



Office Locations:

**Fort Frances Office
(Main office)**

240 First Street East, Suite 200
Fort Frances, Ontario P9A 1K5
Phone: (807) 274-7787
Fax: (807) 274-6646

Atikokan Office

214 Main Street
P.O. Box 2050
Atikokan, Ontario P0T 1C0
Phone: (807)597-2700
Fax: (807) 597-6920

Rainy River Office

113 Fourth Street East
P.O. Box 476
Rainy River, Ontario P0W 1L0
Phone: (807) 852-3387
Fax: (807) 852-1064

TOLL FREE NUMBER
1-800-465-7764

Foster Care

With more than 50 children and youth already in foster care in the Rainy River District, the numbers continue to grow and Family and Children's Services finds itself in great need for foster and adoptive families. The foster care program needs families for both short-term and long-term, as well as homes that can provide care for infants, toddlers, school-aged children and adolescents. There are also thousands of children and youth across the province that are in need of permanent adoptive homes. The

approval process for becoming a foster parent and adoptive parent has stringent guidelines but both single and two-parent families are enthusiastically welcomed as candidates for the program.

Foster parenting and/or adopting a child requires a great deal of commitment, compassion and energy but it is one of the most rewarding and fulfilling jobs a family can undertake. Being a foster parent and/or adoptive parent can be an exciting opportunity to make a difference in

lives of children and adolescents. The role of parenting is challenging yet can be extremely rewarding in terms of personal growth and the satisfaction of helping a child and his family when they really need it. This can far outweigh all the effort and hard work that you put into the job.

Please contact Christa Werenko for more information on becoming a foster parent at (807) 274-7787 ext. 226 or Marty Nelson for more information on becoming an adoptive parent at (807) 274-7787 ext. 267.

A Word from the Executive Director

What's In a Name

Earlier this year, our organization completed a formal process to legally change our incorporated name from the Children's Aid Society to Family and Children's Services of the District of Rainy River.

In 1978, our organization changed its operating name to Family and children's Services from the Children's Aid Society to reflect the agency's enhanced emphasis of working with families. However, as you will note on our correspondence, we maintained the corporate Children's Aid Society name.

It seems very appropriate that we complete the name transformation process at this time in our organization's development. Today we are a truly integrated children's service agency with a new mission statement that focuses on our commitment to work with families, and a recently developed set of organization values that outline the importance of such things as working in collaboration with families, respect, trust, and inclusiveness.

As a result of recent changes to the Family and Children's Services Act, our child welfare services will be significantly transformed, with increasing emphasis on strength-based

and family focused interventions. With our recently expanded children's mental health programming and full range of child development services, we truly are evolving into a full service children's agency focused on optimal family development.

Vik Nowak,
Executive Director



"We are dedicated to ensuring the safety of children and youth and promoting optimal development within families and communities."

Community Services & Quality Assurance

Did you know...

...that FACS has an internal committee called the Service Excellence Committee? The mandate of this committee is "...to make innovative and creative recommendations to improve operations within the agency within the context of providing clients with excellent service."



The Committee has been in place since 2004 and is focusing on the following organization issues: communication, client services, employee services, agency culture,

operational challenges and opportunities. The Committee has representation from every team in the agency as well as from our Board of Directors.

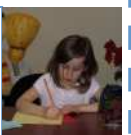
A plan for improving communication was finalized in May 2006, and is nearing completion in terms of implementation. The Committee is currently working on Client Services. We are pleased to report that our new Family Centred Conferencing initiative is having a very positive impact on client services.

"Excellence is never an accident; it is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction, skillful execution and the vision to see obstacles as opportunities."
Author Unknown

Did you also know...

...that FACS also distributes client satisfaction questionnaires to all clients upon file closure? When a questionnaire is returned to the agency, a copy is given to the Manager of the service provided for immediate response, if required. The original is given to me as the Manager of Quality Assurance. An analysis is completed on an annual basis to identify trends. This helps us along our on-going journey to excellence!

Your feedback matters! Please send in your completed satisfaction ques-



Betty-Anne MacKintosh
Manager of Community Services & Quality Assurance



Points of Interest

Tina Leimenstoll, Family Conferencing Co-ordinator for Family and Children's Services has been appointed to the Provincial Family Group Conferencing Co-ordinator roster. Congratulations Tina



Child Protection Services

HOME ALONE

One of the questions we often get asked at FACS is how old do children have to be before they can be left alone at home?

The Children and Family Services Act does not specifically state an age when children can be left home alone. This is because there are many factors to consider when making the decision about children being left at home by themselves. It is strongly recommended that no child under the age of 10 be left home alone. This means that it is the responsibility of the parents to care for and to ensure the safety of their children at all times. It also means that it is an offence to leave any child unattended without making adequate and reasonable arrangements for every situation for the child's care and safety.

When deciding whether or not to leave your child alone, here are some guidelines to consider

(NOTE—These are guidelines only and are not meant as hard and fast rules. Each situation must be considered individually):

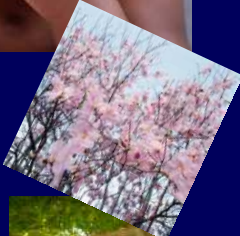
1. Age of child—age alone is not a determining factor
2. Behaviours of the child (dangerous, risk taking behaviours)
3. Temperament of the child (comfort level—discuss with your child)
4. Health of the child (are there health considerations?)
5. Maturity level and capacity of the child
6. Length of time to be left alone
7. Does the child know where you are and how to reach you?
8. Does your child know who is the emergency contact and does he know how to use it? Is there a checklist posted beside the telephone of the emergency contact?

9. Does your child know the rules they are to follow when you are not there? i.e. Kitchen safety, strangers at the door, internet safety, power failures, satellite TV, safety, answering the phone, pet safety, fire safety, etc.

When considering whether to leave your child home alone, talk to your child about this first, and arrange short trial runs to access your child's readiness and capabilities.

It must be stressed that it is always the responsibility of the parents to make the necessary and appropriate arrangements for their child(ren) in these circumstances.

If you have any questions, call 274-7787 or 597-2700 for further information.



Developmental Services

Community Integration Program

Lorraine Gauthier Stromberg is the Community Integration Worker for FACS in the community of Atikokan. Debra Bruyere is the Community Integration Worker for FACS in Fort Frances.

The Community Integration Program is a free and voluntary program, which assists families and their children age 6-18 who have a developmental disability. The focus of the program is to ensure that families and children have

the necessary supports to facilitate their integration into the community so that they can live their lives to the fullest potential. Our job consists of family support services that include advocacy and education; such as reviewing Individual Education Plans with parents, attending Identification Placement and Review Committee meetings with parents, and assisting the family regarding advocating with medical professionals.

We also assist families in accessing financial services from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services such as Special Services at Home and Assistance for Chil-

dren with Severe Disabilities. We offer recreation and life skills programming for youth, often in the form of group activities. We assist young adults and their families in making the transition to adulthood. Much of what we do is identified as a need by the parent and we attempt to meet their family and community needs to the best of our ability.

If you would like more information:

In Fort Frances please call Debra at 274-7787 ext. 229

In Atikokan please call Lorraine at 597-2700 ext. 34

We are on the Web!
www.facsrr.ca

Call your local office of Family & Children's Services
24 Hours a day,
7 Days a week
Or visit us on the web www.facsrr.ca

Children's Mental Health Services

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself.

I am Troy Clink and I recently had the privilege of becoming the Children's Mental Health Manager in November of 2006.

I am very excited to return home to the Rainy River District as I have lived away for the last 20 years. Most recently, I resided in Michigan.

During this time, I gained approximately 10 years of experience as a Masters prepared clinician working with children and families who are struggling with mental illness.

I am excited to bring the experience and expertise that I have gained to my home and native district. I am looking forward to supporting the children and



families of this district that are being affected by mental illness.

Troy