

Annual Report

2021 – 2022



Children's Aid Society of Algoma
Société de l'aide à l'enfance d'Algoma

2022-2024

Strategic Directions and Priorities

Mission

The Children's Aid Society of Algoma is committed to protecting children and promoting their well-being by working collaboratively with children, families and communities through service excellence

Vision

Protecting Children and Strengthening Families throughout the District of Algoma

Values

INTEGRITY

We will be open, transparent, reliable, trustworthy, sincere and honest.

EXCELLENCE

Children have the right to grow up safely in loving families and supportive communities with everything they need to flourish with connection to their culture, ethnicity, race and language.

COLLABORATION

We work together with children, youth and families, their communities and community partners in strengthening family connections.

INNOVATION

We approach every challenge and opportunity with openness and creativity while maximizing the strengths, resilience and resources of children, youth and families.

RESPECT

We foster a culture of equity, inclusiveness and diversity that respects each individual's unique worth and inherent dignity.

ACCOUNTABILITY

We take responsibility for our work, our decisions and our results.

KATELYNN'S PRINCIPLE

The voice of the child is at the heart of everything we do.



A Message From Our **Board President and Interim Executive Director**

This annual report captures a year that challenged all of us as we continue to adapt services due to the pandemic. As Board Chair and Interim Executive Director, we are proud and humbled by the enormous effort we witnessed as community partners, agency employees and families we service worked together to support each other during the pandemic. We are finally seeing the light at the end of the tunnel as we experience the lifting of restrictions and re-opening of our community services.

In July 2021, we saw the retirement of Executive Director Kim Striech-Poser, with her departure came an organizational opportunity to explore the interest of amalgamating child welfare with our local children's mental health agency Algoma Family Services. Both agency Boards supported an outside consulting firm (OPTIMUS) to complete a feasibility study and make recommendations. The guiding principles of the work was to create opportunities to improve quality of care, improve access to service, service enhancement and sustainability. Phase one of the work is completed and the report supported a high rationale for the proposed amalgamation of the two organizations; however, the report also identified some barriers that would need to be addressed for the initiative to deliver the desirable outcomes. Phase two of the work will examine the barriers and also explore the financial sustainability of an amalgamated organization. It is hoped that the second phase of work will be completed by fall 2022. The respective Boards will determine the next steps once this next phase of work has been completed. The amalgamation work is being supported by the Ministry of Children Community and Social Services (MCCSS) and aligns with the Ministry's child welfare reform.

The Board of Directors approved the organization's strategic goals for the next two years to allow for the amalgamation work to be completed. The strategic goals and work plan aligns with the guiding principles

of Child Welfare Redesign the MCCSS announced on July 29th 2020. The primary focus of the redesign is for child welfare, residential and community-based service to build a coordinated range of services that strengthen families, focusing on community-based prevention and early intervention. Services will be high quality, culturally appropriate and responsive to the needs of children, youth and families.

The five pillars guiding the work include:

- Child, Youth, Family and Community Well-being
- Quality of Care
- Strengthening Youth Supports
- Improved Stability and Permanency
- System Accountability and Sustainability

Over the past year, the Agency has been focusing on its service delivery model and how to best realign existing resources in order to maximize the outcomes for children youth and families. Some of the targeted outcomes we want to achieve include reducing the number of children coming into the care of the Society, increasing the number of children placed with kin care givers when they are unable to be cared for by a parent, reducing the cases before the courts, digitizing of all agency records, and increasing capacity in our disclosure department.

Community collaboration continues to be a priority in the agency's strategic plan. Over this past year our community partners have come together to pool resources in order to support several high-risk youths. Participation in local planning tables has also sparked several community initiatives that if approved will provide a spectrum of care for the hardest to serve allowing these youth to remain in their community with the hope they are able to be cared for by family.

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During the 2021/2022 fiscal year, the Society continued to work closely with the Ministry on the expenditure management plan in order to address the agency's deficit. Placements of high-risk youth in outside paid resources and the Ministry's funding formula remain to be driving factors of the deficit.

The Board of Directors saw the departure of Heather Hicks earlier this year and will also say goodbye to Connie Free in September after nine years of service. We want to take this opportunity to highlight and give thanks to those sitting on the Board of Directors this past year. The leadership, advocacy and the commitment that they have demonstrated has strengthened the organization. On behalf of the leadership team, staff and community, we thank you.

Lastly, to all of the staff, foster parents, kin service caregivers we want to acknowledge the challenging year you experienced. Thank you for being a source of strength and stability for children, youth and families that rely on you.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

SEAN SPARLING
Board President

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

TRACY WILLOUGHBY
Interim Executive Director



Board of Directors

For the period of April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022

Sean Sparling
Board President

Nuala Kenny
First Vice President

Sheri Cleaves
Second Vice President

Angela Davey
Treasurer

Rose Cameron
Secretary

Connie Free, Ann Cuzzolino, Jennifer Osesky
Directors

Michelle Sayers
Indigenous Representative(s)

Senior Management

Tracy Willoughby
Executive Director

Krista Budau and Mary Jean Chartrand
Directors of Service

Dirinda Evans
Finance Manager

Dawn Dubois
Legal Manager

Karen Sartoretto
Human Resources Manager

Allan Johnson
I.T Manager

Reflections on the **COVID-19 Pandemic**

Like all sectors, the Children's Aid Society of Algoma had to adapt quickly to the onset of the pandemic. For the past two years, the majority of the staff have been working remotely to ensure everyone's health and safety. Increasing the agency's technology was an initial priority and with it, has allowed seamless connectivity with families, collaterals and the larger sector.

The impact of the pandemic also highlighted the social inequities within the vulnerable sectors of our community. It became apparent how equity-seeking groups were at greater risk during this time. Housing, poverty and food security became a challenge for many. Over the last two years, we also witnessed the resilience required to make the life changes in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those around us.

Kinship caregivers and foster families provided exceptional service during this time often having to demonstrate great flexibility as government restrictions changed and on-line education became the norm. For these caregivers the ever-changing environment was done with grace, maintaining a child focus approach.

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services provided additional supports including:

- Extended financial support and ongoing benefits for youth beyond 21 in order to delay CCSY youth to transition to independence this moratorium is expected to be extended beyond the initial deadline of September 2022.
- Funding to support foster parents in their role as caregiver
- Funding to support Kin service caregivers caring for youth unable to remain with their biological families
- Provision of PPE for the sector
- Provision of antigen tests

Additional support provided by the Agency included:

- Technology to support youth to stay connected with their families, friends, and support people.
- Educational liaison support providing tutoring and ongoing support during periods of remote learning.
- Provision of PPE to ensure safety of those receiving services or caring for children and youth in out of home placements.
- Supplementing families with groceries and linking them to appropriate food banks within the community

Lastly, our staff's resilience, dedication and commitment to their work must be recognized, they have played a significant role in keeping children and youth safe and ensuring the wellbeing of the families we support during these challenging times.



Celebrating Staff

Our staff recognition program acknowledges and honours our employees who have given many years of dedicated service. The program is our way of saying thank you for their devotion, dedication and commitment to helping children and families in our community.

Congratulations and thank you to our employees who have achieved the following years of service!

April 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022

Retirements

Anthony Marrato
John Rossi
Kim Barbon
Kim Streich-Poser

Anniversaries

1 YEAR

Addi Grelowski
Alisha McCaig
Ariane Callegari
Tricia Medaglia

10 YEARS

Lisa Beauregard

15 YEARS

Allison Prusky
Ami Naccarato
Cathy McMinn
Danielle LaRue
Heather Cartmill
Jenifer Armstrong
Jennifer Walker
Lindsay Spina
Lisa Peterson
Luanna Koprash
Marcie Poulin

20 YEARS

Jill Paquin
Nancy MacDonald

Melissa Guild
Mike Cauduro
Patti Peterson
Robin Armstrong
Sarah Bolduc
Sarah Siegwart
Scott Particelli
Sheri Thorburn
Silvano Chiarello
Tina Bastos

Commitment to **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion**

This past year the Society established an Equity Committee to champion the work of anti-racism and anti-oppressive practices within the organization and service model. In May 2022, the Board of Directors approved a motion to accept the agency's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion statement.

Our ongoing journey includes identifying and eliminating all forms of discrimination and systemic barriers so that we can become allies of the children, families, and staff. With each step we take, our goal is to ensure that we provide a safe and inclusive environment for those families and colleagues we work with. We are committed to treating all with respect and dignity; promoting the opportunity for everyone to reach their full potential.

Equity, Diversity And Inclusion Statement

The Children's Aid Society of Algoma acknowledges the oppressive history of child welfare and how we have contributed to the oppression of specific marginalized groups and members of the communities we serve. In recognition of the impacts of the systemic barriers that have contributed to oppression, we are committed to developing ongoing practices that are reflective, responsive, and that foster a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion for individuals we serve and work with. We will strive to become allies ensuring we walk beside families.

Adopting anti-oppression and anti-racist practices sets the agency on a course of organizational change that will require all involved to challenge both personal and organizational values and practices that may be experienced as oppressive. We are committed to dismantling and working against oppression and racism including at the interpersonal, structural, and institutional levels.



Reconciliation

On June 6, 2017, the Ontario child welfare sector unanimously agreed to prioritize Reconciliation with Indigenous communities through nine key commitments. Each Children's Aid Society (CAS) has committed to:

- Reduce the number of Indigenous children in care.
- Reduce the number of legal files involving Indigenous children and families.
- Increase the use of formal customary care agreements.
- Ensure Indigenous representation and involvement at the local Board of Directors.
- Implement mandatory Indigenous training for staff.
- Change their inter-agency protocol to include Jordan's Principle as a fundamental principle.
- In consultation with the Indigenous communities, develop a unique agency-based plan to better address the needs of the children and families from those communities.
- Continue to develop relationships between their agency and the local Indigenous communities.
- Assist those individuals wanting to see their historical files by accessing and providing the information they request.

In 2017 the Society transferred all files affiliated with the seven First Nations of the North Shore Tribal Council to Nogdawindamin Family and Community Services. Joint planning is now underway for the transfer of all other First Nation files including Metis and Inuit.

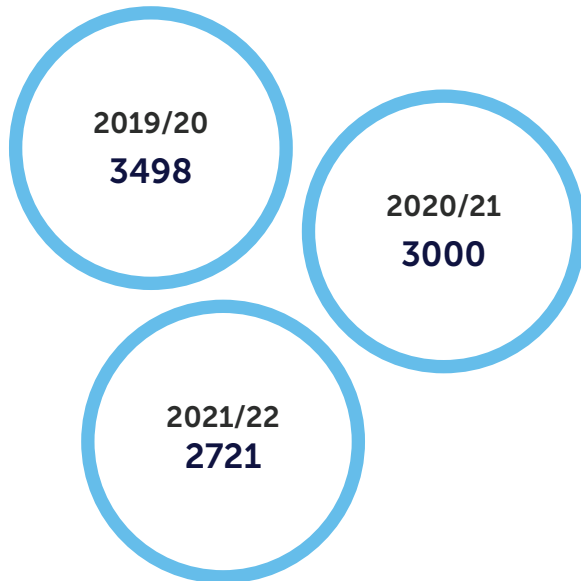
Dilico Anishinabek Care services First Nation Families in Wawa and Kunuwanimano services First Nation Families in the community of Hornpayne.



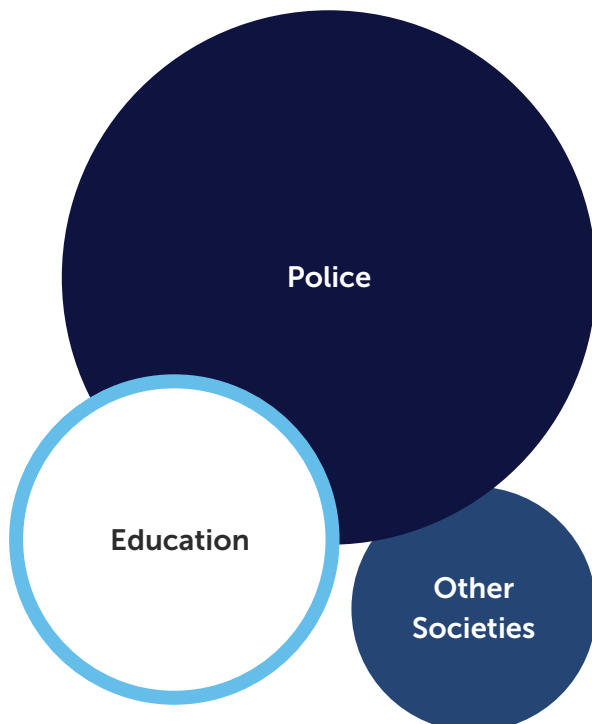
Service

Statistics

New calls received from people worried about a child



Top three callers



Families receiving initial assessment



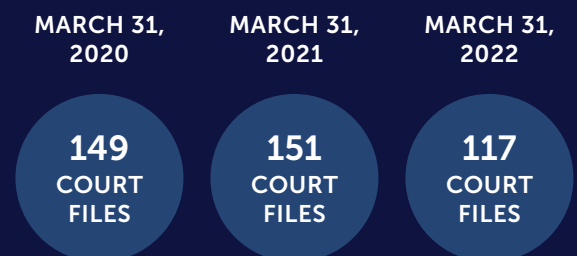
Investigations transferred to ongoing



Families receiving ongoing service



Matters before the court

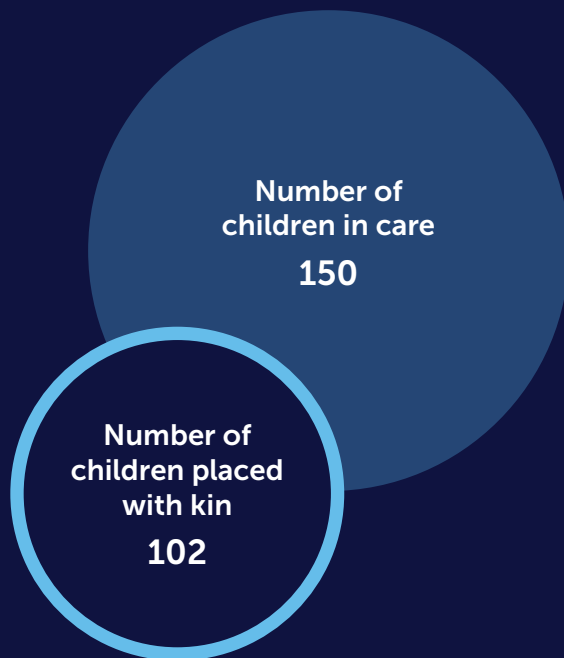


Average length of ongoing service

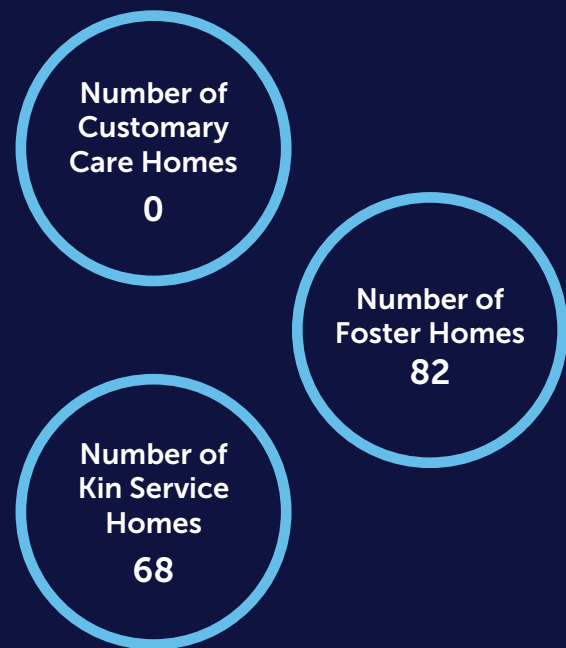


Statistics

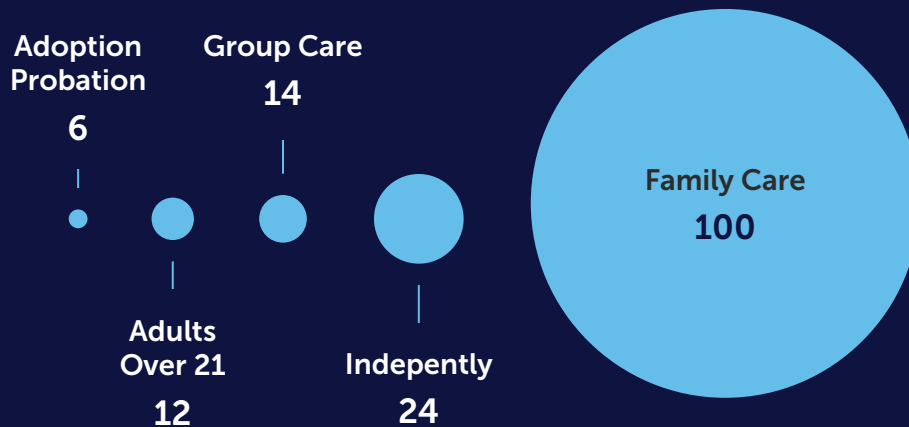
Children and Youth Needing Out of Home Care



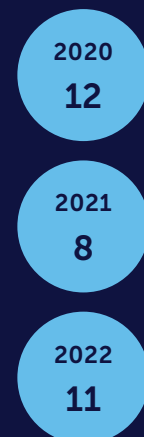
Caregivers Providing Out of Home Care



Where Do Children and Youth in Our Care Reside?



Adoptions



Agency Financials*

Revenue	Child Welfare	Preparation For Independence & Other Program	Operating Fund	Capital Fund	Trust Fund	TOTAL
Province of Ontario	\$17,311,15	\$493,147	\$17,804,298		\$138,996	\$17,943,294
Government of Canada – Universal Child Care Benefit			–		\$144,760	\$144,760
Other	\$1,144,271	\$139,268	\$1,283,539		\$98,700	\$1,382,239
Amortization of Deferred Capital Contributions			–	\$32,436	–	\$32,436
TOTAL REVENUE	\$18,455,422	\$632,415	\$19,087,837	\$32,436	\$382,456	\$19,502,729

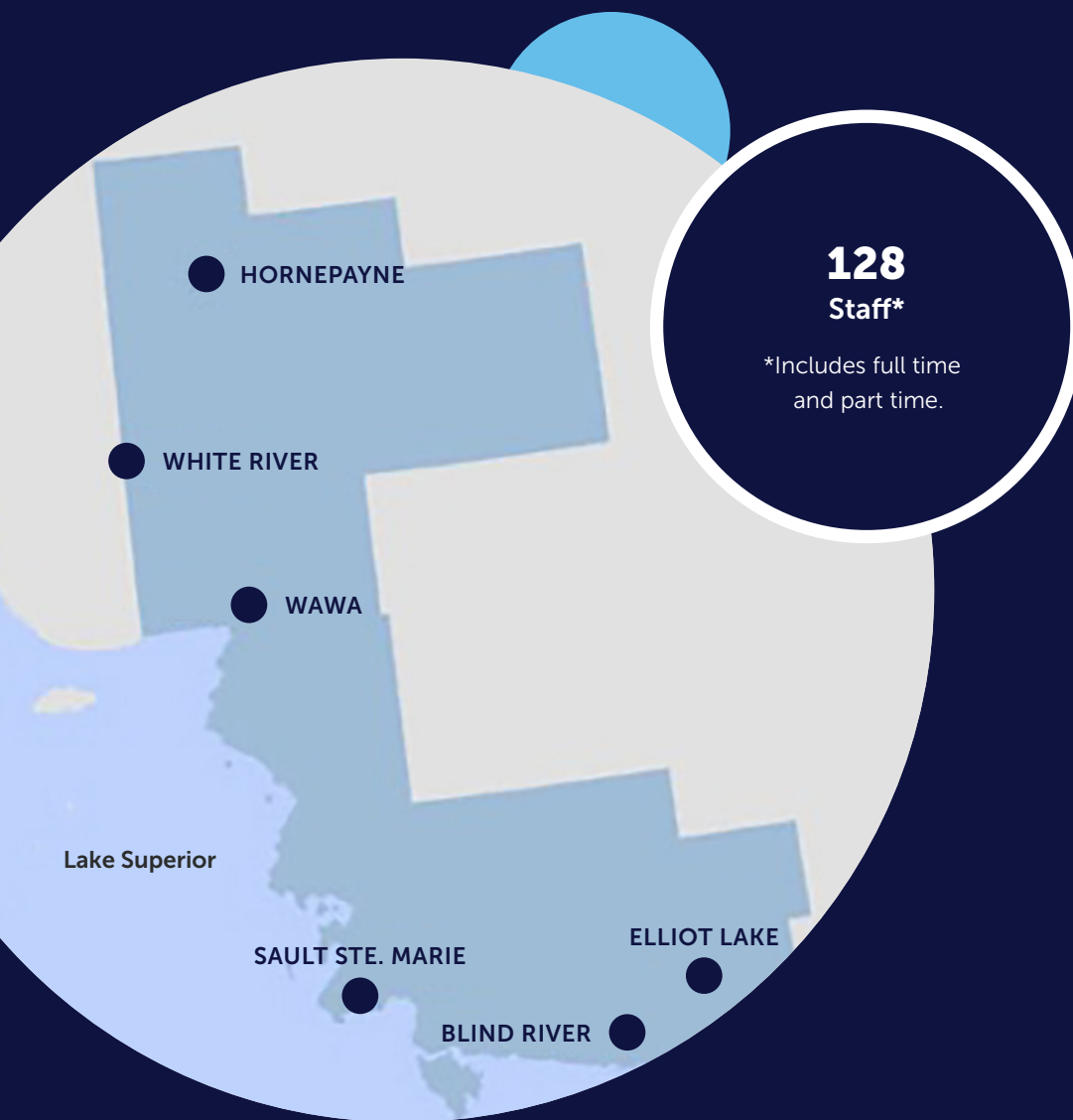
Expenses

Salaries	\$9,311,741	\$74,934	\$9,386,675			\$9,386,675
Employee benefits	\$2,772,187	\$20,364	\$2,792,551			\$2,792,551
Boarding rate payments	\$4,432,846		\$4,432,846			\$4,432,846
Building Occupancy	\$714,969	–	\$714,969			\$714,969
Clients' personal needs	\$593,259	\$14,268	\$607,527			\$607,527
Financial assistance	\$512,886		\$512,886			\$512,886
Health services	\$199,235		\$199,235			\$199,235
Office	\$175,972		\$175,972			\$175,972
Program	\$8,264	\$340,445	\$348,709		\$146,178	\$494,887
Promotion and publicity	\$450	–	\$450			\$450
Purchased services – case related	\$171,506	\$130,016	\$301,522			\$301,522
Purchased services – non case related	\$51,894	\$47,613	\$99,507			\$99,507
Technology	\$219,678	–	\$219,678			\$219,678
Training and recruitment	\$67,271	–	\$67,271			\$67,271
Transportation	\$398,767	\$2,388	\$401,155			\$401,155
Miscellaneous/Other	\$48,901		\$48,901			\$48,901
Amortization of capital assets			–	\$81,773		\$81,773
Interest on long-term liabilities	\$ 7,101		\$7,101			\$7,101
RESP transfer			–		–	–
Scholarships/Crown Ward Trust Funds			–		\$42,932	\$42,932
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$19,686,927	\$630,028	\$20,316,955	\$81,773	\$189,110	\$20,587,838

Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses, before under noted	(\$1,231,505)	\$2,387	(\$1,229,118)	(\$49,337)	\$193,346	(\$1,085,109)
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	(\$1,231,505)	\$2,387	(\$1,229,118)	(\$49,337)	\$193,346	(\$1,085,109)

* Complete audited financial statements available upon request through the Children's Aid Society of Algoma's finance department at 93 Pilgrim Street, Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 3E6

Agency Snapshot



SAULT STE. MARIE – HEAD OFFICE

191 Northern Ave. East
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6B 4H8



FAMILY CONNECTIONS

93 Pilgrim Street
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 3E6



NORTH ALGOMA – WAWA

31 Algoma Street
Wawa, ON P0S 1K0



BLIND RIVER

9 Lawton Avenue
Blind River, ON P0R 1B0



EAST ALGOMA – ELLIOT LAKE

29 Manitoba Road
Elliot Lake, ON P5A 2A7

Service Area Algoma District

GEOGRAPHIC AREA 48,281.36 KM

POPULATION 118,103

0-17 YRS OF AGE 19,420

POPULATION DENSITY 2.419 PER SQ. KM

Contact us by calling 705-949-0162, or toll-free 1-888-414-3571