



# STRATEGIC PLAN

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2015-2020

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2018 UPDATE





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# A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

Andrew Fleck Children's Services (AFCS) has always taken a leadership role in the child care community and in early childhood education. Over the past 100 years, in response to the changing needs of the community, we have developed innovative programs and expanded the organization to provide a comprehensive range of services that meet the diverse early learning and child care needs of families in the City of Ottawa. AFCS takes pride in being progressive, responsive and - most importantly - committed to excellence in all its services.

Modernization of children's services continues to be a theme for our sector. Fortunately, adapting to the changing needs of families is one of our strengths as an organization. We continue to listen carefully to our community so that our services remain responsive and effective. We are proud of our reputation in the community as leaders and pleased to present our strategic plan for the next five years.

The plan was developed in 2015 through the collective efforts of managers, staff, and members of the Board of Directors. In particular, we wish to thank Andrew Fleck employees for their input and especially for their continued dedication to the children and families we serve.

This document was updated in 2018 to report our progress.



# IMPORTANT FACTORS

We developed our plan in consideration of the rapidly changing child-care environment. Important factors we considered included:

## Population Growth

By the year 2025, the Government of Ontario forecast a 22% increase in the number of Ottawa children aged 0 to 5, and a 14% increase in the number of children aged 6 to 12.

## Waiting Lists

The City of Ottawa had indicated that, as of March 2015, there were 12,000 children on the City of Ottawa Child Care Registry and Waitlist, including over 3,000 approved for subsidy. Although there is likely some duplication, there is clearly a shortfall in available spaces in our community. As well, there are significant waitlists for children with special needs who require additional support.

## Child and Family Centres

As of 2015, current services and supports for young children and their families remained fragmented. The Provincial vision of Child and Family Centres supported integration of programs and services but we were still waiting for policy direction. Our experience had demonstrated that program amalgamations result in increased stability.

## Provincial Legislation and Initiatives

The Child Care and Early Years Act (Bill 10) was in effect. Through this legislation, the Government of Ontario strengthened their commitment to quality, early learning environments. The new legislation also provided an incentive for home child care providers to affiliate with licensed agencies.

## City of Ottawa Child Care Service Plan 2015

The Plan for 2015 included important initiatives to stabilize funding for the child care sector. However, the Plan was silent on special needs resourcing.

## Schools-First Policy

There continued to be partnership opportunities with the local school boards to provide extended day programs in schools.

## Supporting Qualified Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs)

The implementation of the College of ECEs Continuous Professional Learning Framework and increased professionalism and expectations for the sector created opportunities and responsibilities for employers.





# MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

It was in this context that we reaffirmed the mission, vision and values articulated in our previous plan:

## Mission Statement

We support children and their families through high quality, inclusive services that meet their diverse developmental, early learning and child care needs.

## Vision Statement

Working with the Ottawa community to build accessible multi-service supports, early learning opportunities and child care for every child.

## Values

Excellence	Leadership
Integrity	Accountability
Responsiveness	Inclusiveness

For more information on how we demonstrate these values in all our services and practices, please visit: [www.afchildrensservices.ca/values](http://www.afchildrensservices.ca/values)



# STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS 2015 - 2020

To achieve our vision we identified three strategic directions, with key initiatives, to focus on for the five years of the plan.

## Strategic Direction #1

Expanding in response to growing demand and unmet needs

### Key Initiatives

Exploring partnership opportunities

Accomplished since 2015: We have confirmed MOUs with Makonsag Aboriginal Head Start Program; Child and Nature Alliance, and Centretown Affordable Housing Development Corporation (CAHDCO). Children's Inclusion Support Services celebrated its 25th anniversary of offering collaborative support and services in the Ottawa community; November 15, 2016 was proclaimed Children's Integration Support Services Day.

Our continued plan: We will continue to collaborate with these and other partners to develop programs and services for children and families while also embracing additional opportunities.

Increasing the number of affiliated home child care providers, in part by offering more flexible administrative arrangements

Accomplished since 2015: We increased our Providers affiliated with our agency through the alternative administrative model. We participated, through the Home Child Care Association of Ontario, in promoting Base Funding as a system initiative to support Providers in joining the licensed sector.

Our continued plan: Now that Base Funding has been approved, we will work with the City of Ottawa to develop an implementation plan that is effective and appropriate for our community.



Seeking additional funding in order to augment services to families whose children have special needs

Accomplished since 2015: We anticipate, due to the announcement of additional funding from the Province, to be able to address the system gaps that currently exist.

Our continued plan: We will be sharing with our community partners our thoughts and ideas on how to capitalize on this new investment to meet the ever-increasing needs of children and their families.

Increasing our Short Term Child Care services (STCC), including a fee-for-service component

Accomplished since 2015: Several employers have started using our services, specifically the Ottawa Catholic School Board, Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario - Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre and the Ottawa Hospital. We continue to offer a fee-for-service option for families who are not employed by one of our employer partners.

Our continued plan: We are focused on additional recruitment and training to ensure we have caregivers available to accept placements.

## Strategic Direction #2

Developing our capabilities and enhancing our services to ensure accessible, client-centred, inclusive high quality care

### Key Initiatives

#### Expanding parents /guardians' support services.

Accomplished since 2015: In anticipation of Provincial changes to funding for segregated programs we consulted with families attending our Making Connections Nursery School (MCNS) to learn from them what supports they would like to see implemented. We increased capacity in 3 of our licensed programs, bringing our total capacity in our group programs to 892 licensed spaces.

Our continued plan: We are investigating a change to our intake process for Children's Inclusion Support Services to be able to offer a "navigator" option, if requested. With this service, parents can be supported to find a licensed child care option for their child with special needs.

#### Expanding care for parents/guardians who are working non-traditional hours.

Accomplished since 2015: We are actively recruiting home child care Providers; this model of care is more flexible and responsive to alternate work schedules.

Our continued plan: We continue to focus on the recruitment of Providers to the licensed sector.

#### Evolving our Ontario Early Years Centre into a Best Start Child and Family Centre.

Accomplished since 2015: We have been an active participant on the City of Ottawa's OEYCFC Advisory Group.

Our continued plan: Our EarlyON, as directed by the City, is to maintain its services status quo until at least the end of 2018. We are actively investigating partnership and system changes based on the results of the parent surveys and focus groups that the City conducted as part of the review.

#### Coordinating recruitment, training and deployment of supply educators for the community

Accomplished since 2015: We launched an online candidate application process in the Fall of 2016 to streamline the recruitment process.

Our continued plan: We heard from community colleagues that the recruitment of supply educators is their focus. With the online candidate application process, we anticipate being able to offer recruitment of supply educators as a service which complements the deployment tool we utilize and can share with community partners.



### Key Initiatives

#### Expanding opportunities for inclusion among and between programs.

Accomplished since 2015: We have assigned a staff member to review opportunities for collaboration. We implemented a Parent Advisory structure to provide a forum for communication. We've hosted 3 meetings so far with representation from each of our sites.

Our continued plan: We are investigating how we can be more streamlined and efficient among our three programs that offer toy and equipment lending options

#### Improving our visibility in order to increase family and stakeholder awareness of our programs and services.

Accomplished since 2015: We launched a Facebook campaign and have gained a greater presence on social media. Our website activity has increased by 8%. We added outdoor signage at all of our Ottawa-Carleton District School Board locations. We posted three podcasts on our website and social media so important content can be accessed when it is needed.

Our continued plan: We continue to focus on internal and external communication including social media. We will continue to add content, including podcasts and will be undertaking a review of our website.

#### Refining our organizational structure and systems to be more responsive to current activities and to future opportunities

Accomplished since 2015: We have streamlined our management team to capitalize on efficiencies and launched a new database to manage the requirements for our licensed programs.

Our continued plan: We continue to investigate additional options for utilizing information technology.

#### Continuing to provide professional development and career development opportunities to our Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) and other employees.

Accomplished since 2015: Our agency has made a significant investment in professional development opportunities; a sampling of the opportunities includes: 17 staff participating in Leadership training offered by Algonquin College, 23 staff taking the Forest and Nature School Practitioner course, and 4 internal PD leadership sessions offered to all staff who are interested. We also co-hosted the Early Childhood Resource Teacher Network of Ontario Provincial Conference.

Our continued plan: We will continue to invest and respond to the professional development needs of our employees. We are monitoring the results of our current investment in leadership training. In our 2016 employee survey 99% of our employees responded that AFCS is a good place to work!

#### Reviewing and updating our Corporate By-Laws and governance practices to maintain compliance with new provincial legislation and accountability to our stakeholders

Accomplished since 2015: The Governance Working Group evolved into a Standing Committee of the Board. Through its work, we launched our new name and had our revised Objects approved. The Committee has reached out to other organizations similar in size and scope to us to assist in determining Best Practices, particularly related to Membership. We developed a Board Accountability Framework document. We completed a Board Member survey to identify our strengths and areas to develop and reviewed our most important board policies.

Our continued plan: We continue to review our By-laws to be well-prepared once the provincial Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA) comes into force.



## Strategic Direction #3

Engaging with other early learning and family service stakeholders to promote an effective, coordinated response to community needs

### Key Initiatives

#### Continuing to play a leadership role in our community

Accomplished since 2015: We have been contracted by several organizations to provide resources and support including recruitment support, proposal writing and investigation of future licensed child care options.

Our continued plan: We are well positioned to respond to requests for consultation services to early learning and child care organizations.

#### Leading and promoting the adoption of quality assurance practices throughout the early learning sector

Accomplished since 2015: We are often asked to share our practices as examples and models for others.

Our continued plan: We continue to participate on local and Ministry Stakeholder Advisory Groups.

#### Advocating for a more coordinated approach to the delivery of early learning and related family services

Accomplished since 2015: A representative met with the Minister Responsible for Early Years and Child Care Indira Nadoo-Harris and shared our vision for an effective early learning and care system.

Our continued plan: We will continue to share our thoughts and ideas in a coordinated way with elected officials, funders and the community.



## Strategic Direction #3 Cont.

### Key Initiatives

**Increasing opportunities to support the sector as a whole by providing access to resources, training and tools**

Accomplished since 2015: We created a leadership booklet, identifying our responsiveness to the changing landscape and the training and resources we have developed.

Our continued plan: We will continue to provide services and supports.

**Advocating for a high quality national child care program**

Accomplished since 2015: In June 2017 we submitted to the Federal Women's Caucus a brief called: *Planning for Early Learning and Care in Canada: Moving from the Current Market Approach Towards a Universal System.*

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Do you have comments, questions, or suggestions? If so, we welcome your feedback! Please contact Kim Hiscott, Executive Director at [khiscott@afchildrensservices.ca](mailto:khiscott@afchildrensservices.ca)

*Our strategic plan demonstrates our continued commitment to children and families; we are excited about the future and the opportunities to build upon our current strengths and the diversity of our services.*



# THE ANDREW FLECK CHILDREN'S SERVICES EXPERIENCE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A PARENT – OUR VISION FOR 2020

After hearing about ANDREW FLECK from neighbours, a parent new to Ottawa arrives at our Ontario Early Years Centre (OEYC) location with her baby, toddler and 3 year old. She is greeted by an ANDREW FLECK staff at this Best Start Child and Family Centre Hub for the community.

Mom anticipates returning to work in 6 months and is interested in licensed home child care for her baby and possibly group care for her toddler. Her 3 year old will be attending kindergarten, but in the meantime is going to stay home with Grandma.

The OEYC Educator shares that we have an upcoming school readiness program - a ½-day program offered 5 days a week during a six week period for children who have not attended licensed care in the past.

The Educator also advises that we have “Meet and Greet” evenings where Providers affiliated with ANDREW FLECK are available. At such a session Mom and Dad ask several of the Providers why they chose ANDREW FLECK. The consistent answer is the amount of support and training available. After feeling a connection with one of the Providers, they identify that their baby has special needs. The ANDREW FLECK Provider is confident that she can support the child and family because of her experience and the training she has attended through ANDREW FLECK's Children's Inclusion Support Services (CISS) and the ongoing support available to her and the family through CISS. When the child starts at the Provider's home all of the equipment she needs is delivered at one time, including the adapted equipment required to support the baby's development.

When Mom and Dad visit an ANDREW FLECK licensed group site; they ask questions about our reverse integration philosophy and appreciate the explanations they receive. They are curious about the French immersion program option for when their toddler is preschool age but also relieved to hear that we have program sites throughout Ottawa and beyond as they are considering moving in the next year or two.

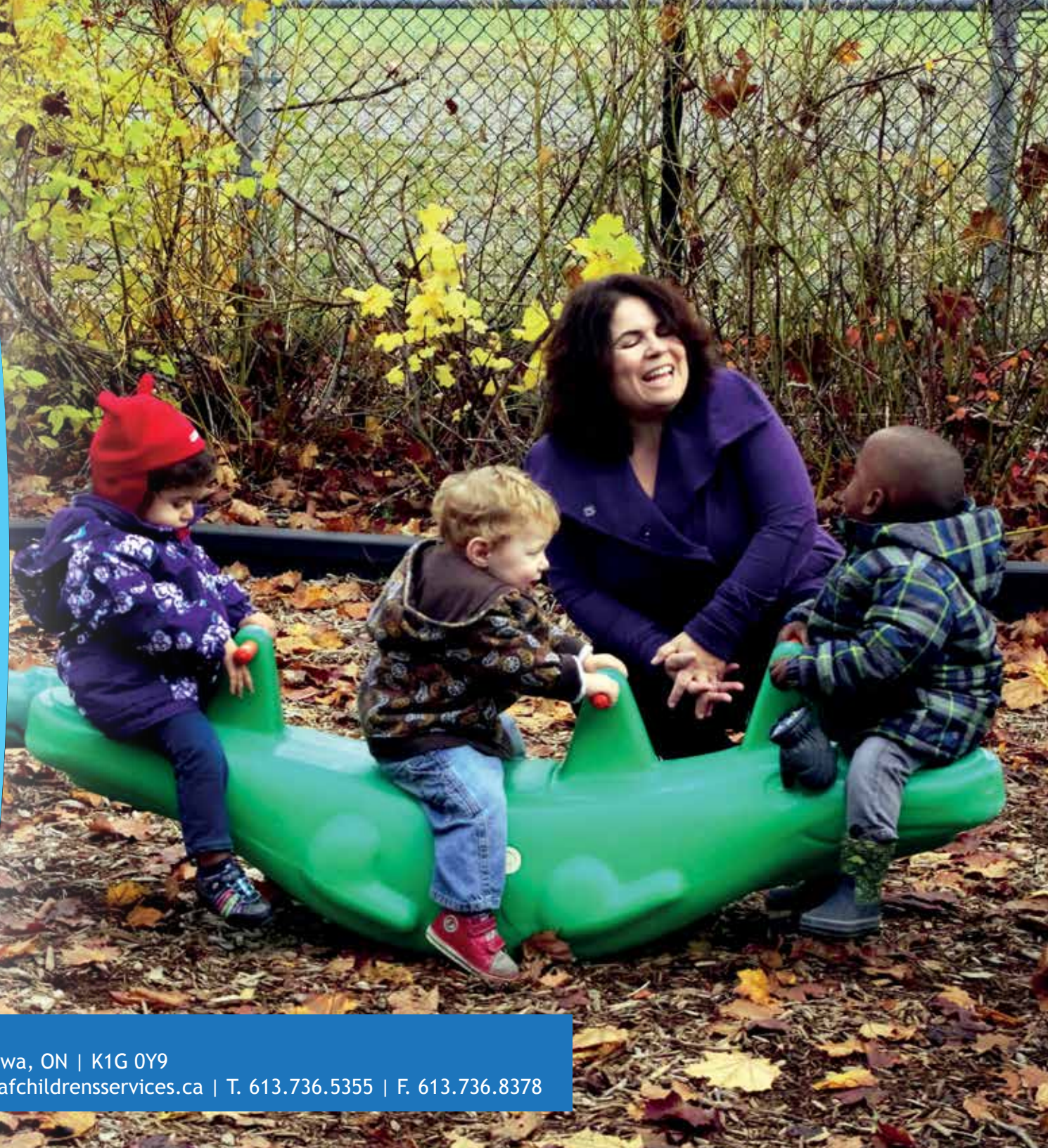
While completing the comprehensive parent intake, the Educator learns that the parents have limited family support - so she shares our Short Term Child Care (STCC) program as an option to them if their child is mildly ill or they need other support. Mom and Dad are also thrilled to hear about the parent support workshops being offered in various locations by the OEYC and the additional opportunities to connect with their Educator at their child's the Group site.

As they are leaving, the Educator mentions that ANDREW FLECK provides training for supply educators. The parents offer to share this information with one of their neighbours who might be interested in this type of training and work especially given the link to the apprenticeship option; they take a copy of the ANDREW FLECK annual report to share with him.

We are committed to this, as our vision of service and support, for every Ottawa family.







**Andrew Fleck Children's Services**

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