



Commission to Promote  
Sustainable Child Welfare

Commission de promotion de la viabilité  
des services de bien-être de l'enfance

May 2010

## HELP US BUILD OUR MAILING LIST

If you know of someone who should be receiving this newsletter and other information from the Commission, please pass this newsletter along to them and suggest they add themselves to our mailing list.

They can do that by sending an e-mail to [sustainingchildwelfare@ontario.ca](mailto:sustainingchildwelfare@ontario.ca) with the subject line: « Add me to your mailing list ».

(Personal information you provide, such as your name and email address, will not be disclosed by the Commission without consent unless required by law. Any personal information collected will only be used to send you news about the Commission).

If you have any questions regarding privacy and your personal information, please email [sustainingchildwelfare@ontario.ca](mailto:sustainingchildwelfare@ontario.ca).

## ABOUT THE COMMISSION TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE CHILD WELFARE

The Minister of Children and Youth Services appointed the Commission on November 20, 2009 with a three-year mandate to develop and implement solutions to promote the sustainability of child welfare in Ontario.

The Commission reports directly to the Honorable Laurel Broten, Minister of Children and Youth Services. The Commission has the authority under the Child and Family Services Act to issue directives to Children's Aid Societies to take specific actions that will promote sustainable child welfare. In parallel, the Commission has the authority to make recommendations to the Minister on matters relating to how the government manages and sets policy for child welfare.

# Staying Connected

## An update from the Commission to Promote Sustainable Child Welfare

### Welcome to our second newsletter

In our first newsletter in March of this year, we talked about progress that we'd made on our start-up objectives: getting organized, getting connected, and getting grounded. It's been a busy couple of months for the Commission! We've now completed our launch, set our priorities for the coming year, and we're hard at work at addressing them.

This second newsletter aims to continue to keep you connected to the Commission's work. It's our way of making sure everyone with an interest in child welfare can keep track of what we're doing. We plan to issue this newsletter at least four times per year. You can sign up to receive it directly by e-mail.

### Please visit our website

You can now visit us online at [www.sustainingchildwelfare.ca](http://www.sustainingchildwelfare.ca). Our website will provide you with up to date information on the mandate and activities of the Commission. You can also access current and past issues of our newsletters there, and find out about ways to get involved in the Commission's work. As our work unfolds, we will also be posting working papers, recommendations, directives, and other outputs of our work on promoting sustainable child welfare.

### Our new location

At the end of March, the Commission moved into our permanent location at 401 Bay Street on the 21st floor. We're easy to find and accessible by subway and taxi. Our walls are now adorned with pictures and paintings and other pieces of art that were loaned to us by CASs and other child welfare partners across the province ... so we have ongoing reminders of what our work is all about and who it is for.

Our new offices have teleconferencing and videoconference capability, so even though we can't always be together in the same location, we can still talk to our partners face to face.

## AGENCIES THAT WE WILL HAVE VISITED BY THE END OF JUNE

Algoma Children's Aid Society  
 Bruce Children's Aid Society  
 Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton  
 Catholic Children's Aid Society of Toronto  
 Chatham-Kent Children's Services  
 Child & Family Services of Timmins & District  
 Children's Aid Society of Brant  
 Children's Aid Society of Hamilton  
 Children's Aid Society of Owen Sound & the County of Grey  
 Children's Aid Society of Oxford County  
 Children's Aid Society of Simcoe County  
 Children's Aid Society of Toronto  
 City of Kingston & County of Frontenac Children's Aid Society  
 Dilico & Anishinabek Family Care  
 Durham Children's Aid Society  
 Elgin Family & Children's Services  
 Family & Children's Services of Guelph & Wellington  
 Family & Children's Services of the District of Rainy River  
 Family and Child Services of Niagara  
 Haldimand & Norfolk Children's Aid Society  
 Halton Children's Aid Society  
 Hastings Children's Aid Society  
 Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society  
 Kenora-Patricia Children & Family Services  
 London-Middlesex Children's Aid Society  
 Peel Children's Aid Society  
 Prince Edward Children's Aid Society  
 Renfrew Family & Children's Services  
 Sarnia-Lambton Children's Aid Society  
 Services à l'enfance et à la famille du Timiskaming Child & Family Services  
 Services aux enfants et adultes de Prescott-Russell Services to Children & Adults  
 Services Familiaux Jeanne Sauvé Family Services  
 Sudbury-Manitoulin Children's Aid Society  
 The Children's Aid Society of Ottawa  
 Waterloo Family & Children's Services  
 Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society  
 York Region Children's Aid Society

## Commission Staffing

May and June are active recruitment months at the Commission with processes underway to fill the positions for the five members of the Commission's core staff team. This team will consist of: an Executive Lead, Manager, Senior Program/Policy Analyst, and two administrative staff. In late April, the Commission also extended an invitation to CASs for nominations for a short-term secondment to support the Commission's work on funding approach that will get underway in June. The Commission expects to be in a position to announce all core team positions by the summer.

## Commission on the Move

The spring has been a busy time for the Commissioners in travelling across the province to visit individual CASs. By the end of June, we'll have completed over 30 of these visits with the goal of having visited all CASs by the end of September. This activity is providing Commissioners with a more in-depth view of issues and circumstances pertaining to each agency, as well as opportunities for positive change.

We estimate that by the end of June, our visits will have given us the opportunity for dialogue with over 500 individuals including CAS board members, executive teams, front line staff, foster and kin families, current and former youth-in-care, leaders of community partners like children's mental health, school boards, and public health, and leaders from Outside Paid Resources. Our visits have also taken us to group homes and foster homes, family visitation centres, and the sites of community partners.

Beyond our visits to individual CASs, the Commission also has several upcoming opportunities to meet with key stakeholder organizations including:

May 29 - first annual League of Foster Families (LOFF) conference

June 2 – Ontario Association of Residences Treating Youth (OARTY) annual conference

June 3 – a forum organized by OPSEU and CUPE to share with the Commission some of the perspectives of front line workers

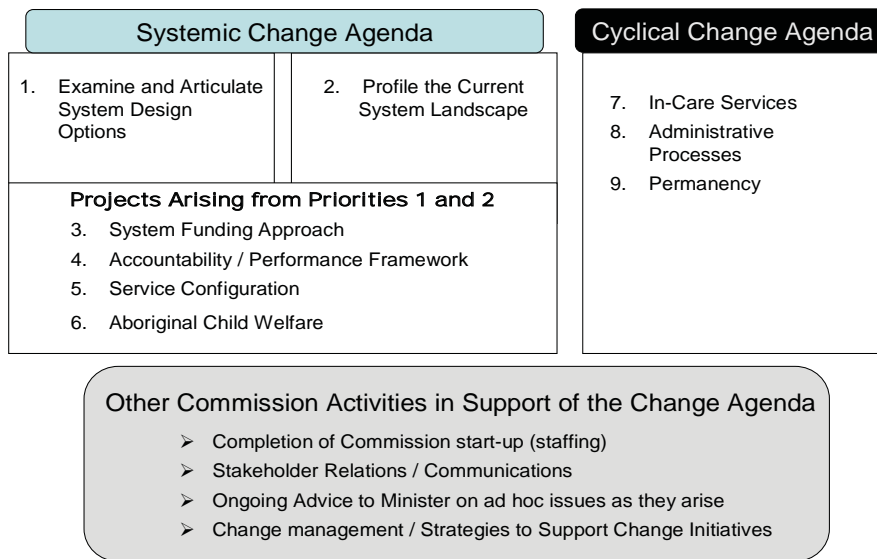
June 4 - annual meeting of Foster Parents Society of Ontario (FPSO)

June 7 - annual Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) conference

## Our 10/11 Priorities

In our last newsletter, we talked about our systemic and near-term change agendas. These two agendas have generated nine priorities for the Commission's work in the 10/11 year. In the coming months, the Commission intends to issue a number of working papers arising from these nine change priorities. All working papers will be posted on our website. The figure below depicts these nine priorities and the Commission's agenda over the coming year.

### 2010-11 Commission Priorities



A major milestone for the Commission will be the issuing of a *Vision and Strategy* document by the end of June 2010. This document will consolidate the conclusions reached during the first phase of the Commission's work. It will set forth the Commission's vision for what a sustainable child welfare system should look like and will outline the strategy the Commission will be pursuing to realize this vision. As such, this document will provide a focal point for ongoing discussions with government and stakeholders and will serve as a framework for the Commission's work during the remainder of its mandate.

### Projects Currently Underway

In April, two significant projects got underway relating to our 2010/11 priorities.

The ***in-care services project*** is focussed on profiling existing in-care capacity and examining opportunities to optimize the use of in-care services, leveraging best practices from Ontario and other jurisdictions. Steve Lough and Associates is leading this work for the Commission. We are expecting this project to wrap up in July.

The ***landscape project***, aims to develop an overall description of the current child welfare system in Ontario. It is intended to describe the current state, key trends in recent years, variability and similarities among CASs, and logical ways of clustering agencies in order to surface options for future system design. Bay Consulting is leading this project for us. We expect to complete this work in mid-July.

In early May, groundwork began for the "***funding approach***" priority with the issuing of an RFS for consulting support. Given the importance of this work, a number of mechanisms will be created to maximize inputs from CASs, government and experts in system funding approaches. We anticipate convening an Advisory Committee for this work together with a number of reference panels. Watch our website and newsletter for further updates when the work gets fully underway in June.

## Appointment of the Aboriginal Advisor

We were very pleased to hear about the appointment of Mr. John Beaucage as Aboriginal Advisor to the Minister of Children and Youth Services. His years of experience and strong advocacy on health and child welfare issues will be of tremendous benefit to Aboriginal children receiving services from the ministry and its agencies.

We look forward to working with Mr. Beaucage as we formulate strategies to improve the sustainability of the child welfare system

## Project Artwork

In April, while visiting the Family and Children's Services of Guelph Wellington, Commissioner Ene Underwood was presented with a contribution to "Project Artwork" in the form of caricatures of the 3 Commissioners done by Sadie Snip, daughter of Mitch Snip, FCSGW's supervisor of legal services. Barry, Ene and Wendy were delighted to receive these caricatures and they are now hanging in the reception area of the Commission's offices. The Commission still has extra wall space and encourages agencies and partners to continue to send us pictures or artwork that will continue to remind us of what our work is all about: children, youth, and families!



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