



Native Child and Family Services of Toronto



2017-2018 Annual Report



Mission Statement

Native Child and Family Services of Toronto strives to provide a life of quality, well-being, caring and healing for our children and families in the Toronto Native Community.

We do this by creating a service model that is culture based and respects the values of Native people, the extended family and the right to self-determination.



2017-2018 Board of Directors

Mae Maracle, President
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Barbara Fallon, Secretary
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Aboriginal Labour Force Development Circle
Anglican Church of Canada
Canada Council
Canadian Heritage – Canada 150 Fund
Children’s Aid Foundation of Canada
City of Toronto
CP24 CHUM Christmas Wish
Hedge Funds Care Canada
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
Indigenous Healing and Wellness Strategy
Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada
Kinark Child and Family Services
Ministry of the Attorney General – Victim Services
Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration and International Trade
Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport
Ontario 150
Ministry of Children and Youth Services
Ministry of Community and Social Services
Ministry of Education
Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training
Ontario Aboriginal Head Start Association
Ontario Arts Council
Public Health Agency of Canada
Tides Canada Initiative – East Scarborough Storefront
Toronto Arts Council
Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network
Toronto District School Board
Toronto Foundation
Toronto Police Association
Toronto Star Fresh Air Fund
Toronto Urban Health Fund
United Way Greater Toronto

With Thanks





*Message from
President of the
Board of Directors,
Mae Maracle*

Welcome to the Annual General Meeting. I have been pleased to serve as President of the Board for this past year. It has been a busy year and the Board members have made some good decisions for the benefit of the children and families that we serve.

The most difficult activity was finding a new Executive Director for this Agency. Difficult because it means that Kenn Richard who has been the face of Native Child and Family Services of Toronto (NCFST) for 30 years or more is transitioning into other work and leaving the Executive Director position as of June 30th. I would like to welcome Jeffrey Schiffer into the position of Executive Director at that time and look forward to working with him.

I would like to say a big thank you to Kenn for his long service to NCFST and for the remarkable work he has done to build it into an entity that provides a variety of services to children and families. Kenn has worked for the benefit of the children in the Indigenous Community of Toronto. People often think of us as only a children's aid society but we do so much more to support the children and families so that children are not separated from their families. Through his leadership and guidance, Indigenous programs exist that have become models for the rest of the Country.

I was honoured to be invited to attend a ceremony at Queen's Park to witness Kenn receive the Meritorious Service Cross (M.S.C.) Civil Division, recognizing outstanding Indigenous Leadership. He has earned this honour through his hard work and never forgetting he is doing this work for Indigenous children and youth.

Kenn will be transitioning into a new position within the Agency. One that will see him using his speaking skills and networks to ensure the longevity of programs and services provided to the Indigenous Community of Toronto.

I have served on this board for over 20 years and have held various positions as an executive member on the board and as a regular member. I have learned a lot working with Kenn and I and the other board members will miss his advice and teaching as he moves on to new challenges for Native Child and Family Services of Toronto.

Nia:Wen,

Mae

Executive Director Report, Kenn Richard, MSW, MSC

This past year has been one of the most significant in recent memory. It has been one of transition, both personally and organizationally, and the changes both within and outside of our Agency will impact us for a considerable period of time.

As to the personal transition I will be leaving my post as Executive Director, one I have held since the founding of this Agency some 30 years ago. My letter on this is elsewhere in this report so I will not repeat its content here. Suffice to say that this moment offers me a chance to reflect on how lucky I have been, blessed really, to have been able to contribute to this great place and to assume, with some humility I hope, that I have been instrumental in many of our successes. When I saw the cover of this report I was amazed to see the incredible scope of our achievements over the past three decades. I do need to acknowledge however that the Agency was built by many, and that its strength lies as much in the collective and not on the shoulders of anyone in particular. I am pleased to hand the reins to Jeffrey Schiffer and to commit to helping him any way I am able in his efforts to further our mission.

Review of the content of this report will reveal an Agency that has matured and become one of the most encompassing and impactful within our service sector. Our services, and the model underlying them, are not only consistent with best practices they are born of an Indigenous approach that is leading the way in service innovation not only in child welfare but health, education and many others. While it is still a work in progress it is clear that Indigenous ways of knowing and doing are influencing service systems and assisting

their transformation from colonial oppression to partner alliance. All good news.

Have a look at the information provided in the banners, the pictures and the success stories. These are a simple snapshot of the work of the Agency and hardly do justice to the diversity of program areas and service options available.

Going forward into this fiscal year will be a tremendous challenge for the Agency. While we are healthy and vibrant the arrival of a new Provincial government will necessitate new relationships and will perhaps challenge us in ways not yet made clear. New developments in

early years and in family support are already underway and we are very excited to be able to develop a treatment and healing centre, the first providing such care to mothers and their children, scheduled to be opened in the Fall.

In addition, for the first time, we are working with Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada on long standing and unresolved issues related to urban services and the prevention side of child welfare. There is tremendous potential here and it will be up to us to seize opportunity and to ensure urban families get the attention that they deserve.

As for myself I am very enthused about what we will be able to achieve in our development of the Indigenous Spirit Foundation. I am pretty confident that we will be able to make real inroads within the private world of Philanthropy. It is a next logical step for the Agency and I am grateful for the confidence in my ability to move it along.

So now dear friends, no drum roll, no applause please. You cannot miss someone who never goes away. Until next time I remain,

Respectfully

Kenn



Native Child and Family Services of Toronto



April 16, 2018

Hello All:

It is no small thing for me to announce my plans to step aside as Executive Director of Native Child and Family Services of Toronto (NCFST), on June 30, 2018. As Founder and ED for over 30 years I approach this with intense emotion, covering everything from panic to jubilation. I am in the hands of forces that will carry me somewhere else and for that I am ready.

However, in the true spirit of never letting go, I will continue my association with NCFST for some time yet. Nothing can replace the satisfaction I get in doing this work. It's a gift not always easy to see, and if I could figure out who to thank for the chance afforded, I would.

So I will thank you all. That extends to all involved, including those who have stood in the way. If it was easy I would have moved on long ago. I must single out three men, Gus Ashawasega, Wilson Ashkewe and Herb Nabigon. Residential school survivors all, they created the circumstance and the inspiration needed to get me to this place. Miigwetch.

An announcement on my replacement is imminent. We will work together briefly, after which I will do special projects on a part time basis. I am keen to continue my work on the Indigenous Spirit project, one seeking to define and practice reconciliation within the philanthropic community. Stay tuned for that one. I will also continue teaching, riding my Harley, and in truth want to be surprised by something as this world has become a little predicable of late.

I hope this new life can resemble some of the old, except with much less intensity. I have become a champion wood stacker and river watcher at my place on the Crowe River, near Marmora. I want to further hone those skills.

I will let you know how it goes. Best wishes to those who do this clean work, I remain,

Yours truly,

Kenn Richard, MSW, MSC
Executive Director



HIGHLIGHTS

Board

- Successfully implemented a transition plan with the hiring of Jeffrey Schiffer to take formal effect on June 30, 2018.
- Found common ground and understanding with our Ministry through collaboration and shared decision making in an external review of our collective contributions to chronic funding shortfalls.
- Found new opportunities for growth to offset consequences of fiscal pressures through Child Welfare and as a result ended our year fiscally balanced.
- Completed a five year Strategic Plan and initiated a process to create one going forward.

Executive

- Successfully engaged the federal government in the provision of prevention services funding through their compliance on the ruling of the Federal Human Rights Tribunal on Jordan's Principle.
- Presented on urban Indigenous issues at the Conference Board of Canada and at Minister Philpott's Emergency meeting on Child Welfare.
- Received the Jane Jacobs Lifetime Achievement Award and the Meritorious Service Cross.
- Completed second phase of the community Reconciliation through the formal adoption of a Client Bill of Rights.
- Development of the Indigenous Spirit Fund/ Foundation initiated.
- Actively supported class action on the part of Sixties Scoop survivors.

Child Welfare

- Expanded use of our Original Dispute Resolution (ODR) process resulted in a 67% increase in its utilization by families involved with Child Protection
- Exceeded provincial averages in 17 of 19 indicators regarding improvements to our services as delineated through the Quality Improvement Plan as dictated through the Auditor General Report of 2016.
- Our Zhishay (Uncle) Program effectively created the chance to close 9 of 14 Child Welfare involved cases resulting in 7 children being reunified with their families.
- 93% of children served through Child Welfare remained with their immediate/extended family.

Native Youth Resource Centre / Transition Homes

- Graduated 8 women through our Office Administrative Assistant certificate program provided in partnership with Centennial College and the United Way of Greater Toronto.
- 8,964 youth visits to the NYRC
- Board of Governors Award of Excellence presented to Darren Wilson, Supervisor, in recognition of outstanding achievement in the category of Community Partnerships.
- The two Women's Transitional Homes supported 34 women and 21 children while the two Men's Homes supported 38 men.



Scarborough Child and Family Life Centre

- Over 100 youth and adults have participated and completed our Aboriginal Education and Training Programs with 15 full time and 12 part time participants securing employment and 74 being certified in various areas including food handling, first aid, driver's education and financial literacy.
- 135 community members participated in our Second Harvest program.
- Family Resource Program (Growing Together) served 139 parents with children 0-6.
- Family Culture night had 207 participants throughout the year.



Clinical

- The Mooka'am Clinic launched a successful March Break Healing Camp for families with exceptional feedback.
- Our Women's Healing Circles were expanded into the Scarborough Community.
- Traditional Individual Counselling continues to be a catalyst for cultural engagement, awareness and healing modalities.
- Our team is leading the community in our Human Trafficking Program, providing training and intervention.

*Gitche
mina yaag
bimaajijig*

(The People are healing)

Early Years

- Increase of 40% of father's participating in programs – (Circles of Fatherhood and Community Kitchen).
- Ninoshe (Auntie) increased number of in-home visits by 30%.
- CAP-C Programming reached 184 families.
- CPNP/Pre-Post Natal worker serviced 83 expectant/post-natal mothers.

MY CITY, MY SIX

Ngwis, miinwaaa, duzgin, niijkwenziin, miinwaa, ngodoo.
Son and partner, friends and family.
Alana, Southeast Scarborough

Niin naadzid gzhizwi mzhishig mno kwendam.
Live the life of an optimist.
Nicole, Southeast Scarborough

Naadzid, baapi, zaagidwin, miinwan zhoomiignwenid, gaas.
Live laugh, love and smile forever.
Tony, Southeast Scarborough

Niin ada Pegahmagabow. Niin ada Mszwendang.
I am Pegahmagabow. I am bold.
Bradley, Southeast Scarborough

Wiingushk Kwe, mshkawaag, zhiiyaa, shkinii-ngashi
Sweetgrass woman, strong, proud, young mother
Caitlin, Southeast Scarborough

Migizehns Kwe bmoose megwe "The Six".
Little Eagle women walkin' "The Six".
Mariah, Southeast Scarborough

Zhaazhi, winishing, megwaa, miidash, mkang, nongo.
What was lost is now found.
Tony, Southeast Scarborough

Niin mdaagwendang zhibiihang minzi manjgopii
I like to doodle everywhere sometimes.
Chad Southeast Scarborough

Nda, maanaadendam, shkaadizi, gzhizhwizid, mskwaande, mnwaa-ngwendang.
Sad mad resilient red joyful.
Justin, Southeast Scarborough

N'da zazgidwin, nbwaakaawin, mnaadendmowin, aakdewin, gwayakwaadiziwin.
I'm love, wisdom, respect, bravery, honesty.
Aaron, Southeast Scarborough

Throughout spring and summer 2017, Torontonians were invited to share something essential about themselves in just six words. Over 4,000 stories were contributed to the project. Some are funny and others poignant, some inspiring and others intriguing. Together they provide a snapshot of Toronto at this moment in history.

As part of our Native Learning Centre's language program students translated their six (6) word story into Ojibwe.

The City of Toronto selected 150 stories. All ten of our student's stories were selected!

You can find them all over the GTA in public spaces across the city; including billboards, transit shelters, subway posters and the TORONTO sign at Nathan Phillips Square.

Migizehns Kwe
bmoose megwe
"The Six".

Little Eagle woman walkin' "The Six"
Mariah H., Scarborough



On September 25, 2017 NCFST held its first **“Honouring our Elder’s Dinner”**.

The evening was a huge success with over 50 participants and we hope to make this an annual event. This was part of our approach that recognizes the importance of our Elders and their contributions.



Alexandria Town, a youth who had involvement with our Scarborough Child and Family Life Centre, was a life guard for Camp Grundy and summer camp administrator at NCFST, is on the Canadian Women’s Wrestling Team, won bronze in Lima Peru and will be representing Canada at the World Championships in Budapest in 2019.

Alexandria continues to support some of our young girls as a mentor by talking to them about her journey as a young girl with anxiety. She will be visiting some of our summer camps this summer to talk to the campers about her journey as an athlete.

Congratulations!





Family Literacy Day is a national awareness initiative originally created by ABC Life Literacy Canada to raise awareness on the importance of reading and engaging in other literacy related activities as a family. On January 25, 2018, Family Literacy Day was held at the Scarborough Child and Family Life Centre in collaboration with ABC Life Literacy Canada. Award winning Canadian author Barbara Reid, Chair of Family Literacy Day, attended the event, bringing posters and books for the families that were in attendance. Children participated in a modelling clay activity with their families. Approximately 65 parents, children, youth volunteers and staff participated in the event.



Sports and Recreation:

Youth in Scarborough have had access to some great facilities and recreational opportunities throughout the year. Our youth have also benefitted from experienced coaches and volunteers who have helped support NCFST's desire to actively engage youth and promote physical literacy. This photo was taken at our March Break Lacrosse Camp lead by Kevin Sandy from the Iroquois Lacrosse Program. Kevin shared Haudenosaunee Oral Teachings and used a variation of traditional sticks (Iroquois, Anishinabek, and Choctaw) to explain why we play lacrosse and our spiritual connection to the game. The youth competed hard and learned about the beautiful game of lacrosse. We are looking forward to expanding our sports and recreational programming in the coming year!





Aboriginal Women's Empowerment and Employment Through Education Program

The credit for the photography goes to Pratheep Charlesjanthan.

Thanks go to the United Way of Greater Toronto for the funding and Centennial College for providing the counsellors and curriculum for this program. This is the second graduating class from the the Aboriginal Women's Empowerment and Employment through Education Program and with continued funding from the United Way of Greater Toronto we can continue to hold this course into 2021.





Parent of Alumni, 2018

“Having women together in this program gives them a voice which strengthens the Indigenous community. The program gave my daughter the strength to come out of her shell and be part of something powerful. It was amazing to witness her finish her education which she always struggled to do; I am so proud of her. The whole program is incredible. I almost cried a couple of times thinking about what the Education Coordinator was doing for these girls. I am amazed by what she has done for her. My daughter has made friends, built up her confidence and is empowered.”

Alumni, 2018

“The systemic and intergenerational factors which affect all participants of this group both individually and culturally, can create a gap between what is expected in various post-secondary institutions and whereas Indigenous women, we may find is our best environment for learning. This program bridges the gap and allows us to uplift ourselves, our families and communities while being connected to the healing of our culture.”

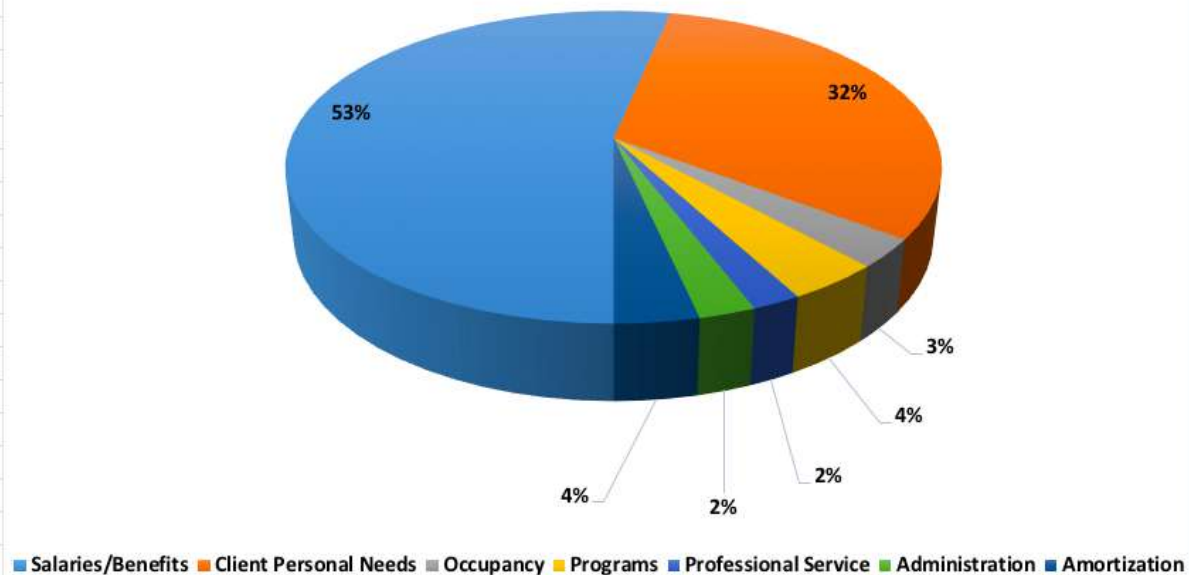
Alumni, 2017

“I believe that when an Aboriginal woman decides to go on a good path, it makes the community stronger.”

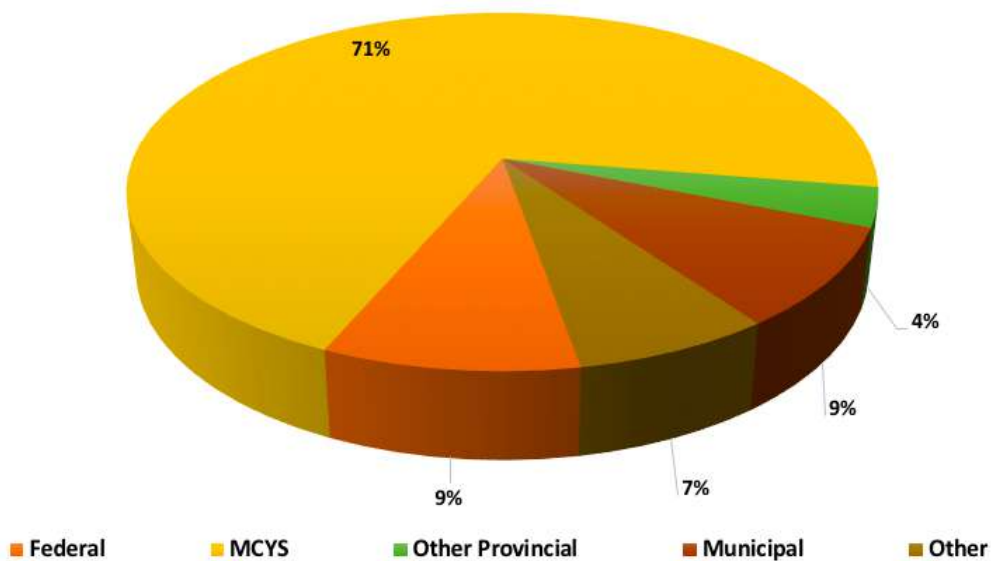


Financials & At a Glance...

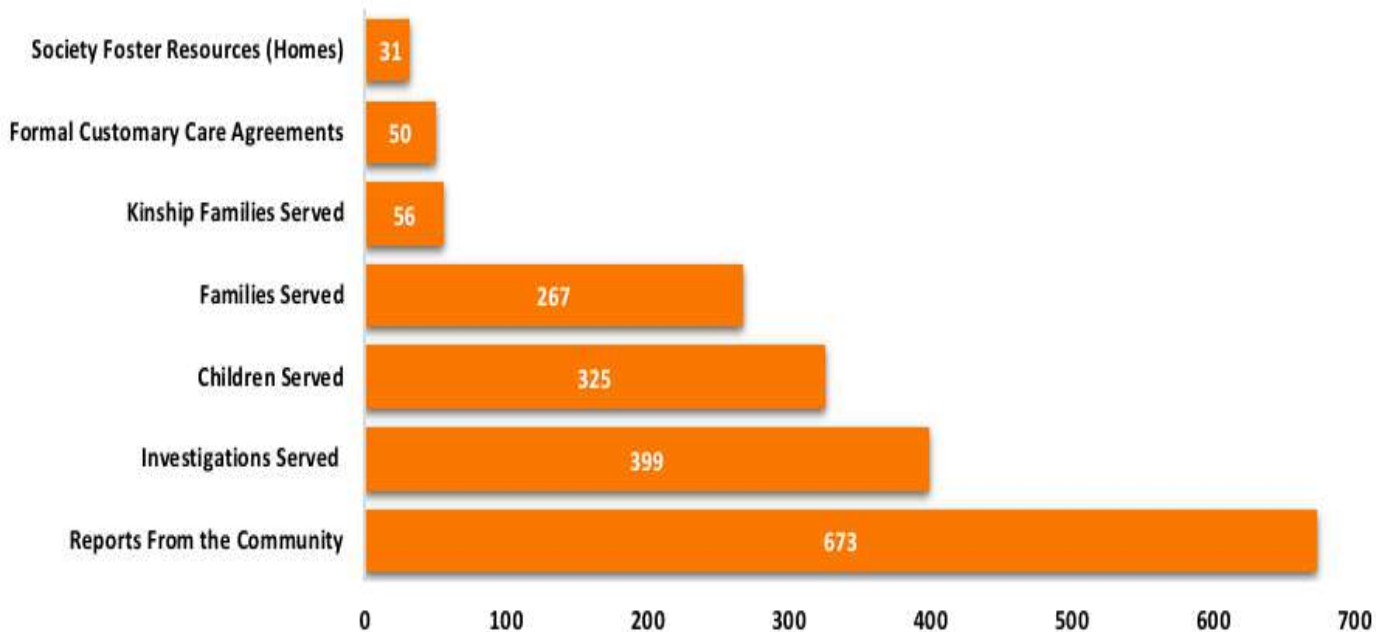
Cost of Services



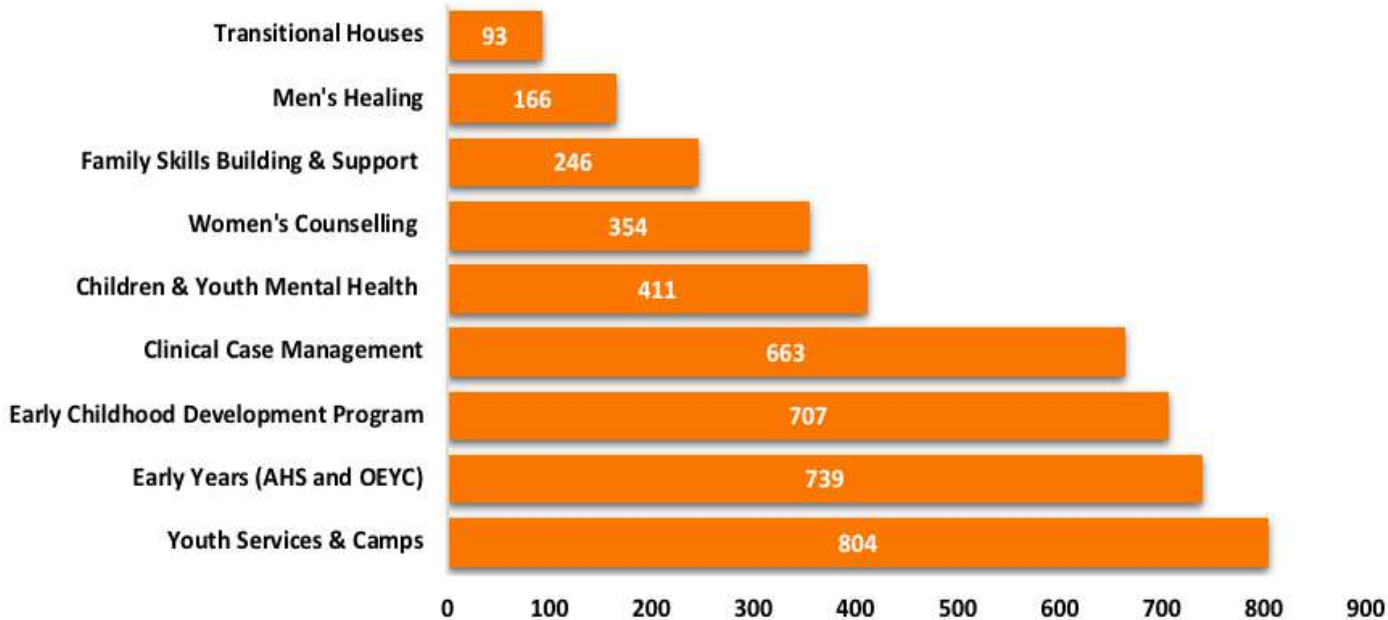
Gross Revenue by Source



Child Welfare # of Service Participants



Prevention & Support Services # of Service Participants





Message from Incoming Executive Director, Jeffrey Schiffer, PhD

It was a cool morning in early December when my first son came into this world. My wife was experiencing a complex pregnancy, and a challenging labour that eventually resulted in a caesarian birth. Just minutes after the delivery I found myself sitting alone with my son, in a quiet hospital hallway, at sunrise in unceded Coast Salish territory. His eyes were enormous and almost completely black. As we looked at each other for the first time I could feel the ancestors within him. And before he had done a single thing in this world I was overwhelmed by how proud I was of him, simply for being the sacred bundle that he was. It was a moment that transformed me and

my connection to all my relations in ways I am still growing to understand. There is no greater blessing in this world than being gifted with the opportunity to work in the service of children, their families and their communities. And so, it is with great humility and gratitude that I have accepted the honour, responsibility and accountability of the role of Executive Director with Native Child and Family Services of Toronto.

This Agency has been developed and nurtured by the direction and leadership of Kenn Richard, one of Canada's greatest advocates for Aboriginal children. Over the past 30 years it has grown into a testament to what is possible when culturally grounded leaders work with community to create a better quality of life for Aboriginal children and youth. Because of the work of those who have come before, NCFST stands as one of the most comprehensive and holistic multi-service agencies of its kind. The path ahead will challenge us to honour and leverage the strength and wisdom of that legacy, within the contemporary complexities facing Aboriginal peoples today. I am joined by many in both relief and appreciation that Kenn is not going far. His ongoing mentorship to me personally, and contributions to the Agency more generally, will play a critical role in the ongoing success and sustainability of NCFST.

In the coming fiscal year I look forward to balancing the stability of NCFST's legacy alongside the transformation and innovation that comes with new leadership. Our path ahead will be complicated by changes in government – affording a greater opportunity to forge new relationships and collaborations - alongside timely reflections on the Agency's structure and growth. As always, our decision-making and practice will keep children at the centre. Chi Miigwetch!

*With Respect and Gratitude,
Jeffrey*







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