Community Living
DRYDEN - SIOUX LOOKOUT

ANNUAL REPORT
FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026

No Barriers... Just Life

Community Living
DRYDEN - SIOUX LOOKOUT

OUR VISION

No Barriers – *Just Life*

OUR MISSION

ADVOCATE. MENTOR. COLLABORATE.

IN MEMORY OF

During the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year
We lost some people dear to us.

This Annual Report is presented in Memory of:

Alanna S Whiskeyjack

Judy Spence

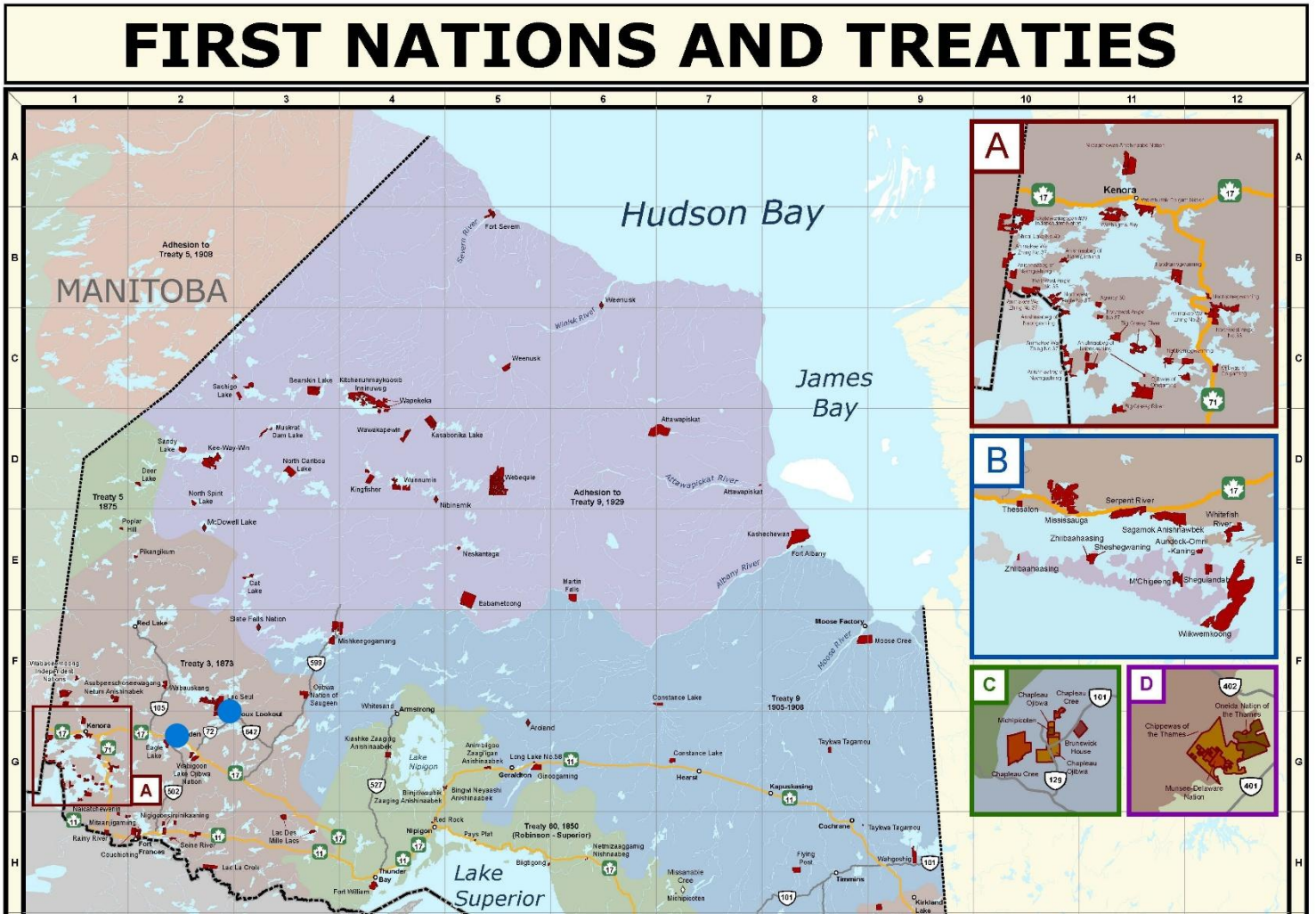
Kenny Hill

Forever in our Hearts

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Community Living Dryden-Sioux Lookout operates in Dryden and Sioux Lookout, Ontario on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe and Métis people of Treaty Three and Treaty 3 Adhesion. These lands are important to the people of Migisi Sahgaigan (Eagle Lake First Nation), Waabigonii Zaaga'igan (Wabigoon First Nation) and Obishikokaang (Lac Seul First Nation).

We respect the Treaties that were made on these territories; we acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past on these lands, and we dedicate ourselves to move forward in partnership with Indigenous communities and people in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.



STRATEGIC PLAN 2024 - 2027



STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2027

MOTIVATION

VISION

No Barriers -Just Life-

MISSION

Advocate Mentor Collaborate

PRIORITIES

People Supported

Empowering People Supported through greater choice, decision-making and housing opportunities

Staff

Build a resilient, skilled and diverse workforce

Sustainability

Ensure long-term organizational stability

VALUES: People focused · Accepting · Accountable · Valued · Supportive

Community Living
DRYDEN - SIOUX LOOKOUT

Vision
No Barriers – Just Life

Mission
Advocate – Mentor_
Collaborate

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2024-2027

1. People Supported:

   EMPOWERING PEOPLE SUPPORTED THROUGH GREATER CHOICE, DECISION-MAKING AND HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES
   - **Develop Innovative housing options and partnerships for affordable living**
   - **Host Community Conferences to promote Inclusion and educate partners, community, and people supported**
   - **Enhance the training provided to people supported and families**

2. Staff:

   BUILD A RESILIENT, SKILLED AND DIVERSE WORKFORCE
   - **Enhance recruitment, onboarding and training processes**
   - **Strengthening internal and external communications and feedback processes**
   - **Develop succession plans that nurture future leaders**
   - **Foster a positive Agency Culture**

3. Sustainability:

   ENSURE LONG TERM ORGANIZATIONAL STABILITY
   - **Building on partnerships within the DS Sector and beyond**
   - **Expanding Fee-for-service Options**
   - **Build on collaborations and relationships with the local Indigenous Communities**
   - **Modernize Business Models and strengthen data-informed decision-making**
   - **Education for all Stakeholders on Journey to Belonging**

VALUES: ⊕People focused ⊕Accepting ⊕Accountable ⊕Valued ⊕Supportive

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board of Director's as of March 31, 2026

Laurie McCarthy

Humberto Pacheco

Daisy Hoppe

Are you Ready to make a difference?

Become a board member

and help your community.

Our Board of Directors is responsible for advancing the agency's vision, mission, and values through strategic direction and sound governance. The Chief Executive Director is accountable to the Board for promoting and delivering on these directives, while the Operational Team, under the leadership of the Chief Operating Officer, manages the annual operational plan. We are mutually accountable and work collaboratively to further the agency's purpose. Board members play a vital governance role by setting policy and strategic direction to support and guide the work of the organization.

Our board member roles offer:

- A rewarding and challenging opportunity
- Advocacy locally and provincially
- Opportunity for professional development
- Opportunities to sponsor events in the community

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Reflections on Leadership and Service

Leadership exists at every level of our agency. It is not about control, but about guidance, accountability, service, and working together. The people we support guide us through their lived experience. Our administration teams provide strong stewardship and support. Our board provides governance and oversight. Our staff mentor and support others every day. Our management team leads by example and helps others grow and succeed.

Refections on Vision, Mission and Values

Vision
No Barriers – Just Life
Thank you for your ongoing support, commitment, and belief in our vision of a community where everyone belongs, where barriers are removed for full inclusion and people just live their lives in the community.

Mission: Advocate, Mentor, Collaborate

Values

We refreshed our values this year. Michael Schiel from Invictus worked with our teams agency wide to clarify our values and the type of workplace that we want to be.
An analysis was made on our listed values, perceived organizational values, personal values and the resulting **5 Desired Future state values.**

1. People focused
2. Accepting
3. Accountable
4. Valued
5. Supportive

Values work will continue with a project team to go through each value and come up with Common Meaning, Behaviour, Role Modeling, Support and Sanction.

Reflections on Service Delivery Principles

After separating our Values from our Service Principles, we are working on clarifying and refining these service principles into plain language. This is still in progress.

1. **Person-Centred and Person-Directed:**
   When we say Community Living Dryden Sioux Lookout aspires to be a **Person Centred Organization** we mean:
   - We are both a **Person Centred,** and a **Person Directed** Organization.
   - People we support are at the heart of what we do.
   - Being **Person Centred** means the people we support, and their welfare is at the centre of

all decisions.

- Being **Person Directed** means people are in the driver's seat of their own lives and choose goals for themselves and make choices about their own lives.
- We believe everyone has gifts and strengths and their contributions matter.
- Being a Person Centred Organization brings together our business side and our service side under one framework.

2. **Supported Decision Making:**
   - Supported decision-making is just another way of describing how everyone makes choices and decisions in their lives.
   - We believe that everyone has the right to make choices, and we always assume that a person can make their own decisions.
   - Supported decision-making is a way that people with disabilities can make their own decisions and stay in charge of their lives, while getting the help they need to do so.
   - When there are legal guardians or decision makers established, we work together to still promote people's will and preference.

3. **Community First:**
   A community first approach means we do not replicate what the community already provides so that people have authentic inclusion while living in a community with access to the same services as all community members.

4. **Just The Right Support Model:**
   The Just Right Support model means providing only the level of support a person needs to be safe and successful—no more and no less—so they can build independence, confidence, and control over their own life.
   Just Enough support uses a support sequence to plan services that include:
   - The person's own skills and abilities
   - Technology
   - Equipment and adaptations
   - Natural supports such as family, friends and neighbours
   - Community engagement
   - Community services
   - Staff support

5. **People Live Normal Lives - Normalization:**
   Normalization means supporting people to live lives that are as typical as possible having the same kinds of homes, routines, relationships, and opportunities as anyone else in the community.

6. **Valued Social Roles:**
   Having valued social roles means helping people have valued roles in society—like worker, neighbour, or friend—so they are respected, included, and seen for their strengths.

7. **Quality:**
   - Through accreditation with CARF International we have a process of continuous improvement through goal setting and monitoring both internally and externally.

- Accreditation is a comprehensive review to determine if a provider's services meet international standards of quality. Achieving accreditation means the provider is committed to delivering safe and effective services and ongoing performance improvement.
- A Rights Review Committee acts as a resource to safeguard and support the human, civil, and legal rights as well as the personal freedoms of all recipients receiving services.

8. **Trauma informed care:**
   Trauma-informed care is an approach that recognizes how past trauma can affect a person's behavior, health, and relationships, and ensures that services are delivered in a way that promotes safety, choice, trust, and empowerment while avoiding re-traumatization.

9. **Harm Reduction:**
   Harm reduction is an approach that aims to reduce the negative effects of risky behaviors without requiring the behavior to stop, by meeting people where they are with practical, non-judgmental support.

10. **Sustainability:**
    Sustainable services are services designed to keep working well over time—using resources wisely, adapting to change, and continuing to meet people's needs now and in the future.
    - People we support are at the heart of our services
    - As a non-profit we provide services through a good business model
    - Customer service principles are used to provide support that people choose and value.

In our quest to be a learning organization and to continuously improve, we took time to listen, co-create and contemplate the present and future challenges.

Our agency did quite a bit of political engagement and participation in local, regional and Provincial initiatives to network, contribute, collaborate, influence and learn together as we find innovative solutions and maintain accountability to our partners inside and outside the agency.

CLDSL will be in another Strategic Planning Cycle soon that will be crucial to keep moving forward in a thoughtful and strategic way in our present and future context..

Thank you to everyone for your continued leadership and commitment.

Sherry Baum,
Chief Executive Officer

PERSON CENTRED ORGANIZATION

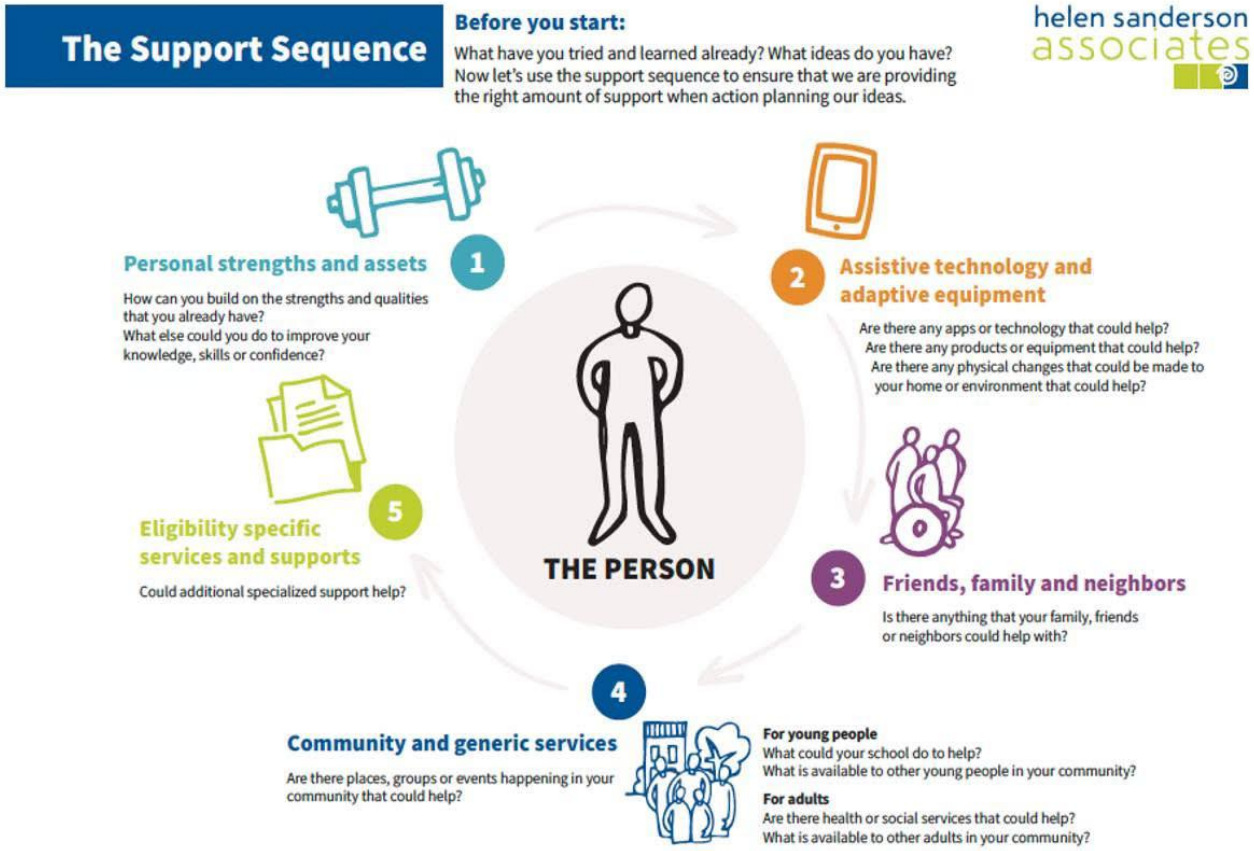
For several years, we have used tools and training from Helen Sanderson Associates to guide us on this journey.



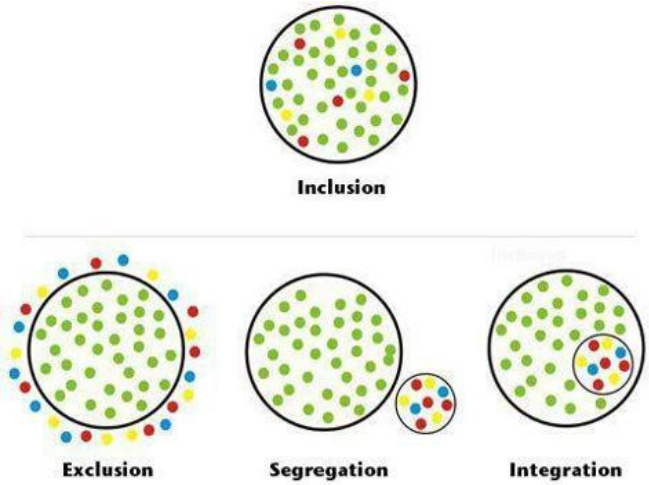
PERSON CENTRED AND PERSON DIRECTED (2 OF 2)

SUPPORT SEQUENCE

When we talk about people being at the centre of directing their own support it means we use a **support sequence** that starts with them and their own aspirations and goals and then map out the Support Sequence starting with their own personal strengths, assets and gifts.



AUTHENTIC INCLUSION



WHAT WE DO - SERVICES (1of 2)

BRIDGE TO COMMUNITY FEE FOR SERVICE

Staff support people seven days a week and evenings to take part in activities in the community. This is individualized person-directed support based on what each person wants. This includes helping people manage their Passport Individualized dollars.

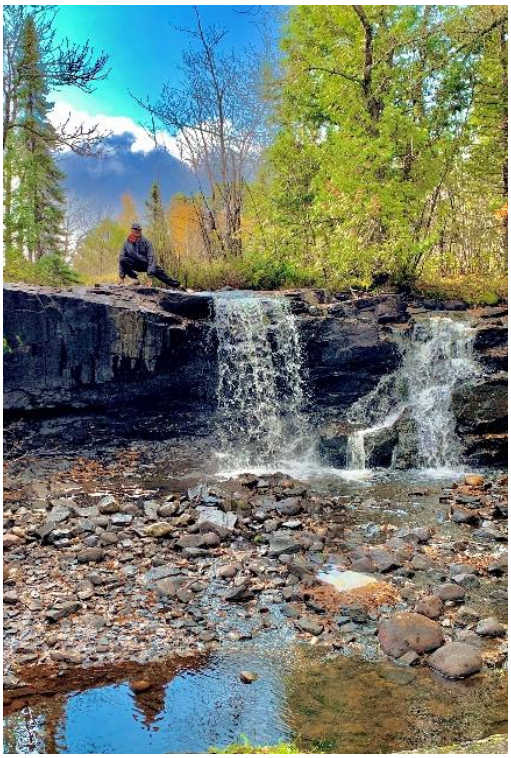
COMMUNITY PARTIPATION SUPPORTS

Full participation in the community is an important part of full inclusion. Our services have moved away from services in our buildings to full participation in the community embedded in services. We no longer operate day programs, but we use MCCSS funded support in an individualized way that is tailored for each person and what they want to do.



COMMUNITY ACCOMODATIONS

Community Accommodations provides 24-hour supports to people in homes located throughout our communities. We put an emphasis on maximizing daily living skills and choice to achieve the highest possible level of independence and community involvement. We have sought to incrementally reduce the number of people living together in one location to be able to



SUPPORTED INDEPENDENT LIVING

Supported Independent Living empowers people to live in their own homes independently. The degree and type of support required are determined by the people themselves, together with their families, various service professionals and the person's support team through the Person Centred Approaches planning process.

Within that program we also have a *Supportive Neighbour* model that matches people with non-staff support while they still maintain their staff team. In addition, in the *Pathways to Independence Program,* it recognizes a population of independent young adults that require a harm reduction model that respects their choices but also puts a circle of community support around them for harm reduction and mentoring.

WHAT WE DO - SERVICES (2 of 2)

LIFESHARE

Host Families offer alternative residential options for adults that provide the person with an opportunity to become an integral member of a family and at the same time live in a community setting.

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

Working can be an important part of wellbeing, belonging and participating in community life. Employment Services provide people with the opportunity to learn the skills needed to gain competitive employment through education and training; job development and coaching; facilitating the transition to employment and supporting businesses that employ people.

MMW VIDEO CONFERENCING

WHERE & WHEN PEOPLE NEED THEM

Mashkikiiwininiwag Mazinaatesijigan Wichiiwewin (MMW) Clinical Videoconferencing Program provides clinical services for adults (18 +) living with or suspected of having a developmental disability. This program is available for communities across Northwestern Ontario. In partnership with local agencies, we work with individuals, families, caregivers and professionals to provide easy access to clinical services in their communities. CLDSL houses two of the Clinical Regional Access Coordinators with VC studio space available.

SAFER STEPS MY WAY – SURREY PLACE

Safer Steps My Way is a non-judgmental, harm reduction outreach program for adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities who use drugs or alcohol and may also be involved with the justice system. The program offers flexible, mobile, community-based support.

Support is provided by a multidisciplinary team that Services are developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive, shaped by the voices of individuals with lived experience. Participants are supported in working toward goals such as:

- Making safer choices related to substance use
- Building trust through non-judgmental harm reduction
- Accessing healthcare and community support
- Strengthening informed decision-making and independence
- Navigating health, social, and justice systems

CLDSL assists with Intensive Case Management.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

We use principles of Person-Centered Approaches, Personal Outcome Measures and have a Declaration of Rights and a Rights Review Committee.

We have also been awarded a 3-year Certification through CARF International as part of the continuous improvement of our services. CARF **Accreditation** and MCCSS **Compliance** hold us accountable to person centred outcomes.

Person Centred Approaches is a set of values, skills and tools we use to get to know someone and discover what they find important and what they want out of life. It ensures that we focus on what matters to the people we support and their family, and that we pay attention to staff as well. By working in this way, we can make sure that people are truly listened to and are kept at the heart of all decision-making and how our service is offered. **Being Person-Directed means people are in the driver's set of their own lives.**

CORPORATE SERVICES

The backbone of our continued service delivery is our Corporate Services team, which includes finance, payroll and scheduling, human resources, administration, asset management, facility maintenance, IT, communications and business to business services.

SERVICES BY THE NUMBERS



- 31 Community accomodations
- 62 Supported Independant Living
- 50 Community Participation
- 4 Lifeshare
- 20 Employmnet Supports
- 47 MMW Video Conferencing

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Community Living DRYDEN - SIOUX LOOKOUT

2025 Strategic Directions Operations Scorecard

As at: December 31, 2025 - Final
Prepared by: Barb Kirouac, COO

	GOAL	KEY OBJECTIVES	INITIATIVES	TARGETS Y1 Q1	Y1 Q2	Y1 Q3	Y1 Q4	2026	2025 Final Report
PEOPLE SUPPORTED	Empower People Supported through greater choice, decision-making, and housing opportunities	1. Develop innovative housing options and partnerships for affordable, inclusive living	1. Create opportunities for Housing	50%	60%	60%	60%	TBC	•Rezoning and City of Dryden Awareness - Feb 2026 •Tiny home / Accessible housing Grant Opportunities
			2. PTI Program Development	50%	75%	80%	100%	TBC	Creative staffing solutions for people who live Independently, are highly complex, using a Harm Reduction Model
		2. Host community conferences to promote inclusion and educate partners, community, people supported and families.	3. Help facilitate the creation of an Advocacy Group	10%	80%	100%	100%	TBC	Advocacy group of People Supported, meets monthly, led by frontline staff.
			4. Help facilitate the creation of a Family Network	10%	20%	30%	30%	TBC	Communications to families were completed in multiple ways. This is a Family led committee, not CLDSL. CLDSL will continue to reach out to families with hopes in helping get one started.
			5. Assessment of People Supported Training SWOT **	0%	50%	75%	100%	TBC	•Program Managers and staff have completed an assessment of Gaps in training needs for People Supported
			6. HSA - Person Centred Planning, Just Enough Supports, Community Connecting	50%	50%	75%	75%	TBC	Roll-out of 15 minute toolkits at staff meetings. LT Employee Retirement Succession Planning
		3. Enhance the training provided to people supported	7. Host Community Information Conference - May 6	85%	100%+	100%	100%	TBC	•Goal was 1 conference (May 6) so successful a second one also took place •November 19 - 2nd Conference - Navigating New Horizons
			8. Host Year 2 of The Shift Gathering - October	65%	70%	80%	100%	TBC	Compassion in Action took place Oct 8-9, 2025, great reviews and reaffirming the importance of approaching care with empathy and humility.
STAFF DEVELOPMENT	Build a resilient, skilled and diverse workforce	1. Enhance recruitment, onboarding, and training processes.	1. Assessment of Hiring and Onboarding Processes of New Hires	72%	75%	75%	100%	TBC	•HR has been working with ADP on the development of these areas, along with reporting mechanisms for evaluation •Continued work beyond original scope
			2. Assessment of Frontline Training Gaps	25%	40%	50%	75%	TBC	•Continued assessment and gathering. However a significant amount of training for frontline staff took place in 2025 above required. Continued work on formalization.
		2. Strengthen internal and external communications and feedback processes.	3. Enhance Digital Literacy Capacity	75%	75%	75%	75%	TBC	•Digital Literacy with SharePoint focus- training video has been completed and sent. Managers are training at all staff meetings •Continued work beyond original scope as we advance our Digital Platforms
		3. Develop succession plans that nurture future leaders.	4. Succession / Development of Non-Union Roles	25%	30%	40%	50%	TBC	• Multi year -Succession Planning project / Identified gaps / Training Needs and Manual and Process Creation
			5. Enhance DEI Initiatives	35%	50%	75%	75%	TBC	Workplan for 2025 was completed by the team, very successful annual Feast.
		4. Foster a positive agency culture	6. Agency Culture Mapping and Plan - Invictus	25%	50%	55%	60%	TBC	Plan has been developed for 2025 to work on Agency Values/Culture/Accountability. This is a multi-year commitment with progress continuing monthly.
SUSTAINABILITY	Ensure long-term organizational stability	1. Building on partnerships within DS sector and beyond.	1. Education for all stakeholders on J2B	100%	100%	100%	100%	TBC	All Stakeholders have had multiple avenues for updates. Updates will continue as information comes forward and awareness is always key to all messaging
			2. Enhance collaborations and relationships with Indigenous Partners	15%	25%	30%	50%	TBC	•Multi-year plan - consultant hired to guide, leadership training continues. Workplan as expected
		2. Expand fee-for-service options.	3. Who we are and Who we are not Strategy	5%	25%	25%	25%	TBC	Assessments are ongoing of people improperly placed.
		3. Build on collaborations and relationships with the local Indigenous Communities.	4. Internal Communication Plan	85%	85%	85%	85%	TBC	•Communications Plan and Mapping for training with timing for 2025 has been completed. Some additional areas of communications will be added once known timelines. Additional assessments added outside of original scope.
			5. External Communication Plan (includes Crisis Readiness)	5%	5%	10%	10%	TBC	Work on External Communications continues.
		4. Modernize Business Models and strengthen data-informed decision-making	6. Branding and Marketing Strategy	10%	60%	60%	60%	TBC	Large Plan - multiple layers - Work continues and increased awareness has been present in our social media presence, which is one area of the full assessment.
		5. Education for all stakeholders on Journey to Belonging	7. Digital Strategy	40%	50%	75%	85%	TBC	Large Plan - multiple year - will submit larger multi-year plan Q2 - so much going on. ADP Updates, Microsoft overhaul, SAP Concur, AIMS/TIMMS, Azure etc. - able to complete approximately 80% of the goal for 2025 workplan, given how large and multifaceted of a project. Assessment with partners took a bit longer than expected but outcome was greater.
			8. Advocacy at Local MPP Level and beyond	5%	5%	50%	65%	TBC	#Waitingtobelong awareness campaign - social media presence, MPP visit

Conclusion

CLDSL's 2024-2027 Strategic Plan emphasizes preparing for sector changes, empowering individuals through innovative supports, strengthening workforce capacity, and building sustainability to ensure ongoing success and impact. This forward-thinking approach aligns with the CLDSL's values of inclusion, advocacy, and collaboration, while meeting the needs of people supported, their families and staff.

Vision: No Barriers - Just Life

Mission: Advocate. Mentor. Collaborate.

Core Values: People. Community. Quality.

Note:
2025 Operational Initiatives were developed in September 2024 based on the Strategic Plan and the vision of CLDSL for 2027.

ASPIRE to Excellence® carf CANADA ACCREDITED

Please Note: Since September 2024, additional initiatives and projects have been added that all attribute to the work of the strategic plan and directives. Partnerships and collaborations continue to develop and flourish. The initiatives listed here are the ones the team agreed to quantify and qualify towards the operational objectives. This plan is only a portion of the great work and projects happening at CLDSL. The internal workplans in each department continue to grow as CLDSL grows and becomes more sophisticated at all levels.

A Year in Review – FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Financial Overview *For the fiscal year ended March 31, 2026*

As part of our commitment to being open, transparent, and accountable to our community, the following information summarizes our financial position and results for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2026 (2025-26), compared to the prior fiscal year (2024-25).

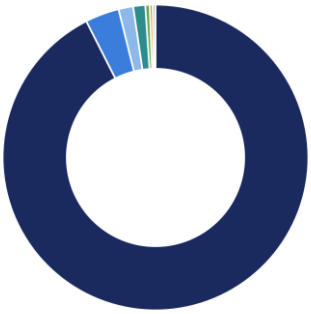
	2025-26 ($)	2024-25 ($)
FINANCIAL POSITION		
Total Assets	9,431,356	9,531,049
Total Liabilities	3,720,426	3,960,431
REVENUE		
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services	17,013,148	15,001,661
Family Services Toronto	659,709	582,189
Rental revenue	284,499	296,235
Surrey Place Centre	234,506	213,596
Management fee	83,717	64,407
Amortization of deferred contribution and other revenue	58,694	142,205
Donations	53,571	9,030
Total Revenue	**18,387,844**	**16,309,323**
EXPENSES		
Salaries and benefits	12,446,409	11,601,588
Occupancy costs	2,225,027	1,146,803
Other program costs	1,946,880	1,178,257
Travel and communication	991,431	828,560
Amortization	310,701	266,363
Training	239,315	157,817
Supplies	177,483	180,957
Total Expenses	**18,337,246**	**15,360,345**
SUMMARY		
Other items (net)	89,714	(190,261)
Excess of revenue over expenses	**140,312**	**758,717**

"Other items (net)" reflects investment income and other non-operating items.

Audited financial statements are available upon request and are consistent with the summary presented above.

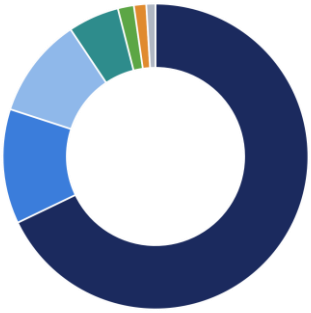
2025-26 Distribution at a Glance

Revenue



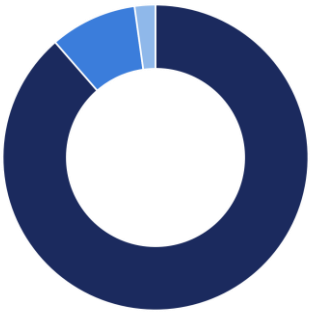
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services	**92.5%**
Family Services Toronto	**3.6%**
Rental revenue	**1.5%**
Surrey Place Centre	**1.3%**
Management fee	**0.5%**
Amortization of deferred contribution and other revenue	**0.3%**
Donations	**0.3%**

Expenses



Salaries and benefits	**67.9%**
Occupancy costs	**12.1%**
Other program costs	**10.6%**
Travel and communication	**5.4%**
Amortization	**1.7%**
Training	**1.3%**
Supplies	**1.0%**

Service Delivery



Supported Living	**88.6%**
Community Supports	**9.2%**
Employment Supports	**2.2%**

A Year of Growth

Total revenue increased by approximately $2.1 million compared to the prior year. Of this increase, $606,894 was funding received specifically to replace a mechanical system at one of our office locations. The remainder of the increase was driven primarily by funding to support youth transitioning from child-based services into adult-funded programs, reflecting real growth in the number of people relying on our services.

It is important to note that our base operating budget did not receive an increase this year. Without adjustments to base funding, the organization continues to face financial pressure resulting from years of underfunding relative to the rising cost of delivering services. We remain committed to managing these pressures responsibly while advocating, alongside our sector partners, for funding that reflects the true cost of care.

Financial Health Snapshot

Current Ratio	Net Assets	Central Admin Self-Funding
2.53	**$5,710,930**	**12.04%**
2024-25: 2.41	*2024-25: $5,570,618*	*2024-25: 11.98%*

Looking Ahead

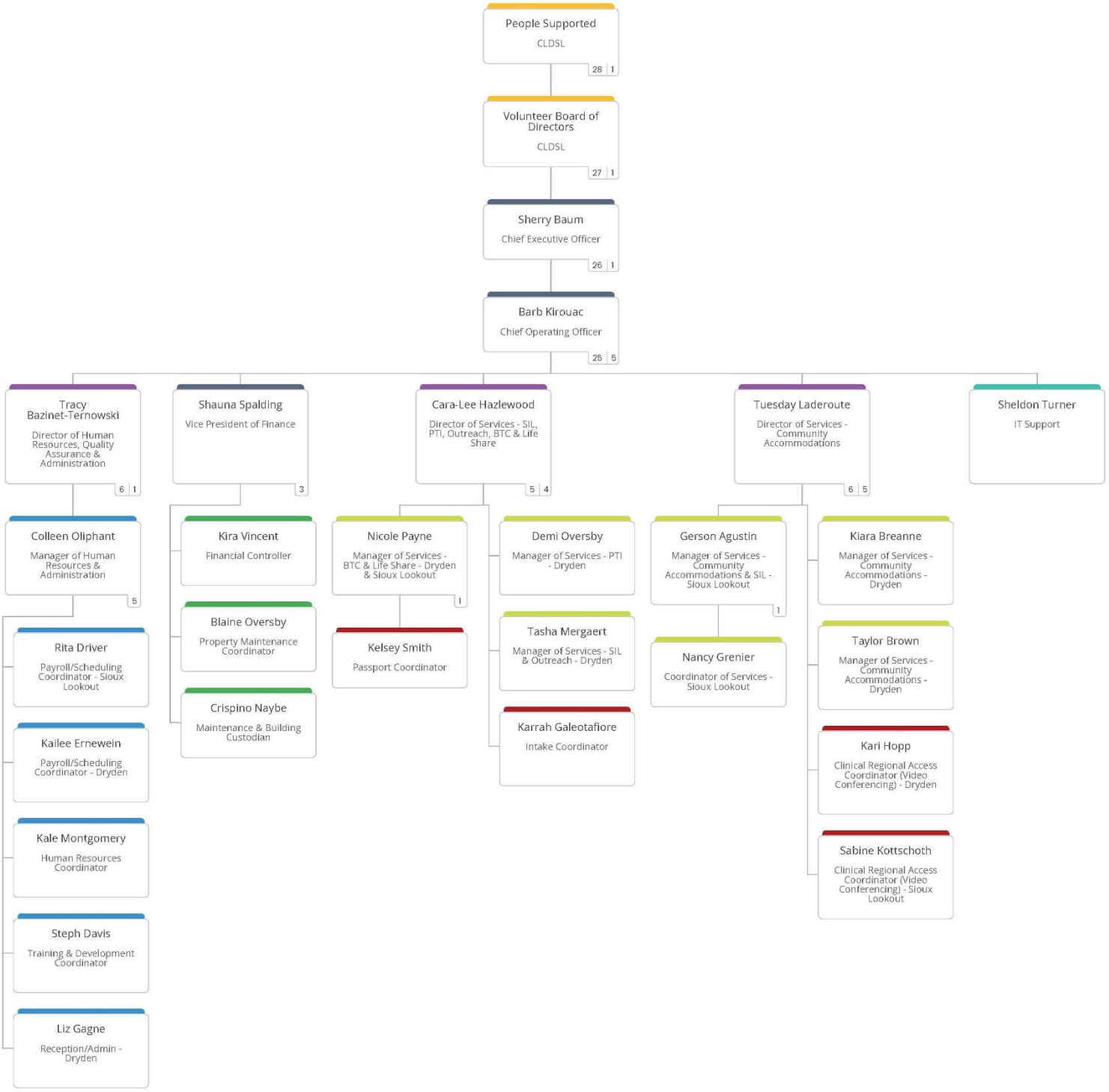
As the sector moves forward under the Ministry's Journey to Belonging: Choice and Inclusion vision, we continue to prepare our organization for what lies ahead. This includes taking a close look at our internal systems and processes and investing in the thoughtful use of technology, so that we can operate as efficiently as possible and continue directing resources toward the people we support.

Our recently negotiated collective agreements with both of our local unions provide greater predictability in compensation and benefit costs going forward, supporting stronger financial planning as we continue to navigate funding pressures across the sector. As part of these agreements, staff will be transitioning to the CAAT Pension Plan, a jointly sponsored, multi-employer pension plan.

We are also nearing the end of our current accreditation cycle and will undergo our next CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) accreditation review this summer and fall. This process supports our broader commitment to continuous improvement, including a review of policies and procedures to strengthen financial oversight and accountability across the organization.

Shauna Spalding,
Vice President Finance

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Confidential - Property of Community Living Dryden-Sioux Lookout

CELEBRATE EMPLOYEE MILESTONES

YEARS OF SERVICE AWARDS 2025

Dryden:

- **Lily Toews-Parsons - 40 Years**
- **Lori Potter - 25 Years**
- **Lisa Biczok - 25 Years**
- **Marilyn O'Quinn - 20 Years**
- **Lhasaja Johnson - 20 Years**
- **Melissa Henry - 20 Years**
- **Ursula MacIsaac - 15 Years**
- **Jessica Smeltzer - 10 Years**
- **Janelle Brown - 5 Years**
- **Kathleen Lang – 5**





Sioux Lookout:

- **Nancy Grenier - 30 Years**
- **Juanita Briones - 25 Years**
- **Sabine Kottschoth - 25 Years**
- **Nick Ortega - 15 Years**
- **Nona Villa - 15 Years**



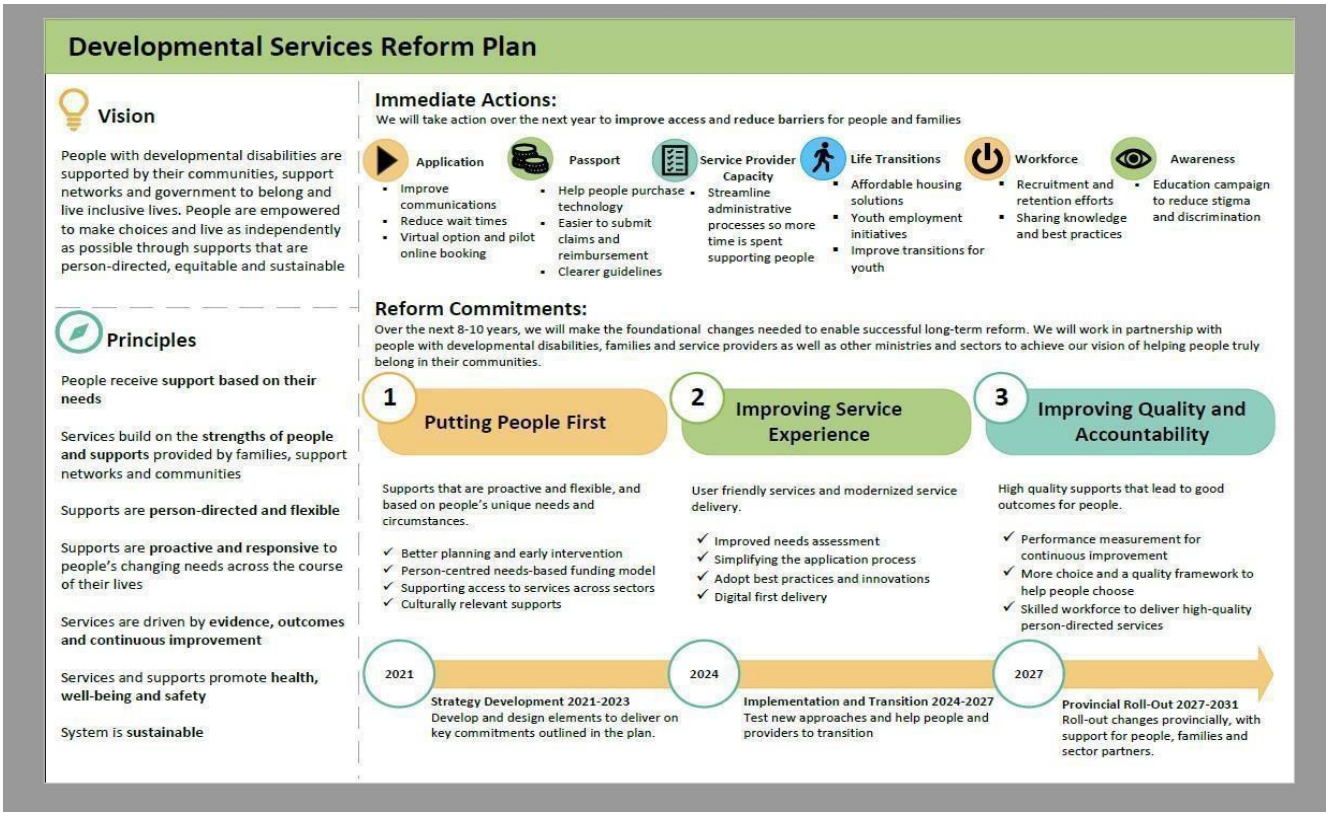




JOURNEY TO BELONGING – J2B

Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS)

J2B is the Developmental Services Reform Plan Journey to Belonging: Choice and Inclusion. Although MCCSS is delayed in their implementation they are following the plan. Starting with a study done by KPMG including looking at other jurisdictions, now they are planning how to implement individualized funding based on algorithms tied to the Supports Intensity Scale done by the DSO and use by the present individualized funding program – Passport.



Journey to Belonging: Choice and Inclusion
https://www.ontario.ca/page/journey-belonging-choice-and-inclusion

Journey to Belonging video:
https://youtu.be/vZwKLafzZ3s

Plain language version:
https://www.mcss.gov.on.ca/documents/en/mcss/developmental/DS_R efor m_Plain_Language-en.p

Safer Steps My Way – Harm Reduction

A new partnership CLDSL is part of is the Safer Steps My Way harm reduction program. We are providing part of the intensive case management support in partnership with Surrey Place, the lead and other agencies in the region.

Report on first Year:
This year, Surrey Place launched Safer Steps My Way: Community Outreach for Drug and Alcohol Use, Ontario's first harm reduction program designed specifically for adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD) who use drugs or alcohol and may also intersect with the justice system. Funded by Health Canada, the four-year initiative moved from planning into active service delivery across the Greater Toronto Area and Northwestern Ontario following extensive development and community engagement completed in the previous year.

In Northwestern Ontario, Surrey Place established a full regional team and strengthened local service capacity through a partnership with Community Living Dryden-Sioux Lookout, where an intensive case manager supports the program one day per week. Together, the organizations provide clinical support, care coordination, and community outreach to increase awareness of harm reduction and improve access to services for adults with IDD who use substances.

Between the January 2026 launch and March 31, 2026, Safer Steps My Way received 46 referrals across Toronto and Northern Ontario, demonstrating strong early demand for this innovative model of care.

Co-created with people with living and lived experience, the program continues to reduce barriers and expand access. Through a partnership with TELUS and the Mobility for Good® program, Surrey Place secured 240 phones with talk-and-text plans to help participants stay connected to supports and maintain continuity of care.

Jennifer Altosaar

Manager, Safer Steps My Way: Community Outreach for Drug and Alcohol Use
(Health Canada, Substance Use and Addictions Program)

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

This year we are working through our commitments to Truth and Reconciliation and our part to address the Calls to Action.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Truth and Reconciliation are all important to us. However, to concentrate on our important obligations for Truth and Reconciliation and how it intersects with our sector and communities, we have separated our Truth and Reconciliation activities to a separate focus group.

Reflections from Barb Kirouac, COO

Advancing Indigenous Relations and Truth and Reconciliation is more than DEI because it is rooted in rights, treaties, history, and nation-to-nation relationships—not simply diversity and inclusion.

While DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) focuses on creating fair and inclusive environments for people from diverse backgrounds, Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation address Canada's unique history and ongoing responsibilities toward First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples.

A Simple Leadership Statement

"DEI is about creating environments where everyone can belong. Truth and Reconciliation is about acknowledging Canada's history, honouring Indigenous rights and relationships, and taking meaningful action to build a different future together."

This framing often resonates with leadership teams because it moves the conversation from inclusion alone to accountability, relationship-building, and long-term stewardship.

Key Differences:

DEI	Indigenous Relations & Reconciliation
Focuses on representation and inclusion.	Focuses on reconciliation, relationships, rights, and responsibilities.
Seeks to reduce barriers and inequities.	Seeks to address historical and ongoing impacts of colonization.
Applies broadly to many equity-deserving groups.	Recognizes Indigenous Peoples as distinct Peoples with inherent rights and unique legal status.
Often centred on organizational culture and workforce diversity.	Extends beyond the workplace to community relationships, self-determination, and treaty responsibilities.
Driven by inclusion goals and equity outcomes.	Driven by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, UNDRIP, treaties, and commitments to reconciliation.

Why It Matters

Reconciliation is not simply about ensuring Indigenous people are included in existing systems. It asks organizations to examine:

- How colonial systems and practices continue to affect Indigenous Peoples.
- Whether policies, services, and decision-making processes honour Indigenous rights and perspectives.
- How trust and relationships can be rebuilt after generations of harm.
- How organizations can share power, listen differently, and work in partnership with Indigenous communities.

A Leadership Perspective

A DEI question might be:
"How do we ensure Indigenous employees feel included and represented?"

A Reconciliation question might be:
"How do we change the way we work so that Indigenous Peoples, Communities, and Nations are respected as partners whose voices influence decisions that affect them?"

Stewardship Lens

For leadership teams, reconciliation is often a stewardship responsibility.
It asks:

- How are we honouring our commitments?
- How are we building trust for future generations?
- How are we ensuring our decisions contribute to healing rather than perpetuating harm?
- What legacy are we leaving for Indigenous communities, employees, and partners?



For contact information for Intake:
Phone: 1-807-701-5370

Referrals and eligibility for developmental services are completed through Developmental Services Ontario (DSO).
https://www.dsontario.ca/