



Niijaansinaanik

Child and Family Services

2025-2026 ANNUAL REPORT





Niijaansinaanik
Child and Family Services

Niijaansinaanik means
“Our children”
in Anishinaabemowin

Our Mandate

Niijaansinaanik Child and Family Services is a designated Indigenous Child Well-being Agency and member of the Association of Native Child and Family Services Agencies of Ontario and the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies. At Niijaansinaanik, we are mandated to provide culturally congruent prevention, protection, advocacy, care, and family support services that promote the well-being of Indigenous children, youth, and families across the districts of Nipissing, Parry Sound, and the Greater City of Sudbury.

About Us

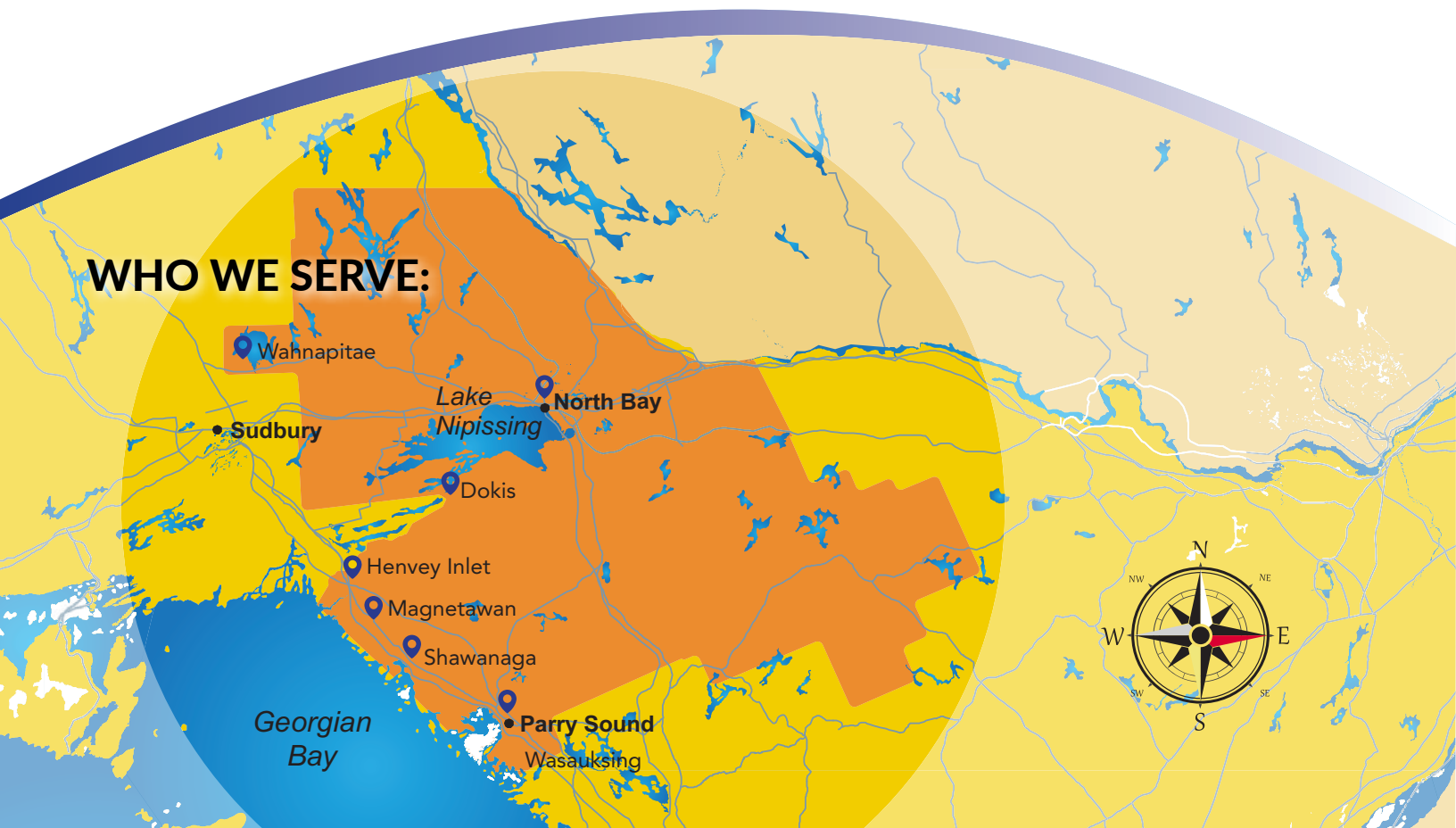
Niijaansinaanik is a culture-based organization responsive to the wholistic needs of all children, youth, and families and committed to meeting those needs with culturally centered protection, prevention, advocacy, care, family support, and cultural services.

At Niijaansinaanik, our services reflect values, beliefs, and principles rooted within Anishinabek culture. We believe that the care of children and youth is the responsibility of an entire community, and our fundamental values emphasize maintaining strong culture and language values that teach us how to live Mino Bimaadiziwin - The Good Life.

We operate a Culture-based Service Model framed around caring for our children and youth and based on diversity, our Elders, the Clan System and Accountabilities, culturally restorative practices, the Seven Grandfather Teachings, and Mino Bimaadiziwin.

While working in the present, we acknowledge history and its impact on our people in relation to outside influences and strive to build a strong, healthy future for all children, youth, families, and communities.

WHO WE SERVE:





Nijjaansinaanik Child and Family Services began activities as a pre-designated Child Well-being Agency in 2016. In November 2018, Nijjaansinaanik Child and Family Services was incorporated as a non-profit organization. On April 1, 2021, we achieved our designation as an Indigenous Child Well-being Agency. This designation was historic, as a necessary step in reclaiming jurisdiction over child well-being services to the First Nations we serve, and by resolution of the Council of Chiefs to support servicing of all Indigenous children, youth, and families in the districts of Nipissing, Parry Sound and the Greater City of Sudbury.

INDEX

Board of Directors	2
Elders Advisory Circle	2
Chiefs.....	3
Message from the Executive Director.....	3
Elder Spotlight	4
Strategic Plan	5
Orange Standard	6
Protection Services.....	7
Children's Services.....	8
Kinship Service	9
Alternative Care	10
Customary Care.....	11
Family Finding.....	11
Guiding Our Children	12
Cultural Services	13
Family Support Services	15
Funding Partners.....	16
Human Resources	17
Legal Services.....	17
Quality Assurance and Measuring Impact.....	18
Prevention Services.....	19
Staff Directory	20

PRIVACY STATEMENT

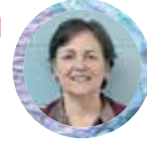
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Board of Directors



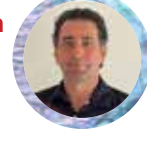
Marnie Anderson
President
Wahnapiatae First Nation

Theresa Raymond
Board Member
Wasauksing First Nation



Denise Restoule
Vice President
Dokis First Nation

Patrick Brennan
Board Member
Henvey Inlet First Nation



Candace Geroux
Secretary/Treasurer
Shawanaga First Nation

April Cardinal
Board Member
Magnetawan First Nation



Elders Advisory Circle



Joyce Tabobondung
Head Elder
Wasauksing First Nation

Tony Tyson
Wahnapiatae First Nation



Audrey Tabobondung
Wasauksing First Nation

Veronica Dokis
Dokis First Nation



Patricia Pawis
Shawanaga First Nation

Leslie Noganosh
Magnetawan
First Nation



Vacant
Henvey Inlet First Nation

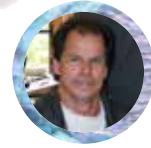


Chiefs



Gimaa | Chief
Gerry Duquette
Dokis First Nation

Gimaa | Chief
Larry Roque
Wahnapiatae First Nation



Gimaa | Chief
Shane Tabobondung
Wasauksing First Nation

Gimaa | Chief
Lloyd Nogansh
Magnetawan First Nation



Gimaa | Chief
Wayne McQuabbie
Henvey Inlet First Nation

Gimaa | Chief
Adam Pawis
Shawanaga First Nation



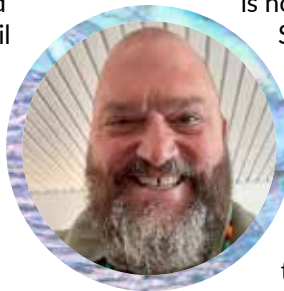
Message from the Executive Director

Scott Corbett, MSW, RSW

I am humbled and deeply grateful to the Board of Directors, Council of Chiefs, and the Council of Elders of Wasauksing First Nation, Shawanaga First Nation, Magnetawan First Nation, Henvey Inlet First Nation, Dokis First Nation, and Wahnapiatae First Nation for their trust and confidence in me as I assume the role of Executive Director of Nijjaansinaanik Child and Family Services.

Having had the privilege of working alongside many of the communities along the Highway 69 corridor since 2002, it is an honour and a source of great pride to serve in this role. Over the past year, we have focused on strengthening the foundation established by our six member communities and ensuring that our relationships, decision-making, and daily work remain grounded in the Seven Grandfather Teachings. Through these efforts, we have fostered deeper connections, strengthened accountability, and enhanced the quality of services provided to children, youth, and families.

The 2025-26 fiscal year brought many challenges; however, each was met with determination, resilience, and a commitment to continuous improvement. As a result, our Agency has emerged stronger than ever and better positioned to meet the needs of the communities we serve. One of the most significant developments this year was the implementation of the Ontario Final Agreement, which has fundamentally shifted how prevention services are funded, planned, and delivered. Rather than existing as a standalone program, prevention



is now increasingly embedded within Cultural Services and serves as a guiding lens through which programs, services, and supports are designed and delivered.

Cultural Services programming experienced significant growth throughout the year. In addition to reaching full staffing capacity, the team introduced new initiatives, including traditional parenting workshops and enhanced cultural training opportunities for staff, while continuing to build on programs that have consistently demonstrated success. With support from the Children's Aid Foundation of Canada and the Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund, we expanded our culture camp programming beyond the annual Youth Hunt (Mooz) Camp with a new Niibin Nishnaabe Naadziwin Summer Camp. These initiatives provided meaningful opportunities for children and youth to strengthen their cultural identity, build connections, and learn from Knowledge Keepers and Elders.

Partnerships continue to play a critical role in advancing our work. Through collaboration with community organizations, funders, and Indigenous partners, we have secured additional resources that directly benefit children, youth, and families. Support from Henvey Inlet Wind enabled the creation of an Urgent Care Fund, ensuring children and youth can access necessary supports during times of crisis without delay. The Agency also entered into a multi-year funding agreement with the Indigenous Peoples Resilience Fund through its

Access to Justice Bundle. This investment will support the renovation of community arbors and the expansion of cultural programming, increasing access to prevention-focused and culturally grounded supports across our communities.

We are also encouraged by continued progress in the implementation of the Orange Standard, which, once established, will help to strengthen service excellence, accountability, and culturally grounded practice throughout the Agency. These standards reinforce our ongoing commitment to providing the highest quality care and services while ensuring that Indigenous

values, culture, and community remain at the centre of everything we do.

As we move forward, I am inspired by the dedication of our staff, the guidance of our Elders, the leadership of our Chiefs and Councils, and the resilience of the children, youth, and families we serve. Together, we will continue to build a strong, culturally grounded organization that honours our communities, supports family well-being, and creates brighter futures for the generations to come.

Miigwech for your continued trust, guidance, and support.

Elder Spotlight



At Niijaansinaanik, we have never been shy about how much we value our Elders. Before being designated, incorporated as a non-profit, or even known by our current name, the 'Elders Advisory Committee' was formed – and ever since, their wisdom and guidance has fundamentally shaped who we are and what we do. By the very next year,

the Annual Report included a face and name that would become quite familiar in the years that followed. Much has changed since our first Annual Report, but Tony Tyson's involvement with the Agency, and dedication to helping others, has not.

Spirit Named *Strong Hearted*, Tony is a proud member of Wahnapiatae First Nation, where he continues to reside as a member of the Sturgeon Clan. Tony has spent more than 20 years supporting Elders as a Lifelong Care Worker – and more than 40 as a husband, raising one child for each of the four directions, and one grandchild for each of the Seven Grandfather Teachings.

There are few who can claim titles such as Fire Keeper, Eagle Staff Carrier, Pipe Carrier, and Traditional Dancer, and Tony is one of those few. These distinctions speak to the tremendous depth of cultural knowledge that, to the Agency's great benefit and gratitude, Tony has brought to the Elder's Advisory Circle or Committee in each of the seven years it has existed.

If you walk around any of our offices today, and start asking about Tony, you are sure to hear a great many positive things. Of course, everyone's experience will differ, but a central theme will quickly emerge: over and over and over again, you are going to hear, not just how willing Tony is to step in and lend a hand, but how genuinely and eagerly he offers his support.

The consistency with which Tony shows up to support others has left a lasting impact on countless people. Always placing the needs of others ahead of his own, he has helped create the kind of trusting relationships that allow individuals, families, and communities to thrive. His dedication to culture, community, and the Agency's mission has helped shape Niijaansinaanik into what it is today. As we reflect on our journey, we are grateful for the wisdom, kindness, and leadership that Tony continues to share.

"Niijaansinaanik" means Our Children, and through the care, guidance, and compassion he extends to everyone around him, Tony embodies the responsibility we all share to care for one another and help our children, youth, families, and communities thrive.



From all of us around you, chi-miigwech Tony, for all that you do!

Strategic Plan

As Niijaansinaanik Child and Family Services concluded its first Strategic Plan, we entered a period of reflection – looking back at the Agency’s considerable growth, and ahead to the landscape and priorities unfolding before us. Our first plan helped establish a strong foundation for the Agency, build organizational capacity, strengthen our workforce, and support the ongoing development of culturally grounded services for children, youth, and families. This work has positioned the Agency to continue leading and supporting transformation within the Child and Family Well-being sector.

Over the past year, we have been engaging with communities, staff, leadership, partners, and other key stakeholders to gather feedback that will shape our next

Strategic Plan. This process reflects our commitment to self-determination, community voices, and continuous improvement.

We are targeting the release of a new Strategic Plan by the new fiscal year. Recognizing the rapid changes occurring across our sector, the next plan will span three years rather than five, allowing us to remain responsive to emerging needs, opportunities, and community priorities. Building on the foundation established through our first plan, the next phase will focus on deepening our impact, strengthening self-determined approaches to child and family well-being, and continuing to advance our vision for future generations.

4 Key Recommendations



5 Main Areas



6 Priorities



Orange Standard

Anishinaabewin nikayaa nkoobnigay – Our Anishinaabe way of raising our children

The Orange Standard envisions a transformative framework that prioritizes prevention-based planning and practices to ensure children are safely nurtured within their families and communities. Rooted in community-centric development and extensive consultation, the Orange Standard integrates traditional knowledge, invests in education, and emphasizes emotional resilience to create supportive environments. By fostering collaboration among stakeholders and advocating for supportive policies, this model aims to maintain family integrity, promote children's rights, and contribute to sustainable, long-term well-being.



In phase 4 – year 1 the focus for the Orange Standard was on engagement around the two draft standards using surveys, within the six First Nation communities that Niijaansinaanik Child and Family Services. Throughout Phase 4, two surveys on the two draft standards, within the six first nations were completed. These include:

Cyber Safety and Digital Footprint Protection:
175 surveys completed

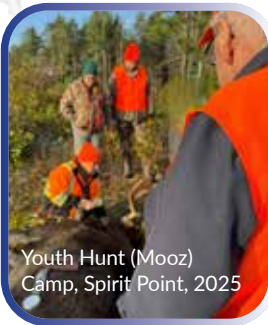
Rights to Nutrition and Food Security:
95 surveys completed



Guiding Our Children
Engagement Event
Wahnapiatae First Nation, 2025

Protection Services

Ganawenjige Binoojiinhag – Protecting Children and Youth



Youth Hunt (Mooz)
Camp, Spirit Point, 2025

Niijaansinaanik Child and Family Services delivers Protection Services across three districts: Greater Sudbury Area; Nipissing; and Parry Sound.

Through 2025-26, the Protection Services continued to maintain strong staffing levels, supporting the delivery

of high-quality, child-centred, and culturally responsive services to the communities we serve.

By working closely with First Nation partners, Protection Services remains community-informed, collaborative, and responsive to the unique strengths and needs of children, youth, and families. At the core of this work is a commitment to strong relationships with First Nations – built on trust, transparency, and mutual respect. Through regular Band Reviews, community consultation, and ongoing communication, First Nation Representatives remain actively participate in planning and decision-making throughout a family's involvement with the Agency, ensuring all service planning remains centred on the child and the child's best interests.

A major focus of 2025-26 was preparing for the transition of prevention services from internal to external delivery by strengthening partnerships, expanding referral networks, and enhancing collaboration with community service providers.

These partnerships enhance awareness of available services and supports, while improving staff capacity to connect families with resources that promote well-being and stability.

Internally, collaboration between Protection and Cultural Services continued to grow. Teachings, circles, Ceremonies, and community-based programming were increasingly incorporated into case planning, helping children, youth, and families strengthen their connections to culture, identity, and community. This partnership supports families on their journey toward healing, wellness, and *Mino Bimaadiziwin*, while ensuring cultural connections remain a key component of service delivery.

In December 2025, the Parry Sound Team began delivering Kinship Services to families within their district – developing expertise in assessing and supporting placements while maintaining their focus on child safety, family preservation, and community connection. Through this work, the team strengthened collaboration with families, communities, and service partners while supporting children in maintaining meaningful connections to family, culture, and community.

Protection Services continues to evolve through strong partnerships with First Nations, community organizations, and Agency programs. Guided by culturally grounded and relationship-based practice, the team remains committed to supporting safe, healthy, and



connected children, youth, and families. Together with our community partners, we will continue to promote positive outcomes and ensure that the best interests of children remain at the centre of every decision.

Children's Services



Youth Creations - Dreamcatcher and Soapstone Community Event

Consisting of eight Children's Services Workers, one Ready, Set, Go Worker, one Educational Liaison, one Case Aide, and two Team Assistants, the multidisciplinary Children's Services team provides wholistic and wraparound support to children and youth across the Greater Sudbury, Nipissing, and Parry Sound districts.

The team's primary role is to ensure that all children and youth living away from their families have their physical, emotional, cultural, educational, and developmental needs met at an optimal level, regardless of whether they are in a Customary, Temporary, or Court-Ordered Care arrangements, or living independently through the Voluntary Youth Service Agreements (VYSA or Ready, Set, Go (RSG Program).

At all times, the Children's Services Team remains dedicated to ensuring that every child and youth living away from their family receives comprehensive and culturally grounded care. For youth aged 16 to 23 receiving support through the VYSA or RSG Program, that care includes promoting successful transitions to independence through advocacy, post-secondary planning, budgeting assistance, life skills development, and connections to community resources and specialized services.

Throughout 2025-26, children and youth were actively engaged in a variety of cultural, educational, and recreational opportunities. Highlights included Nii bin Nishnaabe Naadziwin – the new land-based summer camp attended by more than 25 children and youth as

well as the Annual Youth Hunt Camp. Additional highlights included holiday celebrations, the Little NHL Tournament, and other extracurricular activities such as swimming lessons, music, and gymnastics.

As the fiscal year came to a close, the team celebrated significant educational and employment milestones, seeing several youth successfully transition to the workforce and seven youth pursue or explore post-secondary education opportunities. Among these accomplishments was a youth who became the first member of her family to graduate from high school, and a former youth in care who completed post-secondary studies and secured full-time employment with the Agency's Cultural Department.

The Children's Services team remains committed to ensuring that every child and youth has a dedicated advocate to support their voice, promote their well-being, and keep them at the centre of all planning and decision-making.



Braiding Sweetgrass
Wahnapiatae First Nation,
2026



Kinship Services

Inodewiswin Bami'aawaso – Families Caring for Children and Youth



Throughout 2025-26, the Kinship Services program continued supporting those who are unable to safely remain in the care of their parents, as well as the relatives, neighbours, and other close relations who step in to provide safe, stable, and nurturing homes.

The Kinship team includes two dedicated workers operating from North Bay, with additional staff supporting the Parry Sound district. Together, the team maintains regular contact with caregivers, children, and Band Representatives to coordinate services and monitor placements. Through partnerships and collaboration, the team advocates for children and caregivers, connecting them to community and Agency resources that promote well-being and ensure children's physical, emotional, cultural, and developmental needs are met.

In 25-26, an increased focus on collaborating with Cultural Services proved especially impactful, enhancing the accessibility of cultural programming,

teachings, and community-based activities – all of which help strengthen cultural identity and community connection.

Kinship placements are intended to provide stability for children while families work toward reunification – an outcome the program celebrated several times over the past year. When protection concerns remain and reunification is not possible, alternatives are explored such as Customary Care, long-term arrangements with Kinship Caregivers, or placements with family outside the Agency's jurisdiction. Regardless of location, Kinship Services remains committed to ensuring children and youth have all their needs met through culturally appropriate, family-centred care that promotes safety, stability, and positive outcomes for and families.



Summer Culture Camp 2025.
Camp Petawachuan, Dokis First Nation

Alternative Care

Ganawendaawaso – Taking Care of Children and Youth



Whenever families experience crisis, the Alternative Care Program ensures homes are available where children can be safely supported by qualified caregivers who meet all training and approval requirements. Beyond ensuring a child's safety, placement decisions prioritize options that maintain the highest degree of connection to family, community, and culture.

The Alternative Care team includes four Alternative Care Workers, one Team Assistant, one Placement Coordinator, and the program's Supervisor. In 2025-26, this team expanded regional placement capacity by supporting 26 homes to receive approval from the Alternative Care Review Committee. Beyond approving new homes, caregiver assessments and home studies completed throughout this year lay the foundation for further expansion in 2026-27.

Pursuing an alternative route of placement capacity expansion, the team's Placement Coordinator built or strengthened relationships with external organizations to identify resources with the specialized services and supports required by children and youth with complex needs.

While work to recruit caregivers is ongoing, support and training continued to be provided to existing caregivers and those on the path to join them. In 2025-26, training included: HEART & SPIRIT; First Aid and Car Seat; Trauma-Informed Care; First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Cultural Competency; Non-Violent Crisis Intervention; and more.

The multi-disciplinary work of the Alternative Care department extends further. At times, the department collaborates with the Prevention and Cultural teams, assisting with family circles, directly supporting children and youth, and otherwise promoting culturally grounded services. Additional efforts include frequent community engagement activities such as monthly newsletters and contests, as well as larger efforts including the annual Children's Christmas Party and Alternative Care and Volunteer Recognition Dinner.

The team's hard work was displayed prominently when the annual review conducted by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (January 2026) resulted in renewal, without condition, of the Agency's Alternative Care license. Alongside feedback from our Caregivers, this result highlights the professionalism, kindness, and supportive approach of Alternative Care staff.

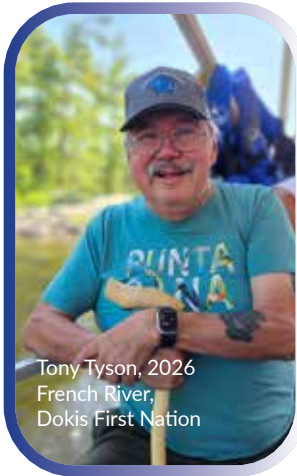
2025-26 was a year filled with many achievements, including a major milestone with the launch of *Guiding Our Children* – a dedicated campaign designed to increase culturally appropriate care homes throughout the service area (see the next page for more).

As the team looks ahead to 2026-27, it remains committed to supporting children, families, and caregivers through collaboration, community engagement, and culturally responsive services.



Customary Care

Ganawenjigaazo – Taking Care of Children and Youth



Tony Tyson, 2026
French River,
Dokis First Nation

and community partners to explore Customary Care arrangements as a culturally grounded permanency

Customary Care continues to be an important service option to support children and youth in maintaining connections to their families, communities, culture, and traditions. Throughout the year, Children's Services, Kinship Services, and Alternative Care Teams worked collaboratively with children, youth, families, caregivers, Band Representatives,

option when children and youth were unable to safely remain in the care of their parents.

Through ongoing assessment, planning, and family engagement, the Agency supported several children and youth in transitioning to or maintaining Customary Care arrangements that reflected the unique circumstances and wishes of their families and communities. These efforts were supported through Indigenous Family Development Assessments, home studies, family circles, and collaborative planning processes. By integrating Customary Care principles across service areas, the Agency continues to promote stability, preserve cultural identity, and strengthen lifelong family and community connections for children and youth.

Family Finding

Through ongoing efforts to identify and strengthen natural support networks, Family Finding helps ensure that children and youth maintain meaningful connections to family, community, culture, and land. Working collaboratively with families, caregivers, community organizations, and First Nations partners, the program engages in networking and outreach activities to locate relatives, reconnect siblings, and support ongoing relationships with family members and other significant individuals in a child's life.

In 2025-26, Family Finding continued to be embedded across all Agency departments, ensuring that decisions affecting children and youth, not only those related to placement and permanency planning, were informed by their connections to family, community, culture, and land.

By strengthening family, cultural, and community connections, the Agency supports a sense of belonging, promotes long-term stability, and fosters cultural identity and overall well-being for children and youth.





Guiding Our Children

Indigenous Foster Parent Recruitment

While the Alternative Caregiver Recruitment Campaign is innovative in its scope and scale, its purpose is not to create something new. Instead, *Guiding Our Children*, at its core, is a campaign to restore the culturally grounded practices that have always sustained Indigenous children and families: community responsibility, cultural continuity, kinship, and collective care.

Directly responding to priorities identified through Orange Standard, the campaign launched early in 2026 with a sense of focus and respect, that reflected its mission to ensure a child's safety never comes at the expense of their connection to family, culture, community, and identity.

In the words of Perry McLeod-Shabogesic, Director of Cultural Services,

"Our message is both urgent and hopeful. Indigenous children thrive when they are surrounded by Indigenous people, teachings, culture, and love."

A focused campaign was delivered to dispel myths, build trust, strengthen relationships, and recruit local caregivers. Key 2025-26 highlights included delivering more than two hours of radio advertising; reaching more than 100 community members through cultural engagement events; and launching a recruitment and information hub at GuidingOurChildren.ca.

When Indigenous children remain connected to their people, culture, and land, entire communities benefit.

The campaign sought for its message to be equally far-reaching, using multiple channels to reach every corner of each community. The message was simple, yet powerful: if the benefits of supporting Indigenous children belong to everyone, then so too does the responsibility. The campaign therefore called on communities to come together: *"Let's Bring Our Children Home"*, because, after all, *"Our Children Need Us, and We Need Them."*

Looking ahead, Guiding Our Children will continue to build momentum in strengthening local caregiving networks, supporting community healing and cultural continuity, and helping bring Indigenous children and youth home.

To learn more, please visit: GuidingOurChildren.ca



Mino-Bimaadziwin – The Good Life



Throughout 2025-26, the Cultural Services department remained focused on strengthening cultural identity, promoting wellness, and creating meaningful opportunities for connection through land-based learning, ceremonies, teachings, gatherings, and partnerships. At all times and at any stage of a family's journey, the team's goal is for culture to remain a source of healing, belonging, and strength.

Cultural Services offers a wide range of programs and services to ensure culture stays active, accessible, and present in everyday life. Through a relationship-focused approach and partnerships with Elders, caregivers,

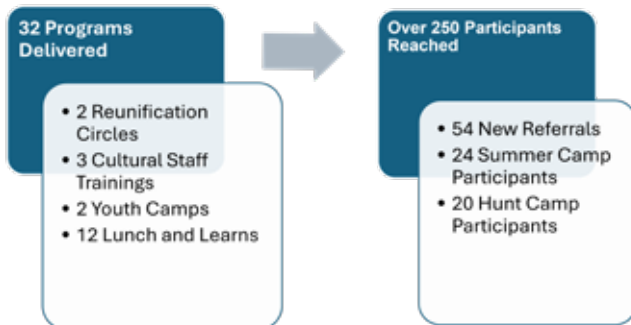
and service providers, the Cultural team ensures that programming remains responsive to local priorities.

Cultural Services delivered 32 programs and initiatives in 2025-26. This output demonstrates considerable range, flexibility, and activity, but does little to highlight the dedicated efforts of those who made it possible – Cultural Helpers. Whether assisting with ceremonies or circles, sharing teachings, building relationships, or supporting children and youth directly, Cultural Helpers work tirelessly to strengthen connections to identity, culture, community, and kinship networks.

2025-26 saw more than 250 participants engaged through:

- Land-based learning opportunities;
- Ceremonies and Teachings;
- Cultural skill-building workshops;
- Direct cultural support;
- And additional cultural programming and training.

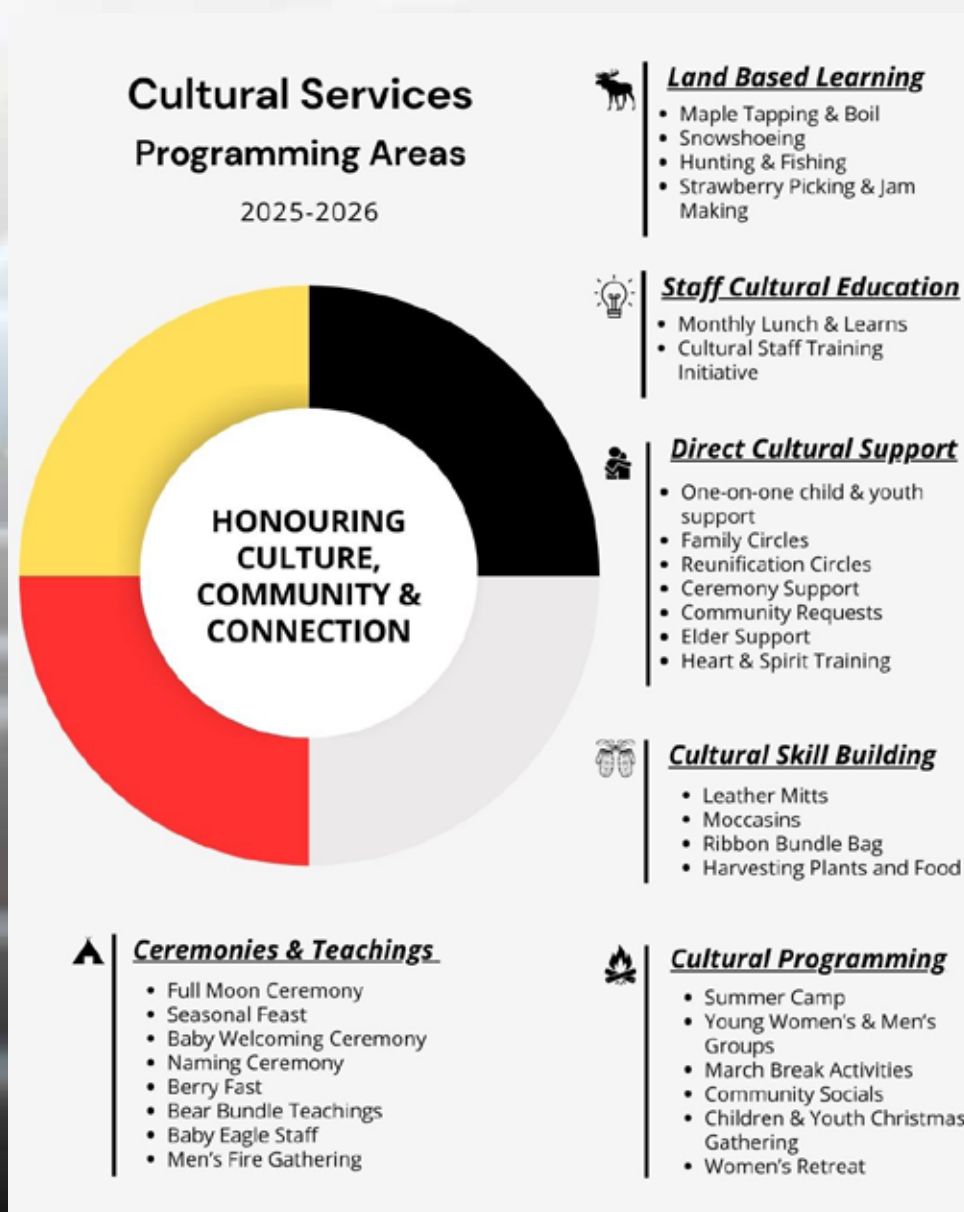
Among the participants of Cultural Services were staff from across the Agency. Through monthly Lunch and Learn opportunities and three intensive multi-day training workshops, the Cultural team directly supported the Agency's commitment to a culturally competent workforce.



With support from funding partners, 2025-26 introduced *Niibin Nishnaabe Naadziwin* – a summer camp that brought 24 youth to Camp Petawachuan, Dokis First Nation to explore the land, their history, and their culture. One season later, the Youth Hunt (Mooz) Camp returned to Spirit Point with 20 youth engaged in another immersive land-based learning experience. This year's camp marked a significant milestone; alongside Elders and Cultural staff, youth experienced a successful moose harvest while receiving valuable

teachings on traditional harvesting practices, respect, stewardship, and community sharing.

As Cultural Services continues to grow, the department remains committed to expanding land-based learning opportunities, promoting cultural revitalization, supporting partnerships, increasing engagement with children, youth, and families, and ensuring culture continues to thrive as an active and accessible part of life today, tomorrow, and generations into the future.



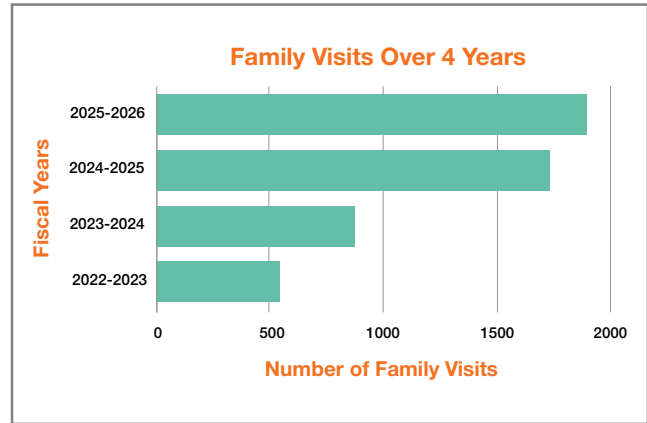
Family Support Services

Maamwi Gdoo-Nchiikwaanaanig Enchiyang – Working Together for Our Families

Family Visiting Program

Doodemag Enji Maawnjidjik – Where Families Gather

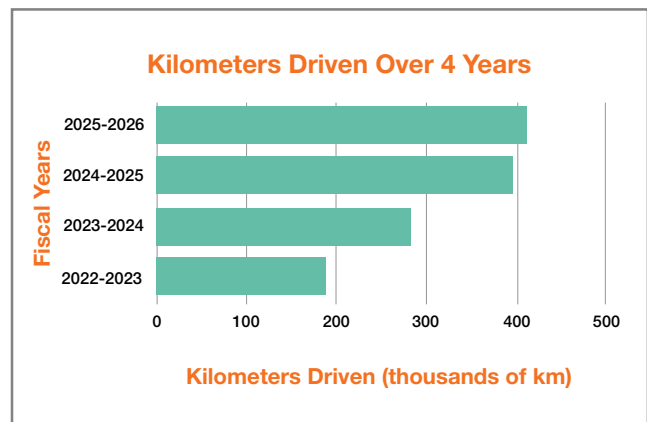
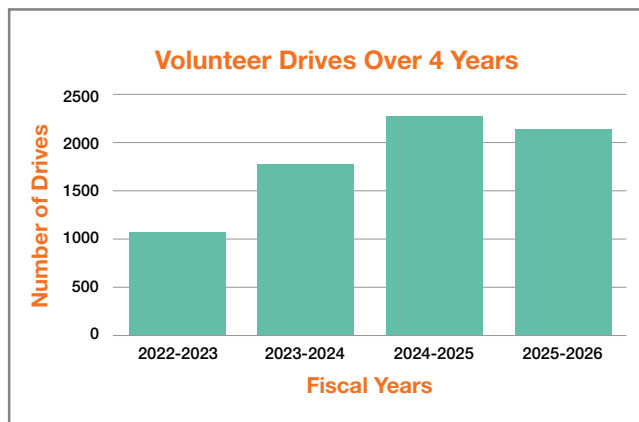
The Family Visiting team remains committed to supporting children and youth in maintaining connections with their families during periods of separation. This year, dedicated staff facilitated 1,848 family visits within our region, representing a 9% increase from the previous year. Whether visits occur in our visiting centres, within the community, in the family home, or outside our district when children are placed elsewhere, we ensure appropriate support is in place to foster a safe, healthy, and positive environment for children and their families.



Volunteer Services

Desinijiini – Lending a Helping Hand

The Volunteer Services Coordinator collaborated with volunteer drivers to coordinate 2,172 transportation trips in 2025-26. These trips enabled children, youth, and families to attend family visits, medical appointments, cultural events, and extracurricular activities that might otherwise have been inaccessible. In total, volunteers traveled 411,937 kilometers, representing a 4% increase from the previous fiscal year.



Funding Partners

Children's Aid Foundation of Canada (CAFC)

In 2025-26, the Agency expanded its partnership with the Children's Aid Foundation of Canada (CAFC) through a new multi-year funding agreement under the Foundation's Back to the Land funding stream. Building on several years of annual grants, this enhanced commitment provides stable funding through 2027-28 for outdoor, land-based initiatives that strengthen cultural connection, belonging, and Indigenous identity among children, youth, and families.

We are grateful to CAFC for its continued investment in Indigenous-led prevention and wellness initiatives. As we enter the second year of this partnership, we look forward to expanding opportunities for culturally grounded, land-based learning and healing across our communities.

Learn more: <https://cafdn.org/>

Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund

In 2025-26, the Agency also received support through the Oshki Wupoowane (Blanket Fund), administered by the Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund. This funding enhanced our ability to deliver land-based culture camps and created additional opportunities for children and families to reconnect with culture, community, and traditional teachings.

We sincerely appreciate the Fund's support in advancing cultural continuity, identity, and healing through land-based experiences.

Learn more: <http://www.downiewenjack.ca/>



Indigenous Peoples Resilience Fund (IPRF)

Looking ahead, the Agency is undertaking a new initiative with the Indigenous Peoples Resilience Fund (IPRF) through its Access to Justice Bundle. The project includes community arbor renovations and culturally grounded programming delivered through community-based Satellite Hubs.

Using restorative and land-based approaches, the initiative will support community healing, strengthen Indigenous sovereignty over child and family well-being, and address factors contributing to Indigenous overrepresentation in the child welfare and justice systems. We also commend IPRF's collaborative and reconciliatory approach to grant-making, which encouraged relationship-building and shared decision-making among applicants.

Learn more: <https://www.iprfund.ca/>

Henvey Inlet Wind

Further strengthening supports available to children, youth, and families, the Agency received a sponsorship from Henvey Inlet Wind to establish an Urgent Care Fund. This funding helps ensure that financial barriers do not prevent children and youth from accessing trauma-informed, culturally responsive placements and specialized supports in times of crisis.

We are grateful for Henvey Inlet Wind's generosity and recognize the positive impact this contribution will have across the First Nations communities we serve.

Learn more: <https://patternenergy.com/projects/henvey-inlet-wind/>



INDIGENOUS
PEOPLES
RESILIENCE
FUND

Chi-Miigwetch!

The Agency extends its heartfelt thanks to all of our funders and sponsors for their commitment to Indigenous children, youth, families, and communities. Together, these investments are creating opportunities for healing, cultural connection, prevention, and self-determined solutions that will benefit current and future generations.

Human Resources

Over the past year, Human Resources continued to provide strategic and operational support to strengthen workforce capacity, employee well-being, legislative compliance, and organizational sustainability.

Amid organizational transition and service realignment in 2025-26, Human Resources prioritized talent acquisition, workforce planning, onboarding, succession planning, and internal talent mobility to strengthen workforce capacity and organizational resilience. Although overall staffing levels declined by 16.26%, a strong staffing fill rate of 95.25% helped preserve service continuity for First Nation families, children, and youth.

Human Resources also provided guidance and support in employee relations, including performance and attendance management, policy interpretation, accommodation processes, conflict resolution, and progressive discipline. These efforts contributed to a respectful, supportive, and accountable workplace culture.

Significant accomplishments included a comprehensive review and redesign of the Workplace Violence and



Harassment Policy and Program to align with Ministry of Labour requirements, including updated training for staff and supervisors. Human Resources also redesigned the onboarding program to enhance employee experience, retention, and cultural inclusion, while continuing development of a comprehensive Employee Handbook.

Additional work included legislative compliance reviews, collaboration with Finance on leave management and return-to-work processes, and participation in ANCFSAO Human Resources leadership initiatives.

Guided by the Seven Grandfather Teachings, Human Resources remains committed to fostering a culturally grounded workplace that supports employee development, workforce sustainability, and organizational excellence.



Legal Services

The Legal Services team consists of one (1) Team Assistant, two (2) Legal Clerks, and one (1) lawyer. The team provides consultation services, promotes knowledge development through legal training for Agency staff, and liaises regularly with front line staff and representatives from First Nation communities. Additionally, the team works to manage disclosure and information requests in a timeline manner.

The Legal Team emphasis is directed toward risk management which includes addressing disputes and concerns outside of court. There is a focus on

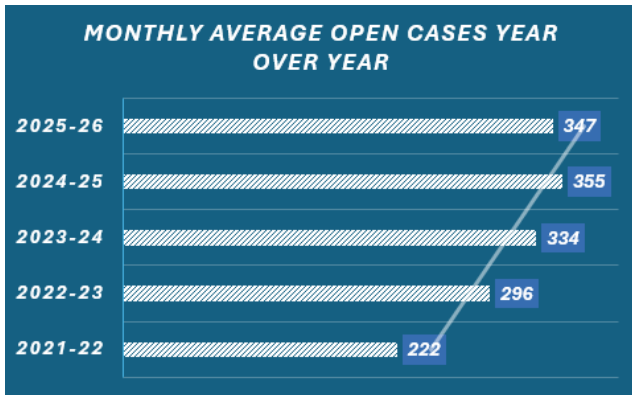


prevention, safety planning engagement, and community support services including culturally informed Alternative Dispute Resolution.

When legal proceedings are necessary under the legislation, the collaborative effort involving consultation both internally and with First Nations Representatives continues toward best possible outcomes for children, youth, and families.



Quality Assurance and Measuring Impact



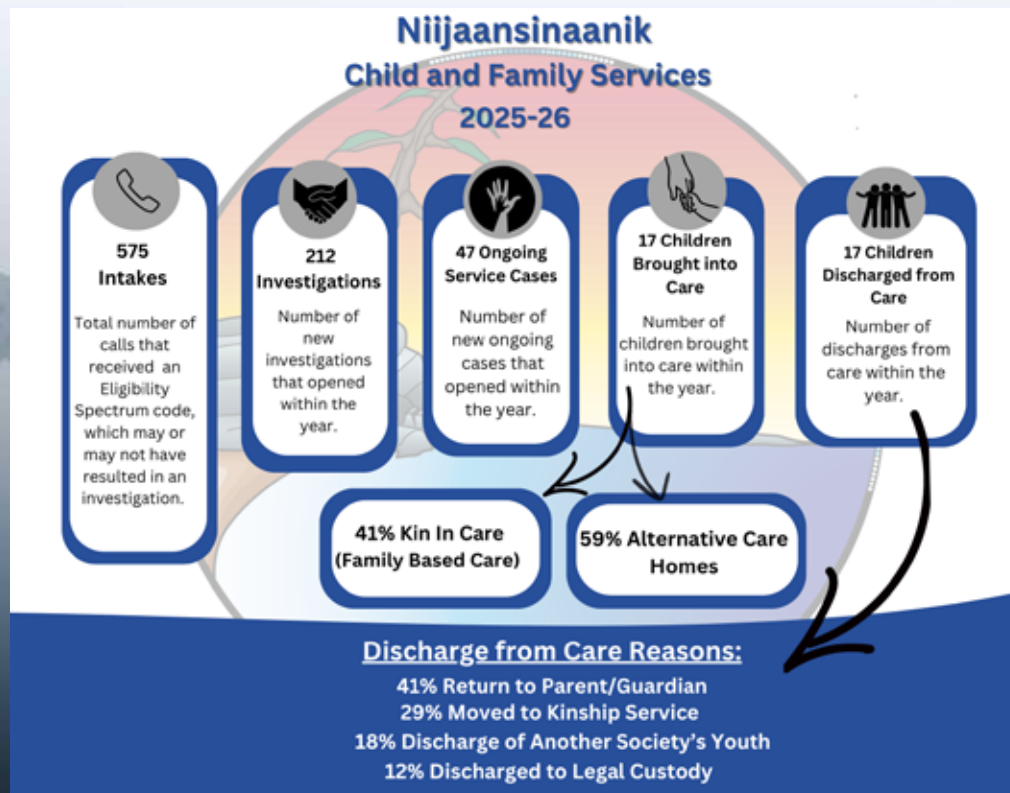
Rooted in a supportive and growth-focused approach, the Quality Assurance department works closely with service teams and leadership to promote accountability, ensure compliance with legislative and organizational standards, protect privacy, and support the delivery of equitable services to all those we serve.

A key responsibility of the department is its role as the Agency's primary steward of privacy, promoting practices that align with legislative requirements, internal policies, and OCAP® Principles. Additionally, Quality Assurance is responsible for the collection, analysis, and interpretation of organizational data to

identify trends, monitor compliance, assess risks, and highlight opportunities for continuous improvement. Through this, the department oversees data quality initiatives, including data cleansing, system integrity, and reporting accuracy, ensuring that information used for decision-making is reliable and meaningful.

Quality Assurance staff maintain regular communication with frontline staff, supervisors, and managers to support learning, strengthen practice, and provide guidance related to the Child Protection Information Network (CPIN) and data entry requirements. Additional coaching, troubleshooting, and knowledge sharing activities further enhance data integrity, improve consistency, and support service delivery efficiency across programs.

Beyond monitoring and reporting functions, the department plays an important role in translating data and compliance outcomes into actionable recommendations that support informed decision-making, service excellence, and organizational growth. By identifying areas for improvement and supporting evidence-informed practices, the department contributes to both immediate operational effectiveness and the Agency's long-term strategic goals.



Prevention Services

Onaakonan Mino-Awaawinan – Planning For Wellness

For agencies across Ontario, 2025-26 was a year of both celebration and transition as preparations for implementation of the Ontario Final Agreement (OFA) accelerated. At Niijaansinaanik, this meant adapting operations to support significant changes in the delivery, planning, and funding of prevention services while continuing to meet the needs of children, youth, and families across our member communities.

Throughout the year, Prevention Services continued to provide voluntary, strengths-based support designed to help families address challenges early and build on existing strengths. Recognizing that no two families are alike, staff tailored services to individual circumstances and goals, providing supports that ranged from parenting and budgeting assistance to advocacy, referrals, and system navigation. These services were delivered through collaborative planning with families, allowing Prevention staff to identify needs, develop personalized service plans, and connect families with the resources necessary to achieve greater stability, resilience, and well-being.



This work was strengthened through ongoing collaboration with Protection staff, community partners, Band Representatives, and service providers, ensuring families received coordinated and culturally relevant support. While significant attention was devoted to preparing for the changes ahead, the core focus of Prevention Services remained unchanged: helping children thrive safely within their families and communities whenever possible.

As First Nations assume a greater role in prevention planning and service delivery, the Agency remains committed to strong partnerships with our communities and supporting a coordinated continuum of services that promotes the safety, stability, and well-being of children and families.

The Ontario Final Agreement (OFA) represents an important step toward First Nations leadership in prevention planning, priority setting, and funding decisions.

Long before the OFA, the Agency, through the Orange Standard project, began working alongside member First Nations to identify community priorities and support child and family well-being planning. These collaborative processes strengthened relationships and built a shared understanding of community strengths and needs.

As OFA implementation continues, the Agency and member First Nations may draw on these foundations, leveraging relationships, shared understandings, and established processes to ensure Child and Community Well-being Plans remain community-driven, responsive to local priorities, and focused on keeping children safely connected to their families, cultures, and communities.





Niijaansinaanik

Child and Family Services

Staff Directory



1-855-223-5558 • Fax: 705-223-7439

Scott Corbett..... Executive Director

Jennifer Ellis..... ED - Executive Assistant

Krystal Meawasige..... Reception

Rebecca Roberge..... DOS - Executive Assistant

Carrie Tabobondung..... Manager of Orange Standard

Hali Tabobondung Orange Standard
Research Assistant

Dianna Wheatley..... Orange Standard
Engagement Coordinator

Jennifer Ford Director of Services

Rob Larose Manager of Resources

Alicia Fahrer Manager of Protection Services

**Perry McLeod-Shabogesic Director of
Cultural Services**

Paige Restoule Cultural Services Supervisor

Pilar Welling..... Cultural Coordinator

Brent Couchie Cultural Services Helper

Louis Sutherland..... Cultural Services Helper

Ashley Martin..... Cultural Services Helper

Crystal Orton..... Cultural Services Helper

Gail Misquadis..... Team Assistant - Cultural Services

Melissa Carmichael..... Supervisor of Children's Services

Darian Southwind Children's Services Worker

May Recollet..... Children's Services Worker

Kimberly Beaucage Children's Services Worker

Connor McLeod Children's Services Worker

Alexandria Ethier Children's Services Worker

Tracie Brown-Tabobondung Children's
Services Worker

Renee Restoule Education Liaison

Brenda Labreche..... Team Assistant
- Children's Services

Meriza George Support Services Supervisor

Beata Misak Access Worker
**Interim Volunteer Services Coordinator*

Janice Furchner..... Access Worker

Kirsten Gordon Access Worker

Leigh Gonder Access Worker

Stephanie Bertrand Access Worker

Samantha Cooper..... Family Support & Access Worker

Chelsea Reid..... Volunteer Services Coordinator

Kristy Storey-Degagne..... Child and Youth Worker

Stephanie Therrien..... Child and Youth Worker

Geraldine Noah..... Team Assistant - Access

Lillian Restoule Alternative Care Supervisor

Melanie Chevrier..... Alternative Care Worker

Andrea Pawis..... Alternative Care Worker

Jody Bosse Alternative Care Worker

Janelle desOrmeaux..... Placement Coordinator
**Interim Alternative Care Worker*

Sara Batters..... Alternative Care Worker

Sophie Leblanc..... Administrative Assistant

Heather McCombie **Customary & Kinship
Care Supervisor**

Krysta Joly Case Aide

Jennifer Bastin Children's Services Worker

Deverick Ottereyes-Rupert Children's
Services Worker

Lizabeth Brant Customary Care Coordinator

Nicky Restoule Kinship Worker

Brittany Chevrier Kinship Worker

MJ Roberge Team Assistant
- Customary Care

Lesley Spence **Screening Supervisor**
**Interim After-Hours and Screening Supervisor*

Kenneth MacDonald Screener

Chrisinda Gordon Screener

Kyle Parnell Disclosure Worker

Leena Hall Team Assistant
- Screening & Disclosure

Charity Young **Services Supervisor**

Dayna Favretto Child Protection Worker

Sharon King Child Protection Worker

Starlee Kanasawe Child Protection Worker

Rubecka Davidson Child Protection Worker

Nicole Penner Child Protection Worker

Nastassja Pickles Child Protection Worker

Lindsay McConnell Team Assistant
- Protection Services

Adam Rickard **Protection Services Supervisor**

Dan Desrochers Child Protection Worker

Dawn Lamothe Child Protection Worker

Justine O'Brien Child Protection Worker

Lisa Henry Child Protection Worker

Melissa Leclerc Child Protection Worker

Véronique Girouard Child Protection Worker

Ounla Rousom Team Assistant
- Protection Services

Michael Harling **Services Supervisor**

Lori-Beth Michaud Child Protection Worker

Marie Culhane Children's Services Worker

Katlin McDonough Children's Services Worker

Brooke Antonio Child Protection Worker

Betty Jean Coughlin Child Protection Worker

Sarah Bell Child Protection Worker

Joanne Fenn Team Assistant- Services

Melanie McGraw-Ritchie **After-Hours Supervisor**

Michelle Frappier After-Hours Worker

Lisa Gregory After-Hours Worker

Renee Boyce After-Hours Services Worker

Josh Clement After-Hours Services Worker

Brenda Hirvilammi **Director of Finance**

Jack LeDrew **Finance Supervisor**

Michelle Robert Compensation
& Benefits Coordinator

Chantal Caron Finance Clerk

Harmony Edwards Finance Clerk

Jesse Cornthwaite Finance Clerk

Lee Widdop Finance Clerk

Lois Williams Finance Clerk

Dennis Goulais **Director of Human Resources**

John Taylor Human Resources Officer

Patrick Sullivan Corporate Services Specialist

Darren Lecompte **Manager of Information
Technology**

Eric Baker IT Help Desk Specialist

Marcel Michaud IT Help Desk Specialist

Paul Caron Facilities Coordinator

Robin Saari **Director of Legal Services**

Kelsea Mintz Sr. Legal Clerk

Kimberley Munro Legal Clerk

Heather Scandlan Team Assistant - Legal

Jessica Brazeau **Quality Assurance Supervisor**

DISCLAIMER: This directory is current as of September 9, 2026, and is intended to list all employees, including contract staff affiliated with the organization at that time, including those who may be temporarily absent from active duty.



Niijaansinaanik
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