

2022/2023 ANNUAL REPORT



SUPPORT THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS



A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The 2022-2023 year can be best described as two sides of a coin. On one side, we have experienced triumph and success, and on the other side, it has been tumultuous and stressful. We have successfully navigated our way through and out of the pandemic; we have established a Strategic Plan and Operational Plan that are both embedded in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; and we have continued to support and serve amongst the most vulnerable children, youth, and families in our community.

Surviving the pandemic, however, has left its scars. And we see those scars in the faces and spirits of the families we serve and in our staff. The mental health toll has been significant. And while we are very resilient and will always come out on the other side renewed and stronger, the journey has been and continues to be challenging.

If the pandemic was not enough, the global economy has added significant pressures to families in the community who were already facing financial stress. What is so alarming for the children, youth, and families we serve is the realities associated with the current economical crisis that has led to insurmountable cost increases in necessities such as food, shelter, clothing, technology, and utilities. Our families struggle with being able to make ends meet day to day. Our youth cannot find affordable housing and our food support programs are being utilized at peak rates.

Despite these real challenges, the strength of our staff, volunteers, resource families and the Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Foundation, has come shining through. Their contributions are deeply appreciated. We all persevered by supporting one another, by being kind and compassionate and by working hard to

operationalize our strategic goals and to fulfill our mission. As a result, we have seen firsthand the many success stories experienced by those we serve. The resources at hand have enabled many to rise above the obstacles to achieve resiliency, financial security, enhanced self-esteem, and stronger positive relationships.

This is why the work we do and the partnerships we build and foster in the Windsor-Essex community are not only important but essential. Collaborations with community service providers enable programs to grow, expand and be viable in terms of meeting multi-faceted needs. The reality is that we cannot meet the challenges alone. Partner organizations all have something innovative and specific that may be advantageous for families or youth to access. By meshing with these services, we can provide a comprehensive plan of service that puts all the pieces of the puzzle in place. Over the past year, our agency has been purposeful in developing and cultivating relationships with organizations and professionals who can support the unique needs and identities of the children, youth, and families we work with. As some of the examples in this Annual Report illustrate, working together we can make a difference.

Over the coming year, a top priority will be to continue to be advocates for families by continuing to strengthen our ties with community groups and organizations to be facilitators of change. This in turn will enable us to set an example of doing better, acting better and being better in all aspects of the work that we as a supporting organization undertake. The future is brighter when children, youth and families are best championed by a community coming together to assure that their well-being is truly an integral part of the rich tapestry of this place we call home. Together, we all have a "duty to support!"

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



Ms. Vicki Houston
B.A., B. Ed., M. Ed.
Board Chair



Mr. Derrick Drouillard
BSW, MSW, RSW
Executive Director

2022-2025 WECAS STRATEGIC PLAN ADDRESSING OUR PRESENT & PLANNING OUR FUTURE



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.



TERRITORIAL LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society acknowledges the sacred land upon which we are located. We recognize that this land has been inhabited by Indigenous peoples from the beginning. This is the Traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations, comprised of the Ojibway, the Odawa, and the Potawatomie people. We acknowledge the traditional ancestral and unceded territory and waters of Caldwell First Nation. These are the original People of Pelee Island, Point Pelee and what is now known as Southern Ontario. We are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work on this land. We are especially mindful of our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, and acknowledge that we walk upon territories and original nations of the first peoples of this land.



WINDSOR POLICE SERVICES (WPS) CARES VIDEO CAMPAIGN

WECAS participated in a video campaign funded through a grant by WPS wherein the mandates, programs and services of 15 community partners were highlighted. Videos are hosted in a community portal for multiple uses, including as a resource that can be shared with victims being supported by WPS. WECAS' video focused on our current Strategic and Operational Plans as a means to address the colonial legacy of child welfare toward greater equity, prevention and being communities-centric.



TRANS WELLNESS ONTARIO (TWO) PARTNERSHIP

WECAS has entered into two agreements with TWO, to: enhance the availability of TWO's peer counselling for trans and queer children and youth; develop a series of training modules and training sessions tailored to specific WECAS departments; develop an Allyship Seminar to facilitate with families and caregivers; and develop an educational programming series to facilitate with youth, including resources materials for service navigation.



BEASTIE VALLEY VIDEO LAUNCH

Through a partnership with Boost Child & Youth Advocacy Centre, and with the support from the OACAS, WECAS released a new educational video series called 'Beastie Valley'. The series emphasizes the message that children and youth have a right to safety and wellbeing in all spaces, and that adults play an important role. The videos are suggested accompaniments to the Ontario Dress Purple Day Prevention Classroom Resources for Elementary Schools.



BEAUTY IS ME (BIM) PARTNERSHIP

WECAS and Beauty is Me (BiM) entered into an agreement to: facilitate workshops that increase hair care knowledge of Black parents, guardians and caregivers that will assist them to take care of Black girls' hair; collaborate with Black owned hair salons to organize guest speakers and presenters to compliment workshop sessions; and contact Black owned hair salons to arrange appointments for black girls to get their hair done at a Black owned salon in Windsor-Essex.



RISE ABOVE YOUTH SYMPOSIUM

WECAS hosted a Black History Month Youth Symposium with Ontario's first Poet Laureate, Randell Adjei. The event was well attended by more than 60 youth, staff and community partners. With a focus on youth empowerment, community and connection, Randell empowered the youth to find, develop and use their stories to make change and to be leaders.

PARTNERSHIP WITH ANCHOR REHABILITATION SERVICES

WECAS has been partnering with Anchor Rehabilitation Services, who are supporting us and families in the community, in caring for some of the most complex children/youth we are servicing. This partnership will help us to address the gaps in service planning as well as program interventions for complex special needs and high acuity youth in our communities.



NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH & RECONCILIATION

September 30th, 2022 was the 2nd annual National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, a day designated to honour the lost children and survivors of residential schools, their families and communities, and to publicly acknowledge the harms and losses that occurred as a result of Canada's tragic policy of cultural genocide. For WECAS, this was a day of reflection, learning and humility. Our agency planned a number of learning activities in person, and encouraged staff to attend a number of events and activities in the community.



CULTURALLY INTEGRATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

In an effort to find better ways to support Muslim families and children, WECAS has partnered with the London Muslim Resource Centre. The main focus has been to move forward on a culturally integrative collaboration and enhance our work with the Islamic Social Welfare and Assistance (ISWA). A Memorandum of Understanding between WECAS and ISWA has been developed and a representative is now present in the WECAS office every Wednesday.



2022 PRIDE FLAG RAISING CEREMONY

In recognition of Pride Month 2022, the Society stood in solidarity with members of the LGBT2SQ+ community by hosting an outdoor Flag Raising Ceremony on Wednesday, August 3. The theme for this year's ceremony, Being the Affirming Adults that Children & Youth Need, informed not only the events of the day, but is also embedded in the work that WECAS is undertaking. The Flag Raising Ceremony is a testament to our ongoing commitment to create safe and affirming spaces for children, youth and families of all stripes.



ADVOCATES PROJECT | FAMILY FUSE PARTNERSHIP

WECAS and Family Fuse finalized a Memorandum of Understanding identifying our commitment to work together for the next year. The partnership includes commitments supporting Black families in our community and the promotion of Family Fuse as an organization supporting Black families in navigating the education system.



SUPPORT THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

	2022-2023	2021-2022
Province of Ontario	\$ 56,919,069	\$ 57,185,525
Other Income	451,921	384,642
Non-Retainable Revenue & Expenditure Recoveries	2,079,625	1,671,275
Total Revenue	59,450,615	59,241,442
Salaries, Benefits, Travel and Training	41,189,362	40,151,630
Boarding Rate Payments	11,983,987	11,405,321
Child, Youth and Family Costs	5,226,076	6,309,624
Administration and Technology	4,115,413	4,275,718
Total Expenditures	62,514,838	62,142,293
Deficiency of Revenue Over Expenditures	\$ (3,064,223)	\$ (2,900,851)

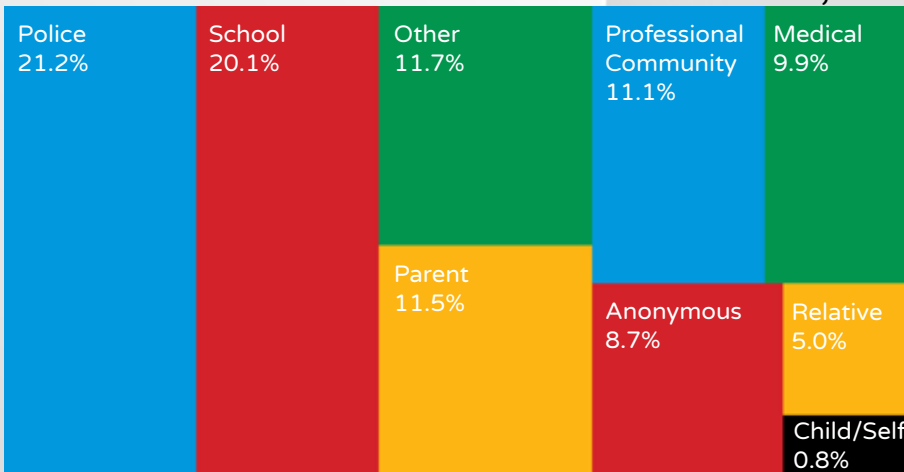
Audited financial statements available at wecas.on.ca

HOW THE DOLLAR WAS SPENT

- 57.1 % : Child, Youth & Family Services
- 19.8 % : Boarding Rate Payments
- 14.1 % : Administrative & Infrastructure
- 4.9 % : Permanency Services
- 4.1 % : Legal Services

TOTAL / YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2023
\$60,435,213 (NET)

REFERRAL SOURCES / 2022-23 TOTAL 3,497



SERVICE STATISTICS

- 3,562 Families Served in Community with Protection Concerns
- 2,783 Investigations Completed
- 779 Average Families Served at Ongoing Protection
- ● ● ● ● ●
- 331.5 Staff *Full-time Equivalent
- 170 Volunteers
- 230 Community Links
- 126 Foster & Kinship Care Homes

CHILDREN & YOUTH SERVED

- 430... Children and Youth Served in Care (includes CCSY)
- 181... Youth Served Through Continued Care & Support for Youth Program
- 140... Children and Youth in Kinship Service
- 11... Transitional Aged Youth
- 21... Adoptions Completed

● **3.2%**
 Children and Youth Served in Community Admitted to Care

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

115 Admissions
 82 In Care + 33 Voluntary Youth Services Agreement

In the past 5 years, the total number of WECAS children & youth admitted into care has dropped by **42.8%**



2022-2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ms. Vicki Houston, Chair
Mr. Kulveer Virk, Past Chair
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Mr. Hugo Vega, Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion





CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES
STRENGTH FOR TODAY - OPPORTUNITIES FOR TOMORROW

**PARTNERING WITH INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS AND
 BUSINESSES TO PROVIDE HOPE AND SUPPORT FOR OTHERS**

... Key Partnerships 2022-2023 ...

- **FORTIS GROUP GOLF TOURNAMENT & FORTIS GROUP/MR. H.Q NO COLD CHILD INITIATIVE**
 General Support for families and coats and accessories for Kinship families & youth
- **BARRY & STEPHANIE ZEKELMAN FOUNDATION**
 “Fresh Air” Summer Camp – Providing a summer experience for children
- **TD BANK GROUP**
 Bridge of Hope Program for youth
- **AMAZON CANADA**
 WECAF chosen as local charity partner to receive regular donations
- **SOLCZ FAMILY FOUNDATION**
 Family Well-Being Program, Family Day Activity Baskets and launch of Early Intervention – Lighting the Path to a Brighter Future, a program for expectant and new parents
- **RBC FUTURE LAUNCH**
 Capturing a Future Through Life Opportunities, Leadership and Experience – Employment skills training and employment experiences for youth
- **THE CO-OPERATORS/SOBEYS**
 “Food for Families on Family Day”, Supporting families with food bags
- **LIBRO CREDIT UNION**
 Mobile Food Enrichment Program for youth living Independently
- **CHILDREN’S AID FOUNDATION, CANADA (CAFC)**
 CIBC Miracle Fund grant for “Fresh Air” Summer Camp, Ted & Loretta Rogers Foster Care Comfort Kit Program, Cooking Towards Independence for youth and Mothers in Mind; a mother and child program designed to meet the parenting needs of mothers who have experienced family violence (Launching in April, 2024)

**\$624,497 raised in monetary
 donations, and over \$500,000
 of in-kind assistance**

**Many thanks to these and
 all our generous donors!**

**YOU Can Make A Difference.
 Donate at wecaf.on.ca**

