

# A CONSTANT FRIEND



A History of the  
Peel Children's  
Aid Society

1912-2012

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## “A Constant Friend” – A History of the Peel Children’s Aid Society

The organizational work to establish a Children’s Aid Society in Peel County began in October 1911, and the inaugural meeting of the Board of Directors was held on April 23, 1912. Peel’s was one of the last CASs to be established in Ontario, but its history is no less interesting – providing a window on changing social policy, community leadership, and humanitarian ideals. Although always focused on child welfare and helping families to care for children, the organization has combined, in various ways, different ideals and different principles of service delivery: acting on behalf of the Crown (government) while emphasizing the local, charitable nature of its work, delivering essential services while advocating for changes that would necessitate less use of those services, acting in both an investigative and supportive capacity, always asking itself difficult questions and searching for an inspired balance.

The following sketch therefore chronicles a past marked by both constant change and consistent challenges.<sup>1</sup>



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# Laying the Foundations

Until the late nineteenth century, orphaned, abused, and neglected children depended on the ad hoc intervention of relatives and neighbours, or they were committed to private (and very bleak) institutions. In Peel, there are records showing that some children resided at the House of Refuge, a County-run facility intended primarily for elderly people with no means of support.<sup>2</sup>

The plight of less fortunate young people was often simply unknown to civic officials and privileged members of the community. In November 1912, when the Peel Children's Aid Society was still in its formative stages, County Councillor J.S. Beck reported on a conference he had attended in Toronto on "feeble-minded children." He wrote that "the statements made by the speakers of conditions in this Province were startling and it was a surprise to me that such a state of conditions could exist in Ontario."<sup>3</sup>

Nonetheless, during the late nineteenth century much was done to give concerned citizens and their provincial and local governments a larger role in "child saving." Across North America, a "progressive movement" was bringing together reformers, many of whom were actually well-to-do and well-connected citizens, in reaction to what they saw as moral and social degradation caused by the industrial revolution. Although the Upper Canada Assembly had passed a rudimentary *Orphans Act* in 1799,<sup>4</sup> the more significant precedent that the progressives could cite to position their movement in the mainstream was probably the gradual acceptance of a strong public role in education.

Indeed, child welfare was fortunate to have a champion as determined and energetic as Egerton Ryerson had been on behalf of public schools.<sup>5</sup>

Irish-born John Joseph Kelso (1864-1935) started his career as a Toronto newspaper reporter. His work introduced him first hand to the cruelty and suffering experienced by thousands of residents of his city, realities that had been seldom profiled by the press. Applying his considerable energy and journalistic savvy, Kelso was determined to mobilize influential citizens. In 1887, he was instrumental in founding the Toronto Humane Society, dedicated to ending cruelty to both animals and children. He later set up the Santa Claus Fund and the Fresh Air Fund to give disadvantaged children some relief from their miserable, squalid surroundings.

In 1891, the young reformer succeeded in starting an organization dedicated specifically to the plight of abused, neglected, and orphaned children. The Toronto Children's Aid Society was well received by civic officials and newspaper readers. In fact, within a few years the provincial government was persuaded to also take action. In 1893, the legislature passed *An Act for the Prevention of*

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*Cruelty to and Better Protection of Children*. At the same time, Kelso was appointed the province's superintendent of neglected and dependent children, a position he held for the next 41 years.<sup>6</sup>

Kelso was soon travelling throughout the province extolling the virtues of Children's Aid work and encouraging the formation of local societies. The Act gave the superintendent's office the same authority as a Children's Aid Society in those parts

**In 1893, the legislature passed An Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to and Better Protection of Children**

of the province where a society had not yet been established. This was not a minor assignment. At first, Kelso worked entirely on his own in the provincial office, and he and his wife sometimes

cared for children in their home. By the early twentieth century, however, he had a small network of employees. We know that Charles W. Norton, the first employee of Peel CAS, had been doing child welfare work in Peel before a society was established; it can be assumed, therefore, that he worked directly under Kelso's auspices. It was also reported that one of the founding board members, C.D. Gordon, had been previously engaged in child welfare; it is possible that he was a member of a Children's Visiting Committee. Under the 1893 Act, such a committee was mandatory for every county. There were, in fact, already over 40 wards in the care of the Society the day it was founded.<sup>7</sup>

The first board meeting, held in the schoolroom of Grace United Church in Brampton, featured a strong contingent of the Peel elite. In the years that followed, many prominent Peel residents lent their efforts to the Society's board, including respected lawyers such as Sybil Bennett, one of the first women attorneys in the area, and Albert Grenville Davis, father of the future premier; renowned scholars and educators, such as architecture professor Anthony Adamson, and a succession of mayors, reeves, councillors, county wardens, and regional chairs.

At that first directors' meeting, Sheriff N. Henderson was elected the founding president and W.S. Morphy was named treasurer. A "Ladies' Visiting Committee" was formed to periodically check on the children who were in the Society's care.<sup>8</sup> Plans were finalized to receive Kelso that September, when he would address parishioners of Brampton's Presbyterian, Methodist, Anglican, and Baptist churches.<sup>9</sup>

Representatives of the first board proceeded to meet with the county council and with the councils of the local municipalities to secure formal endorsements and financial contributions. The initial grants were welcomed, but modest. On June 6, 1912, the county approved \$100. To put this contribution in perspective, the same Finance Committee report recommended that "a grant of Fifty Dollars (\$50) be made for the best



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dairy cattle and the best baron hogs shown by an amateur exhibitor at the Winter Fair.”<sup>10</sup> However, by the end of July another \$100 was granted, and quarterly contributions of at least that amount were forthcoming in the early years. It should also be noted that the county was still footing the bill for the upkeep of some local children who were in orphanages; an institution in Berlin, Ontario, was often used.

The province contributed no money to the Society's start-up and very little to its operating budget for its first several years.<sup>11</sup> This was more than a consequence of basic fiscal restraint; it was related to Kelso's deeply held philosophy that Children's Aid work should be, first and foremost, of a philanthropic nature and not dominated by a government bureaucracy. Despite having been a leading reformer, in this and other ways Kelso was in fact quite conservative.<sup>12</sup>

Raising awareness of the Society's work and objectives was difficult. That first autumn, Norton had to put out an appeal that he be “notified when a waif or stray is taken in by some charitable person.” It was added that, “This is often done without notifying him that such a child or children have been taken in charge and causes great confusion and inconvenience.”<sup>13</sup> A few months later, local newspaper readers learned that W.H. Rutledge, a Port Credit constable, had found four deserted children whose parents had apparently returned overseas. There is no mention of any CAS



J.J. Kelso

involvement before Rutledge had them committed to the Sacred Heart Orphanage at Sunnyside.<sup>14</sup>

Within two years of its incorporation, however, the Society was very active and it was fast becoming a recognized presence in the community. At the organization's annual general meeting in November 1913, it was reported that 75 personal interviews had taken place on behalf of the Society's wards, twenty cases were investigated and fourteen children were committed as wards of the Society. Five children had to be hospitalized because they were “suffering from a very contagious disease.” Five neglect cases were heard in court, and one ward died from acute pneumonia.<sup>15</sup>

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An article in *The Brampton Conservator* on March 5, 1914, summarized the Society's activities:

Has boys and girls now for adoption. Has regular monthly meetings; the work is talked over. Receives neglected and homeless children. Endeavors to save home and not break it up. A constant friend to the friendless child. Supervises children by visits of the Inspector. Places homeless children in family homes. Investigates all complaints of neglect or ill treatment. Constantly endeavors to better child life. Receives back children when necessary. Is helped by Municipal and Township grants, gifts and membership fees. Is supported by good people. Do you contribute?

The same article presented six reasons why the Children's Aid Society was worthy of public support:

1. Because the sorrows of a little child must touch your heart.
2. Because you would not allow a child of yours to be ill-treated.
3. Because the Society is a legally constituted organization for the protection of children.
4. Because thousands of children have been benefitted in the past, and still greater preventative work is possible.
5. Because the Society's aim is to educate parents to love and appreciate their children; to find homes for the homeless, and to befriend and uplift young people who have fallen into evil ways.

6. Because of the high character of the work and its reward: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these ye have done in unto me."<sup>16</sup>

References to rescuing children from "evil ways" frequently appeared in Children's Aid literature, often more prominently than in the above-cited article. Arguments about saving future incarceration costs were also employed. The quotation from the New Testament was not at all unusual; religious and spiritual appeals were used, and several Protestant clergymen were active on the Society's board or helped the organization in other ways. Although Peel did have a Catholic minority with established parishes in the county, very few non-Protestants were brought into the fold in the early days. (This might explain why Constable Rutledge by-passed the CAS – Sacred Heart was a Catholic orphanage.) A similar pattern could be seen in other parts of the province. For example, very soon after the founding of the Toronto Children's Aid Society, members of the city's Catholic community decided that they could not find a home within the new organization and formed the Toronto Catholic Children's Aid Society.

**"Everything satisfactory, well cared for; goes to church and school."**

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By 1915, Inspector Norton was putting in very long hours. He had resigned from his job with Dale Estates Nurseries to devote himself full-time to child welfare. He was sworn in as a county constable to make it easier for him to carry out his CAS duties. The Halton Society was formed in 1914, and Norton was appointed to work for it as well as for Peel. His services were also required for some time in Dufferin County.<sup>17</sup> Travelling in the vast, lonely countryside was not easy, and it was not until the spring of 1919 that the decision was made to purchase a car for Norton's use.<sup>18</sup> Even then, the road conditions left much to be desired.

World War I consumed public attention, but the Society urged local citizens not to overlook its work. Samuel Charters, a member of the Society's board and the publisher of *The Brampton Conservator*, argued that the organization is engaged in "a patriotic work which should appeal to all those who have at heart a love of country and of king. The making of a good citizen is surely equal to sending a man to the front. If you cannot do the latter you may at least help in the former. Your money will be wisely and judiciously spent."<sup>19</sup>

One of Norton's record books has survived. There are brief descriptions of some of his cases. In several instances, it appears that he did try to

avoid taking a child into care, which is consistent with how he publicly described his role. Where a child was made a ward, he was often able to get a parent to sign a contract to acknowledge this. The reasons for wardship were described vaguely. Among the citations: "Neglected under no restraints;" "Mother dead, father unable to provide;" "Parents leading disorderly life;" "Mother ill, neglect by father;" "Absolutely destitute;" "Immorality of mother." In the majority of wardship cases discussed in the record book, it appears that the children did not go back to their natural parents, although they were sometimes committed to other relatives. Norton's visits to each foster home were not frequent — often a year would go by between house calls. When he did turn up, his assessment was usually positive. He would typically record something to the effect of, "Everything satisfactory, well cared for; goes to church and school."<sup>20</sup>

In 1915, Charles D. Gordon succeeded Sheriff Henderson as president of Peel CAS. Richard Blain, a Member of Parliament and later senator, was named honorary president. Although the Peel and Halton Children's Aid Societies became closely integrated administratively, they remained separate organizations with their own boards. As we shall see, they did finally amalgamate in 1935, only to permanently split nine years later.

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# The Gordon Home

The need for a permanent shelter had been discussed since 1912. Gordon and his Halton counterpart, J.M. Denyes, took up this cause. Their arguments in favour of such a facility were not always consistent.

On the one hand, they were mindful of Kelso's strong belief that, wherever possible, wards should be placed in foster homes. Indeed, in a speech in Brampton, Kelso had argued that, "Charitable institutions where children are herded together, unloved and living by rule, are being abandoned and the little ones are now placed in foster homes where they receive the loving care given to those who are born into such homes and families."<sup>21</sup> It was, therefore, often underlined that

the shelter would be a temporary location for initial assessment, a concept that was, in fact, outlined in the legislation.<sup>22</sup> At other times, however, it was admitted that the home was required for longer-term stays because it was difficult to find enough foster families

**It was named the "Gordon Home" in honour of the Peel CAS president who had also chaired the building committee.**

to meet the need.<sup>23</sup> Even before the permanent facility opened, the Peel Society was using a temporary shelter in Brampton.<sup>24</sup>

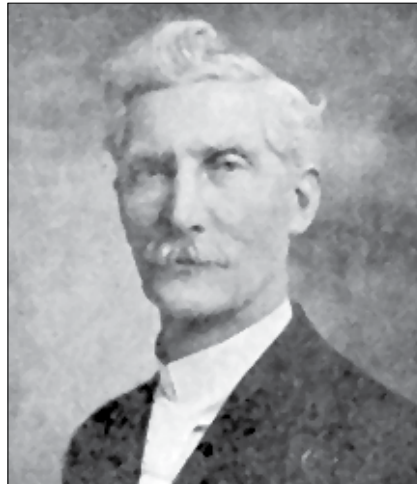


The Gordon Home

On June 13, 1918, Peel county council approved a grant of \$7,200 for the construction of the home, and thereafter usually made annual grants of between \$5,000 and \$6,000 towards its upkeep. Council subsequently appointed a committee to oversee its investment in the project. It included County Warden David McCaugherty (of Streetsville), Brampton Reeve Robert P. Worthy, and Port Credit Reeve R.M. Parkinson.<sup>25</sup> The home was located in Milton (Halton County), at Main and Court Streets, on land previously owned by Gordon C. Edwards.<sup>26</sup>



T. W. Duggan



W. H. Stewart



Frank Thompson

Many prominent citizens gathered for the official opening on June 24, 1919, which featured speeches by Kelso and local dignitaries.<sup>27</sup> It was named the “Gordon Home” in honour of the Peel CAS president who had also chaired the building committee.<sup>28</sup>

C.D. Gordon relinquished the presidency shortly after the opening. He moved to the city where he took a job as a manager with the Dominion Bank of Toronto, as it was then called. He occasionally visited the home, and it was once noted that he worked “in various counties as a friend of children who are in need of a friend.”<sup>29</sup> His name surfaced in a 1938 article that mentioned in passing that he had retired from the bank but that he was still devoting much of his time to “helping unfortunate youngsters to help themselves.”<sup>30</sup>

Gordon’s successor was T. W. Duggan, a former Brampton mayor and a wealthy, influential businessman. Between 1900 and 1932, he was the president of Dale Estates Nurseries, a large enterprise employing more than 150 people. Florists from around the world came to know Dale Estates and its success helped Brampton acquire its reputation as “Canada’s Flowertown.” Duggan also chaired the joint board of management for the Gordon home, and he headed the local Mothers’ Allowance Board in the 1920s and 1930s. He was the Society’s longest-serving president, remaining at his post until the merger with Halton, when he became the honorary president of the combined agency.<sup>31</sup>

Charles Norton resigned in August 1919 and went back to work for the Dale Estates.<sup>32</sup> He was succeeded as inspector by W. H. Stewart, whose official designation was soon changed to



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**McDonald was not the first or the last person to raise the issue of municipal control of the Children's Aid Society.**

superintendent. Visiting committees of local residents were formed to befriend the children in the Gordon Home, and Doctors Gowland and King rendered their services without charge.

The first year, wages for nursing and domestic help totalled \$1,194.60. Clothing, food and drugs cost \$1,804.63. There were then 14 children in the home. Very few private monetary donations were received at first, causing County Council's Children's Shelter Committee to remark that,

The rumor has been circulated to the effect that the Councils of the two Counties were paying the whole cost of maintaining the home and that private donations were not needed. This impression should be corrected for while the Counties pay for the upkeep of the institution donations are always acceptable to provide clothing and other necessaries to the children.<sup>33</sup>

Indeed, in early September 1920, an appeal was put out emphasizing the "urgent necessity" for fall and winter clothing<sup>34</sup> and a campaign was launched from the local pulpits.<sup>35</sup> Public contributions gradually became more numerous and generous, and in 1923 the home was the recipient of \$5,000 from the estate of a Mrs. Hyman. The money was used for a new wing.<sup>36</sup>

Reports on the condition of the shelter were generally favourable, but there were difficulties. On November 19, 1920, for example, County Council learned that "there was now an epidemic of whooping cough."<sup>37</sup> Quarantines were not isolated occurrences. In August 1921, the home's matron, Miss Holloway, died, but the two societies quickly secured the services of her mother. By the mid-1920s other concerns began surfacing. "We found the bathroom in a very unsanitary condition," a committee of County Council reported in 1925. "Also we found that fire escapes had never been provided for, which is entirely against the law; we also found the floor in one of the large bedrooms in very bad condition, very rough and worn through in many places."<sup>38</sup> It is difficult to ascertain how long a child could expect to remain at the home, although we do know that in the first three months after the shelter's opening, four children were adopted.<sup>39</sup>

In November 1925 a fire of "unknown origin" damaged much of the home's old wing. The Milton fire brigade and many citizens rushed to the scene and managed to contain the blaze. There were no injuries, but temporary homes for the children had to be found. The insurance companies provided \$4,177.20.<sup>40</sup> By the end of 1926, the two Societies were able to report that the home was "in splendid condition" thanks to the "liberal" insurance settlement.<sup>41</sup>

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The Depression presented the two organizations with significant problems. Frank Thompson, who took over as superintendent a few months after Stewart's death in 1929, reported that it was becoming more difficult to find foster homes and argued that a system of providing boarding payments to foster parents was necessary; they were already receiving some remuneration in Toronto and Hamilton.<sup>42</sup> The workload had increased in the 1920s when the government of E.C. Drury introduced the *Adoption Act* and the *Unmarried Parents Act*, both of which broadened the scope of mandated CAS involvement.

Meanwhile, the two counties began to balk at the cost of the Gordon Home. J. F. McDonald, the reeve of Caledon Township, called the facility a "white elephant." Added McDonald: "We feel that if we have to provide the money for the operation of the Children's Aid Society, we ought to have more to say as to how it should be spent, and if costs keep going up, we will have to go to the Department of Welfare and see if something can't be done to give us some control."<sup>43</sup>

McDonald was not the first or the last person to raise the issue of municipal control of the Children's Aid Society. County Council began playing a significant role in the Society's affairs when construction began on the Gordon Home. Members of the Children's Shelter Committee, some of whom were on the board of directors or

on the shelter's joint board of management, made regular inspections, reports, and recommendations regarding the appropriate level of County support. By 1933, in view of the economic conditions, Peel County Council went as far as to urge a \$200 reduction in Thompson's salary. Halton councillors insisted on a \$400 decrease. (He was then making



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\$1,900, more than three times the salary of the home's matron.<sup>44</sup>) A salary reduction of \$300 was eventually settled on by the two societies.<sup>45</sup>

By early 1936, the Gordon Home's future was very much in doubt. There were 32 children living there on March 31 of that year, out of 119 children who were in the care of the two societies.<sup>46</sup> That August the home closed its doors. Foster homes were found for most of the residents, although some children were sent to a home in Orillia. "I feel lost without my big family, but I believe they will have

every advantage under the new arrangement," remarked Ettie Telfer, the home's matron.<sup>47</sup>

That November, Frank Thompson was reporting that the change had resulted in improvements to the children, although he had to temporarily rent a home to accommodate children who could not be immediately placed in foster homes. The new funding formula had the county giving the Society 75 cents a day for each ward. The provincial grant was \$1,000 a year. At least some of the foster parents were now receiving financial assistance.<sup>48</sup>





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# Amalgamation and Separation

The closing of the Gordon Home took place less than a year after the amalgamation of the Halton and Peel societies. The new agency was constituted on November 4, 1935.<sup>49</sup> A committee of 50 people undertook the nomination of the new board, which met in early January 1936. A newspaper account at the time explained that the amalgamation was intended to allow the shelter to be operated more efficiently.<sup>50</sup> The union was also likely a result of the Hepburn government's changes to child welfare practices throughout the province.

In December 1934, Ontario's public welfare minister, David Croll, drew up a comprehensive Order in Council setting new minimum requirements for Children's Aid Societies. Frank Thompson reported that,

We have endeavoured to carry out these regulations, which entail a great deal of office and clerical work. While in the past a record was kept of every case, it is now necessary to go into this more thoroughly, collecting all information that may have any bearing on the child involved. During the past year we have revised our filing system and now have quite a complete record of all cases coming to our attention. This would have been quite impossible had not the Society seen fit to engage the services of a Stenographer. It seems difficult, however, with large social problems on our hands and the very wide territory to cover, to give the attention to the individual cases that we feel ought to be given.

Thompson also noted that the provincial department was more frequently providing "constructive advice and suggestions."<sup>51</sup> We know also that H.W. Beise, the young, energetic social worker who succeeded the ailing Kelso as superintendent of child welfare, met with the two boards on March 8, 1935, to share suggestions and concerns.<sup>52</sup> It is conceivable that he encouraged the amalgamation to better co-ordinate activities in both jurisdictions.

The union with Halton did not last long. By late 1943, Peel County Council was told that "at a meeting of all members of Peel and Halton Children's Aid Society it was decided to dissolve the present Society and form a separate Society for each County and an application has been made to Mr. Vivian, Minister of Welfare." The move was initiated by the Peel representatives on the board. Despite the closing of the home, the organization had grown since amalgamation, although this was partly because it was charged with the

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responsibility of finding homes for some 160 British children who had found refuge in the counties for the duration of the war. Peel County Council's desire to have more influence in the affairs of the Society appears to have been a strong motivating factor for the separation. The council wanted the new Society to be governed by a board of seven members, four of whom would be nominated by the County Council.<sup>53</sup> When the new board was finally constituted in the office of Peel County Treasurer J.J. Jamieson on February 21, 1944, three of the

seven members were county nominees; the seven directors were Mrs. W.J. Hood, president; County Warden John Hooper, vice president; Rena Mosely; Streetsville Reeve Clifford Cantelon; A.E. Sherman; and Bert Oakes. Jamieson was also named to the board and given the treasurer's portfolio.<sup>54</sup> A.E. (Bert) Kilpatrick, who had no formal child welfare training but who had been doing relief work for the county since the 1930s, was named the Society's superintendent.<sup>55</sup>

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# Post-War Changes

The post-World War II period forced the Society to grapple with rapid social change and population growth. On September 6, 1945, the Society had 72 wards in its care, 28 of whom were formally wards of the Peel Society, 16 were wards of other societies, and 28 children were on adoption probation.<sup>56</sup> “Of these wards,” County Council was told, “22 are in boarding homes and 20 in free homes. One ward is in a wage home and one ward is in a mental hospital. The 28 wards on adoption probation are of course no charge on the County.”

A year later the county councillors on the board reported that, “We have considered with some alarm the situation arising out of the housing programme for residents of the City of Toronto and strongly recommend... that any [housing] agreement shall provide for payment of supervision by the municipality from where these people come.”<sup>57</sup> After several months the Society’s superintendent had “been instructed to take up with the City of Toronto the question of furnishing

a welfare worker for the Malton and Lakeview areas now used by the city for housing accommodation.”<sup>58</sup>

**The Society was also coming to terms with the need to be more creative and proactive in its programming.**

Although it was subsequently announced that Irene Graham had been hired as a full-time social worker for a two-month probationary period with “expenses payable to the City of Toronto,”<sup>59</sup> the growth was here to

stay and having other municipalities pick up child welfare costs in Peel was not, in the long run, a realistic solution. The Society was also coming to terms with the need to be more creative and proactive in its programming. In 1947, for example, County Council complied with a request from the Society to provide \$2,725 “for prevention purposes,” and it was reported that, “A program of publicity has been laid out seeking public support, both financial and otherwise, for this type of work.”<sup>60</sup>

Meanwhile, the increasingly onerous child protection work throughout the province was prompting the Ontario Association of Children’s Aid Societies to intensify its efforts. In 1947, the Society’s annual OACAS membership fee went from \$15 to \$50 to help the provincial umbrella organization hire a permanent secretary.<sup>61</sup> The level of provincial funding was moderately increased under legislation passed in 1949, and the 1954 *Child Welfare Act* consolidated and updated seven existing statutes.

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But by the early 1950s, all these changes notwithstanding, the Society was overwhelmed. At the annual general meeting in February 1950, Sybil Bennett, the outgoing president, observed that Kilpatrick urgently needed more assistance. She added that “with more than 2,000 visits and interviews, it is evident that there can be no time left for him to properly plan present and future needs of the Society.”<sup>62</sup> As early as 1944, the county was calling on the province to pick up 50 percent of CAS costs, and a resolution passed a year later



Irene Graham

appealed for both provincial and federal assistance, arguing that the Society was “becoming a serious drain” on the finances of the county.<sup>63</sup> The 1949 and 1954 legislation did not go nearly as far the county had hoped. For its part, the county offered few welfare services to complement the efforts of the CAS.

The public mood had been noticeably changing since the Depression. No longer was the plight of needy or neglected children viewed as usually the consequence of the lax morals of their parents. Bert Kilpatrick, for example, had come to the view that if living standards could improve, the Children’s Aid Society would not have such a heavy burden. “Families today are living under conditions that breed discontent,” he told the members of the Society in 1947. “Overcrowding, two or three families under one roof, no security or privacy; in fact no home... When a child is healthy, clean and well clothed, he feels secure and gains confidence and self respect, attends church and enters a fuller life.”<sup>64</sup>

Marion Warman, daughter of Irene Graham, recalls that her mother was deeply concerned about the overall lack of social supports. “She got very frustrated. Some of them [the people in the temporary barracks in Malton and Lakeview] couldn’t get a phone because they were on welfare [and were not permitted such a luxury]... She said, ‘How could a mother get help with no phone and four small children to look after?’”<sup>65</sup>

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The Society, under President Jessie McPherson (1954), pushed strongly for a comprehensive review and a strong action plan. These efforts were supported by the progressive reeve of Toronto Township, Professor Anthony Adamson, who chaired the county's Welfare Committee that year, and who went on to serve as the agency's president in 1955. Adamson remembered that the situation was very urgent. "It was absurd, actually," he told the author in an interview in 2000. "The social legislation of that time was useless and the county was doing little."<sup>66</sup>

The Ontario Welfare Council was brought in. Its executive director, Bessie Touzel, a prominent welfare reformer, authored the watershed final document, *Welfare Services in Peel County and Recommendations for their Development*. She argued strongly for improvements to the Children's Aid Society:

[T]he deficiencies in the work of the Society and the fact that it has undertaken no extensive service to families in danger of social breakdown are related to its budget which is too small. The Society's work in family and child welfare would not appear to be successfully accomplished judging from the large numbers of family breakdowns, the high incidence of children in care as wards and the large number of referrals to the Family Court. It would seem that the

society's function, now too limited, should be broadened and the staff increased, new people appointed being those with the training required for this work.

The report added that "policy is not yet well thought out" and that "the reasons for wardship are inconsistent." It was recommended that the Society, which then had a staff complement of five persons, bring on three new employees.<sup>67</sup>

The Society's board of directors promptly endorsed the recommendation that other welfare functions in Peel be brought under the Children's Aid banner. Specifically, the board's resolution called for "County Council to delegate the following county welfare services to the care of this Board — Relief, Hospitalization of Indigents, Post Sanatorium Care and Peel Manor." It was also recommended that the new agency — to be called the Peel County Children's Aid and Welfare Board — have 18 directors, including nine appointees of the County Council.<sup>68</sup> At the time, the county was spending \$79,637 on all welfare-related services, for which the province was still assuming only a minority share. (The cost for county roads was \$281,480.)<sup>69</sup>

Other child welfare organizations in Ontario were skeptical about this recommendation. They were advising County Council that "activities under the Child Welfare Act should be under the direction of a private Board set up as at present, although they recognize the need for changes in policy,

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operation and personnel of the Children's Aid Society in this county." It was further contended that "Peel County should focus on building a strong Children's Aid Society and plan for the development of other services separately."<sup>70</sup> The eventual outcome was less ambitious, although still important. It was decided that the Society would operate a family services division, offering marital and family counselling. Indeed, for the next 15 years

**Policy makers and their constituents weighed the impact of an often strictly moralistic approach.**

the Society's letterhead and signs bore the name "Family and Children's Services," although the legal name did not change. The new formula for board composition was also established, although the County representatives had to have their

nominations ratified at annual general meetings, and a convention arose whereby the presidency usually alternated between members of County Council and the citizen directors.

Another important board resolution, approved shortly after the publication of the welfare study, was the one to hire Ernest Majury as the manager of the Society, effective July 1, 1955, at a salary of \$6,000 per year.<sup>71</sup> (Kilpatrick became a welfare investigations officer for the County.) Before coming to Peel, Majury had been a provincial employee. He

already had a reputation for being an exceptional child welfare official. He spoke frequently of the intrinsic value of service to others, and saw it as "the true secret of the universe and the real purpose and meaning to our lives, even more than those great scientists who stand even now upon the very threshold of the conquest of space."<sup>72</sup>

While at the Peel Children's Aid Society, Majury was frequently called on to assist with major welfare reviews in other parts of Canada.<sup>73</sup> In 1960, he was invited by United States President Dwight Eisenhower to be one of the few Canadian guests at the White House Conference on Children and Youth, which was held once every ten years.<sup>74</sup>

Those who remember Ernie Majury say that his accomplishments on behalf of the Society were fully in keeping with his reputation.<sup>75</sup> Even-tempered, with a refreshing sense of humour, Majury, who had an assistant manager (Les Matheson) after 1962, helped to guide the Society through a period of unprecedented change for Peel and the nation. Most employees whom he recruited to do social work for the Society were highly educated and shared his altruistic and compassionate spirit. By the late 1960s, almost all social work staff had a university degree, although in most cases not in social work.<sup>76</sup> Each of the seven marital counsellors, however, had a Master of Social Work degree.<sup>77</sup> Some of the employees recruited by Majury went on to senior positions with other agencies or in government. Halton CAS Executive Directors Paul

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Joliffe and Ron Coupland were once employed by the Peel Children's Aid Society.<sup>78</sup>

By the early 1970s, Majury was ill with cancer. His retirement dinner on March 9, 1972, was a remarkable gathering of prominent officials in government, business, the judiciary, and welfare services, as well as many grateful individuals who had been assisted by the kind, dedicated social worker. His illness completely claimed his voice, but he had pre-recorded his retirement speech while he was still able. At the appointed time,

**“No member of the board had anything to gain politically or financially from being on that board. It was all volunteers. They did it because of their interest in the well-being of children and families.”**

he walked to the podium and placed the recording beside the microphone. He was thus able to reflect on a long and honourable career. Ernie Majury died two years later, but not before the council of the Township of Chinguacousy named a park in

the Bramalea area in his honour and Mississauga councillors affixed his name to a child-care centre.

The explosion of industrial and commercial development in Peel allowed the Society to generate more private funds to provide additional services and benefits to children and families,

although these funds were never a substitute for adequate public funding. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the employees' associations of Orenda and A.V. Roe corporations made significant donations.<sup>79</sup> By the late 1950s, a Brampton and District “Red Feather Appeal” was in operation, a forerunner to the much more extensive United Appeal, which was started in 1968 under the leadership of former Society president Anthony Adamson. (The agency received a United Appeal grant of over \$26,000 the first year.<sup>80</sup>) These funds were used to offer the non-mandated counselling services, recreational opportunities, additional clothing, help with educational or medical expenses, and, in some cases, allowed the Society to provide impoverished single mothers with additional resources to care for themselves and their children.

The 1960s saw a major re-examination of — and gradual change to — approaches to child welfare in Ontario. Policy makers and their constituents weighed the impact of an often strictly moralistic approach. The applicable legislation and regulations and the prevailing paradigms had encouraged the Society to intervene as a matter of course with families where the parents were not married, and made it very difficult to secure permanent wardship or adoption in cases where the parents were married, even where abuse and neglect were obvious and serious. As a result many children languished for years without clear status.<sup>81</sup>



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The post-war era also saw a rapid expansion in the public sector. Many questioned whether child welfare services should continue to be delivered by separate non-profit agencies, rather than directly by the provincial government or by municipalities. Peel's J.C. ("Cy") Saddington took an active role in these discussions. Saddington was the mayor of Port Credit and had served as president of the Society in 1957. In 1962, while president of the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, Saddington argued that CASs had not outlived their usefulness. At the same time, he called on the societies to engage in "self-examination" and he urged his counterparts across the province to:

1. Bend every effort to make our own Society on which the community will be proud of.
2. Give our fullest co-operation to all municipal authorities with whom we have dealings.
3. Support to the best of our ability the Department of Public Welfare in the job it has to do.
4. Support in every way possible the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies in the task that lies ahead.<sup>82</sup>

Saddington's position was completely in line with that of the Peel CAS board, which believed that Children's Aid Societies must work closely with their municipal partners, even to the point of making changes to their "principles and program structure." But the board had also concluded that

some autonomy was appropriate. This position was submitted to an "historic meeting of Presidents and local directors," which took place on January 26, 1962.<sup>83</sup>

Ron Searle, the Society's president in 1968 and 1973, recalls that his predecessors and colleagues on the board strongly and genuinely believed that child welfare was better served by retaining semi-autonomous boards for Children's Aid Societies. "I was very, very happy with the way the board operated, by and large," he adds. "No member of the board had anything to gain politically or financially from being on that board. It was all volunteers. They did it because of their interest in the well-being of children and families."<sup>84</sup>

From 1962 to 1965, the board contributed to the deliberations of a special committee established by the Minister to examine the future of Children's Aid Societies.<sup>85</sup> This culminated in a new *Child Welfare Act*, which took effect on January 1, 1966. The Act and its regulations spelled out more clearly than previously the mandatory responsibilities of Children's Aid Societies. The agencies were also required to become more involved in "family services," along the lines of the already-existing Peel model. The method of calculating estimated operating expenses was overhauled, and the old, complicated formula that allowed societies to send bills to their counterparts in other counties in cases where families receiving services had recently moved from another county was eliminated. The



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province would now assume 60 percent of most of the societies' expenses and bear 100 percent of the financial responsibility for services to children of unmarried parents.<sup>86</sup>

The new funding formula caused the Peel Children's Aid Society difficulty by not adequately recognizing costs in certain categories.<sup>87</sup> This situation was somewhat improved through contingency or supplementary funding. Nevertheless, the county was still making sizeable "voluntary payments" to meet the needs of a growing community. Although the agency's budget grew from less than \$160,000 in 1964 to just under \$450,000 in 1968,<sup>88</sup> its caseload had also increased markedly and its revenues were still among the lowest per capita in the province. By 1970, the Society had the eighth largest jurisdiction in the province and its staff numbered just under 50. In 1966, fully 50 percent of the staff had been with the Society for less than a year. Still, the ratio of employees to population was less than half the provincial average. To demonstrate the growing demand, Majury reported at the 1970 annual meeting that staff work hours in direct services to clients had quadrupled between 1962 and 1969. The number of families served had tripled. The total miles travelled by social workers had increased from 77,637 in 1965 to 184,131 in 1969.<sup>89</sup>



Ernie Majury outside the Society office at 44 Nelson Street

As the communities of southern and central Peel made the transition from rural to urban, the housing issue resurfaced and became very serious by the mid-1960s. In October 1966, for example, the board communicated with each of the county's municipalities, expressing concern about "the number of children taken into care due to evictions resulting from redevelopment and/or... the lack of adequate low cost housing." Civic leaders were urged to "explore all possible avenues of providing sufficient low cost or subsidized rental accommodation."<sup>90</sup> This problem did not go away, and, until his retirement, Majury continually restated the view that "there is a deep moral question for any community when a child loses his parents simply because of lack of shelter."<sup>91</sup>

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The Society's larger and more sophisticated operations also prompted a re-examination of governance and management practices. Outside consultants were brought in to review the organizational structure, and the board, for its part, recognized the need to "streamline the delegation from Board to manager."<sup>92</sup> To this point, many routine, day-to-day issues were being discussed and adjudicated by the board. In the spring of 1968, the board also saw the need to authorize the manager to retain legal advice and representation for complex cases.<sup>93</sup> The same year, legal aid had been introduced in Peel, meaning that more CAS actions were being contested by legal counsel representing the affected parents. In early 1970, the board decided that, in light of the growth in demand for its services, the time had come for a new agency or agencies (working closely with the CAS) to take on those family and marital counselling functions that were not directly related to the Society's legislated child protection mandate. By this time, the Society was already contracting out some of the counselling work to the Oakville Family Service Bureau. The Society withdrew from the United Appeal, as these grants had been used for the non-mandatory services.

Hiring practices also became more formalized. Marie Tizzard, who came to work for the Society in 1955 (when she was Marie Chauvin) and retired in 1987 as supervisor of intake, remembers that her "interview" was a request to attend the opening of Peel Manor, where many board members happened to be. "And that was how it was decided that I would be a case worker on staff."<sup>94</sup> A larger staff and more pressing demands required a more thorough, professional process.

The organization was also coming to terms with the increasing ethnic and religious diversity in Peel. The board and the staff were no longer Protestant preserves. Catholic parishes, for example, had become active supporters. By the late 1960s, the staff complement was reasonably reflective of the community's changing ethnic demographics.<sup>95</sup> In the years that followed, the area's non-European and non-Christian population grew significantly and the board and staff members – who themselves came from many backgrounds and walks of life – worked hard to meet these realities with respect and sensitivity.

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# Difficult Adjustments

Despite the many challenges of the 1950s and 1960s, the 1970s are remembered as a more difficult and trying time for the Society. Its work was frequently in the public spotlight — and the light was not always favourable. The agency had some major and highly publicized disagreements with a private group-home operator and with the judiciary. *Children in Trouble*, a 1975 report prepared by a committee of Regional Council, concluded that “a very serious state of affairs exists between the Court and the Children’s Aid Society.”

The Family Court judge, Warren Durham, was rarely receptive to CAS advice on the placement of juvenile delinquents. He often ruled that they be housed in Viking Home I at regional expense, despite arguments by the Society that they could

Late in 1973, the board simply approved a motion to begin the process of changing the organization’s name to the Children’s Aid Society of the Region of Peel.

be cared for much more effectively and less expensively in other settings. Meanwhile, at the urging of the region, the Society’s board had agreed to assume *de jure* (but not *de facto*) wardship or supervision over all children so placed by Judge Durham, allowing the region to sidestep the extra costs. Provincial officials were very critical of this arrangement, arguing that “the intention of the Child Welfare Act was not to relieve third parties of a

financial burden.” This plan expired at the beginning of 1976, but the report’s observation that “there is little hope” of quickly resolving the difficulties with the court proved to be correct.<sup>96</sup>

An important issue of the 1970s was the inauguration of regional government in Peel on January 1, 1974. Although the county’s ten local municipalities were consolidated into three (Mississauga, Brampton, Caledon), the Society felt few ripples because the new region’s boundaries were almost the same as the county’s. Late in 1973, the board simply approved a motion to begin the process of changing the organization’s name to the Children’s Aid Society of the Region of Peel. The number of municipal representatives was reduced to six and later four. (In 1998, the province assumed 100 percent funding of the mandated services, and there are no longer any councillors on the board.) In the years that preceded regional government, however, the Society had been actively studying and discussing the possible implications

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of various proposals. In 1970, for example, the province appeared ready to establish a single regional government covering Halton and Peel. Representatives of the two Children's Aid Societies participated in meetings to consider how they could (once again) amalgamate their operations, but by the summer of 1970 these discussions had been called off at Halton's request.<sup>97</sup>

A major office relocation was undertaken in 1973 to 49 Kennedy Road South. The Society has operated out of several different sites since 1944. Until the

**Specialized foster care programs had been established and a volunteer development program was launched.**

late 1950s, it was based in very crowded quarters on the second floor of the county court house. "There was one telephone for all of us," recalls Marie Tizzard. "Interviewing spaces were non-

existent. Therefore, you visited in the home or became resourceful if someone came to the office. Alternative interviewing spaces included washrooms, courtrooms when court was not in session, cars and park benches."<sup>98</sup> A home at 44 Nelson Street West was later used, and this was shared at first with the county health unit, which occupied the second floor. Judge Daisy Graydon held her family court proceedings in a room that was also used for board and committee meetings. In late 1969, a three-year lease was concluded on

118 Queen Street West, which became the main location, although three departments (Adoption, Unmarried Parents and Infant Care) remained at 44 Nelson. These locations were relinquished in 1973 in favour of the much larger Kennedy Road quarters. In 1980, the agency moved again — this time to the regional administrative building at 10 Peel Centre Drive, before moving to 8 Nelson Street West. There have been various Mississauga "interview facilities" and later branch offices, all of which have been in Port Credit and Cooksville, until the move, in the early 1990s to 55 City Centre Drive and in the late 1990s to 101 Queensway West. Until recently, the place of residence of the volunteers and active supporters corresponded with the location of the head office — a disproportionately high number came from Brampton, although the Society always had many cases in the southern part of the region.<sup>99</sup>



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By the late 1970s, the Society was again entering a period of major change. An extensive operational review was completed by officials in the Ministry of Community and Social Services. The authors expressed concern about the reactive and somewhat disorganized state of the agency. They observed “that the organization showed distresses... inherent in an Agency with a growth factor which was felt to be almost out of control.” The report noted that the Society had inadequate facilities, poor communication with the ministry, a crisis management approach, unclear reporting relationships, and was relatively isolated from other community organizations.<sup>100</sup>

Most of the 78 recommendations were implemented by the board and its newly appointed executive director, Ronald Luciano, who succeeded Paul Mansfield. Luciano, who came to the Society from Sault Ste. Marie, had considerable child welfare experience. Five years after the operational review, he was able to report that the Society had made substantial progress. Specialized foster care programs had been established and a volunteer development program was launched. The Society was working on new alternative-to-care programs with organizations such as the John Howard Society, as well as encouraging the development of other social service organizations such as Peel Children’s Centre (mental health) and the Boys and Girls Club of Peel. Average caseloads had fallen from 45 per worker in 1979 to 30 per worker



in 1984,<sup>102</sup> and there was a significant decrease in the number of children in care. However, a full continuum of child-welfare services still eluded the community.

The Society also worked to adjust to more changes on the legislative front. The federal Parliament’s new *Young Offenders Act*, passed in 1984, reduced the Society’s workload with young people who were in trouble with the law. The province’s *Child and Family Services Act*, proclaimed the same year, required the Society to be much more cautious about bringing children into care.<sup>103</sup> Province-wide, in 1961, approximately 19,000 families were served by child welfare agencies and over 14,000 children were in care. In 1988, 74,000 families received service, but only 9,700 children were in care.<sup>104</sup>

Following a comprehensive strategic planning exercise initiated in the late 1980s by the board and the new executive director, John Huether, the Society continued to expand its role in the

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community. A new initiative to assist at-risk teens was started with Rapport Youth and Family Counselling. The Society worked with Peel Children's Centre to develop support services for children with special needs in child-care centres, and in 1989 the agency helped to provide a series

**Amendments to the Child and Family Services Act, approved in 1999 and proclaimed in 2000, placed more emphasis on the safety of at-risk children and, among other measures, made it much easier for neglect to be a cause for protection.**

of workshops for day-care providers. Meanwhile, steps were taken to provide more support to foster parents. Public education efforts were likewise generating a positive response, and the agency published important position papers on physical discipline and emotional abuse, among other topics. These were

accompanied by community consultation sessions. The Society took a leading role in developing the Parenting in Peel Association to assist families and provide parenting education.<sup>105</sup>

Funding for social services hardly recognized Peel's continuing growth, but in the late 1980s community leaders and cash-strapped organizations were optimistic this would change. The recession of the early to mid-1990s created profound difficulties, however. The provincial government's "Social

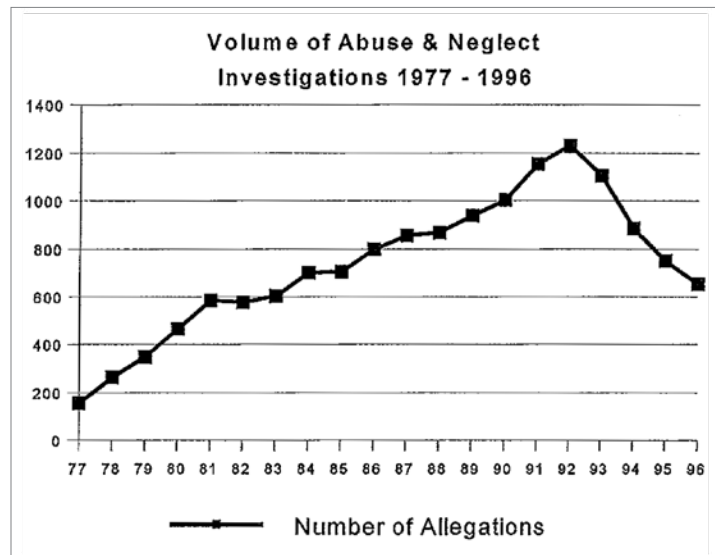
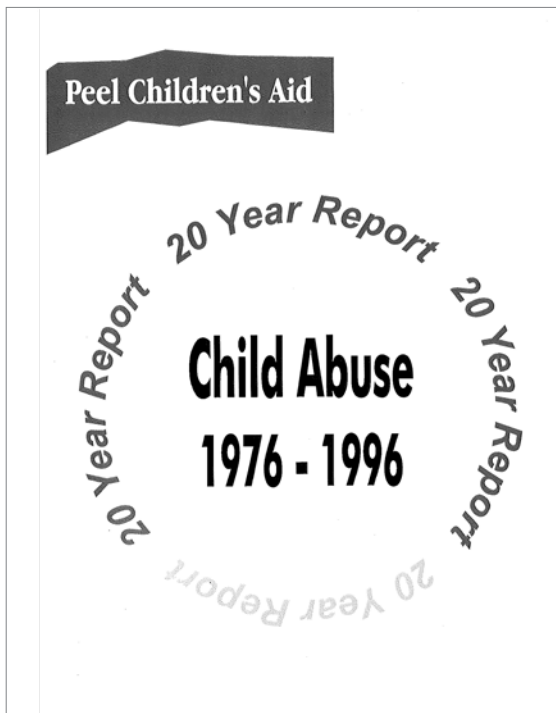
Contract" forced the agency to retrench. Much of the momentum of the late 1980s was lost, and with it valuable prevention initiatives such as the "Family Preservation Program." The Society worked hard, however, to limit the impact on children and families, and it continued to make progress on expanding the foster home network and developing specialized homes within Peel.

In 1995, a new provincial government imposed further funding cutbacks. (Between 1993 and 1997, the Society had to find approximately one million dollars in savings.) The government's approach to Children's Aid Societies soon changed, however, largely in response to the work of a Child Mortality Task Force and the results of a series of inquests into the deaths of children who were receiving services from CASs, including an inquest in Peel. New training standards, a volume-driven funding framework, full provincial funding of mandated services (as opposed to cost-sharing with municipalities), and a standardized risk assessment model were part of the major reforms. Amendments to the *Child and Family Services Act*, approved in 1999 and proclaimed in 2000, placed more emphasis on the safety of at-risk children and, among other measures, made it much easier for neglect to be a cause for protection. As a result, the agency's caseload grew considerably and, within the space of several months, dozens of new employees were hired. The Board approved a budget of over \$34.7 million for 2000-01, up significantly from the previous year.



Despite the increase in its funding, the Peel Children's Aid Society remained deeply concerned about the serious lack of resources for other social services in the still very rapidly growing region – services which, if made more accessible, could reduce the demand for the intervention of the Society. Since 1989, the agency has been a key participant in the Fair Share for Peel Task Force – for which Huether was a driving force, even after his retirement as executive director in

2002. Governments, communities, and citizens are falling short in addressing child poverty, inadequate housing, and in repairing the social safety net. The agency's *Twenty Year Child Abuse Report*, released in early 1998, noted that “[A]buse and neglect are complex issues with no single cause and no single solution, [however] one only needs to look south of the border where higher rates of child poverty and a weaker social safety net can be linked to far higher rates of child maltreatment.”<sup>106</sup>



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# Post-2000

The number of investigations of child abuse and neglect in Ontario nearly tripled between 1993 and 2003. The number of children in care nearly doubled.<sup>107</sup> Many of the new staff recruits in Peel were recent graduates with little work experience. It helped, in some ways, that there was a very detailed risk-assessment tool, but social workers found this formulaic, without enough of the subtle problem-solving inherent in their discipline – and the real world.

The way the funding was allocated every year still caused concern, and appeals for provincial review were required to try to make up shortfalls. Meanwhile, it was hard for the organization to develop strong partnerships for prevention and

public education: It had to make sure it was meeting its mandated obligations.

**The kinship initiatives reflected “a true value and a true belief that children are best served in their own communities”.**

So what was to be done? In short, persist and adapt. Know the communities. Raise the morale through mentorship of new

staff, suitable spaces, and collegial teams. And get the province to rethink the emphasis of child welfare work to allow the organization to do more to provide long-term family support.

In 2005, a new provincial government took steps in this direction. Queen’s Park was concerned that the trends and cost increases could not be sustained.

The new policy was called the “Transformation Agenda.” It meant a “differential approach” to lower risk families, essentially less formal, less forensic interventions in less serious cases, hoping to build on a family’s strengths and connect children and parents to other aid. The clogged and delayed courts were to be relieved in many instances by alternative dispute resolution, like family group conferencing. The Society could still be there to help. The changes allowed the Peel Children’s Aid Society to develop a specialized Adolescent Team, the Safer Families program, and to support community partners to tap into (limited) provincial funds to serve families involved with the Society.

There would be more tuition help and other “extended care” benefits for youth in care who turn 18, although still far from enough, according to the youth themselves. “Many live in fear and dread of their 18th and 21st birthdays,” when supports are reduced or eliminated, says Paul Zarnke, executive director from 2003 to 2012.<sup>108</sup>





A strong emphasis on kinship was also prescribed: Wherever possible, the extended family of a child at risk would be more involved than in the past, including as an alternative to the child coming formally into care. The kinship initiatives reflected “a true value and a true belief that children are best served in their own communities,” notes Vicky Lowrey, senior service manager for advice and assessment.<sup>109</sup>

Agency boundaries had to be crossed, too. The Society was therefore a leader in coalitions like the Peel Child and Youth Initiative, which

focuses on early childhood development, better recreation programs, quicker coordination among organizations, newcomer supports, and more timely, practical research. Some of the work builds on earlier “Success by Six” advocacy for infants and toddlers, with which the Society was also involved.

Such work was badly needed. Between 1997 and 2005 there was a 51 percent increase in the number of children living in poverty in Peel. As of 2010, one in five children in the region were defined as living below the poverty line.<sup>110</sup>

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The Peel Children's Aid Foundation, which had been in development since the late 1990s, was born in 2003. Separately incorporated from the Society, the Foundation was designed to house major fund-raising and philanthropic efforts to support non-government-funded programs for children and youth who are receiving services from the Society. Its board consisted of well-connected civic leaders. It was reported, for example, that in 2011 "more than 3,000 children and families

**The board received an award of distinction from the Maytree Foundation for its leadership in diversity and anti-oppression.**

were served through Peel Children's Aid Foundation's funded programs."

Among other things, the Foundation provided "financial assistance for everyday essentials like warm clothing and diapers," mentorship programs, and "financial

aid to achieve a post-secondary education or trade apprenticeship."<sup>111</sup> The Foundation has also reached out to the public to explain the Society's role and accomplishments, notes Catherine Hinton, the Foundation's executive director.<sup>112</sup>

When bad news surfaced, the Society was prepared to communicate clearly with the public and, where necessary, to improve, especially if serious incidents impacted on the safety of children in care. Sometimes, however, news left the wrong impression. The work of the provincial auditor general has led, appropriately, to tighter Society

policies – around procurement, for example. But in 2006, when the auditor general's office reported that agency workers had been in the Caribbean while on the job, causing great public consternation,<sup>113</sup> it was not acknowledged that the Society manages many child-immigration cases because Pearson International Airport is in the region. There were thus cases where a worker was legally obliged to be with an unaccompanied child on a trip back to a home country. On another occasion, the provincial child advocate released a report on 90 child deaths across Ontario,<sup>114</sup> wrongly implying that most of these children were in the care of Children's Aid Societies and that most of the deaths were preventable.

Partly in response, the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies and its members launched a three-year public education campaign, "I am Your Children's Aid." It included personal stories from youth, foster parents, workers, and adoptive parents. The campaign provided a broader view of the work and achievements of the societies, and encouraged public assistance and participation.

Working with newcomers and all ethno-cultural communities in the region was another area of focus. Did the organization understand and have the respect of each of the cultural communities in the region? Was it in tune with current and past mistreatment based on identity or individual traits? These were important questions. Between 2001

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and 2010, almost 120,000 immigrants (people who arrived in Canada in the last five years) settled in the already multi-ethnic, multi-racial region, accounting for 80 percent of population growth in the same period. About one-third of residents spoke a language other than English or French at home.<sup>115</sup>

Peel Children's Aid concluded that historical and current power relationships often affect how people see the world, how families function, and how people relate to authority and well-meaning community groups. The board and staff decided to adopt an anti-oppression approach, an approach described by many in the agency as "profound", to constantly examine their work through the lens of individuals and groups on the margins, to better reflect the community, and to find culturally appropriate solutions when aiding a child and family. This was to be applied to all aspects of the organization's work and is coordinated by a specifically dedicated senior manager. In 2010, the board received the Diversity in Governance Award from the Maytree Foundation for its leadership in this area and for setting an example.<sup>116</sup>

In 2004-2005, the Society undertook another major initiative – to work with the National Quality Institute, now Excellence Canada, to become more operationally effective. The program has four levels of certification to help organizations achieve excellence. This exercise required the Society to examine its operations from a number of perspectives – leadership, planning, clients,

community suppliers and partners, and building a healthy workplace. In June 2010, the agency received Level 3 certification and the Silver Award, the highest at this level. These various, but focused, efforts contributed to staff turnover dropping significantly. "It brought the organization together," notes Director of Service Rav Bains.<sup>117</sup>

"My sense is that it is a significantly different organization" than it was even a decade earlier, remarks Sandra Frampton, program supervisor for the Ministry of Children's and Youth Services.<sup>118</sup> The Society even began considering a name change to reflect the broader approach. Surveys conducted among local residents found that the Society was known primarily for a "policing" role and perceived with skepticism in some communities. But the data did not necessarily point to the name as being a heavy hindrance. It was a general lack of public awareness of the agency's services. Perceptions changed as more information was shared.<sup>119</sup> The name has a strong heritage, associated with community leadership and altruistic initiatives. And, at its core, the work remains, after all, about aid to children.

But operational changes were still needed. In 2011, the Society adopted a new road map for the next three years, *Safe Children, Strong Families, Supportive Communities*. One of the objectives was to do still more to break down barriers between agencies and communities – in other words to

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offer services seamlessly. Advocacy efforts in the plan include urging the province to raise the age of protection from 16 to 18 and to support young people to stay with their foster parents at least until they finish high school.

In October 2010, the provincial government's Commission to Promote Sustainable Child Welfare, appointed the previous year, reported on major "cost drivers", including children with complex special needs, "legal costs for court supervised access," and "litigious lawyers."<sup>120</sup> Some agencies had unmanageable debt, and one was even threatening to close immediately.<sup>121</sup> Peel Children's Aid welcomed the commission's recommendation for population-based funding, a recommendation

long advocated by the Fair Share for Peel Task Force and the Society itself. Urging this change was also part of the Society's *Safe Children* strategic plan.

In short, Society employees describe the post-2005 period as one of "catching-up, changing, and reconnecting with who we are."<sup>122</sup> Through it all, however, the role of volunteers remained essential. More than 500 residents are serving the organization without pay at the time of writing. In 2011, for example, volunteer drivers logged 1.7 million kilometres taking children and youth to appointments and family visits. Some youth in care have given testimonials about how the volunteers literally saved their lives.<sup>123</sup>



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# Conclusion

On April 23, 2012, exactly a century after the first board meeting, the contemporary successors of those pioneering, founding directors convened a reception to mark the occasion. They invited former personnel, but also some of the people who had been in the care of the Society – recently or long ago.

“I want to again publicly thank the Society for finding me a caring foster home 80 years ago when I was just shy of four years old,” said Carl Ingebertson, addressing this special meeting. “Aunt Laura and Uncle Watson Farr, as I called them, welcomed me and kindly asked me to sit in the big

**The Society recognizes that it has a solemn duty, one that requires dedication, compassion, and skill.**

armchair at the head of the dining room table. This became an everlasting memory as I enjoyed my first meal with my new parents.”

There would be many more such meals. Winston Farr died when Ingebertson was

10 years old, but for Laura Farr there would be no question of relinquishing care of young Carl.<sup>124</sup>

In 1993, Ingebertson’s employer, Mutual Life of Canada, named the former Crown ward to its prestigious honour roll. He was asked to designate a charity to receive \$10,000. Although Ingebertson had been a volunteer with many organizations over the years, it did not take him long to settle on the Peel Children’s Aid Society. A bursary in his name

was promptly created. Ingebertson and others have added to it over the years, and it annually helps youth from the Society who are moving on to post-secondary education or training.

Like Ingebertson, they will leave a legacy. They have been aided by their community and by an organization dedicated to their welfare. They will help others in turn.

In the 100 years since the founding of the Peel Children’s Aid Society, the community has witnessed many changes. An organization that once served small, disparate communities, with agrarian or small-industrial economies, is now part of a large, rapidly growing, very diverse, and technologically advanced region, with business and personal linkages to every part of the world. Peel’s population is now almost 1.3 million, a twenty-five-fold increase in sixty years. But for all its dynamism and its attributes, it is a region with persistent social challenges.

In the early days, the Society was a rather informal operation. Detailed records were not kept. Standards were fluid. Becoming a more professionalized organization as well as accepting





more direct government participation and oversight required paradigm shifts. Attitudes about what constitutes “the best interests of the child” have not been static.

Some contemporary issues and questions, however, have been aired and agonized over in earlier years: the disparity between the needs of growing communities and the resources available to serve children and families; how the Society should be governed and managed; the impact of poverty and other stresses on family life; how best to recruit and retain foster parents, staff and volunteers; how to understand and reflect – on more than a superficial level – the changing cultural make-up of the communities being served; how to mobilize community support; and of course the perennial question, “How do we, as families, as an organization, as a community, and as a province, define ‘the best interests of the child?’”

Despite all the modern pressures, those who have been familiar with the Society’s work for many years believe that there are certain qualities that have always been essential to the board, staff, foster parents and volunteers. “You need to have a love for people – an unconditional love,” says Marie Tizzard. “People either love [the work] and stay or know very quickly that it’s not for them,” remarks Judi Inkpen, a staff member from 1968 to 2012.<sup>125</sup> Marg Wightman, who joined the staff the year before Inkpen, observes that child protection work has always been a unique kind of social work. “It’s raw. It deals with primary emotions,” she says. “It deals with fundamental instincts, it deals with parental stuff with their kids; you’re dealing with intense pain.”<sup>126</sup>

The second century of the Peel Children’s Aid Society promises more challenges – some familiar,



some new. The Society recognizes that it has a solemn duty, one that requires dedication, compassion, and skill. It is a duty that demands unwavering commitment to children and families, and continuous efforts to build a more caring community.

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## Presidents of the Peel Children's Aid Society

### **PEEL CAS (1912-1935)**

1912-1915 Sheriff N. Henderson

1915-1919 Charles D. Gordon

1919-1935 T.W. Duggan

### **HALTON-PEEL CAS (1935-1944)**

1935-1937 J.M. Denyes

1937-1940 Amos Mason

1941-1942 J.J. Jamieson

1943-1944 Mrs. W.J. Hood

### **PEEL CAS (1944-Present)**

1944-1945 Mrs. W.J. Hood

1946-1947 Reeve Clifford E. Cantelon

1948-1949 M. Sybil Bennett, K.C.

1950-1951 I.W. Kellam

1952 Mrs. G. Leslie

1953 D.B. McKichan

1954 Mrs. J. McPherson

1955 Professor Anthony Adamson

1956 E. Walsh

1957 J.C. Saddington

1958 Reeve Frederick Kline

1959 Mary Willis

1960 Deputy Reeve Frank Dowling

1961 Dorothy Ross

1962 Reeve J.J. Berney

1963 Helen Horn

1964 Deputy Reeve John J. Plause

1965 William C. Arch

1966 Deputy Reeve H.M. Allan

1967 Douglas Westlake

1968 Ronald A. Searle

1969 Deputy Reeve James Archdekin

1970 Charles Jenkins

1971 Councillor George Gardhouse

1972 Barry Deacon

1973 Ronald A. Searle (as Councillor)

1974 W. William Appleton

1975 Councillor Terry Miller

1976 David Armstrong

1977-1978 Councillor Fred Dalzell

1979 Paul Engel

1980 Mary Underwood

1981 Graydon Petty

1982-1993 Terry Patterson

1984-1985 Sonja Davie

1986-1987 Dianne Sutter

1988-1989 Glenn Shipp

1990 Richard Prouse

1991-1992 Ray Martins

1993 Hector Jones

1994-1995 Alfred Blayney

1996 Lyn Callahan

1997 Dieter Pagani

1998-1999 Alfred Blayney

1999-2000 Tom Urbaniak

2000-2002 Barbara Horvath

2002-2003 Fern Saldanha

2003-2004 Barbara Horvath

2004-2006 Robert MacFadden

2006-2009 Paul Moran

2009-2011 Dan Labrecque

2011-present Suzanne Senior-Mitchell

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## Chief Staff Persons

1912-1919 Charles W. Norton, Inspector  
1919-1929 W.H. Stewart, Superintendent  
1929 William McCallum  
1929-1944 C. Frank Thompson, Superintendent  
1944-1955 A.E. (Bert) Kilpatrick, Superintendent  
1955-1972 Ernest Majury, Manager  
1972-1979 Paul Mansfield, Executive Director  
1979-1987 Ronald Luciano, Executive Director  
1987-2002 John Huether, Executive Director  
2003-2012 Paul Zarnke, Executive Director



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# Notes

- 1 Unfortunately, most annual reports, board minutes, newsletters, budgets, etc., from before the 1980s have not survived. The history of the Society has to be pieced together in other ways, including news articles, county council minutes and reports, and other County records, some of the early files of Halton CAS, and interviews with individuals who have been associated with the organization. In 1999, the board of directors developed a Society Records Policy, requiring the preservation of at least one copy of all board minutes, annual meeting minutes, annual reports, and financial statements. Henceforth, an annual photograph of the board of directors is to be taken and short biographies on each President are to be retained.  
  
The reference to the Society being launched in October 1911 can be found in the William Perkins Bull Collection of the Region of Peel Archives. Perkins Bull was a wealthy businessman and writer who, with the aid of hired researchers, amassed considerable information on Peel County. He had a small file on the Peel Children's Aid Society, which includes a short summary he wrote based on the information he had received or heard about the Society up to the late 1930s (93.0028M, File 988, Box 51).
- 2 See, for example, Teresa A. Bishop, *Peel Industrial Farm and House of Refuge: A Case Study in Industrial Development* (Master of Arts thesis, University of Toronto, 1984).
- 3 Beck's report can be found in the November 1912 committee reports, appended to the minutes of Peel County Council for that month. The County Council minutes and committee reports are kept in bound volumes at the Region of Peel Archives.
- 4 This Act, which was only one page long, allowed Town wardens to make orphaned or abandoned children apprentices. See *An Act to provide for the Education and Support of Orphan Children*. 39 George III, 29th June 1799.
- 5 It can also be argued that the *Charity Aid Act* of 1874 had encouraged the development of new, voluntary social services.
- 6 For a full account of Kelso's life and career see Andrew Jones and Leonard Rutman. *In the Children's Aid: J.J. Kelso and Child Welfare in Ontario*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981).
- 7 The reports of Norton's and Gordon's previous association with child welfare can be found in a newspaper clipping, from *The Brampton Conservator* from April 26, 1912, which is filed in the Society's main office. When T.W. Duggan retired as president in 1935, *The Brampton Conservator* (on September 19th of that year) reported that he had been active in Children's Aid work "for over 30 years." It is conceivable, therefore, that he, too, had been a member of a visiting committee before 1912.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Kelso's speeches are described in the September 26, 1912, edition of *The Brampton Conservator*.

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- 10 Peel County Council, Finance Committee Report, June 1912. (Region of Peel Archives).
- 11 Part of Norton's salary was, at least by 1918, paid by Kelso's office. Prior to the formation of the Halton and Peel societies, Norton may, indeed, have been receiving provincial remuneration if the assumption is correct that he worked under Kelso's auspices. In 1918, Norton's salary was split evenly among the province and the two counties (County Council minutes, November 19, 1918; Region of Peel Archives).
- 12 See Jones and Rutman, op.cit.
- 13 *The Brampton Conservator*, September 26, 1912.
- 14 *The Brampton Conservator*, November 21, 1912. An example of an early case that was brought to CAS attention was described in the same newspaper on August 22, 1912. A woman had left her young child at home while she went to work, and this was reported by neighbours. *The Conservator* noted that, "Her husband was interviewed by Mr. Norton, agent for the Children's Aid Society here, and stated emphatically that he made sufficient money to keep the home and did not wish his wife to go out working. She was released on being warned that she must take care of the child and remain at home with it."
- 15 *The Brampton Conservator*, November 6, 1913.
- 16 *The Brampton Conservator*, March 5, 1914.
- 17 For a description of Norton's work, see *The Brampton Conservator*, August 19, 1915. The minutes of the Halton Children's Aid Society board of directors for March 1917 (in the Halton minute book for 1914-1926, on file at the Halton CAS office) report that the Dufferin CAS had decided earlier that year to work on its own.
- 18 This decision is recorded in the minutes of the shelter's joint Board of Management for April 12, 1919 (on file at the Halton Children's Aid Society).
- 19 *The Brampton Conservator*, August 19, 1915.
- 20 Norton's record book (which discusses only his visits in Halton County) is on file at the Halton Children's Aid Society.
- 21 *The Brampton Conservator*, September 26, 1912.
- 22 Section 10 (1) of the *Child Protection Act*, 1893, stated, "For the better protection of neglected children between the ages of three and fourteen years there shall be provided in every city or town having a population of over 10,000 one or more places of refuge for such children only, to be known as temporary homes or shelters."
- 23 An August 19, 1915, article in *The Conservator* acknowledged as much: "People with children of their own are unwilling to take in another little one. Those without children do not want to be bothered, they say, with the care of a child who is not of their own kith and kin. The handicap is a severe one for the inspector and officers, who are at their wits' end to make suitable arrangements." Jones and Rutman (pp. 148-9) discuss Kelso's sharp criticism, in 1916, of J.K. MacDonald, president of the Toronto Children's

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- Aid Society, for, among other things, allowing a shelter to become a substitute for foster care.
- 24 The minutes for the joint Board of Management for the Children's Shelter for January 7, 1919 (on file at the Halton Children's Aid Society), note that there were nine wards in a shelter in Brampton. The precise location is not given.
- 25 These appointments were made on November 19, 1918.
- 26 County Council minutes and committee reports, June 1918. (Region of Peel Archives). Richard Ruggle, in his 1978 history of the Halton Children's Aid Society, *We Protect the Little Ones*, notes that the property was known as the McGibbon property. This name is also used by Perkins Bull.
- 27 The guest list from the opening is on file at the Halton Children's Aid Society. Kelso appears to have taken a keen interest in even the most minute details. The minutes of the shelter's joint Board of Management for July 9, 1919 (on file at the Halton Children's Aid Society), make reference to a letter from Kelso urging that "table linen and china" be used during meals at the shelter.
- 28 This is noted by Ruggle, p. 20.
- 29 Peel County Council, Children's Shelter Report, December 1926 (Region of Peel Archives)
- 30 *The Brampton Conservator*, February 3, 1938.
- 31 For a short description of Duggan's political and business career see *A History of Peel County to Mark Its Centenary*. County of Peel, 1967, p. 284.
- 32 See, for example, the minutes for the shelter's joint Board of Management for September 5, 1919.
- 33 Peel County Council, Children's Shelter Report, November 1920 (Region of Peel Archives). At the same time, the two societies were putting pressure on the province to increase its share of the superintendent's salary. In a resolution, the Halton CAS board noted that "it is not possible with the present high cost of living for the agents to maintain themselves and carry on the work." See Halton CAS Board minutes, May 7, 1920 (in the Halton Board minute book for 1914-1926, on file at the Halton CAS office).
- 34 Children's Shelter Board of Management Minutes (on file at Halton CAS), September 3, 1920.
- 35 Children's Shelter Board of Management Minutes (on file at Halton CAS), February 4, 1921.
- 36 Peel County Council, Children's Shelter Report, January 1923 (Region of Peel Archives).
- 37 Peel County Council, Children's Shelter Report, November 1920 (Region of Peel Archives). The same report shows the shelter's finances for its first full year of operations.
- 38 Peel County Council, Children's Shelter Report, November 1925. (Region of Peel Archives).
- 39 This is noted in the September 1919 minutes of the Board of Directors of the Halton Children's Aid Society (on file at Halton CAS).
- 40 Peel County Council, Children's Shelter Report, January 1926 (Region of Peel Archives).
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- 41 Peel County Council, Children's Shelter Report, December 1926 (Region of Peel Archives).
- 42 For example, *The Brampton Conservator*, on January 24, 1935, quoted Thompson: "This year has been an exceptionally difficult year for the procuring of suitable free foster homes for our Wards, due partly, no doubt, to present conditions, but I am becoming more and more convinced that the time is coming when we will have to adopt some form of paid boarding home [by which he means giving payment to foster parents]. Most of the applications received are for paying boarders. Our two Counties being situated as they are between two large cities where the paid boarding home system is in operation, makes it very difficult to obtain free foster homes. While I believe our Shelter is second to none of its size in the Province, it is readily admitted that a child cannot receive the individual attention in an Institution which can be given in a good private home under supervision. There is always a demand for attractive little girls, but boys of school age are almost impossible to place."
- 43 *Peel Gazette*, March 26, 1936; also in William Perkins Bull Collection, File 880 (Region of Peel Archives).
- 44 County Council Minutes, March 17, 1933 (Region of Peel Archives).
- 45 This decision is recorded in the November 5, 1933 minutes of the shelter's joint Board of Management (on file at Halton CAS).
- 46 *The Brampton Conservator*, April 30, 1936.
- 47 *The Evening Telegram*, August 1, 1936; also in William Perkins Bull Collection, File 880 (Region of Peel Archives).
- 48 Peel County Council, Children's Aid Report, November 1936 (Region of Peel Archives).
- 49 Peel County Council, Children's Aid Report, November 1935 (Region of Peel Archives).
- 50 *The Brampton Conservator*, November 7, 1935.
- 51 *The Brampton Conservator*, April 30, 1936.
- 52 The minutes of this meeting are on file at the Halton Children's Aid Society in that Society's minute book for 1927-35.
- 53 We learn this from the minutes of Council's deliberations on January 21, 1944. At the same meeting, the Council went *in-camera* to discuss its options.
- 54 Peel County Council, Children's Aid Report, March 1944 (Region of Peel Archives).
- 55 Kilpatrick's appointment was being announced in newspaper reports that June. See, for example, *The Brampton Conservator*, June 6, 1944. Frank Thompson remained with the Halton CAS until 1960.
- 56 Peel County Council, Children's Aid Report, September 1945 (Region of Peel Archives).
- 57 Peel County Council, Children's Aid Report, October 1946 (Region of Peel Archives).

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- 58 Peel County Council, Children's Aid Report, May 1947 (Region of Peel Archives). The August 1954 report of the County's Welfare Committee noted that the City of Toronto was paying \$2,340.00 "for the services of a social worker." Marion Warman (interview with the author, 2000) recalls that it was the late 1950s before the "temporary" shelters were dismantled and her mother's services were no longer required.
- 59 Peel County Council, Children's Aid Report, November 1947 (Region of Peel Archives).
- 60 Peel County Council, Children's Aid Report, May 1947 (Region of Peel Archives).
- 61 Ibid.
- 62 *The Brampton Conservator*, February 23, 1950.
- 63 For reference to the 1944 position see *The Brampton Conservator*, June 6, 1944. The 1945 resolution is in the Peel County Council minutes for May 10, 1945 (Region of Peel Archives).
- 64 *The Brampton Conservator*, April 3, 1947.
- 65 Marion Warman, interview with the author, 2000.
- 66 Anthony Adamson, interview with the author, 2000.
- 67 See especially pp. 26-30 of the report, which is on file at the Society's main office.
- 68 Peel County Council, Children's Aid Report and Welfare Committee Report, December 1954 (Region of Peel Archives).
- 69 Peel County Financial Statement, 1954; included in the volume with the Council minutes for that year (Region of Peel Archives).
- 70 The June 1955 Children's Aid Report to County Council noted that the Board had gone as far as calling a special meeting of the membership to change the corporate name to "The Children's Aid and County Welfare Society of Peel." (Region of Peel Archives)
- 71 Peel County Council, Children's Aid Report, May 1955. (Region of Peel Archives)
- 72 This comment was made in Majury's speech at the 1967 annual meeting, which can be found in the County Clerk-Treasurer's files (RG 12, 90.0092, Box 4, Region of Peel Archives).
- 73 To cite just one example, the Children's Aid Report to County Council for July 1959 (Region of Peel Archives) noted that Majury was appointed to do a study on behalf of the Canadian Welfare Council on child welfare services in New Brunswick.
- 74 The conference was held from March 27 to April 2, 1960. See, for example, Children's Aid Report to County Council, March 1960. (Region of Peel Archives). See also the editorial in the October 31, 1967 edition of the *Brampton Daily Times and Conservator*.
- 75 Joan Powell, who was on staff from 1964 to 1993, echoes a common sentiment. "He was very hard working," she says. "He was energetic, he was fun, he was humorous." The following is one example she provides: "He was very committed to work. I can remember when we had a holiday on November the 11th and it snowed like crazy and [those who had to] could

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- not get to work. I lived two blocks away and somehow or other I had to go down Elizabeth Street to deliver something. I stopped in at the office and there was Mr. Majury — working. He got there somehow. He felt he had to be there.”
- 76 Marg Wightman, who came to the Society in 1967, was a case in point. “I had a degree in Psychology and I knew nothing about social work... It was trial by fire, essentially”, she says.
- 77 The Clerk-Treasurer’s Files for the County of Peel from the late 1960s and early 1970s contain folders with CAS documents, including annual reports where the names of staff are listed with their degrees (Region of Peel Archives). Examples of the increasingly impressive staff qualifications can be found in the Children’s Aid reports to County Council. Take, for instance, the September 1960 report, which advised that the following individuals had been hired: Ena Mason, B.Sc., M.D., in Child Care; Othelia Turke, Ph.D., working with unmarried parents; and G. Freltham, B.A., B.Ed., B.S.W., as a family worker in the north end. In April 1964, however, it was reported that the Board had struck a committee to study “a plan for the best utilization of the time of the graduate social work staff” (Peel County Council, Children’s Aid Report, April 1964).
- 78 Joliffe was only on staff briefly in 1960 before taking on his new duties.
- 79 In 1959, for example, the Orenda employees contributed \$1,551.91, while the Avro workers came through with \$1,770.00. Peel County Council, Children’s Aid Report, March 1959 (Region of Peel Archives).
- 80 The application for these funds is mentioned in the July 1967 Children’s Aid Report to County Council (Region of Peel Archives).
- 81 In her interview with the author (2000), Marie Tizzard discussed this at length. She provided another example of the very moralistic approach of the 1950s and 1960s: “The introduction of Family Allowance also brought contract work for us to do, but the other thing that came up with it was that the people in the community as well as the higher powers were concerned that the money would not be spent on the children. They would write to the Family Allowance Bureau and say ‘Mrs. Jones is not spending the money on her children’... and we would have to go out and investigate these poor people and see what they were doing with their money. Most complaints were unfounded and unrealistic. Eventually we were able to convince the powers-that-be that buying a washing machine or groceries benefitted the child.”
- 82 These statements are made in the President’s Message in the *OACAS Journal*, September 1962.
- 83 Peel County Council, Children’s Aid Report, January 1962 (Region of Peel Archives).
- 84 Ron Searle, interview with the author, 2000.
- 85 Some information on this can be gleaned from the reports to County Council during this period (Region of Peel Archives).
- 86 A summary of the Act is provided in the November 1965 Children’s Aid Report to County Council (Region of Peel Archives).

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- 87 This was foreseen in the October 1965 Children's Aid Report to County Council (Region of Peel Archives).
- 88 The Society's budget for these two years is included with the annual financial reports for the County included with the Council minutes (Region of Peel Archives).
- 89 These facts are outlined in the Annual Report for 1969, released in early 1970 (County Clerk-Treasurer's Files for 1970, 1990.092 AR, Box 11, Region of Peel Archives).
- 90 Peel County Council, Children's Aid Report, November 1966 (Region of Peel Archives).
- 91 See Annual Reports 1967-70, County Clerk-Treasurer's Files, 1990.092 AR, Boxes 4, 5, 8, 11 (Region of Peel Archives).
- 92 Peel County Council, Children's Aid Report, November 1967. (Region of Peel Archives). Just one example of the administrative detail with which the Board once concerned itself can be found in the December 1949 Children's Aid Report to County Council, where it is noted that, "A new desk has been purchased for the Secretary and is very acceptable and the Secretary wishes to express her thanks to the Council."
- 93 Peel County Council, Children's Aid Report, June 1968 (Region of Peel Archives).
- 94 Marie Tizzard, interview with the author, 2000.
- 95 This is confirmed by Judi Inkpen, who joined the staff in 1968. She also confirms that the Catholic Church was by then playing an important role. "They were a big help to us at all times." She says that this was important because many of the non-anglo-saxon immigrants to Peel in the 1950s and 1960s were Catholics.
- 96 The Report on *Children in Trouble* (1975) can be found in the Region of Peel Archives, Records of the Department of Children's Services, Regional Municipality of Peel. (1990.136 AR, Box 3)
- 97 These developments are highlighted in some of the Children's Aid reports to County Council during the 1969-70 period.
- 98 Marie Tizzard, interview with author, 2000.
- 99 This observation is made by, among others, Jessie McPherson, in her 1978 written reflections, on file at the agency. McPherson was President in 1954 and later became a staff member for the Society. By 1969, the breakdown of the places of residence of volunteers shows a more balanced picture, although still somewhat favouring the central and northern municipalities. The distribution was as follows: Brampton 12; Malton 1; Norval 1; Caledon East 1; Inglewood 1; Streetsville 1; Mississauga 8; Bolton 3; Port Credit 6 (1969 Annual Report in County Clerk-Treasurer's Files; Region of Peel Archives).
- 100 A summary of the findings can be found in *Peel Children's Aid Society – Five Year Report* (October 1984). Regional Municipality of Peel, Office of the Chairman, Children's Aid 1984 file (1990.014 AR, Region of Peel Archives).



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- 101 Joan Powell, in an interview with the author (2000), remarked that “Ron was, in my opinion, a marvellous facilitator. He was very conscious of wanting to get the agency to work with the community and the community with the agency... and he succeeded. I know that the attitude of the community towards the agency became much more positive. Ron was very bright, very dynamic, an easy speaker; he came in with a lot of new ideas.”
- 102 The improvements are discussed in the *Five Year Report*, op. cit.
- 103 For a more detailed summary of the 1979-91 period, see John Huether, “History of the Peel Children’s Aid, 1979-91,” which is on file at the Society’s main office.
- 104 Peel Children’s Aid Society. *Twenty Year Child Abuse Report, 1976-1996* (released January 1998), p. 2. The report also notes that there has been a significant change in the nature of cases during the past 20 to 30 years. It observes, for example, that “During the late 1970’s and early 1980’s the focus of attention shifted to the sexual abuse of children. Adult survivors spoke out about the sexual abuse they had suffered as children and the number of identified child sexual abuse cases grew rapidly with the increasing awareness of the public and professionals.”
- 105 For a good summary of the Society’s initiatives between 1976 and 1996, see the *Twenty Year Child Abuse Report*.
- 106 *Twenty Year Child Abuse Report*, p. 45.
- 107 Ministry of Children and Youth Services, *Child Welfare Transformation 2005: A Strategic Plan for a Flexible, Sustainable and Outcome-Oriented Service Delivery Model*, p. 3
- 108 Paul Zarnke, interview with the author, 2012. See also Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, *25 is the New 21* (2012).
- 109 Vicky Lowrey, interview with the author, 2012.
- 110 *Strategic Plan, 2011-2014*, p. 15.
- 111 Peel Children’s Aid Foundation, *2011-2012 Calendar and Annual Report*. See the page for “May.”
- 112 Catherine Hinton, interview with the author, 2012.
- 113 See, for example, Joseph Chin, “Peel children’s agency comes under fire,” *Mississauga News*, December 12, 2006.
- 114 Irwin Elman, provincial advocate for children and youth, *90 Deaths: 90 Voices Silenced* (2009). See also, for example, the response of Jeanette Lewis, executive director of the Ontario Association of Children’s Aid Societies, in a letter to Elman dated March 6, 2009.
- 115 *Strategic Plan, 2011-2014*, p. 15.
- 116 See, for example, the agency documentary *On Our Way* (2012).
- 117 Rav Bains, interview with the author, 2012.
- 118 Sandra Frampton, interview with the author, 2012.



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- 119 Ipsos, *Peel Children's Aid Market Research Study: Phase I Qualitative*, March 2012.
- 120 Commission to Promote Sustainable Child Welfare, *A Description of the Child Welfare Landscape in Ontario* (October 2010), p. 23.
- 121 Although Peel never came close to taking such a drastic step it has requested formal reviews under Regulation 70, Section 14 (b). See, for example, the letter from Paul Moran, Board President, to the Honourable Madeleine Meilleur, Minister of Community and Social Services, May 15, 2008, on file with board minutes, Peel CAS. The submission gives numerous examples of how Peel CAS is penalized for having historically operated a more austere organization, whereas newer funding formulas tend to build on older baselines. "For example," the submission states, "we have had difficulty in funding support programs to help our children in care achieve better educational outcomes" (p. 5).
- 122 This specific phrase was used by Judi Inkpen, interview with the author, 2012.
- 123 This information was shared by staff, volunteers, and a youth in care at the reception in honour of the 100th anniversary of the Society, April 23, 2012.
- 124 Carl Ingebertson, speaking notes for April 23, 2012, on file at the main office of the Peel Children's Aid Society.
- 125 Judi Inkpen, interview with author, 2000.
- 126 Marg Wightman, interview with author, 2000.



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OUR MISSION

To ensure the safety and well being  
of children and strengthen families  
through partnership

OUR VISION

Every child cherished

OUR VALUES

COLLABORATION and DIVERSITY

ACCOUNTABILITY to the children,  
families and community we serve

RESPECT and compassion

EXCELLENCE, learning and innovation

In a supportive environment

WE CARE

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The Peel Children's Aid Society's century of service is marked by changing social policy, community leadership, and humanitarian ideals. Although always focused on child welfare and helping families to care for children, the organization has combined different approaches and different principles: acting on behalf of the Crown (government) while emphasizing the local, charitable nature of its work; delivering essential services while advocating for reforms that would result in less use of those services; acting in both an investigative and supportive capacity; always asking itself difficult questions and searching for the right balance.

Past President Tom Urbaniak chronicles a history of constant change and consistent challenges.

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PEEL CHILDREN'S AID



[www.peelcas.org](http://www.peelcas.org)