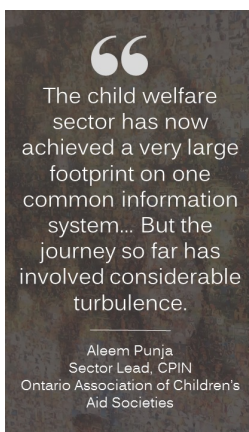


## In the February/March Issue

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## Child welfare provincial information system approaches the halfway mark



**Aleem Punja, Sector Lead for CPIN, discusses the challenges of deployment and why the child welfare sector continues to move forward**

**In the next couple of months almost half of Ontario's Children's Aid Societies will have joined CPIN, the provincial information system that was a key recommendation at several**

**inquests. Is this a turning point to celebrate?**

I think this absolutely is something to celebrate. The child welfare sector has now achieved a very large footprint on one common information system. Reaching this point is key to [our commitment](#) to reconfigure the child welfare system so it better serves

children and families across the province. But the journey so far has involved considerable turbulence. Children's Aid Societies that have deployed CPIN are experiencing significant challenges that need immediate resolution. CPIN in its current state is not meeting the needs of Children's Aid Societies.

### **What are the challenges that most concern you right now?**

There are some serious technical issues that urgently need to be fixed, such as the difficulties most agencies are experiencing getting data out of the system in the form of a report. For example, they are not able to pull a report that tells them where their kids in care are living. For obvious reasons, this is a technical issue that the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) needs to address as soon as possible. Until it is addressed, Children's Aid Societies are having to access this information with manual file crawls.

Read the rest of our [\*\*interview with Aleem\*\*](#).

## **The Truth and Reconciliation Commission directed its first five recommendations for change at child welfare.**

**Dawn Flegel, Executive Director of Sarnia-Lambton Children's Aid Society, talks about the steps her agency has taken to start repairing their relationship with Indigenous communities**



### **When did Sarnia-Lambton Children's Aid's journey towards reconciliation with First Nations communities begin?**

When I first started as executive director at Sarnia-Lambton five years ago the relationships between the agency and First Nations weren't good. First Nation communities viewed our agency quite negatively; people were very afraid of us and our authority. Thankfully both the agency and the First Nations were at the same point in wanting something different

and new and were willing to develop a relationship to make things better for kids and families in our communities. They have been amazing communities to work with.

### **What are some of the first steps your agency took to improve the relationship with First Nations?**

The first thing we did was to turn a focus on First Nations services into a strategic direction. To do this we started an Indigenous Working Group on the board of directors, and added three positions to the board from each of the three First Nations in our jurisdiction. By making it a strategic direction, by adding board members, by talking about it, by valuing it at staff meetings and reporting on it, we really elevated the status of this work. We recognized that to make change every single day and every single

decision in your agency has got to have the question embedded, "How does this impact Indigenous families and staff?"

Read more of our [interview with Dawn](#).

## 6 things you should know about one of the performance indicators that helps evaluate the safety of Ontario's children

**This spring, Children's Aid Societies will publicly report five child welfare performance indicators, an annual commitment to increase the accountability and transparency of the child welfare sector.**

Check out the infographic below that answers six questions about the indicator "Recurrence of Child Protection Concerns After Ongoing Service". To learn more about the provincial child welfare performance indicators project and to view the sector's results, [click here](#). To view the infographic in more detail, [click here](#).



6 things you should know about one of the performance indicators that helps evaluate the safety of Ontario's children



### What is "Recurrence of Child Protection Concerns After Ongoing Services"?

"Recurrence of child protection concerns after ongoing services" is a child welfare performance indicator based on data collected by Ontario's Children's Aid Societies.

It measures the number of families whose cases were closed after receiving services but returned to the child welfare system within 12 months because of further safety concerns.

### Why is it important?

Measuring families that return to the system after receiving child welfare services is one important method





## Why do children and families return with further protection concerns?

### Urgent Protection Concerns

The average percentage of cases that return which involve an urgent protection concern. These include cases of **physical and sexual abuse, neglect under the age of 4, and severe harm.\***

3%

### Chronic Needs

The average percentage of cases that return which involve chronic needs. These include cases of families struggling with **mental health problems, substance abuse, and extreme poverty.\***

16%

## What is the average rate of recurrence?



Since 2010 this performance indicator has averaged provincially between 19 and 20 percent. This means that approximately 2 in 10 families that receive services from Children's Aid Societies return after their cases are closed because of further safety concerns.

## How does the indicator vary across the province?

The provincial indicator varies across Ontario's Children's Aid Societies, ranging from 9% to 26% of children and families returning within 12 months of receiving child welfare services.

University of Toronto analysis indicates that the rate of recurrence is much higher for agencies that are serving Indigenous communities located in parts of Ontario where there are few community services and high poverty rates.\*





## When will the new indicator results be released?

Children's Aid Societies will report their 2014-2015 data results on "Recurrence of protection concerns after ongoing services" in Spring 2017.

\* Connecting Child Welfare Research to Policy & Practice, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Connection Grant overview, Barbara Fallon, Tara Black & Nico Trocmé, University of Toronto, Factor-Inwentash/Faculty of Social Work (2016)

To learn more about the child welfare performance indicators project and to view the sector's results, visit [oacas.org/data-results](http://oacas.org/data-results).

## Indigenous youth in care brought together for inaugural leadership gathering



On December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016 a small group of older Indigenous youth joined their elders, Children's Aid Society staff, and members of the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Society's (OACAS) Indigenous Services team for three days of cultural programming and leadership development at an adventure therapy camp in South River, Ontario. A first of its kind, the gathering included thirteen Indigenous youth, ranging in age from 15 to 21 years, with

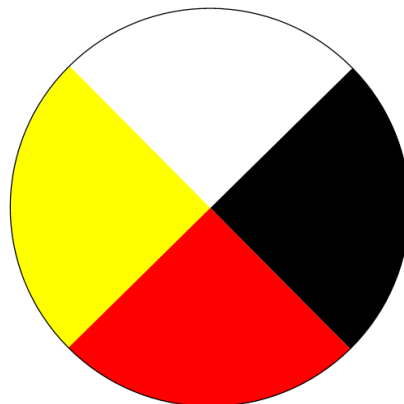
experience in the Ontario child welfare system.

[Read all](#) about the gathering.

## Sixties Scoop plaintiffs win class-action lawsuit

After seven years of legal action, an Ontario judge has ruled in favour of the plaintiffs in the "Sixties Scoop" class-action lawsuit. The court has not yet determined how much the federal government must pay in damages. The plaintiffs had sued for \$1.3 billion, amounting to about \$85,000 for each affected person.

The Sixties Scoop was the result of a federal-provincial arrangement in which Ontario child welfare services placed as many as 16,000 Indigenous children with non-Indigenous families from 1965 to 1984.



Read more about the case and ruling [here](#).

## We're changing the way you get The Voice. Don't miss out! Ensure you're registered at [myOACAS.org](http://myOACAS.org).

If you're an employee or Board Member at a Children's Aid Society and you haven't already done so, complete your registration at [myOACAS.org](http://myOACAS.org) to continue receiving *The Voice*. There you have the option of selecting which electronic publications you would like to receive from us. Make sure you check "The Voice" to receive future issues.

If you've already signed up for [myOACAS.org](http://myOACAS.org) but you aren't sure if you opted to receive *The Voice* going forward, contact Brynn Clarke at [bclarke@oacas.org](mailto:bclarke@oacas.org).

## The Voice Survey Winners!

Last fall we conducted a survey of *The Voice* readers to gather feedback on our newsletter content, frequency and style. As an incentive to participate we offered \$15 Tim Horton's gift cards to three lucky readers. The winners were:

- Dawn Baetens - Early Childhood Educator Professional
- Zainab Shebeita - Settlement Counsellor at The Arab Community Centre of Toronto
- Jessie Cartwright - Child Protection Worker at Highland Shores Children's Aid Society

Congratulations! And thank you to everyone who participated. Your input is extremely valuable as we plan future editions of the newsletter.

If you have additional feedback about *The Voice*, please don't hesitate to connect with us at [public\\_editor@oacas.org](mailto:public_editor@oacas.org).

## Resources You Can Use

### Child Maltreatment-Related Service Decisions by Ethno-Racial Categories in Ontario in 2013-August 2016

[This fact sheet](#) examines the ethno-racial disproportionality and disparities in child welfare investigation and service decisions using data from the Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (2013). It was written by researchers at the University of Toronto.

### Joining the Circle Guide for Educators

COPA, in partnership with the Ontario Teachers' Federation, has created a guide, entitled [Joining the Circle](#), to assist educators of all kinds in ensuring the inclusion of

Indigenous students. "The information and tools provided [in the guide] are designed to help educators strengthen our understanding and respect for Indigenous histories and cultures."

## Upcoming Events

[Gathering Our Voices: National Aboriginal Youth Conference](#), Kelowna, British Columbia, March 21-24, 2017

[Love Thy Selfie: Aboriginal Girls Conference 2017](#), Peterborough, Ontario, March 24-26, 2017

[Wisdom2Action: From Trauma to Resilience](#), Ottawa, ON, March 24, 2017

[Expanding Horizons for the Early Years: You Help Me Soar](#), Toronto, ON, April 27-28, 2017

[Childism: Maltreatment of Children Hidden Secrets - Overt & Covert Across Generations](#), Toronto, ON, April 29, 2017

[Adoption Worker Training Day](#), Toronto, ON, May 2, 2017

[Missing & Exploited Children Training Conference](#), Winnipeg, Manitoba, May 16-18, 2017

## Send Us Your News and Events!

[The Voice](#) has an extensive readership in Ontario and across Canada.

Please forward any child-welfare related news, events, or announcements to [public\\_editor@oacas.org](mailto:public_editor@oacas.org) for possible inclusion in our monthly newsletter.



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