



**Children's
Aid Society**
THUNDER BAY DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025



Dedicated to protecting families and communities by ensuring the safety and well-being of children and youth to reach their full potential.

Tomi Akinyede
Vice Chair



Carmela Hardy
Executive Director



A Message From the Vice-Chair & Executive Director

As Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors and Executive Director of The Children's Aid Society of the District of Thunder Bay, we are pleased to share an update on the Society's progress and achievements over the past year. This has been a year of growth, resilience and adaptability, and in these times, we remain dedicated to supporting children, youth and families in our community.

Operational excellence has been a focus as the Society continues to grow and transform services to meet the diverse needs of service recipients. Through ongoing collaboration with the Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services and key community partners, the Society has strengthened its service delivery model and continues to work to address the financial challenges associated with supporting children, youth and families with complex needs. Preparation for the upcoming third-party review of non-Indigenous Children's Aid Societies will also guide efforts to ensure efficient and sustainable operations, while maintaining high-quality care.

Building a supportive and engaged workforce has been another priority initiative. Staff continue to demonstrate exceptional dedication and perseverance and we are committed to providing the tools, training, and support staff need to provide quality care for children, youth and families. This year staff participated in training sessions focused on mental health support and personality dimensions that help strengthen team dynamics. The establishment of the Staff Engagement and Wellness Committee has further strengthened efforts to create a positive work environment. The committee collaborates to plan, implement and promote workplace wellness initiatives that align with the needs and interests of staff.

Partnerships remain vital to the Society's success. Through collaboration with other provincial Children's Aid Societies, the Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services and local community organizations, the Society continues to provide integrated care and services that better support the needs of children, youth and families. These partnerships help the Society address emerging challenges and provide effective, timely services.

As we reflect on the past year, we would like to acknowledge the dedication and service of two outgoing Board members. We extend a heartfelt thank you to Trevor Kavalchuk for his many years of service on the Board of Directors in various leadership roles including Treasurer, Vice-Chair and Chair. His contributions have been invaluable. We also bid farewell to Ashleigh Presenger and thank her for her time and commitment to the Board. We wish Trevor and Ashleigh all the best in their future endeavors.

We are grateful for the ongoing support of staff, Board members, volunteers, and community partners. Their collective efforts make it possible to continue to provide the necessary care and support to those who need it most. Thank you all for your continued dedication.

Service Area



The Children's Aid Society of the District of Thunder Bay Service Area

The Society shall exercise its statutory authority under the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017 in the District of Thunder Bay with the following exceptions:

a) from the Albany River south at 90 degrees longitude to 50 degrees latitude; west on 50 degrees latitude to the boundary of the District of Kenora; north on the Kenora District boundary to 51 degrees latitude.

Continuum of Care

Admission Prevention	LEAST FORMAL INTERVENTION	Child in care of parent. Society has determined the child to be in need of protection and at risk of admission to care. The child is not in care of the Society. Family is receiving protection services either on a voluntary basis or through a Supervision Order.
Kinship Service (out of Care)		Society has determined the child to be in need of protection and cannot remain with their parent. The child's safety will be protected and an admission to care will be prevented by placing the child with a kin or community member. The child is not in care of the Society. Working toward reunification or a permanency plan.
Kinship Care	PERMANENCY PLANNING SERVICE CONTINUUM	Society has determined the child to be in need of protection and child has been placed in the Society's care. The child has been placed with kin/community caregiver in accordance with the "place of safety" regulation.
Customary Care		Society has determined that an Indigenous child is in need of protection and requires removal from parents/caregivers. Child is placed with a person who is not the child's parent according to the custom of the child's band or First Nations community. There is a customary care declaration by the band of either parent of the child and the Society is supervising the home. Customary Care Agreement is entered into.
Legal Custody		A resource caregiver (aka foster parent), kin or community member has obtained a legal Custody Order under s. 102 (1) of the <i>Child, Youth and Family Services Act</i> for a child placed in Extended Society Care.
Resource Care (aka Foster Care)	MOST FORMAL INTERVENTION	Child is in the care of the Society (Temporary Care Agreement, Interim Society Care or Extended Society Care) and placed in resource home.
Adoption		Child is in Extended Society Care or the child's parents have consented to the child's adoption through the Society. Child may be in care and on adoption probation or out of care as the adoption has been finalized.
Youth Leaving Care		All former children in Extended Society Care who meet eligibility criteria outlined in the legislation and regulations may be considered for ongoing support from a Society between the ages of 18 and 22.

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Intake and Disclosures

Referrals Received **2,031**

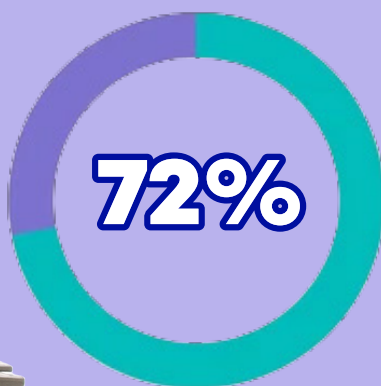
139

People Who Have Requested
Access to Their Files

Child Protection Services

831

Investigations
Completed



of Families we Serve,
Children are at Home

Families Receiving
Ongoing Service
(as of March 31) **190**

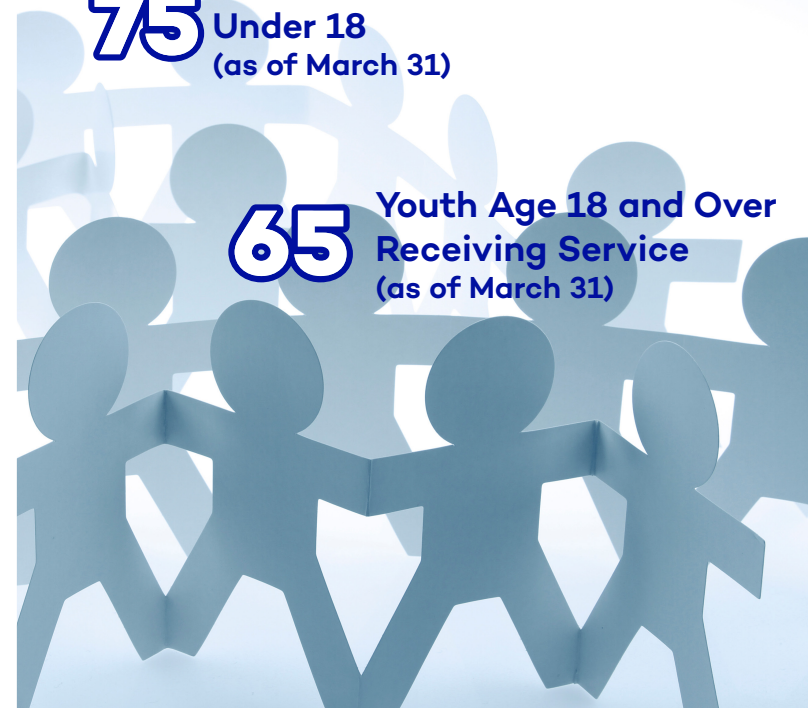
Children's Services

75

Children in Care
Under 18
(as of March 31)

65

Youth Age 18 and Over
Receiving Service
(as of March 31)



PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Support Services

Family Support staff are responsible for providing in-home support to families (parenting support) and facilitating supported family time between children and their families. Family Support staff can also provide Circle of Security, a program designed to enhance understanding of attachment. Family Support staff collaborate and consult with other Society staff, community professionals and care providers.

With the support of casual staff (Prime Workers), Support Services also provides transportation to facilitate family time visits and temporary daycare/school drives. Family Support staff also support children and youth receiving service through one to one support.

Number of Supports Provided (as at March 31)

1,904	Family Time
2,282	Family Time Transportation
127	Parental Support
178	Recreation
553	Transportation

Alternative Care Services (as at March 31)

1 Finalized Adoptions (during fiscal year)

19 Children in Kinship Care Placements

36 Children in Kinship Service Placements

54 Resource (aka Foster) Homes

11 Adoption Homes

19 Kinship Care Homes

26 Kinship Service Homes



PROGRAMS & SERVICES: Volunteer Services

*We asked
Volunteers
to tell us
about a time
when their
volunteering
created a
ripple effect*



Heather Ferguson

25 years of service

Recipient of the Citizen's of Exceptional Award

As a community nurse, I support people who need various types of medical assistance. In developing a relationship with a patient, I mentioned I volunteered at TBCAS for the Holiday Hamper Program. The ripple effect was when she decided months later to donate stockings full of toiletries and treats for children and youth for the Holiday Hamper Program.

I continue to volunteer at TBCAS as I feel appreciated by the staff and the children and youth I serve, I know I am making a small difference and I believe wholeheartedly that in today's world. It is important to role model for my two children Fiona and Malcolm. My hope is that one day through my giving, they will grow to do the same.

123 Backpacks
Assembled

9,366 Kilometers
Driven

96 Active
Volunteers

My ripple effect is that I adopted my two adult daughters through Children's Aid and was happy my daughter and I were asked to speak at the Ontario Adoption Council training sessions that The Children's Aid Society of the District of Thunder Bay held. As a volunteer, my ripple effect was helping to organize and inventory TBCAS's adoption library and resources used by new resource and adoptive families. TBCAS even provided volunteer childcare, so more could attend the sessions and begin to develop networks.

This year helping with the labeling of Old Dutch ripple chip bags for the National Volunteer Week Luncheon was another ripple effect (he he). Even though I could not attend the event, knowing I could help remotely with projects and tasks that support TBCAS is still very meaningful to me.

I feel truly appreciated for the assistance I offered, and I enjoy being helpful, which is another ripple effect. In giving, I too receive.



Joan Krisko

20 years of Service

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Volunteer Services (continued)

Holiday Hampers
Delivered to District

4,000 lbs



Amanda McIntosh
15 years of Service

I am only able to provide volunteer assistance at Christmas time and have been a Wishes Tree Captain for many years. I have noticed over the years that gift donations continue to increase. Each year we bring more and more donations in for children and youth receiving services from the Society. The generosity of our community is amazing to see firsthand.

I have been volunteering for 15 years now, since I was a university student. Now that I have my own young family it is harder, but I make sure I find the time at Christmas to give back. I love that I can also include my young children in helping me. They love coming with me to bring in donations.

We asked Volunteers to tell us about a time when their volunteering created a ripple effect



Sharon Dempsey
15 years of Service

I recently misread a quote in a way that resonated more deeply than the original: "Maybe hope is not something that we find, it is something that we leave." That idea has stayed with me, because I believe hope—like courage, honesty, and patience—is reciprocal.

I've continued volunteering at TBCAS because I've seen how even the smallest act of support can grow into something larger. Over the years, I've learned that a consistent, compassionate presence can build trust, foster growth, and quietly inspire change. It's never been about counting the years—it's about showing up with an open heart, and being part of something that carries forward. And while I've tried to offer hope, I've received far more in return than I ever expected—proof that the ripple flows both ways.

1,543

Total Volunteer
Hours

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*We asked
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Volunteer Services (continued)



Esme French
10 years of service

Volunteering with Team Unbreakable since 2013 has been an incredible experience. As one of the founding volunteers I've seen the program grow from a handful of participants to well over thirty. One example of the "ripple effect" that I have seen is watching past participants come back to be "junior" coaches and then stay on to be full coaches with the program. Having the youth involved in coaching is very motivating for the participants in both their running and leadership aspirations.

Volunteer coaches also create a ripple by promoting the program in the community and recruiting friends to get involved. We've also seen participants encourage their younger siblings to join when they are old enough to do so. The smiles, high fives after each run and the annual "graduation" ceremony are some of the reasons I continue to volunteer. Seeing how far the participants progress over the 10-week program is truly remarkable. I feel very privileged to be able to join the youth, caring adults, and other coaches and volunteers who make the program happen - all are truly "Unbreakable"!



Vasilinka Tsar
10 years of service

I remember volunteering with an adolescent from the Spring program. I was assigned to help her re-integrate into my former high school and I would attend classes with her as her support person. I remember this creating a ripple effect because I was able to show her that high school was not such a scary place, while introducing her to some of the teachers that I had made strong connections with during my 4 years at that school. I also continued to support this individual through developing life skills at the Spring program. We would work together to plan meals, make a grocery list and then cook a simple meal together so that she could build up some confidence in her abilities outside of academics. While we were working on these life skills together, I could really see a difference in how this adolescent felt empowered and proud of her accomplishments. This created a ripple effect into other areas of her life, including her academics and social skills while re-integrating into a traditional high school program. I also got to see a ripple effect in the other students that were involved with the Spring program. They became curious about some of the skills that we were working on, and they wanted to try their hand in helping in the kitchen and showed interest in developing these life skills.

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Team Unbreakable

Team Unbreakable is a national learn-to-run program started by a gentleman who lost his son to suicide at the age of 19.

The Team Unbreakable program encourages physical activity which is known to have a positive outcome on mood and wellness. The program provides a supportive space where young people can build resilience, manage stress and grow stronger together. Team Unbreakable is made up of a mental health component and a physical activity component.



"I had a really good time doing this program. You taught me to believe in myself. Thank you"

- Participant, June 2024

The mental health component allows children and youth to learn about topics such as psychological well-being, motivation, goal setting, structure, learning from mistakes, self-talk, self-awareness, self-compassion and the effect of supporting others, by having them journal and reflect on moods while in the program.

The Children's Aid Society of the District of Thunder Bay has been offering this free 10-week program to children, youth and their families since 2013, with participation growing each year. In 2025 the program accepted 40 children and youth.

The program starts in April and concludes in June with a final race, the Meter Eaters June Classic, followed by a graduation and banquet.

Team Unbreakable Thunder Bay would not be possible without the generous sponsors and volunteers. Thank you to all who have contributed over the years to the safety and well-being of children, youth and families!

National Team Unbreakable: TeamUnbreakable.ca
Thunder Bay Program: LearnToRunTBay.com



"A real community building initiative!"
- Volunteer, June 2024



Board of Directors



Tomi Akinyede
Vice Chair



Brad Gottfred
Treasurer



Rima Mounayer
Governance
Lead



**Pauline
Gemmell**
Director



Lise Haman
Director



**Rebecca
Krawczuk**
Director



**Katherine
Steele**
Director

Thank you to retiring Board members Trevor Kavalchuk and Ashleigh Presenger for your commitment and dedication to children, youth and families.

MISSION: A future that embraces thriving children and youth, empowered families and strong communities

VISION: To protect families and communities by ensuring the safety and well-being of children and youth to reach their full potential

VALUES:

Ssafety & Accountability
Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
Collaboration
Unity & Understanding
Respect & Integrity
Excellence & Innovation



Staff Recognition Years of Service to June 2025

25 Years

Shawna Agarand
Nan Bull
Kristi Fuchs
Rosa Lettieri

20 Years

Vicki Abraham
Tammy Colla
Nicole Etreni
Erin MacLean

15 years

Jennifer Hill
Danny Michaud
Tina Morrison

10 Years

Manon Bishop
Tannis Boire
Sarah Osadic

5 Years

Emily Dias



Combined Balance Sheet

as at March 31, 2025

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Assets		
Cash	386,419	3,303,778
Accounts Receivable	226,942	166,458
Prepaid Expenses	58,566	54,385
Capital Assets, net	744,569	805,701
	<u>1,416,496</u>	<u>4,330,322</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Accounts Payable	1,760,322	2,250,312
Due to Province of Ontario	745,380	850,479
Unexpended Program Funds	568,904	913,699
Deferred Revenue	-	17,910
Deferred Capital Contributions, net	74,432	78,379
	<u>3,149,038</u>	<u>4,110,779</u>
Unrestricted Net Assets	(2,579,238)	(666,401)
Non-Statutory Fund	176,558	158,622
Invested in Capital Assets	670,138	727,322
	<u>1,416,496</u>	<u>4,330,322</u>

Combined Statement of Operations

for the year ended March 31, 2025

Operating Revenue		
Province of Ontario	16,414,109	15,226,332
Other	1,005,031	802,511
	<u>17,419,140</u>	<u>16,028,843</u>
Operating Expenditures		
Salaries & Benefits	10,834,084	9,942,171
Direct Client	7,078,235	4,342,953
Service Support	1,458,906	1,736,223
	<u>19,371,225</u>	<u>16,021,347</u>
(Deficit) Surplus for the Year	<u>(1,952,085)</u>	<u>7,496</u>
Comprised of:		
Non-Statutory Fund Surplus	17,936	7,496
Child Welfare Deficit	(1,970,021)	0

Note: The above financial information is summarized from statements audited by Doane Grant Thornton LLP. The Auditor's Report and Financial Statements for the year March 31, 2025 are available on the Agency website.



The Children's Aid Society of the District of Thunder Bay



www.thunderbaycas.ca



**Children's
Aid Society**

THUNDER BAY DISTRICT