

2019 - 2020 Annual Report

Empowering Families. Upholding Equity. Embracing Diversity.



Letter from the Executive Director & President of the Board



This year, we marked two significant milestones.



1

We moved into a single site at 2206 Eglinton Avenue East.

2

We celebrated our 125th anniversary of providing professional, responsive, child-centred and family focused services and supports to Catholic children, youth and families in Toronto.

Consolidating four offices into one was no easy feat. It took a lot of hard work and dedication on the part of our staff to ensure a seamless transition that did not impact young people and families while we relocated. It was a major endeavour that involved over 100 people in the planning and execution of the move and required a significant amount of organizational attention as we continued our daily operations. It was hard to say goodbye to our office sites, including our long-standing location at 26 Maitland. We know however, that the spirit and essence of CCAS is expressed not in the buildings we occupy but in the people who make our organization great.

Being together in a single site brings stronger collaboration, communication and consistency while supporting young people and their families no matter where they reside in the city. Our community “hubs” provide drop-in and office-based services and are located within community partners’ spaces for those families who would be better served within their own community. As we strengthen our partnerships with community organizations, we believe this will create more effective and collaborative supports and services for children, youth and families. We have also strengthened our co-location pilot with violence against women agencies to continue to assist women and their children coming out of domestic violence situations, empowering them to overcome their circumstances and help them thrive in society. It is in partnering with others in the community that child welfare exists in its best form.



Mark Kartusch - Executive Director



Erin O'Brien - President of the Board

Our 125th anniversary celebration provided an opportunity to look back and celebrate all that we do at the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Toronto.

Through the years we have strived to empower children, youth and families, uphold equity and embrace diversity, ensuring that everyone is included.

Rooted in biblical teachings and values, we have continued to infuse the Catholic faith into our workplace culture, giving our staff a greater sense of identity as a faith-based agency. We also welcomed His Eminence Cardinal Thomas Collins from the Archdiocese of Toronto who officially blessed our new office, including our Chapel, during our 125th anniversary celebration held in December 2019.

Over the past fiscal year, we have increased our efforts to challenge attitudes and perceptions about racism and oppression within our agency and across the child welfare sector. Our goal is to cultivate a culture that acknowledges and actively engages marginalized communities, such as Indigenous, LGBT2SQ and African Descent children, youth and families.



We have begun the integral work of applying an Anti-Racist, Anti-Opressive Practice (ARAO), Evidence-Informed Practice (EIP) and Trauma-Informed Practice (TIP) to our programs and services so that we can better meet the needs of children, youth and families – ensuring that they are a vital part of the decision-making process.

Acknowledging and owning that systemic and persistent discrimination, inequities and oppression exist, including within our organization, is the first step in change. However, we then need to move to create change within our organization and act as agents of change in the community, with government and other policy makers to remove the systemic barriers that have a disproportionate impact on marginalized communities, especially within the Catholic community of Toronto.

Continuing to work on developing services and supports that are fair, equitable, culturally relevant and culturally safe, will ensure our agency leaves a legacy we can all be proud of in another 125 years.



The Impact of COVID-19

Finally, COVID-19 had the most profound impact on our agency as we ended the fiscal year. The pandemic called for a radical transformation in the way we provide service, the way we communicate, and the way we support each other. We moved to working remotely and closing our physical office, conducting virtual visits with young people and families and incorporating personal protective equipment (PPE) into the critical and essential face-to-face visits that were still required and needed to take place.

While the pandemic presented challenges, it also offered us opportunities. Our staff stayed strong, stayed together, rising to challenges and seizing opportunities. Opportunities like connecting on a more regular basis, supporting children and youth in creative ways while we physically distanced and linking and supplying PPE to community partners like Indigenous agencies in the north and Rosalie Hall. We also distributed non-medical fabric masks to young people and families thanks to donations from St. Michael's Home, Catholic Family Charities, Catholic Women's League and many of our staff.

We know this pandemic isn't going away any time soon. We know that we need to stay responsive to meet the needs of children, youth and families, especially those who are marginalized and vulnerable.

Evidence-Informed Program Group

Integrating equity, diversity and quality improvement to better serve families

We owe the best possible programs and services to the children, youth and families we serve. This means using the best available information to guide our efforts as well as trying to make them better. Creating a continuous cycle of improvement is key in providing quality services and supports to children, youth and families. At the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Toronto (CCAS), we strive to provide supports and services based on evidence-informed practice (EIP), trauma-informed practice (TIP) and an anti-racist, anti-oppressive (ARAO) framework.

"Ensuring our programs meet the needs of our diverse population is foundational to all we do," says Kate Schumaker, Manager of Quality Assurance. "By looking at core programs like Family Finding, Health Specialists, and the Violence Against Women Co-location, we are providing hands-on help to ensure each program area is informed by research and delivered through a trauma-informed, anti-racist and anti-oppressive lens.

We have embarked on the next phase of our Evidence Informed Practice initiative which is to have a more systematic look at the programs we are offering. We have assembled a work group, that includes Tope Adefarakan, Anti-Racism Anti-Oppression Practice Supervisor, Kate Schumaker, Manager of Quality Assurance, Domenic Gratta, Director of Service, and Dr. Wendy Manel, Trauma-Informed Practice Lead, to focus on the core program areas at CCAS and take a closer look at how we can improve supports and services to better meet the needs of children, youth and families.

As CCAS gets better at this process, all programs will be asked to share results annually, including feedback from children, youth and families about their experiences, and data about the degree to which services have made positive changes in their lives. Each program will be supported in collecting this information by a dedicated member of the CCAS Quality Assurance team.

Dr. Wendy Manel

Trauma-Informed Practice Lead

Kate Schumaker

Manager of Quality Assurance

Tope Adefarakan

Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression Practice Supervisor

Domenic Gratta

Director of Service





“This process will lead to learning for all of us, and recommendations for program development and continuous improvement. By next year we will begin to see how applying these lenses has made an impact on the families with whom we work.”

~ Kate Schumaker, Manager of Quality Assurance

Partnership with Violence Against Women



Partnering to provide supports to women and children in violent situations

An innovative co-location pilot has brought together the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Toronto (CCAS) and violence against women (VAW) workers from Catholic Family Services, Juliette's Place, Redwood Shelter and Yorktown Women's Shelter to offer support and services to women and their children and assist them in healing from the trauma of domestic violence.

Research indicates that children who witness intimate partner violence are at risk for a host of troubling short and long-term outcomes including internalizing and externalizing problems, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance use and school-related difficulties in both childhood and adolescence.

"If we can ensure a mom is safe, she can keep her children safe. If her emotional and financial needs are being met, she is better prepared to meet the emotional needs of her children," says Lisa Bishop, CCAS Child Protection Services Manager. "That's what this partnership is all about. It's about empowering women so they can offer their children the best chance at a healthy, safe and secure life."

~ Lisa Bishop, CCAS Child Protection Services Manager



"We know that early and immediate intervention is key to helping women and children in domestic violence situations," explains Lisa. "This unique partnership allows us to collaborate, consult, and determine the best services and supports that will empower women."

The pilot spanned from February 2018 through to March 2019. During this period, 195 women and their families were provided services under the co-location VAW pilot program, resulting in over 600 consultations between CCAS staff and the four VAW workers.

The core elements of the co-location pilot were:



- ✓ Consultations between CCAS workers and VAW workers about women experiencing domestic violence
- ✓ With a woman's consent to service, joint visits between CCAS and VAW workers to the family home or at a location of the woman's choosing
- ✓ Face-to-face contact or phone calls between VAW workers and female clients to provide immediate support, psychoeducation, referrals to community resources to meet both concrete and socio-emotional needs.
- ✓ Safety planning with the female client supported by the VAW worker.

Success from the pilot articulated a need to continue the VAW-CAS collaboration into this past fiscal year and beyond. Through this work it was also identified that CCAS needs to provide specific and focused training and knowledge to CCAS staff regarding engaging men, and the child welfare role in working with male perpetrators of violence.

"With the move to a single site, there is an opportunity to explore whether some resources could be focused on supporting the work with men, similar to the supports already in place to assist staff in engaging females," says Lisa. "Our goal is to continue to help women and children, as well as provide interventions and supports to men, ultimately empowering the whole family."



Our Catholic Identity

The Catholic Children's Aid Society embraces its spirituality and faith and attempts to infuse these practices in all that we do. Our work includes understanding and strengthening ways of living our Catholic Identity.

For our agency, Catholic faith is not merely an approach, it is our fundamental identity that is rooted in teachings from the Holy Bible. These values and beliefs are embedded in our strategic directions for service delivery and community outreach programs.

While we promote Catholic faith and identity within our workplace, we employ staff from other faith traditions and beliefs. Rooted in love and acceptance, we are inclusive of many other religions and faith journeys. Our approach maintains a Catholic Identity focus for our staff to better understand and meet the needs of children, youth and families within the Catholic community of Toronto.

This past fiscal year, we ramped up our internal initiatives with respect to promoting Catholic identity in our workplace. We infused Catholic identity elements into our new building led by an internal Catholic Identity Work Group. They guided the design and creation of our wonderful Chapel, setting up a prayer/multi-faith room, displaying visible signs and symbols of Catholic identity, setting up a Pastoral Services Resource Centre, and providing training for all staff on Catholic values and beliefs.

The work group was also instrumental in coordinating the blessing by Cardinal Collins. Receiving a holy blessing creates a solid foundation for our new space to be one of acceptance, a tangible public facing expression of equity and inclusivity displayed in our sign above our front doors "All are Welcome".



HOPE for CHILDREN FUND



The Hope for Children Fund provides needed supports for vulnerable children, youth and families served by the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Toronto. Thanks to our amazing donors, we were able to positively impact thousands of families and children in 2019/20. In 2019/20, the Hope for Children Fund granted more than \$233,000 in scholarships allowing 78 of the Society's youth on extended society care to attend college, university or trade school. This included 10 young people that were given special grants for graduating from post-secondary institutions. Congratulations to all our recipients!

Donations to the Hope for Children Scholarship Program in 2019/20 were \$331,085. We are grateful to our loyal donors that truly appreciate the importance of post-secondary education in today's challenging workforce.



"I have dreamt of being in this very place since the completion of my first semester of undergrad, and I am so grateful to be here. It is all thanks to the continuous support I have received from HFC. A very special thank you to my current donors: I am truly grateful that you have chosen to support me through this journey. I have learned throughout the years that one cannot achieve their goals without the right supports."



Revenue Generated
\$634,000*

**Excludes gift in kind*



Emergency Grant
179 families supported

“Don’t give up because you had a bad day, forgive yourself and do better tomorrow.”

~ Wise words to live by from Irene, HFC scholarship recipient



Catholic
Children's Aid
FOUNDATION

The Catholic Children's Aid Foundation

The Catholic Children's Aid Society of Toronto (CCAS) created the Catholic Children's Aid Foundation (CCAF) to protect the Capital Fund (includes endowments, bequests, and any contributions specific to Catholic Children's Aid) and to ensure that the Capital Fund continues to be used in support of activities that are consistent with the charitable purpose of supporting children of the Catholic faith.

Connie Reid, CCAF Executive Director and her newly appointed assistant, Sheryl Sutton, will continue to build on the amazing work completed by the Hope for Children Fund. CCAF will strive to improve the services to help our most vulnerable to ensure all children and youth have equal opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities, summer camp and continue their post-secondary education. "It Takes A Village" and we will continue to make a difference in families we serve.

Scholarship Program

\$233,000

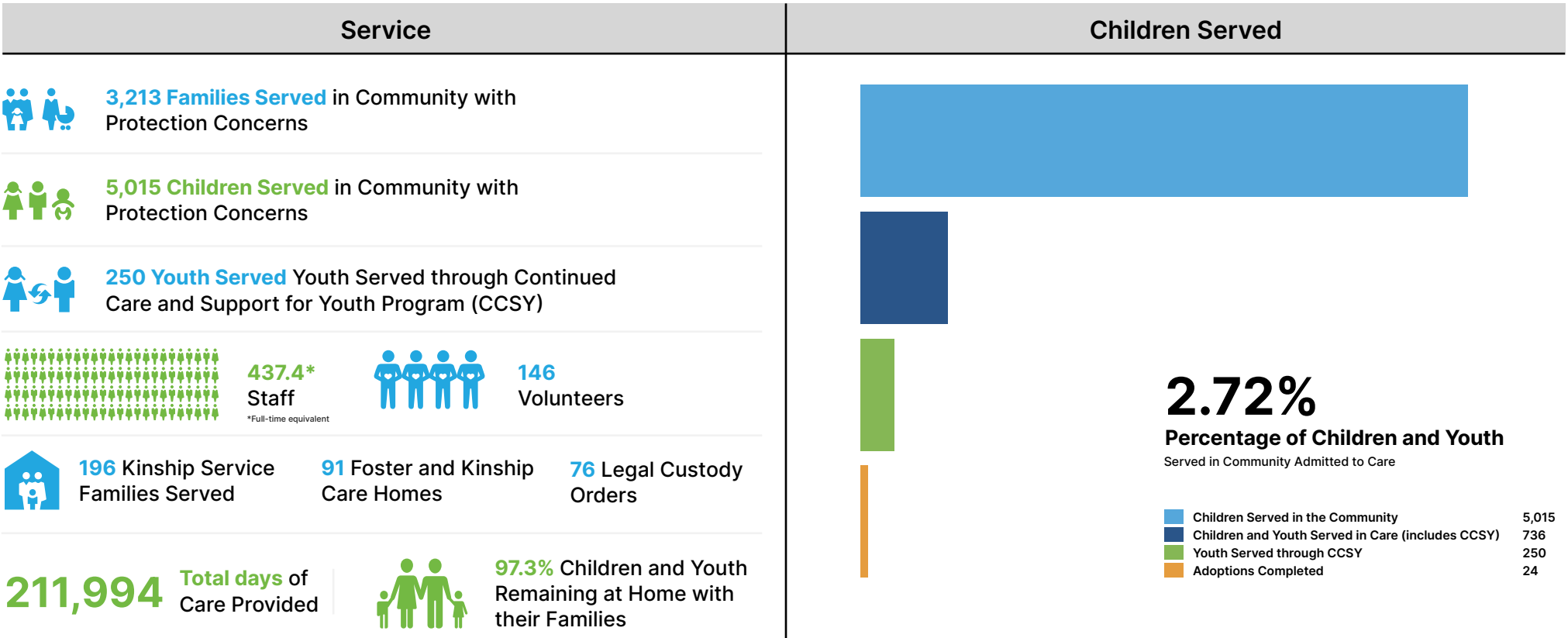
78 students supported



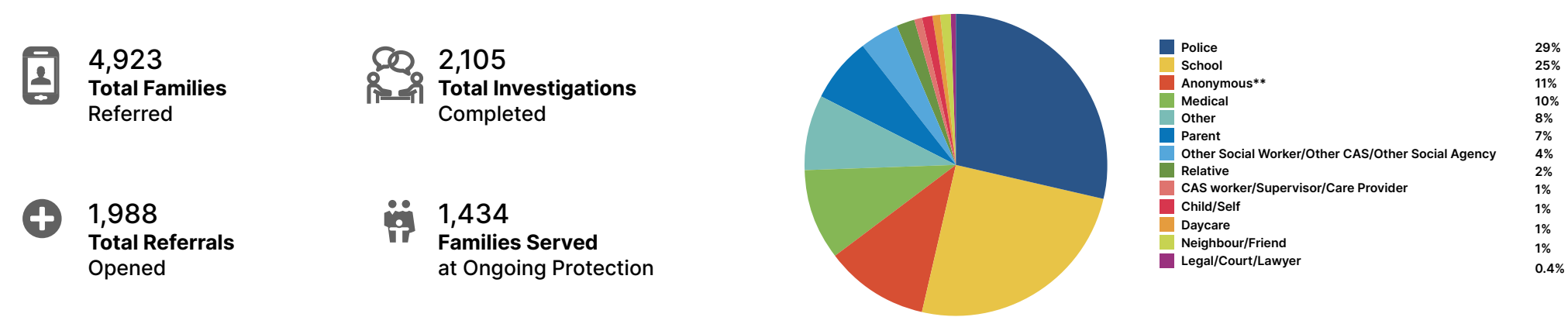
Summer Camp

120 young campers

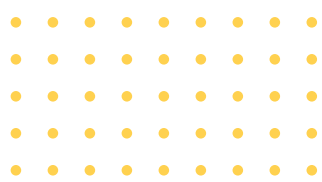
Service Stats



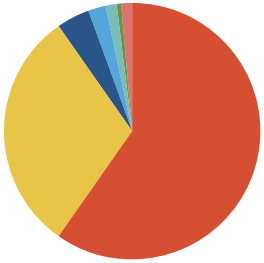
Total Referrals Involving Protection



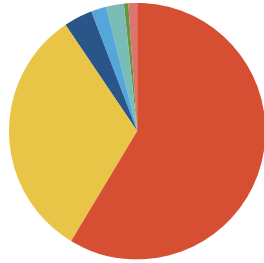
Financial Statements



Child & Family Services Costs (in thousands of dollars)



● Salaries & Benefits	41,216
● Board Rate Payments	21,184
● Financial Assistance & Special Programs	2,845
● Travel	1,465
● Children's Personal Needs	1,044
● Purchased Services	481
● Health & Related Services	770

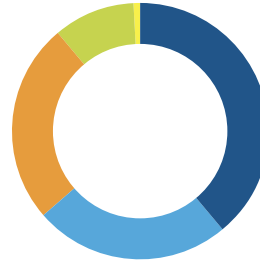


● Salaries & Benefits	46,142
● Board Rate Payments	24,942
● Financial Assistance & Special Programs	2,830
● Travel	1,646
● Children's Personal Needs	1,616
● Purchased Services	570
● Health & Related Services	655

Total Year ended March 31, 2020
69,005

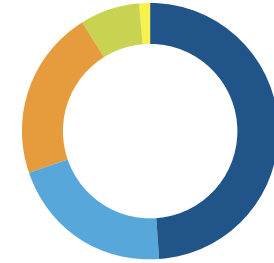
Total Year ended March 31, 2019
78,401

Administrative Costs (in thousands of dollars)



● Salaries & Benefits	6,116
● Building Occupancy	3,877
● Office Administration and Other	3,967
● Technology & Purchased Goods + Services	1,602
● Training & Recruitment	116

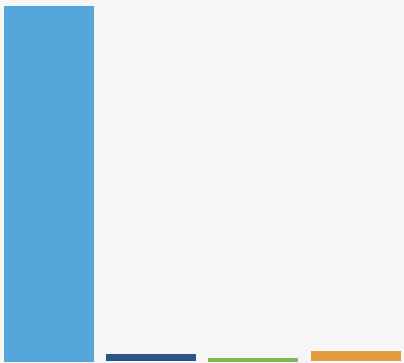
Total Year ended March 31, 2020
15,678



● Salaries & Benefits	6,847
● Building Occupancy	2,948
● Office Administration and Other	2,970
● Technology & Purchased Goods + Services	1,066
● Training & Recruitment	162

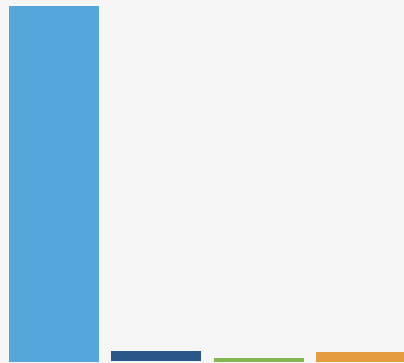
Total Year ended March 31, 2019
13,993

Revenue (in thousands of dollars)



● Province of Ontario	84,111
● Government of Canada	1,746
● Hope for Children	634
● Other	2,278

Total Year ended March 31, 2020
88,769



● Province of Ontario	89,669
● Government of Canada	2,247
● Hope for Children	541
● Other	2,088

Total Year ended March 31, 2019
94,545

Total Costs (in thousands of dollars)

2020

Total

Year ended March 31, 2020

84,683

2019

Total

Year ended March 31, 2019

92,394

Excess (deficiency) of Revenue over expenses for the year

Total

Year ended March 31, 2020

4,086

Total

Year ended March 31, 2019

2,151



Catholic Children's Aid Society of Toronto

Address: 2206 Eglinton Ave E., Toronto, ON M1L 4S7 | **Telephone:** 416-395-1500

