

STRONGER TOGETHER

SIMCOE MUSKOKA FAMILY CONNEXIONS
ANNUAL REPORT
2021-22



Simcoe Muskoka
Family Connexions

Connexions Familiales
de Simcoe Muskoka



LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

This past year was another uniquely challenging and rewarding time for our agency. We are pleased to present this report and highlight key achievements in our determination to better serve children youth and families.

Year two of COVID-19 had a cumulative impact on services, staff, resource caregivers, and families in the community. Staff turnover in 2021/22 reduced our agency's resources and diminished capacity within community services that children youth and families rely upon. Thanks to the dedication of our staff and caregivers, the consistency and quality of services delivered by children's mental health and child welfare remained strong, a remarkable achievement considering that we had an increase in referrals across all programs.

Whether you provide direct services to children youth and families, corporate and administrative support within the agency, volunteer services, contribute as a resource caregiver or Board Director we recognize and sincerely appreciate all that you have done to protect and promote child and youth safety and wellbeing. Your advocacy, preventive action, interventions, and work with community and Ministry partners has made for a better community - a community of compassion, care, and support.

The Board believes that this agency's focus on infant and early mental health, adverse childhood experiences, trauma, healing, diversity, equity and inclusion, youth in transition, virtual access to mental health services, a Black, Francophone and Indigenous service focus, make this agency more responsive to children youth and families, and communities. All this important effort has positioned our agency to move forward through pandemic recovery, child welfare redesign, and the increasing community need for child and youth mental health and complex needs service.

Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions continues to be a change maker, despite the pandemic - creating an inclusive workplace, pushing the community forward through advocacy and representation at various tables and committees, building a community that is more supportive and accepting of all parents, caregivers, and their children. Keeping children and youth in their families and communities, strengthening in- care resources and services, and responding to child and youth mental health needs will achieve a better future for all children youth and families we have the privilege of serving.

As Executive Director and Board Chair we are very proud and humbled by the commitment and dedication of our staff, caregivers, volunteers and Board members to the safety and wellbeing of families, to the health and wellness of our communities, and to the individual and collective resilience that brought us through this last year.

We have emerged stronger together.

Thank you, Merci, Miigwetch

JANE KOVARIKOVA
Chair, Board of Directors

GERALDINE DOOLEY-PHILLIPS
Executive Director

Our Vision



**Safe Kids.
Healthy families.
Strong communities.**

Our Values

WE

We honour **C**onnexions

We are **A**ccountable

Respect is essential

Equity is foundational

Our Purpose



**To build safety and well-being with
children, youth, families and
communities.**

A warm, intimate photograph of a family of three in a kitchen. A woman on the left, wearing a yellow sweater, is leaning over a wooden table, smiling as she serves a large white bowl of green salad. A young child with curly hair, wearing a yellow top and a grey cardigan, sits at the table, looking up at the woman with a joyful expression. A man with a beard and dreadlocks, wearing a grey sweater, sits to the right, laughing heartily. The background is softly blurred, showing kitchen shelves with various items. The overall mood is happy and communal.

Children & youth safe & well with families in their communities

We promote wellness, stability and a sense of belonging through effective services, quality care, relationship preservation, and connexions to community and identity.

Children & youth safe & well with families in their communities

Our child welfare services, and child & youth mental health services remained fully operational throughout changing circumstances of the Covid 19 pandemic. Most service volumes increased, with few remaining consistent with the previous year.

Highlights

7,135

child welfare referrals
received



+ 8%

from last year

48

youth remained under agency
care to support preparation for
transition



+ 45%

from last year

2X

Almost doubled our use of
Alternative Dispute Resolution
practices over last year

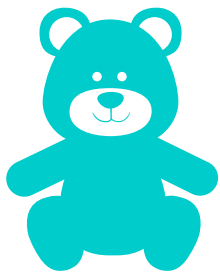
Children & youth safe & well with families in their communities



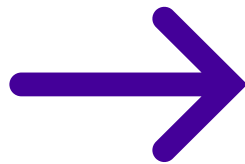
20

16 youth in care graduated from secondary school and 4 graduated from post-secondary school

29



adoptions finalized



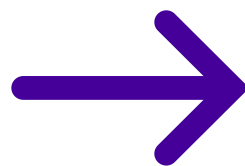
2X

More than doubled the number of openness legal files

120



kinship service placements, on average



+40%

over the last 2 years



17

new foster homes approved from ongoing recruitment campaign. OPR foster placements reduced by 9 between April 21-March 22

Children & youth safe & well with families in their communities

Child & Youth Mental Health Services

280

virtual walk-in clients
served by CYMH



+4%

from last year



119

crisis
assessment /interventions

+26%

from last year

44

children youth and families
supported by complex special
needs



Child and youth therapies (225) and intensive
services (76) remained consistent with last year

The background features a large, faint lightbulb outline. Inside the lightbulb, a rocket ship is depicted launching upwards. The rocket is white with red and blue accents. At the base of the rocket, where it meets the lightbulb, there are yellow and orange flames, suggesting the rocket is taking off. The entire scene is set against a dark, textured background.

Innovation, Accountability, & Outcomes

We provide evidence informed services and maximize resources through a commitment to continuous improvement, privacy and accountability for outcomes.

Innovation, Accountability, & Outcomes

Our staff are our greatest asset. Last year we saw unprecedented numbers of staff turnover with 18 retirements and new opportunities for staff leading to additional resignations.

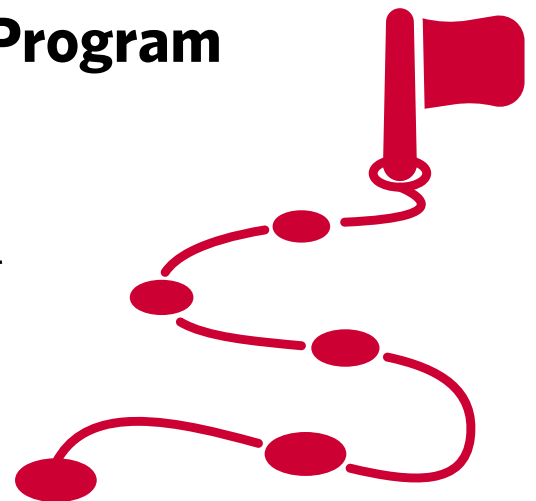
This resulted in **54** new hires



We reset our **Youth Outcomes Committee** to support and align with developing programs and needs including the Youth in Transition Program (for Muskoka and Parry Sound), the Educational Liaison program; mentorship, housing and mental health needs for youth leaving care.



We supported the **Milestone Tool/Program** (MCCSS funded research project) to assess the validity of an online tool designed to support better outcomes for youth transitioning from care. The tool was developed by our foster parents Cyrese and Roger Samuels.



Innovation, Accountability, & Outcomes

We achieved significant progress in our

'Active Offer of French Language Services'

Ministry submission, achieving greater levels of compliance towards becoming a fully bilingual agency with equal quality client services in French and English.



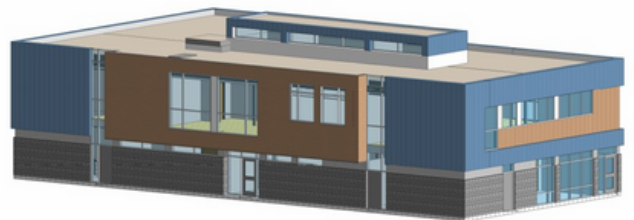
We eliminated our **historical debt** through expenditure management strategies.

We implemented a streamlined **phone system** which is cost-efficient, effective and meets agency needs.



We developed new **administrative services and file disclosure team structure** to improve disclosure, and case records management.

To reduce costs and footprint, and to better align with service delivery needs, we made considerable progress on the **property strategy.**



new Bracebridge design

Truth & Reconciliation

We commit to truth and
reconciliation with Indigenous
families and communities.



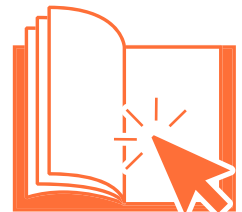
Truth & Reconciliation

Initiation of **Indigenous staff advisory**
and development of **Service Resource Guide**



We concluded a three-year Truth and Reconciliation process with Rama First Nation resulting in the **production of a film** and commemorative space developed by 60's scoop survivors. The film will be used in training curriculum for staff and community agencies.

We focused our commitment to **transfer Indigenous children & youth** to Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child & Family Services. We transitioned 225 clients during 2019 -2022



We have strengthened and developed our **partnership** with the Metis Nation of Ontario.



Effective Communication & Partnership

We hear and value the voices of children, youth and families; partner with communities, colleagues and stakeholders to build networks; and advocate.

Effective Communication & Partnership

Fundraising and donations

Fundraising and donations through community partners and local businesses help fund our programs throughout the year to support families. This includes basic needs, summer camps, back-to-school and holiday assistance.

\$68,779

collected through Holiday
donations

\$755,498

in donations

\$481,109

gifted through in-kind donations

\$40,862

given through basic needs fund



5,000+

families & individuals
supported

95



volunteers

11

independent youth sponsored

Effective Communication & Partnership

Community Partnerships



We collaborated with Simcoe County Infant & Early Mental Health committee to develop the **Service Pathways** Project for clear and efficient service pathways for infants, children, and families accessing early mental health services and supports.

We initiated the development and launch of a **Francophone Situation table** to improve coordination of services to children and families with complex needs.



We achieved better child and youth outcomes through our **Mobile Behavioral Treatment Team** (multi service) partnership. At the front end of service, 18 youth were supported and remained in their homes and communities with an estimated cost savings of \$477,522. For children and youth in care, 11 were supported through improved care and support with a savings of \$192,603.

Effective Communication & Partnership

Community Partnerships

We strengthened the partnership with our

CYMH lead agency HANDS

and made progress in our multi-year service plan to better support vulnerable populations starting with 0-5 years, with planning for 2SLGBTQ+ youth and a community youth engagement process.



We strengthened our partnership with

Shak's (Stay Humble and Kind) World

who provide mentorship and programming to support vulnerable youth.

We strengthened community partnerships with

the **Simcoe Muskoka Black Community Development Council**

whose goal is to build community capacity to better serve black families.



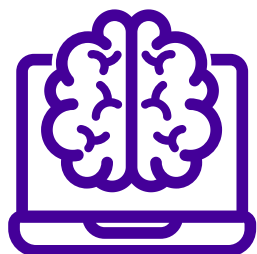


Equitable Practices

We advance an
organizational culture,
workplace, policies, programs
and services that are
equitable, inclusive, and
trusted.

Equitable Practices

We made progress in our 3-year equity plan with the following highlights:



We delivered key learning and development sessions including **130** staff attended the Critical Reflexivity session; **315** staff attended the Unconscious Bias session (85% of the agency); **60** leadership staff participated in the 3-Day Equity Workshop as well as Gilbert Centre's Safer Space training.

We collected data to identify **the overrepresentation of black children youth and families**

in child welfare. Baseline data will measure continuous improvement; 80% of service staff received training in Identity-Based Data collection.



Initiated review of **human resource policies** using an equity-based lens.

Equitable Practices



We supported the ongoing work and achievements of our **Equity committees:** Afri-CAN Carib Connexions (ACCC), One Vision One Voice, the Anti-Oppression/Anti-Racism, AODA committee and initiated a 2SLGBTQ+ committee who are tasked with implementing the equity strategy.

Each advisory body has its own work plan that is directly connected to the agency's overall equity and inclusion implementation plan.

The agency continues to support the work of equity in the sector through its membership to OACAS's provincial committees and initiatives, and participation in CMHO's community of practice.



Ontario Association of
Children's Aid Societies



Children's Mental Health Ontario
Santé mentale pour enfants Ontario

FINANCIALS

STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENSES

| For the year ended March 31 | 2022 | 2021 |
|--|----------------------|---------------------|
| Revenues | | |
| Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services | \$ 49,093,977 | \$ 50,360,328 |
| Ministry of Health | \$ 2,377,412 | 2,195,053 |
| Other | \$ 3,957,528 | 4,716,369 |
| Gross Revenues | \$ 55,428,917 | 57,271,750 |
| Expenses | | |
| Administration and other | \$ 16,187,411 | 16,307,645 |
| Boarding rate payments | \$ 11,988,376 | 11,586,764 |
| Salaries and wages | \$ 26,517,898 | 26,294,655 |
| Gross Expenses | \$ 54,693,685 | 54,189,064 |
| Excess of revenues over expenses for the year | \$ 735,232 | \$ 3,082,686 |



BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2021-22

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Vice President:

Mary Jean Watson

Past President:

Dave MacPherson

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Michael Illori

Secretary:

Debbie Opoku-Mulder

OACAS Provincial Liaison:

Cyrese Samuel

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Courtney Craigie

Steve Clement

Mary-Anne Denny-Lusk

Gisele Forrest

Donna Goodwin

Jeff Harper

Tamara Obee

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Tracey Rynard



Simcoe Muskoka

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