



Children First Fund

*Family & Children's Services
of Guelph and Wellington County*

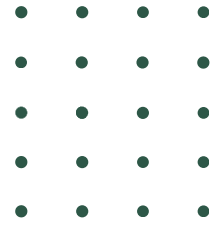


Impact Report 2025-2026

Building Opportunities, Meeting Urgent Needs, Enriching Lives

519 824 2410 | www.fcsgw.org | @fcsgw

MESSAGE FROM OUR MANAGER



Dear Friends,

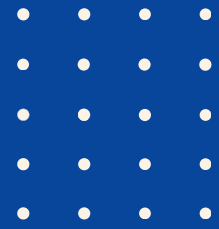
2025 has been a year of remarkable growth and impact. Together, we reached more families, launched new programs, and built stronger communities. Your trust and generosity fuel our mission every day. Thank you for standing with us.



— Patricia Brady,
Fund Development
& Communications
Manager



OUR MISSION & VALUES

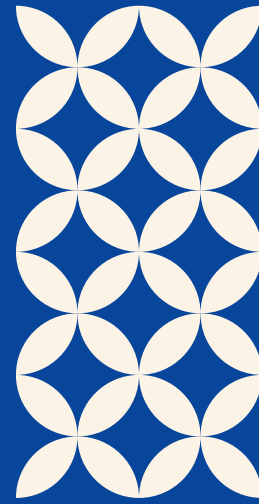


Mission: With children, youth, families, and communities, we work inclusively and equitably toward safety, well-being, connection, and reconciliation.

Values: Voices of Children and Youth: Outcomes, Accountability & Transparency, Innovation & Leadership, Collaboration & Partnerships, Equity & Inclusivity

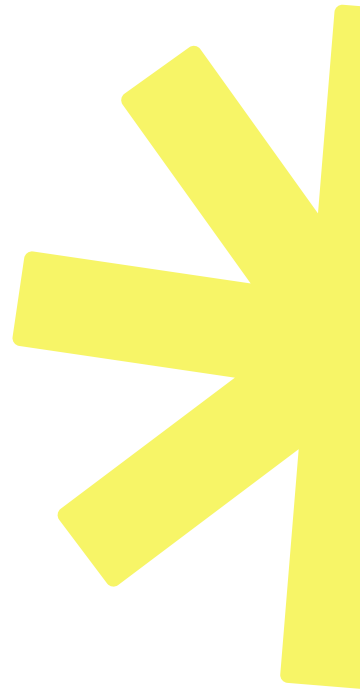
Vision: Children and youth are safe, supported, and thriving.





YEAR AT A GLANCE

In 2025, the Children First Fund proudly supported over **300** children, youth, and their families involved with Family and Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County (FCSGW). The fund provided essential items, enrichment experiences, and opportunities for youth success.





KEY PILLARS OVERVIEW

- **Building Opportunities for Youth Success:** Focuses on boosting educational achievement, life skills, and self-advocacy among youth.
- **Meeting Urgent Needs:** Enhances access to essential items like new car seats and household necessities.
- **Enriching Lives:** Aims to foster positive family relationships and strengthen individuals' sense of identity and belonging.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

- **Total Revenue:** \$288, 267
- **Toal Expenses:** \$152,732



RESULTS & METRICS

- 📅 Events Sponsored: 7 (↑ 3 from 2025)
- 🌟 Level Up Youth Programs Funded: 13 (↑ 4 from 2025)
- 🎓 Educational Bursaries Awarded: 35 (↑ 11 from 2025)
- 🤝 New Clients Served: 62 (↑ 8 from 2025)
- 📦 Gifts in Kind Handed Out: Over \$10,000 (unchanged)



EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Thanks to the generosity of the **City of Guelph, United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin, Skyline Group of Companies, Guelph Community Foundation, and Westwood and Starwood Dental**, the Children First Fund successfully supported seven impactful events for children, youth, and families. These events included Children and Youth in Care Day, Pride, Black History Month, Anti-Human Trafficking Youth Symposium, Guelph Wellington Indigenous Feast, Youth Holiday Party, and a Foster Care event.



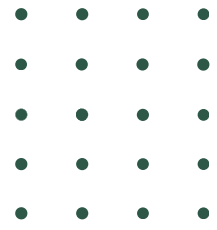


DONOR SPOTLIGHT

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to **Ross and Donna Irvine** for their generous contribution through the development of a new \$25,000 educational fund dedicated to children and youth in kinship and alternate care.



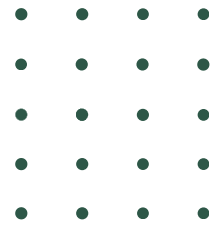
IMPACT STORIES



“Receiving the bursary from the Irvine family has made a huge positive difference in my life, both academically and mentally. Finding money for tuition, groceries, rent, and other expenses is mentally taxing, and this bursary goes a long way in lifting a bit of weight off my shoulders. Instead of worrying about how I’m going to afford groceries next month, I can focus on my academics and extracurricular activities, and I’m incredibly grateful for that. It truly is one of those acts of kindness that stays with you for a long time and is never forgotten. It not only helped me get by, but it also gave me hope for my future.” —**Bursary Recipient, The Ross and Donna Irvine Education Fund**



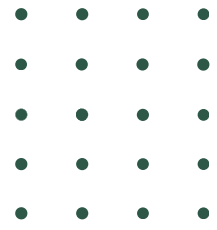
IMPACT STORIES



"I am incredibly grateful to the Children First Fund for providing us with a new car seat. As a single dad who has faced the difficult loss of my wife, every day presents new challenges. The expense of a quality car seat is significant, and without this generous support, it would have been a struggle to afford one on my limited income. This gift not only ensures my baby's safety on the way to crucial doctor appointments, but it also allows me to redirect our funds to other essential bills. This kindness lightens our load and gives us hope for a brighter future." - **Client, Children First Fund**



IMPACT STORIES



"In August 2025, we were able to give a family the opportunity to enjoy a day at Bingeman's wave pool. This experience was a first for them—a chance to come together as a family, free from worries, and simply have fun. Everyone put aside their differences, creating a joyful and memorable day for the children. It was a moment that brought everyone together, including the children's parents, both grandmothers, and the aunt with her children. For a family that has faced numerous challenges, this day was a cherished reminder of love and connection. We are grateful to our donors for making such a meaningful experience possible." - **Jeff Stillman, Family Service Worker**





ADVANCING EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES FOR YOUTH IN CARE

General Population Trends:

- Nearly 70% of young people in Ontario pursue post-secondary education.
- 54% of Canadians aged 25-64 have completed post-secondary education.

Youth in Care Statistics:

- Graduation rates for foster children and youth are significantly lower than the general population in both Canada and the US.
- 86% of youth in care express a desire to succeed academically.
- Only 48% of youth in care graduate high school by age 18.
- A mere 21% of 18-20-year-olds in this group engage in post-secondary education.

(Ferguson, 2019; OACAS – Gateway to Success, 2008; Courtney, Piliavin, Grogan-Kaylor, & Nesmith, 2001)



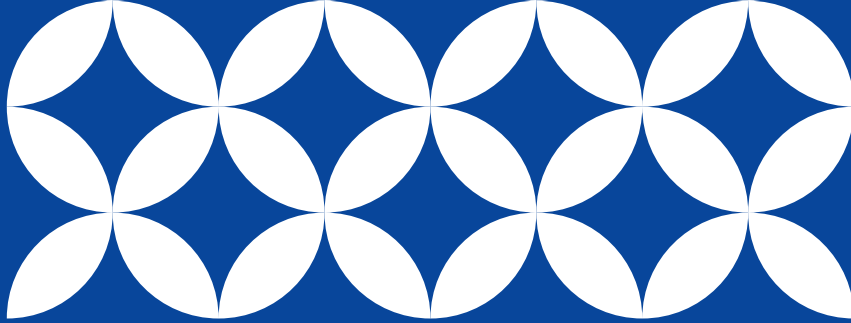


LOOKING AHEAD

In 2026, we aim to:

- Introduce a bursary recognition program.
- Launch a comprehensive digital campaign utilizing social media, email marketing, and search engine optimization to boost engagement and visibility.
- Expand enrichment opportunities by 25% to enhance family relationships and foster identity, culture, and belonging.
- Implement a new tracking system and centralized platform for enhanced transparency, efficiency, and accuracy in fund management and data collection.





Be part of the change.

Your support transforms lives.
Join us in building brighter futures.

*"Together, we can make
meaningful change."*



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