



Office of the Auditor General of Ontario
Bureau de la vérificatrice générale de l'Ontario

Value-for-money audit of:

Child Protection Services—Children's Aid Societies

2015 Annual Report, Section 3.02

Background

- 47 non-profit Children's Aid Societies across Ontario serve children and youth who have been, or are at risk of being, abused or neglected
- Societies received \$1.47 billion from Ministry in 2014/15
- Societies completed almost 82,000 child protection investigations in 2014/15, and provided services to about 27,000 families and over 15,500 children in their care



Audit Objective

Assess whether:

- Societies have effective policies and procedures to ensure that children in need of protection receive appropriate services in accordance with legislation, policy and program requirements; and
- funding to Societies is commensurate with the value of the services provided.



Overall Conclusions

- The 47 Societies provide differing services and supports across the province
- Societies' adherence to protection standards needs improvement
- Amalgamation of some Societies serving neighboring areas could help achieve economies of scale



Specific Findings

- Files we reviewed suggest Societies may be closing protection cases too soon
- Child-protection investigations we reviewed took more than seven months on average to complete instead of the required 30 days
- Average caseloads per caseworkers ranged from low of eight to high of 32 for family-protection cases
- Societies did not always conduct child-protection-history checks on individuals involved with children



Recommendations

Societies should:

- ensure risk factors are appropriately addressed before they close cases;
- conduct child-protection investigations within required deadlines;
- conduct home visits within required timeframes in cases involving children still in the care of their family; and
- conduct child-protection-history checks on all individuals involved with children upon receiving a report of a child-protection concern.



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