



General Child
and Family Services
Authority

Partnerships

Supporting children and families

[part.ner.ship]

A relationship between two or more
individuals who have a joint interest.

2017/2018 Annual Report



*'Alone, we can do so little;
together, we can do so much.'*

~Helen Keller

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General Authority: History and Overview

With proclamation of *The Child and Family Services Authorities Act* in 2003, there was a significant shift of powers from the Director of Child Welfare to each of the four new Child and Family Services authorities (the General Authority, Metis Authority, Northern Authority and Southern First Nations Network of Care). Most powers directly related to the operation of child and family services agencies were transferred from the Director to the four authorities. The authorities are responsible for mandating, funding and overseeing the services provided by child and family services agencies throughout the Province of Manitoba. Within the General Authority, these services are provided by the following agencies:

Jewish Child and Family Service



JEWISH CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICE
Strengthening Lives in Keeping with Jewish Values

Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba



Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba



Winnipeg Child and Family Services Branch and four Rural and Northern service regions (Interlake Region, Eastman Region, Parkland Region, and Northern Region). These departmental agencies are mandated by the General Child and Family Services Authority.



General Authority Staff for 2017/2018

*Sandi Benson

Debbie Besant

Del Bruneau

Patti Cox

Allison Dunfield

Thomas Ens

Jennifer Fallis

Lynda Fulton

Kerri-Lynn Greeley

Jeanette Grennier

Laurie Gulowaty

Bryan Hart

Andrew Lajeunesse

Monica Mazur

Laura Morton

*Bev Pion

*Janice Rees

Dana Reid

Brian Ridd

Lisa Schmidt

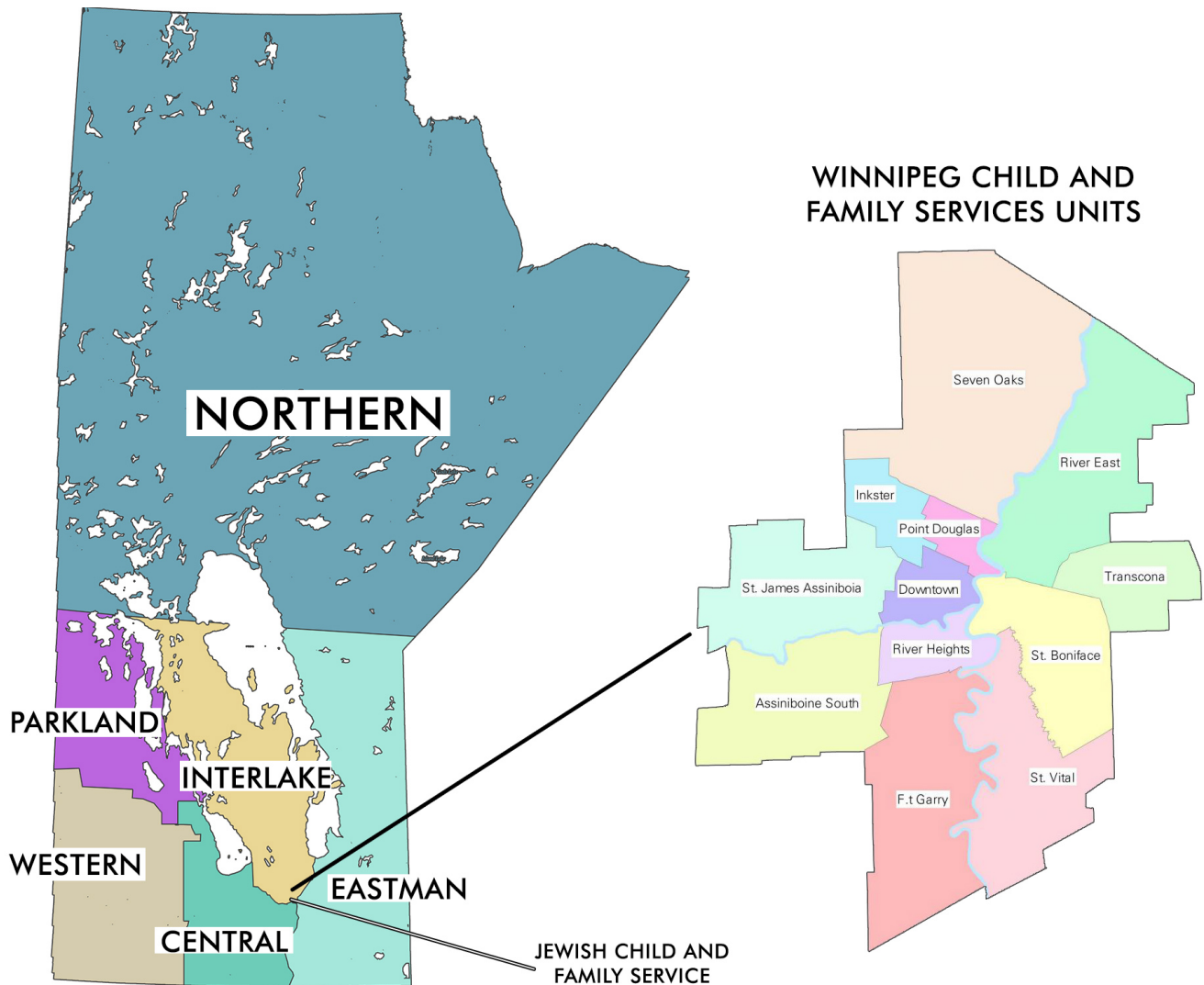
Careen Simoes

*Patti Wawyn

Laura Wilson

*Left the employment of the General Authority during 2017/2018

General Authority Agencies & Service Regions



Board of Directors



General Authority Board of Directors for 2017/2018

From left: Mark Fleming (Board Chair), Laura Crookshanks (outgoing Board Chair), Catherine Biaya, Leah Deane (Secretary), Laura Cogollo, David Sierhuis (Vice-Chair/Treasurer). Ex-officio members: Lorraine Scollin, Jordan Friesen. (missing).



Incoming General Authority Board of Directors for 2018/2019

From left: Leah Deane (ex-officio), Mark Fleming (Board Chair), Debbie Besant (General Authority CEO), David Sierhuis (Vice-Chair), Craig Johnson, Jordan Friesen (ex-officio), James Lowry, Catherine Biaya and Laura Cogollo. Missing: Lorraine Scollin (ex-officio).

Message from the CEO & Board

"Partnerships are not hard work, but heart work."

~Joyce Epstein and Associates



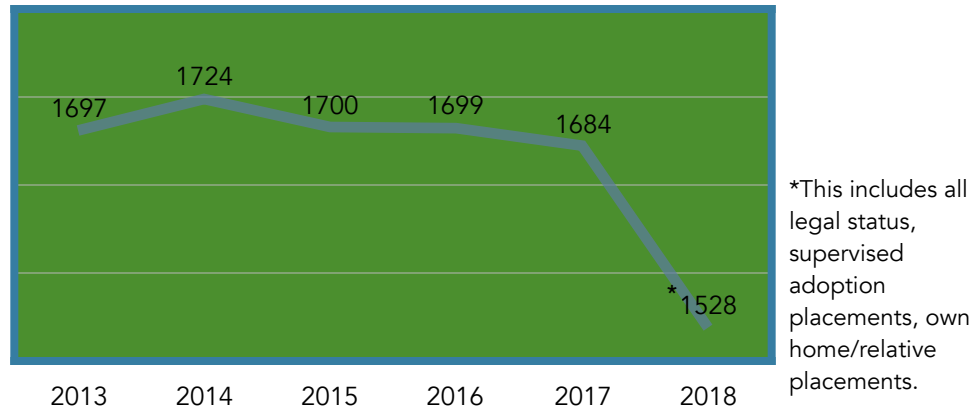
Board Chair Mark Fleming and CEO Debbie Besant

Hello and welcome. This is the 15th annual report from the General Authority. We continue our tradition with a joint report from the Board Chairperson and the Chief Executive Officer.

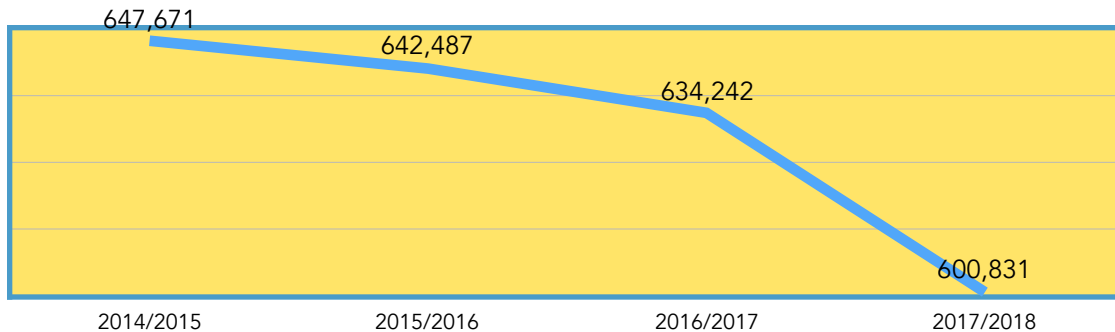
The General Authority's role and responsibility is to mandate, fund and oversee the services provided by our agencies and regions throughout the province. The board plays an integral role in the governance of our Authority and relationship with the boards of our private agencies. We acknowledge and thank our Authority staff, agencies' and regions' leadership, and their staff. It is through our key partnerships at all levels – board, child and family service agencies, community agencies, government departments and our partner authorities, that we come together to support families and children.

For the year 2017/2018, we have continued to focus on the implementation and refinement of the Practice Model and community based partnerships. Supporting families to keep children safe at home is our key goal, and takes all of us – the Authority and our partners – working together in concert with the family. We all strive to reduce the number of children in care, or, at the very least, reduce the time spent in care. We do that by helping to build on the strengths of the family so that children can either remain at home or return more quickly.

Number of Children in Care at March 31, 2018 for the General Authority



Days care by year



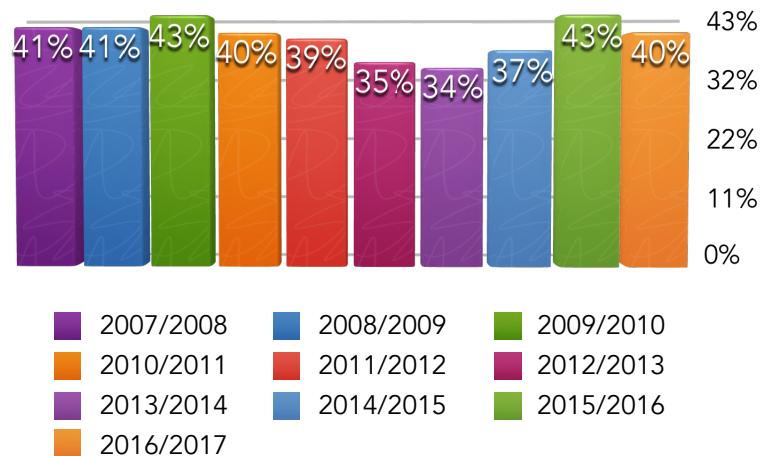
Across the Authority, we continue to utilize Structured Decision Making® to support family engaged practice, inform decision-making and provide transparency to families. We continue to imbed Safe and Together™, a domestic violence intervention strategy, to build on strengths of the primary caregiver and work to hold the offender accountable while educating the offender on the impact to their family and their parenting. We have moved to offer the Caring Dads™ program in more locations across the province. This provides a group treatment forum for fathers to explore their parenting choices. Our use of safety networks with families continues to grow as a practice modality and it is here that community partnerships play a key role in supporting families to keep children safe.

With respect to our focus on children in care, we look to connection with extended family and family of origin wherever possible. We acknowledge the dedication, caring and commitment of our foster families and our group care resources. We cannot underestimate the importance of our children in care having families and relationships that are permanent.

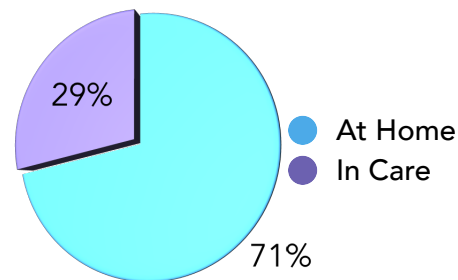
We trust you will find the information contained in this report helpful in understanding the realities of working in the child and family services milieu. Our active and continued numerous

partnerships are critical for families to flourish. No one entity can do this meaningful endeavour of supporting families and children alone. We are committed to continuing to work with our partners to support more children in their own homes.

Of children coming into care, the per cent of Child in Care openings that are reunified within 12 months, by year



Of all children receiving services, the percentage being supported at home (with their parents) at March 2018



In addition, our work on continuous quality improvement and our collaborative endeavours with our three partner authorities (Northern, Metis and Southern First Nations Network of Care) and the Department of Families can only continue to strengthen child welfare practice. We thank them for their continued support.

We would also like to sincerely thank the Department of Families for their ongoing funding and assistance. And, we would also like to express our gratitude to the Dave Thomas Foundation for continued funding of a Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter within the General Authority as well as the Royal Bank, Scotia Bank, and the Children's Aid Foundation—all of whom support specific initiatives.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Besant, General Authority CEO, and Mark Fleming, Board Chair

Directors' Leadership Table

The Directors' Leadership Table (DLT) determines, implements and monitors the strategic direction for the Authority's service network in a manner that promotes collaborative decision-making and enhances consistency in service delivery. Comprised of agency and regional directors, as well as General Authority senior management, DLT promotes best practice approaches and operates as a collective voice to address service delivery gaps and issues and to influence change across and beyond the child welfare system.

Any achievements in reducing the number of children in care in General Authority agencies and service regions, reducing days care and helping families to care for their children safely at home, can be attributed to the collaboration between our agency and service region directors, the tireless efforts of all agency and regional staff and the General Authority. We believe the strength of this partnership has been a key factor in establishing and entrenching our practice transformation.

A core set of Directors' Leadership Table values reflect the collective identity, culture and

<i>Believes in promoting hope, optimism and capacity building through a strengths focus that cultivates, appreciates and enhances the talents, skills, assets and success of the individuals and groups that are part of the General Authority service system.</i>	<i>Believes in inclusiveness where diverse and unique opinions are welcomed: Where staff, youth, families and stakeholders are empowered to have a "voice," invited to participate in the planning process and given the opportunity to influence decisions.</i>	<i>Believes in transparency where plans and decisions are communicated in a timely manner and in that communication, the rationale, expected results and connection to best practice principles are clearly evident.</i>	<i>Believes that plans and decisions should clearly reflect the best and most current available evidence derived from research, proven practice and other sources known to result in positive outcomes for children, youth and families.</i>	<i>Believes that outcomes for children, youth and families are more likely to be positive when staff feel engaged, valued, respected and supported in their work environment.</i>
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service philosophy endorsed by the General Authority:

Through continued facilitation by Dr. Linda Burnside, in the early months of 2017, DLT continued to refine and set specific measurable goals and objectives for the coming years. The group also identified areas of support, leadership or advocacy required on the part of the General Authority to assist agencies/service regions in fulfilling their goals. This resulted in the final *DLT Strategic Planning Priorities, Outcomes and Activities* framework approved on June 15, 2017. The framework includes plans that focus on practice and the ongoing commitment to family centred engagement and collaboration. It also includes key priorities such as the use of

family networks, working with victims and perpetrators of domestic violence and continued work with collaterals regarding our practice innovations.

In addition to the completion of the annual Strategic Service (Business) Plans, this updated strategic plan provides a solid framework for the work of the Directors' Leadership Table and the General Authority for the coming years.

The facilitator noted, 'That no matter which priority theme was being discussed, the narrative frequently returned to the centrality of the Practice Model. This shift in practice. . . has been critical to changing how we engage with families, how we ensure the safety and well-being of children, how we work with communities and collaterals, how we develop and support placement resources, and how we assist with and prevent child maltreatment.'



Review of Child Welfare Legislation

On Dec. 21, 2017, Families Minister Scott Fielding announced "...a team of seven community leaders and experts that will review child welfare legislation to ensure it supports the government's proposed reforms to create better outcomes for children." Andrew Micklefield, MLA for Rossmere, was appointed to chair the committee.

The General Authority was given an opportunity to make a presentation to the committee, respond to specific questions and provide additional recommendations for possible changes to child welfare legislation.

On Jan. 4, 2018, in preparation for the General Authority presentation, the Directors' Leadership Table engaged in a focused discussion on recommendations for legislative reform. In a collaborative effort with General CFS Authority staff members, a written report was prepared. On Jan. 31, 2018, CEO Debbie Besant and then-board chair Laura Crookshanks submitted the report as part of their presentation to the committee.

Five critical points were highlighted in the report:

- It is recommended by the General Authority and agencies that the legislation be amended to include a requirement that there must be a family network meeting within a maximum number of days (to be determined) following CFS involvement.
- It is recommended that the language related to "Permanent Orders" be reviewed and potentially replaced with a more accurate, less negative term being considered (e.g., long-term order) to promote continued contact between parents and children and possible reunification. It is also recommended that the province proceed with legislation and the continued development of a framework for subsidized guardianship, in particular, for extended family members and home communities.
- It is recommended that legislation and a standard be developed to require an assessment and the offer of a network meeting before apprehension of an infant occurs due to a birth alert, unless there are immediate and life-threatening safety concerns.
- It is recommended that the legislation and regulation regarding foster parent appeals be reviewed and revised, and a minimum length of time in the home added as a criterion of eligibility to appeal.
- It is recommended that the legislation and regulation be amended to exclude the delivery of child and family services in a regional office and that all child and family services be delivered as in Subsection 6.1(1) of the *CFS Act* that empowers authorities to mandate agencies, thereby removing government from direct child and family service delivery and facilitating further agencies that are closer to community ties.

Board to Board Engagement 2017

In 2017, the General Authority's board of directors met with the boards of its private agencies (Central, Western and JCFS) to participate in a board-to-board engagement exercise. The format of the engagement activity was a mapping session designed to provide an opportunity for mutual learning, increased board-to-board awareness and strengthened board relationships.

Each board was sent a set of three questions prior to the event. They were asked to consider the following questions:

1. Thinking about your board in terms of duties, functioning, governance, and policy, what are things in these areas that are working well, worries and possible next steps?
2. Thinking about your board's connection to your respective communities, what are some worries, things working well, and next steps in terms of your role in strengthening these connections to the community?
3. Board-to-board support is an important part of optimal function. What are things that are going well, worries, or next steps in developing or strengthening these relationships/connections?

Within each question, each board group was asked to look at their responses and ideas in terms of three main categories: their worries, what they thought was working well, and potential next steps (including the key people or groups needed to help implement suggested next steps). Prior to their responses, the boards were asked to provide a brief overview of the current status of their board.

Some of the themes that emerged from the mapping exercise included boards noting good communication amongst themselves; a solid relationship with community partners; strong and representative committed board members; openness to learning, working and sharing with other General Authority boards, good board-to-agency relationships and boards that are responsive to agency needs. In terms of worries, themes of recruitment and connection emerged. Next steps included the need for continued strategic planning and training, and continuing to strengthen relationships with other boards.

Overall, those who attended felt this event was beneficial in both learning and connecting to other boards. Attendees said they felt eager to embark on implementing some of the identified next steps.

Finance Report

I am pleased to present the 2017/2018 finance report and audited financial statements. The General Authority continues to be a financially stable organization. Our auditors, Magnus LLP, have once again provided an ("unqualified") opinion that the financial statements *"present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Authority as at March 31, 2018 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the Canadian public sector accounting standards for government not-for-profit organizations."*

The General Authority reports using three separate funds: the Operating Fund, the Agency Fund, and the Special Projects Fund.

The Operating Fund is used to support the staffing and operating requirements of the Authority, including training initiatives as well as other programs and projects such as the Wendy's Wonderful Kids program (**see page 29**), Children's Aid Foundation Awards programs, Vision Catcher's Fund, etc. (**see page 64**).

The Agency Fund provides funding to child and family services agencies under the jurisdiction of the General Authority to support the delivery of service including agency staffing, operating requirements and the delivery of support services. Annual operating funding for private agencies is provided by the Department of Families to the General Authority. The Authority then provides this funding to its three private agencies (CFS of Western Manitoba, CFS of Central Manitoba and Jewish Child and Family Service).

The Special Projects Fund is used for special projects as approved by the board of directors including the Bringing Families Together Pilot Project. This is a project entered into by the Province of Manitoba, First Nations of Northern Manitoba Child and Family Services Authority, Southern First Nations Network of Care, Metis Child and Family Services Authority, the General Authority and the project's private funder - Until The Last Child© (UTLC). The General Authority continues to be responsible for the financial administration of this two-year project which commenced in October 2016 and is scheduled to end in September 2018. The Special Projects Fund reports the revenues, expenditures as well as the assets, liabilities and net assets related to this project.

The General Authority continues to be active in supporting agencies in a number of programs and initiatives including providing targeted resources in the following key areas:

'Growth is never by mere chance; it is the result of forces working together.'
~ James Cash Penney



- Family network facilitation support
- Youth engagement
- Foster parent engagement
- Adoptions (via Wendy's Wonderful Kids program)
- New Canadian Initiative support

2017/2018 marked the beginning of the CFS Division's *Child Maintenance – Financial Analytics Initiative*. The General Authority's Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer began participating in biweekly meetings with other authority CEOs, CFOs and senior department representatives to discuss system budget and finance issues. Related to these discussions is the new and ongoing financial analytics initiative related to child maintenance expenditures within the overall system. The purpose of this ongoing initiative is to better understand child maintenance costs in order to guide the development of new policies and to support overall decision-making.

In 2017/2018, the Child and Family Services Division introduced a block funding pilot project and began implementing this project in select agencies across all regions in Manitoba. Block funding provides agencies with increased funding flexibility intended to help decrease the numbers of children in care, time spent in care and keep families together. The project's goal is to generate savings to be reallocated to reunification and prevention activities as well as services to families. In 2017/2018, three agencies within the General Authority entered into an agreement to commence block funding.

- CFS of Central and CFS of Western each began block funding on Nov. 1, 2017
- Jewish Child and Family Service began on Jan. 1, 2018
- Rural and Northern Services (RNS), which includes the Eastman, Interlake, Northern and Parkland service regions, began block funding on April 1, 2018

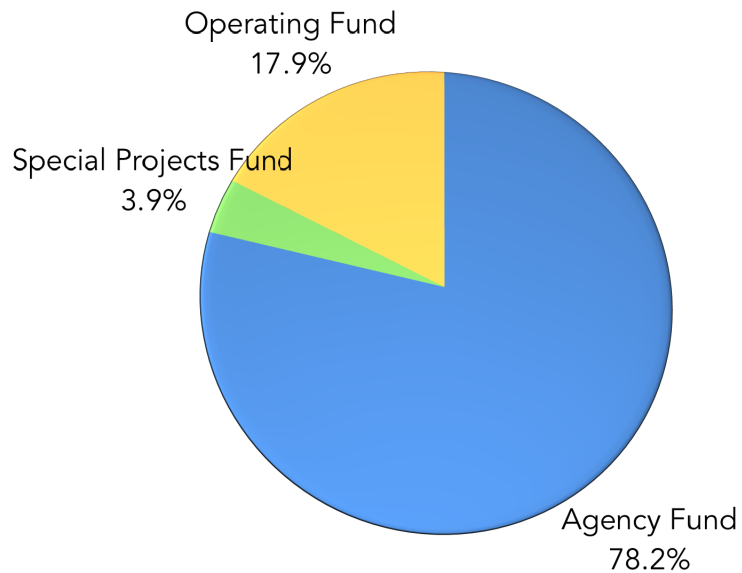
The child and family services system in Manitoba relies on numerous entities to do their part in order to for the system to function, which results in a need for ongoing collaboration, partnership and engagement. The General Authority holds regular finance-related discussions including:

- Biweekly finance meetings with senior representatives from the four authorities and the Department of Families
- Quarterly finance meetings with agencies
- Regular finance meetings between authority CFOs

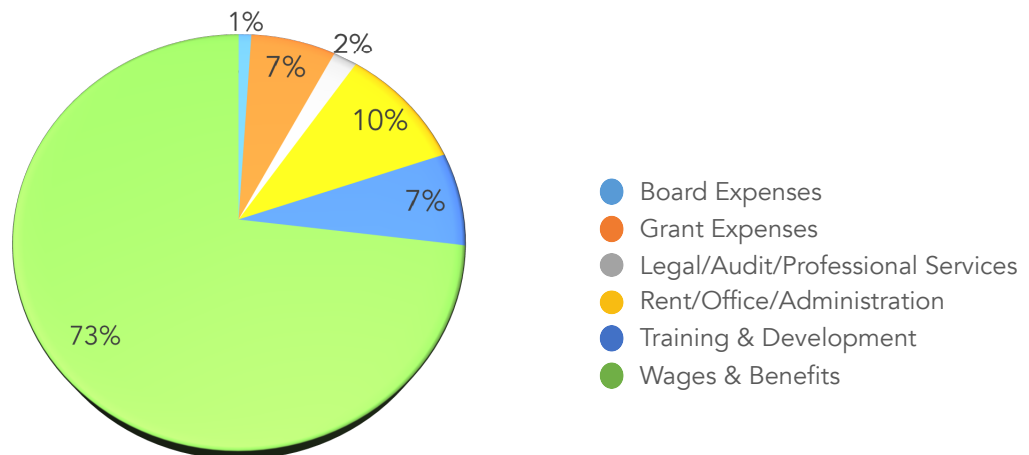
On behalf of the entire organization, thank you to all of our funders, other partners and management and staff for their commitment to making 2017/2018 a successful year.

David Sierhuis, CPA, CA, Treasurer & Finance Committee Chair

For the year ended March 31, 2018 - Total Expenditures by Fund



For the year ended March 31, 2018 - Total Expenditures, Operating



*A copy of the audited financial statements can be found on our website, www.generalauthority.ca.

Practice Model - Engaging Communities to Support Families

Communities and neighbourhoods play an important role in ensuring the safety and well-being of children by strengthening families. Efforts to reinforce child protection systems have frequently taken a top-down approach of imposing formal, government-managed services. Our Practice Model approaches this very differently. The model was first introduced as part of our practice in 2010 and establishes a framework that provides families working with agencies with a consistent approach to case practice and decision-making, along with ensuring child safety.

One of the fundamental principles of the model is that families are experts in their own lives and in order to provide sustainable safety for a child, a network of support should be in place to assist the care provider. This approach to community involvement enables collaboration and alignment of planning with families around child safety. The General Authority Practice Model is based on the premise that keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility. For this, we recognize that connection to community is vital. This necessary community partnership includes involving family, extended family, friends, neighbourhoods, community partners, schools, social service agencies, mental health and substance treatment programs, faith communities and others. We all play a role in keeping children safe with their families, as we know this is critical in achieving the best possible outcome for them.

In the past year, the General Authority and its agencies/regions have engaged with communities in the following ways:

- In the Eastman and Interlake region, presentations were given to community collaterals to help them to understand the role of CFS in the context of other service providers.
- Winnipeg CFS connected with the Somali community, and other New Canadian communities in Winnipeg to begin to develop culturally appropriate foster home placements, and to build bridges so everyone can move together to ensure safer families and communities.
- Family facilitators are currently working at CFS of Central Manitoba, CFS of Western Manitoba and Winnipeg CFS. These facilitators co-ordinate and lead safety network meetings to ensure that plans created for the ongoing safety of children are developed with a community of people who care about the child and who can help the families feel less isolated as they work toward behavioural change and the goal of sustainable safety.
- Agencies and service regions across the General Authority use safety networks in formal or informal ways, in many cases, to help us partner with families and communities in order to create and maintain safe homes.

- The General Authority and its agencies and service regions, in partnership with Changing Ways™, are offering a service to fathers called Caring Dads to assist them in improving parenting and in being a safe parent and partner. Caring Dads is offered in Brandon, Thompson, Winkler and Winnipeg and we hope to continue to expand this service.

Support and Mentorship

The General Authority agencies and service regions engage in ongoing training of all modules that directly relate to practice. Regular “refresher” training, coaching and mentoring will also be provided periodically to help staff continue to build skills. Many agencies and service regions across the General Authority now regularly incorporate elements such as case consultations and facilitated family network meetings to guide decision-making and case management practices.

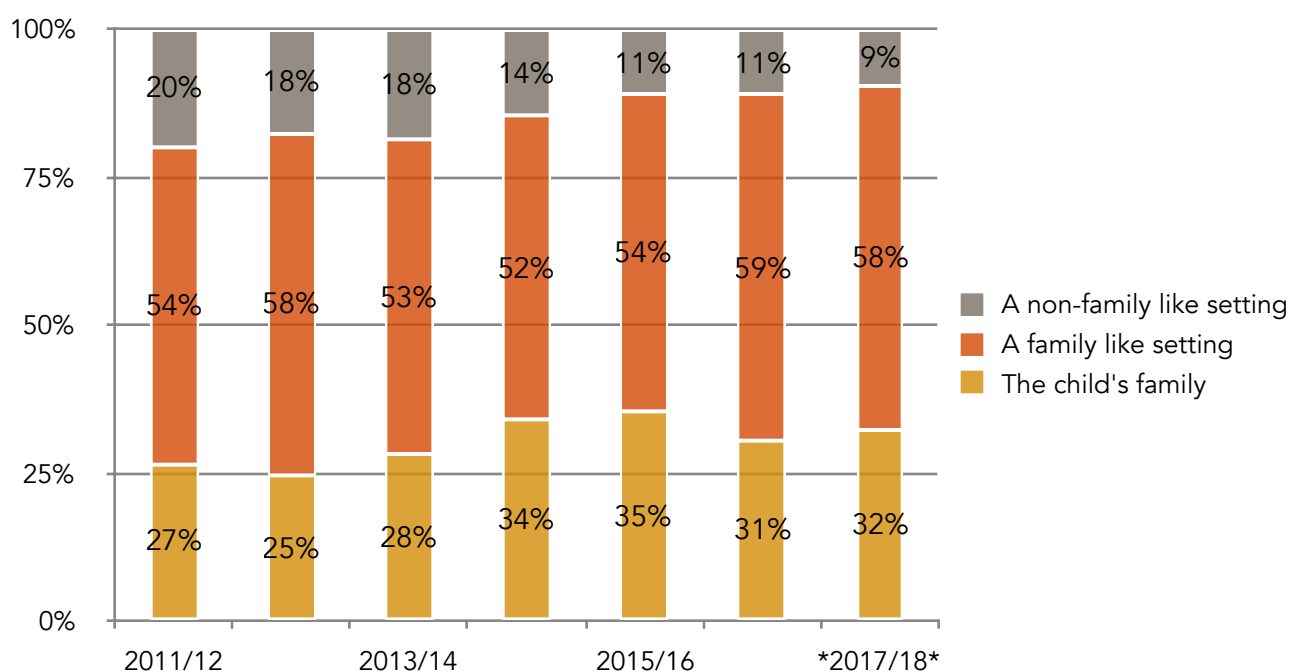
Over the past year, we have had a greater focus on enhancing our Domestic-Violence (DV)-Informed Practice. We have reached out to our community collaterals to help them to understand this shift in practice , and to raise awareness of domestic violence, as well as to access some of the resources available to help families affected by domestic violence. A DV-Informed Practice is one which strives to partner with survivors and perpetrators while keeping children at the centre of the work, in its approach to domestic violence. Aside from the support, training and mentoring that is provided on an ongoing basis in our service regions and agencies, the General Authority continues to work with the U.S.-based Children’s Research Centre (CRC) for training support.

CRC staff came to Winnipeg in January to provide an enhanced training session on working with the survivors of domestic violence and providing practical, hands-on skills to supervisors.

The General Authority and its agencies and service regions will continue to collaborate with the CRC to enhance our knowledge, expand it to front-line staff and deepen practice in Manitoba. It is through our agencies evolving enhanced practice and increasing community engagement that we continue to see a reduction in days care and overall children in care. The majority of our children are served in the context of their own families rather than being children in care.

Of the children that we serve, the vast majority are being supported at home with their parents.

Placement Arrangement for Children in Care



- **A non-family like setting:** emergency shelter, correctional facility, hospital, mental health facility, group care facility not locked, group care facility locked, independent living, other
- **A family like setting:** emergency foster home, foster home general, foster home treatment specialized, Place of Safety (POS) general, select adoption probation
- **The child's extended family:** foster home child specific extended family, POS extended family, own home.

*In 2017/2018, 90% of all General Authority children in care resided with family or in a family like setting.



Caring Dads

Caring Dads™ is an intervention program for fathers (including biological, step and common-law), who have physically or emotionally abused or neglected their children. It is also for men who have exposed their children to domestic violence or who are deemed to be at high risk for those behaviours.

The Caring Dads curriculum works with fathers to change patterns of abuse, increase their awareness and application of child-centred fathering and to promote respectful co-parenting with children's mothers.

The program consists of a 17-week group intervention for fathers, as well as regular outreach to the children's mothers to ensure their safety and freedom from coercion. The facilitators also have ongoing contact with the workers who referred them to the program to discuss their progress.

In November of 2017, two trainers from Caring Dads came to Winnipeg to train facilitators. There is capacity for the program at Winnipeg CFS, Rural and Northern service region (Thompson), CFS of Central (Portage la Prairie and Winkler) and CFS of Western. Programs have been run, or are being set up, in all of these regions and service areas. Initial feedback has been very positive, with fathers and their partners reporting behavioural change and more safety and well-being for their children.

Continuing with our goal to partner with others; in the past year, staff from ANCR (All Nations Co-ordinated Response Network) and Marymound (youth services provider) in Thompson, private therapists and community members attended the facilitator training. We are hopeful that this valuable service for dads will continue to grow and expand into other agencies and service regions.

For more on Caring Dads, please visit www.caringdads.org.



Safe and Together

'A perpetrator pattern, child-centred, survivor-strengths based approach to the intersection of domestic violence and child maltreatment.'

~David Mandel, founder of Safe & Together™

The Safe & Together Model:

Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba introduced the Safe and Together model to Manitoba in 2015, when they invited the Safe and Together Institute to speak at their annual conference. Since that time, interest grew in adopting this **Domestic Violence-Informed Practice** (please see following page for more) and using it as part of General Authority agencies and service regions' practice.

In 2016/2017, 40 front-line staff and supervisors from all General Authority agencies, as well as Dakota Ojibway CFS, ANCR and women's shelters received 10 days of skill-based training by the Safe and Together Institute. These 40 staff were then certified as mentors, with the intent of having them provide a supportive and consultative role to their colleagues, who were working with families who have been affected by domestic violence. Training was completed by the end of 2017.

Based on the principles and components of the Safe & Together Model, the General Authority's agencies and service regions began to develop a Domestic Violence (DV)-Informed Practice, focusing on:

- Perpetrator's patterns of coercive control
- Survivor's acts of protection
- Impact on the child and family functioning

The General Authority has also been partnering with the Children's Research Centre (CRC), a division of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, to implement the use of a suite of research-based tools called the Structured Decision Making® System since 2009. The system improves workers' abilities to assess safety and risk for children and families and to assess families' strengths and needs. Staff from the CRC came to Winnipeg in January of 2017 to provide additional training for supervisors and management on the Safety Organized Practice-Domestic Violence (SOP-DV) Timeline. (Safety Organized Practice is a way of organizing our thinking so that children are at the centre of our work). The SOP-DV Timeline is a "visual tool that incorporates the core components, tools and concepts of SOP, the Structured Decision Making System and the Safe & Together model." **(See model page 23).**

The timeline helps workers assess for safety and risk by exploring specific events of harm and danger experienced by the survivor and children and by identifying the perpetrator's patterns of coercive control. It also helps to explore any "windows," or exceptions, when the abuse

could have happened, but didn't. The SOP-DV timeline can also help to create balanced assessments, detailed safety plans, and organized, family centred meetings.

This training focused on engaging with the survivor and identifying their "acts of protection," or ways in which they acted in order to keep their children safe.

The General Authority's next steps include representatives from the CRC providing training to front-line staff on the SOP-DV timeline. The Authority is also exploring strategies to work with the perpetrators of domestic violence, as agencies and service regions are beginning to focus more on engaging with the person causing the harm and developing training in this area for front-line staff. We acknowledge the framework of Safe & Together.

A further goal is to continue to educate and engage with community collaterals. Presentations have been made to other service providers such as daycares, schools and hospitals; and further presentations are planned for the legal system and family conciliators. The General Authority continues to engage with the shelter system as well as with ANCR to share successes and challenges, as we continue to promote a domestic violence informed practice. **A DV-informed practice** involves partnering with survivors, engaging with perpetrators and enhancing the safety and well-being of children.

The agencies and service regions of the General Authority and our partners look forward to the continued implementation of Safe & Together principles and components in working with families to keep children safe.

Domestic Violence-Informed Continuum of Practice

Domestic Violence Destructive: Primarily defined by identifiable policies and practices that either actively increase the harm to adult and child survivors of domestic violence and/or make it harder for them to access support and assistance.

Domestic Violence Neglectful: Primarily defined by identifiable policies and practices that reflect a lack of willingness or ability to intervene with domestic violence and/or fail to acknowledge how domestic violence's distinct characteristics impact children and families.

Domestic Violence Pre-Competent: Primarily defined by an identifiable gap between the stated relevance and prevalence of domestic violence to the safety and well-being of families and child welfare's actual domestic violence policy, training practices and services infrastructure.

Domestic Violence Competent: Primarily defined by identifiable policies and practices that use a child-centred perpetrator pattern and survivor strength-based approach to domestic violence. Domestic violence isn't perceived as an add-on, but, instead as a core part of child welfare practice.

Domestic Violence Proficient: Primarily defined by identifiable policies and practices that ensure that domestic violence policies and practices are consistent, dependable and used throughout the child welfare system. — *From the Safe & Together Institute*

SOP-DV Timeline



Survivor's Protective Capacities: Before, During, and After Each Incident

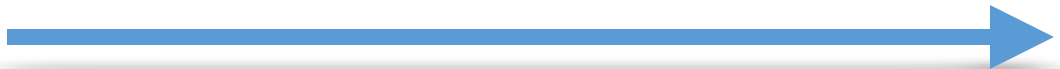
- List all of the survivor's specific strengths and protective actions taken to keep the child safe from physical and emotional harm.
- List his/her actions to help the child heal from trauma and provide stability, as well as nurturing the child.
- Name any network members who helped him/her.

Are these efforts reasonable based on perpetrator's behaviour patterns, the system's response to the situation, and the survivor's vulnerabilities?

Past

Present

Future



Perpetrator's Patterns: Before, During, and After Each Incident

- List the full range of the perpetrator's patterns of coercive control and actions that have harmed the child, disrupted child and family functioning, or interfered with the survivor's ability to parent, as well as any complicating factors (such as mental health/substance abuse/general neglect by perpetrator and survivor) and their impact on the child.

*Source: 2018, NCCD, All Rights Reserved

Permanency

Children in care experience primary trauma from events that resulted in their entry to care and secondary trauma as a result of being separated from their family, community and all things familiar. Children cannot tolerate continued losses, and that is why the work toward permanence (e.g. reunification, placement with extended family/community members, adoption, legal guardianship) is so critical. From the moment a child or youth comes into care, further trauma can be prevented by keeping as many of their connections intact as possible and reducing the number of moves they could experience. In working towards permanence in relationships and connections, children and youth need ongoing opportunities to grieve their losses. This does not only happen in the context of formal therapy. It is about the relationship with the child or youth's worker.

As permanency moves to the forefront of our agency and service region practice, there is recognition of the importance of children and youth understanding who they are, and what has happened to them.

'Achieving permanency is not just an outcome ... for children and youth, it is a process. Whatever their legal status may be, at all ages, they are most interested in the relational permanency that they can find, create, maintain or develop in the safety of a parent-child relationship. Ensuring that children and youth are ready for relational and/or legal permanency, in what has proven to them to be a world that offers little stability, is a critical step.'
~ Child Welfare Information Gateway

Bringing Families Together Pilot Project

Bringing Families Together is a two-year pilot project with the objective of increasing permanency opportunities for children in care. The pilot explores additional ways that the Manitoba child and family service system can engage with children, families and communities to establish lifelong connections and create a strong sense of belonging for children in care. Bringing Families Together recognizes that all children have a right to be connected to their family, community and culture and that these connections are vital to one's sense of belonging and identity. Child welfare has too often disrupted these connections and needs to work in partnership with families and communities to maintain and strengthen these networks.

The pilot does this through a dedicated team of workers who use Kevin Campbell's internationally recognized Family Finding practice approach (www.familyfinding.org) to establish lifelong connections for children in care with their family and community. The pilot went live in September 2016 and has served approximately 150 children to date from agencies across the four child and family service authorities — the vast majority of whom have been sibling groups and other children in Winnipeg's emergency care system.

This leading practice approach shifts how we work with families. As a part of this practice approach, these dedicated workers use specific skills and strategies to locate and engage family and community connections who are or have been significant in the child and family's life and that may have been disrupted as a result of the child coming into care, and include them in planning for the child's future. The goal of this process is to restore the child's natural family and community support network and ensure these supports are lifelong and are not dependent on long-term child welfare services. Once this support network is in place, the network shares the decision-making responsibility for the child's safety, permanency and well-being.

The pilot is a formal partnership between Until the Last Child (www.untilthelastchild.com), the Southern First Nations Network of Care Child and Family Services Authority, the First Nations of Northern Manitoba Child and Family Services Authority, the Metis Child and Family Services Authority, the General Authority and the Province of Manitoba (Department of Families). Until The Last Child works alongside child welfare agencies, encouraging and supporting innovation. They provide funding and other necessary resources to enable enhanced, stable outcomes for children in care — outcomes that cannot be achieved with public-sector resources alone. In many cases, child welfare agencies already have the creativity and best practice models they need, but lack the funding to implement the models.

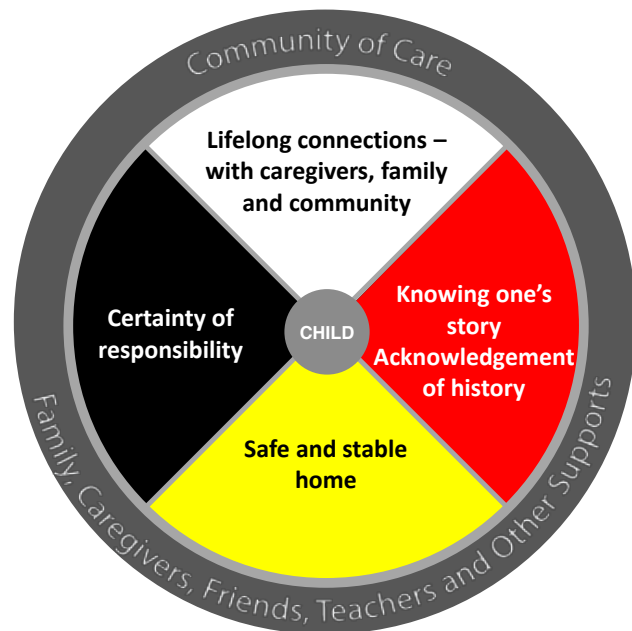
What is Manitoba's Definition of Permanency?

Manitoba's definition of permanency was developed by the four CFS authorities and is inclusive of each of the authorities' unique perspectives on permanency.

Children require safety and stability from childhood through to adulthood. Fundamental to the required safety and stability is "certainty of responsibility" – caregiver(s) who accept lifelong responsibility and commitment to care for the child and whom the child mutually understands and accepts to be a trusted support. Manitoba's definition of permanency recognizes that all children have natural certainty and belonging through their family and community of origin and that these connections are vital to maintain.

The four markers of permanency are intended to provide children the connections, supports and understanding they require to find "certainty of responsibility" following child and family services involvement with the child and their family. Each marker has specific and important intended outcomes:

- **Knowing one's story and history** – this provides the child with a distinguishable sense of belonging, culture and identity.
- **Safe and stable home** – creates a safe, stable and reliable place for the child to learn life skills, grow and develop.
- **Certainty of responsibility** - establishes trusted caregiver(s) in the child's life who will provide the supports and resources for the child into and throughout adulthood. Provides the child with the security of an ongoing lifelong connection with supportive caregiver(s).
- **Lifelong connections** – emphasizes the importance of making every effort to maintain connections with the child's natural network of support and extended family whenever possible. Creates the safety and security required to foster resilience and ensure the child has the connections and supports in place to pursue education, employment and any other aspirations into and throughout adulthood.



Although difficult to measure, each marker of permanency is also rooted in providing the opportunity for the child to love and feel loved. Love is an imperative part of a healthy and safe childhood, and a key aspect of a successful transition to adulthood.

What will this mean for Manitoba in the Future?

There has been ongoing evaluation throughout the pilot project that is examining implementation of the Family Finding practice approach and results pertaining to the four markers of permanency as defined by Manitoba's definition of permanency. This evaluation is gathering evidence and perceptions of services and results from several sources, including the families and children who received services, along with service providers, and caregivers. The evaluation is also gathering information from other key individuals in Manitoba's child welfare system – those who have general knowledge and experience with local or other best practice approaches that emphasize family involvement in ways intended to empower families and communities in sharing responsibility for planning and decision-making in meeting the goals of safety, permanence and well-being for children in the child welfare system. The lessons learned from the final evaluation (due after the pilot ends in September 2018) can inform the development of possible strategies to implement this practice approach on a broader scale within various authority service systems.

The 3-5-7 Model[®]: Preparing children for permanency

The 3-5-7 Model is an important part of our commitment to children and young people's well-being. Developed by Darla Henry, a child welfare expert based at Temple University in Harrisburg, Pa., 3-5-7 is a strength-based practice model that provides workers with practical skills and tools to work with children and youth on loss and grief. The model helps children and youth understand:

- What happened to them (loss)
- Who they are (identity)
- Where they are going (attachment)
- How they will get there (building relationships)
- How they will know when they belong (claiming/safety)

One of the ways to help children and youth work through these transitions is the creation of a lifebook. The pages of a lifebook reflect the child's experience and record memories and life events that occurred when they lived with family, as well as when they were in a placement. Lifebooks help children remember connections to those who have been important in their lives and may help heal past experiences with their present circumstances in a positive way. General Authority agency and service region workers are encouraged to do lifebooks with children as a way of making their contact with children both purposeful and meaningful.

Until children and youth can reconcile the separations and trauma in their lives, they are not able to make a successful transition to permanency (reunification, legal guardianship and

adoption). Agencies continue to utilize this framework as part of our Practice Model in supporting children in care toward healthy wellbeing.



'We need others in order to succeed. We need genuine connections, a real network, we need co-operation. It is extremely hard, if not next to impossible to do everything required by yourself, for yourself. It is much easier to do it as part of a team. You can give your special talents and others can give theirs, altogether you can build each other up. We compliment each other. We can build something great together.'

~ Akiroq Brost

Wendy's Wonderful Kids

The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption (DTFA) provides grants to public and private agencies to hire Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK) adoption recruiters, who implement proactive, child-focused recruitment programs geared exclusively toward preparing and placing North America's longest-waiting children in care (permanent wards) with adoptive families. Wendy's Wonderful Kids has 300 recruiters working for children throughout the U.S. and Canada. The program has resulted in more than 7,000 adoptions.

Caseloads are purposely kept small to ensure that recruiters have the time and resources to help children work through their loss and grief in preparing them for adoption. Work also occurs with birth parents, helping them to grieve their losses and to give their children permission to move into permanency.

Recruiters are trained in the Child Focused Recruitment Model, using proven tactics to search all avenues to find the best home for a child, through the starting points and familiar circles of family, friends, and neighbours; and then reaching out to the communities in which the children live.

The General Authority is in its fifth year of partnership with the DTFA. Children and youth in care of our agencies and service regions are beginning to see the benefits. The following table provides a summary of the work of the General Authority's WWK adoption recruiter:

Total Number of Children Served to date	34
Age Range	4 – 20 years
Sibling Groups Served	8 (one of three and seven of two)
Children Legally Adopted	7 (two single children, a sibling group of two and a sibling group of three)
Children in Supervised Adoption Placements	5 (a single child and two sibling groups of two)
Children matched but caregiver unable to adopt due to insufficient adoption financial assistance subsidies	3 (a single child and a sibling group of two)
Children withdrawn from program as agency's permanency goal changed	3
Children currently being served by the program	21

Aidan's Story

An example of child-focused recruitment work by our WWK recruiter

Upon meeting *Aidan, he was very open to leaving foster care and being placed for adoption. There was little resistance to the idea. He can identify the differences between living in a foster home and the things he hopes an adoptive family will provide him. Aidan, who is 16, feels “different” from the birth children in his present foster home. He notes some subtle differences in the treatment of foster children in all the things in life he experiences and he wants to be normal and not feel like a child in care any more.

Recruitment efforts began with a file review. Based on file information, a genogram was completed. This young man has seven siblings—of which he only knew of three. In addition to these three, he has three older half-brothers and a half-sister who were adopted by two different families as infants.

The WWK worker was able to locate one of the families and an outreach was made through their previous adoption worker. The family and their son very much wanted to meet Aidan and the first visit took place in summer, 2018. The visit went extremely well and on the drive back to the foster home, Aidan “could not believe how much alike he and his brother were.”

The connection has been made and now Aidan has regular contact with his brother. Aidan now gets picked up by his brother and they go to his house to play video games together and have dinner with the family. His brother's mother has taken a real interest in Aidan and is looking into school programs that may help Aidan in the future. The WWK recruiter has advised the family that Aidan is open to an adoption in case they might be on board with this plan.

In the recruiter's words: ‘Working through connecting Aidan to the people on the genogram that he has lost touch with, or never knew, is the beginning work of recruiting for this young man. Even if they do not end up as an adoptive resource, his life will be richer with people who will love, care and support him before and after he finds his forever family.’

*Names have been changed for privacy reasons



Agreements with Young Adults

Under legislation, the General Authority is responsible for the review and approval of Agreements with Young Adults or AYAs (formerly extensions of care), for youth in the permanent care of an agency or service region requiring support beyond the age of majority. Between April 1, 2017 and March 31, 2018, there were **367** young adults (ages 18 to 21) supported by an AYA through the General Authority. This represents a slight increase, from the previous fiscal year, in the number of young adults requesting support beyond the age of majority to realize goals as part of a successful transition to young adulthood.

In recent months, the General Authority has initiated activities aimed at improving service delivery to young adults continuing to receive support through an AYA. Primarily, this has included the revision/development of Leading Practice Guidelines for Agreements with Young Adults. This resource, in development for General Authority agencies and service regions will:

- Ensure that current guidelines and case management standards related to how young people, as well as their supportive network and collaterals, are informed of this continued service.
- Offer additional community resources to be considered or explored prior to or during an AYA.
- Outline standards of service and contact to be provided by an agency throughout an agreement period.
- Review important points to consider prior to concluding an agreement.

These new guidelines will be implemented during 2018/19. Additional resources for youth and young adults will also be explored by the General Authority, including the development of a “fact sheet” or informative document related to a young person’s rights while supported by an AYA, along with their obligations.

The General Authority continues to support opportunities for direct feedback (initiated and/or facilitated by agencies and service regions) from current and former youth in care regarding their experiences while involved with a CFS agency, and what changes should be considered or implemented to provide better service and support to children and youth in care. Recent changes and ongoing improvements related to Agreements with Young Adults have in large part been initiated by direct feedback from former youth in care over the last three years.

Tuition Waivers and Futures Forward

In February 2012, the University of Winnipeg announced the implementation of tuition waivers, or tuition-free education for youth currently or formerly in the care of a child and family service agency in Manitoba. This was a first of its kind announcement in Canada, and in September of

that year, six youth in the care of a General Authority agency as well as four former youth in care received a tuition waiver from the University of Winnipeg.

As of September 2017, there are now nine post-secondary institutions across Manitoba offering tuition waivers to youth in and from care. In addition to **the University of Winnipeg**, this includes, **the University of Manitoba, Brandon University, Red River College, Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology, Assiniboine Community College, Université de Saint-**

Boniface, Booth University College, and

University College of the North. During the

last fiscal year, 55 students currently or previously in the care of a General Authority agency or service region were able to commence or continue their post-secondary studies as part of this initiative. Consistent with the previous year, this represents a significant number of young adults who are able to achieve their academic dreams without financial barriers that otherwise would have made this pursuit challenging, if not impossible. The General Authority would again like to thank all of the participating post-secondary institutions for their commitment to this tremendous initiative, and congratulations to all of our students who have graduated from their programs this past year!

Tuition waiver applications, as well as support related to preparing for and pursuing post-secondary studies, continues to be provided by the Tuition

Waiver Co-ordinator as part of the Futures Forward Program (formerly Building Futures). Since its launch in 2013, Futures Forward/Building Futures has assisted hundreds of youth and young adults in Manitoba to prepare for, or continue their transition from CFS involvement to adulthood and independence. Through a network of community partners including the Canadian Mental Health Association (Manitoba and Winnipeg), Youth Employment Services, and Community Financial Counselling Services, youth and young adults (ages 15-29) are able to access a range of services and supports related to money management, employment and education, counselling and emotional support, and the navigation of complex service systems.

The General Authority looks forward to its continued participation on the Futures Forward Advisory Committee. For more information regarding Futures Forward, please visit www.futuresforward.ca.



Quality Assurance & Outcomes

The General Authority remains committed to the use of data to continuously improve services to children and families provided by our agencies and service regions. Our long-standing focus on outcomes for children and families, through data gathering and analysis of a number of indicators, has been critical to ensuring safety, well-being and permanency for children and meeting both General Authority and provincial priorities. Monitoring and auditing of compliance with standards, policy and legislation sets the foundation against which better outcomes for children and solution-focused approaches to family engagement can flourish. Highlights of the broad range of CQI systems and processes used by the General Authority and its agencies/service regions to enhance and measure services to children and families conducted this year are as follows:

Audits

Audits of compliance with standards and regulations occurred throughout the year included the following:

- *Face-to-face contact with children in care
- *CFSIS (Child and Family Services Information System) Recording
- *Use of Structured Decision Making assessment tools
- *Foster home licence renewal review
- *Child in care legal and cultural status
- *Place of Safety status
- *Cases Waiting Closure

Service Reviews

A number of reviews of services and case management to children and families were conducted this year, including:

- Completion of a special case review of foster care and family service in an agency, assessing compliance with standards, regulations, legislation, and best practice in permanency planning for children.

Operational and Program Reviews

In 2017/2018, the General Authority completed the third in a series of five authority-specific Operational and Program Reviews of the Designated Intake Agencies (DIA) under our jurisdiction. With the primary goal of determining service quality and best practice, the reviews also examined operational challenges, staffing levels, caseload volumes and the scope of services required today in contrast to the service expectations, and continued limited funding, since the establishment of DIAs following the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry-Child Welfare Initiative in 2003. A review of a fourth DIA is currently underway with the one remaining DIA review anticipated for completion in late 2018. Details of the review will be found in the 2018/2019 report.

Measuring Outcomes

In 2009, the General Authority implemented a comprehensive matrix for reporting on system-wide service outcomes.

The General Authority Outcomes Matrix is comprised of these five outcome domains:

- Child Safety
- Child Well-Being
- Permanency
- Family and Community Support
- Satisfaction/Service Effectiveness

Each of the five outcome domains adopted in the Outcomes Matrix have several associated Outcome indicators. Sources of information for service outcomes include a yearly abstract of data from CFSIS as well as from the completion of the Child in Care Annual Reviews of the service plans for children who have been in care of an agency for over one year.

The information collected is analyzed and reveals service trends across the General Authority as a whole and within each agency or service region.

Examples of General Authority agency/regional outcomes are included throughout this report, and demonstrate several key successes:

- Continuing low rates of children in care of General Authority agencies and service regions.
- A significantly greater proportion of families served in comparison to children in care.
- A significantly greater proportion of children served safely in their own home compared to the total number of children in care.
- A steady and substantial increase in the number children who return home to family within 12 months of entering care.
-

General Authority Outcomes Matrix

Outcome Domain	Outcome Indicators	Outcome Domain	Outcome Indicator
Family & Community Support	The percentage of children in care who do not experience community disruption as a result of a change in school.	Satisfaction/Service Effectiveness	The percentage of children who have only one social worker.
Family & Community Support	The percentage of children placed in care that live with extended family.	Satisfaction/Service Effectiveness	The level of satisfaction experienced by children/youth in care with the services they have received.
Family & Community Support	Of all children receiving service, the percentage being supported at home with their parents.	Satisfaction/Service Effectiveness	The number of families that choose the General Authority as their Authority of Service who have another Authority of Record.
Family & Community Support	The percentage of families where all children are in the home.	Satisfaction/Service Effectiveness	The level of satisfaction experienced by parents with the services they have received.
Permanency	Of children coming into care, the percentage of children reunified with their parents or guardians during specified time periods.	Well-Being	The number of children in care (excluding extensions) per 1000 children in Manitoba.
Permanency	Of children reunified the percentage that do not re-enter care during specified time periods.	Well-Being	The percentage of children in care who do not experience an unplanned disruption in placement.
Permanency	Of children legally free for adoption, the percentage whose adoption placement was finalized during specified time periods.	Well-Being	The percentage of children in care who receive regular and appropriate medical, dental and optical examinations and treatments.
Permanency	Children in care for whom reunification, adoption or legal guardianship is not the plan, the percentage of children who are living in what is considered to be their permanent placement.	Well-Being	The academic performance of children in care in an appropriate school setting.
Permanency	The percentage of children who re-enter care and the number of times children come into care during a specified time period.	Well-Being	The frequency and seriousness of behavioural and emotional problems and involvement with the youth justice system exhibited by children in care.
Safety	Of all children receiving services, the percentage that do not experience another incident of maltreatment.	Well-Being	The percentage of children in care who are involved in appropriate extracurricular activities.
Safety	Of children who are in care, the percentage who do not experience another incident of maltreatment.		
Safety	Of children in care who experience a substantiated recurrence of maltreatment, the type and seriousness of the maltreatment.		
Safety	Of the total number of openings and re-openings, the percentage that were opened for voluntary family services.		

Child in Care Annual Review

Under Section 39 of *The Child and Family Services Authorities Regulation*, each authority is responsible for reviewing the placement, care and treatment of, and the permanency plans of every child who has been in the care of agencies and service regions for 12 continuous months or more. To fulfil this requirement, all General Authority agencies and service regions submit a Child in Care (CIC) Annual Review form to the General Authority once a year for all children who meet these criteria.

The CIC Annual Review form is designed to collect information on the child well-being outcomes established by the Authority for children in care in the areas of Child Safety, Child Well-Being, Permanency, Family and Community Support and Service Effectiveness. The information gathered then assists the Authority to track and understand the changing service needs of children and young people and provides detailed information on which to base decisions about how best to use and target resources. Analysis of this information is then shared with the General Authority's agencies and service regions.

In 2017/2018, the completion rate of the CIC Annual Review forms by General Authority agencies and service regions was **97%**.

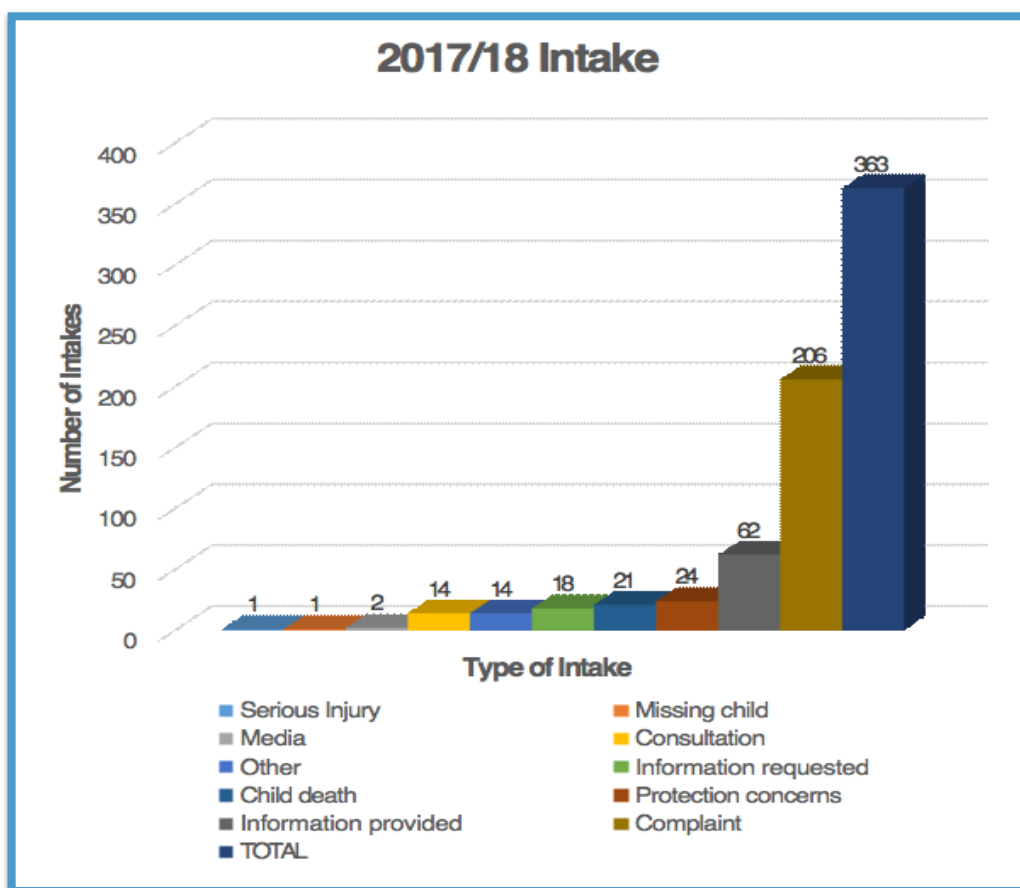
'None of us, including me, ever do great things. But we can all do small things, with great love, and together we can do something wonderful.'
~ Mother Teresa



Responding to Intakes

Each year, the General Authority responds to communication from youth, parents, foster parents, community members, agencies and service regions, collateral organizations, the Department of Families, and other jurisdictions (i.e., other authorities, other provinces/territories, etc.). The communication takes the form of calls, emails, letters, or in-person meetings related to many varied topics (including complaints, requests for information, etc.). The General Authority is committed to responding in a timely, professional and respectful manner. The intake function assists the public by providing accurate information, connecting callers to appropriate services, reviewing concerns, and following up with agencies/regions. The intake function also assists agencies/regions by helping resolve issues and by consulting upon request. The intake function at the General Authority contributes to the overall quality assurance function of the Authority, by identifying cases requiring additional attention (e.g., updating CFSIS notes, etc.).

In 2017/18, the General Authority responded to 363 intakes:



2017/18 also marked a transition to a paperless intake process in which all documentation is stored electronically. The new process ensures greater security of confidential information, as the managed computer system has built-in backup and redundancy features. It is also a more streamlined process that reduces paper use and the need for physical file storage. An added benefit is that the electronic files are fully searchable and easily accessible to other General Authority staff, as needed.



'If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself.'

~Henry Ford

Complex Case Reviews

Each year, complex case reviews are conducted to review multifaceted case situations. The reviews bring together representatives from the General Authority, Winnipeg CFS senior management and the director of programs for the Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre. Other members are added as needed. These representatives are all standing members of this committee.

This process allows stakeholders, including workers, supervisors and other community service providers, along with parents and their support networks, to come together to discuss difficult and challenging situations. These reviews can also involve multiple systems, such as mental health, schools, health professionals and the legal system. These unique family situations present significant challenges for agencies and may require specialized services or interventions for children as needed.

The committee functions as an inclusive, respectful and confidential forum in which to discuss these issues. Membership is fluid, allowing for the inclusion of individuals, internally and externally, with expertise that is relevant to the matters of the families being reviewed. Minutes, which include role responsibility and goal setting, are provided to the assigned Winnipeg CFS staff. The process also includes case mapping, which is the process used to gather information and facilitate the case plan in order to achieve safety for children.

In 2017/2018, the committee heard **six** complex cases, and worked with **five** families. The response from workers, supervisors and families who have accessed this process has been positive. Agency staff value the support, collaboration and suggested next steps for planning with the family offered by the membership.

Critical Incident Reporting

On March 15, 2018, the *Advocate for Children and Youth Act* came into effect, which allows for the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth (Manitoba Advocate) (formerly the Office of the Children's Advocate) to represent children beyond those receiving services from the child welfare system. Under Subsection 8.2.3(1) of *The Child and Family Services Act*, the Manitoba Advocate is required to conduct a review of services after the death of a child who received services through the child welfare system within a year prior to their death. The purpose of the review, referred to as a Special Investigation, is to identify ways in which services may be enhanced to improve the safety and well-being of children receiving those services, and to reduce the likelihood of a death occurring in similar circumstances. Special Investigation reports may contain recommendations for changes to standards, policies or practices.

The General Authority looks forward to continued work with the Manitoba Advocate.

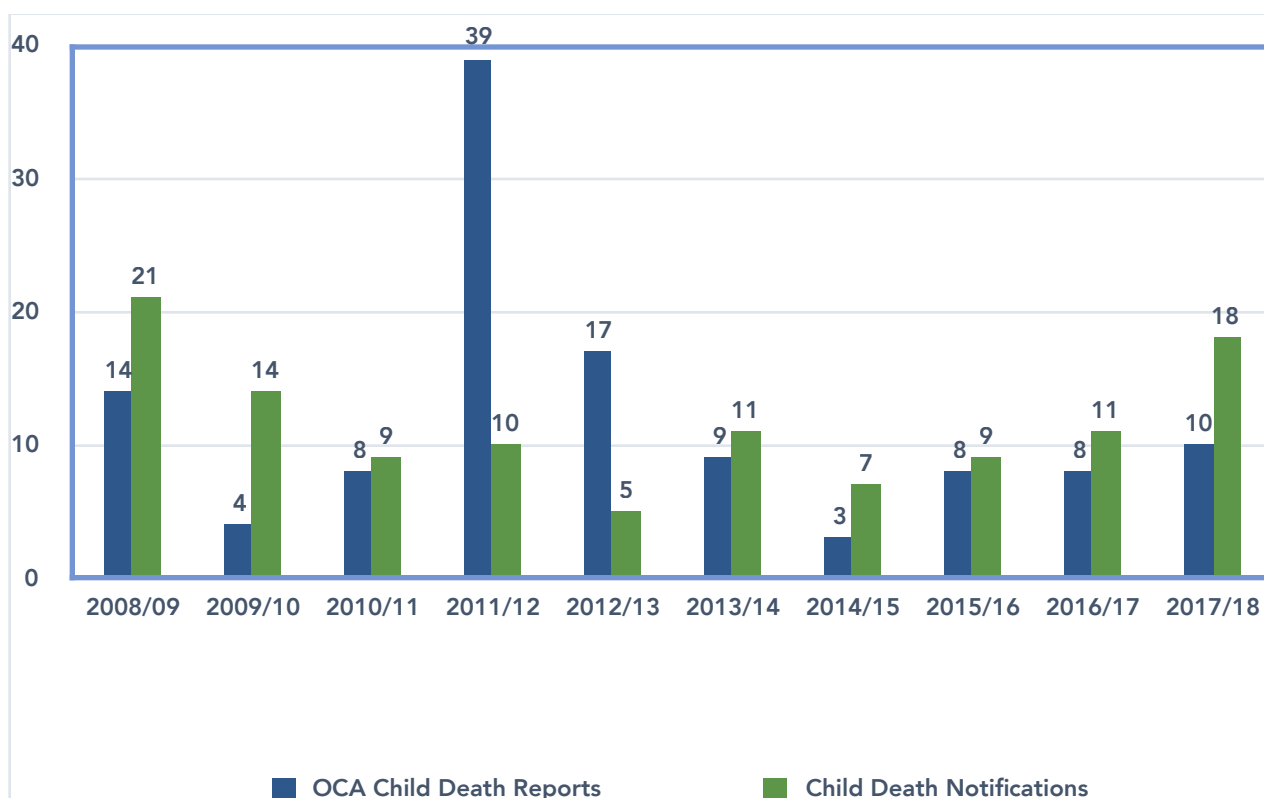
In 2017/18, the General Authority received ten Special Investigation reports. One of these reports contained a total of four recommendations for the General Authority and its agencies

or service regions. Responses to all these recommendations have been completed and provided to the Manitoba Ombudsman.

During this same time period, the General Authority received notice of 18 child deaths from our agencies/service regions, the Manitoba Advocate or the CFS Division. Of these deaths, nine occurred on open family service files and nine deaths occurred on family service files that had been closed to a General Authority agency or service region.

Five deaths occurred as a result of an accident, three occurred as a result of suicide, eight deaths were a result of natural causes and the cause of one death was undetermined. The General Authority, its agencies and service regions continue to provide supportive services to families parenting medically compromised young children whose life expectancy is, sadly, all too short. Agencies and service regions persist in advocacy with mental health service providers to identify supports for children dealing with issues affecting their mental health.

The chart below provides the numbers of notifications of child deaths from the current and past years, as well as the number of special investigation reports received by the Authority.



Partnering with Standing Committee & its Committees/Working Groups

Partnering with our authority colleagues on many working groups and committees is fundamental to the work that is done by the General Authority.

We highly value these opportunities to share information and communicate with our partners on initiatives, programs, training and best practice approaches.

The Child and Family Services Standing Committee is a significant example of one of these working groups. The Standing Committee is made up of representatives from all of the authorities as well as the CFS Division. Its purpose is to provide leadership, support and guidance in the development and implementations of strategies to inform and influence services and policies, and **actively participate in setting the direction and ensuring resilience for child welfare in Manitoba**. It serves as an advisory body to the authorities and the government and facilitates co-operation and co-ordination in the provision of services under *The Child and Family Services Authorities Act*.

The committee's mission is to provide a framework for our agencies and service regions to support the needs of families, children and their communities while respecting and honouring diversity.

Other working groups also make up a significant part of our daily work. The following are some of the other working groups in which the General Authority takes an active role:

Inter-Authority Standards Working Group (IASWG) – is a subcommittee of the Child and Family Services Standing Committee. Its aims include: create an annual work plan for developing new CFS Standards Manual sections and revisions of existing sections; identify issues and priorities for manual development; and consult with experts to develop standards sections and recommend new sections of the manual to the Standing Committee for consideration. IASWG is made up of cross-authority and CFS Division representatives.

Collaborative Authority Resource Team (CART) – is assigned to monitor and support placements of children and youth outside of the Emergency Placement Resource program.

Joint Training Team (JTT) – Comprised of an education and training representative from each of the CFS authorities as well as the CFS Division, the JTT reports to the Child and Family Services Standing Committee and is responsible for developing, co-ordinating, implementing and evaluating education and training activities for staff and caregivers in the child and family services system. Using a joint approach, the JTT continues to develop education and training activities based on the priorities and needs identified by the CFS system, as well as the recommendations of external reviews of the CFS system.

Child Abuse Regulation Working Group – This cross-authority and CFS Division working group is assigned to review the issues surrounding cross-jurisdictional abuse investigations and the reporting on these investigations to regional child abuse committees.

The Phoenix Sinclair Inquiry Working Group – This is one of the most intensive cross-authority collaborations to date.

Phoenix Sinclair Inquiry Working Group

In 2017/2018, joining representatives from the four CFS authorities and the CFS Division, the General Authority continued to work towards the completion and updating of responses to the recommendations made by the Hon. Ted Hughes in his 2013 report, *The Legacy of Phoenix Sinclair: Achieving the Best for All our Children*, and the further recommendations noted in the *Options for Action Implementation* report of AMR Planning and Consulting in 2015.

The responses to many of the recommendations focus on practice and the proposed Manitoba CFS Practice Framework and Continuum. The Framework is consistent with the general Practice Model approaches to collaborative family engagement, child safety, the use of networks and the goal of keeping children safely with family. The working group also continued to monitor and await the announcement of several legislative proclamations over the past year, including the awaited expansion of the role of Office of the Children’s Advocate, which became the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth in March 2018.

This year also marked the departure of the program specialist who was the long-standing General Authority representative to the Phoenix Sinclair Working Group. The General Authority is indebted to Bev Pion for her significant contribution to the group and the completion of the many Inquiry recommendations, bringing her knowledge and expertise to the table, always with the central focus of enhancing services for children and families.



Bev Pion

Changes of Authority

The Authority Determination Process (ADP) is an important feature of Manitoba's child and family services system. As set out under *The Child and Family Services Authorities Regulation*, it is the process by which a family chooses which authority will be responsible for oversight of the services provided to that family. Families complete an ADP form at the point of intake. They may subsequently request a Change of Authority.

Change of Authority Requests to transfer out:

Request to Transfer to:	Accepted	Declined	Awaiting Decision	Withdrawn	Total
MA	5	1	1	1	8
SFNNC	4	6	4	3	17
NA	3	0	2	0	5
TOTAL	12	7	7	4	30

Change of Authority Requests to transfer in:

Request to Transfer from:	Accepted	Declined	Awaiting Decision	Withdrawn	Total
MA	0	0	0	0	0
SFNNC	2	0	0	0	2
NA	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	2	0	0	0	2

Transfers of Guardianship

Under Section 49(1) of *The Child and Family Services Act*, the Minister of Families may transfer guardianship of a child from an agency having guardianship of a child to another agency. Such transfers typically occur when a family requests a change in their Authority of Service or when permanent wards are transferred to their Culturally Appropriate Authority.

When General Authority agencies or service regions are requesting transfers of guardianship, application packages are forwarded to the General Authority for review and processing and then forwarded to the Director of Child Welfare for approval. In 2017/2018, the General Authority received 17 Transfer of Guardianship applications, with the following breakdown:

Guardianship Order	Metis Authority (MA)	Southern First Nations Network of Care (SFNNC)	Northern Authority (NA)	General Authority (internal)	Total
Temporary	6	2	2	0	10
Permanent	1	3	3	0	7
TOTAL	7	5	5	0	17

Mixed Facilities/Variance Statistics

In keeping with Sections 7 and 8 of the *Foster Homes Licensing Regulation*, the General Authority reviews and approves requests to vary the numbers of children in care under the age of five, and the number of dependent persons in the home. The General Authority also reviews and approves requests for mixed facilities (where foster families provide care for both children and adults in care).

The following illustrates approvals granted in 2017/2018:

Agency	Mixed Facilities	Variances	TOTAL
Central	0	2	2
Eastman	0	1	1
Interlake	1	0	1
JCFS	0	0	0
Northern	0	0	0
Parkland	0	0	0
Western	0	0	0
WCFS	10	6	16
TOTAL	11	9	20

Services To Minor Parents

The General Authority receives a copy of the Notice of Live Birth and/or the Notice of Maternity for any mother under the age of 18 from the Director of CFS. The General Authority program specialist reviews CFSIS (Child and Family Services Information System) to ensure that services have been offered to the minor parent by the applicable mandated agency or service region. In the rare situation that services have not been offered, the program specialist follows up with the agency/service region to ensure service expectations for the youth and families, as set out in legislation and standards, are met.

In cases where the minor parent is under 16, the General Authority contacts the agency/service region to ensure that the appropriate procedures and standards have been followed.

In 2017/2018, the General Authority received 21 Notices of Maternity or Live Birth from the Director of CFS. Upon review, five of these Notices were completed by the Designated Intake Agency and/or the minor parent was already in receipt of services from another CFS authority/agency/service region.

Therefore, 16 Notices of Maternity or Live Birth were active with General Authority agencies/service regions, and five of these notices related to mothers under the age of 16. Information is based on the number of notices completed by hospitals and other medical facilities and referred to the Director of CFS.

The overall decline in the birth rate of underage mothers in Manitoba remains consistent with the provincial (Annual Statistics Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living) and national trends (Statistics Canada) which show a decline in birth rates for mothers ages 15-19 years.

Services to Minor Parents for 2017/2018

Agency/Service Region	Number of Notices		Total 2017/2018
	Mothers under Age 16	Mothers age 16 to 18	
Winnipeg CFS	2	8	10
CFS of Western MB	1	0	1
Central CFS	1	2	3
JCFS	0	0	0
Eastman Region	0	0	0
Interlake Region	1	1	2
Parkland Region	0	0	0
Northern Region	0	0	0
TOTAL	5	11	16

Supports for families with children living with a disability

The role of the Directors' Leadership Table (DLT) within the General Authority continues to promote a best practice approach. In response to trends identified by agencies and service regions that indicated a need to provide broader support to children and youth with disabilities and their families, the General Authority expanded its Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) work to include a more inclusive base of disability support and training to General Authority agencies/regions. This disability support includes training in various disability needs, program planning, resource development, assisting staff to access diagnostic services, placement resources, support services and case consultations related to specific disabilities as identified by the agency/region. A key role of the program specialist for disabilities is to provide expert advice and consultation on case-specific issues related to the needs of the child/youth's disability. The ongoing response and feedback from agencies/service regions has been very positive.

Since the onset of our FASD work in 2008, and continuing today with the program specialist for disabilities, the General Authority has maintained its active membership on the Manitoba FASD Coalition, formerly known as the Manitoba Coalition on Alcohol and Pregnancy (MCAP).

A number of new programs and initiatives have been developed over the past year, with the goal of assisting our agencies/service regions to provide services and support to children, youth and families affected by disabilities within the child and family services system in Manitoba, including:

- The development and delivery of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) training in conjunction with St. Amant Centre for foster parents, support workers, EPR child and youth care workers, social workers and supervisors within the General Authority.
- Participation of the program specialist in the development and delivery of a two-day provincial training for FASD with Healthy Child Manitoba and other stakeholders.
- Providing FASD provincial training for foster parents, support workers, EPR child and youth care workers, social workers and supervisors within the General Authority.
- Continuation of funding and service review of the Stepping Out on Saturdays (SOS) program offered in the Westman area and the extension of the SOS Program into the Interlake area. SOS is a day camp which offers respite to caregivers and parents who care for children with FASD and provides their children an opportunity to socialize with other children who have FASD.
- Interdisciplinary case consultations with agency/regions to support children, youth and families with complex care and resource needs related to their disability.
- Increasing facilitation of joint agency case planning and collaboration with Children's disABILITY Services and Community Living disABILITY Services for children and families based on our respective roles and responsibilities.
- Participation in planning a National FASD Symposium in February 2019.

Quotes from training participants:

'Best training course I've been to, five stars out of five stars. Not only factually informative but also very humbling and emphatic.'

'This was an excellent training & I feel more informed and capable in dealing with people with FASD. I gained more understanding of an individual with FASD and how to support and care and relate with them more.'

Sexually Exploited Youth and High-Risk Victims

Tracia's Trust is Manitoba's strategy responding to children, youth and adults at risk of/or survivors of sexual exploitation and human trafficking. One of the key initiatives under this strategy is the StreetReach (STR) Program, led by the CFS Division, which links mandated child welfare agencies with non-government partners and law enforcement to provide a comprehensive and co-ordinated rapid response to address the safety of Manitoba's most vulnerable; along with high-risk, missing and exploited youth in Winnipeg. The goals of the STR program are to stop youth from running away from their home or placement; to prevent future abuse and exploitation; to redirect runaway children to stop victimization; and to intervene with those who exploit young victims.

STR provides services to children and youth of all gender identities who have been assessed by a team of professionals to be at an extremely high risk of being exploited or victimized through the sex trade and are identified as a High-Risk Victim (HRV). Once a child or youth has been identified as HRV, a co-ordinated response plan is established. This plan involves professionals from health, social service and justice systems. The goal of STR intervention with HRV children and youth is to locate and return them to safety as quickly as possible when it is believed that they are at-risk in the community.

In 2017/2018, there was a call for a third-party evaluation of the STR Program. While the evaluation has not yet occurred, significant work in the areas of research and facilitation of community input into the evaluation methodology and framework has occurred with child welfare agencies, authorities and community Indigenous program leaders. The General Authority was a participant in focus group sessions to provide input. Approval to move forward with the external evaluation remains pending final Treasury Board approval.

The General Authority is an active participant in the STR Program and continues to represent our agencies and service regions at the STR Advisory Committee, comprised of many community stakeholders. At the committee, the General Authority representative advocates for the needs of these vulnerable youth, ensuring that feedback from agencies and service regions on the services provided is reported to the STR staff and the CFS Division.

Collaborative Authority Resource Team

The Collaborative Authority Resource Team (CART), formerly known as the Hotel Reduction Team (HRT), which was established in June 2014 to address the issue of placement of children and youth in hotels, continued their work in 2017/2018 with authority staff reassigned from all four authorities and the CFS Division. It is imperative to note that there have been no hotel placements for children in care since Dec. 1, 2015, in accordance with the new provincial standard, which no longer supports the practice of hotel placement.

CART remained focused on collaborative efforts to locate long-term placements for children and youth placed within the Winnipeg Emergency Placement Resources (EPR) system and to support province-wide regional resource planning to effectively decrease the length of stay in emergency resources. This was achieved through a number of ongoing activities such as:

- Weekly meetings between CART and the Provincial Placement Desk (PPD) at the CFS Division to review resource vacancies and to track PPD referrals.
- Monthly meetings between CART and collaterals including B & L and Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata to review planning for children and youth accessing an emergency or short-term placement within their respective youth placement programs.
- Authority monitoring, support and review of the respective agency/service region's planning efforts for children and youth in EPR for 30 plus days/or children and youth presenting with unique challenges such as cognitive/developmental delays, extreme behaviours, sexually exploited youth and sibling groups. This included CART's weekly meetings with EPR staff to review plans for children and youth currently accessing a placement within EPR and to identify any challenges related to transitional planning of children and youth from their current EPR placement. These weekly meetings, which began in early 2018, have demonstrated enhancements to the working relationship between EPR and CFS authorities/agencies and service regions.

Effective Sept. 1, 2017, a process was established whereby all referrals to the Provincial Placement Desk (PPD) were initially vetted through the General Authority for quality assurance and tracking of resource needs or trends. (The CFS Division manages the PPD, which is a body responsible for managing all referrals to specialized third party foster and group care resources who have a Service Purchase Agreement with the Division). Once reviewed at the Authority level, placement referral packages for children and youth requiring a specialized placement were forwarded to PPD, and the Authority remained involved throughout the process to track the progress towards placement in an identified resource.

In November 2017, the CFS Division established a PPD Panel consisting of CART and CFS Division staff, along with representatives from all of the external service providers who provide placements through PPD. The focus of this PPD Panel was to review and discuss referral information on children and youth who have been assessed as having specialized or higher

needs and required placement in the group care and/or treatment foster care resources whose placements go through PPD. These meetings were initially held weekly until a collective decision was made in February 2018 to decrease the meeting frequency to monthly PPD Panel meetings.

Early in 2018, with the support of the Office of the CFS Standing Committee, new Winnipeg EPR business rules and established processes to strengthen support roles and communication for both agency staff and partners were implemented. The collective goal of this “Emergency Planning Resources: Collective Ownership” process is to develop effective care plans which ensure that children and youth are discharged from EPR to the care of family or a foster group care resource, prior to the maximum 30-day stay. For children and youth who remain in Winnipeg EPR beyond 30 days, this structure supports solution-focused planning to identify barriers and mobilize intensive planning efforts. The Authority CART representative plays a fundamental role in monitoring and facilitating this collective process.

Individual Rate Adjustment Protocol

The General Authority has a responsibility to monitor the controls on child maintenance expenditures, part of which was the introduction of the Individual Rate Adjustment Protocol (IRAP), which came into effect on June 1, 2012.

General Authority agencies and service regions determine an appropriate placement plan for children in care based on their level of need. At a specific funding threshold, these plans must be reviewed and approved at the authority level and/or the CFS Division. With the establishment of block-funding, CFS of Western, CFS of Central and Jewish CFS are not obligated to participate in IRAP, however their directors have chosen to continue with the General Authority oversight function. For non-block-funded agencies and service regions, IRAP submissions are reviewed weekly both at the General Authority and, when the placement is for a child or youth in the EPR system, fast-tracked to the Collaborative Authority Resource Team (CART). In 2017/2018, the General Authority reviewed and approved 299 placement funding submissions.



Resource Support for Children & Youth

The General Authority provides consultation and support to agencies and service regions in resource development and placement planning for children and youth through the Resource Program Specialist Team.

Activities for the 2017/18 year included:

- Assisting the agencies/regions with the follow-up process related to previous referral to the Provincial Placement Desk (PPD) external service providers, applications for Level V funding and applications to operate a childcare facility. Effective Sept. 1, 2017, all referrals for children and youth to the CFSD's Provincial Placement Desk were required to be submitted, reviewed and processed at the General Authority prior to being forwarded to the CFSD's Provincial Placement Desk.
- Connecting with staff from various Adult Services Programs to discuss eligibility requirements and the eligibility determination processes.
- Participating in complex case/mapping meetings to discuss placement planning issues and next steps.
- Exploring the suitability of out-of-province treatment facilities in collaboration with the agency/region and the PPD.
- Co-ordinating meetings and regular communication with stakeholders (e.g. agency/region, CFS Division, external service provider/operator and current placement) regarding the development of a specialized placement resource.
- Determining the potential to develop a specialized placement resource with external service provider agencies or independent operators.
- Assisting external service provider agencies or independent operators in the development of a resource proposal.
- Discussing funding models for resource proposals with the CFS Division.
- Receiving and reviewing residential child care proposals with agencies to determine need and capacity.

Children and Youth with Complex Needs: High Fidelity Wraparound Task Group

The General Authority, along with the other three authorities and the Departments of Health, Justice and Education, participates in the High Fidelity Wraparound (HFW) Task Group. This approach is designed to enhance the integration of multiple services to families caring for children and youth with complex needs. The HFW task group was formed to guide the development and implementation of the HFW approach for children and youth with complex needs and their families. During the 2017/2018 reporting period, the task group had oversight of a developmental evaluation, produced by Health in Common, which identified opportunities and recommendations for implementation of the HFW approach.

COACH Program

Since 2001, the Winnipeg School Division, Macdonald Youth Services and the Healthy Child Manitoba Office have delivered the COACH program for young children with profound emotional and behavioural challenges. This is a 24-hour, year-round program that assists these children to use their strengths to achieve positive outcomes. The COACH Expansion Project, a product of this committee, continued during 2017/2018 to successfully support **15** youth in care with high/complex needs in its mentored school program. The COACH program is evidence-based and has proven to be effective with younger children, providing individualized intensive support with the goal of integrating back into a specialized classroom. Using the High Fidelity Wraparound approach to planning increases the inclusion of the family and youth's voice in planning and building on strengths.

Structured Analysis Family Evaluation

Through 2017/2018, the Structured Analysis Family Evaluation (SAFE) process continued to be used by General Authority agencies and service regions for foster and adoption home studies and annual reviews (updates). While initial training of General Authority staff across the province has been completed, each year new workers and/or supervisors and program managers require the two-day Basic Training and Supervisor's Training. Macdonald Youth Services hosted a training session in the spring of 2017 attended by seven General Authority staff. Training needs continue to be assessed throughout General Authority agencies/service regions and the external agencies who utilize this approach.

Resource Guide

Revisions to the Manitoba Placement Resource Guide for all agency staff, which include a comprehensive listing of all shared placement resources in Manitoba, was undertaken within 2017/2018, and the second version of this guide is set to be released in mid-2018.

The previously established General Authority Placement Network (GAPN) remained active as a responsive, electronic communication network tool amongst General Authority agencies and regions to match available foster care resources with children and youth requiring placement.

*'If you want to lift yourself
up, lift up someone else.'*

~ Booker T. Washington

Foster Home Appeals

Through Section 8 of *The Child and Family Services Act* and Section 14 of *The Child and Family Services Authorities Act*, Child and Family Services authorities are responsible for hearing appeals from foster parents on the removal of children from a foster home, the refusal of an agency or service region to license the foster home, or the cancellation of a foster home licence.

Following receipt of a letter of appeal from a foster parent, an authority takes the following actions:

- Assesses the content of the request to determine whether an actual appeal is being made by the foster parent.
- Determines how the reconsideration of the agency decision will be conducted.
- Communicates with the agency/service region and foster parents about the process of reconsideration.
- Reviews the information of all parties.
- Provides foster parents with a letter advising them of the outcome of the General Authority's reconsideration and the reasons for their decision.
- Provides a written report of the authority's findings to Child and Family Services agency/service region.

In 2017/2018, the General Authority completed two appeal requests. The outcome by the General Authority, in both cases, remove a child

upheld the original decision of the agency to or to cancel the licence of a foster parent.

We believe that the limited number of appeals received by the General Authority reflects the diligent work at the agency and service region level in developing and maintaining positive working relationships and open communication with foster parents.



Increasing Skills & Competence Through Training

The General Authority continues to support education and training, as it recognizes that this is a meaningful and necessary investment to continually improve services to families. As such, the General Authority, in collaboration with its agencies and service regions, is pleased to be able to offer numerous and ongoing training opportunities. Our goal continues to be the enhancement of services to the children and families that we serve and engaging community to help support families.

The scope of training offered in the General Authority agencies and regions is broad and is designed to support the needs of our staff and foster parents. Many of the training sessions offered are considered foundational and are held on a regular basis each fiscal year. This includes training in the areas of the Practice Model (including Structured Decision Making), standards, suicide prevention, attachment, trauma, addictions, domestic violence, health and safety, child and youth support, children's disabilities, child abuse and more.

Further, one of our priorities continues to be providing training in the area of cultural awareness, and in particular, the honouring of the calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In addition to other training, the General Authority regularly participates in "Residential Schools: Intergenerational Effects and Truth and Reconciliation" training. There are many other training sessions that are provided that help augment and build upon the learning of the foundational materials. Participants have included social work staff, managers/supervisors, foster parents, respite workers, support workers, Emergency Placement Resource staff, administrative staff, volunteers, and community collaterals such as Willow Place, Macdonald Youth Services, B&L Homes, New Directions, Regional Health Centres, Marymount, daycare staff and more.

The General Authority continues to value the partnerships of the other authorities (Northern Authority, Metis Authority and the Southern First Nations Network of Care); along with the CFS Division in the ongoing work of developing and delivering joint training through numerous cross-authority initiatives.

A total of **2,153** participants attended training in 2017/2018. Specifics of this overall number can be seen in the chart on the following pages with some training examples highlighted within each specialized training theme.

TYPE OF SPECIALIZED TRAINING	TOTAL ATTENDEES
Addictions (e.g. Brief Intervention Addiction Training, AFM, Fentanyl Abuse)	92
Administrative Support & Communications (e.g. Front Desk Safety, Information Security Awareness, Professional Administrators Conference, Government of MB Active Offer)	10
Attachment (e.g. Parent/Child Assessment Presentation, Understanding Access & Reunification, Trauma & Attachment, Basics of Attachment, Circle of Security, Manitoba Foster Family Network Conference)	59
Crisis Prevention/ Intervention/ Postvention (e.g. Mandt, Non-Violent Crisis Intervention)	68
Critical Incident Stress Management (e.g. CISM, Vicarious Trauma)	36
Cultural Awareness (e.g. Aboriginal Awareness Cultural Workshop, Working with Refugees, Residential Schools)	137
Child and Youth Support (e.g. Autism , Robb Nash Project, Bridging the Gap: Technology and Sexual Exploitation, Understanding and Working with Children & Youth Who Have Been Sexually Exploited)	204
Domestic Violence (e.g. Domestic Violence, Safe & Together, Safety Organized Domestic Violence)	190
Family Enhancement (e.g. Advanced Facilitation Skills, Practice Model, SDM, Reunification Assessment & Planning, CRC Specialized Training)	263
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD, FASD & Autism)	40

TYPE OF SPECIALIZED TRAINING	TOTAL ATTENDEES
Gang Awareness (e.g. Street Gangs and Drugs)	32
Health and Safety (e.g. CPR/First Aid, Mental Health First Aid, Water/Ice Safety)	465
Investigating Child Abuse (e.g. Child Abuse Co-ordinator's Conference, Winnipeg Police Services Child Abuse Investigations)	52
Orientation to the CFS System (e.g. WCFS Orientation, S.A.F.E.)	61
Suicide Intervention/Prevention (e.g. Applied Suicide Intervention Skills, Tattered Teddies, Straight Talk, Little Warriors Prevent It)	53
Standards (e.g. Case Management, Foster Home Framework)	77
Strengthening Relationships (e.g. Positive Discipline Parenting, Rebuilding Connections Conference, Caring Dads Facilitator Training)	25
Leadership Development (e.g. Building Better Boards, Roles & Responsibilities of Effective Boards, Labour Law, Morrison Supervisor Training)	67
Trauma (e.g. Making Sense of Trauma, Restoring Wholeness: The Connection between Neuroscience and Treatment of Trauma Conference)	79
Other (e.g. Professional Development)	143
TOTAL	2,153

Critical Incident Stress Management

Critical incidents are defined as traumatic situations that are sudden, overwhelming and sometimes dangerous to individuals and/or significant others. They can cause strong emotional reactions, with the potential to interfere with an individual's ability to function at the time of the incident, or at a later stage. Critical incident stress is a person's stress response to involvement in an incident. Child and family services workers are often confronted by traumatic events.

The General Authority supports Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Peer Support Teams throughout the province. The purpose of these teams is to ensure that following the occurrence of an incident, staff are supported and assisted in a compassionate and professional manner to help to reduce the intensity and duration of stress experienced. The CISM teams operate in all General Authority agencies and service regions across the province and include:

- Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba (Audrey Armstrong and Rachel Smith, co-chairs)
- Eastman Region (Dustin Dent, chair)
- Interlake Region (Serena Stier, Tracey McNerney and Lynette Carriere, co-chairs)
- Jewish Child and Family Service (Wade Bilodeau, chair)
- Northern Region (Jeanette Kimball and Jeanette Campbell, co-chairs)
- Parkland Region (Bruce McMillan and Kim Nichols, co-chairs)
- Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba (Tracy Koop, chair)
- Winnipeg Child and Family Services (Brad Halstead and Kenny Pawloski, co-chairs)

The General Authority's CISM Steering Committee meets twice a year, in the spring and fall. The Steering Committee's function is to ensure the continuity of the teams, determine ongoing training needs and gather province-wide statistics which may help identify common themes. The services provided by the Peer Support Teams are voluntary, therefore not all incidents that may have been critical incidents are reported by staff or referred to a Peer Support Team.

There are currently about 60 volunteer staff members who make up eight teams offering CISM services in General Authority agencies and service regions. The General Authority currently has one staff member trained in CISM and supports all of these teams, recognizing the importance of a Peer Support Model. It is worth noting that membership consists of non-CFS staff from the Department of Families as well, since many CFS staff are co-located with other departments, and often have work with the same families.

In the fall of 2017, new team members from CFS of Western Manitoba, CFS of Central Manitoba and Parkland Region received training. Training will continue on an as-needed basis as the teams in each agency and service region identify new members that require training. We plan to continue to offer training in the upcoming year, and expand the number of staff who can provide a supportive response to their peers who have experienced a critical incident.

Critical Incidents 2017/2018

- JCFS – No reported incidents
- CFS Western – 48 incidents, 56 staff outreached to/impacted
- Eastman – 7 incidents; 23 staff impacted
- CFS Central – 4 incidents, 9 staff outreached to/impacted
- Northern – 4 incidents; 6 staff outreached to/Impacted
- Winnipeg CFS – 34 incidents; 65 staff outreached to/Impacted
- Interlake – 5 incidents; 8 staff outreached to/impacted
- Parkland – No reported incidents

*Numbers may differ from year to year/region to region depending on number of incidents reported

‘Being human , we are imperfect. That’s why we need each other. To catch each other when we falter. To encourage each other when we lose heart. Some may lead; others may follow; but none of us can go it alone.’

~ Hilary Clinton



Staff and Youth Engagement

Staff Engagement

In 2017, the General Authority participated in a Staff Engagement Day, facilitated by Dr. Linda Burnside. Over the course of the day, the staff team:

- reviewed highlights of the past year
- discussed changes within the system
- deliberated the strengths and weaknesses in the Authority's efforts to ensure the right service is provided to the right person at the right time
- considered recent changes to provincial funding and their effect on the General Authority service system and
- explored the Authority's relationships with agencies, sister authorities, the Department, and collateral organizations

Improvements that were identified included suggestions for ensuring excellent communication across the Authority, enhanced use of advanced technology, support for "cross-pollination" of tasks and roles to ensure continuity within the General Authority, and a commitment to maintain strong, positive working relationships with all other CFS organizations. Overall, the day was a great opportunity to share ideas and identify potential improvements in many areas.

Similarly, several of the General Authority agencies and service regions hosted a staff day or special event that featured the opportunity to honour each other as co-workers, learn new things, and contribute to the operation of the respective organizations. A great example was the event hosted by Eastman that featured poverty simulation exercise *Living on the Edge* (facilitated by the United Way), which was a powerful way to enhance the staff team's empathy for the challenges families in poverty face each day. This was followed by a presentation on Lean efficiency principles (ways to increase efficiency) and group discussions to identify improvements that could be undertaken regarding internal functions. The Lean activity also led to a formal submission to the Department's Continuous Improvement team to explore potential changes to decrease the impact of time lost to travel. Other staff engagement activities took the form of regularly scheduled opportunities for flowing information, and eliciting feedback and suggestions. Many of the General Authority agencies and service regions incorporated this aspect of staff engagement into their regularly scheduled staff meetings. This is an organic, grass-roots method of ensuring everyone receives the same information while encouraging their contributions in a supportive setting.

Using some of the same inclusive principles, one of the activities conducted by Winnipeg CFS was a structured interview with every case-carrying staff member regarding their use of the Practice Model. This afforded the agency a great opportunity to gather information that will be analyzed in an effort to advance their use of the model.

Agencies and service regions also did an excellent job of providing opportunities for staff to:

- get to know each other (e.g., CFS of Western hosted an event called The Western Way for staff)
- contribute to their communities (e.g., Jewish Child and Family Service staff volunteered at the Thrive: Community Support Circle)
- use smaller committees (like RNS Parkland's Action Committee) to empower staff to create real and tangible changes within their organization

Thanks to everyone for their truly engaging ideas and activities!

Youth Engagement

"Youth engagement is about empowering all young people as valuable partners in addressing and making decisions about issues that affect them personally and/or that they believe to be important." – The New Mentality.

In 2017/18, General Authority CFS agencies and service regions used a range of activities to connect with their youth and to tap into their ideas and energy. The activities included special events that helped develop the youths' relationships with agency staff members, promoted growth through mentoring and inspiration, and forums in which youth could relate their personal experiences and provide their insight for improvements. Activities also included the creation of lifebooks to honour achievements and build memories, preparation for adulthood through the development of independence skills, and celebrations for youth graduating out of care.

Jewish Child and Family Service's "Bowling with the Bombers" was a youth-focused event that included bowling with several members of the Winnipeg Blue Bombers football team, and inspirational stories from these local sports stars. The athletes drew on their own experiences and spoke to the youths about defining their own futures.

Many of the General Authority's agencies and service regions hosted gatherings to celebrate youth aging out of care. Often these events included discussion with the youths that elicited their ideas for improving agency services. Other agencies took a more individual approach by interviewing each aging-out youth personally, to acknowledge their accomplishments, and benefit from the youths' accumulated wisdom—no one knows more about an agency's services than the youths who have received them.

In an effort to formalize these discussions, Winnipeg CFS published "Youth Engagement Project: Exiting Care Interviews" that was released in September 2017 and drew on the General Authority's "Extensions of Care Outcomes" project. The WCFS project explored the experiences of youth in transition both at the age of majority, and on an Agreement with Young Adult (AYA):

"Through 36 qualitative interviews, the study analyzes youths' experiences of the system including development of life skills, support in education and

employment attainment, interpersonal relationships with agency representatives and their support networks, and preparation for adulthood considerate of these factors. Finally, the study asked youth to make recommendations regarding services they received from the agency.” – Winnipeg Child and Family Services Youth Engagement Committee

A highlight of the 2017/2018 year was the “Because YOU Matter” youth conference, which was a province-wide event hosted by CFS of Western Manitoba that featured Josh Shipp as the keynote speaker, a “Youth Speak Out Panel” organized by Voices: Manitoba Youth In Care Network, and presentations by organizations that identified and described available services to help youth succeed.

Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba presents:

'BECAUSE YOU MATTER'

2017
YOUTH IN CARE CONFERENCE

Ages 13 - 20 years

SATURDAY, MAY 27, 2017
9:00am - 3:00pm (lunch included)
Brandon University - Harvest Hall (Dining Hall)
270 18th Street, Brandon MB
FREE * Registration required *
Contact Breanna Dick at (204) 726-6114 or breanna.dick@gov.mb.ca

Day Entails:
Personal experiences shared by the Youth Panel from Voices: Manitoba's Youth in Care Network
Interactive support-service booths for youth to explore
Door prizes, give-aways & a gift for each youth!

Featuring International Keynote Speaker:
JOSH SHIPP
'Former at-risk foster kid turned teen advocate.'

Supported by:
HOME DEPOT CANADA FOUNDATION.

Logos: CANADA FOUNDATION, The Orange Door Project, MTV, CW, E! Entertainment, FOX, and others.

New Canadian Initiative

In 2009, the General Authority launched the New Canadian Initiative (NCI) in recognition of the challenges facing new Canadians and the need for a preventative approach to raising awareness and providing accurate information about the child and family service system in Manitoba. The collaborative tables and networks that have emerged since the launch of the NCI, along with a number of new programs and initiatives within General Authority agencies and service regions, have continued to develop during this fiscal year, further realizing the objectives of this initiative and enhancing service delivery to new Canadian children, youth and families. These networks include:

The **Coalition of Cultural Communities for Families (CCCCF)**: Comprised of members from a number of ethno-cultural communities in Manitoba, this group continues to be engaged in prevention and early intervention work with families, as well as helping to build capacity within cultural communities to provide care and support to new Canadian children and families currently involved with CFS. In collaboration with General Authority agencies and service regions, the CCCCf also plans to take on a larger role with respect to mutual learning opportunities with frontline staff, further education and training, and community engagement. The General Authority looks forward to continued collaboration with the CCCCf.

The **CFS and Settlement Services Inter-Agency Network**: This group brings together members of the Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO) as well as collaborators from Winnipeg CFS, Healthy Child Manitoba, All Nations Coordinated Response Network (ANCR), and the General Authority. Continuing with a forum encouraging the exchange of ideas and relationship building, this team has also been instrumental in designing/facilitating mutual learning events for front-line staff (CFS and settlement service agencies) as well as community groups and members.

The most recent mutual learning event in October 2017 brought together management and front-line staff from Manitoba settlement service organizations and child and family services (Winnipeg CFS, Jewish CFS and ANCR). The objectives of this event included understanding resources available to new Canadian families and service providers, processes or legislation that guide service delivery throughout each service area, discussions of promising practice, barriers to overcome, and further opportunities to work collaboratively to better ensure the safety and wellbeing of new Canadian children, youth and families.

The **Education and Awareness (Train the Trainer)** team is an ongoing collaboration of settlement service providers, ANCR, the General Authority, the CFS Division, and Healthy Child Manitoba. Their role continues to include engaging cultural community members and settlement service workers to provide child welfare information. This information is provided, in

part, through the *Sounds through the Wall* training video. (video can be found at www.generalauthority.ca).

Highlights of General Authority agency work with new Canadian children, youth and families in 2017/18 include:

Soccer and the Art of Parenting, Eastman Region

Offered in the RM of La Broquerie, this Saturday afternoon soccer game offers a recreational outlet, meaningful engagement, and skill-building opportunity for new Canadian families. Parents and children have the opportunity to strengthen self-confidence and engage in positive feedback, improve communication, develop leadership skills, explore and be active and participate and grow within a community. The program has enjoyed consistent participation with more than **10** families and **24** children taking part over the past year.

As described by one parent:

'The children's soccer program has been a great opportunity for my son and I to connect, bond, attach, and most importantly to play...I have seen my son grow in developing confidence and work on developing his social skills with his peers through the avenue of soccer. It was great to be engaged with others in the community, to be physically active, and share our passion for soccer through this experience.'

Family Resource Centre, CFS of Western

The resource centre continues to offer programming for newcomers, including Community Connections and Welcome Here. A Spanish-speaking social work assistant leads a parenting program called Seeds of Hope in Spanish. The assistant also attends Westman Immigrant Services to connect with their staff and families as needed. Additionally, summer activity based programming for newcomer and immigrant families provided through the family resource centre is extremely well-attended.



Scholarships & Awards

The General Authority and the Children's Aid Foundation of Canada

The Children's Aid Foundation of Canada (CAF), based in Toronto, provides funding for programming and awards for children and youth across Canada. The General Authority, in partnership with the CAF, is able to assist children and youth receiving services from agencies and service regions with funds to support school related expenses, enrichment activities; and to support children coming into care.

Funding to the General Authority is provided through generous donations from CIBC, Scotiabank, and the Ted and Loretta Rogers Foundation. Please check the CAF website (www.cafdn.org) for more information about the services and programs they offer, hear testimonials from youth who have benefitted from the CAF, and learn how to donate.

The Ted and Loretta Rogers Foundation:

This fund assists children and youth who are coming into care by providing them with backpacks that have foundational, age-appropriate essentials. Backpacks for all age groups include a teddy bear and a blanket. They can also include sippy cups for infants and toddlers, toys, books, and personal hygiene items (toothbrush, shampoo, deodorant, etc). Along with these "Comfort Kits," additional funds are available so they can be customized with additional items for each child or youth, depending on their needs.

In the 2017/2018 fiscal year, we issued funds in the amount of **\$42,716.98** to personalize and customize these backpacks.

CIBC Miracle Fund:

The CIBC Miracle Fund provides opportunities for children and youth to experience enrichment activities that can enhance their physical, mental, social, and developmental well-being. These are activities that children or youth may not get to experience otherwise, and provide them the opportunity to take part in activities that others their age enjoy.

Some of the young people served by General Authority agencies and service regions are exceptional athletes, artists, or musicians, and this fund gives them an opportunity to develop these skills and talents further. Some examples of enrichment activities include:

- Arts and cultural events
- Music lessons
- Summer camp, including specialized camps for children with disabilities
- Sports and recreational activities
- Travel costs for special events such as band trips or school trips

Funds are available for any child or youth currently receiving services from a General Authority agency or service region. In the 2017/2018 fiscal year, we issued a total of **\$15,103.77** for 40 children and youth.

Scotia Capital Fund

The Scotia Capital Fund is made possible through funding from Scotia Capital and is designed to support “at risk,” disadvantaged children and youth across Canada. The funds help them achieve academic success and recognize their educational efforts. The awards offered through the Scotia Capital Fund are: Graduation Awards, Stay in School Awards, and Leap to Learning Tutoring.

Graduation Awards

The Graduation Awards were established to recognize at-risk, disadvantaged students who successfully meet their immediate education goals in spite of challenging life situations, and graduate from Grade 8, 9, or 12. The awards are \$50 for graduation from Grade 8 or 9, and \$100 for graduation from Grade 12.

Stay in School Awards

The Stay in School Awards program was established to recognize elementary and high school students who are doing exceptionally well in school and who have overcome significant life challenges. It encourages them to finish high school and continue on to post-secondary education. The Stay in School Award is a \$300 cash award.

Leap to Learning Tutoring

Many children in care of or receiving services from child and family services experience lower academic outcomes. The Leap to Learning fund helps children who struggle academically by giving them some additional support so that they can experience educational success. The amount approved varies depending on the need of each child or youth.

All of these awards and bursaries from the Scotia Capital Fund totalled **\$19,867.56**, and served 53 children and youth.

The Children’s Aid Foundation continues to advocate for improved programming and services for children and youth across Canada. Their fundraising efforts are ongoing throughout the year, as they receive no government funding. As part of our ongoing collaboration and partnership with the Children’s Aid Foundation, they regularly canvas the General Authority for feedback and ideas on areas of need to explore for further funding opportunities. The commitment of the CAF and its generous donors make it possible to offer these opportunities to the children and youth served by the General Authority. It is a pleasure to assist social workers to recognize and provide some small reward to the children and youth with whom they work.

Vision Catcher's Fund

The Vision Catcher's Fund was established to assist youth in care to develop their strengths, maximize their potential and pursue their career aspirations. At the General Authority, funding is available to support youths ages 16 to 21 who are currently in care or on an Agreement with Young Adults (AYAs) to enhance their special talent/skill and further their career goals. Funding can be used for specialized study in high school, purchasing supplies needed to pursue a career, job search assistance, accessing post-secondary education, attending technical training or taking an apprenticeship program. In 2017/2018, the General Authority provided Vision Catcher's funding to support 32 youth and a total of **\$30,875.93**. The Authority appreciates the continued support of the Department of Families in support of this funding.



Thank you ~~for~~ very
much for the
swimming class

It really meant a lot!

Thank you from the bottom
of my heart for the 100\$ gifted.
I truly do appreciate this award
as it will help me on my path
towards becoming a nurse. It means
a lot to me that there are such
great people like yourself out
there willing to help the next
generation in achieving their
hopes, dreams, and aspirations.
As well as trying to make the
world a better place for us all.
Sincerely,

Dear CIBC Fund

Thank you for helping, cover some of my basketball funds. I greatly appreciate it and can't wait to kick off summer with Mayhem basketball that I will truly enjoy. This money will help me learn what high calibre basketball has to offer and I will enjoy every moment of it. Basketball throughout my life has had a positive impact on me. It has taught me great values and what it takes to be part of a team. With this valuable cheque I will be able to learn even more and maybe even pass on some of my knowledge I have gained throughout my basketball career. This summer is going to be full of slam dunks.

Thank you,



French Language Services

The General Authority has now completed year two of our Five-Year French Language Services (FLS) Plan that runs until 2021. Activities undertaken through the year are identified in an Annual Operating Plan. This year's Annual Operating Plan featured steps to solidify the General Authority system's ability to deliver services in French.

- Active Offer – The General Authority and its agencies and service regions each:
 - Monitored signage in relation with FLS requirement.
 - Maintained lists of staff with French language fluency.
 - Monitored current reception practices.
 - Ensured orientation practices for new staff members include information regarding French Language Services.
- Collaboration with the Francophone community – The General Authority:
 - Initiated meetings with Santé en français (SEF) twice during the year and maintained regular contact with Santé staff.
 - Information sent out by Santé en français was forwarded to agency and service region FLS Co-ordinators, as appropriate.
 - Met with the Department of Families' new French language services co-ordinator and maintained ongoing readiness to attend SEF Social Services Roundtable upon request (although attendance was not requested during 2017/2018).
 - Reminded General Authority agencies and service regions of the opportunity to attend rural SEF Social Services Roundtable meetings if desired/upon request.
 - Included French Language Services as a standing item on the Directors' Leadership Table agenda.
- Promotion and awareness activities – The General Authority and its agencies and service regions each:
 - Designated staff members to fulfill role of FLS co-ordinator for their organization.
 - Were re-familiarized with FLS requirements through review at the Directors' Leadership Table, including a review of the Five-Year FLS Plan and the Annual Operating Plan.
 - Committed to review all communication and publications in light of FLS requirements.

A new Annual Operating Plan is being developed for 2018/2019. This plan will continue to focus on the three main priorities: Active Offer, collaboration with the Francophone community,

and promotion and awareness activities. The focus for 2018/2019 will be to 1) ensure that the public is aware of the opportunity to receive services in French, if desired and 2) ensure that the Authority and its agencies and service regions have the capacity to deliver services in French.



'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.'

~Margaret Mead

Kim Thomas Award

The Kim Thomas Award of Distinction in Community Engagement was established in 2016 by the General Authority Board of Directors in recognition of the many contributions of late practice specialist Kim Thomas, in the area of the New Canadian Awareness and Education Initiative. This year's award recipient is Patrick Harrison, long-time service manager with Winnipeg Child and Family Services.

In addition to Patrick's many roles and responsibilities with the agency, including supervision of the Newcomers Unit, he has also been involved with many aspects of the New Canadian Initiative. This includes participation and leadership within the CFS Settlement Services Inter-Agency Network, mutual learning event planning, education and awareness, and the previous Cultural Community Reference Group.

Patrick also helped to develop Winnipeg CFS's work with Manitoba's Somali community. The two groups have worked together over the last few years to find ways to be actively involved with child welfare and prevention. More recently, this collaboration has especially focused on



foster care – including specific training for community members regarding becoming a foster parent with the agency, and promotional materials for potential foster parents. Winnipeg CFS also envisions specialized foster care within the larger program, inclusive of foster families from various religious and cultural backgrounds, available to care for children from new Canadian and other communities in Winnipeg. This is an important step in better ensuring the religious and cultural needs of children are being met while in the care of Winnipeg CFS. This is

also an important step in community engagement and building relationships between CFS and cultural communities. Patrick has been a central figure in the progression of this initiative, and in encouraging ongoing innovative work with new Canadian families.

Congratulations Patrick, for this well-deserved recognition, and award!

By the Numbers...



71% of children receiving services are being supported at home with parents

367 young adults supported by an AYA (Agreement with Young Adults)

55 students received a tuition waiver

15 youth supported by COACH, a program for children with emotional and behavioural challenges

97% completion rate of Child in Care annual reviews

2153 staff and foster parents received training at the General Authority

24 children **10** adults took part in the Soccer and the Art of Parenting program at Eastman

40 children received money from the CIBC Miracle Fund for enrichment activities including camp, music lessons and arts and culture

THANK



YOU



Partnerships

2017/18 Annual Report
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General Child
and Family Services
Authority