



2020 - 2021



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# Thank You to the Communities

Thank you to the communities we serve and work with to help make a better life for our children and families. With our mandate to work alongside leadership, we are partners and a part of each community. We continue to strive towards a day where all of our families are healthy and raising happy, strong and proud children. As we continue the important work we do in child and family services, we truly appreciate the guidance, wisdom and values of each community.

## Lorraine Crane

Board Chairperson

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ΓΡΥΔ·ΛΥΣ 31, 2021

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

@ March 31, 2021

Lorraine Crane, Chairperson  
Sonny Gagnon, Co-Chair  
Russell Kakepetum, Secretary-Treasurer  
Jim Bottle, Board Member  
Simon Winnepetonga, Board Member  
Stena Turtle, Board Member  
Samantha Kejick, Board Member  
Chris Kakegamic, Board Member

## ELDERS' COUNCIL

Elsie Fox  
Emily Gregg  
Moses Mawakeesick  
Georgina Neshinapaise

## YOUTH COUNCIL

Reina Foster  
Chrednick Raul Kakekagumick



## About Tikinagan Child and Family Services

We are here because we want to protect our children, help our families and nurture our communities.

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Created by the First Nation leadership in our region back in 1984, Tikinagan is a community-based child wellbeing agency rooted in and accountable to the communities we serve. We are a large team of caring staff working in First Nations and supporting our families from our 30 First Nations.

We are here because we want to protect our children, help our families and nurture our communities.

## OUR MANDATE

Tikinagan Child and Family Services has a dual mandate. It is one of 53 Children's Aid Societies in Ontario mandated under the Child, Youth and Family Services Act to protect children from harm. We are accountable to Ontario for this responsibility. We are also mandated by our Chiefs to provide services that are culturally sensitive to the needs of Indigenous children, families and First Nations. We are accountable

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to the Chiefs and to the communities for this responsibility.

## OUR VISION

## The Answers Lie Within The Communities

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The Creator entrusted First Nations with the sacred responsibility of protecting our children and developing strong families and healthy communities. The Chiefs created Tikinagan to support and strengthen our children, our families, and our communities. The future of our communities is our children. They need to be nurtured within their families and communities. As such, community responsibility for child protection is an essential aspect of First Nations' self-government.

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Find out more about Tikinagan at [tikinagan.org](http://tikinagan.org), follow us on Facebook @[Tikinagan](https://www.facebook.com/Tikinagan), and on Instagram @[tikinagancfs](https://www.instagram.com/tikinagancfs).



# Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin

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Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin is the Tikanagan service model. In Ojibway/Oji-Cree, Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin means, “everyone working together to raise our children.” It is a system of protecting and caring for children and supporting families that has been designed and is delivered by First Nations people.

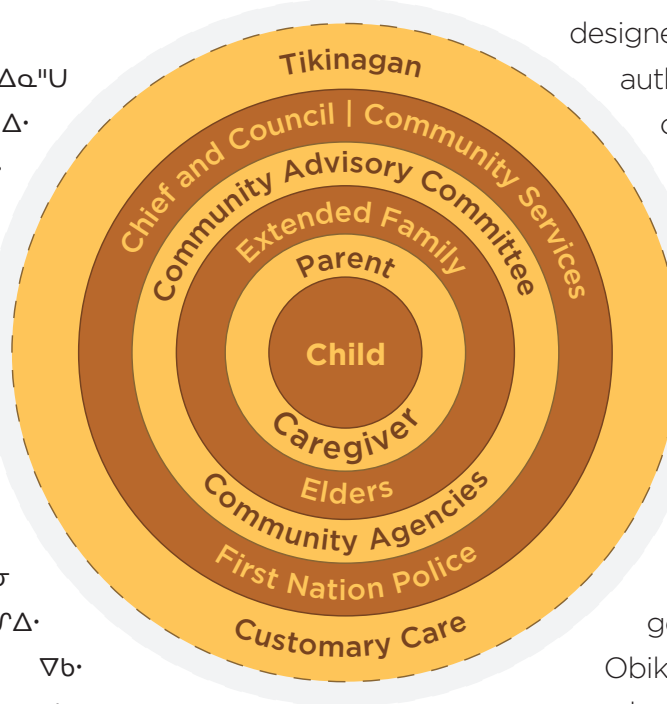
Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin represents the culmination of almost 35 years of work to develop a culturally appropriate response to children and families who are in need of help in the First Nation communities. In developing Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin, we have sought to be true to the original vision that the Chiefs and Elders had when Tikinagan was created. The service model is now described in detail in a set of comprehensive service manuals, including service standards and policies, and

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Mamow      Obiki-ahwahsoowin      is

Customary care is an integral element of Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin. Within the customary care system, the First Nation Chief and Council have the authority to declare children to be placed in Tikinagan care when removal from their home is required. The First Nation, parents, Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin caregivers and children in care sign a Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin Care Agreement for children coming into the agency's care. Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin care puts the decision in the hands of families, extended family, communities, and First Nation leadership, and not mainstream Court systems.

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## Message from Board Chairperson



“All the families were focused on being together.”



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a focus on being together. I have seen more people doing work in their yards, little groups of families getting together, outdoor cooking, and people being out on the land. Communities were brought closer to their culture and saw the importance of being around their families.

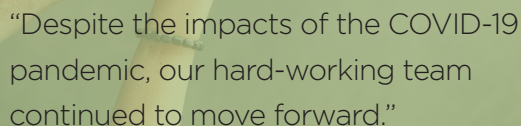
A core traditional value held sacred by our people is Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin, which means “everyone working together to raise our children.” Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin brings us together to decide what is best for our children, families, and communities. The pandemic didn’t halt our service; it made us find different ways of helping. The care we provide did not change and we continued to focus on families.

I spent a lot of my youth in residential school where parents had no say about how their children were raised. Tikinagan focuses on the people and their families with the support of their community and Elders, working together to determine what is best for the children. This

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Despite the challenges due to the pandemic, our hard-working team continued to move forward. A Board Committee was created to review our existing By-law No. 1. This is our governing document that defines and outlines: corporate membership, annual chiefs assembly and board meeting guidelines, Elder and youth guidance requirements, Tikinagan's service delivery model Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin, and more. We will present the results of this endeavor at a future Annual Chiefs Assembly.

Much progress has been made in our transition to serving the City and District of Thunder Bay. Thunder Bay is a hub of resources needed by our communities including health care and education. Many members from our communities relocate to Thunder Bay for this reason. Since we work with the communities directly, when it comes to the decisions regarding children in care and their families, the communities from which they originate determine how we meet their needs and help support them as if they were home. This means our presence in Thunder Bay is necessary to uphold our traditional values held by our people. Our staff continues to welcome our Thunder Bay families from our communities to our agency.

As a Board of Directors, it is important for us to come together to meet, share and decide what is best for our agency. While technology enables us to do this during a pandemic, I am excited to share these discussions face-to-face with my

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fellow Board Members and Executive team in the future. I am forever grateful to be able to navigate this global crisis with my fellow Board Members to ensure Tikinagan meets needs of our First Nations. Their continued support and hard work during these unprecedented times has been astonishing. Guidance from our Elder Council has been a blessing. Their knowledge and advice have helped support me in my role as Board Chair through this pandemic.

Our Executive Director and her team continue to lead our agency through this pandemic with strength and empathy, understanding the needs of our people. I want to thank Tikinagan staff, especially the community-based staff. Their efforts to ensure that everyone's needs have been met while ensuring the safety of all parties has been remarkable. Their strength and caring are truly admirable. They are the embodiment of Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin.

I hope when this pandemic comes to an end, we are all able to come together to celebrate what we gained and honour what and who we lost. I hope we will continue to hold what we learned such as stronger family values and togetherness in our hearts. Until this time comes, stay connected, keep safe and follow the rules, as we are all role models. Tikinagan is always here for support and guidance to our families.

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Lorraine Crane  
Board Chairperson



## Message From the Executive Director



*Thelma Morris, Executive Director*

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Waachiye, Greetings!

This has been a year of change and growth for our children, youth, families, Elders, and our communities. Like Tikinagan's Mamow Obikihwahsoowin model, we used the wisdom, guidance, teachings, and direction of our communities and Elders to help move forward together.

With guidance from our communities, we have been able to navigate the many changes we have experienced within our organization that have brought about growth. From the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic to managing our Thunder Bay transition to taking advantage of new funding opportunities, we have been

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successful at adapting while continuing to meet our communities' needs.

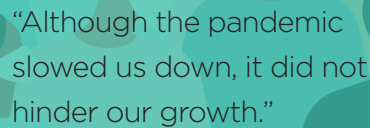
Like many, the pandemic has presented us with many challenges. We had to quickly adapt and change the way we provide service to the communities. Our staff had to respond in different ways to services that were required. Community based staff became more essential than ever to service delivery as was leadership in the communities. We also had to rethink how our staff connected internally and externally.

To accomplish this connection, we had to make sure our staff had the appropriate technologies. We did not have the equipment for our staff to work remotely and complete their work in ways that met provincial and local pandemic regulations. However, thanks to our I.T. team and funding options available from the various levels of government, our staff received necessary equipment and tools to continue their work.

An outcome we did not anticipate was how the technology we implemented would help the agency improve how we communicated internally and externally. We have seen increased communication with foster parents and with children in care as well as creative ways of meeting with the families we support. Internally, we saw growth amongst our staff as they learned new technologies and new ways to communicate with one another.

Additionally, we implemented safety measures to protect our clients, foster parents, and staff. While being respectful of each individual community's pandemic measures as well as



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Other important changes were thanks to funding accessed through the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal and our committed finance team. We were able to access funding to establish agency operated homes and group homes, improve and meet current infrastructure needs, and provide more support to families in the form of prevention care. This funding has enabled us to

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enhance our service delivery so we can increase help by investing in more supports for families before there is the need for their children to come into care.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the change in the agency's designation and new legislation allowing First Nations to develop their own child welfare laws, we decided to revisit and refocus our strategic planning efforts. We will look at the strategic planning done to date with a new lens and moving forward will incorporate strategic goals to address these current developments. We are committed to following our mandate, meeting the needs of our communities, and ensuring the original vision of the Chiefs is achieved. Our next strategic plan will be stronger than ever.

Moving forward, we are assisting First Nations to take on new and bigger roles in services to families. Our mandate created by the Chiefs in 1984 included having the First Nations provide their own governance and delivery of services to their children and families. We are working to support Band Representative programs and collaborate with them as partners, as well as help First Nations in their efforts to create their own child welfare laws. This was part of the Chiefs' vision for Tkinagan and we are honoured to help First Nations achieve self-governance over these services.

Lastly, I would like to recognize the amazing, continued support we receive from the Chiefs, our communities, and our Elders. Together we have been able support many of our children and families. Local partnerships including schools,

























## CARING FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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Following Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin, everyone is responsible and involved in raising our children. Even when a family is struggling, this circle of love and support is called upon and involved in the response. We bring children into care only after all other less intrusive alternatives to ensure the children's safety and well-being within their family have been explored and exhausted.

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When children come into care we keep children connected to their culture, family, and community by prioritizing placement with extended family in or as close to their home community as possible with the end goal of reunification with their immediate family.

[illegible]

Excluding the Thunder Bay District which we started providing service to in January 2020, we saw a decrease in the number of children in care by just over four percent. This is proof that our Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin service model and our emphasis on prevention and early intervention helps to keep families together. Within all our full service area including the Thunder Bay District, we started the year with 494 children in care and finished with 591 children in care. An increase of 97 children, however, 118 were as a result of our expansion to Thunder Bay.

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Almost all children coming into Tikinagan care are under the authority and direction of their First Nation, not the court system. With Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin, we consult with each First Nation and work with each child's circle of care to respond to protection concerns.

## INCORPORATING OUR VALUES

We also have responsibilities placed on us provincially, however, we are committed to culturally appropriate services and the spirit of Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin as our first and most important responsibility. We have incorporated the Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin values and service model into our service delivery and documentation. In this way, we are able to provide culturally appropriate service while at the same time maintaining compliance with provincial standards. This year, for example, we received a 100% compliance related to child and home safety during the Ministry's review of foster homes.

At Tikinagan, our approaches ensure the proper documentation and plans are in place by developing and using culturally appropriate tools. We recognize that as an Indigenous agency, our strengths come from our storytelling and



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relationships. And while our way tends to be unique, the tools and policies we developed, such as our Plan of Care for children and youth and Service Plans for families, have strengthened our trust with our families and communities.

## SUPPORTING OUR YOUTH

Many of the resources vulnerable youth require are outside their own community, which is why in December 2020 we launched an initiative to identify gaps and build supports for them. The Tikinagan Youth Outreach Program (YOP) is committed to providing outreach and support to young people that encourages and re-inspires them to invest in themselves and their future. This new program helps by building and nurturing values, behaviors, knowledge, attitudes and life skills that reinforce a positive self-esteem and hope for a brighter future. We have one unit established in the Sioux Lookout region and a second planned for the Thunder Bay area, which will then cover the entire area Tikinagan serves.

For additional resources, Tikinagan also developed the Clinical Counselling Unit, which supports our children and youth. They assist in debriefing high risk youth, attending healing circles (case conferences) for children/youth, and providing Mental Health Care Packages. These teams help to keep our high-risk youth closer to home and in Tikinagan's placements.

We also recognize that many of our youth will require continued supports into adulthood. We have spent many years working with transitional age youth and the number of our youth who receive specialized Adult Services has steadily grown.

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## A PLACE TO CALL HOME

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All children have the right to nurturing care and a continuing relationship with their parents, siblings, extended family, culture, language, traditions and community. If a child must leave his/her community, Tikinagan works to ensure that the child's relationships with family, extended family and community are preserved and strengthened.

We maintain a focus on recruitment of community-based and Indigenous foster homes because Indigenous children deserve an Indigenous home. At March 31, 2021, we had 248 foster homes. The most common type of foster parent connection begins when we receive a call from someone who wants to take a family member into their home (such as a niece or nephew) when the parents are facing challenges -- a true customary care approach to fostering with Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin.

We have continued to work towards family-based care with foster parents and away from group home care. Over the past 5 years, this focus has reduced the number of days in care in group home settings by almost 50%. However we recognize that we will need to continue building culturally appropriate options for children and youth in the area we serve, to keep them closer to home and family. To accomplish this, we have purchased homes, which will be a safe place for our children in care. We look forward to remodeling each home and establishing programs that emphasize our Elders' teachings, language, and culture and create a home-like environment, offer land-based programming, and bring families together.

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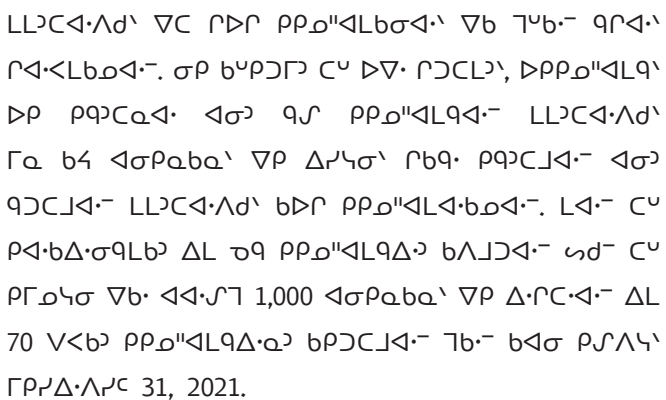
We have received positive feedback from newly transferred families. One family said they feel supported and respected by their Family Service Worker. Multiple clients have stated they like the way we work with families and treat them with respect. They prefer the Mamow Obikwahsoowin way of helping and supporting families.

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and staff had to learn how to participate in a virtual classroom. It was a huge adjustment for our training department but their efforts were very successful with over 1,000 staff participating in more than 70 different training sessions this fiscal year.

One positive outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic is it made us better communicators. This year, we held meetings more often and as a result, we are more connected and more informed than ever before. This is something that has expanded to our work with families.

At our meetings, we start and end our time with a prayer, putting our value of spirituality at the forefront of our work. We regularly pray for our families, communities, and staff. During the pandemic, it was a source of hope and comfort, guiding our leadership and all of our staff.



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## Financial Position 2020-2021

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ገቢያት 20/21

ለጋራ ልማት ስራው አስፈላጊ ስራው	20/21	20/19
ጋራ ልማት ስራው	\$ 64,376,786	\$ 56,254,050
ጋራ ልማት ስራው	\$ 12,884,429	\$ 21,004,984
ጋራ ልማት ስራው	\$ 77,261,215	\$ 77,259,034
ለጋራ ልማት ስራው	20/21	20/19
ጋራ ልማት ስራው & ልማት ስራው	\$ 43,543,146	\$ 34,316,224
ጋራ ልማት ስራው & ልማት ስራው	\$ 23,255,155	\$ 33,544,418
ጋራ ልማት ስራው ስራው ስራው	\$ 10,462,914	\$ 13,352,684
ጋራ ልማት ስራው	\$ 77,261,215	\$ 81,213,326
ጋራ ልማት ስራው, ልማት ስራው ስራው	\$ (6,135,848)	\$ (4,234,904)
ጋራ ልማት ስራው ስራው ስራው	\$ 6,135,848	\$ 2,053,348
(ጋራ ልማት ስራው ስራው)		
ጋራ ልማት ስራው ስራው ስራው ስራው	\$ -	\$ (3,954,292)
ጋራ ልማት ስራው ስራው ስራው ስራው	\$ -	\$ (6,135,848)

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## STATEMENT OF CHILD WELFARE FUND

OPERATIONS 20/21

OPERATING REVENUE	20/21	20/19
Child Welfare	\$ 64,376,786	\$ 56,254,050
Other	\$ 12,884,429	\$ 21,004,984
Total	\$ 77,261,215	\$ 77,259,034
OPERATING EXPENSES	20/21	20/19
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 43,543,146	\$ 34,316,224
Boarding & Client Services	\$ 23,255,155	\$ 33,544,418
Administration	\$ 10,462,914	\$ 13,352,684
Total	\$ 77,261,215	\$ 81,213,326
Fund Balance, Beginning of the year	\$ (6,135,848)	\$ (4,234,904)
Settlement of prior year deficits	\$ 6,135,848	\$ 2,053,348
(Deficit) or Surplus for the year	\$ -	\$ (3,954,292)
Fund Balance, End of the year	\$ -	\$ (6,135,848)

A summary from Schedule 1 – Statement of Revenue and Expenses – Child Welfare –  
 compiled by MNP LLP, Chartered Professional Accountants



Tikinagan Child and Family Services would like to recognize employees who have reached their 10th, 15th, 20th and 30th anniversary of employment with the agency in the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Our thanks and congratulations go to the following employees for their many years of dedicated service to the families and children of this region.

Kayla Beck  
Lee-Anne Besselt  
Armand Binguis  
Amanda Tait  
Heather Gillespie  
Sandra Gray  
Phyllis Marie McKay  
Sarah Morin  
Amanda Trenchard  
Nancy Sakchekapo  
Beatrice Kakepetum  
Aaron Kakegumick  
Rodney Rae  
Christina Zatorsky  
Floyd Chisel  
Michelle Lobreau  
Angela Williams  
Amy Hardy  
Steven Somers  
Jesilyn Daniels  
Maria Mekanak  
Kelly Wilson  
Scott Whatley  
Christina Beardy  
Lena Sagutcheway

Teresa Angeconeb  
Roy Beardy  
Rachel Tinney  
Ellen Meekis  
Toni Vincent  
Robert Meawasige  
Emily Van Voris  
Dawn Gardhouse  
Wendy Baumbach  
Edna Quequish  
Nora Chisel  
Marion Kenny

Christine Stever  
William J. Davis  
Harry Suganaqueb  
Frances Grieg  
Deanna Mitchell

## Marie Hudson





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**WILLIAM J. NOTHING AND TOMMY FIDDLER**

In the summer of 2020, Tikinagan mourned the loss of two important contributors to the agency's legacy, William J. Nothing and Tommy Fiddler.

Remembered as a visionary and negotiator for Tikinagan and many other First Nation organizations in Northwestern Ontario, Nothing laid the foundation for our agency. He negotiated a ground breaking memorandum that First Nations Chiefs signed in Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation in 1984, which was the founding event for Tikinagan.

From there, Nothing stayed with Tikinagan as Board Chair, and later became Executive Director to help guide Tikinagan through its development stages. Nothing's leadership and vision was instrumental in the creation and development of

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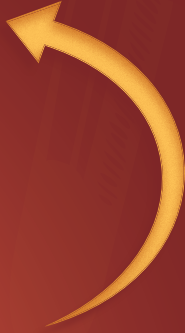

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σΔ· ∇ρ Δσd ΔΛCLQ' Γb· 2001 Λσ<sup>υ</sup> 2009.



Tikinagan benefited greatly from Tommy's expertise and guidance and we are thankful for his dedication to improving services at the community level. Tommy truly cared for the children and families we serve. He was an honourable man, as evident through his compassion, humility and acceptance of everyone. Fiddler is remembered for his dedicated service on our Board of Directors as a Board Member, serving from 2001 to 2009.



## SAME HOME, NEW LOOK



Learn about becoming a foster parent, explore new career opportunities, discover our Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin Care Model, and more!



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# Tikinagan

Child & Family Services

