



FAMILY &  
CHILDREN'S SERVICES  
OF THE WATERLOO REGION

*Help Today for a Better Tomorrow*

Annual Report  
2018-2019

# Message from the Executive Director of the Agency & Foundation



**Karen Spencer**

**Executive  
Director**

**Agency &  
Foundation**

There are not many organizations that see it as a positive thing when their statistics go down rather than up. Here at Family and Children's Services, though, we feel some pride in noting that we have fewer children and youth in foster care than in years past. This is the result, we believe, of our strengths-based approach to working with families, which includes a number of collaborations with partner agencies, and our commitment to engaging with extended family and kin when children need an alternate home.

This has also helped us manage the reduction in funding from the provincial government, as you will see in our financial statements elsewhere in this report.

We continue to be concerned about the over-representation of Indigenous and Black families receiving services from our agency, and the over-representation of their children in care. For the past year we have focused on equity through all-staff meetings, training events and small-group discussions and plans are in place to continue this work.

The creation of the Two Row Understanding Service Team, the hiring of Indigenous and Black Cultural Navigators and of a Ninoche are additional steps taken to bring greater equity to our work.

The task ahead of us is to ensure that the children and families in Waterloo Region, who require our services, have access to early intervention supports that prevent problems from intensifying. In our Region, we benefit from the commitment and willingness of many community partner agencies and donors who collaborate with us to ensure families get the help they need. We thank each of you for helping to create a community where children and families thrive!

I am continually impressed by the willingness of so many of our staff and others connected to our agency to take initiative and think outside the box in their efforts to provide families and children with the support they need. We have faced many challenges in the past year but the commitment and integrity of our staff, foster parents, volunteers, donors and Board members have carried us through.

Thank you to all of you.

# Message from the President of the Agency Board of Directors

As children's aid organizations across the Province responded to and navigated an ever-changing provincial budget climate, I congratulate the staff, volunteers and foster parents of Family and Children Services of The Waterloo Region. Despite the difficult times that are happening within our sector, the Board of Directors deeply appreciates your local level commitment and dedication to ensuring the well-being and safety of our children and youth.

We experienced a decrease in our service volumes, an indication of the tremendous work that is happening within our organization and within our community. The commitment to fostering and building our community partnerships, our focus on kinship services and the support received from the Foundation has aided our success in "weathering" provincial changes.

If you have not had the opportunity to see what is happening within The Resilience Project, #bounceforward, I encourage you to have a peek! Check out how ten partner organizations are collaborating to build community capacity to enhance resilience in our children and families. This project is generously funded by the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation.

In 2019, we will embark on a process to update our Strategic Plan – stay tuned for opportunities to be engaged and to provide input!

As I look back on 2018, I do so with heartfelt admiration for the children, youth and parents who, despite facing adversity and barriers, continue to thrive and to achieve success.

Thank you!

Lori Palubeski



**Lori Palubeski**

**President**

**Agency Board of Directors**

# Message from the President of the Foundation Board of Directors



**Jessica  
Jaremchuk**

**President**

**Foundation Board  
of Directors**

It's been another busy year here at the Family & Children's Services of the Waterloo Region's Foundation. With a focus on evidence-based programming and preparing our youth for the future, the Foundation has taken steps to encourage growth and resiliency in our youth.

At the Foundation, we raise funds for non-government-funded supports and programming for our community's youth. Through generous donations, grants and our fundraising events we try to ensure that we can provide supports that our children need to heal, learn and grow. The CHYM Tree of Hope, our biggest fundraiser of the year, was a huge success. We can't thank CHYM and Cadillac Fairview Park Mall enough for all of their continued support in the 26 years of this key fundraising event.

With the support of our incredible community, the Foundation was able to send more than 500 kids to camp last summer, provide 778 kids with backpacks for school, and give scholarships to 41 youth going into college or university. We also supported the Agency's Resilience Project, alongside the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation. The Resilience project looks to meet the needs of children and youth with a goal of building relationships between caregivers, peers and the community. Resilience programming includes things like art and music lessons and family friendly events. The Project focuses on boosting the capacity for enhancing resilience in our children, families, and community through offering innovative programming, collaboration of services, and support for children and families experiencing adversity.

I think almost all of us can say that we have experienced some form of adversity in our lives. We can also likely look back and point to things that helped us get through it. Knowing that there was someone around that cared. Experiencing a trusting friendship. Gaining self-confidence through trying new activities. Feeling as though we are a part of a community. These are all things that help develop our ability to bounce back – to be resilient. Our youth already show so much resiliency in their determination to succeed. We need to help them foster that resilience and make sure that they don't just bounce back – they bounce forward. And in the process of doing this, I think we all might learn a little about getting back on our feet after a tough time.

Thank you to all of our amazing Foundation staff and our volunteers who have worked tirelessly to further our mission and goals. Without you, none of this would be possible. A big thank you to the Agency staff as well. Your support has been incredible and your dedication to this often difficult field is inspiring.

On behalf of the Foundation's board of directors, I wish you all a safe and happy summer.

Sincerely,  
Jess

# Foundation Highlights

## The Goodfellows' Story



When Jamie Goodfellow walked into a management training workshop, he had no idea his life was about to change. “The trainers weren’t just talking about succeeding in the workplace. They were inspiring us get involved in some way, to make a difference, to make our community a better place to live for all residents.”

Liza Goodfellow adds: “We knew what some children and families in Cambridge were going through. When we were searching for ways to give back to our community, hosting a fundraising event seemed like a good way to start.”

Jamie is an avid sportsman so he and Liza wanted the event to be sports related, but something that anyone would be comfortable participating in. Liza remembered: “My parents were curlers and I knew that curling was something even beginners could enjoy!” And with that, the Funspiel was born!

For the past 15 years, on a Saturday in March, friends and community members spend the day at the Galt Country Club united in making a difference for children in their community. To date the Funspiel has raised over \$50,000 to provide opportunities for the children & families in Cambridge that work with FACS.

Thank you to Jamie and Liza and the Funspiel supporters – we are so grateful for your incredible commitment to children and families.

Have an idea for a fundraiser?  
Contact [foundation@facswaterloo.org](mailto:foundation@facswaterloo.org) for more info!

- 500+ children experienced summer camp, supported by proceeds from our annual Hot Shots Street Hockey Tournament
- 778 children received new backpacks for school through our Back to School Campaign
- 225 children received opportunities through our Smile Maker fund to ‘just be a kid’ and play on a sports team or receive other supports like graduation clothing and birthday gifts
- \$222,694 was raised at the annual CHYM Tree of Hope Radiothon
- 725 local families and youth received support through our Holiday Support Program
- 41 youth received post-secondary scholarships, allowing them to pursue their academic goals
- 5 awards were given to children in foster care to pursue their passions in the area of culture, sports or the art

**Government funding is not enough to meet all the needs of the children, youth and families we serve.**

**The Family and Children’s Services Foundation relies on the generosity of individuals, families, businesses and other foundations to help children and families in need to **HEAL, LEARN and GROW.****

# Making a Difference for Children, Youth & Families



## Tree of Hope Campaign

**Magic, Dreams & Hope.** This was the theme of our annual Tree of Hope campaign in 2018. Every day amazing and generous donors help make “ordinary magic” happen for a child. But during our fall Tree of Hope campaign we are especially grateful. This 8-week fundraising campaign includes activities like the CHYM Tree of Hope Radiothon where we share stories of hope, our Holiday Support Program, independent fundraising events, major gifts and regular giving to raise much needed funds to support programs and services we know to build resilience in children, youth and families. In 2018 we raised over \$285,000 during our Tree of Hope campaign. Thank you for your caring support!



## First Kids to Camp Campaign a Success!

Research shows that the camp experience - fun and games, time spent outdoors, the presence of caring adults and the chance to make friends - provides all the building blocks for children to develop and nurture their resilience.

For 13 years the Foundation hosted the Hot Shots Street Hockey Tournament to raise funds to give local children the opportunity to experience the magic of summer camp. In 2018, the Foundation committed to raising the \$150,000 necessary to support the program and the community rose to the challenge!

The Kids to Camp Campaign launched in early May, anchored by Hot Shots as the signature event. In addition to the funds raised at Hot Shots and through peer to peer fundraising for the event, the campaign also included a successful silent auction, a community appeal, corporate gifts, and many third-party fundraisers. By the end of the summer, thanks to the kindness and generosity of donors, more than 500 kids got to go to summer camp! For more information go to [www.facsfoundation.org](http://www.facsfoundation.org)

## Back to School Program

Every child deserves to start the school year off ready to learn! Last year, Chief Bryan Larkin of the Waterloo Regional Police Service issued a #BackpackChallenge to fellow first responders and the broader community in support of our campaign. Over 1,500 backpacks were collected overall, as well as nearly \$5,000 cash/gift cards. This allowed families to do some back to school shopping of their own for supplies, shoes, and clothing. Our Foundation distributed over 750 backpacks to children served by the Agency and the extra backpacks were shared with other child and youth serving organizations in our community.

# The Two Row Understanding Service Team



To respond to the ongoing over-representation of Indigenous families and children, we created the Two Row Understanding Service Team last year. Our team is guided by the Two Row Wampum treaty; an agreement between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous individuals, agreeing to work together, side by side, respecting one another. Our hope is that this team is seen for what it is, the foundation for a larger system shift for our agency, rather than a specialization.

**Training:** Back in the fall, The Two Row Understanding Team underwent two days of cultural training with Estelle Simard from the Institute of Culturally Restorative Practice and we plan to embed many of the teachings we learned into our everyday practice. Some members of our team as well as other colleagues, attended the Healing Conference hosted by Healing of the Seven Generations. We look forward to other opportunities for people to learn and share in this beautiful culture.

**The Future:** The team is developing agency tools, engaging in various community committees and hosting regular training/support circles for foster parents. They are in the process of establishing protocols with surrounding First Nation Communities as well as new partnerships with the local Indigenous community to improve working relationships between us and continue on the path of reconciliation.



## 360 Family Engagement

Family engagement has been part of our work at the Agency since 2011 with the development of the Kin Teams and Family Finder/Connection Facilitator roles. Since then we have been on a journey that has led us to the 360 Family Engagement Model, a comprehensive approach to engage families and their networks of support and ensure the safety and well-being of all children and youth.

360 Family Engagement aims to connect the work (for staff) to all of our service principles and the standards that guide our work as well as to ensure consistent and ongoing service to all families aiming to improve outcomes. need to be happening within the family and their network to close the case.

This model integrates what we have learned from evidence-informed models including Signs of Safety, Family Finding, Anti-Oppressive Practice, and Trauma and Attachment. This model includes adaptable tools and strategies that can be used across all agency roles to engage with families, children, and youth under a variety of circumstances. We look at ways to engage families and their networks from our first point of contact to case closure. We address the need for collaboration and clarity around why Family and Children's Services is involved with a family and what would need to be happening within the family and their network to close the case.

# Foster Recruitment



## First Pow Wow in Agency History

Family and Children's Services formally attended a Pow-Wow for the first time in our 125 year history in February of 2019. This is an important first step in our agency's journey towards healing and reconciliation with the Indigenous families we have worked with in the past and currently work with today. The agency booth was staffed with members of the Two Row Understanding Service Team, recruitment and general staff. The reception was overwhelmingly positive and the message of our goal to keep Indigenous families together was what the community wanted to hear. There were even moments that were very touching for staff as 60's Scoop survivors came up to share their story and offer their help to ensure Indigenous families stay connected to their culture and community. This is just a small step, but an important one in Family and Children's Services of the Waterloo Region's healing journey.

Foster parents are a pillar of the child welfare system. Their selfless commitment and work put them on the frontlines of ensuring children in our community are able to not just get by, but thrive. Currently the agency is facing a shortage of foster parents and a new strategy has been adopted to address this.

- To build Goodwill-The agency will take a more active role in engaging the public within Waterloo Region.
- Being physically present at important community events as well as supporting organizations that work with children through value added presentations and materials.
- Show the community that the agency is a force for good and that collaborating with us through fostering is an excellent way to give back and an honourable distinction for the foster parent.
- Recruitment efforts are heavily focused on bringing in Indigenous and African-Canadian foster families that can provide culturally appropriate care to over represented groups of children.
- Recruitment has been opened up to everyone, not just recruitment workers. This allows a diverse array of staff to attend events and feel empowered to recruit foster families.
- Promote various types of fostering such as C.A.R.E. homes.

## A Quiz About Foster Parents

True or false:

1. Foster parents need to own their own home.
2. Foster parents need to be married couples.
3. Foster parents need to be experienced parents.
4. Foster parents need to have one parent home full-time.

All of these are false! Find out more at [fosteringkids.ca](http://fosteringkids.ca)



[fosteringkids.ca](http://fosteringkids.ca)

# It Takes a Village to Raise a Child

## Q & A with Michele Ho Sue

**Q:** How would you describe your work as a Cultural Navigator at Family and Children's Services?

**A:** My role is in the beginning stages. There is the "invisible work" of community engagement to support my understanding of what the African Canadian community is experiencing in Waterloo Region. The Black community (also known as the African Canadian community) refers to all Canadians of African descent whether they were born in Canada, the Caribbean, Africa or South America.

I work with our research department to understand how many Black children and youth are in Society care and/or not living with their primary caregivers. Much of my work involves discussing anti-Black racism with colleagues to see how it informs our practice and the outcomes of the Black families we work with. Discussions about Anti-Black Racism are not coming from a perspective of blame – the goal is to understand how White privilege and Colonization are deeply embedded in Canada and continue to negatively affect the Black community in 2019.

African Canadian families are over-represented in the system, and Black children and youth are over-represented in care. It's the same in the justice system, and in schools in terms of kids who are expelled or suspended. Black parents are always under the microscope, whether they are involved with Family and Children's Services or not. There is also an under-representation of Black people in positions of power or positions where they can make changes.

**Q:** Are you seeing positive changes at FACS?

**A:** I appreciate that management recognizes the importance of this work. It's very rewarding when colleagues say the consultations were helpful, when they have an "Aha" moment and begin to understand how Anti-Black Racism was affecting a family they are working with and have made changes in their practice to reflect this. But we still have a lot of years of undoing and unlearning.



Working to keep black families together & children connected to their culture

**Q:** How does the work we are doing in Waterloo Region fit into the provincial picture?

**A:** The provincial One Vision, One Voice 2016 research report highlighted the racial disproportionality and disparities. The report listed 11 Race Equity Practices to serve as a guide for the child welfare sector. The work we're doing here will help address the over-representation of Black children in care and improve outcomes for Black families. You can find out more information about One Vision One Voice at the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies website at <http://www.oacas.org/what-we-do/onevisiononevoice>



Bring on the Sunshine African Festival.  
Kitchener, February 2019

# Providing Community-Based Services



The majority of Family and Children's Services' staff work from one of the agency offices in Kitchener or Cambridge, but increasingly child protection workers or protection support workers are located at least part-time with other community organizations. Co-located staff have been at the Women's Crisis Centre and at the Child and Youth Advocacy Centre at Carizon for a few years, but we have developed new partnerships in the past year and look forward to building more:

## Reception House

Reception House is a welcome centre for government-assisted refugees. Newly-arrived families can live there and are helped to connect to housing, medical services, etc. as they transition out to the community. FACS staff have presented information sessions to residents about supervision, discipline and parenting in Canada, and the response suggested there would be value in having a staff person located at Reception House to work with families there. A child protection worker will spend one half day each week at this location.

## Woolwich Counselling

Woolwich Counselling serves the northern township areas of Waterloo Region. A FACS child protection worker will spend a half day there, twice a month, to provide consultation for staff and help determine if FACS involvement might be the appropriate intervention for a particular family. As well, a protection support worker will provide parenting advice for families and co-leads groups.

Other community organizations are currently in the planning stage to bring FACS staff into their offices to enhance the ways we work together.



# THE RESILIENCE PROJECT

## INCREASING RESILIENCE WITH COLLECTIVE IMPACT



### THE SIX IMPACT AREAS OF THE RESILIENCE PROJECT



#### PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Mountain Biking program and Gym Drop-ins build self-efficacy



#### ART-BASED ACTIVITY

Family Art Activity Days at KW Art Gallery promotes social competence and positive identity



#### MENTORSHIP

Mini "Me to We" program builds empathy and provides opportunities for "turning points"



#### FAMILY FRIENDLY EVENTS

Family Movie Nights help children learn community values and increases social support networks



#### BUILDING SECURE RELATIONSHIPS

TLC parenting programs promote positive family communications and reduces the "stockpile" of problems



#### MINDFULNESS

Mindful Kids & Caregivers helps to adjust and cope with common everyday stresses, lessening the "stockpile" of problems

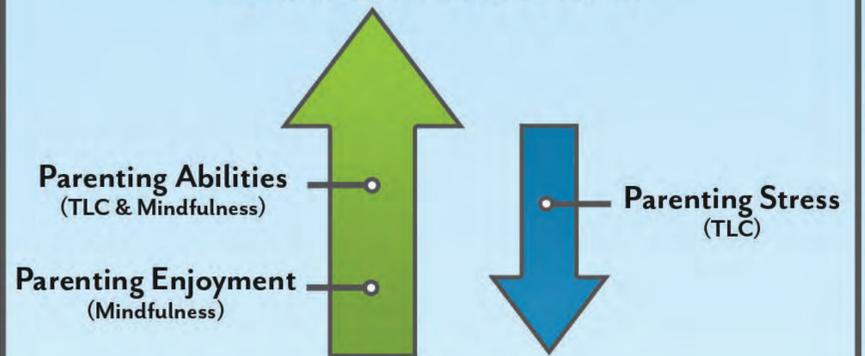
### OUR IMPACT

A SAMPLE OF OUTCOMES FROM THE PROJECT:

#### CHILD OUTCOMES



#### PARENTING OUTCOMES



# Volunteers

Volunteers are a crucial part of Family and Children's Services, providing help and support in many different ways. We are always looking for new volunteers!

Chris freely admits that he started volunteering with ulterior motives. "I was looking to get into graduate school, and I knew having volunteer work on my resume would help," he says. Having studied psychology with a focus on youth and adolescent development, the idea of working with youth appealed to him.

After completing the application and training process at Family and Children's Services, Chris was asked to become a mentor to four brothers ages nine, 10, 12 and 13. "I was warned that it could be challenging, but I felt I was up to it," he says.

At first, the youngest boy was the only one willing to spend time with Chris, but after a few outings he'd had such positive experiences that he convinced his brothers to join them. "And now," Chris says, "they're running out to the car when I arrive to pick them up."

All four boys love playing video games. "They could literally talk about video games for days," says Chris. One great way to get them away from the on-screen games has been taking them to try more physical activities, from kicking around a soccer ball together to soaring on a column of air at Sky Zone. The biggest hit so far has been bowling, which Chris finds brings out their competitive instincts. The boys work hard to improve their skills and beat each other, but they also have a lot of fun along the way.

Chris adds: "I took a step out of my comfort zone, too, when I agreed to mentor four boys. And I'm very glad I did."



It's now been 2.5 years since Chris first met the boys. He'd only expected to volunteer for a few months (yes, he did get into grad school) but volunteering has been such a positive experience that he doesn't want to stop. "I see the difference in the boys. They were very introverted at first, now they trust me and are willing to open up," he says. "They've taken steps out of their comfort zone and they see that it can lead to good things."

**"I took a step out of my comfort zone, too, when I agreed to mentor four boys. And I'm very glad I did."**

**-Chris**



# What Happens After you Call?

You know about your responsibility to call Family and Children's Services when you are concerned about a child or youth. Maybe you've wondered, though, about what will happen once you pick up the phone. Every situation is unique, but here are the typical steps:

**Questions:** Expect to be asked lots of questions! That's one reason it's important that the person who has the concerns or has seen something is the one who makes the call. (For example, if you are a teacher worried about a child, you can't ask your principal to call on your behalf.) One standard question that many don't expect is whether there is domestic violence in the family. Don't worry if your answer has to be "I don't know." Just answer as much as you can.

**Checks:** The worker who takes your call will review internal records and the Child Protection Information Network (CPIN) to see if the family has current or previous involvement with child welfare services.

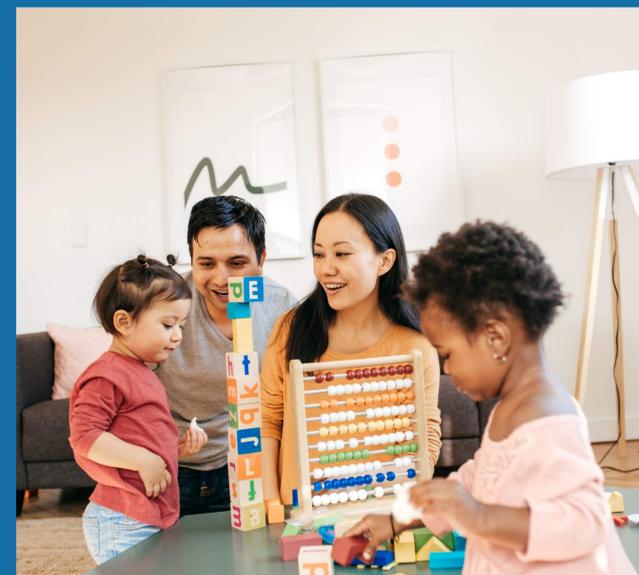
**Eligibility:** The worker will make a decision about eligibility for service based on all the available information about the child, family and situation along with the Eligibility Spectrum – a set of provincial guidelines. If an assessment is needed, the guidelines will help to determine how quickly the worker needs to meet with the child and family. If not eligible, a worker may still contact the family and help them to connect with other community resources

**Assessment:** As previously mentioned, every case is different. In most cases – about 97%! – the child or youth is able to stay at home with their family while they work on resolving any issues. In the small number of cases where children are not safe at home, they may move into foster care, usually on a temporary basis until the parents are able to resolve the issues.

**Community Support:** An essential part of helping families move forward is connecting them to community supports. That may be family or neighbours who can help, or organizations that assist people with problems such as addiction or mental health concerns.

**Confidentiality:** It's important – and required by law – that we respect the confidentiality of the families we work with.

One more reminder – the duty to report is ongoing. That means if you see a new concern related to a child you previously called about, you should call again.



# Agency Board Members

Martin Avevor

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Joe Bell

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Trisha Robinson

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Christine Senior

Jill Stoddart, Director Research & Innovation

Matthew (Matt) Kirby

Pete Travers

\* Agency Board Representative

Darren Kelly \*

Ami (Amichai) Tsarfati (Treasurer)

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Emily Wilson

Kim Schnarr \*

# Agency Finances

## 2018-19 CONDENSED FINANCIAL REPORT

CHILD WELFARE					
REVENUE BY SOURCE	2018-2019	2017-2018	EXPENSES	2018-2019	2017-2018
Province of Ontario	\$ 52,262,639	\$ 51,650,388	Salaries and benefits	\$ 33,000,462	\$ 34,623,129
Grants from Foundation	1,566,504	1,235,328	Child in care and client related	18,854,877	20,220,096
Family benefit and Child Tax Benefit	1,500,831	1,569,727	Operating expenses	3,675,976	3,576,715
Other *	262,893	613,429			
	<u>\$ 55,592,867</u>	<u>\$ 55,068,872</u>		<u>\$ 55,531,314</u>	<u>\$ 58,419,940</u>

\* Rebates, interest, miscellaneous income, administration fees

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS	2018-2019	2017-2018
Revenue	\$ 55,592,867	\$ 55,068,872
Expenses	55,531,314	58,419,940
Excess of revenue over expenses	<u>\$ 61,553</u>	<u>\$ (3,351,068)</u>

SPECIAL PROGRAM FUNDING	2018-2019	2017-2018
Sexual Abuse Treatment Program	\$ 504,820	\$ 480,781
Special Services Program	141,872	380,458
Education Liaison Program	77,186	-

All special programs are 100% expended

(Extracted from Audited Statements audited by KPMG LLP Chartered Professional Accountants, Licensed Public Accountants.)  
Details for other programs are contained in the audited financial statements.

# Foundation Finances

## 2018-19 CONDENSED FINANCIAL REPORT

### FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES OF WATERLOO REGION FOUNDATION

#### STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019

Donations	\$	1,136,255
Investment Income		93,317
Change in fair value of investments		(39,566)
	<u>\$</u>	<u>1,190,006</u>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>		
Grants to Agency	\$	1,477,578
Scholarships		88,926
Transfer to Agency Capital Fund		-
Office and administration expenses		64,992
Professional and investment fees		23,692
	<u>\$</u>	<u>1,655,188</u>
Net Surplus (Deficit)	<u>\$</u>	<u>(465,182)</u>

(Extracted from Audited Statements audited by KPMG LLP Chartered Professional Accountants, Licensed Public Accountants.)  
Details for other programs are contained in the audited financial statements.



FAMILY &  
CHILDREN'S SERVICES  
OF THE WATERLOO REGION

*Help Today for a Better Tomorrow*

## Contact Us

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