

2022-23

Focus on Families



Child and Family Services
of Western Manitoba

A MESSAGE FROM US

Land Acknowledgement

We at Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba acknowledge and respect the history, land and the people of this area; the traditional homelands of the Dakota, Anishinabek, Oji-Cree, Cree, Dene and Métis peoples.

Our Path to Reconciliation



The child welfare system that followed residential schools continued the practice of separating children from their families, communities and cultures that created generations of trauma. The Calls to Action for child welfare have immense significance and impact on creating a new legacy for families.

We are committed to following these calls to action and the standards and principles in the Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis Children, Youth and Families.

Welcome to our 2022-2023 annual report. While this report offers a glimpse into the efforts of our staff, volunteers and Board of Directors to make a difference in the lives of children and families, it certainly does not reflect the entirety of their compassionate work.

Many in the helping sectors are feeling the weight of the last few years. Responding to child safety and family wellbeing is an essential service with at times an overwhelming sense of responsibility. And it often happens under great public scrutiny. To do this kind of work with a focus on supporting children and their families requires compassion, perseverance and commitment. It also requires keeping up to date with evidence based best practices in child welfare and knowledge of many issues impacting child safety and family well being. Parenting stressors, domestic violence, mental health, trauma and problematic substance use to name a few.

We know that children need family and families need support. We honour families, their stories, their challenges and their successes. And we honour those who continue to work alongside them with their uniqueness, complexities, and histories.

In spite of certain challenges we are proud to highlight the outcomes of some of our programs and services over the past year.

Thank-you to all of our staff and volunteers from preschool to permanency for your focus on families. We are grateful for you, the families we work with, and all who support this essential work.



Joe Ball

President, Board of Directors



Arlene Stewart

Chief Executive Officer

THE ROLE OF CHILD WELFARE

Social Workers in Child and Family Services have a complex and often difficult to understand role. To focus on child protection means focusing on more than safety. It means a focus on prevention, and family preservation. Engaging with families and their challenges that affect the safety of their children, sees child welfare workers exposed regularly to crises and trauma.

Child welfare social workers experience burnout at a higher rate than other helping professions. They have a higher rate of secondary trauma. They face a high rate of public scrutiny. They must adapt to change to effect change. They need resilience to foster that in others. They show strength to help families to build on their own. They are committed to learning and applying best practices to improve the outcomes for children.

PRACTICE INNOVATIONS



Safety Organized
Practice Model



Trauma Informed
Care



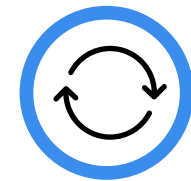
Youth
Engagement



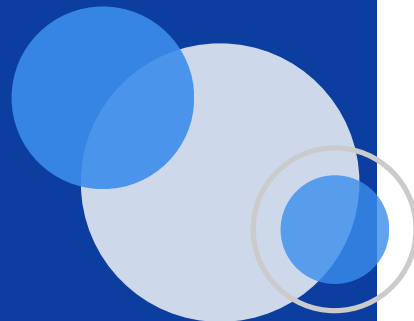
Family
Engagement



Domestic Violence
Informed Practice
(Safe & Together)



Intensive
Permanency
Services



PREVENTION

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS

PRESCHOOL ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

VICTORIA DAY CARE CENTRE

ELSPETH REID FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE

Investment in early childhood education and strengthening families is a **prevention strategy**. Children are nurtured in all areas of their development. They need safety and security. Parents receive encouragement to understand and support this development and respond to their children's needs.

The Preschool Enrichment Program started in 1966 as a place for children to receive stimulating, enriching experiences vital to their healthy growth and development. It was a combination of community involvement, volunteer participation and staff that enabled the program to get where it is today. Special programming exists for many areas of child development. Parenting programs are offered to help parents develop their skills in becoming more effective parents.



TOP: Victoria Day Care Centre turned 50 this past year. BOTTOM: Our Family Resource Centre staff at the Preschool Wellness Fair.



Supporting families

Preschool staff were working hard to support a parent who was having trouble securing transportation to get her child to and from preschool every day. It was important for the child to attend, since he was seeing the speech language therapist from Brandon School Division for difficulties with his speech. Unwilling to let him simply stop coming, staff reached out to mom and made arrangements for the child to start coming on the van. The parent was very thankful as she knows that her child benefits from our program and she wants to see him succeed in kindergarten in the fall.

-Karolina Scott

PREVENTION

ELSPETH REID FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE

4,920

Parenting group attendance

472

Total families

200

New families

The Family Resource Centre is the place for families, providing a welcoming space, care, support and education to children and their caregivers. Children are at the heart of the family strengthening programs that build protective factors in parents and reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect.

21

People attended the Traditional Indigenous Parenting Program

2752

Visits for respite or parent program childcare at the Family Resource Centre

“

"I really enjoyed learning and being respected by the facilitator when I shared my experiences with my children"

"Thanks for helping me raise my kids"

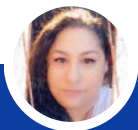
"I felt like I could speak freely without being judged"

"The child care staff are amazing women!"

"It was hard to look back at how I was raised but I understand it better now"

"The course helped me understand the changes I see in my baby, her emotions, abilities and development"

”



Volunteers change lives

I like to volunteer because it gets me out of the house and interacting with other people from the community. I enjoy the opportunities to meet with peers and learn their 'story,' and to give back to the community that I currently call home. I had a blast with families in the ParentChild+ Program, and as a mentor I got to experience a whole different dynamic while learning about (new to me) familial situations and physical abilities.

-Allison Stevens

EARLY INTERVENTION

DESIGNATED INTAKE SERVICES

2,127

Intakes responded to this past year

The first point of contact with child welfare may be through the Intake system. **Intake workers** respond to concerns for child safety and risk as well to requests for support services. Immediate child safety concerns require an immediate response. Intake workers look to families' own support networks to create safety for children and prevent the need for removal. The main risk factors for parents continue to be substance use, mental health issues, stress and lack of supports.

432

Transferred for ongoing services

6

Northern Authority

50

Southern Authority

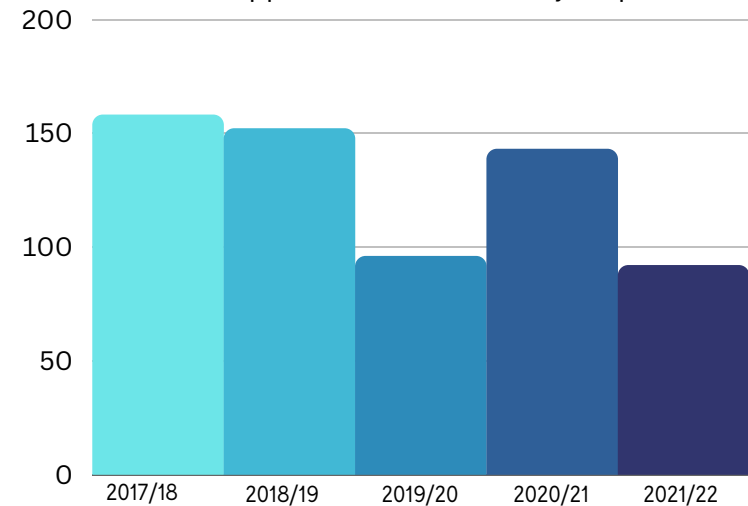
16

Métis Authority

360

General Authority

Trend in apprehensions over a 5-year period



Trauma Informed Approach

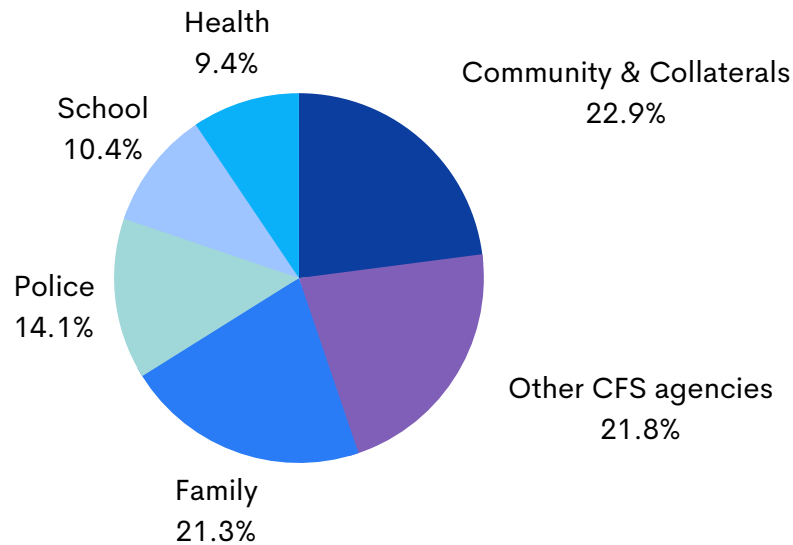
Intake workers are often the face of the Agency for both families and community collaterals. We work with families for their initial assessment, working with them and their supports. Sometimes this means assisting in building a support network. Our goal on intake is to discover or build enough safety within a family network; enough that any concerns with child safety can be mitigated. We make an ongoing effort to bridge gaps between other community services in hope to better service families. The hope is families will have a lasting circle of support beyond our involvement.

-Lauren Doyle

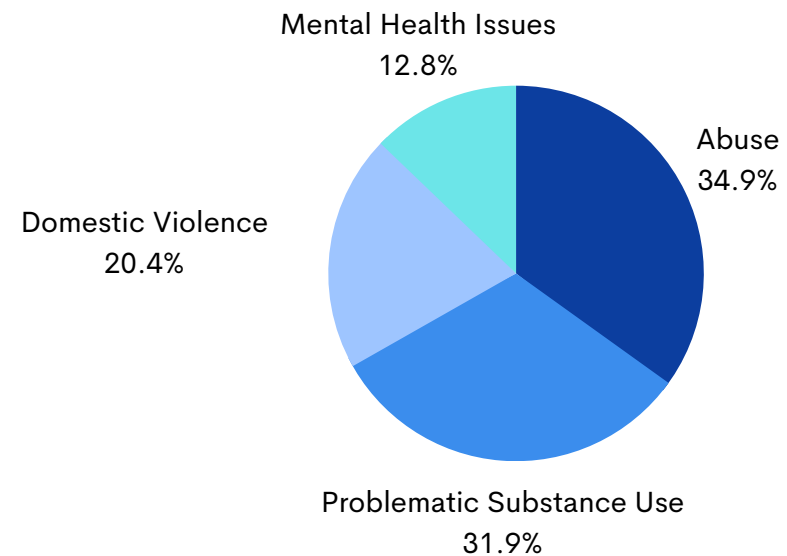
EARLY INTERVENTION

DESIGNATED INTAKE SERVICES

Intake Referral Sources



Prominent Issues Present at Intake



As part of the Act respecting First Nations, Inuit, Métis Children Youth and Families, **Indigenous Governing Bodies** are notified when a significant action is taken involving an Indigenous child. As a child welfare agency involved with the 60's scoop, many survivors request information about their history of involvement. **Intake workers** must have an understanding of the intent of colonization and the ongoing impact of multigenerational trauma.



Our Commitment to Reconciliation

In the context of working at a Non-Indigenous agency as a DIA Intake worker, I believe that we hold a very challenging position. It includes always learning from families and communities, and ensuring child safety. In addition, I strongly believe that we have a responsibility to families and community to ensure that not only do we assist families in (re)discovering their own strengths and wisdom, we also need to continue to recognize the significant amount of time that is needed for families to heal. When I meet with a family at intake, I work hard to ensure that I consistently acknowledge the devastating harm that the child welfare system has perpetuated on Indigenous families. I also verbally acknowledge to them that I'm aware of the power, authority, fear, anger, and all the other emotions that my presence brings to the family, typically when they are experiencing crisis or when they are at their worst. Our goal is to be transparent with caregivers about the current concerns that brought the family to our attention, and to highlight all of the family's strengths and safety that already exist. We strive to practice cultural safety, throughout our work which includes exploring networks, relevant services, and safety planning. We strive to ensure that families find our service delivery is relevant, helpful, and aligns with the family values/beliefs on their journey.

-Courtney Olsen

FAMILY PRESERVATION

BRANDON AND RURAL FAMILY SERVICES

Family Service workers engage with families at many points of vulnerability using evidence based practice frameworks. The goal is to address risks to children to keep them safely with their parents or caregivers.

Preserving families means preserving relationships, culture and important connections. The Agency has a broad continuum of services that aim to **preserve families** and prevent children from entering care. Accessing these services can be a challenge for rural families, as well as rural based workers. They show the importance of creative problem solving, resilience, and building relationships with families, collaterals, and other network supports.

Voluntary Family Services

184

Families

319

Children

Protection Family Services

416

Families

716

Children



Rural Factors

Our team prides ourselves in understanding the dynamics – both positive and negative – of living and working within a rural setting as this is how many of us were raised ourselves. We work diligently to create strong relationships with our clients, their families, and the community collaterals we work with. We understand that this is the foundation of creating any positive change among systems, whether a community as a whole or a family unit. While we spend a large amount of time on the road and working out of our cars, we know it is worth it to meet our clients where they are at, offering face to face services and support when families need it most.

-Kirsten DeBeats



Family Centered Response

Keeping families together is an ongoing challenge in the child welfare field. It is a balance between managing family conflicts while also addressing safety concerns. Ensuring that families maintain their connection while maintaining safety is our priority. We do this by having open and clear communication with our families and their children. As well as utilizing the programs at the Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre to support and maintain child centered parenting for our clients.

-Jess Bell

FAMILY PRESERVATION

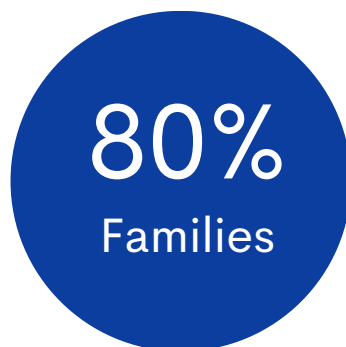
IN-HOME SUPPORT SERVICES

The role of **In-Home Support Services** is to help parents meet identified goals to address concerns impacting their parenting.

In-Home Support Services



Received In-Home support



Averted children
coming into care



Supporting Families in Rural Communities

I enjoy providing in-home support to our rural families, being able to help connect families to resources and supports in their area that they otherwise might not be aware of is extremely rewarding. I feel a key piece of my role is helping families celebrate little victories and helping them achieve their parenting goals. For the families we support, I think they really appreciate knowing they have someone in their corner that genuinely wants to see them succeed.

-Brandi Dyhm

Support of addiction recovery:

A social work assistant transported children into Winnipeg once a week to visit with their mother, a survivor of domestic violence who was in a 6-month treatment program for co-occurring addiction to methamphetamines and mental health concerns, helping this mom feel comfortable remaining in the treatment program and preserving the relationship between her and her children. This resulted in the recent reunification of her with her children.

Supporting family networks:

In-Home Support was provided to an adult sibling group so that they could parent their younger sibling, as their mother is struggling with addiction and is unable to do so.

FAMILY PRESERVATION

Safe Care

The goals of the Safe Care Program are to reduce child neglect and maltreatment through a prevention and early intervention approach. It is evidence informed and provides high risk parents with skills to understand their role and strengthen their parenting. Evaluations of Safe Care show a positive impact on three main goals of child welfare services: safety, permanency and child and family well-being.

Family Engagement Meetings

Family Engagement meetings remain one of the most effective ways to create a safety network for children. This facilitated group meeting identifies support people who the family agrees will hear about the concerns affecting the safety and well-being of their children, as well as themselves.

179

Meetings held

88

Families

191

Children served

4
Trained
Safe Care
Facilitators

11
Families Referred
to the Program

65%

Of participants felt communication was improved across the network

54%

Of participants felt the well-being or safety of children was improved

81%

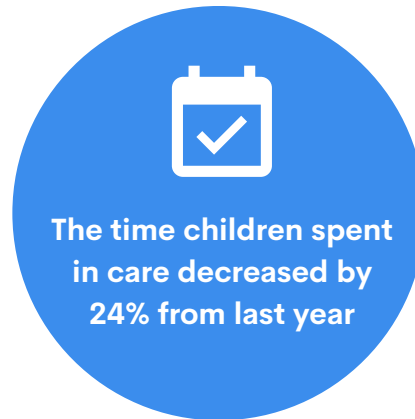
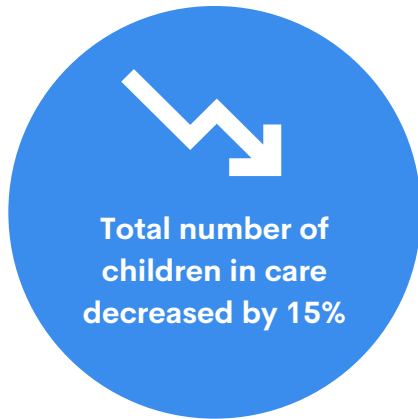
Of participants felt the expectations were clear

73%

Of participants felt everybody involved was able to contribute to planning

FAMILY PRESERVATION

The combined efforts of families, staff, networks and collateral supports saw more children being able to remain in their own homes or with family. This intensive and intentional work contributed to a further reduction in the number of children in agency care.



Children's Therapy Program

The Children's Therapy Program offers groups for parents and caregivers in the **Intergenerational Trauma Treatment Model** to help them understand how their past traumas affect how they parent.



Number of groups offered



Number of participants



The principles of the Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit, Métis children, youth and families focus on **preserving** family community, and culture.

Talking, Learning, Caring (TLC) is a support and educational group for parents involved in the child welfare system to ensure they know their rights and where colonial history and its impacts are explored.

Agency staff receive training in residential schools, pre-contact parenting and Jordan's Principle.

REUNIFICATION

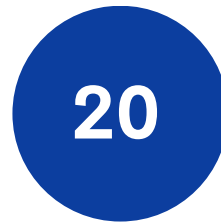
Several factors can contribute to a higher likelihood of successful **family reunifications** of children in care; visitation, support networks, training for resource parents and group care workers, positive relationships between worker and family and **post reunification support**.



Families Supported

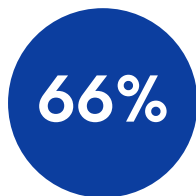


Reunifications

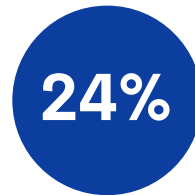


Children remain at home after reunification

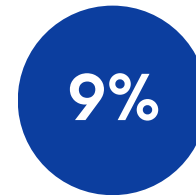
Of the children who exited Agency care:



Returned to parent care



Transferred to another agency



Reached age of majority

Supports for Reunification



Complex trauma case consultations teach parents and caregivers how to respond and regulate trauma based behaviour in children.



Social Work staff are trained in the General Authority's Reunification Readiness Assessment tool.



The Family Finding/Family Seeing Model provides a framework and tools to enhance family engagement, and find and support critical connections for children.



Positive Impact through Natural Support Networks

The Family Finding Model continues to be useful to mitigate loss for our children, youth and families. This model positively impacts our kinship placements and helps our children, youth and families develop a sense of belonging and grow their natural support networks. Family finding incorporates our mission statement of keeping families together.

-Ronnallee Robertson

REUNIFICATION

Parents whose children are in care receive coaching from **visit supervisors** to improve the relationship with their children. **Social Work Assistants** provide this coaching and supervision to ensure children have safe and supported contact with their parents.

Resource Homes

Resource parents are a support for the children they are caring for and their families. They provide security, stability and help ensure children in care have regular contact with their first families.

17

Resource Homes participated in training

Group Care

The group care research project led by the University of Regina focused on implementing a Trauma Informed Training and support program for youth care workers to increase their resilience and reduce compassion fatigue.

Staff saw a positive shift in workplace culture, their knowledge of trauma informed care, and learned new ways of responding to the needs of youth in group care.



Group Care Project

3

Provinces participated

226

Total staff participated in project

17

Staff from our Agency participated



Equipping Resource Homes

Resource parent training is built on a formal informed practice, which means helping resource parents as well as children identify the meaning of what happens to them. Our resource and kinship homes continues to provide safety and stability for children and now have also become healing homes which enables them to have a sense of who they are and where they came from. The orientation and trauma informed trainings continue to be offered to support the ongoing healing for families, children and youth.

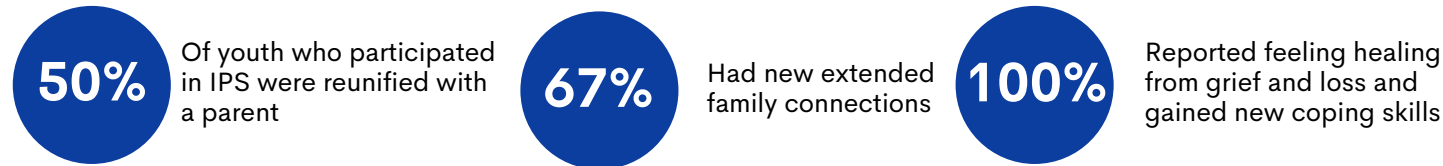
-Brenda Paziuk

PERMANENCY

INTENSIVE PERMANENCY SERVICES

Every child needs reliable life long connections and a sense of belonging. This is especially critical for children who have not grown up with immediate or extended family.

The **Intensive Permanency Services** (IPS) program helps children and youth in care address past grief and trauma, heal relationships, and find family or other supportive connections. It is a two year program with a maximum of 8 youth at a time per caseload.



Permanency Team

Permanency and Resource Development Social workers worked with children in care and their families to provide increased family contact and family connections, and where possible, reunification.



Permanent Wards reunified



Children left care with guardianship to family



Connecting youth to a Network of Support

Connection lies at the heart of our every effort. Its inception is both a foundational approach to our work and an ideal end goal for those we serve. To engage and help youth and their families, we have to show up with care and compassion. In turn, one of the most fundamental desired permanency outcomes for youth and young adults is to ensure that they have lifelong connections within an informal network of support to live a fulfilling, safe and stable life.

-Cali Cline



"I felt it provided me with a safe place to talk about loss and my experiences"

"I used tools and creative activities to learn healthy coping strategies"

"I felt it provided me with a sense of wholeness and stability"

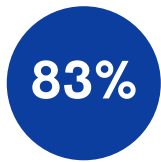
"It helped create healthy connections and relationships for me"



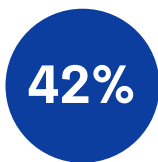
PERMANENCY

Agreement with Young Adults

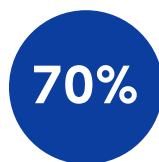
Agreement with Young Adults provide extended financial and emotional support to youth over the age of 18 who are transitioning out of the child welfare system.



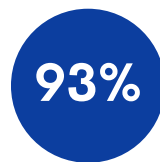
Access to Housing



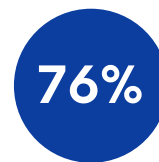
Pursuing post-secondary



Has source of Income



Not actively involved in the legal system



Established relational connections

Youth Works Program

Youth Works is an employment training program funded by the Children's Aid Foundation of Canada, in partnership with the Royal Bank and Employment and Social Development Canada. The agency, as one of six sites across Canada, is in its sixth year of delivering this program to youth currently or formerly in care between the ages of 16 and 29. Youthworks provides employment readiness skills, training, job placements and support.



Provided transportation prior to first pay



Youth taken to job fair



6 youth employed within 3 months



The Children's Aid Foundation Home Base fund provides emergency supports to establish or maintain safe and stable housing.

10

Youth received assistance when transitioning out of care

Feedback from participating Youth

"I'm learning how to take initiative and am getting support in managing all parts of life so I can be ready for a job."

"Thank you for not giving up on me. You kept coming back."

CONNECTION

Board of Directors engages with Community

The **Board of Directors** for Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba plans yearly community consultations with our partners and collaterals across the areas that we serve.

These events provide opportunity to work collaboratively with other child, youth and family serving organizations to understand how each can better respond to needs in our communities.

The Agency goals are derived from our mission to protect children and strengthen families. One of our goals encompasses working in partnership with the community and other social service agencies in the communities that we serve.

Our community-led board hosts the community consultations in Brandon and rural surrounding areas on a yearly basis. The collaborative discussions lead to partnerships, new initiatives and informed feedback from collaterals, Agency staff and clients.



Community Consults held



Brandon Collateral based



Virden Collateral based

Purpose of Community Consultations



Responsibility to Stakeholders



Further the understanding of Family and Community needs



Information needed for strategic planning priorities

Collateral Feedback

Thanks for organizing. Meetings like this inform your agency, but also help all of us and in turn, benefits the families and communities.

I think continuing to offer these consultations would be beneficial, so we can all work together to help as many children and families as we can. Together we are stronger!

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

For the Year End, March 31, 2023 | Unaudited, Prepared by Mark Gillis, Comptroller

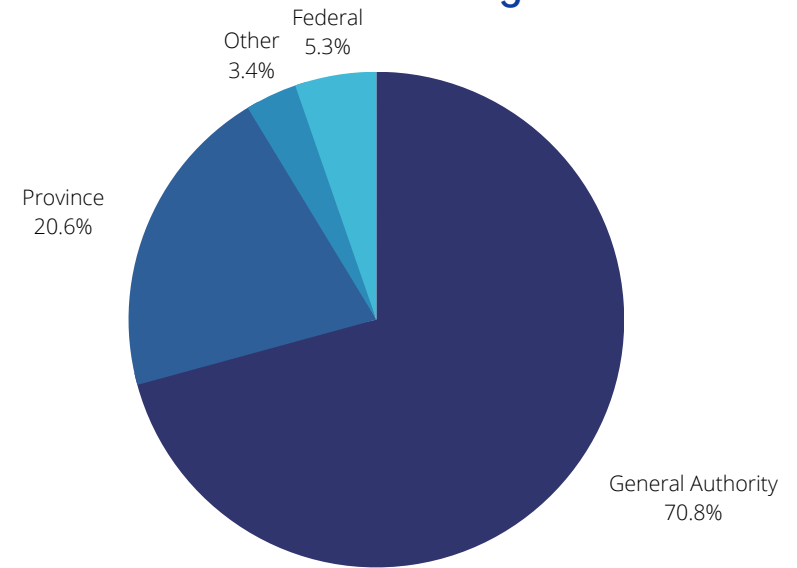
REVENUE

General Authority	9,556,859
Province of Manitoba	2,776,011
Government of Canada	456,195
Other	717,917
Total	13,506,982

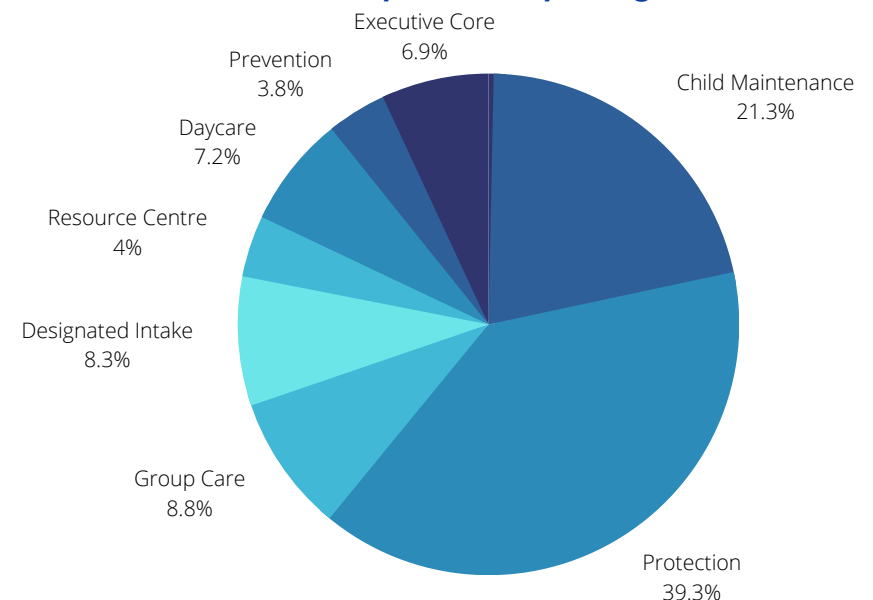
EXPENSE

YouthWorks	42,653
Child Maintenance	2,721,891
Protection	5,016,514
Group Care	1,127,704
Designated Intake	1,062,920
Resource Centre	506,204
Daycare	918,848
Prevention	491,209
Executive Core	883,529
Total	12,771,472
Surplus/(Deficit)	735,510

2022-23 Funding



2022-23 Expenses by Program



CARING COMMUNITY

Our community supporters are the reason why we can help so many children and their families throughout the year.

LAST DONATION TO SUPPORT BABIES



Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (IODE) Diamond Jubilee (1960) Chapter in Brandon made their last donation of layettes – packages of baby clothing, toys and blankets – to CFS

Western to give to adopted children or mothers in need. It's a decades long tradition from this group of ladies and we truly appreciate all the packages we've received over the years.

ROTARY SUPPORTS US



Rotary Brandon Chapter hosts the Rotary Wine Festival Gala and the proceeds from this event go to our Family Resource Centre.

TEAMING UP WITH MINT ORTHODONTICS



Thank you to the Mint Orthodontics team and their customers who donated books and pajamas for vulnerable children. Thank you for being part of our community of caring individuals.

TELUS SUPPORTS KIDS CAMPS

Telus awarded CFS with an \$10,000 grant in support of The Sun Fund for Kids Program. It exists to send Westman children to summer camps around the region who come from situations that otherwise would prevent their participation. Thank you Telus Foundation for supporting kids in our region.



CANADIAN TIRE HOSTS CFS HOLIDAY TREE

Thank you to Canadian Tire in Brandon who hosted our local holiday gift tree. Thank you to the community for generously donating their time to find the right gift for children in need. We helped over 400 kids this year.



VIRDEN HOME HARDWARE SUPPORTS LOCAL KIDS

Home Hardware in Virden hosted our first rural CFS Holiday Tree this year with overwhelming support for local children. Thank you for supporting our cause and for supporting over 50 children who without your help would have not had a present this past holiday season.

OUR SUPPORTERS

Thank you to all of our wonderful supporters





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