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Board of Directors

@ March 31, 2025

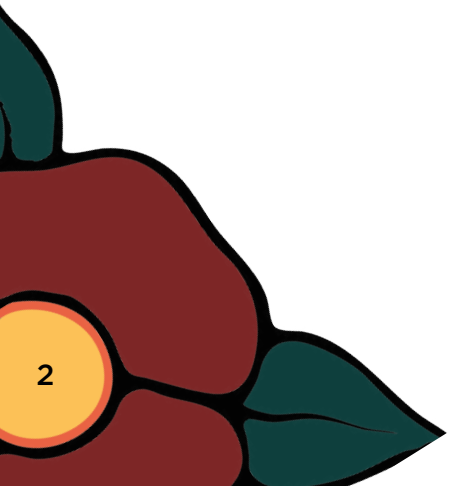
Lorraine Crane, Chairperson
Sonny Gagnon, Co-Chair
Russell Kakepetum, Secretary-Treasurer
Jim Bottle, Board Member
Simon Winnepetonga, Board Member
Samantha Kejick, Board Member
Chris Kakegamic, Board Member

Elders Council

Georgina Neshinapaise, Nibinamik First Nation
Teri Fiddler, Sandy Lake First Nation
Nora Atlookan, Aroland First Nation

Youth Council

Reina Foster, Lac Seul First Nation
Tyleen Strang, Poplar Hill First Nation



ᑎᑦᑲᑦ ᑭᑦᑲᑦ ABOUT TIKINAGAN CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

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

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 to the Chiefs and to the communities for this responsibility. We are also 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.

Our Vision

The Answers Lie Within the Communities

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.

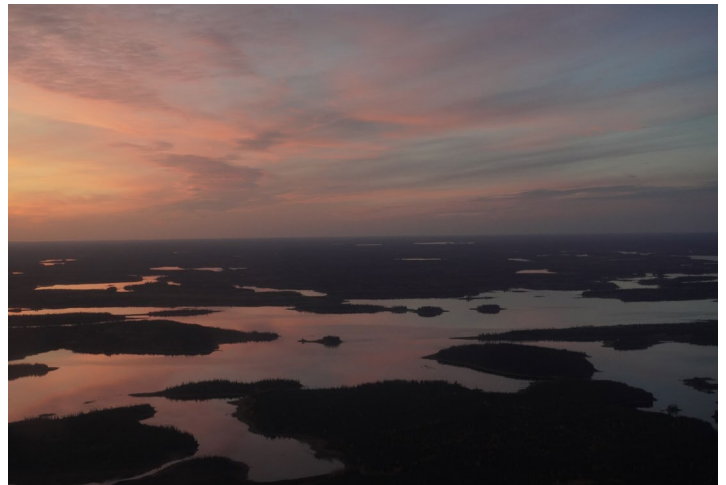
Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin

Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin is the Tikinagan service model. In Ojibway/Oji-Cree, Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin means, "everyone working together to raise our children." It is our traditional ways 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 40 years of work to develop a culturally appropriate response to children and families who are in need of help in 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.

Customary Care

Customary care is an integral element of Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin. 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.



Learn more about our history and service model



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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Thelma Morris
Executive Director



Waachiye,

I am honoured to share Tikinagan Child and Family Services' 2024-25 Annual Report. As we mark 40 years of working together with our 30 First Nations, I want to recognize the progress we've made in working toward the vision set by our founding Chiefs. Miigwetch to all the Chiefs, Elders, Youth, Board Members, Staff, Foster Parents - past and present - who have been a part of Tikinagan's history.

Since the beginning, our children have been at the heart of our services at Tikinagan. Their lives matter deeply. That is why we, as adults, leaders, and as an agency, have carried this responsibility to protect, support, and guide them toward a healthy and happy future for four decades. This is what they deserve, and we must value them.

While we honour our past, we also recognize the work ahead. Now more than ever, our First Nations and our agency are focusing on what comes next - and what is best - for our children and their futures. Throughout this fiscal year, we have reflected on the future of our agency and its

long-term vision, and, above all, the safety and wellbeing of our children.

The Future of Our Agency

In 2024-25, the Chiefs of our 30 First Nations, along with the Chiefs of Ontario, reached an agreement with the Government of Canada to reform the First Nations child and family services program in Ontario. Throughout this process, Tikinagan advocated for what is best for our children and families. We thank our Chiefs for allowing us to bring forward our concerns and ideas. I am inspired by the work that our communities have committed themselves to bring transformational change for our communities.

If the Ontario First Nations Agreement (OFA) is approved by the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, it will mark the beginning of a transition period for Tikinagan. This will bring new ways of collaborating and new responsibilities for our First Nations. This is a positive step. But it will require all of us to work together more closely than ever - to plan together, to protect together, and to ensure

“ “ ———
We are returning to the teachings, the strengths, and the values that have guided our people for generations.
————— ” ”

no child is ever missed or left behind.

New Pathways for Child and Family Wellbeing

Connected to this transition is the need to determine the long-term vision for our agency. When the founding Chiefs established Tikinagan in 1984, they saw it as a temporary step on the path to self-governance. They believed that each First Nation should be able to care for their own children.

Today, that vision continues through the work of Niigaanshkaawin, which is helping build new pathways for child and family wellbeing protocols and law development in our communities. This fiscal year, Niigaanshkaawin has worked alongside Elders, Youth, and community



members to help shape accountability practices and guide our strategic planning for the future.

The Safety & Wellbeing of Our Children

As our communities take the next steps forward, we remain focused on our children's safety, our families' healing, and ensuring that every voice is heard. Through Tebenchikaywin Keenkwan Aboowin ("Families respectfully listening to each other, meeting together"), we bring together everyone who is part of a child's life - to build the best outcomes for our greatest gift from the Creator: our children.

In 2024-25, we have been able to keep more children at home and maintain their connection to their family, culture, and community. Throughout this report, you'll find highlights of our services that demonstrate how our service model Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin is making a difference.

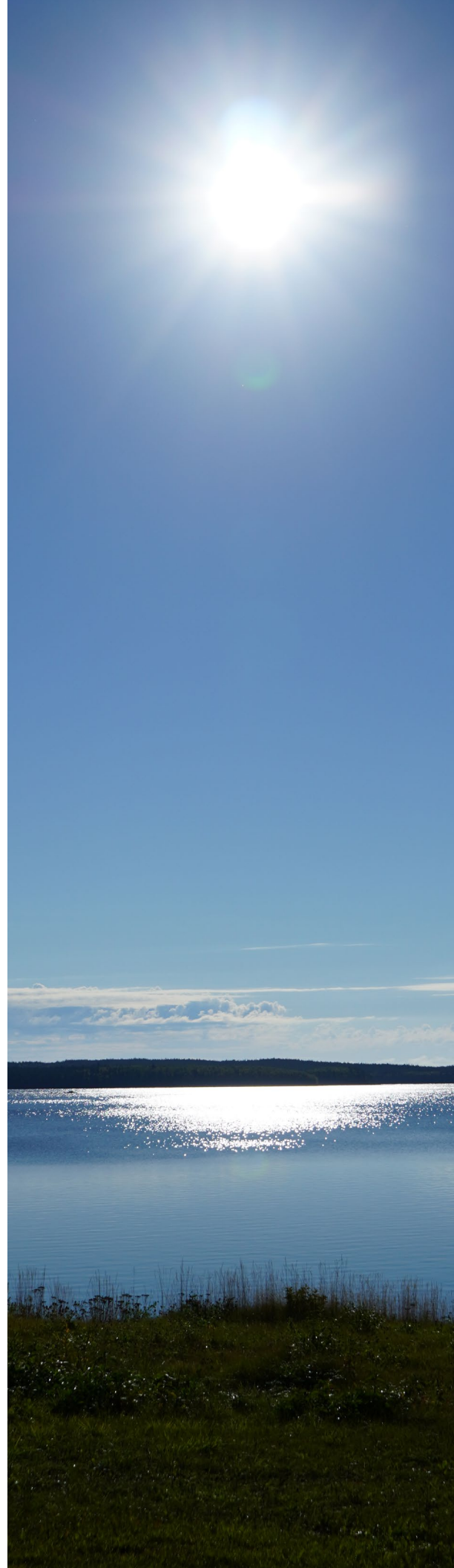
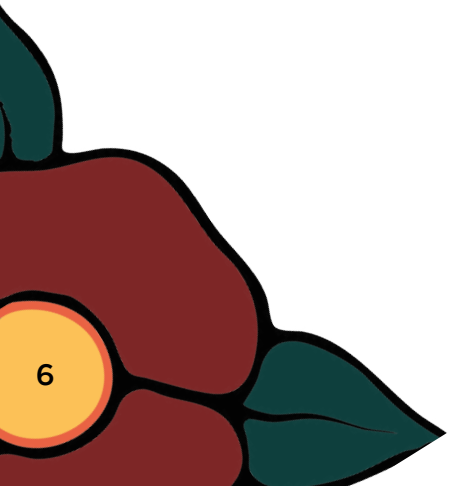
Mamow Obiki-ahwahsoowin was created by our people and reflects the belief that "Tikinagan is your agency." Tikinagan was established by your Chiefs to support your children, your families, and your communities.

Your agency is governed by First Nations, guided by your Elders and Youth, managed by your people, based in your communities, and rooted in your traditional ways of raising children. Your Chiefs believed - and continue to believe - that the answers lie within the community.

Guided by Tikinagan's First Nations mandate, we remain committed to working together with our First Nations. We will continue to honour the vision that has led us for 40 years and will keep supporting the children and families who count on us.

Miigwetch for walking with us, for working together, and for helping to build safe, supported, and hopeful futures for our communities.

Thelma Morris
Executive Director





Niigaanshkaawin

σβσ^υβΔ^ι BREAKING TRAIL

Niigaanshkaawin - Breaking Trail is an initiative designed to follow the direction of all our First Nations we work with in supporting and assisting First Nation affiliates of Tikinagan Child and Family Services in the development of Band representation programs, implementation of child welfare laws, and reimagining the role Tikinagan will have in supporting this initiative. We continue to do this by following the direction of all First Nations we work with.

Ontario Final Agreement

In February of this year, Nishnawbe Aski Nation, Chiefs of Ontario and Indigenous Services Canada announced the Ontario Final Agreement (OFA). This agreement awaits final approval at the Tribunal. We have spent time listening and learning with our First Nations on the draft Final Settlement Agreement (FSA) and Ontario Final Agreement on child welfare reform. We welcome our Chiefs' decision in securing this agreement and appreciate the collaboration that will start to bring transformational change towards ending discrimination against First Nations children and families.

First Nation Representative

Under the CHRT Orders, First Nations were able to access First Nation Representative Funding (Band Representative). Our communities began the process of recruiting First Nation Representatives.

Throughout our engagements with First Nations, we have heard that for them to set out on their path, they need

the tools for the journey. As a result, we began to create a Kikinoniwewi Masinahikan Guidebook. This will be available to First Nations who may require additional assistance or support during the development of their programs and services. But we don't just put tools in their hands, we visit communities and share these supports in one-on-one development sessions.

Some of our communities are ready to navigate this new path with trained and skilled staff, service delivery, and community-led processes and protocols in place to support their children and families. However, most of our First Nations have not had the time or resources to fully plan and prepare before taking on these new responsibilities. Our communities are doing their best to meet needs of children and families, but it will take time, support, and continued effort.

Child, Youth and Family Law

Many First Nations are actively engaged in their journey toward self-determination and the reclamation of jurisdiction over child and family services. These Nations are at various stages of this important process, with some advancing through collaborative models, such as tribal councils and other First Nation Partnerships. We are very pleased to hear more First Nations who are in the process of creating or who are on their first steps in revitalizing their child, youth and family laws.

Accountability

The Chiefs in Assembly further

directed that Tikinagan develop a working group to create a strategic planning process and evaluation framework. With oversight from Niigaanshkaawin Chiefs, we have established a working group who consist of community experts in child welfare, they are community based, language speakers and leaders. The group, who have been providing direction, feedback, and engagement to Tikinagan, will help reimagine Tikinagan's future and help us provide the best service and outcomes to children, youth and families.

Original Vision of our Chiefs

Today, the child welfare landscape is changing rapidly. While these changes are important, we continue to honor the original vision of our founding Chiefs. Tikinagan was founded on two basic principles, as handed down by the chiefs. First, "that no more children be lost from our communities." Second, "that a child and family service agency be created that would work with the people for the people, while respecting culture, heritage, and the concepts of the extended family."

Moving forward

We're committed to listening openly and establishing meaningful partnerships with leadership and the community. Direct communication and culturally grounded practices remain the foundation of the Niigaanshkaawin approach. We will continue to support First Nations to reach their goals of exercising authority and jurisdiction over their children no matter where they reside.



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Statement of Child Welfare Fund

Operations 25/24

Operating Revenue

	24/25	23/24
Child Welfare	\$ 77,851,300	\$ 73,971,700
Other	\$ 57,541,780	\$ 40,829,795
Total	\$ 135,393,080	\$ 114,801,495

Operating Expenses

	24/25	23/24
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 59,146,923	\$ 51,968,227
Boarding & Client Services	\$ 59,057,706	\$ 40,710,550
Administration	\$ 29,356,917	\$ 24,394,234
Total	\$ 147,561,546	\$ 117,073,011

Fund Balance, Beginning of the year	\$ (1,020,488)	\$ (2,271,516)
Settlement of prior year deficits	\$ 751,297	\$ 2,067,638
(Deficit) or Surplus for the year	\$ (12,168,466)	\$ (816,610)
Fund Balance, End of the year	\$ (12,437,657)	\$ (1,020,488)

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Tikinagan Child and Family Services would like to recognize employees who have reached their 10th, 15th, 20th and 25th anniversary of employment with the agency in the 2024-2025 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.

10 Years

Evangeline Kanakakeesic
Roxanne Papassay
Robert Thomas
Laila Aho
Caroline Ignace Spade
Norah Beardy
Stella Brown
Desiree Hollingsworth
Moses McKay
Laura Haney
Delilah Keewaykapow
Janine Smale
Kathryn Morris
Justin Suggashie

15 Years

Ruth Beardy
Kayla Beck
Lee-Anne Besselt
Armand Binguis
Heather Gillespie

Beatrice Kakepetum
Amanda Trenchard
Aaron Kakegumick
Christina Zatorsky
Floyd Chisel
Michelle Lobreau
Angela Williams
Amy Hardy
Jesilyn Daniels
Steven Somers

20 Years

Annie Anishinabie
Teresa Angecone
Roy Beardy
Rachel Tinney
Ellen Meekis
Robert Meawasige
Toni Vincent
Emily Van Voris
Wendy Baumbach
Dawn Gardhouse

Nora Chisel
Marion Kenny
Edna Quequish

25 Years

Anne Morgan
Randy Fukushima
Christine Stever
William J. Davis
Frances Grieg
Harry Suganaqueb
Deanna Mitchell

35 Years

Marie Hudson

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CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

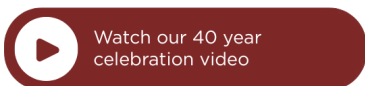
October 2024 marked 40 years of Tikinagan Child & Family Services. Founded by the Chiefs of Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN), Tikinagan has grown from a dream of supporting and strengthening our children, families, and communities into a leading figure in Indigenous-controlled agencies in Canada.

Tikinagan was incorporated on October 11, 1984, after the Chiefs of NAN and the Government of Ontario signed a Memorandum of Agreement outlining their mutual intent to move toward full Indigenous control over child welfare services. The agreement provided for the takeover of Child and Family Services by the Indigenous people of NAN and established a framework for the creation of Tikinagan.

In June 1985, the agency’s parameters were established, and some preventive service delivery was initiated. In April 1986, Tikinagan was given approved agency status and on April 1, 1987, Tikinagan received designation as a Children’s Aid Society with responsibility for all child and family services within its geographical territory.

Tikinagan has continued to grow and provide services to families living in remote First Nations and urban areas. In January 2020, Tikinagan was designated by the Ministry to provide child protection services to the families from our communities who reside in the district of Thunder Bay. On April 1, 2023, Tikinagan celebrated with Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug, the first among the 30 First Nations served by Tikinagan and the second in Ontario to create their own family law under Bill C-92, An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis Children, Youth and Families.

In celebration of the 40th year milestone, we’ve created a “40th” logo based on the original design by Paddy Peters of Pikangikum First Nation. The logo has been shared since October 11, 2024, to commemorate the 40th year of working together to support children, youth and families.



UPDATES, STORIES, CAREERS, AND MORE TIKINAGAN.ORG



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