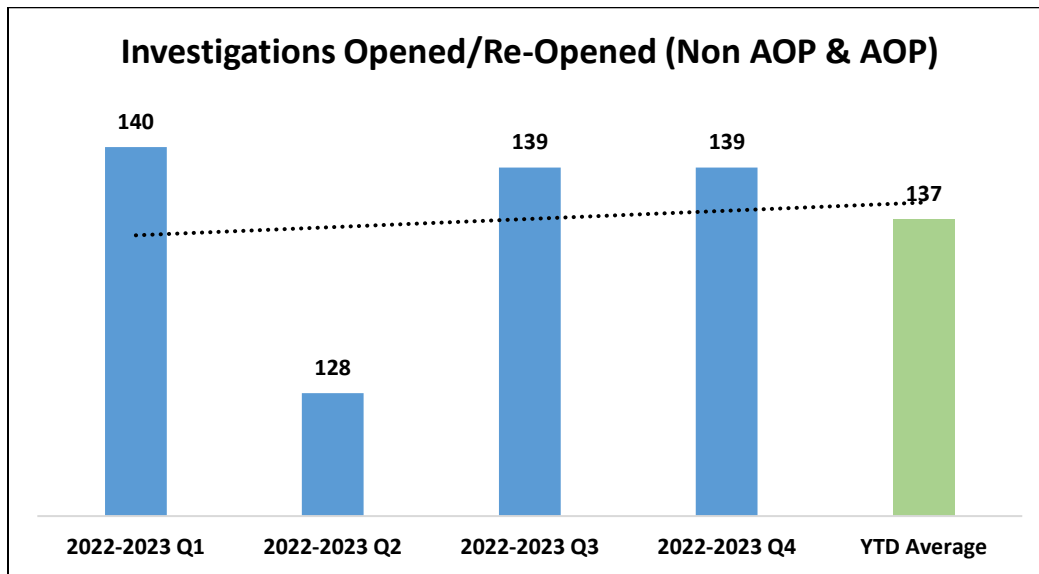
2022-2023 Year End

Service Volumes

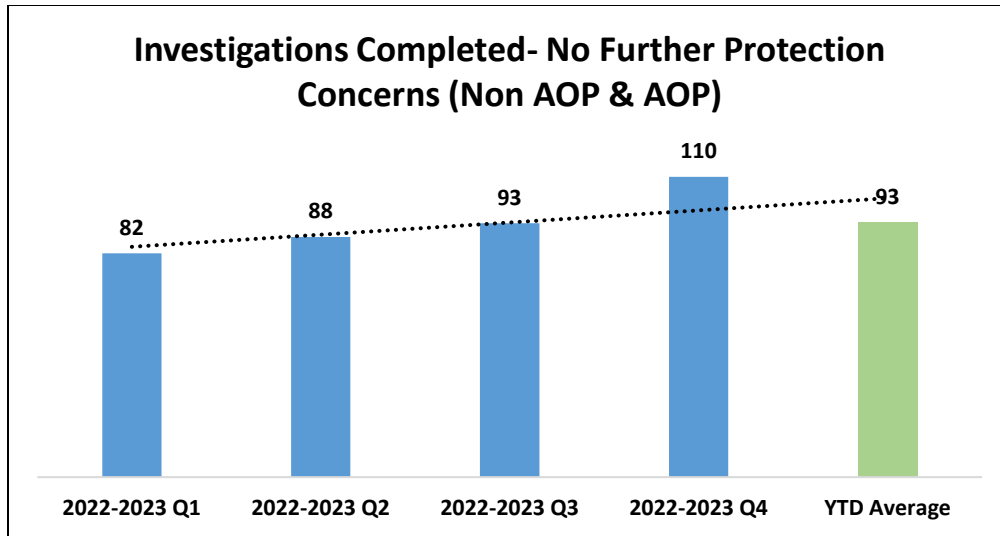
The Ministry has recently advised of their intent to resume the Standards Quality Improvement Plan process and re-establish SQIP reporting requirements across the sector. All Societies will now report SQIP data for the months of February and September. A summary of the organization's SQIP will be highlighted in the report.

This Report will also provide Q4 and 2022-2023 year-end service data and information, along with five-year trends in key funding categories reported to the Ministry.

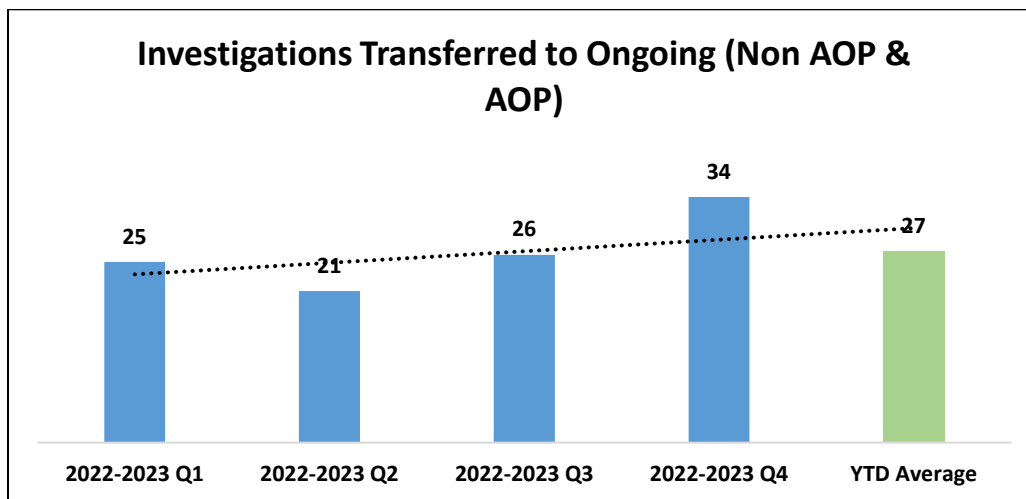
INTAKE/INVESTIGATIONS



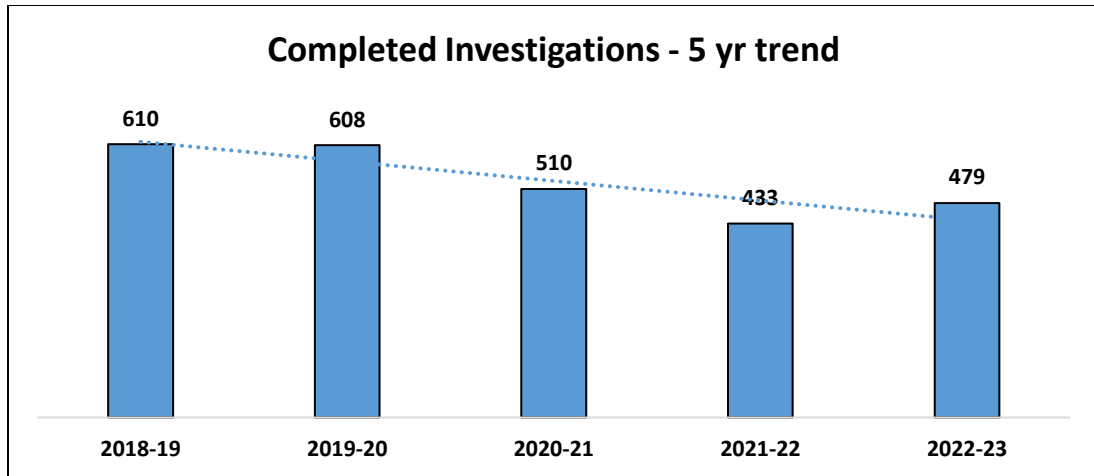
- Overall YTD numbers have slowly started to increase post-pandemic. Compared to last year's YTD average of 120, we have seen a 12% increase in investigations opened/re-opened.



- The Q4 rate of transfer to ongoing service was 23% . Overall, the year end transfer rate was 22.5% and within the normal range.

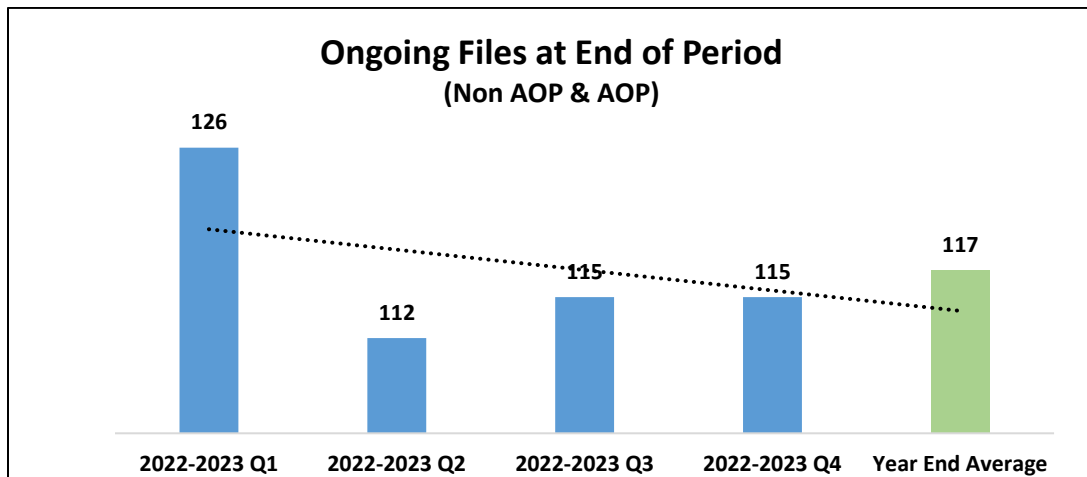


- The total number of protection investigations completed this year (479) is the combined sum of the two graphs above. Compared to last year (433) there was a 9% increase in the total number of investigations completed.

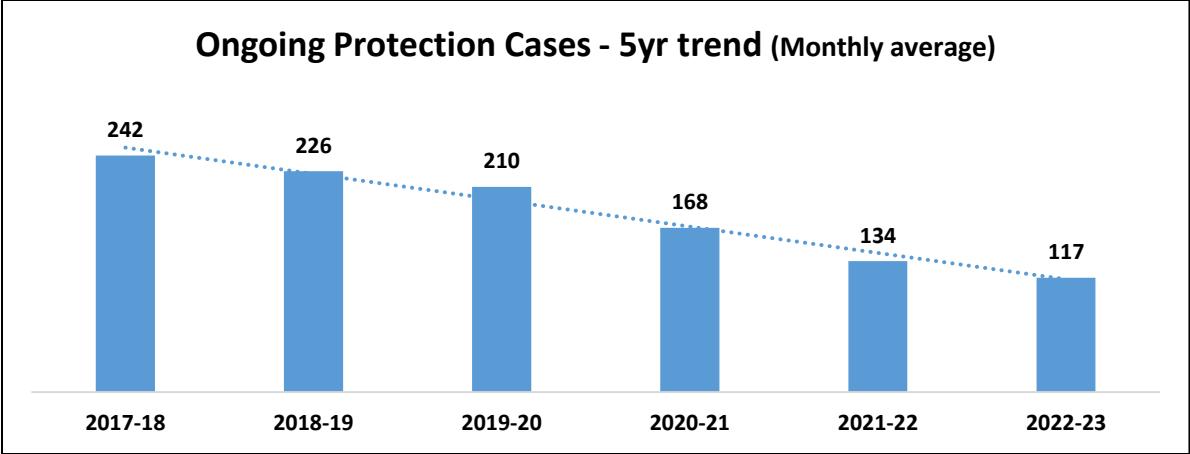


- The volume of completed investigations were fairly steady from 2018-19 through 2019-2020, a trend that we anticipated would continue into 2020-2021, prior to the pandemic taking hold.
- Since 2019-2020 we have seen a 21% decline (or 129 files) in the number of protection investigations completed.

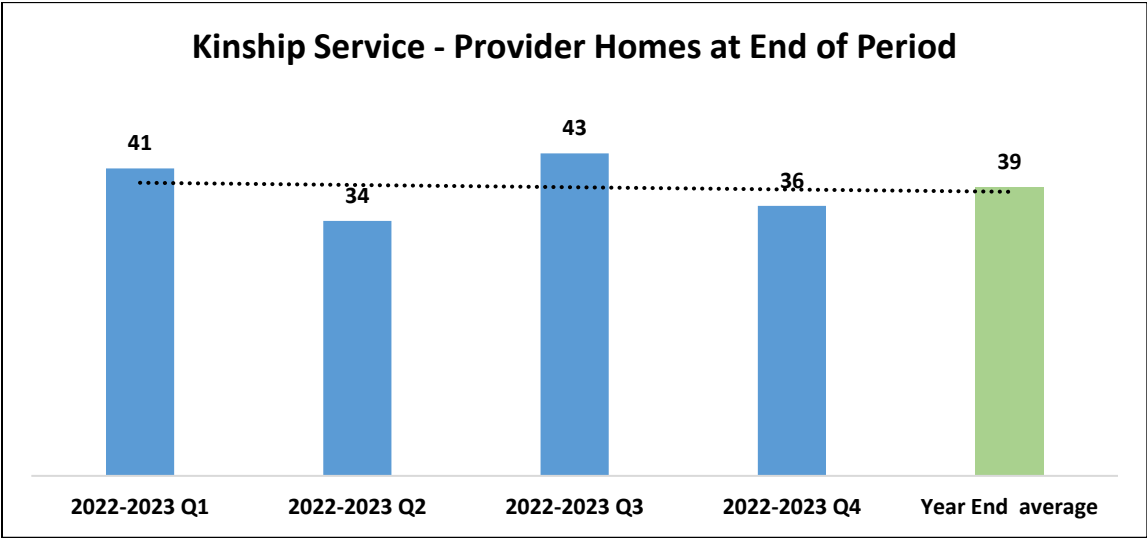
ONGOING FAMILY SERVICES



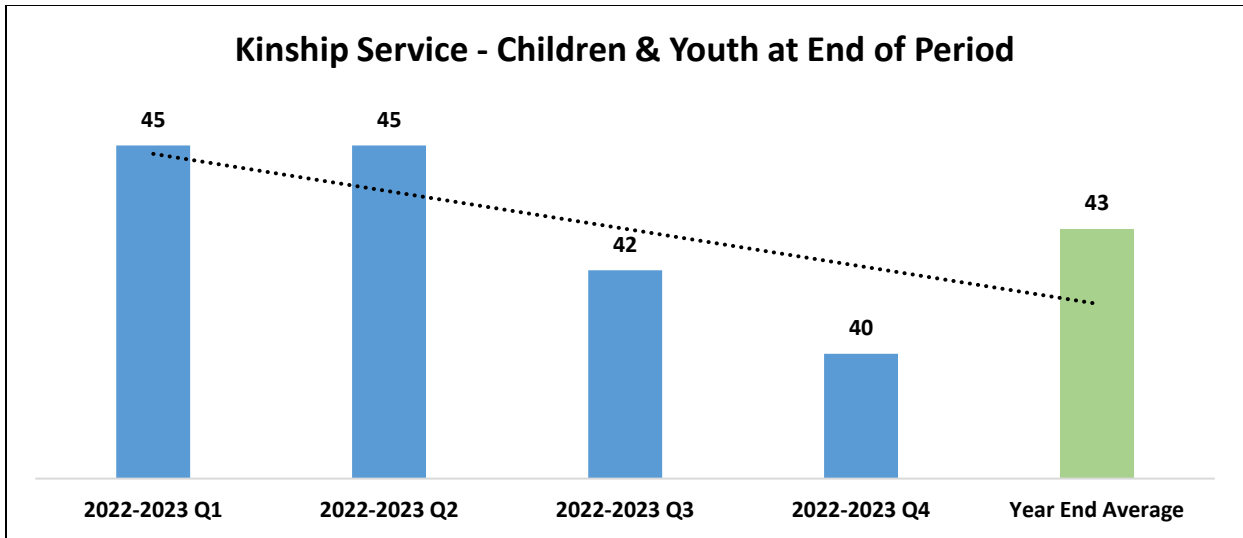
- There continued to be a decline in the number of open family files across the 2022-2023 fiscal year, albeit much slower than last year. The decrease of 11 files from Q1 to year end represents a reduction of 8% compared to 14% in the year prior.
- The graph below again highlights the steady decline in the number of ongoing files over the past 5 years, with the biggest decline noted between 2019-2020 and 2020-2021.



ALTERNATIVE CARE

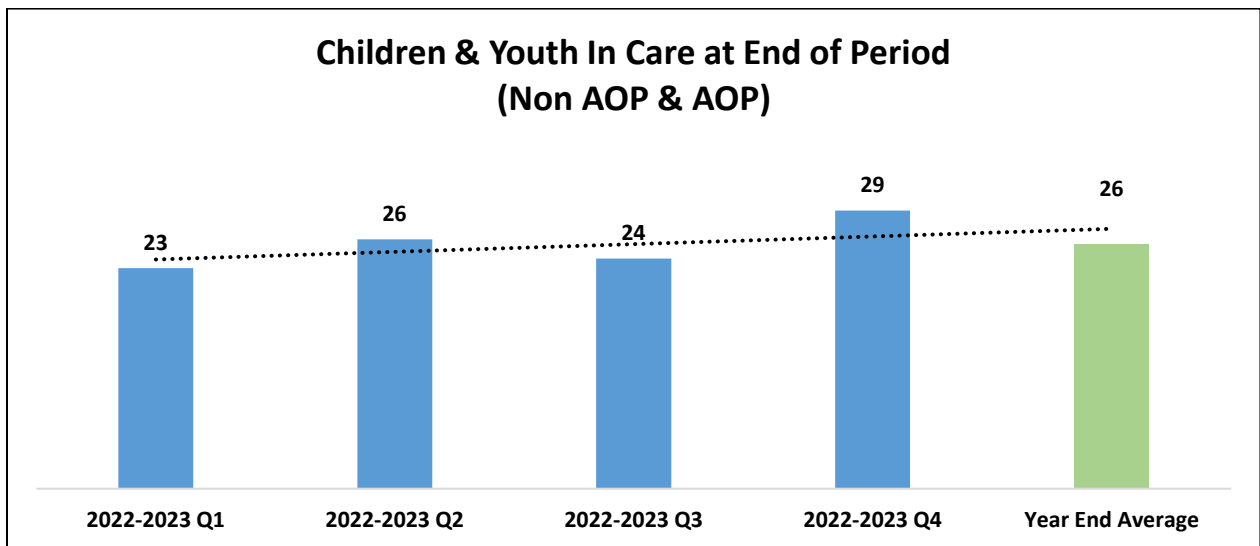


- Kinship Service is fluid with homes often opening and closing in relatively short timeframes as children return to their primary caregiver(s) and/or find permanency with their kinship family.



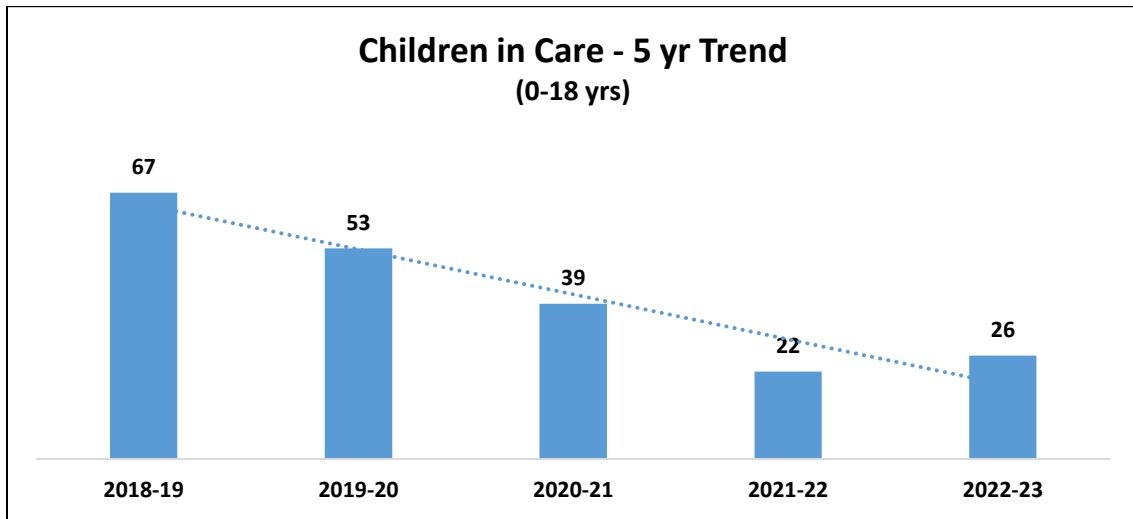
- Keeping children out of care (admission prevention), and residing with people they know rather than strangers when they are not able to remain in their family home, is the desired outcome, and we are achieving it. Short-term kinship placements, or permanency with kin, is the preferred option when considering alternative care and is considerably higher than the number of children in care as noted below with 29 children in care at Q4 compared to 40 in kinship service.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

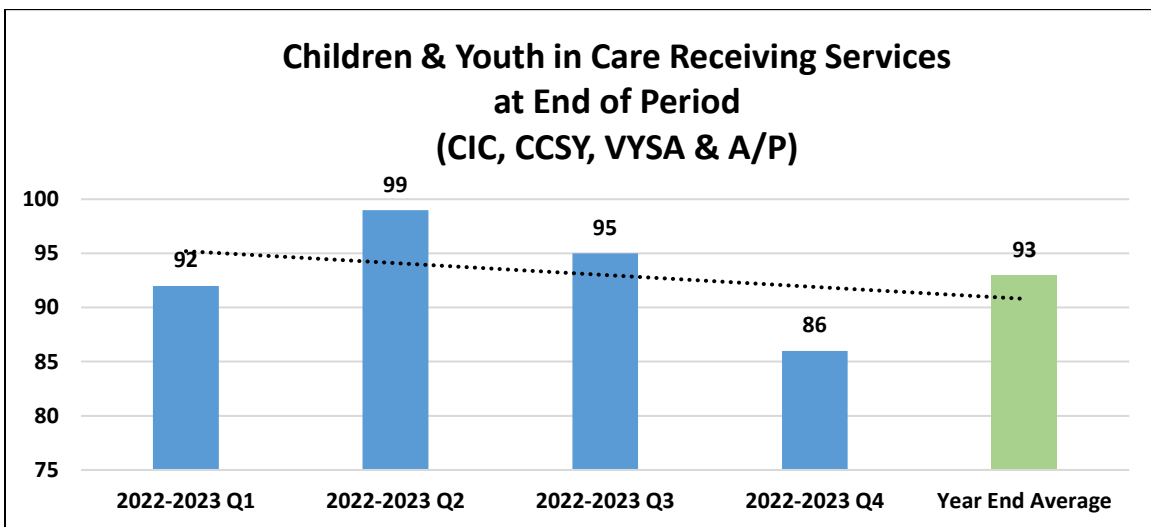


- This chart illustrates children in care only – that is children and youth who came into care prior to their 16th birthday and who have not yet turned 18. The number of children and youth in care remained fairly stable throughout the year with a slight increase of a sibling group of 5 in Q4. Despite a slight increase from Q3 to Q4, our year end average of 26 still remains 3% lower than last year at this time.

- It is anticipated that our low numbers of children in care will be a continuing trend as a result of the shift in our practice framework that includes an increased focus on kinship service.



- Five years ago, at the end of Q4, we had 67 children in care. We have continued to reduce the number of children in care since that time by 62%.



- Total children and youth in care is the sum of Children in Care noted above (0-18 years), Continued Care and Support for Youth (18+), Voluntary Youth Services (16-17 under Voluntary Service), and Adoption Probation. While the CCSY, VYSA and A/P children and youth are not “officially” in care of the Society, they are receiving services and are reported to the Ministry as children in care.

Breakdown of Children & Youth Receiving Service by Type

Type	2022-23		2022-23		YTD Average
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
CIC	23	26	24	29	26
CCSY	58	60	60	48	57
A/P	7	6	4	4	5
VYSA	4	6	7	5	5
Total	92	98	95	86	93

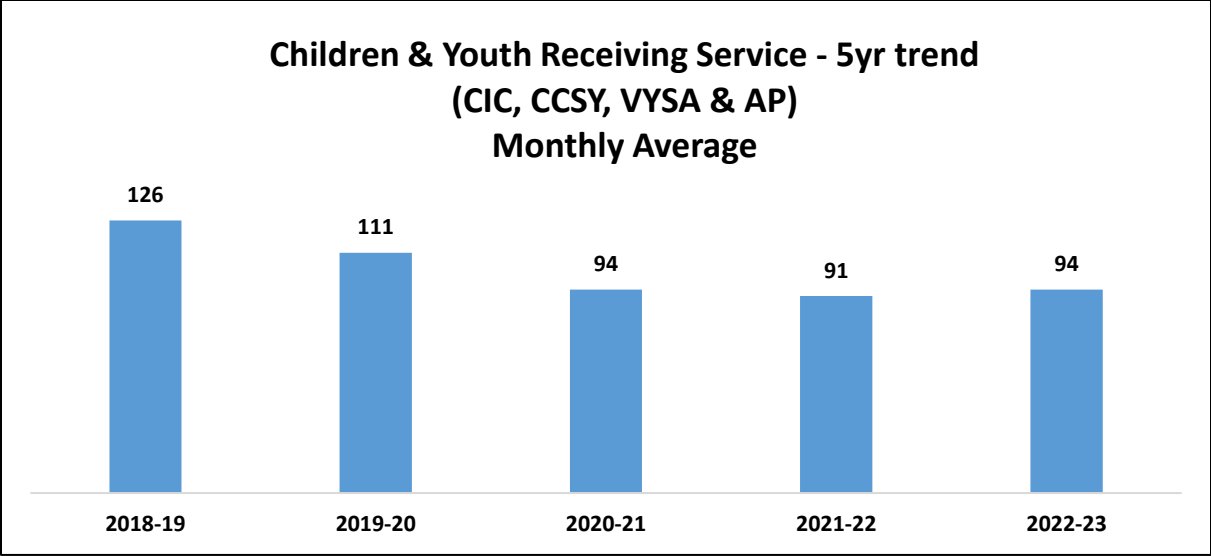
- As this chart illustrates, while the number of children in care (CIC) decreased, we have realized an increase in the number of youth 18+ who continue to receive supports, resulting in very little overall change in the number of children and youth receiving service (referred to as children in care by the Ministry).

CCSY 21 + Receiving Service	
2020-2021	12
2021-2022	13
2022-2023	10

- The current cohort will age through the system as below with a total number of 32 having exited out of care by 2027-28:

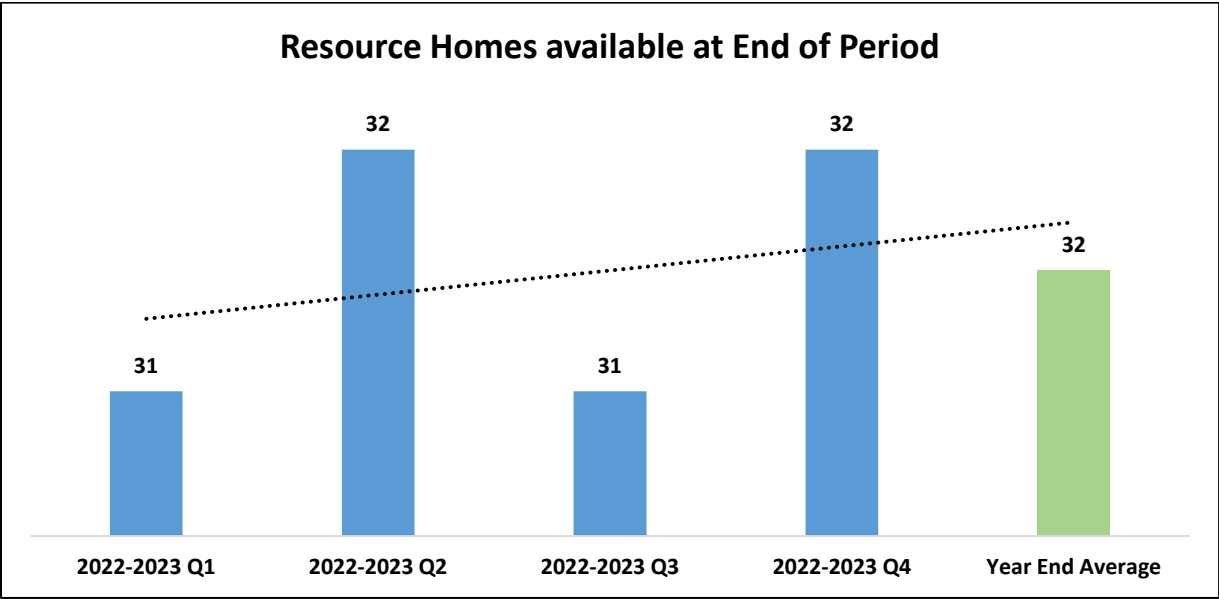
CCSY 21 (Replaced by RSG April 1, 2023) + for 2023-2027					
Brought over 20 CCSY 21+ as of April 1 2023	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
21+	9	13	7	6	0
22+	11	9	13	9	0
23+ (To be closed)	0	11	9	13	9
	20	22	20	15	0

- Moreover, of the 48 CCSY at the end of Q4, 10 are youth who have turned 21 and would have normally exited care the past two years notwithstanding the moratorium on youth “aging out of care” during COVID that was extended until March 31, 2023. This represents 21% of our CCSY youth and 12% of the total number of children and youth receiving care.
- The moratorium on youth “aging out of care,” will be replaced with the Ready, Set, Go (RSG) program effective April 1, 2023 extending care and support to young adults until the age of 23.

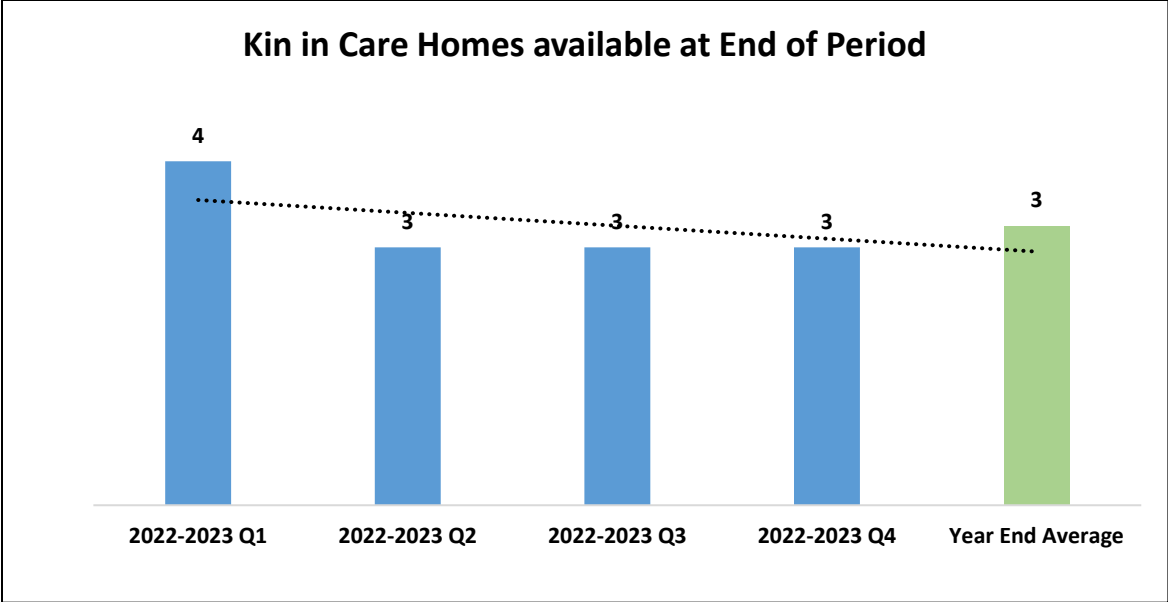


- The graph above illustrates the five year trend for children and youth receiving service volumes. While the trend line does show a slight increase in the number of children in care, it can be misleading because it does not separate out the groups or types that make up this metric (i.e. children in care, CCSY, VYSA).

ALTERNATIVE CARE



- The number of available Fostering Permanency homes has remained relatively static this year, with little fluctuation. We continue to recruit fostering permanency homes, with a focus on homes for children and youth with acute and complex needs. This will be an area we will continue to monitor.



- Whereas Kinship Service (out of care) is the preferred and least intrusive option, Kinship Care is available for some children/youth depending on needs – typically for clinical reasons where the family/child requires a greater level of support than that available through Kin Service. Kin in Care homes have remained stable over the current fiscal year.

LEGAL



- There has been a 10% decrease in the number of legal files compared to last year.

Legal Cases: 2021-2022		Legal Cases: 2022-2023	
Q1		Q1	
2021 April	32	2022 April	40
2021 May	35	2022 May	37
2021 June	40	2022 June	37
Q2		Q2	
2021 July	42	2022 July	36
2021 August	41	2022 August	37
2021 September	40	2022 September	36
Q3		Q3	
2021 October	39	2022 October	36
2021 November	42	2022 November	33
2021 December	41	2022 December	33
Q4		Q4	
2022 January	42	2023 January	33
2022 February	41	2023 February	32
2022 March	40	2023 March	36
AVERAGE MONTHLY	40	AVERAGE MONTHLY	36

Identity Based Data (IBD) Collection

Collecting standardized identity based data consistently from children and youth is one way in which Children’s Aid Societies and the MCCSS can understand who is receiving child protection services and the outcomes for specific groups of children and youth. This information is intended to support better planning, across the provincial child welfare system, and locally at the level of individual Societies.

It also provides children and youth a voice in how they choose to identify themselves which informs practitioners in their case planning with diverse children, youth and families.

Societies must provide all children and youth who are subject to a child protection investigation, in receipt of ongoing service, or are in care or in receipt of continued care and support for youth (CCSY), with the opportunity to participate in identity based data collection provided there is consent.

Compliance at year end for Children and Youth Being Served

Department	Total (April snapshot)			Consent asked			Consent not asked			Compliance		
	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Snapshot in time (April)												
Children & Youth Services (CIC/CCSY/VYSA)	86	83	87	84	82	85	2	1	2	98%	99%	98%
Ongoing Services	291	262	256	275	253	235	16	9	21	95%	97%	92%
TOTAL	377	345	345	359	335	321	18	10	23	87.4	97%	93%
*Assessment	220	258	301	163	171	182	62	87%	119	74%	66%	60%

*At assessment/investigation phase this information may only be captured at closing/transfer, hence the numbers are not necessarily reflective of completion in cases where an investigation has not yet been completed, thus potentially skewing this line somewhat.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR LINK)

ADR link connects families involved in child protection matters with Children’s Aid Societies to Alternative Dispute Resolution practitioners in the South Region of Ontario. There are four prescribed methods of Alternative Dispute Resolution available through ADR-link:

- Child protection mediation;
- Original Dispute Resolution/Indigenous Approaches;
- Family Group Conferencing; and
- the 4th Option/Other

Each option involves a decision making process for resolving disputes between a Children’s Aid Society and family or child who is or may be in need of protection.

The 4th option is a unique method of ADR to be utilized in circumstances where one of the other prescribed methods is not available or where another method is deemed more suitable. There are specific criteria for 4th option or “other” referrals.

	Apr 1, 2020 – Mar 31, 2021	Apr 1, 2021 – Mar 31, 2022	Apr.1, 2022- Mar 31, 2023
Child Protection Mediation (CPM)	31	23	14
Family Group Decision (FGC)	8	7	2
Original Dispute Resolution (FNIM)	2	3	4
4 th Option/Other Referrals	1	2	1
Total ADR referrals	42	35	21

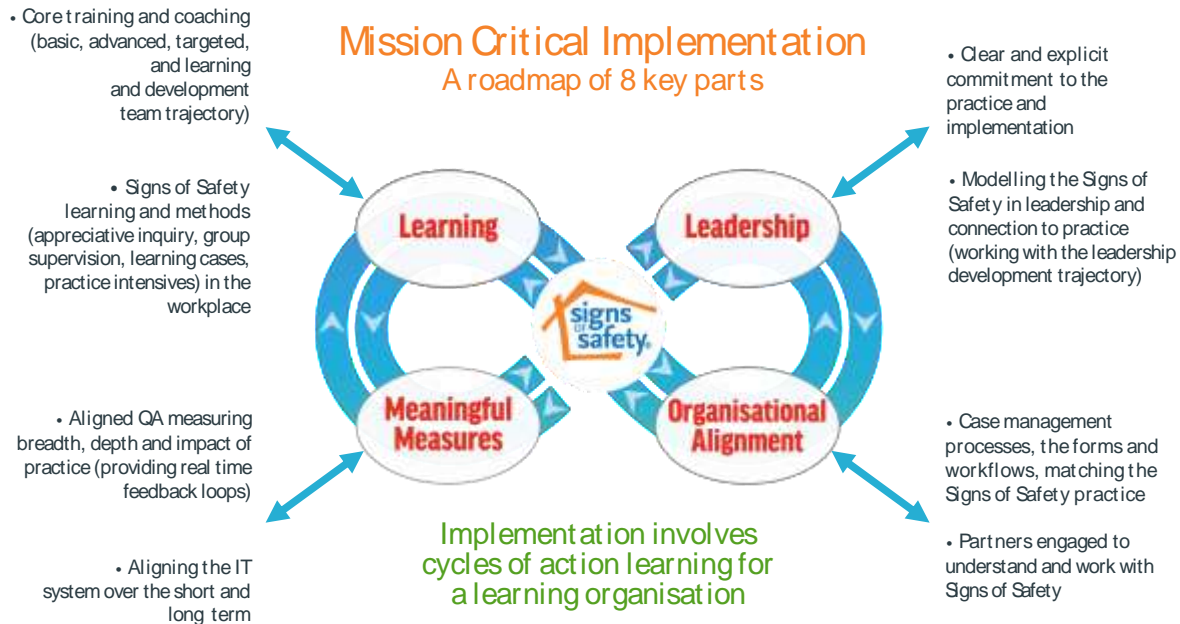
Standards Quality Improvement Plan Reporting- February 2023

Child Welfare Record Checks: 320/320 **100%**
 Child Abuse Registry Record Checks: 8/8 **100%**
 12 Hour Response Time: 4/4 **100%**
 48 Hour Response Time: 0/0
 7 Day Response Time: 36/36 **100%**
 Safety Assessment Documentation: 45/46 **98%**
 Investigations Completed within 45 or 60 days with extension: 29/29 **100%**
 Ongoing Service 30 Day Service Plan: 8/8 **100%**
 Ongoing Service 6 Month Service Review: 10/10 **100%**
 Ongoing Service Monthly Home Visits: 164/164 **100%**
 Ongoing Service 6 week supervision: 61/61 **100%**
 CIC Private Visits at 7 days: 3/3 **100%**
 CIC Private Visits at 30 days: 2/2 **100%**
 CIC Private Visits at 90 Days: 13/13 **100%**
 CIC 30 Day Plan of Care: 2/2 **100%**
 Kinship Service Private Visits at 7 days: 4/4 **100%**
 Kinship Service Private Visits at 30 days: 1/1 **100%**
 Kinship Service Private Visits at 90 days: 19/20 **95%**

Signs of Safety

Signs of Safety is the practice framework that was chosen by Family and Children’s Services of St. Thomas and Elgin in April of 2019 with the signing of our contract agreement with Elia International Limited. Our implementation contract agreement was officially launched in September of 2019 and ended in June 2022 as we moved into the next phase of sustainability.

The dynamic nature of Signs of Safety implementation is reflected in the framework's illustration, showing how the implementation and sustainability of the framework is a continuous learning and development cycle with the practice approach at the center.



At its simplest, it illustrates the obvious point that everything an organization does (its leadership, procedures, measurement and learning) must always focus on what practitioners actually do with children and families.

Objectives and Indicators of Success:

Family and Children's Services Strategic Plan is based on 4 integrative elements which align with the framework and principles of Signs of Safety®.

- 1) **Lead the way**
 - Pursue innovation and excellence in service delivery; and
 - Change the face of Family and Children's Services in the community (Branding & Reputation).
- 2) **Journey together**
 - Engage with First, Nations, Inuit and Metis communities in a culturally responsive way.
- 3) **Do the right thing**
 - Provide an excellent service user experience;
 - Improve life outcomes for children and youth; and
 - Be a great place to work.
- 4) **Walk alongside**
 - Engage families, children and youth as partners; and

- Be a leader in anti-oppressive practice.

These four elements support the vision of all children and youth being safe and having increased well-being with the core values being child and youth centered, family focused, safety, excellence, partnerships, permanence, diversity and anti-oppression.

The framework and principles of Signs of Safety© are aligned with providing an excellent service user experience, being a great place to work, engaging families, children and youth as partners, being a leader in anti-oppressive practice, and pursuing innovation and excellence in service delivery.

It is noteworthy that since the implementation of Signs of Safety began we have reduced the number of children coming into care, increased our use of kinship service when alternative care is required, and decreased the number of cases before the court – three identified key deliverables of the framework.

Below are some highlights of our work from September 2019 until June 2023.

September 2019-March 2020 (Pre-Implementation)

- Completion of the 5 day advanced training course for all direct service staff, managers and senior leadership;
- Working through an initial case to learn about our organization’s current practices, areas of workflow alignment and identifying early leaders;
- Core overview and understanding of the implementation framework with leadership;
- Establishing a Steering Committee comprised of both staff and management who will support the implementation;
- Identification of 15 agency Practice Leads;
- Developing a clear and focused commitment to Signs of Safety practice including an implementation plan and trajectory; and
- Access to the Knowledge Bank for all direct service staff.

April 2020- April 2021 (Implementation Year One)

- An ongoing development program for all Practice Leaders;
- Targeted half day virtual training tailored to specific staff group roles such as team assistants, QA, finance, payroll, legal clerks & CPIN lead; Intake screeners & After hours; Youth and Kinship, Alternative Care, Investigation and Ongoing Services;
- Attendance of 6 staff members at the virtual Signs of Safety National Gathering;
- Presentation of our pre-implementation journey at the virtual Signs of Safety National Gathering;
- Steering Committee and Leadership have worked collaboratively to begin to align processes, complete an initial implementation plan and develop a workflow alongside of staff;
- Leadership self-assessment and staff feedback survey both initiated (Meaningful Measures);
- Initial discussions and planning with leadership regarding a Signs of Safety quality assurance system;
- Appreciative Inquiry and Group Supervision processes are in place;
- Launch of Signs of Safety workflow for each department;
- Additional learning sessions for identified practice leads;
- Targeted training for specific staff groups, leadership and meaningful measures;
- Development and roll out of Parent/Community Feedback Survey (Meaningful Measures); and

- Identification of Internal Trainers.

April 2021 to June 2022 (Implementation Year Two)

- Development and roll out of Children/Youth Feedback Survey (Meaningful Measures);
- 6 Whole System Learning Cases;
- Collaborative Case Review;
- Attendance of 6 Staff members at the International Signs of Safety Gathering;
- Leadership self-assessment and staff feedback survey completed for a second time (Meaningful Measures);
- Development of 5 Internal Trainers;
- Embedding Equity, Inclusion and Diversity within the framework; and
- Sustainability Planning - June 1-7 2022.

July 2022 to Current (Sustainability)

- Leading End to End Case Work Practice Sessions; and
- Targeted Support Sessions to Internal SofS Trainers

The aim of both these sessions reinforced:

- The importance of leadership modelling new practices/processes in order to create and sustain a learning organization;
- Increasing confidence and ability of management to lead staff through the two main processes: assessing risk and safety planning;
- Leading staff to move beyond the breadth of the work (how often they are doing it) into the depth of the practice (the quality);
- Recognize how to lead staff through this new way of working in a way that models the disciplines and processes of Signs of Safety© (e.g. leading through curiosity and questions);
- To work through each piece of the Signs of Safety© roadmap and apply it to your work as a leader in different departments; and
- For internal trainers (designated front line staff) to have the opportunity to participate in the sessions in order to deepen their own practice and develop leadership capacity within the organization.

Next Report:

Extended Society Care and Foster Care Licensing Reviews

- Foster Care Licensing Review was initiated on April 17, 2023
- Extended Society Care Review is scheduled for May 15- May 19, 2023
- It should be noted that reviews were not coordinated this year despite the organization's request to do so.
- Both reviews were conducted using a hybrid model; virtually and on site using CPIN (Child Protection Information Network) and SOR-RL portal
- A final Report will be provided to quality committee at a later date