Children's Aid Society Service Plan 15/16 and 16/17

Children's Aid Society of Stormont Dundas & Glengarry

May 2015

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1.0 Purpose of the Service Plan

Under section 6.0 of the Accountability Agreement, the development of a Service Plan is identified as a performance obligation. In 2014/15, the Society shall develop a Service Plan for 2015-2016 and 2016-17 that shall be approved by the Board. The Service Plan must be developed within the context of the Society's multi-year planning allocations for future years. Upon receipt of Approved Budget Allocation for 15/16, the Society shall update the Service Plan as required.

The Service Plan is a narrative document that focuses on service planning, measurement and evaluation of Children's Aid Society service and organization performance. The minimum requirements for the Service Plan include:

- 1. Society's overarching strategic goals and activities that are developed in the context of local needs and within the context of provincial directions.
- 2. Service delivery model: Plan for delivering services within its Approved Budget Allocation Objectives and within the Provincial Transformation Objectives
- 3. Performance Obligations and Performance Management Processes in terms of Implementation or Achievement of Quality Improvement and Continuous Learning:
 - i. Licensing Reviews;
 - ii. Crown Ward Quality Improvement Plans;
 - iii. Ministry Risk Mitigation Plan;
 - iv. Serious Occurrence Annual Summary Reports;
 - v. Paediatric Child Death Reviews;
 - vi. Any other reviews, accreditation exercises, or audit.

2.0 Strategic Plan: Goals and Activities

Please list the strategic direction and goals that are outlined in your Society's Strategic Plan and that are developed within the context of local needs and within the context of provincial directions.

Here are the strategic priorities that were developed for 2010-2015.

- 1. We are committed to strengthening children, youth and families in our communities.
- 2. Our residential model supports the development of the child within a permanent family system including their own family.
- 3. Be a leader in the fight against child abuse and neglect in SDG.
- 4. Developing our people and strengthening our organizational capacity and accountability

To add to this strategic plan, we have adopted **seven fundamental values** that guide our work in ensuring positive outcomes for everyone involved.

Service excellence

Providing excellent service to children, youth, families and community is very important to our agency. Through critical analysis and outcome measurement, we ensure that we are always striving to continually improve our service.

High expectations

We believe that transmitting a sense of high expectations for our children, youth, and families leads to better outcomes. It infuses them with confidence, self-esteem, and personal standards of merit and value, which in turn, encourage future success.

Strength based

We recognize that all families have competencies and strengths. Our agency adopted the Signs of Safety strength based approach in order to empower our families and ensure the safety and well-being of children and youth in their home. For a description of this approach, visit Signs of Safety.

Outcome driven

We believe in meaningful, positive outcomes for our children, youth and families. Tracking and managing the goals we set keeps us accountable and ensures continuous progress.

Permanency

Our goal for every child and youth in care is a permanent, loving, and safe home. It is our responsibility to make every attempt to provide the opportunity for a child or youth to belong to a committed, safe and nurturing family. In collaboration with the family, we develop a safe and stable plan, so every child and youth can attach to a caregiver in a loving, safe and permanent relationship. For more information on the subject, visit Permanency.

Normalization

Children and youth who come into care often face the challenge of stigmatization and isolation from the community. Our agency understands the negative effects this can have on a child or youth's emotional and social development. For this reason, we ensure that each child and youth's experience in care is as normal as possible. They are accepted into a family setting and given a variety of opportunities to grow and develop to their full potential.

Resiliency

Resiliency is the ability to overcome challenges of all kinds and bounce back stronger. Despite the adversity faced by children and youth coming into care, we believe they have what it takes to overcome their difficulties. Our goal is to increase each child and youth's resiliency factor by building on their strengths and helping them attain more positive outcomes. To achieve this, we are committed to The 40 Developmental Assets, which act as building blocks to growing resiliency in children and youth. For more information on how we use this program, visit The 40 Developmental Assets.

Strategic plan 2015-2020 - Our strategic plan is currently under review and will be finalized by the end of fall 2015.

Although the strategic plan is not designed yet, making it difficult to answer this section of the service plan, we believe our focus will be on four components:

- 1. Enhance our service delivery model through training and implementation strategies to help our employees incorporate all levels of our model into their current practice.
- 2. Strengthen our partnerships with our community partners by continuously looking for ways to work better together for the benefit of families and children in our community.
- 3. Aim for service excellence by always looking for ways to improve the quality of the services we offer families, children and youth.
- 4. Continued accountability and transparency of our current practices by making sure we have proper documentation and processes in place, showcasing in a more public way some of the work we are doing with families, and offering the public a more in-depth view of our outcomes.

Once our strategic plan is completed, we will be updating this section of our service plan.

3.0 Service Delivery Model

In this section, the Society should provide a summary of the context in which CW is delivered and focus on both internal and external factors that may impact program delivery and client outcomes. This section could include the following elements: analysis of previous service planning cycle data, strategies that seemed to work well and those that did, social and economic environment, demographic trends, community stakeholder interactions, etc. for both 15/16 and 16/17

Outline any changes to your current Service Delivery Model and the objectives of these changes and how they support the goals of Child Welfare System Transformation which include:

- Better outcomes for children and youth in and leaving care; prevention; permanency and preparation for life;
- Better value for money

As our Agency continues to move forward with transformation, we spent many years searching for a philosophy that is in line with our strategic plan. We wanted a philosophy that was congruent with our belief that families should be respected and treated as the experts of their situation.

In 2010, we began the implementation of the *Signs of Safety* philosophy. Our strategic plan aims to ensure a focus on the protection and healthy development of children and youth, while maintaining family and community connections and striving for positive outcomes for children, youth and their families. The *Signs of Safety* is a collaborative approach to child welfare which fits perfectly with what we want to accomplish in our service delivery model.

Our motto as an Agency is "We are Here to Help". To really help families, we need to move beyond monitoring files and documenting what we believe the family needs to accomplish. We had the SOS philosophy to guide our work, but we needed to go further. We needed a program that would offer families parenting tips/strategies and allow them to implement this knowledge into the future, as their children age and different struggles arise. Moreover, this program needed to be consistent with the information being provided by other community services, so that the family did not get differing information.

As a result, our community has embarked on training and the delivery of the *Triple P - Positive Parenting Program* to the families that we work with, from community families to our resource families. This initiative is in line with our strategic priority to strengthen families and keep them together, as it allows families to work through parenting issues and develop strategies that can be applied throughout their children's development.

With an overriding philosophy and a program to help families, the last piece needed to complete our vision and mission is to have a way to measure our outcomes with families. We need to confirm that we are getting the desired results; ensuring that children are protected, safe, and

have strong connections with their families and community, have a permanent plan and are achieving the best outcomes to guarantee a successful future.

As a result, we have begun the preliminary planning for the roll out and implementation of *Feedback Informed Treatment (FIT)*. This measurement tool will be used to measure whether we are achieving the best outcomes for our families in every aspect of the work that we do; from our engagement with families, to Triple P outcomes, to outcomes for our youth in care, or those exiting care.

SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL



The core of our model represents and reminds us of WHY we do the work that we do. This is best described through our logo and what it represents, and our slogan that WE ARE HERE TO HELP. We always hold this central to our work, as we are dedicated to helping children, youth and families and ensuring their future success.

The middle circle represents HOW we work with children, youth and families. We chose an approach, program, and tools that were in line with our core values and beliefs, and they all work in unison to achieve the mission and vision of our Agency.

Signs of Safety (SOS) is an approach to child welfare that focuses on a balanced risk assessment and allows the family to remain the experts of their situation.

Triple P - Positive Parenting Program is a program that offers families parenting tips/strategies and allows them to implement this knowledge in the future as their children age and different struggles arise.

Feedback Informed Treatment (FIT) is the tool that we will use to measure whether we are achieving the best outcomes for families in every aspect of the work that we do.

The outer circle of our model represents WHAT we do; our mission, as well as the laws and standards that guide our practice.

In addition to the development of our service delivery model, we have also focused our efforts on how we offer services to our children and youth through a strong commitment to Family Based Care. We have developed guiding principles and have spent a lot of energy and effort in reducing the number of children in group care settings. We have been quite successful and we are down to only a few children/youth living currently in group care.

These guiding principles are:

- All children should be raised with their family.
- If and when children come into care, they should reintegrate into their family (including kin) as soon as possible.
- If they cannot reintegrate back into their family, they should like with a foster family, ideally in their community.
- Each foster family should have one child or sibling group per placement.
- Siblings should be placed together.
- If the child has to remain in care, then the primary goal for long-term care of a child becomes adoption/legal custody/kin family reunification.

By embracing the transformation agenda and by moving toward Family Based Care for all of our children, our boarding costs have reduced significantly. This has allowed us to invest more in our children and youth by providing them with various opportunities to help them grow and have high expectations of themselves with the hope of seeing them transition into adulthood as successful young adults. We are have a much higher rate of high school graduation and a much higher rate of youth going to post-secondary education. Our efforts will now be spent on helping these youth successfully graduate from College or University by offering them the support they need until they are done with their studies.

Our foster parents are aging and many of them retiring. In order to keep children in family based care, we will continue to invest in recruiting and training foster parents including searching for kin families.

We are an organization that works with many community partners. We have developed over the years various partnerships to help service families and children in a more organized way. We currently have a multitude of protocol and service agreements with more than 15-20 partners. We will continue to work with our partners for the betterment of our families and youth.

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4.0 Performance Obligations and Performance Management

5.1. Licensing Reviews:

Complete the chart below using the last CFSA licensing review. In the situation that your Children's Aid Society has multiple licenses (e.g. foster and group homes), add rows for each license review, and identify the license type and location for group homes.

Society Response	Timeframe	Progress to Date
	Society Response	Society Response Timeframe

5.2. Crown Ward Quality Improvement Plans

Complete the chart below using the last CFSA Crown Ward Review. This information should be taken from the Quality Improvement Plan that was submitted to the ministry.

Recommendations/Directive	Society Response	Timeframe	Progress to Date
The last QIP was completed and a new one is due June 7, 2015.			We will add this section once we have the QIP done.

5.3. Ministry Risk Mitigation Plan:

Complete the chart below using the last MCYS Risk Mitigation Plan submitted to the ministry.

Recommendations	Society Response	Timeframe	Progress to Date
Legal and Compliance Risk 5.1 Have there been litigations or contraventions of legislation in the past 5 years, resulting in fines, penalties, personal liabilities for management/employees, stoppage of work, etc.?	We were part of the Cornwall Public Inquiry which resulted in civil suits against the CAS. We have reached out-of-court settlements for two (2) of these civil suits in recent years.		We were never found liable but were able to settle out of court. No more action needed.
5.2 Are there any pending legal actions that could result in material financial settlements (net of any insurance proceeds, if applicable)?	As mentioned, we went through the Cornwall Public Inquiry and as a result we have had multiple civil suits. Apart from the two which have been resolved, we currently have one more pending civil suits – one of which is inactive.		We have settled our two civil suits. We haven't received any news from the inactive possible civil suit since 2013-although we cannot say with certainty we don't anticipate they will take any further action.
Technology and Information Risks 6.2 Does the agency have a Disaster Recovery & Business Continuity Plan, which is both current and which has been tested?	We are working on creating a disaster recovery plan.		Our IT manager is currently working on this - this is not yet completed and will hopefully be done by the end of 2015.

5.4. Serious Occurrence Annual Summary Reports:

Complete the chart below using the previous calendar year's Serious Occurrence Annual Summary Report submitted to the ministry.

Action Identified by the Society	Timeframe	Progress to Date
The results of the Annual Summary this year demonstrate in clear terms the outcomes of our Service Delivery Model focussing on the Signs of safety approach with families and children, the Triple P positive parenting program based in our service to families and Feedback informed treatment to review our work and improve upon results.		Implementation of all components of our Service Delivery Model is currently in place. Developing our practice is ongoing.
Our move to repatriate our youth back to our home area and having a 0% OPR placement rate as our goal, instituting family based care as our model and seeking permanency through family finding and strengthening families we work with, along with significant commitment and gains in working with our community partners to foster this change, have all yielded a shift in the overall nature of these reports to show no child deaths related to safe sleep concerns this year and no significant injuries to our children and youth in care, fewer missing children overall, and very few restraints of youth in group home settings.		
We continue to assess complaints by or about our children, youth and families as they arise and are also seeing less significant concerns reported overall. We continue to consider these on a case by case basis.		

5.5. Paediatric Child Death Reviews:

Complete the chart below using all outstanding Paediatric Child Death Review reporting requirements.

Recommendations	Society Response	Timeframe	Progress to Date
Reporting and Review is currently being completed and will be forwarded to Ministry in the coming week.	The Society is preparing the most recent response to the PDRC recommendations and this will be forwarded to the Ministry within the timeline coming up.		All recommendations have been addressed from the Internal Child Death Review conducted in 2011. There have been no further recommendations required since that time.
This report involves only one Child Death report from 2011 and all requirements and			
recommendations have been addressed.			

5.6. Regional Office Audit September 2014

Complete the chart below using any recommendations or actions identified from other reviews, accreditation exercises, or audits.

Recommendations/Action	Society Response	Timeframe	Progress to Date
Ensuring that all safety plans are documented and shared with relevant parties.	Safety Planning is a critical part of our integral practice; our attention in the last few months and in the year to come is how to put into practice safety plans and ensure they are well documented.		- Standard 5 was reviewed with our Child Protection Workers and Supervisors as part of our entire Child Protection Standards (2007) review process in the fall/winter of 2014. For staff returning from maternity leave or for new hires, we will include the Child Protection Standards (2007) review as part of their orientation program.
			- We reviewed the recommendation raised related to Safety Planning from our audit at our Staff Development 2015 Day and highlighted the importance of thoroughly developed and documented safety plans.
			- Safety Planning training to all of our front line staff (Child Protection Workers, Child and Family Workers, and Supervisors) on March 10 and 11, 2015. For those who were absent, there is a plan to offer the training once more before the summer. For staff returning from maternity leave or for new hires, we will include this training as a module in the orientation program.

Recommendations/Action	Society Response	Timeframe	Progress to Date
			- The Signs of Safety Committee is working on developing a presentation that we can offer to our community partners that includes an education portion on the Signs of Safety approach and detailed discussion around Safety Planning. This is being developed for the summer/fall of 2015.
			- An internal audit process has been developed. From January to June 2015, we will be auditing each standard and as of the fall, we will be auditing entire protection files. This will allow for the time to ensure that the standards are being put into practice as they are meant.
			Tasks/Timelines:
			This recommendation has been achieved. Our internal audit will be completed in June and further audits will continue to take place.
The Service Plan is developed within the context of a "family centered conference". Participants in the service planning conference should include but is not limited to collateral service providers, foster parents, kin and family members. Ensuring that the participants have been invited to attend and documenting attendance.	We are actively working on improving our practice around developing the Service Plan through an inclusive approach, within the family centered context. Internally, we have made it a priority to communicate in a more efficient manner when a file has multiple workers involved. We are also working on active participation by all		- Standard 9 was reviewed with our Child Protection Workers and Supervisors as part of our entire Child Protection Standards (2007) review process in the fall/winter 2014. For staff returning from maternity leave or for new hires, we will include the Child Protection Standards (2007) review as part of their

Recommendations/Action	Society Response	Timeframe	Progress to Date
	family members, supports and community partners to take part with a family and the Society to develop service plans which are more realistic, thorough and well developed.		orientation program. - We reviewed the recommendation raised related to Service Planning from our audit at our Staff Development 2015 Day and highlighted the importance of organizing and facilitating these meetings in the context of a family centered approach.
			- Purposeful Practice Residency training to all of our front line staff (Child Protection Workers, Child and Family Workers, and Supervisors) on March 3 and 4, 2015. For those who were absent, there is a plan to offer the training once more before the summer. For staff returning from maternity leave or for new hires, we will include this training as a module in the orientation program.
			- An internal audit process has been developed. From January to June 2015, we will be auditing each standard and as of the fall, we will be auditing entire protection files. This will allow for time to ensure that the standards are being put into practice as they are meant.
			Tasks/Timelines:
			This recommendation has been achieved. Our internal audit will be completed in June and further audits will continue to take place.

Recommendations/Action	Society Response	Timeframe	Progress to Date
In cases where high conflict issues are present, consideration be given to using ADR approached to help the couple mediate their difference.	We have gained knowledge and insight in the last few months in how to manage and work with high conflict families through the ADR approach.		We have a lot more to learn and achieve but have thus far completed the following: - We have met with the ADR lead and the Ottawa CAS supervisor lead to review the current process and practices at Ottawa CAS. This meeting occurred in the fall of 2014.
			- We organized a two day training in November 2014 on "Effectively Responding to High Conflict Families". In attendance were CAS SDG front line staff and management, and over 40 community partners from a variety of agencies across SDG. This was a successful event and offered insight and education to everyone in attendance.
			- ADR liaison has attended a number of individual team meetings within our agency to offer one on one education about ADR. This option continues to be made available as required by the different protection and permanency teams at our agency.
			- We are organizing an education/training day on June 2, 2015 for our front line staff and supervisors as well as our community partners to review ADR approach in general but more specifically with high conflict families. We intend to invite

Recommendations/Action	Society Response	Timeframe	Progress to Date
		Ž	community partners from the legal forum to this event as well. Tasks/Timelines:
			This recommendation has been achieved.
Establishing an internal process to review/audit cases where there are multiple openings.	We have had multiple discussions since this review was completed to establish a clear process to identify/review/audit cases with multiple openings. We have come to an understanding and will be presenting our decision around this recommendation.		 We have a PowerPoint presentation for the management team prepared for April 16th, 2015 which will be led by our Intake Supervisor. The PowerPoint includes clear criteria in identifying a high risk file along with the process related to the review/audit of a file that has multiple openings. Each supervisor will be responsible to present the PowerPoint to their teams by the end of May 2015 to ensure everyone is educated around this and has a clear understanding.
			- Since our Staff Development Day in January 2015, referrals accepted for service at intake that have a long standing history have been immediately assigned to an Ongoing Child Protection Worker. That worker completes the assessment/investigation and then continues to provide ongoing protection services as this will alleviate a worker change. We intend to continue with this practice.
			- We have included as part of ou permanency planning guidelines

Recommendations/Action	Society Response	Timeframe	Progress to Date
			criteria to review high risk files when required. - When a file is flagged as high risk, we are inviting community partners to the planning table. This is not a formal process but will be included in the April 16th PowerPoint to ensure a reminder is sent out to all of our management and staff to include our partners in the planning process for these particular files. Tasks/Timelines: This recommendation has been partially achieved. We intend to have this recommendation fully achieved by mid June 2015.
The development of a restorative justice approach for young people who sexually abuse based on a therapeutic treatment and wraparound family support model.	A committee was formed and the criteria developed to review the interventions with families in which sibling sexual abuse has occurred or for children who are exhibiting inappropriate sexual behaviours.		The committee will review the file at the completion of the assessment and prior to the file being closed. The trauma counsellor from our local Children's Mental Health team will be an active member of the committee and possibly another community partner. **Tasks/Timelines:** The first meeting will be held on May 13, 2015.

Recommendations/Action	Society Response	Timeframe	Progress to Date
The Child's Advocate Office to be called in to share the results of the youth in care hearings as well as the "My Real Lifebook" report with community serving agencies.	As part of our Community Day Initiative, our Youth Representative (who is an employee of our agency) along with a Child and Family Worker presented beautifully the overview and results of "My Real Lifebook" report.		Included in the presentation were current provincial and local initiatives (CWECT, LGBT, Assets, etc.). Overall, their presentation touched all of our audience, specifically with our Youth Representative's own story that she wanted to share. Throughout their presentation, both presenters clearly highlighted and challenged everyone to continue to work together as a community to help children and youth in care achieve their dreams. Each person in attendance received a copy of the report. Tasks/Timelines: This recommendation has been achieved.
A follow up community consultation to the one that was held in February 2014 with representatives from school boards, police, hospitals and community support services to review the Transformation Agenda, the Signs of Safety approach, Strengthening families, Permanency planning, Alternate Dispute Resolution, My Real Life Book and Family Based Care.	We organized a successful Community Day on March 6 th , 2015. Our attendance included over 120 employees from a total of 37 community agencies.		The day was complete with a number of presentations from our agency as well as some from our community partners; the day also included a number of round table discussions with key solution focused questions. - We have continued to attend our community partner agencies to present on our Service Delivery Model and have continued to receive our partners during our monthly staff meetings to share

Recommendations/Action	Society Response	Timeframe	Progress to Date
	•		information about their services. This is a practice we intend to continue with as it has proven successful.
			- We are establishing a SDG community partnership committee to plan for Community Day 2016 as we want to ensure there is a solid cross-representation from multiple sectors and services. We have already received positive responses about this initiative from our community partners.
			Tasks/Timelines: This recommendation has been achieved.

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•	Dundas & Glengarry

5.0 Board of Director Approval and Monitoring of Progress Towards Achieving its Service Plan

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