

Report from the President to the General Members June 2010

This year has been one of significant change and challenges within our organization.

In June of 2009, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services stunned the provincial Child Welfare sector when it released each agency's budget allocation for the year. With a cap on infrastructure spending, and the termination of end of the year mitigation funding, along with the Ministry's refusal to recalibrate the baselines that are central to fixing annual budget allocations, many Children's Aid Societies found themselves in a significant deficit position. While our agency's allocation remained substantially unchanged, some of our sister agencies in the North were facing some significant financial challenges which would impact our agency over the coming year.

At the end of July, Kenora-Patricia said goodbye to Skip Gryschuk, the ED of Kenora-Patricia for the past 25 years. Skip decided to take a well deserved retirement. Skip's years at Kenora-Patricia were noteworthy for his fiscal management and the significant role he played in the development of first nation child welfare. The board announced that Bill Leonard, a Director of Services for the agency would be Skip's replacement effective August 1, 2009.

This past year saw the agency undergo a number of Ministry reviews. Most notably was the foster care review wherein the agency received a 100% compliance; the crown ward review 90+%; as well our group homes in Kenora and Dryden were reviewed and we again received a regular license for both. Congratulations and thanks go out to all staff for their ongoing efforts to maintain high standards in their work.

At the end of September we received a phone call from Family and Children's Services Rainy River (FACS). They were concerned about their fiscal sustainability and were enquiring if Kenora-Patricia would be interested in talks to explore ways that the agencies could work together in a formal way to assist FACS' financial predicament. Subsequent meetings resulted in the Kenora-Patricia Board adopting a motion that would have us explore formal amalgamation between Kenora-Patricia and FACS. A great deal of work went into detailing a plan as to how this amalgamation would occur and this detailed plan was sent to the Ministry on April 30, 2010. We should receive a formal response from the Ministry in July. Then the real fun begins.

Last year we received funding to relocate our Kenora Group homes from Black Sturgeon Lake to a new facility to be constructed in the city of Kenora, with all city services available. The Black Sturgeon property has been placed on the market. The new group home should be completed by the end of March 2011.

We continue our working relationship with Tikinagan. Tikinagan has implemented Phase 2 of the repatriation of their children to the Northern communities. As they continue to develop their resources we will continue to close down ours.

In February and March management and union set about to negotiate a new collective agreement. After seven long days we were able to reach agreement on an 18 month contract with a 2.5% wage increase in the final twelve months. It is the hope that 18 months will see the contract expire when the agency is in a position to know their fiscal situation, which we have not been in a position to do in the past.

Also in February, the agency held a general staff meeting to bring everyone together and provide them with updates on the various activities of the agency. It also allowed staff the opportunity to ask questions of senior management face to face. It is hoped that this forum will continue to occur on at least a biannual basis.

In the spring we had an opportunity to meet with Commissioner Barry Lewis, of the Ministry's Commission on the Sustainability of Child Welfare. Mr. Lewis was impressed with our input especially as it related to providing child welfare services in the north and the special needs of first nation's children and families.

The budget allocations for 2010 were released on May 21 of this year. Kenora-Patricia's budget realized a modest increase, but FACS is again facing a \$400,000 deficit which will present a challenge as we continue our talks toward amalgamation.

I suspect the coming year will be as challenging as the one past, but we remain committed to the high quality of child welfare services to children and families with whom we work.

Children's Services 2009/2010

There was significant activity in Children's Services over the year. 242 children were admitted to care, with new admissions of Kenora-Patricia children exceeding those of other Children's Aid Societies (OSW's). This resulted in the need to increase the number of Children's Services Social Workers in Dryden and Kenora. Discharges of OSW's increased during the last half of the year, resulting in a reduction of total children in care by March 31, 2010. OSW days care increased over the previous year, but the days care provided to Kenora-Patricia children declined. While the number of Kenora-Patricia admissions to care was up, those children experienced shorter lengths of stay in care.

The combined total days care was only 451 days lower than 2008/09. The OSW project with Tikinagan Child and Family Services had matured to the point where children were being discharged to families and resources within Tikinagan's jurisdiction.

	Kenora-Patricia Children	OSW Children	Total
Children in Care (April 1, 2009)	116	200	316
New Admissions	124	118	242
Discharges from Care	118	153	271
Children in Care (March 31, 2010)	122	165	287
Days Care Provided	43,216	68,766	111,982
Days Care Foster	31,168	42,270	73,438

Most Kenora-Patricia children were cared for in a foster family - 72% of days care were various types of foster care. The Society only had two of its children placed in treatment facilities outside of its catchment area at year-end. By comparison 61.5% of OSW days care were in foster care. More OSW days care were in the Society's group care and staffed resources, which had been designed to care for more difficult to serve children and youth. Discharges of OSWs from staffed care accelerated over the last half of the year.

Adoption services were much quieter than the previous year with three adoptions finalized versus four (4) a year previous. Nine (9) approved homes were awaiting placement, compared to seven (7) last year. Court activity has declined, with the result that fewer Crown Wards are being created and available for adoption. The Society was trained in the use of the AdoptOntario Website and posted one child available for adoption. There were 46 requests for adoption disclosure during the year, up from 16 in the previous year.

Forty-two (42) youth received Extended Care and Maintenance Services during the year, down from 49 the previous year. The Kenora and Dryden Independent Living programs combined to host a very successful regional YouthCan weekend in Dryden and Blue Lake at the end of May, 2009.

The Kumon Tutoring Program continued to operate in Kenora and Dryden. A second tutoring day was added in Kenora due to the volume of children participating in the program. There was an attempt to expand the Kumon into Red Lake, but there were insufficient numbers to sustain the program. At year-end, the Dryden program was developing an expansion of Kumon into Sioux Lookout.

One Kenora-Patricia youth was transitioned to adult developmental services in Red Lake, leaving three youth in the Society's Associate Living Supports program at year-end.

Foster Care Resources 2009/2010

Opportunities for foster parents in the last year to attend training have been many. Foster parents from all branches have attended PRIDE Training. Some foster parents participated on a one day workshop on Teamwork & the Challenge of Working with Difficult Clients: Families and Children, FASD two day training in the Dryden/Sioux Lookout community, Critical Incident Stress Management and Trauma Children and Youth. ONLAC for foster parents was offered in Dryden and Sioux Lookout; Therapeutic Crisis Intervention and Attachment was offered in Kenora. In addition foster families have attended specialized training which was available in their own communities.

Foster parents have also had the opportunity to attend via the Child Development Centre and Sick Kids Hospital in Toronto, teleconference such as Anxiety Training, Healthy Eating Matters, and Behavioural Training Interventions.

Foster Parents have indicated that they find the PRIDE curriculum very helpful and enjoy taking the different modules in this training. The First Aid/CPR training will be organized for this fall. Foster parents are looking forward to participating in this specific training.

Foster families in Kenora assisted with the planning of OPEN YOUR HEART benefit in February. The benefit was very successful raising \$2,000 for children in care.

In the Dryden community the Patricia Centre for Children and Youth works with our foster families who are experiencing difficulties with their children to prevent placement breakdowns. This has assisted in the prevention of placement breakdowns.

The work of foster families has been honored in each Branch; foster families have participated in appreciation/dinner evenings held in each community. Each Resource unit has planned different activities for their foster parents for this evening. Foster parents indicated that they enjoyed the evening.

The Sioux Lookout/Dryden Annual Foster Parent/children picnic At Objibway Provincial Park was a success with largest prize of a one week long house boat cruise.

The Foster Parent Associations have been active in Kenora and Dryden communities. In Sioux Lookout the association has been reborn with an active membership. Their first meeting was February 2010 and the association held a Sleigh Ride Party at Cedar Bay.

Presently we have 166 Foster Families and each resource worker is conducting Safe assessments to continue building the number of beds we have for children in our community. Some of the recruitment activities are focusing in attempting to increase foster family homes that will care for infants and adolescents. This is an area of challenge as most families do not want to take on this age of children.

Foster parents will also be attending the FPSO Conference in Toronto in June of this year.

For the coming year the resource unit will focus on recruitment, retention of foster families and decrease in the number of placement disruptions. Ruth Eskritt has joined the foster team as supervisor following the retirement of Jim Ames at the end of April. We also have Connie Brown moved to foster resources. We welcome them both to the team.

The main goal of the treatment foster parent program is to help very difficult children develop a trusting relationship with their caregivers. Children with FASD, ADHD, Autism and Attachment Disorder are the children targeted to the program. Initially the goal of the program was to have five (5) homes in Kenora with a total of 10 children. In April 2010 the program in Kenora had 10 treatment homes with 13 children placed. The program in Kenora has three active partners: the Child Development Centre, Kenora-Patricia and Anishinaabe Abinoojii Child and Family Services. We also welcomed Ted Carey as the supervisor for the program beginning in May 2010.

Given the success of the treatment foster program in the Kenora Branch, Kenora-Patricia made a decision to expand the program to the Dryden/Sioux Lookout area. The goal of the program and structure is the same as the one in Kenora.

The Pat Centre, children's mental health has joined as a partner along with AAFS Dryden Branch. Both agencies are contributing with their expertise the development of the Dryden treatment foster care program. At present we have one (1) foster home and one (1) child placed, in the community of Sioux Lookout.

Four (4) homes are in process in the community of Dryden and one (1) in the Town of Sioux Lookout.

Four (4) families have indicated an interest in the community of Dryden to provide respite for the program and one (1) in the town of Sioux Lookout. We welcome Susan Rooke as the foster treatment resource worker for the Dryden team and look forward to the continued development of the treatment foster care program in the Dryden/Sioux Lookout Branch.

Protection Services 2009/2010

Over this last year protection has been very successful in two fronts overcoming initial challenges: Kenora-Patricia has been able to stabilize the Dryden and Kenora protection units. Both units began the year with almost all new staff to protection. New protection staff have all received the New Worker training program which runs for 18 days and it consists of eight (8) modules of training. Each module is two (2) full days of training with the exception of two (2) modules which are three (3) days each.

Protection units have focused on ensuring that their work is measured by keeping children safe. Further by engaging and building on the family strengths to minimize the risk of harm that parents/families posed to their children. In delivering protection services, when children have to be removed from the family home, a strong effort is made to identify caregivers in the child's circle of support. Thus children would be placed in a "kin" family first before exploring the foster care system.

Both intake staff and protection staff throughout the agency (including supervisory staff) spent considerable time this past year in reaching out to our community's partners and clarify "the duty to report." Through the process of providing community agencies with clarification on their *duty to report*, it also gave Kenora-Patricia the opportunity to discuss concerns these agencies had with our agency. Thus opening dialogue between agencies as to how we can work better to serve our families and children.

The second challenge which protection has been addressing is the significant increase in the number of protection cases. Kenora-Patricia ended the fiscal year March 31, 2009, with 153 protection cases. In reviewing the statistics for the year April 1st 2009, to date (May 2010), Kenora-Patricia has 182 open protection cases. The increase of an additional 29 cases has put significant stress in both protection and intake units. Social work staff in the protection units have risen to the challenge and supported each other by travelling from one branch to another to assist in the response to intake cases. Long term protection units have been very supportive by taking cases quickly from intake and carrying full protection caseloads. At present the agency is exploring alternatives in determining the best manner to staff protection units in order to effectively deal with the up and down trends which make planning for staffing difficult.

The Dryden Branch has developed a response to adolescent/parent conflict which will assist the families deal with youth who are experiencing high conflict with their families. The intervention being delivered allows the opportunity for intake/protection and children's mental health to work together at the point of intake to up front the service delivery.

The agency has centralized screening services for all calls, and referrals received from our communities. This function has been assigned to the Dryden Branch.

Tikinagan Child and Family Services had been delivering emergency on call services to Red Lake and Sioux Lookout Branches. Beginning January 2010 Kenora-Patricia resumed the delivery of on call once again for both Red Lake and Sioux Lookout. Tikinagan had been delivering services in Red Lake for approximately one (1) year and in Sioux Lookout since October 2005. This decision was as a result of budgetary constraints encountered by Tikinagan.

Protection staff attended a number of OACAS training programs through the year. In addition protection staff participated in Critical Connections exploring the intersection of domestic violence and child safety.

Four cases were successfully mediated with the assistance of the Child and Family Services Board. Protection families brought their concerns/complaints to the CFSB. Kenora-Patricia met with the families mediated by a facilitator from the CFSB and resolved the differences.

The P.A.R. (Partner Assault Response) program has developed an additional service component to females who have been charged with domestic violence. The programs for both male and female offenders have been very successful in assisting the Dryden community deal with domestic violence.

The protection program is focusing on developing a framework for strength based clinical practice. To this end protection social work staff and supervisors will be coming together in the fall to engage in both training and full dialogue to develop Kenora-Patricia's clinical framework for strength base practice.

Prior to this year summer vacation, protection staff will be coming together to examine our practice in kinship service. Training will be provided to further develop the kinship service program. Specifically assessment areas and legacies these families bring will be highlighted to establish a more comprehensive practice.

During the summer an effort will be placed in reviewing protection procedures and making the changes necessary to bring these up to date.

**Statement of Operations Operating Fund for the Year Ending
 31 March 2010**

REVENUE	
Province	\$ 12,475,194
Interest and other income	109746
Total Revenue	\$12,584,940

COST OF ALL SERVICES	
Non-Residential	\$2,270,586
Residential	\$6,869,522
Adoption	\$379,707
Legal	\$351,537
Infrastructure	\$1,796,819
Direct Travel	\$500,760
Capital & Technology	\$494,007
Transformation	\$53,646
Other Society Wards	<u>\$8,879,164</u>
CW Total Expenditures	\$21,613,748
Recoveries	<u>(\$9,497,312)</u>
Net CW Expenditures	\$12,118,424
Non-Child Welfare	430429
One Time Capital	\$56005
Total Operating Costs	<u>\$12,604,858</u>

FINANCIAL NOTES

Donation Reserve Fund Balance 107,808
 Trust Funds Balance 125,282

Record of Employees Paid \$100,000 or more in 2009

Mervin E. Gryschuk
 Earnings \$122,556.41
 Benefits \$ 2,517.67

William Leonard
 Earnings \$112,472.53
 Benefits \$ 1,070.61

Bill Johnson
 Earnings \$100,697.63
 Benefits \$ 1,034.81

Robert Onysko
 Earnings \$101,564.81
 Benefits \$ 1,034.81

Prepared in accordance with the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act, 1996.

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