



General Child  
and Family Services  
Authority

# Promising Practice:

## Supporting families & children



Annual Report  
2016/2017



# Overview of the General Authority

With proclamation of *The Child and Family Services Authorities Act* in 2003, there was a significant shift of powers from the Director of Child Welfare to each of the four new Child and Family Services authorities (the General Authority, Metis Authority, Northern Authority and Southern First Nations Network of Care). Most powers directly related to the operation of child and family services agencies were transferred from the Director to the four authorities. The authorities are responsible for mandating, funding and overseeing the services provided by child and family services agencies throughout the Province of Manitoba. Within the General Authority, these services are provided by the following agencies:

## **Jewish Child and Family Service**



## **Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba**



## **Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba**



**Winnipeg Child and Family Services Branch and four Rural and Northern service regions (Interlake Region, Eastman Region, Parkland Region, and Northern Region).** These departmental agencies are mandated by the General Child and Family Services Authority.



## **General Authority Staff for 2016/2017**

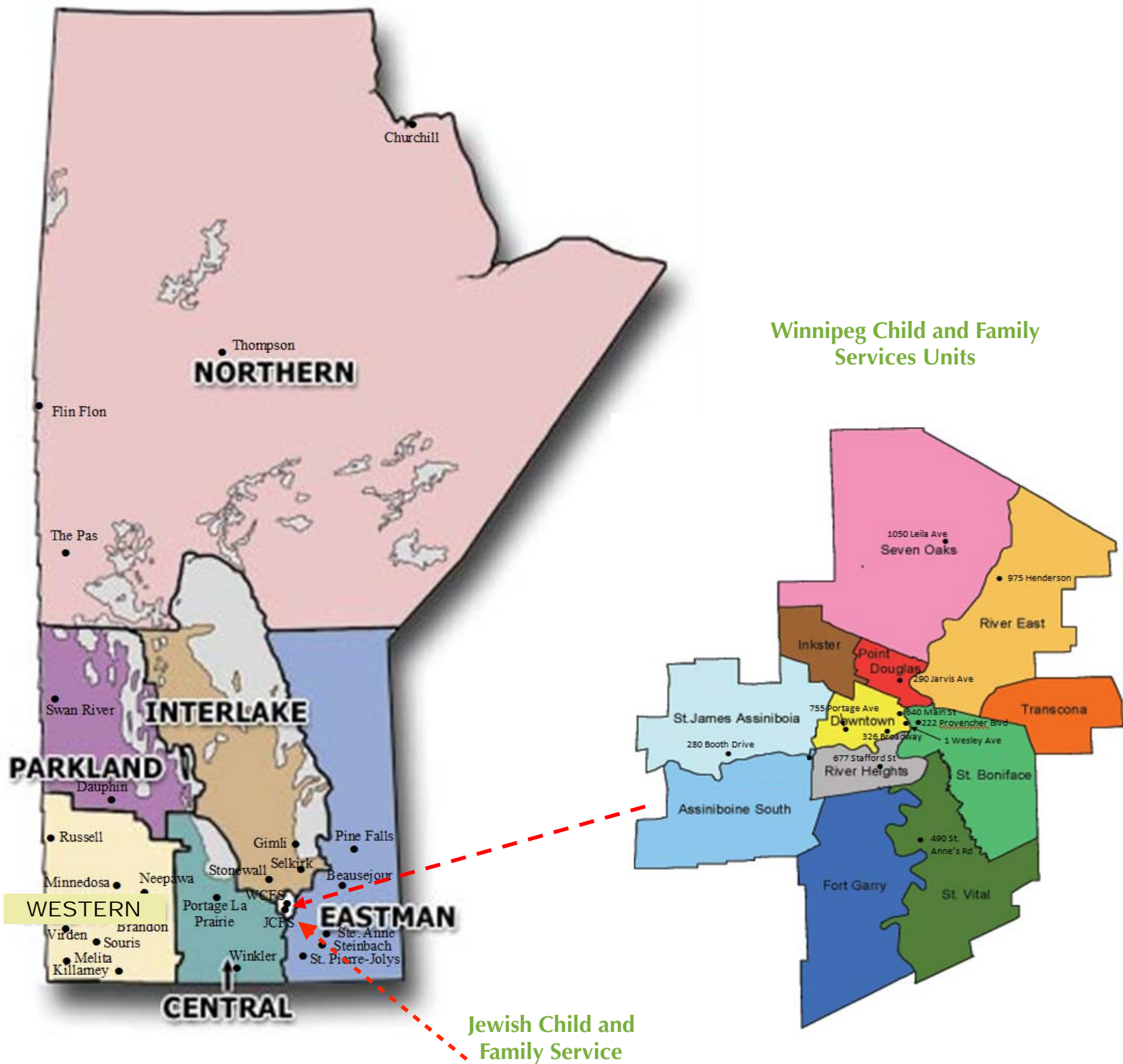
Kathleen Baxter  
Debbie Besant  
Del Bruneau  
Patti Cox  
Allison Dunfield  
Thomas Ens  
Jennifer Fallis  
Lynda Fulton  
Jeanette Grennier  
Laurie Gulowaty

Andrew Lajeunesse  
Laura Morton  
Bev Pion  
Janice Rees  
Brian Ridd  
Lisa Schmidt  
Careen Simoes  
Patti Wawyn  
Laura Wilson  
\*Erica Wood

\* Left the employment of the  
General Authority during  
2016/2017



# General Authority Agencies and Service Regions



# General Authority Board of Directors



(Left to Right): Mark Fleming, Laura Crookshanks, Catherine Biaya, Leah Deane, Laura Cogollo, David Sierhuis. Missing: Karen Kost

## **General Authority Board of Directors for 2016/2017**

Laura Crookshanks (Board Chair)

Mark Fleming (Vice-Chair)

David Sierhuis (Treasurer)

Leah Deane (Secretary)

Catherine Biaya

Laura Cogollo

Karen Kost

# Message from the CEO and Board

Hello and welcome. This is the 14<sup>th</sup> annual report from the General Authority. We continue our tradition with a joint report from the Board Chairperson and the Chief Executive Officer.

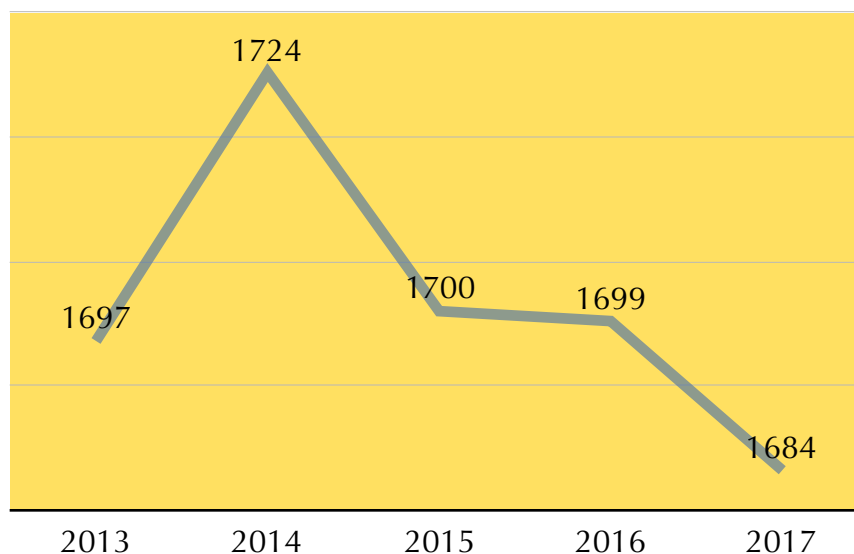
The General Authority's role and responsibility is to mandate, fund and oversee the services provided by our agencies and regions throughout the province. The board plays an integral role in the governance of our Authority and relationship with the boards of our private agencies. We acknowledge and thank our Authority staff, along with the leadership of the agencies and regions and their outstanding staff. Without them, this work of supporting families and children would not be possible. Our success is their success.



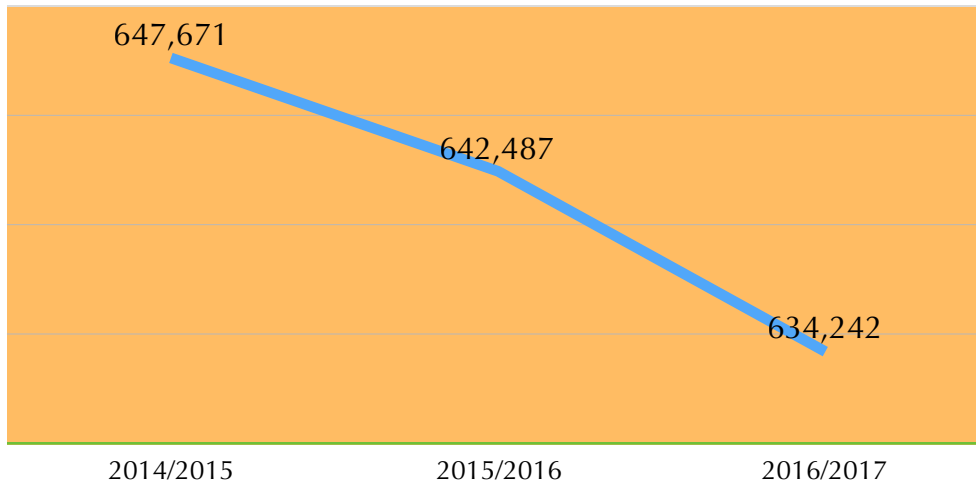
**General Authority CEO Debbie Besant and Board Chair Laura Crookshanks.**

For the year 2016/2017, we have continued to focus on the implementation and refinement of the Practice Model. It is our umbrella for families, workers, agencies and our Authority. Beneath our umbrella, we have many support interventions that have resulted in a continued decline in our numbers of children in care and our overall total days care by year.

## **Number of Children in Care at March 31, 2017 for the General Authority**



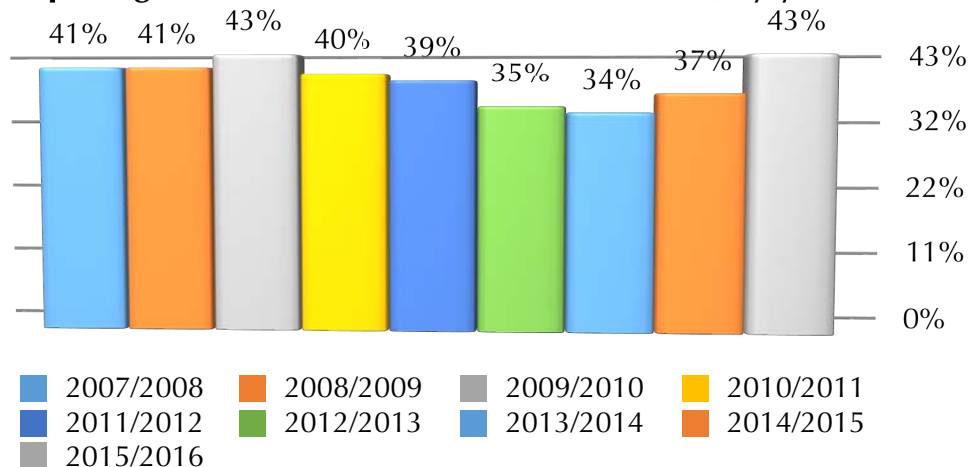
### Days care by year



In 2017, the duration of days care decreased by 8,245 days.

Across the Authority, we continue to use Structured Decision Making (SDM®) to support family engaged practice, inform decision-making and provide transparency to families. We have implemented Safe and Together™, a domestic violence intervention strategy, to build on strengths of the primary caregiver and work to hold the offender accountable. The program also seeks to educate offenders about the impact of their actions on their family and their parenting. Pilot programs such as Caring Dads provide a group treatment forum to explore parenting choices. We look forward to implementation of the Caring Dads program across all our agencies in the future. Our use of safety networks with families has also facilitated children remaining safe in their own homes or able to return home sooner. We continue to look to permanency as a goal for those children who do need to be in care; and for those who do, it is hopefully for as short a duration as possible.

### Of children coming into care, the per cent of Child in Care openings that are reunified within 12 months, by year

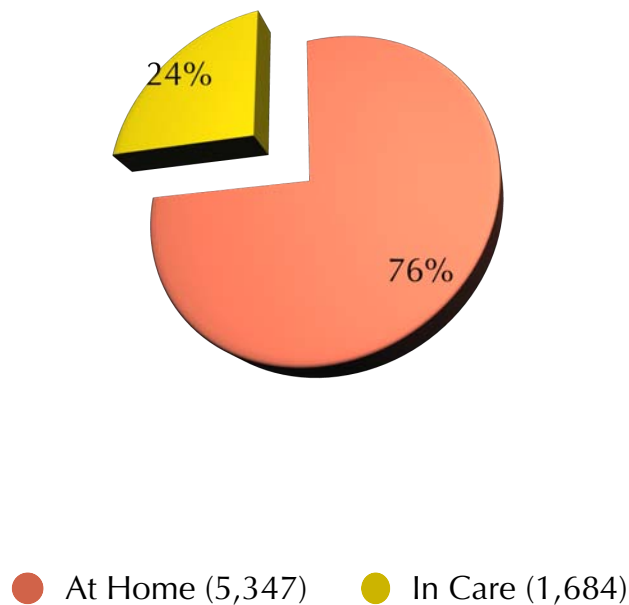




As part of our focus on children in care, we look to connection with extended and family of origin where possible through Bringing Families Together™, a family finding focus for placement, and programs such as Wendy's Wonderful Kids and 3-5-7™ to assist with grief and loss work. With all of this, we would be remiss in not acknowledging the dedication, caring and commitment of our foster families and our group care resources. We cannot underestimate the importance of our children in care having families and relationships that are permanent.

We trust you will find the information contained in this report helpful in understanding the promising practice in which we are so engaged—providing guidance to all with the goal of supporting families and children, so that we can continue the trend of caring for more children in their own homes.

**Of all children receiving services, the per cent being supported at home (with their parents) at March 2017**



In addition, our work on continuous quality improvement and our collaborative work with our three partner authorities (Northern, Metis and Southern First Nations Network of Care) and the Department of Families, can only continue to strengthen child welfare practice. We thank them for their continued guidance.

We would also like to sincerely thank the Department of Families for their ongoing funding and assistance. And, we would also like to express our gratitude to the Dave Thomas Foundation for continued funding of a Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter within the General Authority as well as



the Royal Bank, Scotia Bank, and the Children's Aid Foundation—all of whom support specific initiatives.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Besant, CEO of the General Authority  
and Laura Crookshanks, Board Chair

***“Reunification begins at apprehension.” ~ Phil Decter, interim  
director of child welfare, National Council on Crime and  
Delinquency***



# Directors' Leadership Table

In 2009, in the collective interest of the General Authority service network, agency and regional directors, with support from management of the General Authority, moved to take on a collaborative leadership role with emphasis on engagement and empowerment.

Termed the **Directors' Leadership Table**, this active leadership group continues to flourish. And, collectively with the General Authority, the Directors' Leadership Table determines, implements and monitors the strategic direction for the Authority's service system in a manner that promotes collaborative decision-making and enhances consistency in service delivery. The Directors' Leadership Table also promotes best practice approaches and operates as a collective voice to address service delivery gaps and issues and influence change across and beyond the child welfare system.

A core set of Directors' Leadership Table values reflect the collective identity, culture and service philosophy endorsed by the General Authority:

<i><b>Believes in promoting hope, optimism and capacity building through a strengths focus that cultivates, appreciates and enhances the talents, skills, assets and success of the individuals and groups that are part of the General Authority service system.</b></i>	<i><b>Believes in inclusiveness where diverse and unique opinions are welcomed:</b> Where staff, youth, families and stakeholders are empowered to have a "voice", invited to participate in the planning process and given the opportunity to influence decisions.</i>	<i><b>Believes in transparency where plans and decisions are communicated in a timely manner and in that communication, the rationale, expected results and connection to best practice principles are clearly evident.</b></i>	<i><b>Believes that plans and decisions should clearly reflect the best and most current available evidence derived from research, proven practice and other sources known to result in positive outcomes for children, youth and families.</b></i>	<i><b>Believes that outcomes for children, youth and families are more likely to be positive when staff feel engaged, valued, respected and supported in their work environment.</b></i>
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In 2016, the Directors' Leadership Table, along with executives from the General Authority, engaged in a strategic planning process which resulted in the completion of a Directors' Leadership Table strategic plan. The strategic plan outlines priorities, goals and desired outcomes for each agency and service region, as well as the collective, and the related actions/support required from the General Authority. With a primary focus on practice and the ongoing commitment to family centred engagement and collaboration, key priorities also include the use of family networks, working with victims and perpetrators of domestic violence, assessing the impact of the use of the Practice Model and continued work with collaterals regarding our practice innovations. In addition to the completion of the annual Strategic Service (Business) Plans, this updated strategic plan provides a solid framework for the work of the Directors' Leadership Table and the General Authority for the next three years.

We wish to acknowledge and thank the Directors' Leadership Table for their outstanding and continued commitment to service excellence, reliance on leading practice approaches to work with children and families and for their ongoing and integral collaboration with the General Authority.

# Finance Report

I am pleased to present the report from the Finance Committee for the 2016/2017 fiscal year. The General Authority is a financially stable organization prepared to meet current requirements and future challenges. Our auditors, Magnus Chartered Accountants LLP, have provided an opinion that the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Authority as at March 31, 2017 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the Canadian public sector accounting standards for government not-for-profit organizations.

The General Authority has established three funds to manage its financial operations: the operating fund, the agency fund and the special projects fund.

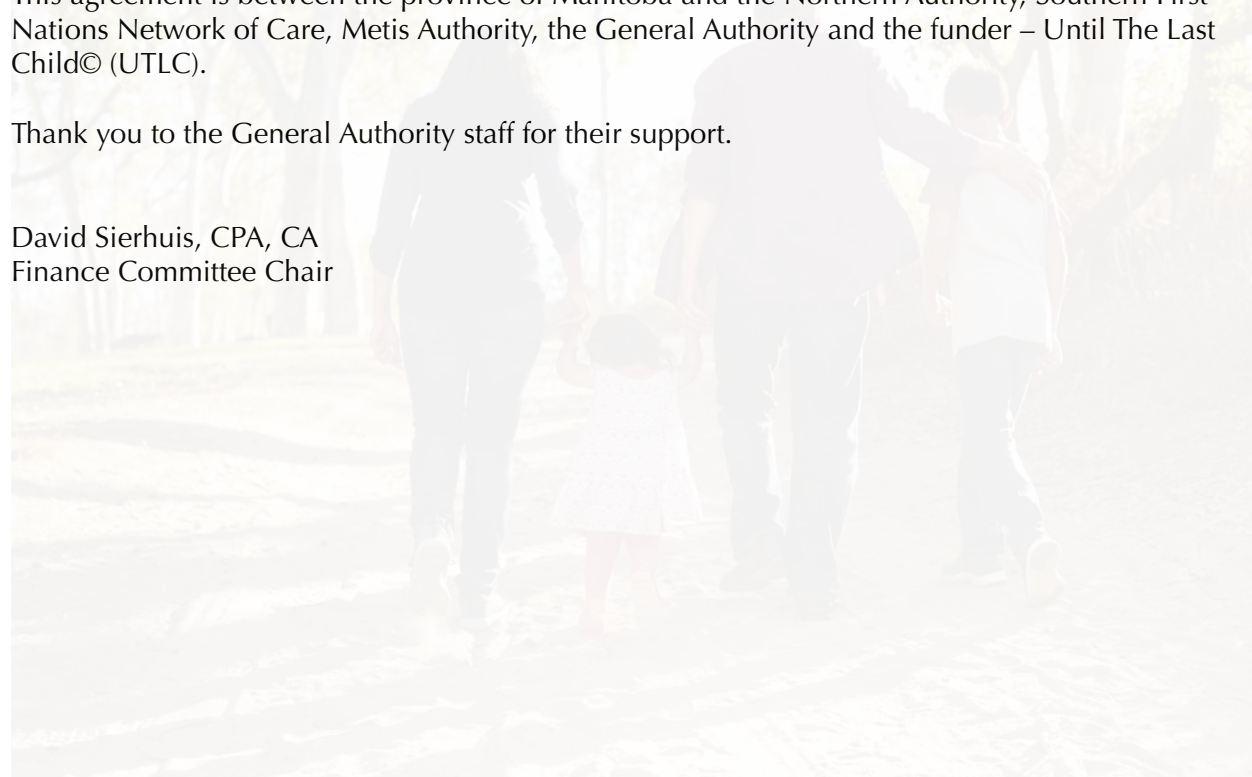
The operating fund is used to support the staffing and operating requirements of the authority, as well as initiatives and projects deemed appropriate for authority support.

The agency fund provides funding to child and family services agencies under the jurisdiction of the General Authority to support the delivery of service including agency staffing, operating requirements and the delivery of support services.

The special projects fund was established by the Authority during the year to be used for special projects as approved by the Board of Directors. This fund is used to record the assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses relating to special projects in order to ensure these amounts are segregated from the primary operations of the authority and its agencies. Currently, the special projects fund is used to record amounts relating to the Bringing Families Together Pilot Project Funding Agreement. This agreement is between the province of Manitoba and the Northern Authority, Southern First Nations Network of Care, Metis Authority, the General Authority and the funder – Until The Last Child© (UTLC).

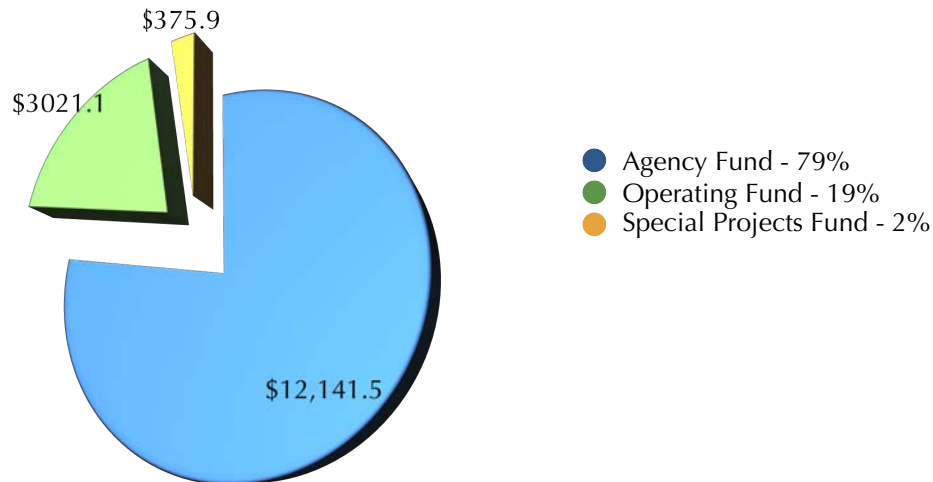
Thank you to the General Authority staff for their support.

David Sierhuis, CPA, CA  
Finance Committee Chair



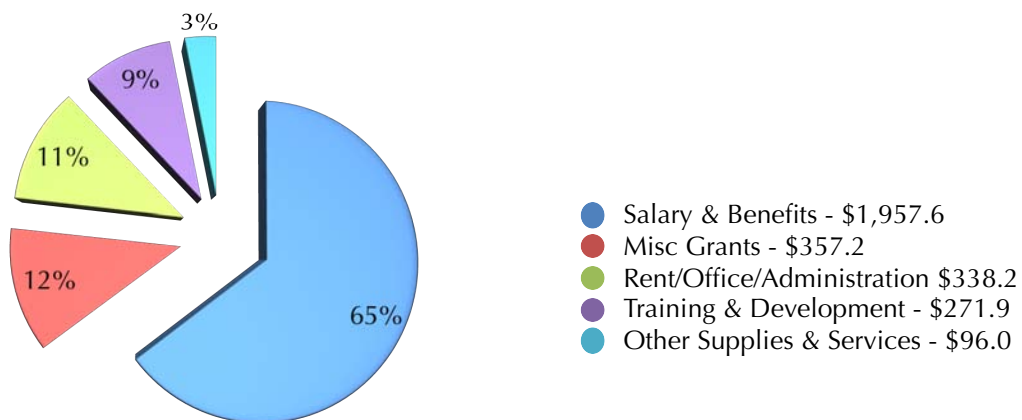
**For the year ended March 31, 2017 - Expenditures by Fund (amount expressed in \$000)**

**Fund expenditures: \$15,538.5**



**For the year ended March 31, 2017, a summary of expenses within the Operating Fund are as follows**

**Summary of expenses: \$3,021.0**





# Practice Model - Evolving Practice

The agencies and service regions of the General Authority have been evolving and deepening practice since components of the Practice Model were introduced in 2008. Combining Structured Decision Making assessment tools with a solution-focused approach to engage and plan with families assists workers and supervisors in focusing on creating sustainable safety for children. Practice elements include:

- Developing good working relationships with families, networks and collaterals
- Thinking critically and applying research-based, decision-support tools
- Co-creating Danger Statements, Goal Statements and behaviourally based plans that address safety of children
- Targeting resources to families who need it the most
- Engaging in a transparent way with families and networks
- Including the voice of the child
- Using common definitions for what is working well and what the worries are

Training of all modules that directly relate to practice has been completed across General Authority agencies and service regions. On an ongoing basis, training will be provided as new staff are hired. “Refresher” training/coaching and mentoring will also be provided periodically to help staff continue to build skills. Many regions and service areas across the General Authority now regularly incorporate elements such as Case Consultations and Family Network Meetings to guide decision-making and case management practices.

In October 2016, the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) hosted an International Conference on Children, Youth and Families in Orange County, Calif. The conference theme was *“Creating Solutions.”* Three Leading Practice Specialists, as part of a delegation from the General Authority, participated in a panel that also included a representative from Child and Family Services of the Northwest Territories. The presentation addressed the theme of *“Creating Solutions”* by focusing on the lessons learned during the General Authority’s journey of implementation of the current model of practice, in the context of child welfare in Canada.

The Directors’ Leadership Table (**see page 10**) recognizes the importance of partnering in a different way with families impacted by domestic violence. This year, a main focus of training was on Safe and Together, a framework for working with families affected by domestic violence. Safe and Together focuses on domestic violence as a destructive parenting choice made by the perpetrator. The framework emphasizes the importance of exploring the survivor’s protective abilities in order to partner more effectively to create safety for the children in those situations. A core group of supervisors and workers throughout General Authority agencies and service regions and partners from the All Nations Coordinated Response Network (ANCR), Dakota Ojibway CFS and women’s shelters have been trained as coaches and mentors and will be available to consult with staff working with families affected by domestic violence. The Safe and Together approach lines up closely with, and enhances, our practice in cases where domestic violence is a concern.

## **Support and Mentorship**

The General Authority continues to partner with the Children's Research Center (CRC) to provide training and support to its agencies and service regions in order to deepen and evolve practice. Involvement with the CRC also provides General Authority agencies and service regions the opportunity to keep current with recent developments in child welfare research and best practices internationally.

Last year, the Directors' Leadership Table identified the goal of facilitation skills training for employees. CRC staff came to Manitoba on three occasions to enhance skills in this area. Initially, a large session for supervisors and workers was held, followed by subsequent smaller sessions, individualized for each agency or service region. The sessions occurred as follows:

- June 2016: Heather Meitner, senior program specialist with NCCD, conducted two, two-day training sessions with supervisors and program managers across General Authority agencies and service regions, deepening knowledge and confidence in facilitating case consultations.
- September 2016: Phil Decter, interim director of child welfare with NCCD, spent two days with CFS of Western Manitoba, and two days with Rural and Northern Services. Each session was tailored by the respective agency and service region to address the specific training needs they identified.
- February 2017: Meitner spent time with CFS of Western Manitoba, CFS of Central Manitoba and Winnipeg CFS. The focus again was on enhancing and building facilitation skills.



The General Authority and its agencies and service regions will continue to collaborate with the CRC to continue to evolve and deepen practice in Manitoba. **It is through our agencies evolving enhanced practice that we continue to see a reduction in days care and overall children in care. The majority of our children are served in the context of their own families versus being children in care.**

*"I feel like I need to do my best. If the family is not settled...I will keep thinking about them and their struggles and how things are going. It is really the least I can do."*

*~ V, a CFS worker*

# Safe and Together

**“A perpetrator pattern, child-centred, survivor-strengths based approach to the intersection of domestic violence and child maltreatment.”**

**~David Mandel, founder of Safe and Together**

## **The Safe and Together Model:**

In May 2015, CFS of Western Manitoba and the General Authority partnered to bring this model of intervention for domestic violence to Manitoba. As a result of this initial trial, and the reporting of anecdotal success in keeping families safer together—with children requiring less days in care in CFS of Western Manitoba and Rural and Northern Regions—the Directors’ Leadership Table sought to make this a priority for embedding in the Practice Model in 2016/2017.

The General Authority formalized its relationship with Safe and Together to support our agencies in developing certified mentors/coaches in this treatment intervention model. In addition, key to this was the partnering with ANCR, the Family Violence Prevention Program and the Southern First Nations Network of Care. The General Authority’s goal in developing this partnering across child welfare is to begin to develop a more consistent, comprehensive and system-wide approach to the complex issue of working with families who have been affected by domestic violence. A steering committee comprised of members from the Manitoba Association of Women’s Shelters, Family





Violence Prevention Programs, Justice- Victims Services, ANCR, and the General Authority was instituted to further support this initiative.

"Developed originally for child welfare systems, it has policy and practice implications for a variety of professionals and systems including domestic violence advocates, family service providers, courts, evaluators, domestic violence community collaboratives and others.

The behavioural focus of the model highlights the 'how' of the work, offering practical and concrete changes in practice. The model has a growing body of evidence associated with it, including recent correlations with a reduction in out-of-home placements in child welfare domestic violence cases."

- © 2016 David Mandel & Associates LLC  
[www.endingviolence.com](http://www.endingviolence.com)

From October 2016 to March 2017, trainers from Safe and Together provided 10 days of skill-based training leading to certification of 40 mentors from within all General Authority agencies, Dakota Ojibway CFS, ANCR and women's shelters. In addition, key to embedding the model was an orientation overview for internal and collateral resources totalling approximately 140 people. Those attending included Department of Families staff (Family Conciliation, Child and Family, Family Violence Prevention), Department of Justice staff, staff representing all four authorities, university staff, women's shelters and school divisions.

The agencies and service regions of the General Authority and our partners look forward to the continued implementation of Safe and Together in working with families to keep children safe. The CFS-based mentors are now working with agency staff to use the Safe and Together model with families where domestic violence is present. An additional goal is to further develop and explore treatment options for perpetrators of domestic violence. As a result of Safe and Together, the General Authority and its partners, at the initiative of CFS of Western Manitoba, will continue further implementation of the Caring Dads program.



## Caring Dads

Caring Dads is an intervention program for fathers (including biological, step, common-law) who have physically abused, emotionally abused or neglected their children, or exposed their children to domestic violence or who are deemed to be at high risk for these behaviours.

The program consists of a 17-week, empirically-based, manualized group parenting intervention for fathers, systematic outreach to mothers to ensure safety and freedom from coercion, and ongoing, collaborative case management of fathers with referrers and with other professionals involved with men's families.

The group component of Caring Dads combines elements of parenting, fathering, battering and child protection practice to enhance the safety and well-being of children. Program principles emphasize the need to enhance men's motivation, promote child-centred fathering, address men's ability to engage in respectful, non-abusive co-parenting with children's mothers, recognize that children's experience of trauma will impact the rate of possible change, and work collaboratively with other service providers to ensure that children benefit (and are not unintentionally harmed) as a result of father's participation in intervention.

For more on Caring Dads, please visit [www.caringdads.org](http://www.caringdads.org).



*At Western, dads involved in the inaugural program in winter 2017 “were very successful showing changes in their parenting.”*

*~Co-facilitator*

# Family Finding

In keeping with our goal of **permanency** for all children in care, General Authority agencies and service regions have also committed to broadening our understanding and use of the **Family Finding** model.

Developed by Kevin Campbell, internationally known youth permanency expert and the founder of the Center for Family Finding and Youth Connectedness, Family Finding offers methods and strategies to locate and engage relatives of children currently living in out-of-home care. The goal of Family Finding ([www.familyfinding.org](http://www.familyfinding.org)) is to connect each child with a family, so that every child may benefit from the lifelong connections that only a family provides.

Core beliefs inherent in this approach are:

- 1) Every child has a family, and they can be found if we try.
- 2) Loneliness can be devastating, even dangerous, and is experienced by most children in out-of-home care.
- 3) A meaningful connection to family helps a child develop a sense of belonging.
- 4) The single factor most closely associated with positive outcomes for children is meaningful, lifelong connections to family.

*The National Institute for Permanent Family Connectedness, <http://www.familyfinding.org/>.*

In April 2016, the General Authority sponsored a small group of agency and authority staff to attend a **Family Finding Boot Camp** with Campbell hosted by the Children's Aid Society of Oxford County in Waterloo, Ont. This five-day training event immersed attendees in learning the philosophy, framework and skills of Family Finding practice. Participants worked in small and medium-sized teams, actually practising Family Finding for children and youth who are in out-of-home care or supporting families who are new to child welfare.

Based on the success and interest this event spurred, the General Authority sponsored 45 staff from our agencies and service regions to attend a second Family Finding Boot Camp with Campbell in Winnipeg in September 2016. Those who attended have gone on to impart the philosophy and methods of Family Finding to their child and family services co-workers for use with children in care and children at risk of coming into care. Family Finding is also the base of a cross-authority pilot funded by Until The Last Child.

The methods of Family Finding are compatible with our other practice modalities, using existing engagement, planning and decision-making strategies to build networks around the child. The model offers us yet another way to achieve permanence and a sense of belonging for children and youth and the opportunity to help to reduce the number of children in agency care.

# Bringing Families Together Pilot Project

“Bringing Families Together” is a two-year pilot with the objective of increasing permanency opportunities for children in care. The pilot is intended to explore additional ways that the Manitoba child and family service system can engage with children, families and communities to establish lifelong connections and create a strong sense of belonging for children in care.

“Bringing Families Together” recognizes that all children have a right to be connected to their family, community and culture and that these connections are vital to one’s sense of belonging and identity. Child welfare has too often disrupted these connections and needs to work in partnership with families and communities to maintain and strengthen these connections.

The pilot does this through a dedicated team of workers that use Campbell’s internationally recognized Family Finding practice approach to establish lifelong connections for children in care with their family and community. The pilot went live in September 2016 and will serve approximately 150 children over two years from agencies across the four CFS authorities, with a primary focus on serving sibling groups and other children in Winnipeg’s emergency care system.

This leading practice approach shifts how we work with families. As a part of this practice approach, these dedicated workers use specific skills and strategies to locate and engage family and community connections who are or have been significant in the child and family’s life and that may have been disrupted as a result of the child coming into care, and include them in planning for the child’s future. The goal of this process is to restore the child’s natural family and community support network and ensure these supports are lifelong and are not dependent on long-term child welfare service. Once this support network is in place, the network shares the decision-making responsibility for the child’s safety, permanency and well-being.

The pilot is a formal partnership between Until The Last Child ([www.untilthelastchild.com](http://www.untilthelastchild.com)), the four CFS authorities and the Province of Manitoba (Department of Families). Until The Last Child works alongside child welfare agencies, encouraging and supporting innovation. They provide funding and other necessary resources to enable enhanced, stable outcomes for children in care — outcomes that cannot be achieved with public-sector resources alone. In many cases, child welfare agencies already have the creativity and best practice models they need, but lack the funding to implement.

## **What is Manitoba’s Definition of Permanency?**

Manitoba’s definition of permanency was developed by the four authorities and is inclusive of each authority’s unique perspectives on permanency.

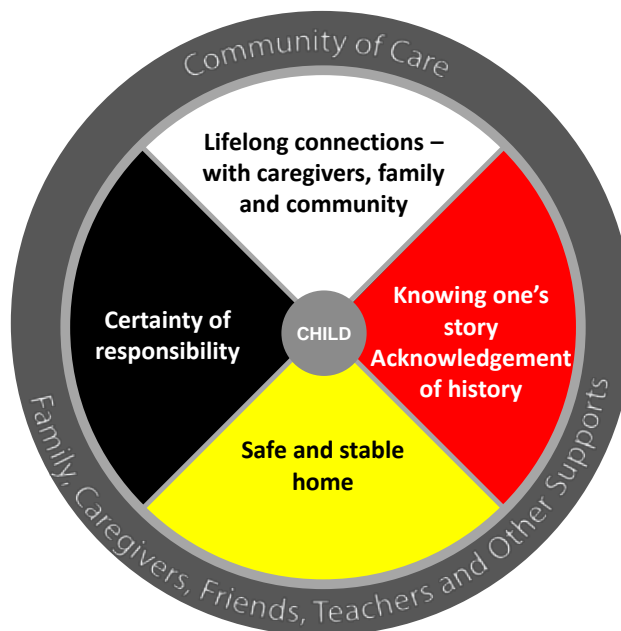
Children require safety and stability from childhood through to adulthood. Fundamental to the required safety and stability is “certainty of responsibility” – caregiver(s) who accept lifelong responsibility and commitment to care for the child and whom the child mutually understands and accepts to be a trusted support. Manitoba’s definition of permanency recognizes that all children have natural certainty and belonging through their family and community of origin and that these connections are vital to maintain.

The four markers of permanency are intended to provide children the connections, supports and understanding they require to find ‘certainty of responsibility’ following child and family services



involvement with the child and their family. Each marker has specific and important intended outcomes:

- **Knowing one's story and history** – This provides the child with a distinguishable sense of belonging, culture and identity.
- **Safe and stable home** – Creates a safe, stable and reliable place for the child to learn life skills, grow and develop.
- **Certainty of responsibility** – Establishes trusted caregiver(s) in the child's life who will provide the supports and resources for the child into and throughout adulthood. Provides the child with the security of an ongoing lifelong connection with supportive caregiver(s).
- **Lifelong connections** – Emphasizes the importance of making every effort to maintain connections with the child's natural network of support and extended family whenever possible. Creates the safety and security required to foster resilience and ensure the child has the connections and supports in place to pursue education, employment and any other aspirations into and throughout adulthood.



Although difficult to measure, each marker of permanency is also rooted in providing the opportunity for the child to love and feel loved. Love is an imperative part of a healthy and safe childhood, and a key aspect of a successful transition to adulthood.

### **What will this mean for Manitoba in the Future?**

The four CFS authorities, The Department of Families and Until The Last Child are very excited about the potential of this partnership. There will be ongoing evaluation throughout the pilot project that will look at implementation of the practice approach and permanency outcomes that include a child's lifelong connections to a support network of family and community and their sense of belonging. The lessons learned from the evaluation will inform the development of a possible strategy to implement this practice approach on a broader scale within the system.

### **The 3-5-7 Model**

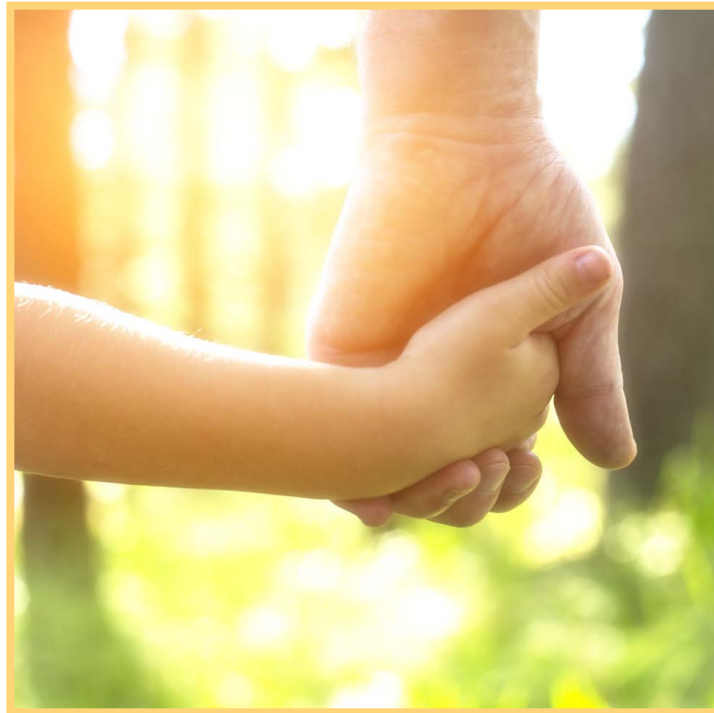
The 3-5-7 Model is another important part of our commitment to children's well-being. Developed by Darla Henry, a child welfare expert based at Temple University in Harrisburg, Pa., 3-5-7 is a strength-based practice model that provides workers with practical skills and tools to work with children and youth on loss and grief.



The model helps children and youth understand:

- **What happened to them (loss)**
- **Who they are (identity)**
- **Where they are going (attachment)**
- **How they will get there (building relationships)**
- **How they will know when they belong (claiming/safety)**

Until children and youth can reconcile the separations and trauma in their lives, they are not able to make a successful transition to permanency (reunification, legal guardianship and adoption).



# Wendy's Wonderful Kids

The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption (DTFA) awards grants to public and private agencies to hire Wendy's Wonderful Kids (WWK) adoption recruiters, who implement proactive, child-focused recruitment programs geared exclusively toward preparing and placing North America's longest-waiting children in care (permanent wards) with adoptive families. Wendy's Wonderful Kids has 260 recruiters working for children throughout the U.S. and Canada. The program has helped more than 5,400 children be adopted.

Caseloads are kept small to ensure that recruiters have the time and resources to help children work through their loss and grief in preparing them for adoption. Work also occurs with birth parents, helping them grieve their losses and to give their children permission to move into permanency.

Recruiters are trained in the Child Focused Recruitment Model, using practices and proven tactics directed at finding the best home for a child through the starting points and familiar circles of family, friends, and neighbours; then reaching out to the communities in which the children live.

The General Authority is in its fourth year of partnership with the DTFA. To date, a total of **31** children have been served. Children and youth in the care of our agencies and service regions are beginning to see the benefits. The following table provides a summary of the work of the Authority's WWK adoption recruiter.

Age range	4 – 19 years
Sibling groups served	8 <i>(one of three and seven of two)</i>
Children legally adopted	6 <i>(a single child, a sibling group of 2 and a sibling group of 3)</i>
Children in Supervised Adoption Placement	3 <i>(a single child and 1 sibling group of 2)</i>
Children matched but caregiver unable to adopt due to inadequate adoption financial assistance subsidies	3 <i>(a single child and a sibling group of 2)</i>
Children withdrawn from program as agency's permanency goal changed	4

## Wendy's Wonderful Kids: An adoption story

Siblings Andrew and Tyler entered agency care in 2011 and were made permanent wards in 2013. The boys have visits with their family of origin, who are not in a position to resume a parental role. Both Andrew and Tyler understand the reasons they cannot live with their birth family and are accepting of that.

Over a period of six months, the boys worked on lifebooks and other activities to help them ready themselves for an adoptive family. Family resources were explored, as well as people in the boys' networks. No adoptive options were found. Andrew was ready to be adopted right away but Tyler advised that even if the General Authority's WWK recruiter Laura Wilson gave him a million dollars, he would not leave his foster parents. There was some tension between the boys as they were at different stages of readiness. Their foster parents were concerned with the boys leaving their placement, which contributed to Tyler's resistance and left Andrew feeling somewhat hopeless about getting out of foster care, which he wanted tremendously. Wilson had worked hard to build a trusting relationship with the boys, and when she located the perfect family for them, she promised Tyler he would only have to meet them once, for lunch. With reluctance, he agreed.

The family was found through a faith-based group called Forever Families of Canada, an organization which supports foster and adoptive families in Manitoba. Forever Families referred adoptive parents Tara and Derek to Wilson to talk about the program. When Wilson met the couple, she couldn't imagine a better family for the boys. Tara and Derek own an equine therapy ranch. Both boys have Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and the adoptive father shared that he, too, was diagnosed as a child, but it had served him well and he used it to his advantage in life. The boys would be understood—and instead of their ADD being seen as a challenge, the family saw it as a source of strength.

At the lunch, the family was warm and loving, and made it very clear that they knew the boys were afraid. They said that they, too, did not want to force them to do anything and that joining a family is a big deal. They noted it takes time to get to know one another. The couple filmed a video of their ranch, which included a theme of "a day in the life of a rancher" for the boys to watch over lunch. The adoptive father showed the boys a picture of a pony he had purchased that morning which he named "Tommy," after WWK founder Dave Thomas. He told the boys he needed to recognize the day somehow, as it was the day he might become a dad—and if it wasn't for Thomas and WWK he might not have met Tyler and Andrew. As he finished the story, Wilson heard a little voice at the table. Tyler whispered, "I'm in." The boy who wouldn't take a million dollars to leave foster care had made the leap to be adopted. Visits were planned and after their first trip to the ranch, both boys wanted to move in with their forever family as soon as they could.

Work occurred over a period of time to ready both the children and adoptive parents for this new and important life event.



# Celebrating Adoption Day!



Tyler, with adoptive parents Tara and Derek, and brother Andrew.



Andrew, WWK recruiter Laura Wilson, and Tyler.



A special pony named "Tommy."



# Agreements with Young Adults

Under legislation, the General Authority is responsible for the review and approval of Agreements with Young Adults, (formerly known as Extensions of Care) and continued Agreements with Young Adults (AYAs), for permanent wards requiring support beyond the age of majority. Between April 1, 2016 and March 31, 2017, there were a total of **353** young adults (ages 18 to 21) supported by AYAs through the General Authority. While this number represents a slight decrease from the last fiscal year, there remains a consistently large number of youth and young adults requesting agency support beyond the age of majority to realize goals as part of a successful transition to adulthood.

To better understand the value of AYAs; namely goals and outcomes achieved by young adults during this extension period, and to examine how the use of AYAs have grown or changed across General Authority agencies over recent years, an Extension of Care Committee was formed in March 2015. Comprised of directors, supervisors and staff across General Authority agencies and service regions, this committee has designed and implemented several research activities since its formation – resulting in the recent report *Extension of Care Outcomes Project, Final Report (June, 2017)*. This report highlights the larger benefits of extending support to youth reaching the age of majority within CFS care. It includes outcome data for young adults whose AYA came to a conclusion over the last two fiscal years (2014/2015 and 2015/2016), agency feedback regarding the use and value of agreements with young adults, and, most importantly, interviews with young adults whose agreements also concluded during this time.

Specifically noted were improved outcomes related to housing and income stability, education and employment; and the availability of a reliable support network for young adults beyond their transition to adulthood and independence. The project has also provided a valuable outlet for former youth in care to share experience and wisdom regarding services and supports that assisted them during this time. Young people spoke about improvements that could be made to better support youth in care prior to reaching the age of majority, as well as during their agreements, to ultimately achieve better outcomes in adulthood.

The General Authority would like to thank each of the young adults who participated in this project for their time and immensely valuable feedback. We would also like to thank each of our agencies and their staff teams for their contributions towards this project – including participation on the committee, provision of outcome data, and providing feedback regarding the value and importance of AYAs.

## **Tuition waivers and financial resources for youth currently or formerly in care**

In March 2017, University College of the North (UCN) announced that they would be joining the expanding number of post-secondary institutions in Manitoba offering the opportunity for tuition-free education to students currently or previously in the care of a provincial CFS agency. By participating in this initiative, and by removing financial barriers to post-secondary studies, UCN is helping to ensure more young people in northern Manitoba will have the opportunity to stay in their communities and realize their academic goals. With the addition of UCN, there are now a total of **nine** post-secondary institutions throughout Manitoba offering tuition waivers to youth in and from care, including: University of Winnipeg, University of Manitoba, Brandon University, Red River College, Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology, Assiniboine Community College, Université de Saint-Boniface and Booth University College.

During the last fiscal year, **50** students currently or previously in the care of a General Authority agency or service region were able to commence or continue their post-secondary studies as part of this initiative. Consistent with the previous year, this represents a significant number of young adults who are able to achieve their academic dreams without financial barriers that otherwise would have made this pursuit challenging, if not impossible. The General Authority would again like to thank all of the participating post-secondary institutions for your commitment to this tremendous initiative, and congratulations to all of our students who have graduated from their programs this past year!

This last year has also seen a positive change in the application process for tuition waivers and support available to potential students (currently and previously in care) while preparing for their future post-secondary studies. As part of the Futures Forward program, a new Tuition Waiver Co-ordinator has been introduced not only to assist in the collection of tuition waiver applications across the province, but also to work with each applicant in navigating post-secondary systems (application process, course selection), apply for other funding opportunities, and provide continued support throughout their academic journey.

For more information regarding tuition waivers, please contact:

Charity Leonard, Futures Forward Tuition Waiver Co-ordinator  
614-294 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, R3C 0B9  
204-987-8661 (ext. 671)  
[cleonard@yesmb.ca](mailto:cleonard@yesmb.ca)

Please also visit the Futures Forward Tuition Waiver Information Page:

[www.futuresforward.ca/tuition-waivers](http://www.futuresforward.ca/tuition-waivers)

### **Building Futures/Futures Forward**

Since its launch in 2013, Building Futures has assisted hundreds of youth and young adults in Manitoba to prepare for, or continue, their transition from CFS involvement to adulthood and independence. Through a network of community partners including the Canadian Mental Health Association (Manitoba and Winnipeg), Youth Employment Services, and Community Financial Counselling Services; youth are able to access a range of services and supports related to money management, employment and education, counselling and emotional support, and the navigation of complex service systems.

Since November 2016, Building Futures has become an initiative of the Department of Education and Training, and is now known as **Futures Forward**. With this exciting transition, the initiative has grown and a broader suite of services have been implemented including the introduction of a Tuition Waiver Co-ordinator and Indigenous Youth Service Navigator. Through Futures Forward, the Department of Education also introduced the Advancing Futures Bursary for students currently and previously in care pursuing post-secondary studies during the 2016/2017 academic year. As of March, 2017, more than **\$400,000** has been awarded through this bursary program – making it one of the largest financial awards programs for current and former youth in care in Manitoba pursuing post-secondary studies. Congratulations to all of the successful award recipients this year!

The General Authority looks forward to its continued participation on the Futures Forward Advisory Committee and contributing to the growth of this tremendous initiative.

For more information regarding Futures Forward, please visit

<https://www.futuresforward.ca/>



UNIVERSITY  
OF MANITOBA



Université de  
**Saint-Boniface**  
Une éducation supérieure depuis 1818



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**WINNIPEG**



**RED RIVER  
COLLEGE**  
OF APPLIED ARTS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



**BRANDON  
UNIVERSITY**  
Founded 1899



MANITOBA INSTITUTE OF  
**TRADES AND TECHNOLOGY**



**ASSINIBOINE  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**



**BOOTH  
UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE**

"The person that I was, the situation that I was in when I was 18 is like night and day to where I...am [now] after the extension of care ended. Because I am in school now, I am working, I am putting a down payment for a house...I would not have been able to do all the things I have done to get to where I am right now if it wasn't for all the help that I have gotten."

~Student who received an AYA and tuition waiver



# Quality Assurance and Outcomes

The belief in continuous quality improvement and service excellence is fundamental to the General Authority. Highlights of the broad range of CQI [Continuous Quality Improvement] systems and processes used by the General Authority and its agencies/service regions to enhance and measure services to children and families conducted this year are as follows:

## **Audits**

Audits of compliance with standards and regulations occurred throughout the past year and included:

- Face-to-face contact with children in care
- CFSIS (Child and Family Services Information System) recording
- Use of Structured Decision Making assessment tools
- Foster home licence renewal review

## **Service Reviews**

A number of reviews of services and case management to children and families were conducted this year, including:

- Completion of a special case review spanning several agencies and involving multiple authorities, assessing compliance with standards, regulations, legislation, communication between agencies and best practice
- Completion of a joint agency/authority caseload review and audit

## **Program Review and Evaluation**

The study of agency or authority programs and functions is critical to service improvement, accountability and to determine whether the results achieved meet or exceed our practice expectations, standards, the requirements of the legislation and the goals of safety organized practices and family engagement. Our work on multi-year projects included:

- Completion of two in a series of five authority-specific operational and program reviews of the Designated Intake Agencies (DIA) under our jurisdiction. With the primary goal of determining service quality and best practice, the reviews also examined operational challenges, staffing levels, caseload volumes and the scope of services required today, in contrast to the service expectations, and continued limited funding, since the establishment of DIAs following the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry-Child Welfare Initiative in 2003. A review of a third DIA is currently underway with the remaining reviews of two DIAs under the General Authority continuing over the coming year.
- Completion of the final phases of work on the *Extension of Care Outcomes Project*. The review considered the outcomes achieved based on services provided to youth transitioning from the child welfare system beyond the age of 18, up to the age of 21.



Phase 1 of the review noted the number of youth who have continued their schooling and with assistance have pursued post-secondary education, have established stable independent living situations, received mental health support and built social networks while safely maintaining family connections. Phase 2 of the review, completed this year, included qualitative interviews with youth to obtain feedback on services they believed were most beneficial to successful transition to adulthood. A final report with findings and recommendations for our work with young adults is in progress and was anticipated for completion by the summer of 2017.

- Completion of an initial phase of a joint agency/authority review of the Permanency Planning program of a service region included the development of a program logic model, evaluation design and data collection.

### **Measuring Outcomes**

In 2009, the General Authority implemented a comprehensive matrix (**page 31**) for reporting on system-wide service outcomes.

The General Authority Outcomes Matrix is comprised of these five outcome domains:

- Child Safety
- Child Well-Being
- Permanency
- Family and Community Support
- Satisfaction/Service Effectiveness

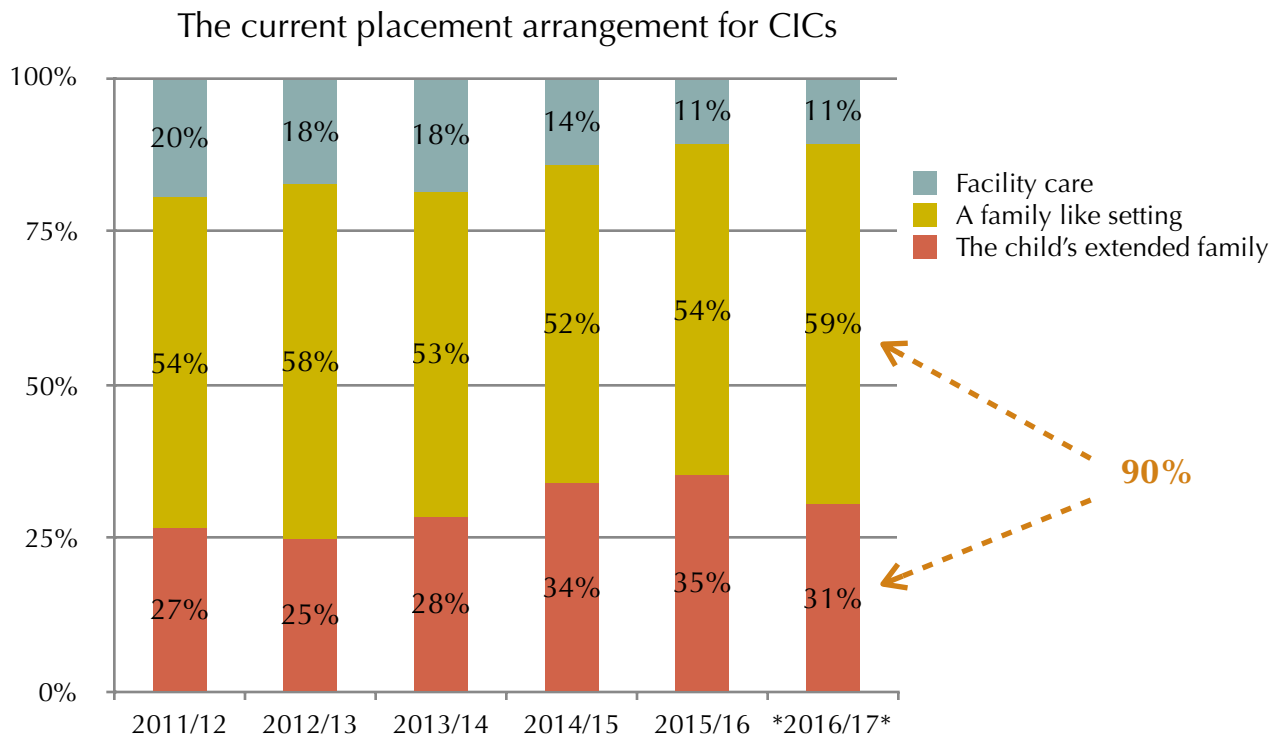
Each of the five outcome domains adopted in the Outcomes Matrix have several associated Outcome indicators. Sources of information for service outcomes include a yearly abstract of data from CFSIS as well as from the completion of the Child in Care Annual Reviews of the service plans for children who have been in care of an agency for over one year. The information collected is analyzed and reveals service trends across the General Authority as a whole and within each agency or service region.

Over the last few years, our “Outcome” work has focused on the goal of measuring and determining the impact of the General Authority practice initiatives such as: safety organized and family engagement practice, the use of safety networks, family finding and grief and loss work with children. Indicators of success include: reducing the number of children coming into care or the number of days children must spend in care; and shortening the length of time to achieve permanency for a child – be it a return to family or a permanent home with extended family, foster or adoptive parents.

Examples of General Authority agency/regional outcomes are included throughout this report, and demonstrate several key successes:

- **Continued low rates of children in care of General Authority agencies and service regions.**
- **A significantly greater proportion of families served in comparison to children in care.**
- **A significantly greater proportion of children served safely in their own home compared to the total number of children in care.**
- **The vast majority of children in care are placed with family or in a family-like setting. (see chart on next page for more information).**

## Per cent of Children in Care (CICs) who live with extended family



**In 2017, 90% of all General Authority CICs resided with family or in a family like setting.**

- **Facility care:** emergency shelter, correctional facility, hospital, mental health facility, residential care facility not locked, residential facility locked, independent living, other
- **A family like setting:** emergency foster home, foster home general, foster home treatment specialized, Place of Safety (POS) general, select adoption probation
- **The child's extended family:** foster home child specific extended family, POS extended family, own home

# General Authority Outcomes Matrix

Outcome Domain	Outcome Indicators	Outcome Domain	Outcome Indicator
Family & Community Support	The percentage of children in care who do not experience community disruption as a result of a change in school.	Satisfaction/Service Effectiveness	The percentage of children who have only one social worker.
Family & Community Support	The percentage of children placed in care that live with extended family.	Satisfaction/Service Effectiveness	The level of satisfaction experienced by children/youth in care with the services they have received.
Family & Community Support	Of all children receiving service, the percentage being supported at home with their parents.	Satisfaction/Service Effectiveness	The number of families that choose the General Authority as their Authority of Service who have another Authority of Record.
Family & Community Support	The percentage of families where all children are in the home.	Satisfaction/Service Effectiveness	The level of satisfaction experienced by parents with the services they have received.
Permanency	Of children coming into care, the percentage of children reunified with their parents or guardians during specified time periods.	Well-Being	The number of children in care (excluding extensions) per 1000 children in Manitoba.
Permanency	Of children reunified the percentage that do not re-enter care during specified time periods.	Well-Being	The percentage of children in care who do not experience an unplanned disruption in placement.
Permanency	Of children legally free for adoption, the percentage whose adoption placement was finalized during specified time periods.	Well-Being	The percentage of children in care who receive regular and appropriate medical, dental and optical examinations and treatments.
Permanency	Children in care for whom reunification, adoption or legal guardianship is not the plan, the percentage of children who are living in what is considered to be their permanent placement.	Well-Being	The academic performance of children in care in an appropriate school setting.
Permanency	The percentage of children who re-enter care and the number of times children come into care during a specified time period.	Well-Being	The frequency and seriousness of behavioural and emotional problems and involvement with the youth justice system exhibited by children in care.
Safety	Of all children receiving services, the percentage that do not experience another incident of maltreatment.	Well-Being	The percentage of children in care who are involved in appropriate extracurricular activities.
Safety	Of children who are in care, the percentage who do not experience another incident of maltreatment.		
Safety	Of children in care who experience a substantiated recurrence of maltreatment, the type and seriousness of the maltreatment.		
Safety	Of the total number of openings and re-openings, the percentage that were opened for voluntary family services.		

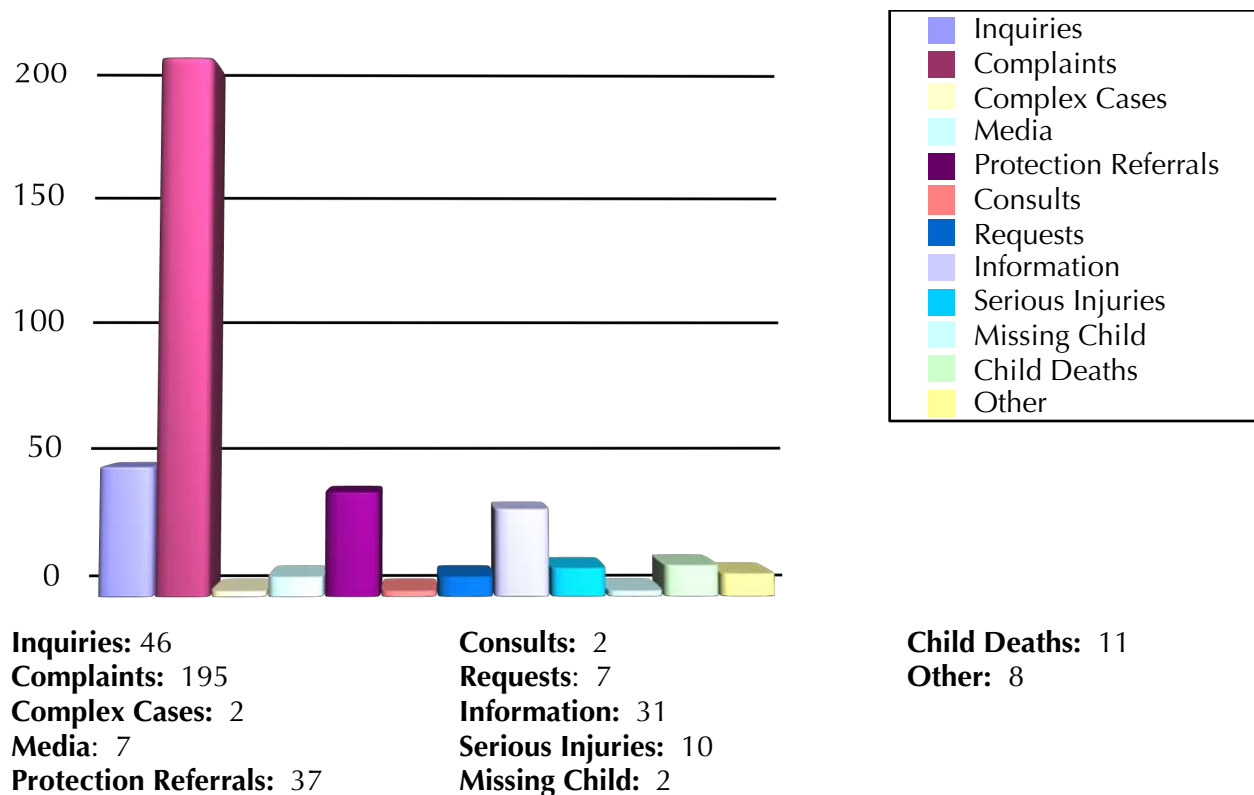


## **Responding to Intakes**

One of the General Authority's key roles is to respond to concerns, complaints and inquiries (collectively referred to as "intakes") regarding the services provided by an agency/service region. These referrals can come from the community, directly from families, from collateral organizations or through the Department of Families. In 2016/2017, the General Authority responded to **358** intakes.

The following chart demonstrates the nature of the intakes received at the General Authority:

### **Breakdown of 2016/2017 Intakes:**



During 2016/2017, the General Authority continued to implement a quality assurance assessment of the General Authority Practice Model and data completion requirements on intakes based on information obtained from the CFSIS/Intake Module. The use of Structured Decision Making tools, face-to-face contact, case recordings, and entry of digital pictures of children in care were reviewed and notification of outstanding tasks was forwarded to supervisors/program managers.

The General Authority, Winnipeg CFS senior management and the Director of Programs of the Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre are standing members of a committee to review complex case situations. This mechanism allows stakeholders to come together to discuss complex cases involving systemic issues, which present significant challenges for agencies and/or specialized services for children as needed. The committee functions as an inclusive, respectful and confidential forum in which to discuss these cases. Membership is fluid, allowing for the inclusion of individuals, internally and externally, with expertise that is relevant to the issues of the cases being reviewed. Minutes, which include role responsibility and goal setting, are provided to the assigned Winnipeg CFS staff. Case Mapping is the process used to gather information and facilitate the case plan in order to achieve safety for children.

# Mapping: Putting it all Together

**MAPPING: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

<b>What we are worried about</b> Harm and Danger	<b>Purpose</b> Genogram/EcoMap Circles of Security and Support	<b>What is Working Well?</b> Safety & Belonging
Complicating Factors	Cultural Consideration	Strengths & Resources
SDM Guidance		
<b>What Needs to Happen Next?</b>		
Danger Statements	Scaling	Safety Goal Statements
Actions		

**Case Plan**

**Left Side Tools:**

- Safety Assessment** (Imminent Harm/Danger)
- PFH/RPFH** (Items scored 1+)
- FSNA** (Needs)
- House of Worries**
- 3 Houses**
- Safety House**

**Right Side Tools:**

- Safety Assessment** (Protective Capacities)
- PFH/RPFH** (Items scored 0)
- FSNA** (Strengths)
- House of Good Things**
- Future House**
- 3 Houses**

**Bottom Center:** Case Plan

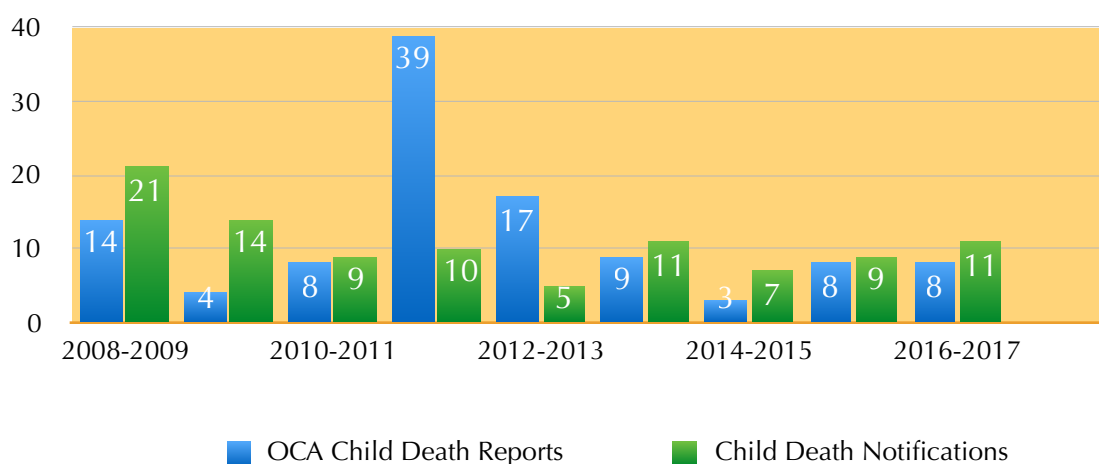
# Critical Incident Reporting

Under Subsection 8.2.3(1) of *The Child and Family Services Act*, the Office of the Children's Advocate (OCA) is required to conduct a review of services after the death of a child who received services through the child welfare system within a year prior to their death. The purpose of the review, referred to as a Special Investigation, is to identify ways in which services may be enhanced to improve the safety and well-being of children receiving those services, and to reduce the likelihood of a death occurring in similar circumstances. Special Investigation reports may contain recommendations for changes to standards, policies or practices.

In 2016/2017, the General Authority received eight review reports. Three of these reports contained a total of four recommendations for the General Authority and its agencies or service regions. Responses to all these recommendations have been completed and provided to the Manitoba Ombudsman.

During this same period, the General Authority received notice of 11 child deaths from our agencies/service regions, the OCA or the CFS Division. Of these deaths, 10 occurred in open family or children's service files (one being a child in the care of a General Authority agency or service region at the time of their death) and one death occurred on a family service file that had been closed to a General Authority agency or service region.

Four deaths occurred as a result of an accident, one occurred as a result of suicide, three deaths were a result of natural causes and three deaths were infants born medically fragile. The chart below provides the numbers of notifications of child death from the current and past years, as well as the number of special investigation reports received by the Authority:





The General Authority and its agencies and service regions continue to work closely with the OCA on the review of Draft Special Investigation Reports, which allow the authority or agency to provide additional information on programs, authority or agency functions or quality improvement activities relevant to the OCA's draft report. Authority/agency meetings with the OCA are also excellent forums to provide information to the OCA, when requested, to assist in the formulation of recommendations.

Following receipt of the finalized investigation report, the General Authority works closely with agencies and service regions to review any findings and/or recommendations made by the OCA. The reports may contain instructive comments on potential improvements to service delivery as well as acknowledge service excellence.

In instances where recommendations for service improvements have been made, the General Authority responds by working collaboratively with agencies/regions to develop and implement thorough and effective action plans.

### **Mixed Facilities/Variance Statistics**

In keeping with Sections 7 and 8 of the Foster Homes Licensing Regulation, the General Authority reviews and approves requests to vary the numbers of children in care under the age of five, and the number of dependent persons in the home. The General Authority also reviews and approves requests for mixed facilities (where foster families provide care for both children and adults in care).

The following illustrates approvals granted this year:

### **Mixed Facilities/Variance Statistics for 2016/2017**

Agency	Mixed Facilities	Variances	TOTAL
Central	1	3	4
Eastman	3	1	4
Interlake	4	0	4
JCFS	0	0	0
Northern	0	0	0
Parkland	0	0	0
Western	0	0	0
WCFS	3	6	9
TOTAL	11	10	21

## **Transfers of Guardianship**

Under Section 49(1) of *The Child and Family Services Act*, the Minister of Families may transfer guardianship of a child from one agency that has guardianship of a child to another agency. Such transfers typically occur when a family requests a change in their Authority of Service or when permanent wards are transferred to their Culturally Appropriate Authority.

When General Authority agencies or service regions request transfers of guardianship, application packages are forwarded to the General Authority for review and processing and then forwarded to the Director of Child Welfare for approval. In 2016/2017, the General Authority received **27** Transfer of Guardianship applications, with the following breakdown:

Guardianship Order	Metis Authority (MA)	Southern First Nations Network of Care (SFNNC)	Northern Authority (NA)	General Authority ( <i>internal</i> )	Total
Temporary	11	2	1	2	16
Permanent	4	3	0	4	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>27</b>

## **Individual Rate Adjustment Protocol**

The General Authority has a responsibility to monitor the controls on child maintenance expenditures, part of which was the introduction of the Individual Rate Adjustment Protocol (IRAP), which came into effect on June 1, 2012. General Authority agencies and service regions determine an appropriate placement plan for children in care based on their level of need. At a specific funding threshold, these plans must be reviewed and approved at the authority level and/or the CFS Division. IRAP submissions are reviewed weekly both at the General Authority and, when the placement is for a child or youth in the Emergency Placement Resource (EPR) system, fast-tracked to the Collaborative Authority Resource Team (CART). In 2016/2017, the General Authority reviewed and approved **297** placement funding submissions.



## Changes of Authority

The Authority Determination Process (ADP) is an important feature of Manitoba's child and family services system. As set out under the Child and Family Services Authorities Regulation, it is the process by which a family chooses which authority will be responsible for oversight of the services that are provided to them. Families complete an ADP form at the point of intake. They may subsequently request a Change of Authority.

### ☼ Change of Authority Requests to transfer out:

Request to Transfer to:	Accepted	Declined	Awaiting Decision	Withdrawn	Total
MA	8	1	1	0	10
SFNNC	11	3	0	2	16
NA	2	0	3	0	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>31</b>

### ☼ Change of Authority Requests to transfer in:

Request to Transfer from:	Accepted	Declined	Awaiting Decision	Withdrawn	Total
MA	2	0	1	0	3
SFNNC	1	0	0	0	1
NA	1	1	0	0	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>



### Services To Minor Parents For 2016/2017

Agency/Service Region	Number of Notices		Total 2016/2017
	Mothers under age 16	Mothers ages 16 up to age 18	
Winnipeg CFS	4	10	14
CFS of Western MB	0	9	9
CFS of Central MB	0	4	4
JCFS	0	0	0
Eastman Region	0	2	2
Interlake Region	1	2	3
Parkland Region	0	0	0
Northern Region	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>32</b>

The General Authority receives a copy of the Notice of Live Birth and/or the Notice of Maternity for any mother under the age of 18 from the Director of CFS. The General Authority Program Specialist reviews CFSIS to ensure that services have been offered to the minor parent by the applicable mandated agency or service region. In the rare situation that services have not been offered, the Program Specialist follows up with the agency/service region to ensure service expectations for the youth and families, as set out in legislation and standards, are met.

In cases where the minor parent is under 16 years of age, the General Authority Program Specialist is in contact with the agency/region to ensure that the appropriate procedures have been followed to determine if an abuse investigation and/or criminal investigation should be conducted.

In 2016/2017, the General Authority received 38 Notices of Maternity or Live Birth from the Director of CFS. Upon review, six of these Notices were completed by the Designated Intake Agency and the minor parent was already in receipt of services from another CFS authority/agency. Therefore, 32 Notices of Maternity or Live Birth were active with General Authority agencies, and five of these notices related to mothers under the age of 16. Statistics are based on the number of Notices completed by hospitals and other medical facilities and referred to the Director of CFS. The overall decline in the birth rate of underage mothers in Manitoba remains consistent with the provincial (Annual Statistics Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living) and national trends (Statistics Canada) for mothers ages 15-19 years.

## **Foster Home Appeals**

Through Section 8 of *The Child and Family Services Act* and Section 14 of *The Child and Family Services Authorities Act*, Child and Family Services authorities are responsible for hearing appeals from foster parents on the removal of children from a foster home, the refusal of an agency to license the foster home, or the cancellation of a foster home licence.

Following receipt of a letter of appeal from a foster parent, an authority takes the following actions:

- Assesses the content of the request to determine whether an actual appeal is being made by the foster parent
- Determines how the reconsideration of the agency decision will be conducted
- Communicates with the agency and foster parents about the process of reconsideration
- Reviews the information of all parties
- Provides a written report of the authority's findings to the foster parent and agency or service region

In 2016/2017, the General Authority completed two appeal requests, an increase of one from the 2015/2016 reporting year. The outcome in both cases upheld the original decision of the agency to remove a child and to cancel the licence of a foster parent.

**We believe that the limited number of appeals received by the General Authority reflects the diligent work at the agency and service region level in developing and maintaining positive working relationships and open communication with foster parents.**

## **Sexually Exploited Youth and High-Risk Victims**

StreetReach teams are part of Tracia's Trust, the Manitoba government's strategy to assist in preventing sexual exploitation of children and youth.

These teams deal with children and youth who are at high risk of exploitation. The goals of the program are to stop youth from running away from their home or placement; to prevent future abuse and exploitation; to redirect runaway children to stop victimization; and to intervene with those who exploit young victims.

A High-Risk Victim (HRV) is a child or young person who has been assessed by a team of professionals to be at an extremely high risk of being violently victimized through the sex trade. They are children who need immediate, intensive intervention. Once a child has been deemed a high-risk victim, a co-ordinated response plan is set up. The plan involves professionals from health systems, social service systems and justice systems. Their goal is to locate the child and return him or her to safety as quickly as possible.

The General Authority is an active participant in this program and continues to represent our agencies and service regions at the StreetReach Advisory Committee, comprised of many community stakeholders. At the committee, the General Authority representative advocates for the needs of these vulnerable youth, ensuring that feedback from agencies and service regions on the services provided is reported to the StreetReach staff and the CFS Division.

### **Phoenix Sinclair Inquiry Working Group**

The General Authority has continued as an active member of the Phoenix Sinclair Inquiry Working Group. The group is comprised of representatives from each authority and the CFS Division. It began meeting in September 2015 to address:

- 62 recommendations outlined in the report, *The Legacy of Phoenix Sinclair: Achieving the Best for All Our Children*, written by the Honourable Ted Hughes, December 2013.
- Associated options included in the Options for Action Implementation Report for: *The Legacy of Phoenix Sinclair: Achieving the Best for All Our Children*, completed by AMR Planning and Consulting, January 2015.

While the General Authority had previously provided General Authority specific responses to the Hughes recommendations, the focus for 2016/2017 continued to be on 25 practice-related recommendations/options prioritized collectively by the four CFS authority CEOs. Work on a proposed Manitoba CFS Practice Framework and Service Continuum, which addresses these 25 recommendations made by Hughes, is very much in line with the model of practice utilized in General Authority agencies and service regions, where the focus is on collaborative family participation/engagement.

All other recommendations/options have been directed to the appropriate departments for follow-up and provision of regular updates to the working group. A four-step analysis and detailed implementation plan has been completed for each recommendation. The detailed implementation plans from the various departments and working groups are then forwarded to the Families Minister for review and sharing with the Office of the Children's Advocate.





# Resource Development

## **Resource Support for Children and Youth**

The General Authority provides consultation and support to agencies in resource development and placement planning for children and youth through the Resource Program Specialist Team.

Activities for the 2016/2017 year included:

- Assisting the agency/region with the follow-up process related to previous referrals to the Provincial Placement Desk (PPD) external service providers, applications for Level V funding and applications to operate a childcare facility.
- Connecting with staff from various Adult Services Programs to discuss eligibility requirements and the eligibility determination processes.
- Participating in complex case/mapping meetings to discuss placement planning issues and next steps.
- Exploring the suitability of out-of-province treatment facilities in collaboration with the agency/region and the PPD.
- Co-ordinating meetings and regular communication with stakeholders (e.g. agency/region, CFS Division, external service provider/operator and current placement) regarding the development of a specialized placement resource.
- Determining with external service provider agencies or independent operators the potential to develop a specialized placement resource.
- Assisting external service provider agencies or independent operators in the development of a resource proposal.
- Discussing the funding model for the resource proposal with the CFS Division.
- Receiving and reviewing residential child care proposals with agencies to determine need and capacity.
- Developing community networks with New Canadians to assist our agencies in the creation of culturally appropriate resources for children entering care who are of the range of ethnicities seen in Manitoba.

In addition to the above activities, on January 31, 2017 the Resource Program Specialists hosted an event for General Authority resource workers and program managers titled “An Overview and Discussion of Manitoba Placement Resources.” The CFS Division’s Quality of Care Specialist Team attended, with a presentation outlining the facilities managed by this team and the PPD. Information was provided by the General Authority Specialists regarding direct referral programs in foster care as well as programming for older adolescents.

Highlights of the discussion included:

- Direct vs. PPD Referral (introduction of the new PPD referral form)
- Foster homes converting to Letters of Approval homes for Adult Services
- Mixed Licenses/ Child specific regulation



- General Authority resource needs: Level 2 and 3 long-term options, family settings for sibling groups, co-ordinating/sharing infant placements, recruitment and funding issues
- Designated Intake Agencies and the availability of emergency beds
- Emergency Bed Program and the reporting process
- Expanding kinship programs

This event was a welcome opportunity to examine trends, review promising practice and consider current and future resource needs. Plans are underway to make this planning day a regular occurrence.

### **Children and Youth with Complex Needs: High Fidelity Wraparound Task Group**

The General Authority, along with the other three authorities and the Departments of Health, Justice and Education, participate in the High Fidelity Wraparound (HFW) Task Group. This group was formed to guide the development and implementation of the HFW approach for children and youth with complex needs and their families. During the 2016/2017 reporting period, the task group approved the High Fidelity Wraparound Protocol, which replaces the “Wraparound Protocol for Children and Youth with Severe to Profound Emotional and Behavioural Disorders” administered by the Department of Education. This approach is designed to enhance the integration of multiple services to families caring for children and youth with complex needs.

### **COACH Program**

The COACH Expansion Project, a product of this committee, continued during 2016/2017 to successfully support 15 youth in care with high/complex needs in its mentored school program. The COACH program is evidence-based and has proven to be effective with younger children, providing individualized intensive support with the goal of integrating back into a specialized classroom.

*“Before COACH it [school] wasn’t going well. Now I feel like I’m successful. I like coming here every day.”  
~COACH student*

### **Structured Analysis Family Evaluation**

Through 2016/2017, the Structured Analysis Family Evaluation (SAFE) process continued to be used by General Authority agencies and service regions for foster and adoption home studies and annual reviews (updates). While initial training of General Authority staff across the province has been completed, each year new workers and/or supervisors and program managers require the two-day Basic Training and Supervisor’s Training. Training needs continue to be assessed throughout General Authority agencies/regions and the external agencies who utilize this approach.

### **Collaborative Authority Resource Team**

The Collaborative Authority Resource Team (CART), formerly known as the Hotel Reduction Team (HRT), which was established in June 2014 to address the issue of placement of children and youth in hotels, continued their work in 2016/2017 with authority staff reassigned from all four authorities and the CFS Division. It is imperative to note that there have been no hotel placements for children in care since December 1, 2015 in accordance with the new provincial standard, which no longer supports the practice of hotel placement.

CART remained focused on collaborative efforts to locate long-term placements for children and youth placed within the Winnipeg Emergency Placement Resources (EPR) system and to support provincewide regional resource development plans to effectively decrease the length of stay in emergency resources. This was achieved through a number of ongoing activities such as:

- Weekly meetings between CART and the Provincial Placement Desk (PPD) at the CFS Division to review resource vacancies and to track referrals.
- CART's quarterly meetings with established committees comprised of external service providers in the children and adult systems to assist with identifying placement options for children and youth in EPR (or at risk of entering EPR) for whom there is no identified placement resource.
- Authority monitoring, support and review of the respective agency's planning efforts for children and youth in EPR for 30 plus days/or children and youth presenting with unique challenges such as cognitive/developmental delays, extreme behaviours, sexually exploited youth, and sibling groups.
- Updating the Manitoba Placement Resource Guide for all agency staff, which includes a comprehensive listing of all shared placement resources in Manitoba; and communication and support to the inter-authority regional resource committees established provincewide.

CART and the Eastman/Interlake Regional Resource Committee, comprised of representatives from all agencies who provide service in this geographical area, initiated a process by which collective resource needs were discussed and planning to address these needs occurred. These meetings identified a need to develop emergency residential services in the region. External service providers were canvassed for interest and an opportunity to submit an application to operate a licensed residential care facility was submitted to the CFS Division by one selected external service provider. By the end of the 2016/2017 fiscal year, this application to operate two, three-bed emergency resource homes in Selkirk and/or Steinbach was in the review process at the CFS Division.

The previously established General Authority Placement Network (GAPN) remained active as a responsive, electronic communication network tool amongst General Authority agencies and regions to match available foster care resources with children and youth requiring placement.

# Continuing Our Learning Journey

The General Authority recognizes the ongoing need to continue to develop skills and competencies through education and training. As such, the General Authority, in collaboration with its agencies and service regions, is proud to continue to offer a large variety of training opportunities. Our goal continues to be the enhancement and improvement of services to the children and families that we serve. It is important to note that the number of attendees at our training sessions has grown each year since 2011.

The scope of training offered in the General Authority agencies and regions is broad and was designed to support the identified needs. Many of the training sessions offered are considered foundational and are held on a regular basis in each fiscal year. This includes training in the areas of the Practice Model (including Structured Decision Making), standards, suicide prevention, attachment, trauma, addictions, domestic violence, health and safety, child abuse and more. The sessions have been attended by social work staff, managers/supervisors, foster parents, respite workers, support workers, EPR staff, administrative staff, volunteers, community collaterals such as the Office of the Children's Advocate, various daycares, school division staff and members of the Manitoba Foster Family Network, along with other government departments.

The General Authority continues to value the partnerships of the other authorities (Northern Authority, Metis Authority and the Southern First Nations Network of Care); along with the CFS Division in the ongoing work of developing and delivering joint training through numerous cross-authority initiatives.

A total of **3,173** participants attended training that was offered in 2016/2017. Specifics of this overall number can be seen in the chart below with some specific training examples highlighted within each specialized training theme.

TYPE OF SPECIALIZED TRAINING	TOTAL OF ATTENDEES
Addictions (e.g. Brief Intervention Addiction Training, AFM, Drug Presentation)	101
Administrative Support & Communications (e.g. Front Desk Safety, Information Security Awareness, Professional Administrators Conference, Government of MB Active Offer)	17
Attachment (e.g. Trauma & Attachment, Circle of Security, Manitoba Foster Family Network Conference)	68
Crisis Prevention/Intervention/ Postvention (e.g. Mandt, Non Violent Crisis Intervention)	98
Critical Incident Stress Management (e.g. CISM, Vicarious Trauma)	19

TYPE OF SPECIALIZED TRAINING	TOTAL OF ATTENDEES
Cultural Awareness (e.g. Aboriginal Awareness Cultural Workshop, Islam & Muslims, Low German Mennonite Networking Conference, Residential Schools)	123
Child and Youth Support (e.g. Autism , 3-5-7 Training, Families Affected by Sexual Assault, Family Finding Boot Camp, Infant Care, Understanding and Working with Children & Youth Who Have Been Sexually Exploited)	303
Domestic Violence (e.g. Domestic Violence, Safe & Together)	392
Family Enhancement (e.g. Advanced Facilitation Skills, Practice Model, SDM, Signs of Safety, CRC Specialized Training)	894
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)	1
Gang Awareness (e.g. Street Gangs and Drugs)	19
Health and Safety (e.g. CPR/First Aid, Mental Health First Aid, Water/Ice Safety)	585
Investigating Child Abuse (e.g. Child Abuse Coordinator's Conference, Missing & Exploited Children's Conference, Child Abuse Investigations)	66
Orientation to the CFS System (e.g. WCFS Orientation, CFS of Western Child Orientation)	50
Suicide Intervention/Prevention (e.g. Applied Suicide Intervention Skills, Tattered Teddies, Straight Talk)	65
Standards (e.g. Case Management, Sexually Exploited & Absent/Missing Children, Ethics and Standards)	96
Strengthening Relationships (e.g. Positive Discipline Parenting, CFS of Western MB Conference, Nurturing Resilience Among Children, Youth and Families with Complex Needs)	146
Leadership Development (e.g. Management Essentials, Labor Law, OSD)	19
Trauma (e.g. Making Sense of Trauma)	45
Other (e.g. Professional Development)	66
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,173</b>



# Staff and Youth Engagement

## **Staff Engagement**

The General Authority's authority specific standard on Staff Engagement, updated in September 2015, ensures that front-line child and family service workers, supervisors and administrative staff have opportunities to influence key policy and program decisions affecting service delivery, participate in initiatives designed to build morale and assist in developing strategies to improve the working environment. In 2016/2017, the General Authority continued to make funds available to support staff engagement activities hosted by its agencies and service regions. One example of an engagement activity occurred at Eastman CFS. The agency hosted a full-day regional event. The focus this year was on staff and agency well-being. Presenters provided some basic information on personal self-care, leading to a plan to have further discussion on this topic at upcoming team meetings. The Eastman regional event also provided updated training on Workplace Safety and Health—an important aspect of ensuring staff well-being.

In 2016/2017, Eastman also provided staff with a variety of ongoing opportunities to receive information about agency activities and to voice their views. These opportunities included: quarterly Q&A sessions with the regional director, encouraged participation in the Civil Service Staff Engagement Survey, meetings with the service director held approximately every two weeks, and regular team meetings.

## **Youth Engagement**

Youth Engagement comes in more than one form. It includes assisting children/youth to be connected to the agency, staff, foster parents and other “children in care”—we are all at our best when we are connected. Another form involves providing an opportunity for youth to help staff and the broader system to learn from their experience.

General Authority agencies and service regions reported engaging their youth in a variety of ways in 2016/2017. There were regularly scheduled activities, based on fun events to attract as many youth as possible as well as affording the chance to see familiar faces, share stories, provide support, acknowledge achievements, and form lasting bonds. These events were often tied to activities that tap into the youths' ability to contribute in a meaningful way.

One such activity was to gather information from youth to create a guide for pre-teens and teens to help prepare them for “what it's like to come into care.” This information was given to Voices: Manitoba's Youth In Care Network, to help support youth across the province. Another agency was able to hire a Youth Engagement Specialist—this helped ensure a steady focus on youth and provided an opportunity for ongoing engagement and feedback. One other idea of note was an agency that constructed “independent living gift baskets” for youth leaving care. These baskets were thoughtfully filled with the little necessities for making the independent living transition successful and provided to all youths leaving the care of the agency who turned 18. And the General Authority conducted individual interviews with young adults previously receiving an extension of care from a General Authority agency during the summer of 2016 as part of its *Extension of Care Outcomes Project*. The tremendous feedback provided was included as a part of a larger extension of care review. Thanks to each of the young people who participated and provided valuable feedback!

# New Canadian Initiative

In 2009, the General Authority launched the New Canadian Initiative (NCI) in recognition of the challenges facing new Canadians, and the need for a preventative approach to raising awareness and providing accurate information about the child and family service system in Manitoba. This year has seen tremendous work done by several General Authority agencies and service regions in furthering the collaborative goals and objectives of the NCI, and ensuring better outcomes for children, families and communities.

Highlights of community/agency collaborative work this year includes:

## Eastman Region, Soccer and the Practice Model

- Current initiative originally began with cultural cafes, created for community members to discuss family dynamics and culture; mutual learning opportunity for community members and Eastman staff.
- More recently, Eastman region has incorporated elements of the Practice Model into informative materials about CFS for new Canadians. This has worked well in introducing potential supportive networks including friends, co-workers and others who can assist in keeping children safe at home.
- Similar presentations regarding the Practice Model have taken place in the community, and have provided an opportunity to address questions regarding the day-to-day work of CFS staff.
- A soccer video, created by Rhonda Dagg (Leading Practice Specialist, Rural and Northern Services) was also introduced to highlight similarities between CFS values and those of the “beautiful game.” The video has been well received, with further plans to present in area schools – the goal being removing fears and stigma associated with CFS and building positive relationships.
- The “Soccer for Dads” program, initiated by Alberto Blandon (Eastman Region Supervisor), has provided a recreational outlet for new Canadian dads in the Steinbach area – also creating an opportunity for socialization and conversation, especially important for those struggling with the transition to a new country and culture.



### Winnipeg CFS and Somali Community Engagement Committee

- Members of the Somali community have worked with Winnipeg CFS over the last few years to find ways to be actively involved in child welfare and prevention.
- Over the past year, this collaboration has especially focused on foster care. Members of the Somali community have been identified to participate in training regarding requirements to becoming a foster parent for Winnipeg CFS, with the goal of transferring this knowledge throughout the Winnipeg Somali community and generating interest with families who may be able to do this work.
- Promotional materials for potential foster parents will also be translated into Arabic.

Winnipeg CFS hopes to create specialized foster care within the larger program – inclusive of foster families from various religious and cultural backgrounds, available to care for children from new Canadian and other communities in Winnipeg. This is an important step in better ensuring the religious and cultural needs of children are being met while in the care of CFS. It's also an important step in community engagement and building relationships between CFS and cultural communities. The committee hopes this foster care initiative will become a model for future collaborations, including with other Muslim faith communities.



The previous Cultural Community Reference Group, comprised of over 30 ethno-community members, as well as General Authority board members and staff, has also undergone significant changes over the last year. Newly re-named the **Coalition of Cultural Communities for Families (CCCCF)**, this committee will now take a larger role in advising, directing, and setting outcomes for the New Canadian Initiative. The role will include direct collaboration with General Authority agencies regarding mutual learning opportunities, education and training, and community engagement. The General

Authority looks forward to the CCCC taking on this leadership role within the New Canadian Initiative, thereby creating further opportunities for growth, community development, and innovative strategies to better support new Canadian children and families.

The previous Action Team has also been re-named this year as the **CFS and Settlement Services Inter-Agency Network**. This group brings together members of the Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations, as well as collaborators from Winnipeg CFS, Healthy Child Manitoba, ANCR and the General Authority. Continuing with a forum encouraging the exchange of ideas and relationship building, this team has also been instrumental in designing/facilitating mutual learning events for front-line staff (CFS and settlement service agencies) as well as community groups and members. This work continues this year with a mutual learning event being planned for 2017/2018.

The Education and Awareness (Train the Trainer) team has also continued their valuable work over the last year, engaging cultural community members and settlement service workers to provide child welfare information. This team brings together members from Healthy Child Manitoba, the Department of Families, ANCR, the General Authority and settlement service providers.



# Critical Incident Stress Management

Critical incidents are defined as traumatic situations that are sudden, overwhelming and sometimes dangerous to individuals and/or significant others. They can cause strong emotional reactions, with the potential to interfere with an individual's ability to function at the time of the incident, or at a later stage. Critical incident stress is a person's stress response to involvement in an incident. Child and family services workers are often confronted by traumatic events.

The General Authority developed Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Peer Support Teams throughout the province. The purpose of these teams is to ensure that following the occurrence of an incident, staff are supported and assisted in a compassionate and professional manner and the intensity and duration of stress experienced by those affected is reduced. The CISM teams continue to operate in all General Authority agencies and service regions across the province and include:

- Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba (Audrey Armstrong, chair)
- Eastman Region (Dustin Dent, chair)
- Interlake Region (Serena Stier, Tracey McInerney and Lynette Carriere, co-chairs)
- Jewish Child and Family Service (Wade Bilodeau, chair)
- Northern Region (Jeanette Kimball and Jeanette Campbell, co-chairs)
- Parkland Region (Donna-Jean Slack, chair)
- Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba (Tracy Koop, chair)
- Winnipeg Child and Family Services (Cheryl Ellis and Brad Halstead, co-chairs)

The General Authority's CISM Steering Committee meets twice a year, in the spring and fall. The Steering Committee's function is to ensure the continuity of the teams, determine ongoing training needs and gather provincewide statistics which may help identify common themes. The services provided by the Peer Support Teams are voluntary, therefore not all incidents that may have been critical incidents are reported by staff or referred to a Peer Support Team.

There are currently about **60** volunteer staff members who make up eight teams offering CISM services in General Authority agencies and service regions. The General Authority currently has one staff member trained in CISM. The General Authority supports all of these teams, recognizing the importance of a Peer Support Model. It is worth noting that membership consists of non-CFS staff as well, since many CFS staff are co-located with other departments, and often have work with the same families.

Training was provided in the fall of 2016 again, with new members being educated from Winnipeg CFS and CFS of Western Manitoba. Education will continue on an ongoing basis, as the need is identified in each team, and as membership changes. Training is planned for up to four teams in 2017/2018.



### CISM stats from April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017:

<b>Jewish CFS:</b>	8 incidents, involving 12 staff.
<b>Winnipeg CFS:</b>	23 incidents involving 40 staff. (This is lower than previous years. It is unlikely that there have been fewer incidents this year, it is more likely that incidents have not been reported/referred).
<b>Northern Region:</b>	0 incidents reported. (It may be that incidents have not been reported/referred).
<b>Interlake:</b>	6 incidents involving 7 staff. (Five were outreach, one was a defusing situation).
<b>Western:</b>	51 incidents involving 63 staff. (Most related to threats made against staff).
<b>Eastman:</b>	7 incidents, involving 23 staff.
<b>Central:</b>	0 incidents reported.
<b>Parkland:</b>	0 incidents reported.



# Scholarships & Awards

## The General Authority and the Children's Aid Foundation

The General Authority partners with the Children's Aid Foundation (CAF), based out of Toronto, to provide funding for programming and awards for children and youth across Canada.

Funding is provided with the assistance of generous donations from BMO Financial, CIBC, Scotiabank, HSBC, TD Bank, the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, The Slight Family Foundation, and Element, a corporate vehicle company. Individuals are encouraged to check the CAF website ([www.cafdn.org](http://www.cafdn.org)) for more information about the services and programs they offer, hear testimonials from youth who have benefitted from the CAF, and learn how to donate.

Through the partnership with the CAF, the General Authority is able to provide enrichment activities through the CIBC Miracle Fund to all children and youth involved with General Authority agencies and service regions. There are also awards available through the Scotia Capital Fund for children and youth which recognize and help them celebrate graduations, encourage them to continue with their studies when faced with challenging circumstances (Stay in School awards), and provide them with opportunities to overcome barriers (the Leap to Learning tutoring fund).

The General Authority has had tremendous support for and interest in this initiative from workers again this year, and has been able to provide funds and awards to a large number of children and youth across General Authority agencies and service regions.

## CIBC Miracle Fund:

The CIBC Miracle Fund was established to provide opportunities for children and youth to experience enrichment activities that can enhance their physical, mental, social, and developmental well-being. These are activities that children or youth may not get to experience otherwise, and provide them the opportunity to take part in activities that others their age enjoy. Some of the young people served by General Authority agencies and service regions are exceptional athletes, artists, or musicians, and this fund gives them an opportunity to develop these skills and talents further. Some examples of enrichment activities include:

- Arts and cultural events
- Music lessons
- Summer camp, including specialized camps for children with disabilities
- Sports and recreational activities
- Travel costs for special events such as band trips or school trips

Funds are available for any child or youth who is currently receiving services from a General Authority agency or service region. In 2016/2017, the General Authority approved a total of **\$20,424 for 69 children and youth.**

## **Scotia Capital Fund**

The Scotia Capital Fund is made possible through funding from Scotia Capital and is designed to support “at risk,” disadvantaged children and youth across Canada. The funds help them achieve academic success and recognize their educational efforts. The General Authority administers this fund for the agencies and service regions on behalf of the CAF.

The awards offered through the Scotia Capital Fund are the Graduation Awards, the Stay in School Awards, and Leap to Learning Tutoring.

### **Stay in School Awards**

The Stay in School Awards program was established to recognize elementary and high school students who are doing exceptionally well in school and who have overcome significant life challenges. It encourages them to finish high school and continue on to post-secondary education. The total amount awarded in this program in 2016/2017 was \$1,500.

Workers applying for this award have the option of combining it with a Graduation Award. This year, five youth received a combination Graduation/Stay in School Award for completing Grade 8 or 9 and moving on to complete high school. This amounted to \$1,750. As well, 13 youth completing Grade 12 and moving on to post-secondary education also received a combined award, for a total of \$5,200.

### **Graduation Awards**

The Graduation Awards were established to recognize at-risk, disadvantaged students who successfully meet their immediate education goals in spite of challenging life situations, and graduate from Grade 8, 9, or 12. The awards are \$50 for graduation from Grade 8 or 9, and \$100 for graduation from Grade 12. In 2016/2017, excluding the combined awards mentioned above, the General Authority issued ten Grade 8 Graduation Awards, for a total of \$500. A total of nine Grade 12 Graduation Awards, amounting to \$900, were also handed out.

### **Leap to Learning Tutoring**

Many children in care of or receiving services from Child and Family Services experience lower academic outcomes. The Leap to Learning fund helps children who struggle academically by giving them some additional support so that they can experience educational success. This year, the General Authority awarded Leap to Learning Tutoring to three children and youth, for a total of \$8,681.

The Children’s Aid Foundation continues to advocate for improved programming and services for children and youth across Canada. Their fundraising efforts are ongoing throughout the year, as they receive no government funding. As part of our ongoing collaboration and partnership with the Children’s Aid Foundation, they regularly canvas the General Authority for feedback and ideas on areas of need to explore for further funding opportunities. The commitment of the CAF and its generous donors make it possible to offer these opportunities to the children and youth served by the General Authority.

It is a pleasure to assist social workers to recognize and provide some small reward to the children and youth with whom they work.



## SCOTIA CAPITAL FUNDS

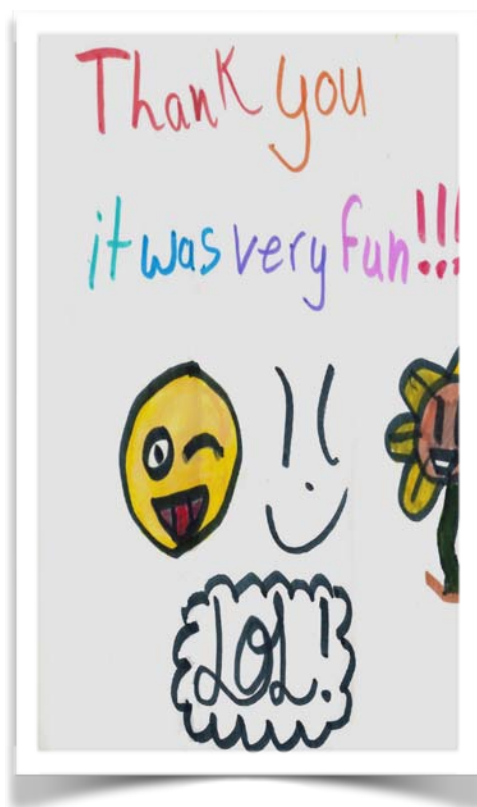
FUND NAME	NUMBER OF AWARDS ISSUED	AMOUNT OF FUNDS ISSUED
Grade 8/9 Graduation Awards	10	\$500
Grade 8/9 Graduation - Stay in School Awards	5	\$1,750
Grade 12 Graduation Awards	9	\$900
Grade 12 Graduation – Stay in School Awards	13	\$5,200
Stay in School Awards	5	\$1,500
Leap to Learning Tutoring Fund	3	\$8,681
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>\$18,531</b>



CIBC MIRACLE FUND		
	NUMBER OF AWARDS ISSUED	AMOUNT OF FUNDS ISSUED
Miracle Fund	69	\$20,424

### Vision Catcher's Fund

The Vision Catcher's Fund was established to assist youth in care to develop their strengths, maximize their potential and pursue their career aspirations. At the General Authority, funding is available to support youths ages 16 to 21 who are currently in care or on an Agreement with Young Adults (AYAs) to enhance their special talent/skill and further their career goals. Funding can be used for specialized study in high school, purchasing supplies needed to pursue a career, job search assistance, accessing post-secondary education, attending technical training or taking an apprenticeship program. In 2016/2017, the General Authority provided Vision Catcher's funding to support 30 youth in total—\$15,982 for tuition assistance and \$16,325 to help youth with talents and skills. The Authority appreciates the continued support of the Department of Families in support of this funding.



# French Language Services

In keeping with the French Language Services Regulation and the “Framework for the Development of French Language Services Plans by Child and Family Services Authorities,” the General Authority developed a **Five-Year French Language Services Plan** (FLS Plan) for the years 2016 to 2021 and a **French Language Services Annual Operating Plan** for 2016/2017. The plans were reviewed and approved by the senior management and Board of Directors of the General Authority, the Board of Directors of Santé en français, the Families Minister, and the Minister responsible for Francophone Affairs.

The Five-Year FLS Plan was designed to honour the three priorities set out in the Framework document: 1) Active Offer, 2) collaboration with the Francophone community, and 3) promotion and awareness activities. The Annual Operating Plan set out activities under each of the priorities. During 2016/2017, these activities were accomplished, as follows:

- **Active Offer** – The General Authority and its agencies and service regions each:
  - Conducted a review of signage in relation with FLS requirement.
  - Created/updated lists of staff with French language fluency.
  - Reviewed current reception practices.
  - Reviewed current orientation practices.
  - Explored ways to use the FLS supports available through Santé en français and the Francophone Secretariat.
- **Collaboration with the Francophone community** – The General Authority:
  - Initiated meetings with Santé en français twice per year.
  - Expressed willingness to accept French language social work students, however the General Authority noted placement in CFS agencies and service regions would be more consistent with learning goals for social work students—to that end, this activity was discussed at the Directors’ Leadership Table.
  - Expressed willingness to attend SEF Social Services Roundtable upon request—although not called upon to attend during 2016/2017, it is noted that the department’s FLS Co-ordinator is a regular attendee at those meetings.
  - Notified General Authority agencies and service regions of the opportunity to attend rural SEF Social Services Roundtable meetings if desired/upon request.
  - Included French Language Services as a standing item on the Directors’ Leadership Table agenda.
- **Promotion and awareness activities** – The General Authority and its agencies and service regions each:
  - Designated staff members to fulfill role of FLS Co-ordinator for their organization.

- Were re-familiarized with FLS requirements through review at the Directors' Leadership Table, including a review of the Five-Year FLS Plan and the Annual Operating Plan.
- Committed to review all communication and publications in light of FLS requirements.

Also during 2016/2017, an Annual Operating Plan was developed for 2017/2018. The new plan continues to focus on the three main priorities. Activities for 2017/2018 focus on maintaining and augmenting the steps taken in the previous year. The 2017/2018 Annual Operating Plan was approved by the General Authority senior management and Board of Directors.



# Kim Thomas Award of Distinction in Community Engagement



**Kim Thomas**

In recognition of the many contributions of late General Authority practice specialist **Kim Thomas**, in the area of the New Canadian Awareness and Education Initiative, an award was established in her name by the Board of Directors. Thomas passed away in 2016 after a 30-year career in child welfare. The Initiative was created to raise awareness and provide accurate information about Manitoba's parenting laws and the CFS system to newcomers.



**Yasmin Ali**

**Yasmin Ali** is the 2016/2017 recipient of the **Kim Thomas Award of Distinction in Community Engagement**. Ali is the president of the Canadian Muslim Women's Institute (CMWI). The CMWI is a non-profit organization established in 2006 with a goal of promoting and empowering refugee and newcomer women and their families in Manitoba—including socially, economically and spiritually. Run by a board comprised of a diverse group of women, the organization serves its members through a variety of programs.

Ali has worked closely with asylum seekers coming across the Manitoba-U.S. border in recent months, and has been instrumental in helping provide them with information, food, clothing and shelter. Ali also helped establish Sew Fair, a sewing group for Muslim women, which helps them overcome isolation, language barriers and unemployment. The program helps women use their sewing expertise to earn money while learning valuable career-building skills, such as resume writing and learning English.

The General Authority would like to acknowledge all of the New Canadian Awareness Initiative team and committee members for their dedication and innovative work. A special thank you also to Martin Itzkow and Dr. Steven Feldgaier for their leadership and participation in all aspects of the New Canadian Initiative.









General Child  
and Family Services  
Authority

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