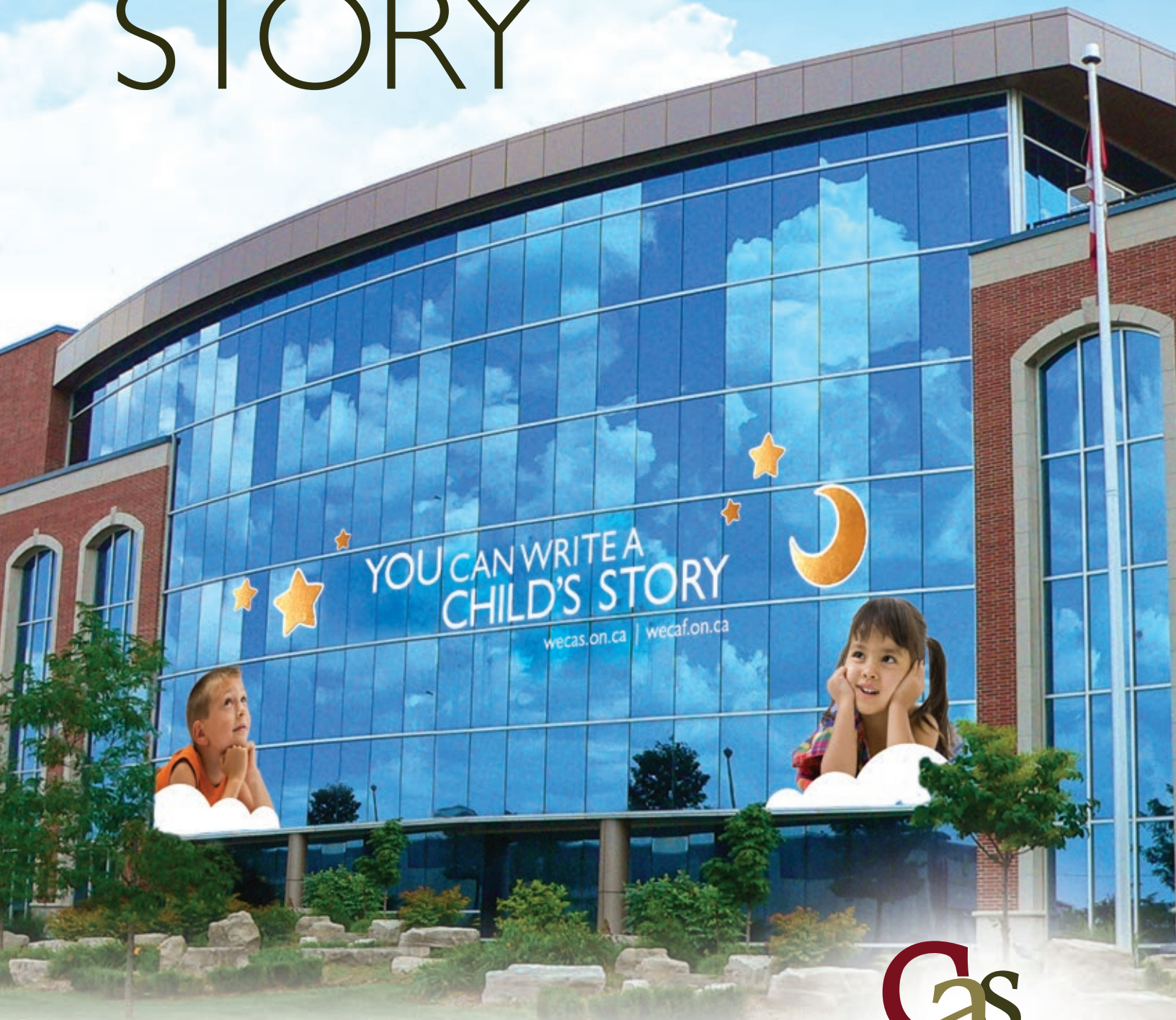


YOU CAN WRITE A CHILD'S STORY



WINDSOR-ESSEX CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY
115TH ANNUAL REPORT | 2014-2015



MISSION STATEMENT

The Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society is dedicated to the well-being and safety of every child by advocating for, and partnering with, our children, families and communities.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2014-2015

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Past President

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Treasurer

Ms. Dana D'Andrea,
Secretary

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Mr. Brendan Dodd
Ms. Genevieve Isshak

Dr. Dena Nazer
Ms Julie Roy (Resigned
mid-term)

SENIOR MANAGEMENT 2014-2015

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Chief Executive Officer

Mr. Mark Friel, CPA, CMA
Chief Financial Officer

Mr. Jack Sullens, LLB
*Chief Legal and Human
Resources Officer*

Ms. Terry Johnson, BSW, MSW
Chief Operating Officer

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Children's Services

Mr. Lyle Ward, BSW, MSW

Family Services

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BSW, MSW

Dr. Kim Brisebois, PhD

Mr. Bill Morris, BSW, MSW

Permanency

Ms. Linda Goodhue,
BSW, MSW

Quality Assurance

Dr. Jessica Sartori, PhD

Information Technology, Facilities and Technical Services

Mr. Jason Rainsforth, MCITP,
MCSE+I, CNE, CCNA,
CCDA, CCA, A+



A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



The theme of the Annual Report and the 115th Annual General Meeting of the Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society (WECAS) is that of the Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Foundation's new campaign, "You Can Write a Child's Story". So much of what we do as an organization evolves around the essential belief that despite circumstances, every child should have an equal opportunity to realize his or her dreams and aspirations. This document features several of our youth who are well on their way to successful futures. As any good parent would do, the Society has provided them with tools, resources and a huge amount of belief in the fact that they can achieve.

This past year, we marked the first full year of operation of the Bill & Dot Muzzatti Child & Family Centre. In this time, \$500,000 was gained in savings by having the majority of programs and services at one central location. This had a significant impact in terms of achieving a balanced budget for the second consecutive year. This is in compliance with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services five year funding formula. Based on our trends and analysis, we predict a

balanced budget for the next few years. Just as important, the Muzzatti Centre has enabled child and family friendly programs to thrive. We once again extend our appreciation to Dorothy Muzzatti and her family as well as the many other significant donors who made this innovative facility a reality. Within the walls of this complex; art, music, tutoring, youth activities, life skill training amongst other programs happen daily in a home-like, enriching environment. As a result of cost savings, the mortgage of \$3.1 million on the Muzzatti Centre has been paid.

"If there's a story you really want to read, but it hasn't been written yet, then you must write it"

Tony Morrison

The Accountability framework at WECAS has worked. The purpose of the framework is to outline the roles and responsibilities of the Ministry and the Society with the goal of creating a sustainable system of Child Welfare. The collaboration between the Ministry, OACAS and the Society has been a template for positive collaboration. This was discussed with Assistant Deputy Minister Rachel Kampus and Minister of Children and Youth Services Director for the West Region on a visit to the agency in the past fiscal year. In terms of other accountability mechanisms, the annual Crown Ward Review brought forth positive outcomes. The review which monitors compliance with legislation and requirements related to the care of children had particular praise for the Society in terms of its work on strength based planning for its children and youth in care, the quality of its social histories and its high percentage of family based care. We have been able to find the balance between strong fiscal management and quality protection and prevention services.

We continue to hire new staff to meet our needs and to ensure quality service to our clients and stakeholders. The focus continues to shift to our strategic plan of providing greater permanency by way of family based placements for



Mark Rinaldi-Ross
Board President



William Bevan
Chief Executive Officer

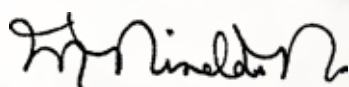
A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

children. With less reliance on local and provincial group homes, we were able to maximize our staff in Resources/Kinship to increase efficiencies in these areas. Our total staff complement at the end of this fiscal year is 374.

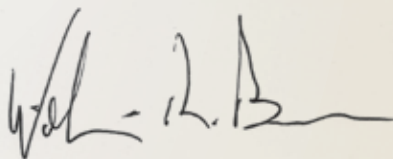
Two significant community outreach programs this past year have had a direct impact on clients. In November, Thiessen's Orchards of Leamington donated 12,000 pounds of apples which equated to 1200 bags of fall fruit to families who receive services from WECAS. Our thanks to Andrew Thiessen and his family for this generous gift. On Family Day in February, Sun Life Financial joined with Sobey's, St. Clair Beach to host the 1st Annual Food for Families on Family Day. The drive resulted in over 1000 bags of food being packed by volunteers. This equated to \$10,000 worth of food donations that was distributed to WECAS families. We appreciate the efforts of Paul Lue Pann, General Manager of Sun Life Financial's Anchor Drive office who organized this great initiative. We also commend the staff and members of the Society and Foundation Boards who together contributed \$25,584 to the Annual Boards/Staff Face to Face Campaign. This is an increase of \$8,600 from 2013. This is of course over and above the giving that goes on twelve months a year as our staff and volunteers assist our families in so many ways.

Many of our programs would not be possible without the support of the Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Foundation. The Foundation whose mandate is to generate funds for these programs has gone through a renewal process. Eight new Board members have come together with eight existing members to form an energized and passionate group dedicated to making a difference in the lives of the children we serve. A definite highlight of the past year was the Holiday Program which generated over \$85,000 in monetary donations and over \$500,000 in terms of in-kind gifts that assisted a record 866 families. The Foundation is the author of the "You Can Write a Child's Story" campaign. In the months ahead, we look forward to joining with the Foundation as this campaign is unveiled to the community. This will begin at our doorstep as our Riverside Drive windows take on a visual invitation for people to join in. As indicated at the beginning of this message, there are opportunities for everyone to contribute either by monetary donations to programs, volunteerism, becoming a foster parent or through adoption. You Can Truly Write a Child's Story!!

Our special thanks to the staff, volunteers and foster parents who together form the team that provides the day to day impact in terms of nurturing children, empowering youth and strengthening families. You are advocates, champions, and mentors for our young people. 115 years later, we are proud to say, "We Are Your Children's Aid"!



Mark Rinaldi-Ross
Board President



William Bevan
Chief Executive Officer



WHO ARE WE?

The Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society is dedicated to child abuse prevention, protection of our community's most vulnerable resource; our children and providing the resources required to assure appropriate permanency planning for all children and youth in care. The following Departments carry out the day to day operations of the organization.

INTAKE & AFTER HOURS

The Intake and After-Hours Department is responsible for investigating and assessing all allegations of child maltreatment through the use of the Eligibility Spectrum (a standardized tool that defines the grounds for protection) to ensure the protection, safety and well-being of children, ages 0-16 years, and recommend the most appropriate intervention. Services are provided on a 24 hour basis, 365 days per year.

FAMILY WELL-BEING PROGRAM

The Family Well Being Program plays an instrumental role in the development and implementation of support strategies and educational programs for care-givers who provide care to children in foster families, kin (in care) and protection families. The primary role of the program is to assist in sustaining families and protecting children through situations of high stress thereby reducing the incidence of admission to care. The Family Well Being Worker provides a short term, behaviourally oriented, intensive service to program participants. Group programming is also offered as a strategy to address concerns. In 2014-2015, there were approximately 350 referrals made to the program.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

The Children's Services Department works with, and meets the needs of children in the care of the Society. These children may be in the care of the Society for a short period of time. Services are provided to children from birth to eighteen years of age and the Society provides extended care to youth between eighteen and twenty-one years of age as circumstances warrant.

PERMANENCY PLANNING

The Society continues to make great strides in our efforts to increase opportunities for Family based care vs. Group care for children and youth who are

admitted to care. A number of strategies have been initiated to support this permanent option and will continue throughout the coming year which includes sustaining children and youth with their families and kin; ongoing permanency planning; repatriation of children to our community; Treatment Foster Care Program that supports children with complex needs; community capacity program with our community partners and our internal Family Well Being program that supports foster homes who care for adolescents who come into care.

ADOPTION SERVICES

Adoption recruitment efforts include the provincial Adoption Resource Exchange Conference, Adopt Ontario, and the new provincial web-based initiative for Agencies. The Society was again successful in receiving \$80,000 funding from Wendy's Wonderful Kids to support recruitment efforts in this area. The agency has implemented a 'Foster Adopt' program where we dually approve families to 'foster with a view to adopt'. The adoption department continues to focus on permanency planning and in addition to these efforts, we work cooperatively with other teams and our community in achieving stability for children. Provincial and agency subsidies may be provided to support families in the adoption process.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Quality Assurance Department is responsible for monitoring the outcomes of the children and families that the Agency works with. This is done through program evaluation. A tracking system for strategic performance management (balanced scorecard), and staff feedback. This past year, the agency participated in the public launch of the Provincial Performance Indicators which are tracked by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. These indicators foster continuous improvement in service delivery and outcomes, and increase transparency and accountability. We currently monitor the performance indicators twice annually and use them to make decisions about service delivery. Next steps include continued monitoring and public reporting.

A LOOK BACK AT A SUCCESSFUL YEAR

CHILD & FAMILY ACCESS PROGRAM

This program is dedicated to providing children in care with a safe and family friendly environment for children and caregivers to visit with each other. The Society completes over 50,000 hours of supervised access a year.

CROWN WARD REVIEW

This annual review provides the Society with a measure of performance regarding Ministry Standards involving children who have been made wards of the Crown following twenty four months of successive Crown Wardship. As a result of a great commitment by frontline staff and supervisors, the Society enjoyed another successful year with a Full/High compliance rating of 91.7%.

YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE (YAC)

YAC is a child and youth in care lead group advocating for and supporting each other. The Committee has met with huge success this year and has increasingly become a valuable part of the overall experience of children in care. Members of the Committee are active in local events and initiatives. As well, they participate in leadership and advocacy roles at the provincial level.

FOSTER CARE LICENSING REVIEW

The Foster Care Licensing Review was conducted in October, 2014. Overall, it was a positive review and WECAS was granted a full license. Positive interviews with foster families reflected a sense of value and feeling respected as part of a team. Feedback from children in care included comments such as, "It feels like a family"; "It is great. It changed my life."; "They make my favorite meals."; "It is fun, there is no spanking." and "It feels like home."

CCSY (CONTINUED CARE AND SUPPORT FOR YOUTH) PROGRAM

Through the CCSY program, youth ages 18-21 can receive financial and other supports to help build on their strengths and meet their goals during transition to adulthood. The Society supports these youth through Life Skills programming and emotional and financial support. The Crown Ward Education Championship Initiative is another committee that also seeks to support our youth in achieving successful educational outcomes.

LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM

A Life Skills program has been maintained and offered in collaboration with staff from New Beginnings. Our Continued Care and Support for Youth (CCSY) staff participates in the planning and delivery of the weekly program with New Beginnings. A program consists of meal preparation and dinner followed by a one hour life skill lesson including cooking, cleaning, budgeting, banking, employment skills, apartment/tenant information as well as making youth aware of community resources and how to utilize them. This past year, 31 youth benefitted from the program that took place in the W. Garfield Weston Foundation Teaching Kitchen of the Muzzatti Centre.

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

This past year, 212 active volunteers donated 63,446 service hours to Society and Foundation programs and services. These included transportation, Kids on the Block, Family Well Being, Photography, Holiday, Mentorship and special events.

CHILDREN & YOUTH IN CARE DAY

Our youth joined with M.P.P. Teresa Piruzza on May 14th in hoisting the youth flag over the Society's Riverside Drive lawn. A barbeque followed which allowed for an interactive and informative discussion amongst the youth and M.P.P. Piruzza. The day concluded with the dedication of the Emilia Rossi Children's Play Area, a gift of the Ziter family.



A LOOK BACK AT A SUCCESSFUL YEAR

THE ANTI-OPPRESSIVE PRACTICE (AOP) ADVISORY COMMITTEE

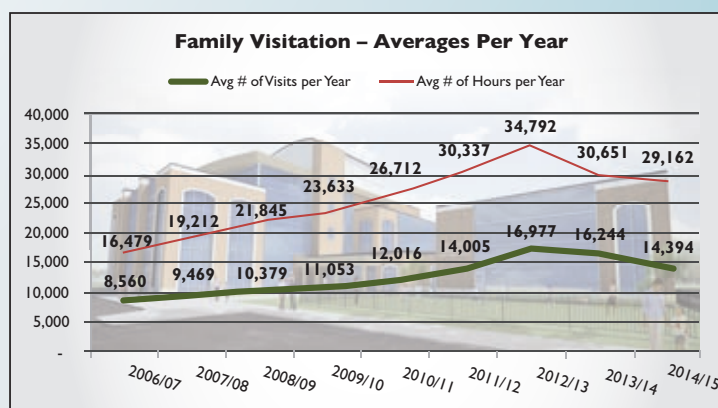
The Anti-Oppressive Practice (AOP) Advisory Committee supports WECAS in delivering services in a manner which is fair, inclusive, respectful and culturally competent. This past year saw enhancements to protocols with our First Nations, Metis, Islamic and African communities through a process of consultation with stakeholders. WECAS continues to be a strong voice on the Windsor-Essex Local Immigration Partnership (WELIP), a local planning body with broad sector representation. The Society's collaborative approach to working with our Islamic community was highlighted at the 2nd Annual WELIP Forum. WECAS was also represented at the Provincial Anti-Oppressive Roundtable (AOR) of the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS), contributing to the vision and work plan of the coming year.

FAMILY ACCESS

The Bill & Dot Muzzatti Child & Family Centre for access is much larger and warmer, and conducive to improved visits between children, parents and extended family. Though the group model of supervision can be uncomfortable for some families, the Centre has allowed families to each have their own "family space" within an open area. The staff are there to continue to supervise visits but are positioned outside of the "family space". The emphasis to staff is to intervene where there are safety concerns and to be as least intrusive as possible in a supervised setting, normalizing a visit as much as possible under the circumstances.

THE "GET ALONG GANG" CAMP

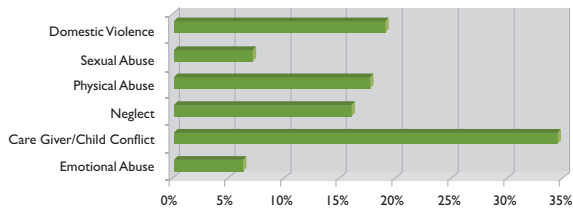
The camp merges best practice social skills therapy techniques, creative-arts therapies and success-oriented camp activities. The "Get Along Gang" camp aims to advance campers social competency while building self-esteem through social, physical and creative activities with peers in many venues. This past summer, 11 children benefitted from the camp which made full use of the new Weston Teaching Kitchen and the many activity rooms of the Muzzatti Centre. Zehrs Markets (Manning Road) was a generous contributor to the program.



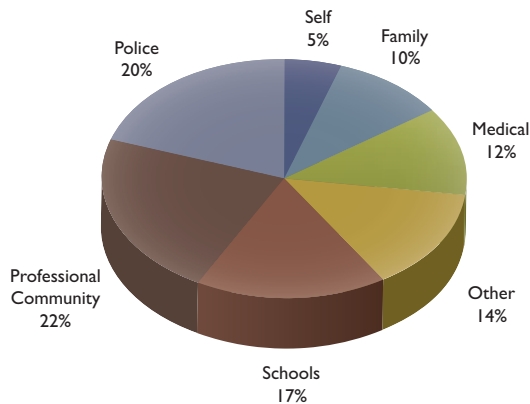
STATISTICAL AND FINANCIAL REVIEW

OUR WORK: WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT

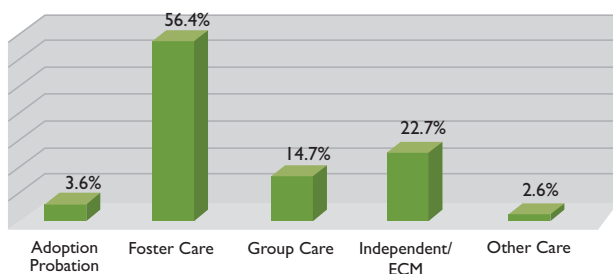
What causes a child to come into care? You will note from the chart below that caregiver/child conflict (where the caregiver and child relationship is so combative that there is a risk of harm to the child or other family members) was the number one reason, followed by domestic violence.



Any time we get a referral, it means somebody in the community has a concern and feels a child or family would benefit from our assistance. The Referral Source remains consistent with previous years.



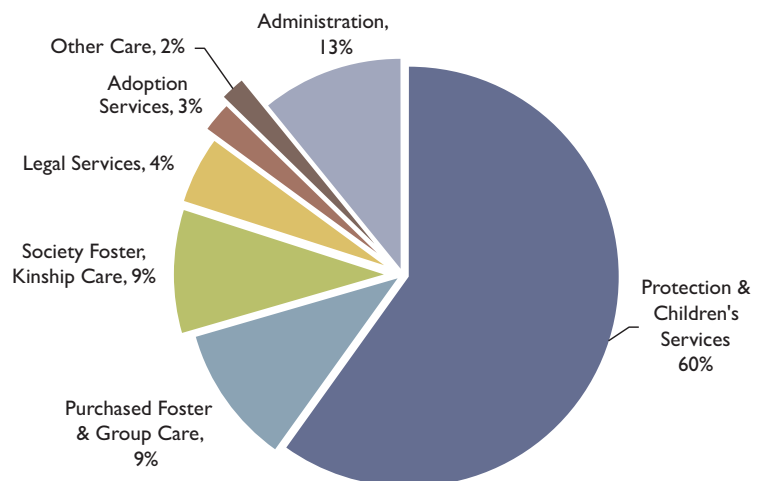
When children are unable to return home, our Resource Workers are responsible for selecting the most appropriate residential placement for children coming into care of the Society.



Child Welfare Data	2014-2015	2013-2014
Intake Services - Investigation & Assessment		
New Child Protection Referrals	3,019	3,061
Investigations Completed	3,040	3,030
Family Services - Ongoing Protection		
New Ongoing Protection Cases Transferred From Intake	879	858
Average Open Ongoing Protection Cases	1,503	1,494
Kinship Service Home Studies	135	121
Family Visitation Access Program - Annual Visitation	14,394	16,130
Family Well Being Program - Admission Prevention		
Families Served	666	519
Children's Services		
New Admissions into Care	233	272
Total Children Served	852	873
Discharged from Care	247	254
Average Extended Care & Maintenance Youth (18+)	131	96
Average Children In Care	614	613
Resources and Adoption Services		
Average Foster Homes Available	178	192
Average Kinship Care Homes Available	58	55
Children Adopted During the Year	24	32
Volunteer Services		
Total Volunteers	212	251
Total Volunteer Hours	63,446	58,744
Volunteer Kilometers Driven	2,461,914	2,349,122

Child Welfare Expenditures*	2014-2015	2013-2014
Boarding and Client Services	18,315,098	19,530,721
Staffing Wages, Travel and Training	37,057,349	35,995,310
Administration	3,956,567	3,401,059
Total Gross Expenditures	59,329,014	58,927,091
Other Income	2,581,794	2,723,883
Net Expenditures	\$56,747,220	\$56,203,207

How the Dollar Was Spent - \$56.7 Million



OUR COMMUNITY RESPONDS



On November 13, 2014, Thiessen's Orchards made a donation of 12,000 pounds of apples for needy families



The Sun Life Food for Families on Family Day, February 16, 2015 resulted in 1000 bags of food being packed by 30 volunteers for families of WECAS.

886 families wish lists are fulfilled as a result of an appeal to the Community to assist the 2014 Holiday Program





The Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society is Most Appreciative of the Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Foundation's Support of the Following Programs

RBC'S FAMILY WELL BEING THROUGH EARLY HELP PROGRAM

Sixteen different groups are provided annually as a result of a grant from RBC Financial. These include: Strengthening Families, Clean Sweep, Budgeting, Heart of Parenting, Back to Basics, Mindful ME Yoga, Parenting Your Spirited Child, Autism, Tech Savvy, Triple P Parenting, Building Positive Relationships and Dove Self Esteem. Additional supports and resources have also been provided to families referred to the Family Well Being Program through this grant.

"FRESH AIR" SUMMER CAMP

246 children and youth benefited from a camp experience that included 21 day and recreational camps. The total cost of camp was \$85,423 including transportation. Canadian Tire Jumpstart and Patrick & Andrea Horan were major contributors.

EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Foundation continues to be dedicated to the healthy development and academic achievement of the youth served by the Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society. On an annual basis, approximately 30 youth receive over \$25,000 in total to ensure they successfully complete their programs. This year, we acknowledge the generosity of Jose's Bar & Grill, the Windsor Regiment and the W. Garfield Weston Foundation who have made significant contributions to bursaries.

BACK TO SCHOOL PROGRAM

In partnership with Staples Business Depot (Walker Rd.), National Bank of Canada, and Union Gas (Helping Hands Program), 755 back packs filled with school supplies were provided to children and youth receiving protection services from the Society. The children and youth who benefitted from this program were ready for school and positioned for success.

HOLIDAY PROGRAM

The program saw an overwhelming increase in need with 866 families referred to the program. This includes our youth living independently. In total 181 businesses and community organizations as well as 231 individuals/families supported the program. An appeal to the community through a series of articles in the Windsor Star resulted in a record \$85,820 in monetary donations. In addition, over \$500,000 of in-kind gifts were received. We were able to meet all "wish lists". Third party events such as "Help Carlos Stuff the Bus" were instrumental in helping to achieve the goal. The three day event held in Leamington brought in 517 toys.

PHOTOGRAPHY PROGRAM

The Photography Program, "Camera Club" involves a group of youth who come together in a social setting to explore creativity and self-expression through photography. Each youth is given a camera that is taken on a number of outings. The program has produced amazing results, not only in terms of the snapshots taken, but more importantly the increase in self-esteem and friendships that have been established through the program.





The Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society is Most Appreciative of the Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Foundation's Support of the Following Programs

MUSIC PROGRAM

Once again, over 50 children who participated in this program were given an opportunity to explore and discover their inner self through vocal and instrumental music. Under the direction of a qualified Music Therapist, children met weekly in the Muzzatti Centre's Music & Arts Room to share a group experience that culminates in a long term positive impact. The young people presented a Christmas Concert in December that was truly amazing!

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION & OUTREACH

The Child Abuse Prevention Program was formed out of the need to address the education and prevention of child abuse as a child welfare mandate. The program works closely with community partners and the community at large to ensure that the issue of child abuse remains in the forefront of public education efforts aimed at reducing and preventing its impact on children and families.

- "Go Purple for Prevention" – October is Child Abuse Prevention Month
95 local organizations and businesses participated during the campaign and made a tremendous impact on raising awareness about child abuse and how to keep children and youth safe in our community. A new social media campaign significantly contributed to increasing the profile of the issue and spreading the word about the importance of reporting suspected abuse.
- The Society's internal Speaker's Bureau delivered over 65 community and professional workshops to over 3,000 individuals. These presentations primarily focused on identifying and reporting child abuse and the role of a Children's Aid Society. This included a presentation to the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies' provincial Communications Working Group on the Society's demonstrated success in child abuse education and prevention.

- The school based program, Kids on the Block delivered over 190 presentations in 95 different venues serving 13,357 children and adults by the end of the fiscal year.
- The Society's www.preventchildabuse.ca website received over 52,000 "hits" by over 12,500 unique visitors.

HOMEWORK PROGRAM

30 children and youth received educational supports from 30 tutors in the Homework Program – a 1:1 ratio! The program also receives ongoing support from three group leaders and three floating tutors. The program runs over six months, three nights a week. This past year, the program provided 55 tutoring sessions in all.

Bricks 4 Kidz visited the Homework program nine times this past year thanks to a grant from the Windsor-Family Credit Union. The goals of the program are; for children to play and socialize with friends while learning the fundamentals of engineering and architecture in a noncompetitive setting by incorporating math, science and creative thinking; to build problem-solving skills, provide an opportunity for creative expression and foster an appreciation of how things work; and to help students understand how engineering and architecture are built upon current subjects taught within the class such as numeracy, literacy, problem solving, math and science.

WINDSOR-ESSEX
Children's Aid
FOUNDATION
Growing a Strong Future



- Support Education, Enrichment & Family Programs
- Support Children & Youth of Windsor-Essex County
- Foster, Volunteer, Adopt

To find out how “You Can Write a Child’s Story,” contact 519 252-1171, ext. 3210 or visit www.wecas.on.ca or www.wecaf.on.ca.



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