

Children and Youth Services Steering Committee

Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington  
Children and Youth Services Steering Committee  
Community Plan  
A Framework for Action

*“Making KFL&A a Community Where Children  
and Youth Reach Their Full Potential”*

2008



Sunnyside Children's Foundation

THE ONTARIO  
TRILLIUM  
FOUNDATION  LA FONDATION  
TRILLIUM  
DE L'ONTARIO

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## History

The committee’s history dates back to an earlier committee that existed from the late 1980’s until 1993. This committee lost its funding and was disbanded in 1993.

As a community we decided to try again. In 1997 a group of Executive Directors with a common will to serve children, youth and families better; began meeting to discuss issues of mutual concern and develop strategies to address family needs. The initial group was made up of a smaller group of representatives from Frontenac Children’s Aid Society, Lennox and Addington Family and Children Services, Pathways for Children and Youth, Better Beginnings for Kingston Children, St. Lawrence Youth Association, the Limestone District School Board, and the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board. Over the next two to three years, more and more agencies and organizations joined as this became recognized as an excellent venue to share ideas, concerns and information about programs and new initiatives.

In 2003 Bob Fulton was commissioned to do a demographic assessment of, both Frontenac and Lennox and Addington Counties for the Children’s Aid Societies. After reviewing the information in the report, the CYSSC decided as a group to use this information to launch a more formalized community planning initiative.

In 2004 the KFL&A CYSSC invited Bob Fulton to facilitate a broad based planning session using the information in the report to determine the areas that needed immediate attention. The KFL&A Children and Youth Services Steering Committee identified priority areas of concern. Those were building capacity within the community to effectively plan in collaboration, children and youth living in poverty, youth at risk, and single female parents.

At this time the KFL&A CYSSC also felt that in order to ensure sustainability and to emphasize the commitment and dedication of committee members, a membership fee would be introduced. All members pay on a sliding scale based on their agency/organization annual budget. The fact that all 30 member agencies pay and sign a ‘letter of commitment’ speaks to their commitment to serve children/youth better.

In 2005 the KFL&A Children and Youth Services Steering Committee received multiyear funding from the Trillium Foundation to hire a full time coordinator to further our work and assist in the development of a Community Action Plan for children. The details and strategy of the plan are outlined in this report.

In 2006 Sunnyside Children’s Foundation partnered with KFL&A CYSSC to explore the full spectrum of possibilities in community capacity development. On May 18, 2006, Sunnyside Children’s Foundation announced a three-year, \$100,000 funding partnership between Sunnyside Children’s Foundation and the KFL&A Children and Youth Services Steering Committee. This multi-year funding commitment to the Steering Committee can be described as a “new brand of partnership between a funder and a community-based services organization.”

In June of 2006 using the KFL&A CYSSC as a model, the Ministry of Children and Youth South East Regional office created three additional zone planning tables, one in Leeds and Grenville, one in Hastings and Prince Edward and one in Lanark County. These committees, and the CYSSC, are designated regional planning tables for children’s services, acting in an advisory capacity to both MCYS and the community. Funding for this new role was allocated through Child Welfare Community Capacity Building funds in 2006 and 2007. The roles and responsibilities of the planning table will be outlined in our Macro Strategy.

## Who We Are Today

The KFL&A Children and Youth Services Steering Committee brings together decision makers from across the spectrum of human services to provide overall leadership in children’s services.

While we continue to recognize our original priorities, we have found that they are inextricably mixed and cannot necessarily be addressed in isolation as we had originally planned. We identified the need to look at our rural communities and how children’s services can better serve them. Additionally, we identified a need to formalize a process for linking with other community planning bodies who have similar goals to ensure we support each other and to jointly maximize our resources.

As we began working on these priorities, we quickly realised the complexity of these priorities and that the systems that impact children and youth are not designed to work together. This action plan sets out an initial strategy for better integration of services and developing a system for gathering information about gaps in service.

Our Community Action Plan includes the strategies and desired outcomes of each of our working sub-committees, as well as a more global macro strategy that incorporates many community partners and initiatives impacting our communities as a whole.

“Never doubt that a group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead

## Vision

We want a service system that is supportive of children, youth and families and that is easily accessible and seamless. A system that is sensitive to our Aboriginal children and youth, our children and youth with special needs, our Francophone children and youth, and our children and youth who live in poverty.

We want to reduce the risk factors facing our children and youth. We want to reduce the number of children and youth coming into care of the Children’s Aid Societies. We want to reduce youth crime, infant mortality, teen suicide, teen pregnancies and high school dropout rates. We want to reduce addiction and alcohol abuse in our youth. We want quality early learning and care programs for our youngest and most vulnerable children. We want the full spectrum of care and services for our children and youth with special needs. We want to fully support the 1 in 5 children who suffer from mental illness. We want to engage our youth in meaningful ways.

We want all levels of government serving our communities to consult the KFL&A Children and Youth Services Steering Committee on any and all issues that impact the children and youth in our communities.

*Ultimately, we want all of the children and youth in our community to reach their full potential. We want them to feel valued, loved, safe, and secure.*

## Macro Strategy

If we are to bring about significant change in our communities, and truly improve the lives of our children and youth, we need to bring together all of our assets, share our knowledge and think strategically toward a shared vision. We need to engage our communities, involve our government, and work together.

We are all working hard to meet the needs of children, youth and families, but our collaborations and partnerships often revolve around programs and not the big picture. Our macro strategy is a different approach, one on a more global level where we can work together at all levels to make change.

Consider the following excerpt from this young woman’s speech. Paula Reid is a young minority woman who has faced much adversity in her short life and has an important message for all of us.

“

I am here today because I want to make change, and I want to make a difference, and I am making a difference.

...

We want you to stop labelling us by our gender, our race, our class and our community. Labels like “at-risk” are negative and take away from who we really are. Everyone is at-risk for something, so what makes us so much more at-risk than you? It’s not our fault that sometimes we live in bad neighbourhoods, or grow up in poverty, so why does it seem like you keep blaming us for it by calling us at-risk?

We want the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child to be taken seriously and incorporated into law in this country. Please, show us you’re serious about us.

...

We are asking you to stop pretending to listen, stop contradicting yourselves about how much we are worth to you, stop making excuses like “there just isn’t enough money”, stop breaking promises, stop acting like you know it all and stop blanketing the issues.

We want someone to look out for all of us at a national level. We want a Children’s Commissioner, but only if that person is chosen with the help of youth. And we mean REAL youth.”

-Excerpt from a speech Paula Reid made September 28th, 2007 to a forum inspired by the Senate Committee report, “Children: the Silenced Citizens”.

”

## Community Capacity Building

One of the priorities within our macro strategy is building capacity within the services for children and youth and raising the consciousness of the community at large around the issues facing children and youth. One of the ways we are able to do this, is by providing opportunities for training, forums for education and through public awareness events. It is through our funding from The Sunnyside Children’s Foundation and our community partners that these collaborative opportunities can occur.

Some of these opportunities have included “Father Involvement Training” in partnership with the Father Involvement Initiative. This training was for service providers working with families, and provided key strategies to engage men in programs and services from a father’s perspective. Another example is our ongoing partnership with KFL&A Public Health in the annual “Helping Children Soar Conference”. This conference is also geared to service providers and has covered many topics from “Surviving Adversity and Trauma to Adolescent Brain Development”. Conference participants have a full day of education and practical knowledge that can be applied in the field.

The KFL&A CYSSC recently sponsored an “Aboriginal Sensitivity Training” in partnership with Katarokwi Native Friendship Centre and Aboriginal Healthy Babies, Healthy Children for the members of the Best Start Network. We are currently exploring the possibility of providing this training again to all agencies and service providers.

### Child and Youth Poverty

We have also raised the awareness of the community around the issues of child poverty. As we began to explore the issue of poverty in our communities we became increasingly aware of the magnitude and depth of poverty locally. We connected with a number of community groups and initiatives geared at alleviating poverty such as the Lennox and Addington Homelessness Initiative, A Room of One’s Own, and the Social Issues Networking Group.

This new knowledge prompted us to host a Child Poverty Forum in October of 2006. Our partners at Campaign 2000 presented the Ontario Report Card on child poverty and several area groups identified local poverty issues. The forum was open to the public, service providers and politicians. This was purposely planned to coincide with the municipal elections, and was held on International Day for the Eradication of Poverty in Make Poverty History week. The Mayor of Kingston and the Mayor of Napanee were invited to attend and asked to read the Make Poverty History Pledge. The Mayor of Kingston led the over 100 participants in reading the pledge. Mayor Rosen also agreed that if elected he would form a task force to explore the poverty issues in Kingston. True to his promise, a Mayor’s Task Force on Poverty was struck. After five months of work, this group recommended the creation of a Community Round Table on Poverty (CRTP). The KFL&A CYSSC is an active partner at the CRTP, and will be working with them on some exciting youth initiatives in the near future.

The KFL&A Children and Youth Services Steering Committee initiated a “Work Place Poverty Challenge” in early 2007. We challenged all businesses and work places in KFL&A to do what they could to help alleviate child poverty and then share their initiatives with the community. The initiatives were wide and varied, from food and clothing drives to volunteering at food banks, to pot luck suppers.

In June of 2007 the Lennox and Addington Health Services Coalition identified poverty as a serious issue and one of the priorities for the coalition in the coming years. KFL&A CYSSC in partnership formed the Lennox and Addington Hunger Elimination Project. The goal of this committee is to work collaboratively to promote an integrated strategy to reduce the prevalence of hunger in Lennox and Addington and to increase awareness of existing programs. One of the first activities the project took on was a “Trick or Eat Campaign” in partnership with the World Youth Organization. Working with youth in Napanee, the campaign encouraged the community to donate food to the local food bank. The youth went door to door to collect canned and dried goods on Halloween night. This will now become an annual event.

In November of 2007 the KFL&A CYSSC in partnership with several poverty groups and the Kingston Social Planning Council held a “Face Up to Poverty Event”. This was a public venue for politicians to hear the poverty

issues and to listen to the Poverty Reduction Strategy suggested by Campaign 2000 and the Social Planning Council of Ontario. Several Provincial and local politicians attended and publicly supported the strategy as a starting point.

In May of 2008 the Kingston Poverty Roundtable and KFL&A CYSSC asked the City of Kingston Arts and Recreation Committee to take the "25 in 5" declaration to City Council for formal endorsement. They were also asked to direct the Community and Family Services Department of the City of Kingston to work with the Poverty Roundtable in a local poverty reduction strategy and to share this strategy with other municipalities. The "25 in 5" Declaration asks the Provincial and Federal Government to adopt a poverty reduction strategy that reduces poverty by 25% in 5 years. The KFL&A CYSSC also sent letters to Lennox & Addington County Council and Frontenac County Council requesting they also formally endorse the declaration. Both county councils have now formally adopted the "25 in 5" declaration.

We will persist in our advocacy for children, youth and families living in poverty and continue to raise awareness of the impacts of poverty on the children we serve.

“

*During the 2005-06 school year more than 4000 children in KFL&A used the Food Share Program in our schools. Between 8-12 % of all children between 0-6 in KFL&A are dependant beneficiaries of social assistance.*

*(KFL&A United Way Report)*”

## Regional Planning

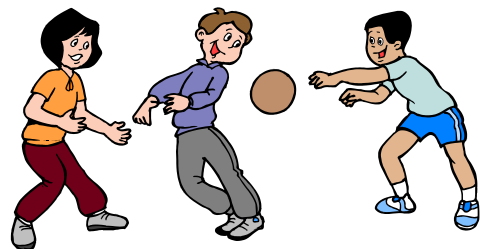
In June of 2006, the Ministry of Children and Youth announced its plan to develop a Regional Planning Approach for all Children’s Services. The Regional Planning Table is made up of representatives of the four planning zones in the South East Region. The Zone Planning Tables and the Regional Planning Table give advice and make recommendations both to the community and to the South East Regional MCYS. The goal is to create a rational, sustainable approach to planning and capacity building for children prenatally to 18 years, encompassing child welfare, children’s mental health, developmental services and the Best Start Initiative. The intended outcome is that services for children and youth across the region are provided in an equitable, timely and appropriate manner.

As a Regional Planning Table, we are sharing best practices, identifying gaps and developing consistent processes in children’s respite services, case resolution, and Best Start planning . We are also advising the Ministry of Children and Youth on the allocation of resources based on needs of children in our area, rather than program boundaries.

As a Zone Planning Table, several initiatives have been vetted through the KFL&A CYSSC as a funding requirement of the Ministry of Children and Youth. Each of these initiatives is also required to provide an annual update and evaluation to the KFL&A CYSSC, providing an opportunity for the committee to make recommendations and provide feedback. These initiatives include Wrap Around, Integrated Family Solutions and Autism Spectrum Disorder Respite Services. This process is an excellent example of agencies and service providers engaging in community consultation and working towards true community planning. While this new role does present some challenges around process and deadlines, it is a first step in what we see as an expanded role where agencies no longer work or plan in isolation.

Through the Regional Planning Tables and in partnership with KFL&A United Way, we developed the Community Profiles Report. The report helps to identify geographic areas in our community where children are at high risk. The report will serve as a planning tool for service providers to facilitate opportunities to respond to identified needs and gaps.

Another planning tool developed through the Regional Planning Table is the Children and Youth Services e-portal. This is a searchable data base that builds on the Volunteer Information Kingston data base and “Where to Turn” guide. This tool is still in its infancy and will be used as an inventory initially but will eventually have the capacity to assist and analyze gaps and overlaps in services.



## Strategic Committees

Our strategic committees support the overall vision of the CYSSC and are structured to address specific issues and challenges as outlined below.

### Youth Services Committee

#### Why do we have a Youth Services Committee?

From the Bob Fulton report and facilitated discussion, we determined that Youth in Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox and Addington are at high risk. We have higher than the provincial average in teen pregnancy rates, teen suicides, crime rates, and high levels of poverty.

Research shows that youth who have opportunities for meaningful participation in their communities are less likely to engage in risky behaviour. They tend to have higher self-esteem, be more physically active, show a greater commitment to friends, families and communities, and are more likely to achieve healthy development (United Nations, 2004; Public Health Agency of Canada 2000; International Institute for Child Rights and Development, & Environmental Youth Alliance, 2004; Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement, 2003)

In September of 2007, the Youth Services Committee was convened to begin to address these issues in a cross-sectoral collaborative approach. We recognized that these complex issues are best tackled in partnership with those working with and serving youth in our communities. We also recognize the critical importance of engaging youth in the process to determine their needs, wants, aspirations and the barriers that prevent them from reaching their goals.

We assisted the Northern Rural Youth Partnership in its infancy in convening members of the North Frontenac Community and developing short and long term goals. The NRYP has since applied for and received funding for a coordinator and some additional funding for a portable skate board park that is scheduled to begin touring our Northern communities in summer of 2008. The NRYP has also formed KidSport North and Central Frontenac. This charitable program helps disadvantaged children and youth participate in organized sports. We are looking forward to building on this initiative and transferring some of the successes and lessons learned to other communities in KFL&A

#### Early Successes

The call for committee members went out in early September of 2007 and the response from community agencies, organizations and schools was overwhelming. There are currently members of this committee from a wide range of sectors, Government Ministries, and disciplines, all concerned with the well being of our youth.

In October of 2007 the Children and Youth Services Steering Committee in partnership with the KFL&A Public Health, co-hosted a ½ day conference on Adolescent Brain Development featuring Dr. Ron Clavier. The conference gave service providers some insight into the adolescent brain and some introductory strategies for working with youth.

The Committee determined that our first action would be to determine what services were currently available for youth. Working with the Data Analysis Coordinators for the Children and Youth Services Planning Tables, we are developing a comprehensive inventory of services through the E-Portal for Children and Youth Services. The E-Portal is by no means complete and we recognize that this inventory is a growing and evolving list.

Our next action was to develop both a survey for youth themselves and a survey for agencies/organizations/programs serving youth in our communities. The youth survey for services/agencies was launched in April 2008 and the Youth Survey for youth to complete was launched in May 2008 in select agency focus groups and

through the Mohawk Technical Institute. The survey will also be launched in Limestone District School Board and Algonquin Lakeshore Catholic District School Board in September of 2008.

We are looking forward to working with the KCRTP in engaging youth in a Youth Conference in February of 2009. We will then compile the results of our surveys and the youth conference and convene all youth service providers in early 2009 to develop strategies to address barriers and gaps and develop a community youth engagement strategy.

### Strategies Over the Next Two Years

- Analyse the results of surveys –Identify Gaps and barriers to services
- Work in partnership with KCRTP
- Host Youth Services Forum in 2009 and develop strategies to address Gaps and Barriers
- Develop Community Wide Youth Engagement Strategy

### Desired Outcomes

- Collaborative approach to providing services to youth
- Increase in Youth Accessing Services
- Decrease in Risky Behaviour
- More Youth Staying in School
- There is a continuum of community programs and services, for all children, youth and families

“

*It is not possible for civilization to flow backwards while there is youth in the world. Youth may be headstrong, but it will advance if allotted length.*

Helen Keller

”

## Children’s Respite Committee

### Why do we have a Respite Services Committee?

In March of 2006 the Ministry of Children and Youth released “Children’s Respite Report-Best Practices and Best Delivery” The report included input and active participation from many members of the KLF&A Children and Youth Services Steering Committee. Consistent with the series of recommendations tabled in the Report, the South East Regional MCYS office requested that a Children’s Respite sub-committee of the KFL&A CYSSC be established.

The Children’s Respite Committee was convened in March 2007 and is made up of a group of multi-sectoral agencies who currently provide some level of respite to families with children of varying needs. Respite Services have been traditionally thought of as a service provided in the Developmental Services Sector. This committee will be looking at respite holistically to include families in temporary crisis, children with mental health issues, children with autism, children with severe behavioural issues and children with complex special needs. This committee has identified some local gaps and barriers to service in addition to some systemic issues.

### Early Successes

In August of 2007 new Provincial Funding was released for respite services for children and youth with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. The Children’s Respite Committee and community partners developed a service delivery plan based on the information collected from parent surveys and community consultations. This plan included funding to enhance existing respite services and create some new programs as well as provide some funding directly to families for respite care.

The Autism Spectrum Disorder Funding for 2008-09 will support School Break, Respite and Community Services offered through multiple service providers. It will also support a Saturday Respite Program that runs two Saturdays per month. One Saturday targets teens with Asperger’s, while the second Saturday is for children who are high functioning on the Autism Spectrum.

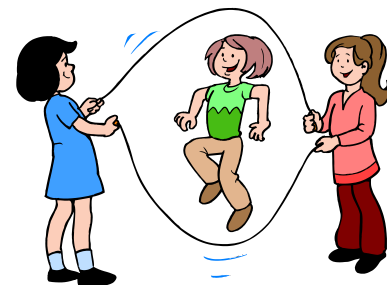
Joint training opportunities are currently under development for select groups of summer camp staff working with children with autism in camps. The goal is to expand training to the broader community in 2009.

### Strategies for the Next Two Years

- Continue to review and evaluate the ASD Respite Funding
- Develop joint respite training opportunities
- Review individual agency policies to determine barriers
- Utilize [www.respiteservices.com](http://www.respiteservices.com) to actively promote cross-sectoral training opportunities

## Desired Outcomes

- To create a more accessible, fair and sustainable system of community-based supports
- A consistent process for all agencies providing respite
- Community capacity of trained staff in complex medical needs and behavioural issues
- More family user friendly access to respite
- Emergency Respite
- Sustainable Respite funding
- Cross-sectoral /shared Respite services



## Rural Services Committee

### Why do we have a Rural Services Committee?

Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington Counties are a mix of urban and rural communities. Population and often the cost of delivery limits the services available to rural communities. Our rural communities have unique strengths and unique needs. Some of those identified in the Summary of Conversations About Community Quality of Life in Northern Frontenac 2004 were: the lack of access to coop education, post secondary education, employment, and social and recreational activities for our youth, depressed local economy and income levels below the provincial average, lack of medical services, lack of quality childcare, and feelings of isolation. These are common threads throughout small rural communities in Ontario, and while not documented in Lennox and Addington, anecdotal reports indicate the issues are very similar.

“If you live in rural Canada, you know how hard it can be to find and access services – whether it’s services for children, families, youth, adults, or seniors. Even if social services are available to you, they are often not available in your own community, during the hours you need them, or in a way that responds to your individual needs. Governments and social service agencies across Canada struggle to successfully respond to the specific challenges of rural, remote, and northern communities. These challenges include large geographic distances, low population base, cultural diversity, seasonal employment patterns, and rural demographics.”

Rural Voices 2008

In October of 2007 the KFL&A CYSSC convened a Rural Services Committee to begin to address the issues facing children, youth and families in our rural communities. This committee is made up of a broad cross section of agencies, services and schools serving our rural communities. The primary focus for this committee is to identify specific gaps in service and barriers to accessing service. The committee will also be exploring new and innovative ideas for contacting children, youth and families who do not typically access any services.

### Early Successes

This committee is very new and has had only a handful of meetings. The first success has been in the development and distribution of an Agency Survey on April 1, 2008. The response has been excellent and the committee is looking forward to piloting the client survey in May and will be looking at the results of the Agency Survey in June.

The Rural Services Committee is partnering with our Best Start committee to conduct several community meetings in four rural communities in Frontenac, Lennox and Addington Counties. These community meetings will give us some information from residents about their needs and aspirations for children and youth in their community. We will also be developing neighbourhood advisories from these communities to guide us in our future planning. We will also be working with our community partners in the Northern Rural Youth Initiative to increase activities for youth.

## Strategies for the Next Two Years

- Analyse results of surveys-Identify Gaps and Barriers
- Community Meetings and Neighbourhood Advisory Committee Development
- Collaborate and share resources to begin to fill gaps
- Build on Community Strengths

## Desired Outcomes

- More accessible service for children, youth and families
- Increased number of families accessing services
- Increased activities for Youth
- Sustainable services for Rural Communities



## Frontenac Youth Justice Advisory

### Why do we have a Frontenac Youth Justice Advisory?

In May of 2004 St. Lawrence Youth Association and Youth Diversion held a conference celebrating the Youth Criminal Justice Act and the 30th anniversary of each of the organizations. The response from the community was enormous. This spoke to the need for open dialogue and collaboration about the issues facing agencies, police services, education and the justice system. From this conference stemmed a strong community interest in discussing the formation of a Youth Justice Committee in our community.

Youth Diversion hosted the first few meetings in 2005. The Executive Director of Youth Diversion, an active member of the KFL&A Children and Youth Services Steering Committee, quickly recognized that this group needed to become a standing sub-committee of the KFL&A Children and Youth Services Steering Committee. The Frontenac County Youth Justice Advisory Committee began officially in October of 2005.

This committee is comprised of members of the justice system, service providers, education, probation, police services and county council. The primary function of this committee is to bring together key stakeholders in the community to identify issues and to advise the CYSSC, and all levels of government of issues in the justice system and to monitor local needs and pressures.

### Early Successes

One of the pressures facing youth in Frontenac County was the amount of time they were waiting for their cases to be heard. This was brought forward to the Frontenac Youth Justice Advisory Committee as an issue. A request was put forward to the Defence Council and the Justice of the Peace to reduce the number of adjournments so that youth can begin serving their sentence sooner. Youth cases are now being processed sooner thus reducing the stress and anxiety faced by youth waiting for their case to be heard.

This committee also created what is referred to as “Triage Meetings” that are held regularly, with all of the appropriate members (crown, police, probation, St. Lawrence Youth, and Youth Diversion) to discuss the upcoming court and what needs to occur in relation to that particular youth facing charges. The main purpose is to determine what would be the best outcome of the case, balancing the needs of the youth, victim and community. This is especially true for youth suffering significant disadvantage (learning disabilities, social issues, mental health issues), and also high risk youth.

### Strategies over the Next Two Years

- Strive to enhance relationship between Youth Justice and Children and Youth Mental Health and Children’s Aid
- Continue to identify local pressures and needs
- Continue to build relationships with agencies and schools
- Identify appropriate avenues for public education
- Formalize linkages with County Council

## Desired Outcomes

- Cohesive collaborative approach to reducing youth crime
- Alleviate local pressures
- Increased public awareness and education
- Municipal support

“

*We must combine the toughness of the serpent and the softness of the dove, a tough mind and a tender heart.*

”

Martin Luther King, Jr.,

## Best Start Network

### Why do we have a Best Start Network?

“The evidence is clear that good early child development programs that involve parents and other primary caregivers of young children can influence how they relate to and care for children in the home, and can vastly improve outcomes for children’s behaviour, learning and health in later life. The earlier in a child’s life these programs begin, the better. These programs can benefit children and families from all socioeconomic groups in society.” Dr. Fraser Mustard

Best Start began as a Provincial initiative in 2004 with a focus on the expansion of licensed child care spaces. In 2006, we began Phase 2 of Best Start with a focus on an integrated service system. This is a collaborative effort involving Provincial and Municipal Governments, early learning and care providers, school boards, and numerous community agencies.

Our Best Start vision in KFL&A is that children will have the best early learning opportunities possible through an integrated system of programs and services that will assist them in reaching their full potential as adults.

Best Start is about supporting children and families, and collaborating with them to enable them to provide children with the best opportunities possible.

Best Start is about strengthening our partnerships and enhancing the collaboration of all community supports for children and their families.

Best Start is also about community partners who view themselves as an integrated system of supports for early child development and parenting.

### Early Successes

Child care spaces were expanded and increased by close to 200 spaces in KFL&A

Child care centres were provided with the technology and internet access.

Early Development Instrument data collected.

Increased training opportunities for child care providers in a number of disciplines including Aboriginal sensitivity training.

The introduction of the Preschool Program Development Instrument.

An increased awareness of the importance of early learning and its role in brain development.

Helping Children Soar Conference on Early Brain Development featuring Dr. Jean Clinton

Increased collaboration between agencies in service and program delivery.

The Transition to School Initiative has developed formal partnerships, protocols and processes to assist children and families with a smooth and positive transition from childcare to school.

The development of Neighbourhood Hub Leads including specific population leads for Special Needs, Aboriginal and Francophone children and families.

Early Years Programs for Aboriginal Families.

Early Years Programs for Francophone Families.

## Strategies for the Next Two Years

- Continue to work with Municipalities to expand child care spaces
- Collect additional data to inform our planning for service delivery
- Increase awareness through a comprehensive marketing plan
- Consult community agencies regarding training needs and provide workshops through “Helping Children Soar Conference” in partnership with KFL&A Public Health
- Continue to identify gaps, overlaps and barriers to service, and identify opportunities for integration
- Conduct community neighbourhood meetings to identify community needs
- Develop neighbourhood information hubs
- Develop Neighbourhood Advisory Groups to continue to inform local planning
- Develop joint professional development opportunities and reduce duplication

## Desired Outcomes

- Seamless comprehensive services for children and families
- Quality Early Learning and Care programs
- Increased awareness of early brain development
- Increased community engagement and locally informed planning

“

*It is our responsibility to ensure bright futures for today's children so that tomorrow's society will benefit.*

”

Dan Offord

## Case Resolution Committee

### Why do we have a Case Resolution Committee?

In 1997 the policy, Making Services Work for People, required that every local system of services have the capacity to provide supports to children and youth with complex/multiple needs who have been assessed to be ‘most in need’, within available resources. Local systems of services must find ways to provide service to children/youth who are assessed “most in need” to reduce the immediate health and safety risk to the child/youth. Once the level of risk has been reduced, the child/youth and/or family may be placed on a waiting list for additional services where the services are not immediately available.

The Case Resolution Committee brings together representatives from a cross-section of service agencies and sectors that are also members of the KFL&A CYSSC, to problem solve together to address the issues that stand in the way of a child/youth getting the service he/she needs. The function of the Case Resolution Committee is to engage in short and long term planning to address the needs of children and family.

The Case Resolution Committee is a forum for resolving complex cases requiring multiple services and supports. The Committee identifies and addresses barriers to the implementation of the child/youth’s plan, reviews the “special needs” requests and makes recommendations to the Ministry of Children and Youth

Agencies are encouraged to develop collective creative solutions and each case is dealt with individually and only after all other resources and services have been exhausted, does it come to the Case Resolution Committee.

### Early Successes

The biggest success for this committee has been the committed interest of all agencies and services in the community to serve the particular child/youth whose case is coming forward. The best interests of the child/youth are always in the forefront of the planning. This committee has continued to be innovative in its thinking about how to best serve children/youth and has put in place strategies that are supported across Ministries both financially and in direct service.

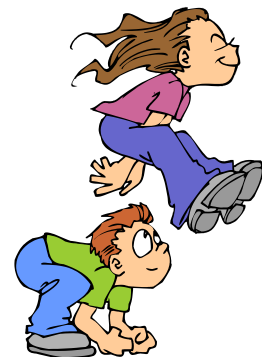
It is very difficult to measure the successes of each individual case as many involve long term solutions. The Case Resolution Committee in partnership with MCYS and our South East Regional counterparts are in the process of developing an effective method of evaluation and monitoring cases.

### Strategies of the Next Two Years

- Work on developing a process for assessing cases and evaluating placements
- Work on the application process for agencies and services bringing cases forward
- Develop a Hand Book for families and one for agencies to help them to understand the process
- Monitor cases that are coming forward
- Ensure cases coming forward have a draft plan

## Desired Outcomes

- Comprehensive evaluation tool
- Streamlined concise process for cases coming forward
- Hand book available for families –Families know what to expect
- Agency Staff fully trained in process for cases
- All children/youth are fully served
- Reduction in cases coming forward



## Wrap Around

### Why a Wrap Around Committee:

The Frontenac, Lennox and Addington Wraparound Initiative began in May of 1999 when Dr. John VanDenBerg provided an orientation to community agency staff and informal service groups, sponsored by Pathways for Children and Youth.

By April of 2000 a Steering Committee had been created to work towards the implementation of Wraparound. In May of that year 50 agency staff and volunteers attended an intensive four-day facilitator training.

In the fall of 2000 FL&A Wraparound started taking referrals and began our first “wraps”. In December of 2000 the first Wraparound Coordinator was hired.

To ensure that the KFL&A Wraparound Initiative did not become a ‘program’ owned by any one agency, partner and collateral services supporting children, youth and families were engaged and formed the KFL&A Wraparound Steering Committee. Membership on this steering committee has changed a bit over the years and is now represented by 18 agencies across KFL&A. Agencies contribute funding to the initiative, in-kind donations of Wraparound Facilitators and ongoing support to the development and implementation of Wraparound.

The ability of Wraparound to respond to a range of individual needs of a family or youth and the involvement of the community in finding solutions, makes it a unique process.

This type of commitment, versatility and flexibility on the part of participating agencies is a demonstration of trust and advocacy that continues to grow and reflect a common vision of a better life for vulnerable children, youth and families in KFL&A.

### Early Successes

One woman and her children served by Wraparound came into the process 6 months ago and identified: Spiritual, Behavioural, Emotional/Psychological, Housing, Family, Medical, Social/Recreational and Financial as her family’s Life Domain areas of challenge. In addition, she identified, 23 Formal Supports, and One Informal Support. The Informal Support person was a sister who was available to attend Wraparound Meetings only very periodically because she was on Kidney Dialysis. Mother sums up her and her family’s strength as, “We hold it together during crisis.” Since being involved with Wraparound, the family has decreased the number of meaningful Formal Support People to 5 and increased Informal Support to 8 people. In addition, the team has been able to elicit the support of a volunteer handyman and cleaning woman. The areas of challenge are now: Behavioural and Family. This mother is learning to drive, has reconnected herself and children to spiritual and social activities, has help organizing her home, has a team to brainstorm with, and in her words, “More freedom to get along better as a family, be happy, forgive and move forward.” Wraparound continues to provide her with support.

- The diversity of Aboriginal communities, both on-reserve and in urban/rural contexts is acknowledged and celebrated. This booklet offers a practical set of exercises leading to the development of a person’s self-care plan called “My Wellness Wheel.”
- Children, individuals with limited literacy skills and individuals where English is not their first language benefit from the Visual Representations of a Wraparound of Supportive Care.
- A resource kit that supports a Six Session Mini Wrap Group Process for families and professional/non professional team members focused on one or two life domain areas.
- StreetWrap is a credit course developed by the KFL&A Wraparound Initiative and being piloted with students who attend Streetsmart. Students attending Streetsmart will be provided with an interactive and experiential learning experience that focuses on the following Life Domains: Social/Recreational, School/Job, Legal, Financial, Spiritual, Emotional, Cultural, Housing, Safety, Medical, Behavioural and Family.

## Desired Outcomes

- Ensure cases coming forward have a draft plan Provide Wraparound Facilitator Training
- Recruit members to Community Resource Teams
- Continue to build increasingly culturally sensitive resources
- Increase the number of referrals and the number of families that Wraparound can support



## Student Support Leadership Initiative

### What does this mean for CYSSC?

The Student Support Leadership Initiative (SSLI) is a joint initiative developed by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services and the Ministry of Education. The initiative was developed in response to recent changes to the safe schools provisions of the Education Act and related policy/program memoranda. School boards are being encouraged to form partnerships with community agencies to provide non-academic supports that promote positive student behaviour. The SSLI aligns with Ontario’s first policy framework for child and youth mental health *A Shared Responsibility: Ontario’s Policy Framework for Child and Youth Mental Health (2006)*. The purpose of the initiative is to assess how school boards and community agencies are currently working together, including formal and informal linkages and to determine how to move forward in a way that builds capacity to make appropriate and effective referrals resulting in improved access to existing services/supports for students and their families.

The CYSSC is a member of Cluster 20 which is comprised of the following district school boards: Hastings Prince Edward DSB, Algonquin Lakeshore Catholic DSB, and Limestone DSB, as well as the Ministry of Education East Regional Office, the Ministry of Children and Youth South East Region, the Ministry of Children and Youth –YJSD Eastern Region, and the Co-Chairs of CYSSC and the HPE Children’s Service Network. The Limestone DSB has agreed to be the lead for this three year initiative.

The CYSSC is also a member of Cluster 29, which is made up of the French Language Eastern School Boards and several other children’s service planning groups. While we have not had a great deal of opportunity to meet with Cluster 29, we fully support the work of this Cluster and will continue to develop strategies to ensure our participation is meaningful. We will continue to learn more about each other over the next few years. Cluster 29 is also looking at the current relationships between schools and agencies and will be hiring a coordinator who will begin working on developing a French Language Service Inventory.

Both Clusters have submitted plans to the Ministry of Education that outline goals for the next 3 years and are planning to hire coordinators to support the clusters and to build or enhance partnerships between school boards and community agencies.

The Ministry directive is to build on existing planning tables and work within that structure. The CYSSC will be forming an Education Integration sub-committee that focuses on building and enhancing integration with School Boards, and this committee will report to both the CYSSC and Cluster 20. A similar subcommittee exists in Hastings-Prince Edward and we will use its structure as a model in moving forward.

This is a very new initiative and we are still working through the process and relationship between the cluster, coordinator and CYSSC.

The CYSSC in partnership with the Limestone Board of Education will be launching “Roots of Empathy” in select schools in KFL&A. Roots of Empathy is an evidence-based classroom program that has shown dramatic effect in reducing levels of aggression among school children by raising social/emotional competence and increased empathy. The program is delivered to school children from Kindergarten to Grade 8. The training for Roots of Empathy is scheduled to begin in October of 2008 with the planned delivery of the program beginning in February of 2009. We will have further details of this exciting joint venture as it unfolds. You can visit [www.rootsofempathy.org](http://www.rootsofempathy.org) for more information about what Roots of Empathy is all about.

## Evaluation/Community Reporting

### How will we know we have done what we said we would do?

Our macro strategy and strategic committees provide us with two types of change in our community. At the macro level monitoring change will be more complex and challenging to measure. The changes will be at a systems level and community awareness level and will be gradual and multilayered.

Each of the strategic committees have identified desired outcomes and these changes will be captured through data collection statistics and increased collaboration and integration of services.

The KFL&A CYSSC will continue to research best practice approaches in other communities and work with our planning partners. We will continue to ask the community for input and ask the questions that allow us to plan more effectively for children and youth. In the fall of 2008 the KFL&A CYSSC will be engaging in a best practices for community planning training session to better inform our planning and evaluation.

This action plan is the first step in our reporting to the community. We will provide an annual update from each of our strategic committees and our advances in our macro strategy. This document will be launched in October 2008 to the service provider community and then to the general public, through our website and through networks and agencies so that we can continue to improve and evolve our strategies. It is hoped that this report will be widely shared and discussed and that it acts as a catalyst in building awareness of our system strengths and weaknesses.

“

*It is not their genes, but rather our actions that will decide our children's future.*

”

Stuart Shanker President,  
Council for Early Child Development

## Final Thoughts

We recognize that no single group or individual can address all the needs of any one family, child or youth. Children and youth need to be seen within the context of their community. Recognizing the demands on government and community resources, it is critical to explore new ways to support neighbourhoods, youth and children, avoid duplication and maximize our resources. Through collaborative planning, gaps in service are addressed, and overlaps eliminated. An integrated approach ensures the most efficient and effective delivery of service of neighbourhoods, children and families.

It will take all of our best efforts to work differently. This is the beginning of the process of developing a community where all of our children and youth reach their full potential.

## KFL&A Children and Youth Services Steering Committee Members

Pathways for Children and Youth  
Better Beginnings for Kingston Children  
Community Living Kingston  
Ongwanada  
Kingston Literacy  
Youth Diversion  
Limestone District Board of Education  
Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board  
Lennox and Addington Family and Children’s Services  
Ontario Early Years-Kingston and the Islands  
KFL&A Public Health  
St. Lawrence Youth Association  
Lennox and Addington Resources for Children  
Hotel Dieu Adolescent Mental Health  
Frontenac Children’s Aid Society  
The Child Development Centre  
Katarokwi Native Friendship Centre  
The Child Centre- Northern Frontenac Community Services  
The Social Planning Council of Kingston and Area  
The Community Care Access Centre  
Lennox and Addington Addictions and Mental Health Services  
Interval House  
Frontenac Mental Health Services  
KGH-Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Program  
Community and Family Services Department of The City of Kingston  
Prince Edward-Lennox and Addington Social Services  
Kingston Military Family Resource Centre  
Extend a Family  
KFL&A United Way  
Association Canadian-Francaise de l’Ontario  
Ministry of Children and Youth

There are many more community partners and agencies working in our sub-committees and working groups who are not listed above and without them our work would be incomplete.

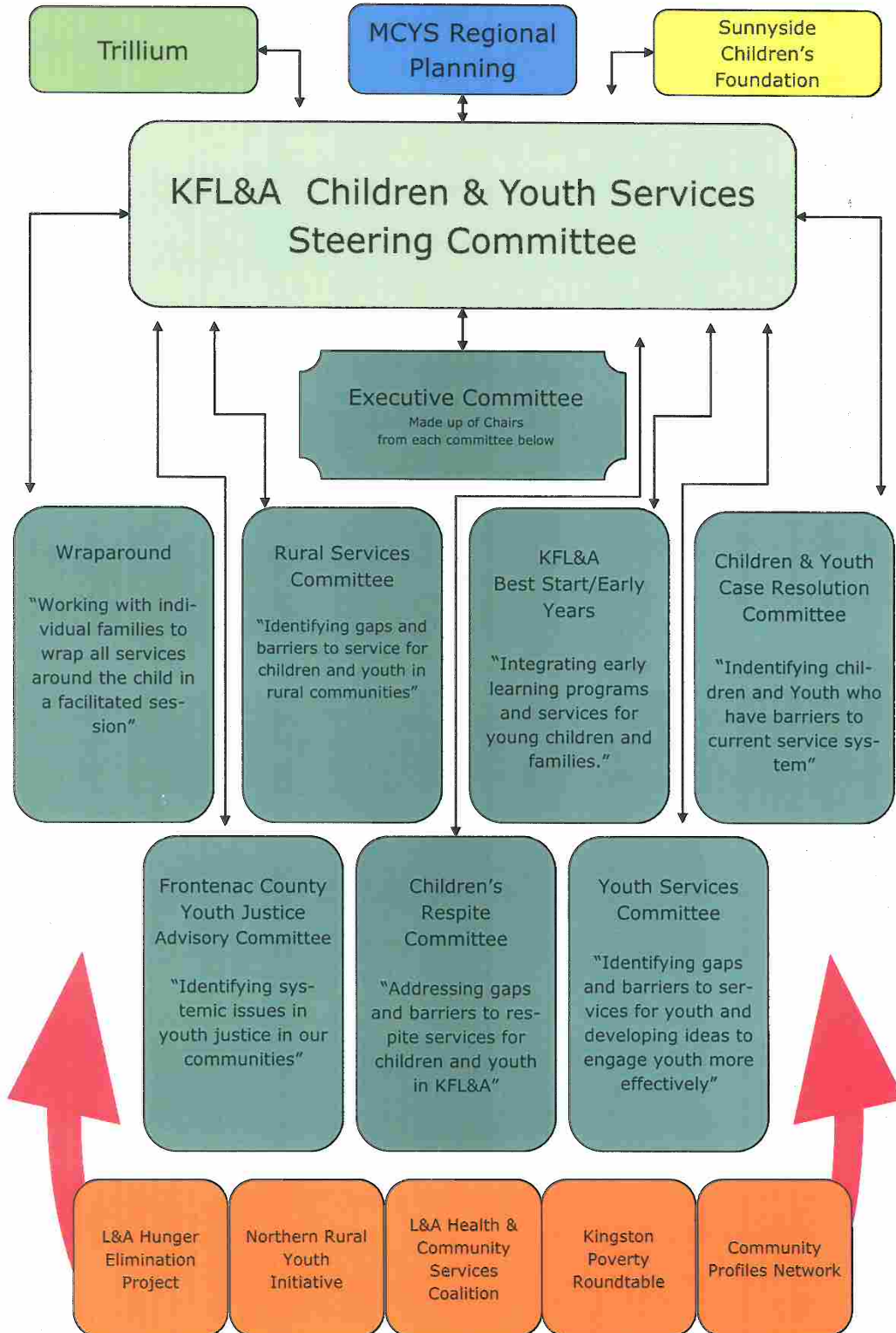
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# KFL&A Children & Youth Services Steering Committee Organizational Chart





## "Working Together to Better Serve KFL&A Children and Youth" Strategic Vision chart

