



75th Annual Report

April 1, 2008-March 31, 2009



Protecting Children and Preserving Families



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

(as of March 31, 2009)

President	Alan Schroeder	Winkler
Vice-President	Anne Malyon	Winkler
Secretary-Treasurer	Kathleen Jones	Winnipeg

Loreley Greenslade	Portage la Prairie
Patti Loewen	Sidney
Cheri Narvey	Portage la Prairie
Barry Rud	Portage la Prairie
Dennis Walker	Portage la Prairie



Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba, Inc.

75th Annual Report



Message from the President

This past year as President was marked with activity related to the roof replacement project that began in the closing days of the previous year. The water leaks with the resulting damage that occurred over the summer months of 2008 were of great concern from both a building integrity aspect and workplace safety aspect for the staff. To date the resulting legal activity is ongoing.

The Resource Center project also came to occupy more and more time as the year progressed due to funding not appearing as it repeatedly was indicated by government as being imminent. Money in the end did arrive with no explanation as to why the year plus delay.

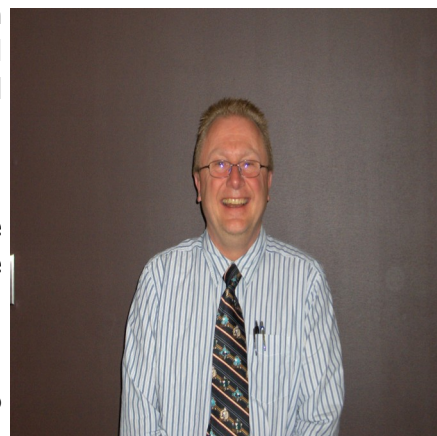
As the year edged into this spring, the work of the Board centered around ending the relationship with the Agency's Executive Director.

With the appointment of the current Interim Executive Director, Ron Fenwick, work and initiatives are continuing to move forward. A highlight was a number of staff attending the Signs of Safety training event in Minnesota earlier in April with the resulting follow-up exposure session for all staff at the end of May.

Advertising for the Executive Director's position was also undertaken in May with an initial round of interviews conducted just last week. Included in the process were staff as well as a representative from the General Authority.

Getting back to the Project, at a meeting regarding Project planning at the end of May, Jay Rodgers announced major operational funding for the calendar year beginning at a 'start up' point identified as this September.

In closing, I would like to express my appreciation, respect and gratitude to Patti Loewen who is leaving the Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba Board of Directors after serving on the Board for seven years. Patti is pursuing her Masters in Social Work!



Alan Schroeder

Thank you Patti for your involvement in the lives of children and their safety and care!

CFS of Central Manitoba, Inc. – In Profile

Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba, Inc. was established in May, 1934 as the Children's Aid Society of Central Manitoba. The Agency is a charitable organization governed by a volunteer Board of Directors that provides services under the Child and Family Services Act, the CFS Authorities Act and the Adoption Act of Manitoba.

Today there are four Child Welfare Authorities struck with responsibility for concurrent service in the Province of Manitoba – the First Nations South Authority, the First Nations North Authority, the Métis Authority and the General Authority. Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba, Inc. is mandated by and provides services on behalf of the General Authority in the off-reserve geographic area of the Central Region of Manitoba.



Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba, Inc. is an Agency under the General Child and Family Services Authority. Together with Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba and Jewish Child and Family Services, Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba, Inc. are the only private agencies in the General Authority. This has allowed our Agency to maintain a private, community board and maintain a Foundation that raises money to provide enhanced services for the residents of the Central Region.

Portage Office

The Central Region is a rather large geographical area located West of the City of Winnipeg. It is bound by the City of Winnipeg and the Red River on its eastern limit, by the International Boundary on the southern limits, by a line approximately half way between the City of Portage la Prairie and the City of Brandon on its western limit and, just north of the Town of Alonsa on its northern limit. Primarily agricultural in its economic base, the total population of this catchment area is 93,000 which includes 28,315 children. The region is home to two cities – the City of Winkler in the southern part of the region and the City of Portage la Prairie in the north. The head office of the organization is located in Portage la Prairie and a sub office is located in Winkler.

Our Mission Statement

Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba, Inc. is dedicated to working in partnership with the community to provide a range of services focused on the well being of children and families.

Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba, Inc. is committed to supporting and building on family strengths through education, advocacy and intervention.



Winkler Office



Message from the Executive Director

I am pleased to be able to present the 75th Annual Report of the Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba, Inc.

This year has again been one of transition and change for the Agency as we adapt to new management and supervisory personnel and continue to develop our services in the aftermath of A.J.I. Reorganization and restructuring seem to be part of the ongoing cycle.

There were a number of exciting initiatives at the Board and Agency Level that should be highlighted. A Board and Management Strategic Planning Retreat was held in January, 2009 where with the assistance of Jay Rodgers, the CEO of the General Authority, the Board confirmed a strength-based, family support approach to services as elaborated on by the Signs of Safety theory that would be utilized by the Agency. This decision entrenched the long espoused approach to services held by the Agency. This approach is in keeping with the Terms of Reference developed for the Director's Leadership Table, the forum the Agency participates in, that guides the practices of the General Authority.

In May 2008, the Agency sponsored the first Women's Retreat, an initiative established to support healthy choices for isolated moms. It was attended by five community women and proved beneficial to all. Staff continued to work with the Tupper Street Family Resource Centre to finalize plans to operationalize this partnership. An official opening of the Centre was held June 23, 2008. Preparing staff through further exposure to Signs of Safety methodology continues.

There have been a number of changes within the supervisory core of the Agency. In April 2008 Grant Jackson accepted a secondment to the Child and Family support Branch, which has subsequently been extended, to work on an Information Systems Transformation Project. In October, Diane deLucia went on an extended sick leave. Grant's position was filled from within, initially by Barry Tait, and then by Cathie Hamm while Michelle Sveistrup is covering for Diane. These folks have worked hard to ensure the staff receives the support necessary for the continuation of quality service by the Agency.

It is interesting to note the number of activities originating within the Agency that help reinforce positive relationships amongst staff; things like Christmas parties, and celebration of new and/or departing staff; the Saturday art classes, the weekly Pilates classes, the book club, the walking and running groups, and the large quantity of volunteer work undertaken by the staff. These are fun activities which help relieve some of the stresses that staffs often feel.

In closing, it is important to recognize the support and direction of our dedicated Board and the competent, committed and caring staff who make our Agency special.

Foster Care Program

Fostering is a challenging job with rewards that last a lifetime. We are thankful for foster families who open their hearts and homes to welcome children at a time when they are in their greatest need. Fostering is a wonderful calling for many people in the Central Region and this year end we had 75 licensed foster homes which includes 12 of our homes used by other agencies. We also manage 23 homes who are licensed specifically for other agencies. The need for foster homes and emergency receiving homes has never been greater in our region. We have been very fortunate that we have seldom had to place children in hotel rooms and, even though we are definitely experiencing a shortage, we are able to count on our regular foster parents to be there for the children who need them, regardless of age or circumstance.

We held our annual Christmas party for our foster families with the help of the Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba Foundation and businesses and individuals in many communities throughout our area who donated money and gifts for our children in care. 136 people attended including 80 children of all ages. It is one small way we say thank you to our foster families and let our foster children know how important and special they are.

Our foster parents were involved in many training sessions this year, one of which was the Standard First Aid Training which was sponsored by the General Authority and offered in Portage and also in Winkler in cooperation with the Boundary Trails Foster Family Association. The BTFFA also offered other training opportunities for foster parents including Child Development, AFM, FASD and Empowering Foster Parents as well as offering a support group once or twice a month. They also celebrated Foster Family Week in October, assisted with the Christmas Party and had a few fundraising activities during the year. Our Agency offered Foster Care Orientation, a mandatory course for new foster parents, in the Spring and Fall of 2008.

Anne Johnston-Peters moved to family service and Kathy Friesen became the new foster care coordinator for the South area in the New Year. The Foster Care Advisory Committee including foster care staff, management and foster parents, was revived and met on a few occasions. However, the loss of our program coordinator and supervisor, Diane de Lucia, due to illness has slowed the progress of this resourceful committee.

We are thankful to those who support the foster care program like the ladies of Good Shepherd Roman Catholic Church in Portage and the Lion Lutheran Church in Winkler who have organized church members to supply items for 'kid kits' for children when they come into care with nothing but the clothes on their backs. Organizations that graciously donate children's items on a regular basis include the Culross Copper Club of Elm Creek, the Rathwell United Church Women. As well donations are received from many other individuals and organizations. We are also grateful to the Shaw Cable Company who provide the Agency with Shaw teddy bears intended for children who are experiencing fear, sadness and trauma. These bears are often given to children of all ages when they come into care.

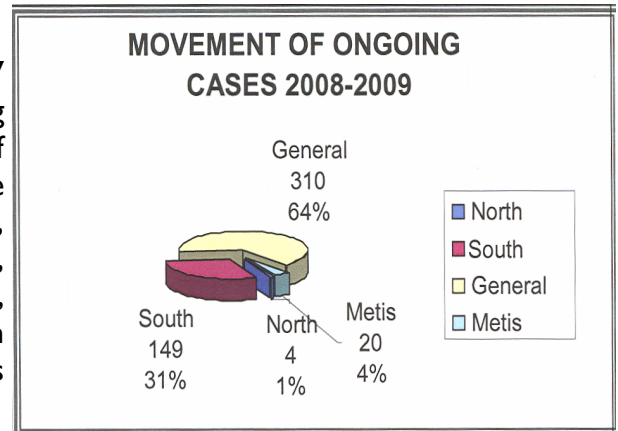




Intake and After-Hours Program

The Agency continues in its role as the Designated Intake and After Hours Service Provider for the Central Region. This team is the first point of access for all children and families in the region and serves all four Authorities (Southern First Nation, Northern First Nation, Metis, and General) - off reserve. This includes accepting calls, conducting assessments, providing emergency services to stabilize situations and meet with families to determine the agency that will be providing ongoing services in situations that require additional supports.

During the fiscal year 2008/09 the Intake Unit accepted 1057 calls. 483 of these were determined to require ongoing services. Changes to the child welfare system as a result of the AJI-CW Initiative allows families to choose their service provider through the four major Authorities. In this region, our major partners are Dakota Ojibway CFS, Sandy Bay CFS, West Region CFS and Metis CFCS. When given the choice, 310 families picked the General Authority, 149 the Southern Authority, 4 the Northern Authority, and 20 the Metis Authority.



The Intake Team consists of 12 full and part time staff (including after-hours). They are a very dedicated and skilled group of workers. All are supportive and encouraging of each other and always seek to find strengths upon which they can build when working with families. The Intake workers strive to have their assessments completed to the best of their ability prior to preparing any Intake for transfer for ongoing service. Also, if a matter seems to require only brief service, a team of workers provides that service with tremendous competence.

Sherri Morgan, on her own initiative, (with her time being supported by the Agency) has been attending Attachment Training at the Aulneau Center in Winnipeg. She will soon be certified to complete attachment assessments. Rod Sveistrup attended a 4 day joint training put on by CFS, RCMP and the Winnipeg Police Service called 'Team Investigation of Child Physical and Sexual Abuse—Train the Trainer'; and Gord Zacharias and Leah Beaupre recently attended training related to Mediation and Attachment.

The Agency has recently developed a back up system for the After Hours team whereby there is a list of names of people that the After-Hours workers may call upon should they require assistance in an After-Hours emergency,



The staff of the Intake and After-Hours team have started using the Signs of Safety approach in their daily work and are very much looking forward to full implementation of this strategy.

Chance 2 Camp

The Chance 2 Camp program is the core program funded by the Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba Foundation Inc., a project near and dear to our heart. Summer camperships, to a maximum of \$400.00 per child are awarded to children who, because of economic circumstances in their families, would not otherwise have the opportunity for a summer camp experience.



To undertake the organization of this program, the agency employs a University student coordinator annually in May. This year we were fortunate to have Sara Murray take on this responsibility. Sara did a wonderful job of advertising the program, meeting with camps to solicit their support and recruiting volunteer drivers. We were sorry to see her go at the end of the summer.

In the year 2008, 156 children attended camp through our program. There were still 13 children on a waiting list at the end of camp season, some did however receive funding from other organizations and were able to attend camp.

The Chance 2 Camp Program would like to thank the Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba Foundation Inc. for their continued support. We would also like to thank the local United Ways and generous individuals for their openhanded donations. It is through your unrelenting generosity that we are able to support children and families across the Central Region not only through the Chance 2 Camp program, but support for other important programs and services operated by the Agency. Interested donors can call the agency for more information.

Volunteer Drivers

Chad Asmundson

Evelyne Schirp

Charlie Clifford

Walter Dedio

Dave Hay

David Lassell

Gustine Wilton

Dennis Wilton





Tupper Street Family Resource Centre

This year we have seen slow but continued progress in our goal to partner with the Tupper Street Family Resource Centre. The highlight of the year was the official opening that occurred on June 24, 2008. This celebration was the culmination of a fundraising drive by a team that raised over \$180,000.00, and a series of renovations that included the development of seven offices, a large all-purpose space, a large childcare space and a huge kitchen.

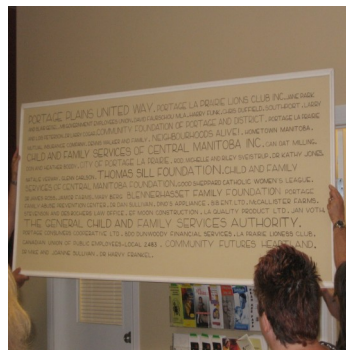
Lots of work, but a very meaningful outcome.



This Agency plans to use this centre as part of their Differential Response Project. Differential Response is a new model of delivering child and family services where families accessing our system will be provided with supports designed to strengthen the family and reduce risk to children. The Differential Response Initiative was introduced by the Minister of Family Services and Housing in November, 2007 and includes a provincial wide injection of seven million dollars into the system.

The Agency and staff of the Resource Centre are in the process of finalizing a service model that will promote strength based services for families in Central Region.

September, 2009 has been established as a start-up date for these expanded services.



Community Partnerships—Metis CFS



This Agency continues to maintain strong relationships with its partners from other agencies and authorities. One of our stronger partnerships is with Metis Child, Family and Community Services agency that shares space and resources in our Portage office. Londa Green, our Portage worker has been joined by Social Worker Assistant Sara Murray on a half-time basis and they are shown here displaying new signage in the door for Metis CFCS.

Adoptions

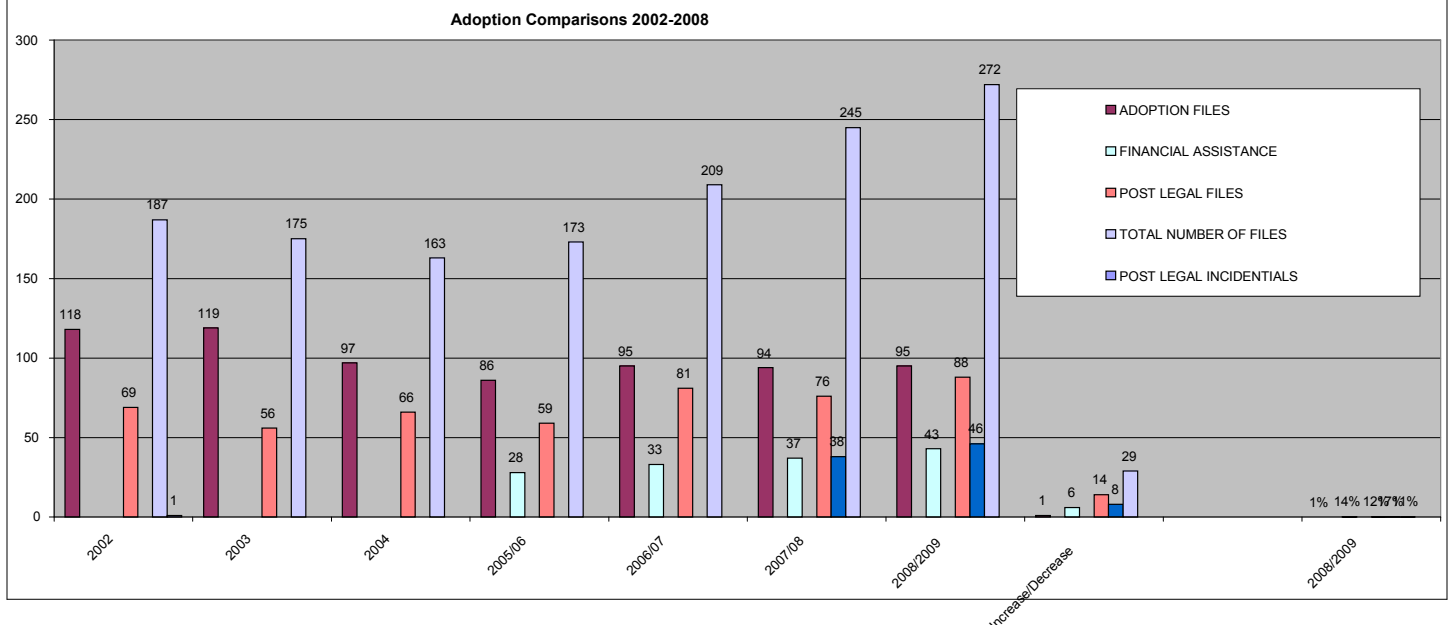
Despite a number of staffing challenges this year the adoption program continues to grow in all areas. The Agency Adoption Program ended the year with 95 adoption files open. Of this number 7 are in different stages of finalization for an Order of Adoption. This is a lengthy process which on average takes approximately a year to complete once a child is placed for adoption. There were 3 Order of Adoptions granted this fiscal year.

An Educational Component for the adoption process which is mandatory for all was offered in July of 2008. This is held over a two day period covering a large amount of information on such subjects as attachment, grief, special needs, discipline, cultural issues and many more. A plan is underway to review and update material with the new Supervisor of the program.

In January 2009 Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba, Inc. hosted an adoption forum for all other agencies providing adoption services under the General Authority. Some of the topics discussed were Legislation and Standards, Adoption Subsidies and Post-Adoption Issues. The next meeting will be held in June 2009 in Brandon.

Exciting news for the Adoption Program of Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba, Inc. and for the Province is the introduction of the SAFE program (Structured Analysis Family Evaluation). This is a home study method that provides a suite of comprehensive home study tools and practices for the description and evaluation of would be adoptive applicants. SAFE is also suitable for the home study of prospective foster families, relative care provides or dual licensure concurrent planning resource families. Training will be held in the fall of 2009.

The trend in adoption continues to be toward placement of special needs children and support to our families through subsidies. In the post-adoption area the Post Adoption Registry will now provide the name and address of birth family directly to clients that register in search of birth family. As this is fairly new the effects on workers involvement in Post Legal searches and reunions is unknown.





Family Service

Family Services continues to be the largest component of our Agency service continuum with 15 full and part-time staff assigned to the two program units providing services to families and their children, permanent wards, voluntary placements, and temporary wards. Staff are also available to provide services to expectant persons who need assistance in making plans for themselves, or their baby.

The Agency takes seriously its commitment to the children it supports. It is committed to work with families to either support their involvement with their children and/or to work towards returning children to their birth family. However, in cases in which families are unable or unwilling to support their children, the agency works to find the child or children permanent homes. We have been fortunate in that we are generally able to find homes in the region.

Along with our work with children in care, the Agency also provides additional supports to families to ensure that children do not have to come into care. Supports range from the provision of respite or homemaker support, pool and recreational passes for children, counselling, daycare and other supports. In the year 2008/09 the Agency spent approximately \$85,000 on these types of services.

Our In-Home support program is also attached to the Family Service program. This program provides information and support to families in their homes. About 40 families took advantage of this program over the past year.

As new initiatives, the Agency has begun planning for a prevention program on corporal punishment and the future implementation of the Signs of Safety approach. These initiatives have caught the imagination of staff who are very excited about the evolving plans.

The Northern Team is continuing to develop a partnership with the Tupper Street Family Resource Centre while the Southern Team is spending time focusing on the increasing number of new immigrants in the Pembina Triangle. In the past year our team has spent considerable amounts of time getting to know the Immigrant Settlement Office and its staff and utilizing German, Russian and Spanish translators when required.

The Winkler Team has been using part of each team meeting to provide a forum for invited community members to present information on their social service and opportunities for networking and collaboration around casework.

The Women's Breakaway Retreat

Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba, Inc. had the privilege of being able to sponsor the inaugural Women's Breakaway Retreat from May 23—25, 2008 at Camp Arnes, Manitoba. The goal of the retreat was to assist mothers who were often living in isolation with issues of poor self esteem. Of the approximate fifteen women who were invited to the retreat five women were able to attend and were supported by three staff, Lois Hunt, Kathy Friesen, and Jayme MacKinnon. The attendees were from Altona, Winkler and Portage la Prairie. The program consisted of activities centered on building self-esteem using games, guided meditation and presentations. Participants were expected to keep journals throughout the weekend to facilitate an evaluation. Everyone felt that the weekend was a huge success and appreciated the fellowship as much as anything. Feedback included comments ranging from:

- "I'm planning on being more patient with my family."
- "I was accepted and allowed to be myself."
- "It made me feel good to hear that others had difficulties in their lives and that we're not alone."
- "This place was neat; I now think that I can do anything. I matter."

Everyone said that they enjoyed themselves and recommended that the retreat become an annual event.

Retiring from the Board



Unfortunately we have to say Good-bye to Patti Loewen. She has been directly involved with the Agency as a front-line worker, after-hours worker or as a volunteer Board member for nearly thirty years. She has devoted many hours to our Agency and her dedication and her commitment will be greatly missed.

Good Luck Patti
in your future endeavours.



10 Year Anniversary

This year we are honored to recognize **Rod Sveistrup** for 10 years of dedicated service to Child & Family Services of Central Manitoba, Inc. Rod has spent each of his 10 years in the area of Child Protection and has done so with exemplary skill and commitment to the safety of children. He is also an active member of CUPE local 2483 (currently on the Executive) and is a strong supporter of the staff at the Agency. We look forward to having you with the Agency for many years to come.

Thank you, Rod!

20 Year Anniversary

TWENTY YEARS!!

Here's to a person who started as the receptionist in April of 1989 and has since provided support in every program area in this Agency. Today Simonne provides key support to the Agency Board and Executive Director as a member of the Management Team

Thanks from us all.





Staffing 'Hello' & 'Goodbye'

Each year we recognize those individuals who joined us or left us during the fiscal year. This year they included:

- Grant Jackson who has been seconded to the Child and Family Services Information System Transformation Project (Strategic Initiative and Program Support—Child and Family Services Division).
- Sara Murray who spent last summer with us as Chance 2 Camp Coordinator
- Linda Watson-Bull who left her position in the after-hours rotation.
- Edith Young who worked briefly as a Family Service worker to cover an extended sick leave.
- Gwen Heinrichs who resigned from her half-time Family Service position in the South after 13 years of service with the Agency, primarily as the Coordinator for the In-Home Support program.
- Candace Funk who has returned to the Agency accepting a position in the after-hours rotation.
- Christine Bernier who worked briefly as a Family Service worker resigned from the Agency to return home to New Brunswick. She was covering a maternity leave.
- Cathie Hamm who assumed the Intake and after-Hours supervisor position.
- Michelle Sveistrup who assumed the new North Family Service supervisor position.
- We welcomed Lindsay Hutton back. She is working with the North Family Service team covering for Sheri Gowler who remains on LTD.
- Diane deLucia who is on extended sick leave. Our thoughts and prayers are with her tonight and into the future as she fights her battle with Rheumatoid Arthritis.
- Janice Madill who was hired as a social worker to cover for a maternity leave.
- David Chaske who resigned from the Agency after 24 years of service.
- Lynn Gouthro who resigned from her position as after-hours worker after several years of service. Thank you to Angela Steuart who has been covering this position.
- Denise Selinger who has joined the after-hours rotation.
- Lee McLeod who has been on and off of Secondment to CUPE for the better part of the year.
- Constance Eagle who came to us as a social work student, completed her B.S.W. and assumed a term social work position when we required additional support to cover the Secondment in the South.
- Christine Chabbert who came to us as a social work student, completed her B.S.W. and assumed a term social work position when we required additional support on the North Family Service team.
- Jammie Zalizniak who came to us as a social work student, completed her B.S.W. and assumed a term social work position when we required additional support on the Intake and After-Hours Team until March 31, 2008. Jammie has now accepted a position with Family Services and Housing.

As well, the Agency has been very fortunate to have two additional students doing placements this year:

- Christa Therrien-St. Lawrence who joined us from the Inner City Social Work Program in Winnipeg. Christa was placed at the Tupper Street Family Resource Centre.
- Teresa Grenier who was here as a student from the Red River Applied Counselling Program in Winkler. She did her 100 hour practicum placement with us – her time was spent shadowing Lois Hunt. A special thanks to Lois for doing such an admirable job with Teresa.

Child & Family Services OF CENTRAL MANITOBA

Designated Intake Agency

For All Four Authorities In

**Central Region
(Off-Reserve)**



Metis Child and Family
Services Authority



Régie métisse des
services à l'enfant et à
la famille

First Nations of
Southern Manitoba Child
and Family Services
Authority



Régie des services à
l'enfant et à la famille
des Premières nations
du sud du Manitoba

First Nations of
Northern Manitoba Child
and Family Services
Authority



Régie des services à
l'enfant et à la famille
des Premières nations
du nord du Manitoba

General Child and
Family Services
Authority



The General Child
and Family Services
Authority

Régie générale des
services à l'enfant et à
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