



Family Services Perth-Huron

2024 Annual Report - Celebrating Over 50 Years!

Our community strengthened one person, one family at a time

Values

- ◆ Each client receives individualized, client-centered services based on the uniqueness of each person and is treated with the respect and dignity that recognizes individual choice, independence and personal rights
- ◆ Individuals, families, and the community benefit from an improved quality of life and well-being in an environment of social inclusiveness
- ◆ No person will be denied service due to insufficient income or inability to pay. Fees are applied in a standard and consistent manner with funding support from grants, contracts, and charitable donations.

Mission

Family Services Perth-Huron is a non-profit, community-based, family service agency dedicated to supporting, strengthening and enriching individual, couple and family life by providing individualized counselling, support, advocacy and educational services that meet the needs of the community. In co-operation with other care providers and service deliverers, consumers, planning groups, and funding bodies, we are committed to working towards the development of coordinated and effective service programs to meet the changing needs of individuals, families and communities.

We are committed to inclusion, diversity and equity of the population we serve in our policies and in the services we provide.

Board of Directors

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Kate Aarssen

Board President's Report

Fifty-one years old! Congratulations to Family Services Perth-Huron! Our communities are much stronger because of your presence and hard work.

The complex issues in our communities require creative solutions. Our Agency is able to offer those solutions as we provide each individual and family with their own unique plan to respond to their own unique situation. Family Services Perth-Huron positively impacts individual's lives by working to improve mental health, personal well-being, and overall quality of life.

We are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion. Individuals reach out to our Agency to be heard, to create an individualized plan, and to problem-solve to create solutions to receive a better future. Creating fully engaged, resilient, and inclusive communities is a result of collaboration and partnerships. We have a 'no wrong door' approach, which requires support from our partner community agencies in order to be able to offer support to everyone.

There are many groups who are vital in supporting the important work we do in our communities.

- Thank you to our clients who courageously reach out to us seeking change and investing in their relationships to live life better.
- Thank you to our amazing staff and service providers, who are very dedicated, hard-working, and compassionate to the needs of others.
- Thank you to our many volunteers. Without your time and spirit, it would be very difficult for the Agency to do some of the work it does.
- Thank you to our funders. We appreciate you!
- Thank to our community partners. Together we are able to provide support for the individuals and families of our communities.
- Thank you to the Board of Directors. This is a group of volunteers responsible for the governance of the Agency, who also have a passion for helping others.

When all of these groups work together, as they do so well, Family Services Perth-Huron truly is strengthening our communities one person, one family at a time. Here's to a great year past and looking ahead.

**Don
Campbell,
Board
President**



INDIVIDUAL, COUPLE, FAMILY

& GROUP COUNSELLING and broad based social work interventions offer support and advocacy for various challenges experienced by our community members. Our Clinical team, comprised of a dedicated team of Social Workers, Psychotherapists and our Intake Support Worker serve diverse members of our community. Many clients are subsidized by our local United Way Perth-Huron.

Community members sought supports to cope and persevere through many challenges that face them on a daily basis. Broader issues of the national housing crisis and high inflation are taking its toll on families. They were supported in issues including complex couple/family relationships, communication breakdown, isolation, disconnection, loss, grief, anxiety, depression, anger and overwhelming emotions, sexuality/gender, problem solving, decision-making and conflict resolution.

"My counsellor listens to my needs and helped me put my feelings and thoughts into words. It has made me a better step-mom and wife. Her patience, shared experiences and calming demeanor are hard to find in a counsellor."

Struggles coping with work, running businesses and the financial pressures of our time continue to add surmounting stress to many in our community.

The need for services and supports continue to be in high demand while clients managed the ongoing shifts and challenges of life. In working in partnerships with our funders and cross referrals with community stakeholders, clinical staff supported clients from youth to seniors.

FSPH is grateful for our clinical funders as they continue to respond with flexibility and understanding in order to best serve those in need of social service and counselling supports. With this support, our team continues to be an active presence and service provider at community development tables, through public education and building community capacity to support our residents with effective, creative and life changing supports.

Our Registered Social Workers and Psychotherapists are credentialed as per the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers and the Ontario College of Psychotherapists. Our counsellors implement culturally sensitive, trauma informed, evidence based methodological interventions.

Connections to vital community resources helped people meet their basic human needs, such as food, shelter and clothing. Each client has a personalized service plan with ongoing adaptations for their circumstances.

"I'm very grateful to have the help and support at this time in my life. To have someone who understands and provides guidance gives me a lot of confidence."

This past year, the **Violence Against Women (VAW)** Program supported many highly vulnerable situations with women and children experiencing physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, economical and/or psychological abuse. Regular drop-in clinics offered a much needed option for women in need.

Through in-person and virtual group settings, women embarked on their healing journey supported by others who have shared experience.

"The group was very helpful and was a safe space to communicate."

The **Perth County Stop Violence Against Women Coordinating Committee of Perth County (Stop VAW)** collaborates with local agencies for awareness, education and prevention of violence against women.

FSPH continues to partner with the **Sexual Assault Crisis Centre of Essex County** in Windsor, providing counselling for men creating space to safely process their trauma of being sexually abused. This funding has been expanding to include men living in Perth and Huron counties.

The **Connecting Seniors Programs "A Time for Me"** and **"Coffee Hour"** provided in person and virtually offered seniors opportunities for personal growth, greater self-awareness and expanded social support networks. In person and phone supports were provided for those in need

and in isolation within our communities.

Counselling through **Ontario Works** and **Stratford Social Services Division** helped participants overcome a variety of emotional challenges to fulfill employment goals and greater life stability. These flexible supports enable counsellors to support clients with extensive and complex trauma history as they take steps to live in community in ways that better serve themselves and those around them.

"I felt very comfortable with my counsellor and we were able to accomplish so much through the times we talked. I feel as though our sessions were very productive and helpful."

Employee Assistance Programs provided by employers invested in their employee's wellbeing and coping skills.

"The insights provided by this counselling have literally transformed my life, making sense of some very important concerns. My counsellor is especially skilled in her approach, expertise, knowledge and depths of understanding."

Clinical counselling and social service supports impacted **1,826** individuals and families over the past year.

Contact: Kate Aarssen, Clinical Supervisor

Thank-you to our funders: The Ministry of Children Community & Social Services; Ministry of Health-OH, The Corporation of the City of Stratford-Social Services Division, The United Way Perth-Huron, Stratford-Perth Community Foundation, Employee Assistance Plans & generous & flexible private donations.



Thank you Dan Hyland, for supporting men's programs and clients in our community for many years!

RESPITE CARE is a flexible, periodic, short-term break from caregiving for the purposes of rest and renewal for the entire family. It offers opportunities for children and adults to gain new skills and make lasting connections in their communities.

In 2023/24, families/caregivers of 130 children and adults received much needed breaks. A variety of respite options provided many hours of skill building and community connections.

Who Benefits from Respite?

Caregivers of children and adults who have developmental and/or physical disabilities, mental health needs, and who are living in a family home in Perth County. Respite funds may be used as an interim solution for families who do not have access to alternate funding sources.

Respite options include:

- day and overnight camp experiences
- one to one support with a contracted Service Provider
- out of home respite in the home of a respite family/individual
- the Rotary Respite House; our MCCSS licensed home for children with complex needs

"Sometimes I get to try something new and I really like that. I am looking forward to going back!"

~ child



Respite Coordination assists caregivers to explore funding options and to create individualized respite plans. Respite Coordinators provide support and advocacy for caregivers and individuals transitioning from children's services to adult supports.

Partnerships innovatively support caregivers and their children.

The Rotary Clubs of Perth County and Stratford have partnered with Family Services Perth-Huron since the Rotary Respite House opened in 2004. The Rotary Club of Stratford has a dedicated committee to support the ongoing needs of the house and the Rotarians assist with regular equipment checks and seasonal maintenance.



"The Rotary Respite House has been such a great support for us. With having no family nearby to watch our kids so that my husband and I can have a date night, we are thankful for the breaks that we get through RRH. We know the kids are safe and having lots of fun while we have a chance to rest, recharge, and spend quality time together. It is also such a relief to know that they work around our kids' food likes and allergies—one less thing that we need to worry about."

~ parent

Thank You Rotary Clubs of Stratford and Perth County!

ADULT RESPITE is guided by the collective knowledge of the Perth Respite Network. Members include representatives from Community Living North Perth, Community Living Stratford and Area, Community Living St Mary's and Area, Facile, Developmental Services Ontario and the Ministry of Children,

Community and Social Services. The Network encourages equitable, timely and creative respite options to support caregivers.

With the support of the Adult Respite Coordinator and Service Providers, individuals and their families were positively impacted in 2023/24:

- Individuals were supported to learn about their communities and make lasting connections, while having fun
- Caregivers benefited from regular caregiver breaks, providing opportunities for self-care, hobbies, relationship building, and more
- Individuals and their families were supported to navigate natural and creative respite options in their communities

To ensure a high quality of service for caregivers and individuals, Respite Coordinators and providers participate in ongoing training such as:

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training, First Aid, CPR and Crisis Intervention training.

Recruitment of new respite house staff enabled an increase in respite availability at the house.



Contact: Nicole Malcho, Lead Respite Care Coordinator

Funded by: The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, Ministry of Health and the Rotary Club of Stratford.

SPECIAL SERVICES AT HOME

(SSAH) offered Support and Respite for 154 Children, up to age 18 with developmental and/or physical disabilities and their families: a total of over 55,000 hours.

Service Providers support children 1:1 with an individualized service plan co-developed with the family. Goals may include increasing the child's activities of daily living skills, fine or gross motor skills, safety awareness or following through with speech or occupational therapy recommendations.

Family caregivers received well deserved breaks while their child developed skills they chose on their individual support plan. Professionals such as physiotherapists, occupational, speech or behavioural therapists offer guidance as needed.

"We love that our Service Provider promotes healthy eating and mind/body balance with joyful positive care. She encourages independence with arms length reinforcement. She is very valued in our lives."



Together the team creates effective and safe support.

Coordination assists families to manage their funding and be responsive to changing needs and family priorities. Some families self-directed funds or received help through the flexible support option for house maintenance to spend more time with their child and or siblings.

Families gained energy and the resiliency to meet the entire family's needs, spending their valuable time on what matters most.

"I was able to accomplish going back to work full time with the support of FSPH."

Careful matching of Service Providers with the individual and families is key!

"I appreciate how well the Service Providers are matched to my child's needs."

Trusted and skilled Service Providers best meet the individuals and their families' needs. Coordinators supported the connection of over 80 contracted Service Providers to individuals and families, averaging 10-11 new matches each month.

PASSPORT 90 adults with a developmental disability were supported to participate in meaningful community activities to pursue interests and achieve personal goals.

Recruitment of new Service Providers continued through networking, job fairs and community events.

"Over the years, the services at FSPH have been an important needed benefit to my son and myself. He is now 18 years old and we are at the end of services. A big THANK YOU to all of the staff that have helped us over the years."

Team orientation and training includes topics such as Accessibility, Medication, Seizure, Fire-Safety, First-Aid, Non-Violent Crisis Intervention, CAS-suspected abuse, Lifting techniques.

Families continue to tell us how much they value this support in their home!

Contact: Janice Steckly, SSAH Lead Coordinator

Funded by: Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services



SSAH/Passport/Foundations/Respite

Listened to when needed to talk: **99%**

Service available & accessible: **95%** Goals & outcomes planned & accomplished to satisfaction: **100%**

Positive relationship between family/individual and Service provider: **99%**

FOUNDATIONS/COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

is a transitional program supporting the successful adjustment from life as a student to life in the community as a young adult. This program supports young adults with developmental disabilities between the ages of 18 to 26 as they transition from high school to an enjoyable, meaningful life in the community. Some transition planning may also happen for those over 16 years, through transition workshops or one-to-one planning.

This year 26 young adults with individualized self-directed plans learned new skills expanding their community connections with the support of trained service providers.

Participants contributed to their communities through **employment** and **volunteer activities**.

They:

- **created resumes** assisted by Partners in Employment, Conestoga Career Centre and Leads Employment Services;
- **maintained employment** at Stratford Festival, River Gardens Retirement Residence, McCarthy Place Retirement Residence, Stockyards, Home Hardware, McDonald's, No Frills, Sobeys, A&W, Physio on Front and Montana's, as well as snow shoveling and gardening in the community;
- **volunteered** at McHappy Day, Stratford Live Music and Food Festival, Lights On Stratford, Christmas Cheer for Seniors, The Local Community Food Centre, Stratford 5KM Run/Walk and the Restore.

Participants **socially connected** through **recreation and leisure** activities.



They:

- ✓ **Engaged** in physical fitness activities including aqua-fit classes, snowshoeing, Special Olympics teams, walking, biking, hiking and working out at local gyms;
- ✓ **Connected** through board game socials, virtual literacy parties and one-to-one virtual hang outs with Service Providers;
- ✓ **Explored** opportunities for creative expression through dance classes and art classes;
- ✓ **Became active** at the YMCA Stratford Perth, St John's Ambulance, Infinity Dance, Knight and Clay, The Local Community Food Centre, Stratford Christian Reformed Church (Friendship Group), Mike's Bowling Lanes, Kiwanis Aktion Club, Stratford Rotary Complex, Gallery Stratford, Stratford Public Library, North Perth Public Library and Stratford Perth Humane Society.

Foundations' **Literacy/Numeracy** Participants learned to:

- **maintain/improve functional literacy** by developing understanding of how we communicate and make sense of our world, applying reading skills towards a variety of material, emailing friends and family, writing books, communicating with pen pals, participating in literacy workshops and utilizing literacy resources with Service Providers and family members;
- **increase numeracy skills** by working to increase understanding of numbers and applying counting skills in functional, fun ways; expanding knowledge of practical money skills;
- **develop new technology skills and decrease social isolation** by learning to use various iPad applications and connecting with each other in creative ways;

Life skills were gained as Participants:

- used public transportation;
- practiced street safety when out and about;
- connected with friends through videos, letter writing and email;
- practiced safe baking and cooking;
- planned and created full meals, including finding recipes, creating grocery lists, budgeting, shopping, preparation, cooking and clean-up;
- used the bank automatic teller, deposited cheques, used the grocery store self check-out and collected mail at the post office;
- practiced income reporting processes through email;
- improved housekeeping skills, e.g. daily cleaning, home organization, carpet cleaning and laundry

Working together with community agencies, we assist young people to meet their goals. We worked with Developmental Services Ontario, the Community Livings of Stratford and Area, St. Marys and Area and North Perth, L'Arche Stratford, Regional Supports Associates, Perth Humane Society, Kiwanis Aktion Club, YMCA Stratford Perth, Pyramid Recreation Centre, Facile Perth and the Stratford House of Blessing.

With our partner, VOICES, we plan events for families, Caregivers and Participants to gain new knowledge and confidence.

Contact: Sarah Cappie, Foundations Lead Coordinator

Funded by: Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services

Buddy Up Social Skills Group facilitates a group experience for youth aged 11-14 years of age with a high functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder. They practiced and generalized social skills in a structured setting with peers by sharing and learning from their own personal experiences. Friendships were fostered and participants gained confidence in their social interactions, easing the transition into high school and adolescence.

FAMILY SUPPORT WORKER (FSW)

Life is a journey with transitions of dreams, challenges and realities. Our FSW guided 89 families caring for a child with a developmental disability with their own unique life transitions in 2023/24. All reasons to reach out are valued involving a child.

Families reach out to the FSW for:

- Instrumental counselling
- Problem solving
- Guidance to source out information, community resources and service options
- Support, advocacy and facilitation to engage with professionals, agencies, systems and others
- Planning
- To be heard from the perspective of their concerns, questions, struggles, plans or dreams.

Positive family outcomes achieved with Family Support Worker support:

- Strengthened personal and family resiliency as the FSW program fostered client-centred, collaborative goal-setting, and created opportunities for informed choices in accessing supports and services
- Support networks strengthened through the FSW case management approach of “meeting the family where they are at”, introducing supports and services unique to each child and family
- Families learned about new resources and supports as they began navigating developmental services after receiving a new diagnosis
- Family voice was heard and respected as they navigated and accessed developmental services
- Development of collaborative interdisciplinary support teams for children with complex needs and their families
- Creative funding solutions to assist with day-to-day expenses lessened financial burden experienced by families
- Interdisciplinary advocacy, collaboration and planning fostered wrap-around support for children and families with complex needs
- Confidence grew as caregivers were supported to advocate for the needs of their family and child/children in the community, education and medical systems
- Individuals and their families felt prepared for transition to adult developmental services with increased awareness of services and supportive transition planning

Contact: *Avrey Jantzi, Family Support Worker*

Funded by: Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services

ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICE WORKER (APSW)

In Huron and Perth counties, APSWs provided case management, advocacy and planning supports to 138 individuals with developmental disabilities in 2023/24. The support provided was grounded in respect, choice, dignity, communication and trust, enabling positive relationship development and highlighted individual strengths and goals. We continued to walk alongside individuals in navigating housing and future life planning, including where individuals' have aging caregivers, in alignment with MCCSS “Journey to Belonging”.

APSW support enabled individuals to address challenges and transitions so they might live independently within their community:

- Individuals experienced improved emotional, mental and physical health through having basic needs of food and shelter met with APSW support in advocacy, navigating medical and social systems and facilitating wrap-around supports
- Instrumental counselling provided opportunities for individuals to feel heard and create action plans when circumstances became difficult
- Individuals experiencing homelessness, risk of homelessness and food insecurity were supported to access emergency services while also planning for the future
- With vigorous advocacy from the APSW, an individual experiencing domestic violence was connected to supports and found housing so she can live a safe, independent life
- Individuals with a desire and dream to live independently were supported along with their caregivers to plan for transition to independent living, exploring housing opportunities
- Parents with developmental disabilities were supported to access appropriate childcare to allow for employment opportunities
- Individuals were supported to navigate employment goals, including one individual who found employment with Habitat for Humanity, with future opportunities to assist in the next Huron County build to explore different trades
- Navigation of services as aging needs change with dementia, with one individual supported by community providers to comfortably move to a retirement home
- Advocacy within the legal system increased understanding and dignity through legal processes, with an individual who experienced assault having their voice heard through with court process with support of the APSW, Crown Attorney and Victim Witness
- Inter-disciplinary and multi-sector advocacy, collaboration and planning contributed to wrap-around support for individuals with changing complex health and developmental needs
- Several individuals transitioned from living with their families to safe, independent living in their communities
- Family connections strengthened, with a couple receiving comprehensive collaborative community support to achieve their goal of a successful long-awaited move to be closer to biological family

Contact: *Cheryl Mcneil, APSW Team Lead*

Funded by: Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services

THE FAMILYHOME PROGRAM offers an adult (Homesharer) with a developmental disability an opportunity to live with a caring Family (Homeprovider) residing in the community. Currently 37 individuals reside in 24 homes throughout Huron, Perth, Grey, Bruce, and North Wellington Counties.

Homesharers have unique and changing needs. This includes dual diagnosis, physical limitations, aging, and medical challenges including visual deficiencies and hearing impairments, which all require a flexible, planned response.

Each Homesharer has an Individual Support Plan (ISP) detailing their goals and desired outcomes. Each person is encouraged to reach personal goals by adapting support and supervision to individual strengths. ISPs are reviewed at least every six months to respond to any major life changes.

We collaborate with Homeproviders, Respite Providers, Day Support Providers, Volunteers, and local agencies to ensure each Homesharer is actively integrated in community life. Supported day programs, volunteer/work placements, post-secondary education, and recreational activities may be part of the support plan.

Annual training for Service Providers includes Host Family 2016 Directives, as well as Quality Assurance Measures.

Familyhome staff members create local service solutions on agency, regional, and provincial committees.

We continue to host larger scale in-person social events such as our annual picnic, bus trip, and holiday dinner.



Positive Outcomes

- We introduced Homesharers with new Service Providers to see who may be a match to share a home, provide respite, or provide day support, based on the relationship.
- One gentleman successfully transferred to Long Term Care to better meet his changing support needs.
- One young lady transferred to Supported Independent Living and has been successful being supported in this support model.
- Another young man transferred out of the Familyhome Program after he got married. He has remained in touch with his Homeproviders and is thriving living on his own.
- We are pleased to have one new Homeprovider and two new Respite Providers after completing home studies, as well as two new day support workers. We also welcomed one new client into the Familyhome Program in November.
- We remain grateful to our dedicated Familyhome Providers, Respite Providers, Day Support Providers, and Volunteers. Their warm hearts and care support individuals to live full and happy lives.
- We continue to recruit new Service Providers for the Familyhome Program and spread the word about this unique option for adults with developmental disabilities to live meaningful lives within their community. If you or someone you know may be interested in opening your home long-term or to provide short-term respite, and to build lifelong relationships and new friendships, please let us know. We would love to hear from you!

Contact: Megan Hopper, Familyhome Program Supervisor

Funded by: The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services

Family Services Perth-Huron Continuous Quality Improvement...

- ✓ Our next Accreditation with the Canadian Centre for Accreditation will be in March 2026
- ✓ FSPH successfully provided inclusive professional counselling and social service supports; over 90% of clients reported on our outcome surveys that they made positive changes to improve their mental health and wellbeing while working with their counsellors to meet their goals
- ✓ We build community capacity for improved wellness/health by participating on over 40 committees, member agencies and planning groups
- ✓ Professional supervision for intern University Bachelor and Master of Social Work students results in additional counselling for our community
- ✓ FSPH succeeded on rigorous compliance reviews; Ministry Licence review & Quality Assurance Measure for our Developmental Services
- ✓ We are Accessible!

At Family Services Perth-Huron we believe in a no wrong door approach!





Family Services Perth-Huron
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THANK YOU for your support

FAMILY SERVICES PERTH-HURON STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

REVENUE	2023	2024
Provincial Ministry Funding	\$3,970,252	\$4,003,20
Purchase of Service Agreements	1,270,415	1,267,224
United Way of Perth-Huron	104,520	127,691
Other	200,120	175,958
Total Revenue	5,545,307	5,574,073
EXPENSES		
Salaries and Benefits	\$2,284,862	\$2,340,489
Contract Expenses	2,566,498	2,535,968
Travel	129,439	140,839
Office and Program Expense	142,252	173,606
Occupancy Costs	160,067	161,668
Other Operating Expenses	252,699	220,606
Total Expenses	5,535,817	5,573,176
Net Revenue	\$9,490	\$897

A special thanks for many years of
valued and dedicated service...

5 Years

Ed Blackmore
Cathy Good
Terri Menary-Stanley
Kelly Fewkes
Devynn Harmer

15 Years

Heidi Baarda

20 Years

Steven Malcho
Jennifer Louwagie
Ange Huehnergard

30 Years

Cheryl McNeil

A thank you to our Board Members who
have finished their terms with us:

Randy Brown, Annette Biasin
and Clive Slade

A special Thank You to: The Stratford Rotaract Club for their Trivia Night Donation;
To the Optimist Club, Community Christ Church and Royal Bank Canada for their donations to our programming and spaces



Thank-you United Way of Perth-Huron and all the caring individuals and
volunteers supportive of our community!

Family Services Perth-Huron staff supports the United Way Perth-Huron campaign! FUN-draising occurred through Payroll Deductions, office games and activities, a soup lunch and Vacation Day Raffles. We value equity, diversion and inclusion within our communities and celebrate the uniqueness of each person!

Thank-you Family Services Perth-Huron funders!

Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services 🖐️ Ministry of Health 🖐️ United Way Perth-Huron 🖐️
Employee Assistance Programs 🖐️ Stratford Perth Community Foundations 🖐️ The Corporation of the City of
Stratford, Social Services 🖐️ Rotary Club of Stratford 🖐️ Private, generous donors