



Simcoe Muskoka

Family Connexions

Connexions Familiales

de Simcoe Muskoka

Back to Basics

Annual Report 2016-17





The importance of simplicity

In the second year as an amalgamated agency, the senior team with the support of the Board of Directors, built a “Back to Basics” plan for Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions to continue to evolve as a new organization. With focuses on service, people, organization and partnerships from the three year strategic plan, there were many large projects to implement that would support the delivery of quality, caring and efficient services to children, youth and families across the large geographic region. Reframing the work as a means to support frontline staff, simplicity was key to gaining support and completing the foundational work and important reporting.



Intake/After Hours
Services & Family
Support Services
Redesigned

Child Protection
Information Network
(CPIN) Launched in
Muskoka Branches

13,627
Children Served

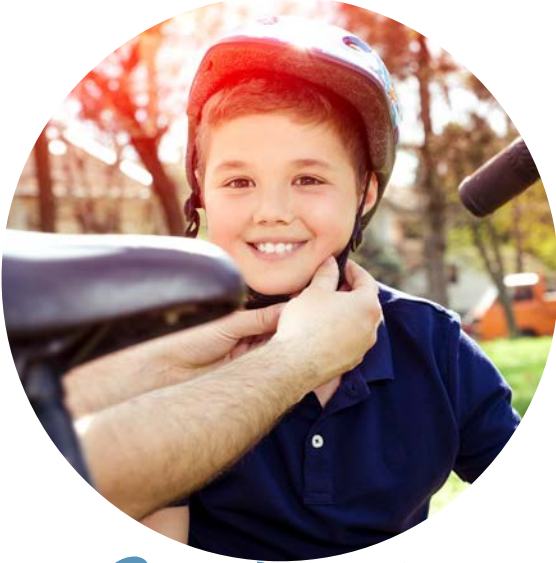
Focus on Service

In compliance with Ministry standards, the Quality Improvement Plan for service level compliance was followed and reported on quarterly. Agency results improved over each quarter and with increased analytical support, staff refocused efforts to get closer to 100% compliance in all service standard areas. Motherisk cases were researched, reported on and provided to the Ministry for provincial reporting and assessment.

French Language
Services launched
across Simcoe &
Muskoka

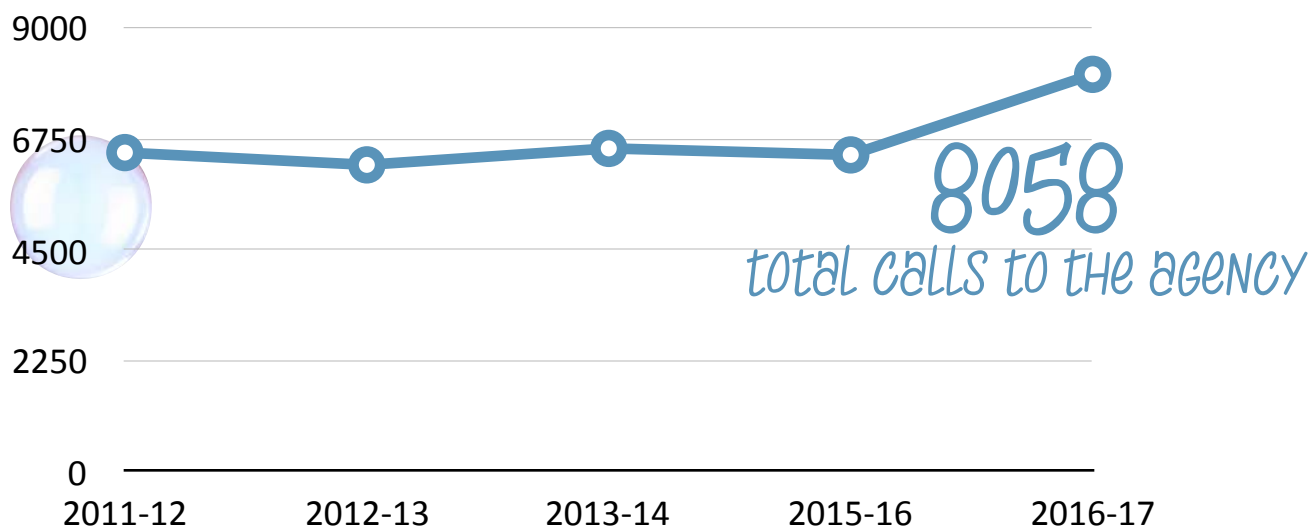
5,925
Families Served





Available 24/7 for children and families

2016-17 saw an increase in phone calls to the agency. Although we analyze systemic issues that may be arising, we focus on our ability to service increasing numbers of clients as well as we possibly can. We are very pleased that people are calling to report their concerns or to get the help they need for themselves or their families. We alone cannot protect children from harm. It is everyone's responsibility in the community to play a role in keeping kids safe and well.





Children at the centre of everything we do.

A provincial inquest into the tragic death of 7 year old Katelynn Sampson, who died in August 2008, concluded in April 2016 with the jury delivering 173 recommendations.

At the heart of them was “Katelynn’s Principle,” which calls for children to be at the heart of the child welfare system. It implores us to see a child as an individual with rights who must always be seen, whose voice must be heard, and one who must be listened to and respected. As an agency, we are committed to implementing this fundamental principle in protection, care and children’s mental health services, and strive to remember that even with an ever-growing set of demands and pressures that we ensure we are weaving the voices and wishes of children into the dense fabric of our work.



3,304
New Protection
Investigations

\$268,182
Raised for the
Holiday Program

Helping Families Get Through Difficult Times

With the dissolution of the Simcoe Children's Aid Foundation at the end of last year, this year was the first in over a decade that the agency represented itself for fundraising in the community. The many traditional programs continued to assist families including our back to school drive, holiday sponsorship program, basic needs support fund, tutoring program and camp program. We find that a little bit of help sometimes goes a very long way.

421
Holiday Hampers
Provided

293
Children Sent to Camp

Focus on People

People are the most integral part of what we do. Our staff, management, resource families, volunteers and partners are essential to working with children, youth and families in our community. During this time as an organization forming and developing new and/or harmonized processes, an enormous amount of human resources coordination, support and work has been created. Our teams have worked together to strategically manage our workers, focused on health, safety and wellness, and continued to foster a culture of recognition, positivity, and teamwork.



Rewards &
Recognition
Plan Designed

Mentorship
Program Launched

811
Children's
therapy
Clients



The Path to Reconciliation

With 105 Indigenous children of the total 524 children in care (20%) in Simcoe and Muskoka at the end of the year, the efforts to support and work alongside First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) families must continue to improve. With our full complement of FNMI workers, each with Indigenous heritage, we provided culturally appropriate, quality services through an Indigenous lens. But we know more work needs to be done and as part of the plan over the year, committees begun to address the five calls to action for child welfare from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

With the Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child and Family Services (DBCFS) agency actively pursuing designation in our catchment area as a mandated native child well-being agency, we began and will continue to work alongside them as they move through the process. We will continue to work collaboratively with them in a mentorship capacity and fully support their goal of becoming designated within the next several years .



Focus on Organization

In line with the Back to Basics theme, there continues to be foundational work that is required through the harmonization of many aspects of our work. An Anti-Oppression committee was established to review all manuals, policies and procedures that are being written, revised and developed to ensure they take equity and diversity into account. The Child Protection Information Network (CPIN) database that is now being used across our agency requires copious amounts of training, learning, standardization and administration. An internal team has been established to facilitate the work and support staff throughout the organization.

Child Protection
Information Network
(CPIN) Launched in
Muskoka Branches

33
ADOPTIONS
FINALIZED



CPIN Admin
Support Team
In Place

NEW Interactive
Intranet "The Hub"
Developed

211
CHILDREN DISCHARGED
FROM CARE

Ticket System
Instituted





NEW Bilingual
External Website
Launched



Social Media
Established

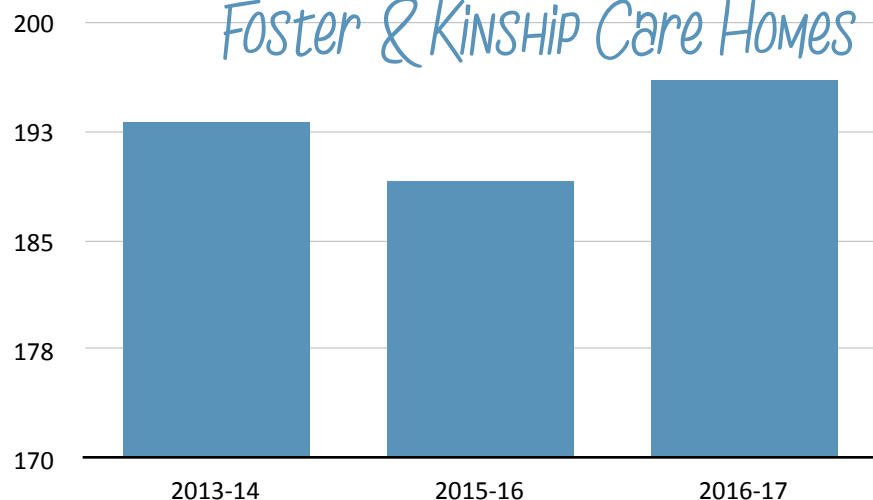
Focus on Partnerships

The purpose of our organization is built on an underlying principle of collaboration. Without partnerships, teamwork, and integration, we cannot meet our goals and be successful. As we experienced an influx of children into care over the year, we reached out to our community to help understand causal issues and potential solutions to help families in crisis. Working together on a mandate of early permanency, we were able to reduce our in-care population by almost 7%.

NEW Resource
Manual Produced

Moving on Mental
Health Community
Plans Completed

196
Foster & Kinship Care Homes



IMPROVING CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH ONE SESSION AT A TIME

As a core service delivery partner with Hands The Family Help Network, we are continuing to work on transforming child and youth mental health (CYMH) in Muskoka. We delivered a variety of different CYMH programs last year and supported over 1,200 clients. In order to affect change in regard to the waitlists associated with accessing child and youth mental health services, we developed and began offering counselling walk-in clinics (CWICs) over five years ago. The CWIC provides access to no-fee confidential therapy sessions for children and their families. For many, a single session with a trained therapist focused on immediate problem solving and supportive conversation is enough. Those struggling further can attend the clinic more than once if needed. Together with our local CYMH partners we are advocating and working towards ensuring that the 16,000 youth in Simcoe Muskoka experiencing a mental illness can get the comprehensive help they need.



A photograph of a child's play area. In the background, a window with white curtains is visible. On the windowsill, three small potted plants in galvanized metal pots are arranged. Below the window is a white wall with a grid of small, dark, diamond-shaped perforations. In the foreground, several wooden blocks are scattered on a light-colored rug. A semi-transparent orange rounded rectangle is overlaid on the lower left side of the image, containing contact information.

60 BELL FARM ROAD
UNIT #7, BARRIE, ON
L4M 5G6
1-800-461-4236
www.familyconnexions.ca