



# Family and Children's Services of St. Thomas and Elgin ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Talbot Teen Centre

June 16th, 2010 at 7:30 p.m.

**Family & Children's Services  
St. Thomas & Elgin**

410 Sunset Drive

St. Thomas, Ontario N5R 3C7

Tel: 519- 631-1492 Fax: 519- 631-0596

www.caselgin.on.ca

## YOUTH IN CARE REPORT

The Youth in Care Executive Committee has been in existence for over six years. During this time we have coordinated monthly social events, planned many activities and got a great deal of work done. Most importantly, we have enabled youth to have a voice in the direction of the programs, policies and best practices of this agency.

Our partnerships within the community continue to expand with people such as Kelly Ruddock from Edward Jones Financial Group. Kelly assisted with the recent launch of our Financial Literacy Training that stemmed from the Ontario Child Tax Benefit Equivalent (OCBE). Fanshawe College and UWO have also played key roles in assisting youth in preparing for post secondary education.

Our ECM youth are particularly thankful for the donation of a storage room from Lyle Cook Storage. This has allowed the program to store donations of household goods that will assist youth who are moving into their first apartments.

This summer the Youth in Care Executive Committee (YICEC) is looking forward to another successful term of our Summer Work Experience Program (formerly Summer Youth Employment Program). This unique program has been a highlight of the YICEC here in Elgin and at our provincial Youth CAN conferences we always like to boast about the success of the program and how it continues to thrive.

Recently we embarked on a "Photovoice" project with the theme "A Day in the Life of a Teen". Youth attended a workshop where they were given an explanation of Photo Voice and a lesson in photography by Kim Atkinson. They were then able to take photos in and around St. Thomas that symbolized our theme. Each youth selected one photo and gave a brief written explanation of why they chose that image. We looked forward to the Annual General Meeting where these photos would be displayed and be part of a silent auction.

The youth-focused committee has run many successful events this year such as Tubing at River Valley, Games Night at the Talbot Teen Centre and our ever popular Youth in Care Christmas Dinner.

This program continues to grow as we see older youth graduating to post secondary studies and new youth being introduced to the committee. We anticipate an exciting provincial conference in August and we will continue our involvement in the SouthWest Zone team building initiatives.

As always, with the support of the Agency, The Elgin Children's Foundation and Community Partners, this program continues to meet its strategic goals.

*- Heather Snow,  
Child and Youth Worker*



**YIC executive:** Britany Doster, Tabitha MacArthur, Lena Klassen, Heather Snow, Eileen Boudreau, Amanda Winter, Ben Van Dorp



Photo Voice: Expressive arts project demonstrating the creativity of our youth.  
Photo Credits: Elizabeth Carpenter (Left), Ashley Stewart (Right)



**Vision Statement:** Youth supporting youth.

**Mission Statement:** Youth in care making connections through social, recreational and educational activities while having a voice in the decisions which will affect and enhance their lives.

# PRESIDENT'S AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2009-2010

Family and Children's Services of St. Thomas and Elgin had a challenging year coping with the social impact of the economic recession in Elgin County as well as dealing with a significant shortfall in funding from the Ministry. This did not deter us from following our strategic plan as implemented in 2009 which is now showing significant outcomes and results.

We started the year with a projected increase in child abuse investigations and facing a projected deficit of \$1.4 million. Despite increases in the demand for our services, we remained true to our principles and to our strategic plan and continued to reduce the number of children that had to be taken into care. We did this by providing services to families in their own homes and when that was not possible we placed children with relatives in what are called kinship service homes. We have embraced permanency options for children by encouraging adoptions. We also promote relatives or foster parents obtaining custody when this is appropriate and in the best interests of the child.

We turned the corner on the rapid growth experienced in family services over the past three years. We reduced caseload sizes in family services and provided additional supports and resources for these families. Despite increases in investigated child abuse reports, we were able to reduce the number of children in care and to reduce the number of family service files transferred to ongoing services. We had fewer cases taken before the courts and the amount of supervised access was significantly lessened.

Child protection is our work and child safety is job number one. The child protection model in Elgin County is achieving what we are mandated to do; keeping children safe from harm, improving the well-being of children, youth and families and developing permanency placement options with families, where the child feels at home and has a sense of belonging.

The volume reductions in family service files and the decreased need for supervised access meant that nine staff lay-offs were required.

The work that we do in Elgin County compares favourably with other child protection services in the South West Region and across the Province. This is shown in our achievement of the strategic initiatives put in place by the Ministry during the Transformation Agenda launched in 2006/7.

The funding formula did not provide the funding required for the child protection services needed in Elgin. We provide child protection services in Elgin County in a frugal and cost efficient manner, as evidenced by our per capita funding that is the second lowest in the South West Region. We followed our strategic plan to advocate for equitable funding for Elgin by proceeding with another Section 14 appeal to the Minister for the required funding. When this was unsuccessful we joined 10 other children's aid societies in the province to bring an application for a judicial review of the manner in which the Ministry allocates funds to children's aid societies.

At the end of the budget year, we did get some help when the Ministry provided additional funding, but Family and Children's Services of St. Thomas and Elgin was still left with an unfunded deficit of \$300,288.

You will see from the accompanying graphs that, in the past year, child welfare investigations are up by 6% and the monthly average of ongoing protection services in Elgin is down by 3.5% from last year.

Families in Elgin continue to struggle with increases in addictions, mental health and domestic violence and this is having an impact on their ability to successfully parent their children, making them at risk for abuse and neglect.

In 2008/09 we had a significantly higher number of cases transferred to ongoing family services and while this has reduced somewhat in the past year, it continues to be above the average for the past 5 years.

## FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2010

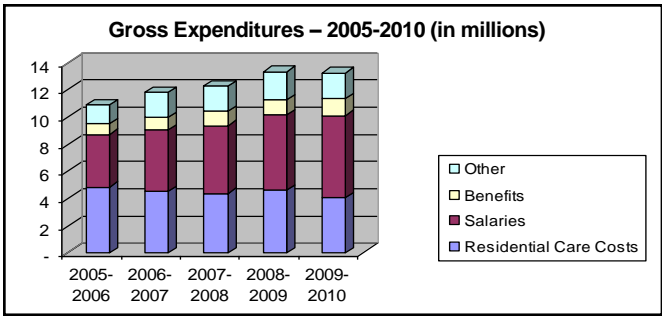
### REVENUES

Province of Ontario - Grants	\$12,427,020	96.3%
Government of Canada - Children's Special Allowance	344,927	2.7%
Other Children's Aid Societies	77,009	0.6%
Other Income and Recoveries	54,792	0.4%
Maintenance from Parents	<u>6,852</u>	0.1%
	<u>\$12,910,600</u>	100.0%

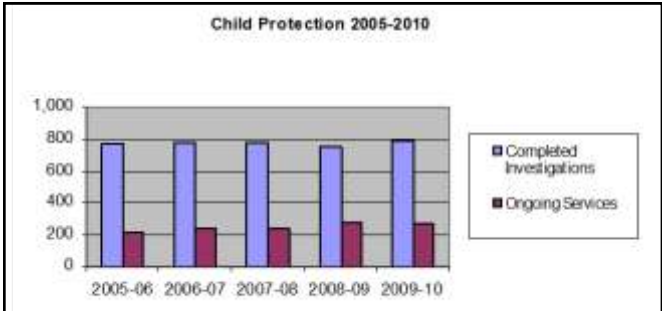
### EXPENSES

Salaries	\$ 6,027,919	45.6%
Boarding Rate Payments	3,422,177	25.9%
Employee Benefits	1,288,067	9.8%
Transportation	599,952	4.5%
Children's Personal Needs	407,529	3.1%
Building Occupancy	306,933	2.3%
Purchased Services - Case Related	300,674	2.3%
Office Expenses	215,127	1.6%
Medical and Related Expenses	211,846	1.6%
Technology	190,118	1.4%
Miscellaneous	89,366	0.7%
Purchased Services - Non-Case Related	65,319	0.5%
Training and Recruitment	52,795	0.4%
Program Expenses	18,158	0.1%
Promotion and Publicity	<u>14,909</u>	0.1%
	<u>\$ 13,210,889</u>	100.0%

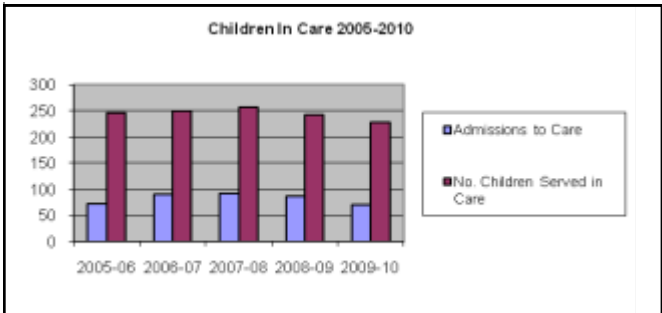
Net Expenses Year Ended March 31, 2010 (\$300,289)



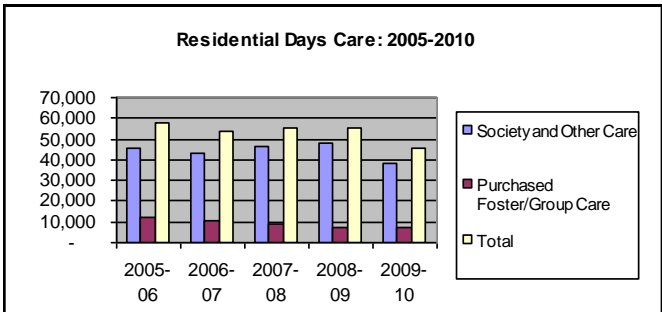
70 children were admitted to care this year compared to 86 children in 2008/09. The total number of children served in care during the year fell from 242 last year to 228 for this current year. The total residential days of care fell significantly from 55,643 to 45,558. This shows a decrease of 10,085 days of care. What the statistical data doesn't reveal is the number of children served by FACS who didn't come into care, i.e. those served in their family of origin or in the home of kin. Unfortunately we are not adequately funded for these activities.



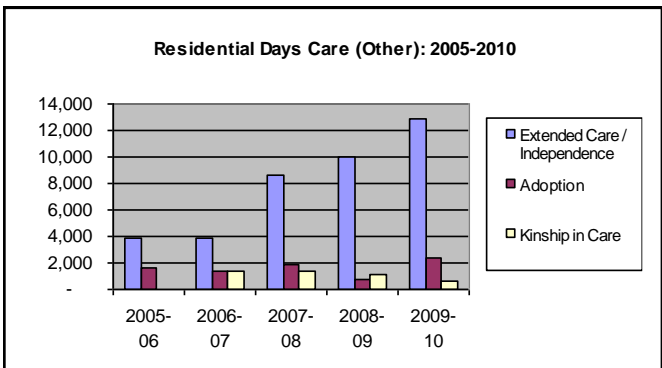
The strategic directions for the child welfare field and for Elgin CAS are to admit fewer children into care. At the same time, to provide more effective supports for youth transitioning to adulthood and to encourage them to stay on with the Agency. This strategy has been successful and has resulted in a significant increase in the number of youth on Extended Care and Maintenance [ECM]. This rose from 21 last year to 32 youth on ECM.



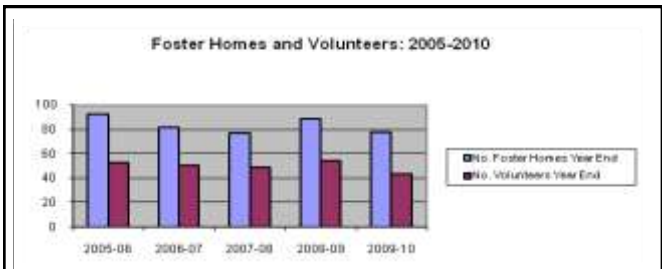
We are very lucky to have a high number of good quality foster homes, allowing us to provide 84% of the days of care to children in our own foster homes and not in outside paid resources. Volunteers provided 9,147 hours of service to our Agency. This translates into the equivalent of 5 full-time staff. We are indebted to our volunteers and can't thank them enough for their contributions.



Support, counselling and early intervention services are operating from the offices on Talbot Street. They operate using funding outside of our child protection budget from sources such as the Elgin-St. Thomas United Way and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. Programs are delivered in partnership with community agencies including Merrymount, West Elgin Community Health Centre and Oxford-Elgin Child and Youth Centre.



We are so fortunate to have a strong and experienced volunteer Board of Directors, dedicated, hard working and passionate Staff, committed, loving and supportive Foster Parents, energetic and productive Volunteers and a bright and enthusiastic Youth-in-Care Network.



In June 2009, the Commission to Promote Sustainable Child Welfare was announced by Minister Matthews. The Commission will focus on enhancing and improving child welfare while keeping funding within a sustainable envelope. They have three years in which to make changes to child welfare.

We have met several times with the Commission and tried to show that Family and Children's Services of St. Thomas and Elgin is producing successful outcomes in a cost efficient manner while following the strategic directions set by the Ministry in the transformation agenda. The future for child protection services in Elgin is best left in our hands, where we can continue our community governance model of working in close collaboration with other community services and families, rather than be forced into some version of an amalgamation with another children's aid society.

The next two years will be very interesting and we look forward to further enhancing the innovative, productive and cost efficient child protection model currently being developed in Elgin County.

Don Lawrence  
President

Rod Potgieter  
Executive Director



**Our Vision:** All children and youth are safe and nurtured

**Our Mission:** We protect children and youth from abuse or neglect by ensuring a safe, stable and nurturing environment in partnership with families and the community.



**Board of Directors 2009-2010**

**Left to Right** - Monty Fordham, Rod Potgieter-Executive Director, Matt Moyes, Cheryl Fish, Ric Murray, Don Lawrence - President, Jeff Addley-Vice-President, Mary Jane Collins-Past President, Maureen Bedek-Treasurer, Jennifer Paul-O'Donnell, Gord Bryant, Tracy Grant. Absent: Kathy Fehr-Secretary

# I am your Children's Aid - Staff 2009-2010

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 Director of Services Dawn Flegel / Karl Flegel  
 Manager, Senior Legal Counsel Joyce Dittrich  
 Manager, Finance & Administration Services Barry Westman  
 Manager, Resources Brian Flint  
 Manager, County Investigations Services Karl Flegel / Gordana Cvetkovic  
 Manager, City Family Services Shelley West  
 Manager, County Family Services Adri Hewitt  
 Manager City Investigations Services Monica Szikszay  
**Manager, Children's Services** Dori Brauer / Julie Carter  
 Manager, Family Services and Human Resources Donna King  
 Manager, Family Services Julie Meyers  
 Manager, Support Services Susan Dawe-Lundy  
 Manager, HR & QA & Volunteer Services Justine Saari  
 Manager, Information Systems Tom Timbrell  
 Executive Assistant Rita Withenshaw  
 Human Resources/Quality Assurance Coordinator Neil Hubert  
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 Legal Assistants Lorri Parkins, Sue Sheridan  
 Receptionist Marlaine Epple, Hetty Findlay  
 Administrative Assistants Julie Agius, Wendy Evans, Nancy Loeters, Sherri Quinlan, Ramona Smith, Terri Struthers  
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 IT Coordinator Dan Bridge  
 Volunteer Coordinator Lorri Donaldson  
 Transportation & Access Coordinator Jamesie Blackwell  
 Child and Youth Worker Tabitha MacArthur, Heather Snow  
 Foster Support Worker Sharon Bogart, Kristen Fryer, Jen Peters,  
**Children's Support Worker** Kari Wyse  
**Children's Mental Health Counsellor** Steve Kippen  
 Case Aid Kim Atkinson  
 Students Heather McMahan, Ashley Pikul  
 Nutritionist Maria Wall  
 After Hours Duty Workers Deb Barnes, Jodie Henry, Sue Hines, Lucy Shaw, Dawn Winegarden, Kathryn Wozny  
 Foster Care Recruiter Debbie Dawdy  
 President, Foster Parent Association Nancy Moyes

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**CHILDREN'S SERVICES WORKERS**

Marcia Andkilde, Silvia Cuevas, Rebecca Downey, Kayla Gowdy, Janice Oldham, Danielle Russell, Adoption Worker – Marilyn Provenzano

**CHILDREN'S RESOURCE WORKERS**

Paul Ballantyne, Hiedi Britton, Tracey Hedges, Marnie Merritt, Susan Nichol, Julie Ritchie, Deb Vint, Kinship Services Workers - Carol Feddema, Maria Gubbles, Jennifer Lester, Wilma van der Woerd

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Wynie Dearlove, Patty Dunn, Cara Gogan, Barbara Newell, Todd Rowley, Kim Seabrook

**FAMILY ACCESS WORKERS**

Lisa Vandenbor, Paula Mooney, Becky Vaughan, Kelsie Hitchen-Percival, Casual - Patty Dunn, Marija Jurcic, Jennifer Lewis, Teresa Ross, Pauline Smith, Kim Young, Kari Wyse, Josie Loewen, Lana Allen.