

KENORA-RAINY RIVER DISTRICTS

# Child & Family

SERVICES



# ANNUAL REPORT

2022/2023

## **Kenora-Rainy River Districts Child and Family Services**

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**23 June 2023**

We acknowledge that we are meeting today on the traditional territory of Treaty #3. We wish to recognize the long history of Anishinaabe people, and show our respect and appreciation to them today. We honour with gratitude the land itself and the Anishinaabe people who have cared for it throughout the generations. We commit to continue learning on how to be better stewards of the land we inhabit and to embrace Truth and Reconciliation within the Anishinaabe Nation of Treaty #3, as with all Indigenous peoples.

### **A G E N D A**

1. Opening/Welcome by Ahnika Bruetsch, Board Chair
2. Minutes of the June 23, 2022, Kenora-Rainy River Annual Meeting
3. Message from the Board Chair and Executive Director
4. Greetings from OACAS
5. Auditor's Report  
Jennifer Pyzer - BDO Dunwoody, Chartered Accountant
6. Governance/Nominating Report, Charron Sippola
  - a) Nomination Report
7. Adjournment

***Vision:** Children and families reaching their full potential*

***Mission:** We are dedicated to ensuring the safety and well-being of every child*

***Values:** Positive attitude, Relationships, Integrity, Diversity, and Excellence*



**KENORA-RAINY RIVER DISTRICTS CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES**

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting**  
**Held June 23, 2022**

The Annual Meeting of the Kenora-Rainy River Child and Family Services was held on June 23, 2022, commencing at 5:00 p.m. via BlueJeans. The meeting was chaired by the President of the Board of Directors, Syrena Lalonde and a quorum of the general membership was present. The Board President welcomed those present and thanked them for attending the annual meeting.

The Mission, Vision and Values Statements were read aloud by Josie Groen.

**MOTION # 20220623 - 1** Moved by Kathy McConnachie and seconded by Diane Clifford that the Minutes of the June 17, 2021, Kenora-Rainy River Districts Child and Family Services Annual General Meeting be approved. Motion Carried.

**President's Report:**

**MOTION # 20220623 - 2** Moved by Charron Sippola and seconded by Josie Groen that the President's Report for June 2022 be approved. Motion Carried.

**Executive Director's Report:**

**MOTION # 20220623 - 3** Moved by Tom Doherty and seconded by Charron Sippola that the Executive Director's Report for June 2022 be approved. Motion Carried.

A letter from OACAS Board President and Executive Director, congratulating the Agency on the Annual General Meeting, was presented to the Membership by Syrena Lalonde.

Jennifer Pyzer, BDO Dunwoody Chartered Accountant provided the membership with a comprehensive summary of the Auditor's report for the fiscal year April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022. The Membership appreciated the detailed report. Thank you to Jason Siwak and his team for the work required to complete the audit.

**MOTION # 20220623 - 4** Moved by Charron Sippola and seconded by Kathy McConnachie that the 2021/2022 Audited Financial Statements be approved. Motion Carried

**MOTION # 20220623 - 5** Moved by Ahnika Bruetsch and seconded by Josie Groen that the services of BDO Canada Chartered Accountants be retained for auditing purposes for the fiscal year April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023. Motion Carried

Having no further business to consider, the President adjourned the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ahnika Bruetsch, President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mary Ann Reimer, Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Chair's Report  
To the Members of the  
Kenora-Rainy River Districts Child and Family Services  
June 2023**

A great deal of focus for the Board this year has been preparing for upcoming change. Bill Leonard will be retiring in January 2024 after 28 years at KRRCFS; 14 years as the Executive Director. We are incredibly grateful for Bill's years of commitment and dedication to the Agency. He has been steadfast in prioritizing the children and families of the Districts, and we wish him all of the best in retirement. The Recruitment Committee hired Legacy Bowes to lead the recruitment of an Executive Director.

After months of meeting, interviewing and discussing the priorities of KRRCFS, we are happy to welcome Alicia Rogerson as the incoming Executive Director effective October 2023. Alicia brings knowledge of both Child Welfare and Clinical Services and a breadth of experience from the Family and Children Services of Frontenac, Lennox and Addington. Her dedication to provide quality service to children and families while embodying the values, mission, and vision of KRRCFS makes her a natural fit with the Agency.

Ongoing staffing challenges has increased workload on staff covering within their communities as well as travelling to cover in other communities. We acknowledge the efforts of all staff who have gone above and beyond to ensure quality service is available to the families served. We also wish to acknowledge the efforts of the Human Resources department to utilize resources strategically and creatively to fill the void. The teamwork and comradery shown across the agency is commendable.

The Agency once again closed out the year in a surplus thanks to the skillful tactics and maneuvering of Bill Leonard and Jason Siwak. Your relentless efforts to demonstrate fiscal accountability is greatly appreciated.

The Board of Directors continued to improve their proficiency as a governing Board. The Quality Assurance Committee created and deployed surveys to collect data on efficiency and effectiveness, as well as performance. Both agency and Board of Directors continue to work within their service plans. Despite the obstacles of funding deficits, our agency continues to offer quality service to the families of our vast geographical area.

On behalf of the KRRCFS Board of Directors, I thank the staff, management and Executive Director for all of your efforts throughout the year. The resilience you have shown in adapting and adjusting to a "new normal" while still maintaining service excellence is admirable.

Thank you to our Board of Directors. Your commitment to our Board is something to be proud of. At this time, I also want to thank outgoing Board members, Kathy McConnachie (7 years) and Syrena Lalonde (10 years) for their dedication to the KRRCFS Board. We are incredibly grateful for the time, effort and energy that they have committed to the Agency.

Respectfully,



Ahnika Bruetsch, Board Chair



Report to the General Membership  
Kenora-Rainy River Child and Family Services  
June 23, 2023

Last Fall we were still struggling with the effects of the Pandemic which again hit a zenith in January particularly impacting our young people and staff within our group home program. Since then we began to see a gradual decrease, and an eventual end, to what has been a difficult experience over the past three years. The Pandemic has impacted many areas of the agency that we continue to struggle to recover from, particularly our ongoing battle with recruiting and retention of staff. The past three years has radically shifted the very definition of work and what it means to different people. The simple matter of recruiting staff has changed as the calculation of work/personal time has become more complicated. Still, as of this writing, we have been successful in bringing Red Lake and Dryden to full staffing, but now our attention has been directed at Fort Frances as we were notified of two sudden vacancies.

Despite the many challenges over the past year we were able to end the year with a balanced budget in our child welfare programming. This was in no small part due to the Balanced Budget Fund, which is a pool of money we were able to save as a result of surpluses in previous years. These funds will not be available to us in the current fiscal year which threatens to be a fiscally fragile one. We have had a number of meetings to look at the numbers. Of note is the cost of returning to regular staffing as we recover from the pandemic, as well as the significant costs of caring for a number of especially high needs children. On its face it would appear that we would have little leeway in the cost of staff or providing the necessary care for children, so it begs the question of how we manage the costs without negatively affecting staff or the care of the children. The answer may be in restructuring the way we staff our child welfare services and we will be looking more closely at this in the coming months.

Our Clinical and Community Programs also went through a staffing crisis this past year. As of this writing they are at full compliment and it appears that we will be able to achieve the goal of having no waiting list for our clinical services in the Rainy River district. These programs also ended the year with a balanced budget.

Last summer we negotiated a new Collective Agreement with our union local. Negotiations were hampered by the Government's imposition of Bill 124 which restricted pay raises to no more than 1% over salary and benefits. Although we achieved a final agreement which was ratified by the Board, we did include an Article that would allow the union to reopen the agreement to have further negotiations on salary and benefits should the Government's Bill 124 be repealed. In fact, Bill 124 was found to be unconstitutional last winter. As a result, we went back to the table in March 2023 and came to a final settlement over salaries and benefits.



The Ministry has also introduced sweeping reforms affecting our foster care/residential programs that include new regulations on training and oversight. The expectation is that all agencies be compliant with the new regulations by July 1, 2023. I have expressed to the Ministry on numerous occasions that we may not be ready. We are meeting some resistance with our kin foster homes regarding the degree of training they are expected to undergo. Just this week I received a bill from a foster parent requesting payment of lost wages as a result of attending training.

One of our major cost drivers over the past few years has been defending against many of the historical lawsuits that have been filed against us. Because we were having difficulty finding who our insurers were back in the 70's and 80's, we were forced to absorb these costs. The Ministry turned a blind eye to requests for assistance. Fortunately, we hired a legal firm who specializes in insurance coverage and they were not only able to obtain insurance coverage of our files, but also to recoup the hundreds of thousands of dollars we spent over the years defending these matters. Recently, we received a claim that does not appear to have coverage, but our lawyers are confident that they can get the insurance company on board.

Respectfully,

William Leonard, BA, BSW, MSW (Clinical), RSW  
Executive Director



Friday, June 23, 2023

Bill Leonard  
Executive Director  
Kenora–Rainy River Districts Child and Family Services  
820 Lakeview Drive  
Kenora, ON P9N 3P7

Dear Mr. Leonard,

The Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) extends warm greetings to you, your Board of Directors, and your staff as you convene your 2023 Annual General Meeting.

As the pandemic officially came to an end this year and agencies continue to innovate their service delivery, we are inspired to see how Kenora–Rainy River Districts Child and Family Services continues to provide excellent services to your local community. OACAS recognizes and applauds the leadership, courage, and perseverance of your staff and board over the past year.

As we enter the process of developing a new strategic plan for OACAS and continuing the work of child welfare redesign, we recognize more than ever the need for strong partnerships and collaborative efforts across agencies and sectors, and within communities to achieve our goals. OACAS honours, recognizes, and appreciates the diverse achievements of your staff and board members at Kenora–Rainy River Districts Child and Family Services on many provincial committees and projects. OACAS is proud to support your agency as you serve the children, youth, and families in your community.

Thank you, Bill, for 28 years of service at Kenora–Rainy River Districts Child and Family Services with 14 of those years as Executive Director, and congratulations on your upcoming retirement in January 2024. We are incredibly grateful for your years of commitment and dedication to the Agency and for being steadfast in prioritizing the children and families of the Kenora Rainy River districts.

Your membership with OACAS continues to be highly valued. Our work is not possible without our members' ongoing participation and contributions. In turn, we strive to provide all members with benefits that support their day-to-day operations, including in the areas of government relations; communication and advocacy; diversity, equity, and inclusion and reconciliation work; service and operational excellence; education and training.

Tel. (416) 987-7725 | 1-800-718-1797

Website: [www.oacas.org](http://www.oacas.org)

Social: [Twitter](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

OACAS looks forward to continuing to work alongside in the coming year and wishes you all the best for 2023-2024.

Sincerely,



Ela Smith  
Board Chair



Nicole Bonnie  
Chief Executive Officer





**Kenora – Rainy River Districts Child and Family Services  
Governance and Nominating Report  
to the Members of the Society  
June 23, 2023**

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As per KRRDCFS bylaw section 2.01, the Governance and Nominating Committee submits the following members of the Society for appointment to the Board of Directors:

1. Cecile Marcino
2. Imran Ali



Ahnika Bruetsch, Board Chair



Charron Sippola, Nominating and Governance Committee Chair

## KRRCFS 2022/2023 STATS

Children's Services 2022/2023		KRRCFS Children	OSW's	Total 2021/2022	Total 2022/2023
	Children in Care (April 1, 2022)	105	49	188	154
	Days Care Provided (2022-23)	33005	21299	59047	54304
	Children in Care (March 31, 2023)	105	45	180	150
	New Admissions (2022-23)	52	17	100	69
	Discharges from Care (2022-23)	52	21	111	73
	Days Care Provided (2022-23)	36663	27620	54304	64283
Protection Services 2022/2023		2021/2022	2022/2023		
	Intakes Open Beginning of Year	68	148		
	Intakes Open During the Year	323	344		
	Intakes Closed	273	36		
	Transferred to Ongoing Protection	50	59		
	Ongoing Opened Beginning of the Year	78	70		
	Ongoing Opened During the Year	69	68		
	Ongoing Protection Closing	77	67		
Ongoing Protection as of End of the Year	70	71			
FOSTER CARE/ RESOURCES		2021/2022	2022/2023		
	Approved Foster/Kin Homes (April 1, 2023)	103	108		
	New Approved Homes During the Year	41	22		
	Foster/Kin Homes Closed During the Year	35	44		
	Foster/Kin Homes Approved During the Year	24	86		
CLINICAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES	<b>DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES</b>				
	Infant and Child Development Program Total Clients Served	74			
	Community Integration Program Total Clients Served	85			
	Family Respite Program Total Clients Served	51			
	<b>Service Plan Commitment #1 – Enhance the development of children receiving services from our agency</b>	<i>*measured by goals achieved on family support plans for infant and child development, community integration, and family respite clients</i>			
	<b>Progress Status</b>	<b>Community Integration</b>	<b>Infant and Child Development</b>	<b>Family Respite</b>	
	Achieved	31	254	13	
	Cancelled		9		
	In Progress	46	20	49	
	No Change	1	14		
No Progress	3	2			
On Hold		3			

	<b>CHILD AND YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES</b> Counselling and Therapy Program Total Clients Served	226			
	Brief Services Program Total Clients Served	41			
	Crisis Services Total Clients Served	18			
	Family/Caregiver Skill Building and Support Total Clients Served	9			
	Intensive Services Total Clients Served	19			
	<b>Service Plan Commitment #2 – Reduce the time that children must wait before being able to access our Child and Youth Mental Health Services in the Rainy River District</b>		<i>*measured by number of wait days for counselling services</i>		
	<b>Month</b>	<b>Average Number of Wait Days</b>	<b>Maximum Number of Wait days</b>	<b>Minimum Number of Wait days</b>	
	April 2022	101	210	3	
	May 2022	60	152	6	
	June 2022	44	105	9	
	July 2022	28	83	1	
	August 2022	28	100	5	
	September 2022	20	82	1	
	October 2022	20	104	4	
	November 2022	11	34	1	
	December 2022	19	54	1	
	January 2023	29	72	2	
	February 2023	31	78	2	
	March 2023	33	84	1	
	<b>Average Number of Days</b>	38	97	3	
<b>SCHOOL BASED COUNSELLING SERVICES</b> *September 2022 – April 2023					
<b>Rainy River District School Board</b> Brief Program Total Clients		290			
Walk In Program Total Clients		149			
<b>The Northwest Catholic District School Board</b> Brief Program Total Clients		5			



## Statement of Operations Operating Fund for the Year Ending 31 March 2023

### REVENUE

Province: MCYS and MCSS	\$ 15,168,899
MOH	\$ 1,116,036
Interest and other income	<u>\$ 930,701</u>
Total Revenue	<u>\$ 17,215,636</u>

### COST OF ALL SERVICES

Salaries	\$ 8,182,869
Benefits	\$ 2,484,911
Travel	\$ 421,393
Training	\$ 92,545
Building Occupancy	\$ 788,848
Professional Services – Non-Client	\$ 385,401
Program Expense	\$ 96,608
Boarding	\$ 5,751,948
Professional Services – Client	\$ 117,177
External Legal Fees	\$ 79,765
Adoption	\$ 324,025
Clients Personal Needs	\$ 590,890
Health and Related	\$ 103,629
Financial Assistance	\$ 29,835
Promotion and Publicity	\$ 4,768
Office	\$ 198,553
Miscellaneous	\$ 263,852
Technology	\$ 476,055
OCBe	<u>\$ 65,746</u>
Total Cost of Services	\$ 20,458,818

Expenditure Recoveries	<u>\$ 3,245,711</u>
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Net Expenditures	<u>\$ 17,213,107</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>\$ 2,529</u>

