



Chair's and Executive Director's Annual Report for 2024 / 2025

Welcome to the 2025 Annual General Meeting of Family & Children's Services of St. Thomas and Elgin.

As we take a moment to reflect on the events of the past year, we are easily distracted by the many challenges and inequities we faced along the way, as an organization, a sector, and a community. The urgent lack of supports and services, insufficient funding, and increased need have all been well documented, as have the consequences – it was a difficult year. Nonetheless, when faced with challenges we pursued opportunities and built effective partnerships, creating new avenues to advance our mandate and deliver a response, and we did it well – below are few highlights of what we accomplished.

It is important to acknowledge that child welfare does not happen in isolation – we do this important work together as a team and a community. It is only through the collaborative efforts of our dedicated staff, Board of Directors, alternative caregivers, partner agencies, and the broader community that we can effectively support the safety and well-being of the community we serve. We extend our sincere gratitude to our many stakeholders whose commitment to children, youth, families, and community contributes to our mission with passion and selfless dedication. Together, we will continue to build a brighter future for the children, youth, and families of St. Thomas and Elgin County – it is what we do!

Service volumes continued to increase across departments in 2024, a trend expected to continue in 2025. We ended the year with 35 children and youth in care and 156 open family files, up from 29 and 131 last year but still well below pre-pandemic levels. Most importantly, we upheld our commitment to keeping children out of care, ending the year with 55 children and youth residing in Kinship Service, with family or people they know – young people that would otherwise be in care. Keeping children connected to their family, relationships, culture, and community is vital and aligns with our strategic direction of *Do the Right Thing*. Supporting 57% more children and youth out of care with Kin than in care with strangers is intentional and central to achieving positive life outcomes for children and youth, the importance cannot be overlooked.

Faced with unprecedented systemic challenges, our commitment to service excellence and accountability did not waver, as evidenced by exceptional compliance and positive outcomes for children, youth, and families. We stayed true to our core values – doing it the Elgin way through a commitment to high compliance and impactful social work. We achieved 97% compliance on mandatory QIP reports, and 100% for permanency, 88% for safety, and 84% for well-being on our annual Ministry Extended Society Care Review for children and youth in care. The review of our Ready Set Go (RSG) program received 100%, and our Residential Licensing Audit received a full License without conditions, demonstrating positive results in the provision of alternate care for children and youth. Ministry auditors celebrated the team's strong clinical work, including sector high contact with our children and youth and high praise for staff's commitment to maintaining relationships and staying connected. We continue to be a top performing agency and could not be more proud of the team—well done.

We continued to advance our EDI practices and build our platform, emphasizing our obligations to Indigenous communities, Truth and Reconciliation, and anti-black racism. An active Anti-Oppression Anti-Racism committee, and First Nations, Inuit, Metis sub-committee, provided guidance and training to staff and the community; we continued to grow and participate. We expanded our relationships with Indigenous communities, collaborating in service delivery and sharing members' data as requested by them, for them. We continued to support our neighbors at Mnaasged Child and Family Services, attending cultural events and sitting on several steering committees; standing alongside them to support their journey towards designation as an Indigenous Child and Family Well Being Agency. We look forward to continuing our partnership.

Being a leader in the community and fostering valued partnerships remained a priority in 2024. Staff actively participate on numerous networks, committees, and planning tables, chairing several. We co-sponsored a two-day symposium on human trafficking with the City of St. Thomas, leading to the development of a community action plan. Collaborating with STEGH, we initiated a community table on children's mental health, bringing together service leaders from across Elgin to develop an action plan and advocate for essential services – we look forward to seeing where this leads. Our pilot project with Community Living Elgin and Regional Support Associates led to purchasing a residence in Aylmer, now close to opening as a licensed residential home for children and youth with developmental disabilities - a first for our community and a model for others. Community leadership continues to drive efforts for Elgin's children, youth, and families – for Elgin by Elgin.

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We are very grateful to work alongside a team of community-minded board members, whose support and volunteer work brings invaluable strengths to our organization. Their dedication helps us create a safer community and reinforces our shared commitment to the children, youth, and families we serve.

We could not have accomplished so much and continued to provide excellent service without the hard work and dedication of our skilled and professional staff. We want to thank you for your perseverance and strength under what were often difficult circumstances in 2024. You should be proud of what you have accomplished.

Progress has been hard-won, the result of collective determination, ongoing reflection, and a willingness to adapt to changing circumstances. Through both challenges and triumphs, we recognize that the landscape of child welfare is ever evolving, demanding continued learning, responsiveness, and humility. We are committed to embedding equity, diversity, and inclusion into every aspect of our work, and to strengthening relationships with community partners who share our vision for healthy children and safe, thriving families.

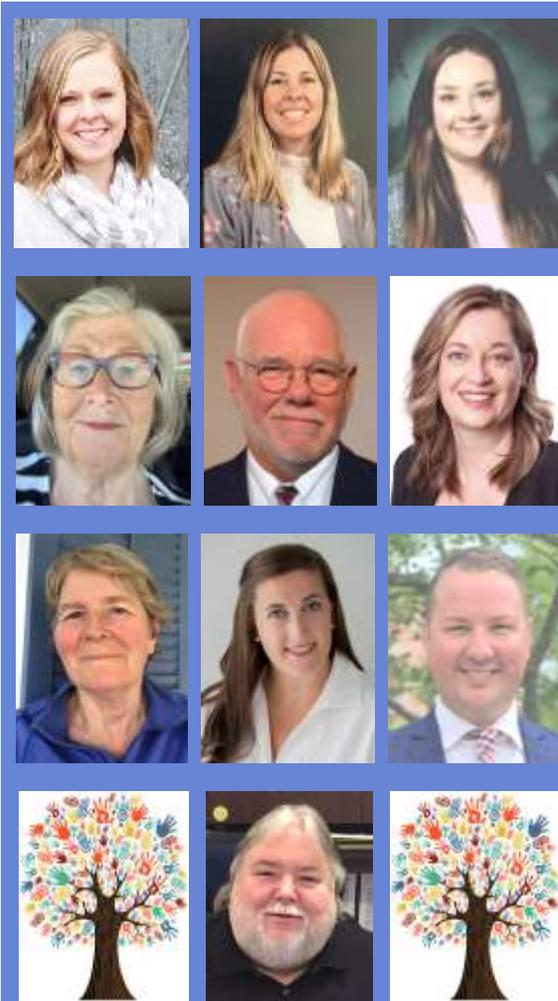
As we move forward, we carry with us the lessons of the past year and a renewed sense of purpose to ensure every child, youth, and family has the support and opportunities they need and deserve – it is the least we can do.



Jan Maguire
Chair of the Board



Brian Flint
Executive Director



FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2025

REVENUES

| | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Ministry subsidies | \$12,493,940 | 90.4% |
| Children's special allowance | 305,295 | 2.2% |
| Balanced Budget Fund | 895,257 | 6.5% |
| Maintenance and other | 120,575 | 0.9% |
| TOTAL REVENUES | \$13,815,067 | 100.0% |

EXPENSES

| | | |
|---|----------------------|---------------|
| Salaries and wages | \$ 6,509,586 | 47.1% |
| Boarding rate payments | 3,381,694 | 24.5% |
| Employee benefits | 1,719,939 | 12.5% |
| Adoption subsidies | 596,766 | 4.3% |
| Building occupancy | 456,982 | 3.3% |
| Technology | 125,045 | 0.9% |
| Travel | 258,218 | 1.9% |
| Liability Insurance and dues | 179,081 | 1.3% |
| Office administration | 143,657 | 1.0% |
| Clients' personal needs | 188,091 | 1.4% |
| Health and related costs | 77,559 | 0.6% |
| Training and recruitment | 76,029 | 0.6% |
| Purchased services - non-client related | 53,894 | 0.4% |
| Purchased services - client related | 45,029 | 0.3% |
| Promotion and publicity | 3,497 | 0.0% |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | \$ 13,815,067 | 100.0% |

MCSS SURPLUS (DEFICIT) YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2024 \$0

FACS Elgin Board of Directors 2024—2025

Left to Right, Top to Bottom: Lyndsay Collard, Donna Good, Samantha Hart-Pace, Jan Maguire (Chair), Christopher Paul (Treasurer), Lindsay Rice (Vice Chair), Nora Sanders (Secretary), Natasha Thompson, Craig Watkin, Brian Flint (Executive Director)