



Together for Our Kids

Introducing the new 2026 Strategic Plan - Executive Summary

Our 2020–2025 strategic plan concluded after five years of focused effort, meaningful accomplishments, and progress across several priority areas. As we approached its completion, it became essential to refresh and reaffirm our Mission, Vision, and Values, and to determine the priorities that will guide our organization over the next three to five years. Central to this renewal was a commitment to a reflective, inclusive process that engaged voices from as many interest holder groups as possible.

We entered this planning cycle with a clear understanding that addressing the overrepresentation of Indigenous and racialized children in the child welfare system remains an urgent and ongoing priority—both across the sector and within our own organization. This awareness reinforced the importance of revisiting our Mission and Vision statements, which guide our daily service delivery and articulate the long-term outcomes we strive to achieve for children, youth, and families. We also took deliberate steps to identify and articulate the values that will ground our work and serve as a consistent reference point for how we carry out our responsibilities. Please note that there is an attached glossary of terms, for while we attempted to use plain and easy to understand language, we recognize there are some terms that are not used in daily conversation that we wished to define for all audiences.

THE PROCESS

Staff Engagement

Our process began internally, creating space for employees across all functions to reflect on accomplishments, identify values, and consider future priorities. In November 2024, we held an all-staff planning day that included:

- A review of accomplishments, successes, and challenges from the 2020–2025 strategic plan
- Facilitated, small-group discussions encouraging curiosity, reflection, and perspective-taking about what matters most to service recipients and what child welfare practitioners believe should guide our next planning cycle

Following this session, a volunteer Strategic Planning Working Group was formed, consisting of frontline practitioners, service managers, administrative staff, a legal services representative, the Director of Service, and the Executive Director. This group was responsible for synthesizing all data collected throughout the process and drafting the high-level strategic plan.

Board Engagement

In March 2025, the Board participated in a planning session that included a review of key service data, accomplishments from the outgoing plan, and the identification of high-level organizational priorities.

Leveraging a Master of Social Work Student

Fortuitously, a frontline child protection worker began a thirteen-week MSW practicum with our organization during the spring. Her primary role was to develop, administer, and compile interest holder feedback tools. Guided by the Strategic Planning Working Group, she created meaningful mechanisms to gather insights about current service experiences and future needs.

Interest Holder Feedback

Anonymous surveys were administered to:

- Parents and families who received protection services
- Kinship caregivers
- Foster parents
- Community partners supporting children, youth, and families
- Youth aged 16–23 receiving services

Additionally, qualitative interviews were conducted with parents and youth, providing deeper insight into service experiences and opportunities for improvement. This feedback helped us understand what we are doing well and where we must enhance, strengthen, or reconsider our approaches.

Synthesizing the Information

The Strategic Planning Working Group met over several sessions to review all feedback, identify emerging themes, and draft the components of the new strategic plan.

THE PRODUCT— MISSION, VISION, VALUES AND PRIORITY PILLARS FOR 2026–2031

[Copy of Strategic plan draft - Poster \(US\)](#)

Mission Statement

Our Mission remains closely aligned with the paramount purpose of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act and the legislated functions of a children's aid society. While we retained the core of our previous Mission, we made intentional revisions to better reflect the diversity and unique identities of the children, youth, and families we serve.

Vision Statement

Our Vision expresses who we aspire to be as a community-based child welfare organization. While our mandate is defined in legislation, our Vision commits us to achieving the most optimal

and least oppressive outcomes for those we serve—honouring their diversity, lived experiences, and identities.

Our Value Statements

The value statements in this plan were developed through careful analysis, extensive discussion, and multiple iterations. They articulate how we intend to carry out our work and serve as a constant reminder of the attitudes, behaviours, and decision-making principles that will guide us. These values hold us accountable to our service recipients and our community.

Priority Pillars

Our three Priority Pillars outline the broad, high-level objectives that will guide service delivery over the next five years. All work within these priorities will be grounded in our Values and aligned with our Mission and Vision. Together, they form a blueprint for our organization—providing clarity and direction for staff, caregivers, and all interest holders, and publicly affirming our commitment to continually improving our services.

Our deepest thanks go to all interest holders whose perspectives and dedication shaped this strategic plan; your contributions will continue to guide our path forward.



Erin Lee Marcotte
Executive Director



Steve Vaughan
Board President