

FIREFLY Annual Report

2024-2025



FIREFLY

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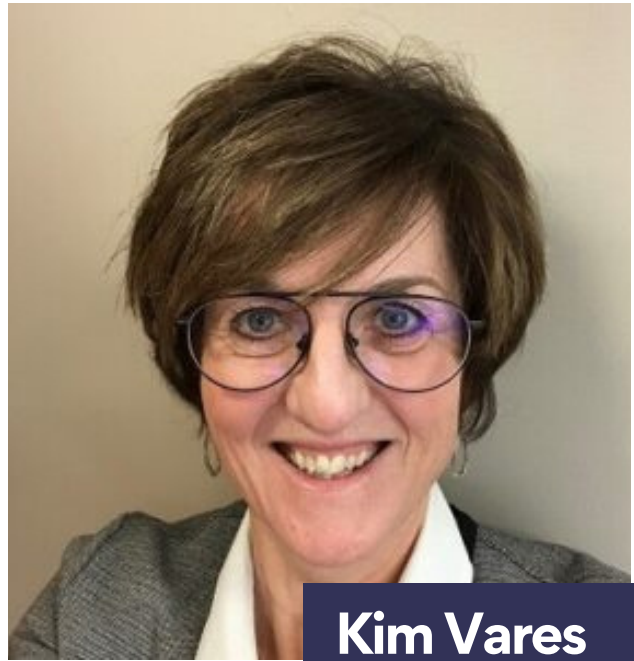
At FIREFLY, we acknowledge the traditional territories of many Indigenous peoples across Ontario. We honour the rich histories, vibrant cultures, and the enduring connections of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples to these lands and the waters that surround us. We are committed to building meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities, grounded in humility, respect, equity, and reconciliation, as we work alongside families to create healthy, resilient futures.

Letter from the CEO & Board Chair



**Karen
Ingebrigtsen**

CEO of FIREFLY



Kim Vares

Board Chair

Each year, the preparation of our Annual Report offers a meaningful opportunity to pause and reflect on the year that has passed. It is also a time to celebrate the infants, children, youth, families, and communities we have been privileged to serve, and to recognize the unwavering dedication of the FIREFLY Board, our staff, and the invaluable contributions of our many service partners.

On reflection, 2024/25 presented profound challenges—locally and globally—including economic instability, global conflicts, the impacts of climate change, housing insecurity, homelessness, food insecurity, and the darker aspects of social media. Children are especially vulnerable in such unstable environments. Yet, even with these challenges, we celebrate the brilliance of the northern spirit— we see it in the determination, resilience, and joy of children, families, and our communities.

This report highlights the progressive, innovative work of our staff, families, and community care partners, all dedicated to enhancing children's physical, mental, and developmental health and well-being. Noteworthy achievements this year include expanded access to local, specialized Children's Treatment Centre and developmental services.

We have also strengthened our specialized mental health supports, including services for eating disorders and child and adolescent psychiatry. FIREFLY staff continue to lead with innovative and responsive approaches, breaking down barriers to ensure timely, equitable access to services.

We are proud to highlight the vital role of families as experts and partners in service delivery. A particularly exciting development is the Parenting Mental Health Support Worker role, assumed by RoxAnne Daignault. Thanks to RoxAnne, the voices of families are being amplified and their lived experience is informing care planning. This new role is made possible through a strong partnership between the Lake of the Woods District Hospital, Canadian Mental Health Association Fort Frances and FIREFLY.

Our technology and information management teams have also been recognized at the provincial level for their outstanding work in leveraging data to guide service planning and decision-making. We are privileged to continue leading children's mental health system services, Children's Treatment Centre programming, coordinated access, and the Smart Start Hub across the Kenora and Rainy River Districts. We remain committed to working and growing with our communities and partners to achieve the best possible outcomes for infants, children, and youth.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone—our Board, staff, students, community partners, and the families we serve—for your contributions to our work and to improving the quality of life for so many. A special thank you goes to our dedicated operations staff, whose tireless efforts ensure everything runs smoothly behind the scenes. We are also deeply grateful to our funders, whose ongoing support helps us to respond effectively to the evolving needs of children and families.

This year marks a leadership transition at FIREFLY, with the retirement of Karen Ingebrigtsen, CEO, in June 2025. The Board extends our deepest gratitude for Karen's outstanding leadership and unwavering commitment to the infants, children, families, and communities we serve. As we look to the future, we are excited to welcome our incoming CEO, Darcia Curtis, formerly FIREFLY's Director of Service Excellence and Partnerships. Darcia is focused on responsive, quality care, supports strong service partnerships and has a passion for ensuring all children and families can access the care and support they need. With Darcia's leadership, we will remain dedicated to realizing the brightest futures for children.

As we close out this year, we move forward with renewed commitment to our mission, values, and vision. We are excited for the changes and opportunities ahead, and together, we will continue to reach beyond—for infants, children, youth, and communities.



Karen Ingebrigtsen



Kim Vares

Our Mission

Making a positive difference in the wellbeing and life journey of children, young people and families.

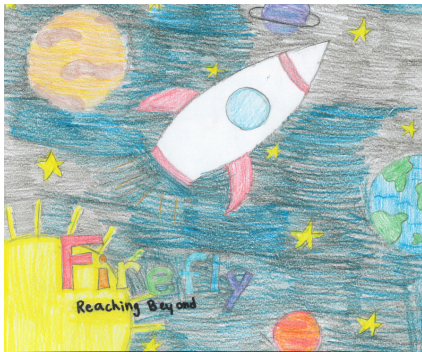
Our Vision:

Healthy People. Resilient Families. Vibrant Communities.

Our Values:

Reaching Beyond

We are future focused, driven by what is possible, and gracefully navigate change for the better.



Artwork by
Grade 6
student, Rylie
Kosloski, École
Ste-Marguerite
Bourgeoys,
Kenora

Heart

This value is about how we do our work; with heart, dedication and with good reason. It's how we approach our work; with empathy, passion, caring, respect and sensitivity.



Artwork by Grade 6
student, Laura
McNulty, École Ste-
Marguerite
Bourgeoys, Kenora

Sharing & Playing Together

Relationships are the foundation of everything we do. We believe in joining, connecting and collaborating.



Artwork by
Grade 6
student, Maggie
Carlson, École
Ste-Marguerite
Bourgeoys,
Kenora

Empowerment

We believe in everyone's strength and capacity and we support their development in the work we do. We cheer and praise, build confidence and celebrate the strengths of our clients.



Artwork by Grade 6
student, Maggie
Carlson, École Ste-
Marguerite
Bourgeoys, Kenora

Accountability

We are dependable and take responsibility for our work, our interactions, our relationships, and our results.



Artwork by
Grade 2
student,
Kierron, Open
Roads School,
Dryden

Our Commitments:

- We honour diversity and affirm the identities and lived experiences of those we serve.
- We strive to be exceptional in the services we provide.
- We are passionate advocates for equity, social justice and reconciliation.
- We work to reduce barriers and promote inclusion.
- We work continuously at being the best we can be as staff and as an organization.
- We are committed to physical, emotional, developmental and cultural safety.

2023-2026 Strategic Plan

CHAMPION

for children, families and communities.

- Elevate the voice of the families for change.
- Promote health equity and system integration.
- Facilitate and act on Calls to Action and service alignment with Indigenous communities.
- Create and grow with communities and partners for greater impact.

LISTEN

empower and inspire each other.

- Sustain an aligned culture of inclusion, pride and teamwork where staff voice matters.
- Increase staff retention and recruitment – Employer of Choice.
- Invest in our people for service excellence and planning for change.
- Foster an environment where staff, student and volunteers share and continuously grow.
- Provide a healthy and safe work environment.

TRANSFORM

experiences and outcomes.

- Integrate voice of families as experts and partners for service excellence.
- Remove barriers to timely and equitable access to services.
- Adopt creative approaches and outreach for underserved and those who are marginalized in our communities.
- Lead in regional best practices to deliver specialized services for those with complex needs.
- Incorporate cultural competency and client safety practices in all we do.

INNOVATE

for quality and success.

- Grow as a centre of excellence for research, innovation, and education.
- Drive evidence-based practice with enhanced capacity and efficient use of data.
- Build greater capacity and focus on external communications.
- Plan and develop facilities for staff and service requirements.

A New Chapter in Leadership

Honouring Karen

This June, Karen Ingebrigtsen will retire from her position as CEO of FIREFLY after 17 years at the helm. Karen's steadfast dedication to infants, children, and youth in Northwestern Ontario has been invaluable. The Board of Directors and FIREFLY extends its heartfelt gratitude to Karen for her exceptional leadership and dedication to the well-being of our children during her tenure as Chief Executive Officer.

"I have been profoundly inspired by the remarkable FIREFLY team, our many collaborative community partners and most especially, by the strength and determination of children, youth, families and communities to make bright futures. It has been a privilege to be part of FIREFLY whose mission is deep within the heart of Northwestern Ontario." – Karen Ingebrigtsen



Welcoming Darcia

Stepping into the role of CEO will be Darcia Curtis. Darcia brings a wealth of expertise in strategic planning, operational excellence and community partnerships. Having been a dedicated member of the FIREFLY team for the past six years, first serving as Partnership and Community Manager before transitioning to the role of Director of Service Excellence and Partnerships, where she has driven impactful initiatives to enhance service delivery and community engagement.

"I am deeply honoured to step into the role of CEO at FIREFLY this June. It's a responsibility I take on with both excitement and gratitude. Working under Karen for the past 6 years has shown me what it truly means to lead: with determination, resilience, and a deep commitment to the well-being of children, youth, and families in Northwestern Ontario."

– Darcia Curtis



Our Programs & Services



Centralized Intake

- Self-referral available through phone, online form and email
- SmartStart Hub services
- Ocean eReferral



Child and Youth Mental Health

- Counselling & Therapy
- Parenting Mental Health Support
- SNAP (Stop Now and Plan)
- Psychology Services
- Youth Justice Program
- Tele-psychiatry (SickKids)
- Triple P (Positive Parenting Program)
- Circle of Security Parenting Program
- Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Services
- Family and Caregiver Services
- One Stop Talk
- Eating Disorders

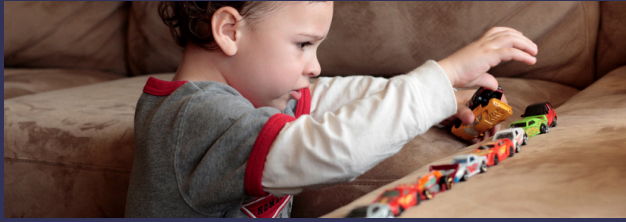


Child and Youth Developmental Services

- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Speech-Language Pathology
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication
- Complex Feeding and Swallowing
- Seating and Mobility
- Infant and Child Development
- Community Based Rehabilitation Services
- School Based Rehabilitation Services
- Indigenous partnerships in service delivery
- Pediatric Clinic
- Registered Behaviour Therapy

Respite Services

Coordinated Service Planning



Autism Services

- Ontario Diagnostic Hub
- School Support Services
- Core Clinical Services Ontario Autism Program (OAP)
- Urgent Response Service (OAP)
- Entry to School (OAP)
- Caregiver-Mediated Early Years (OAP)
- Foundational Family Services (OAP)



Indigenous Professional Learning Opportunities

- Provide differentiated Indigenous professional learning opportunities to enhance culturally relevant programming
- Health teaching



Early Years

- Child development activities
- Prenatal and nutrition services
- Play-based learning opportunities for children 0-6 and their families

What's new at FIREFLY?

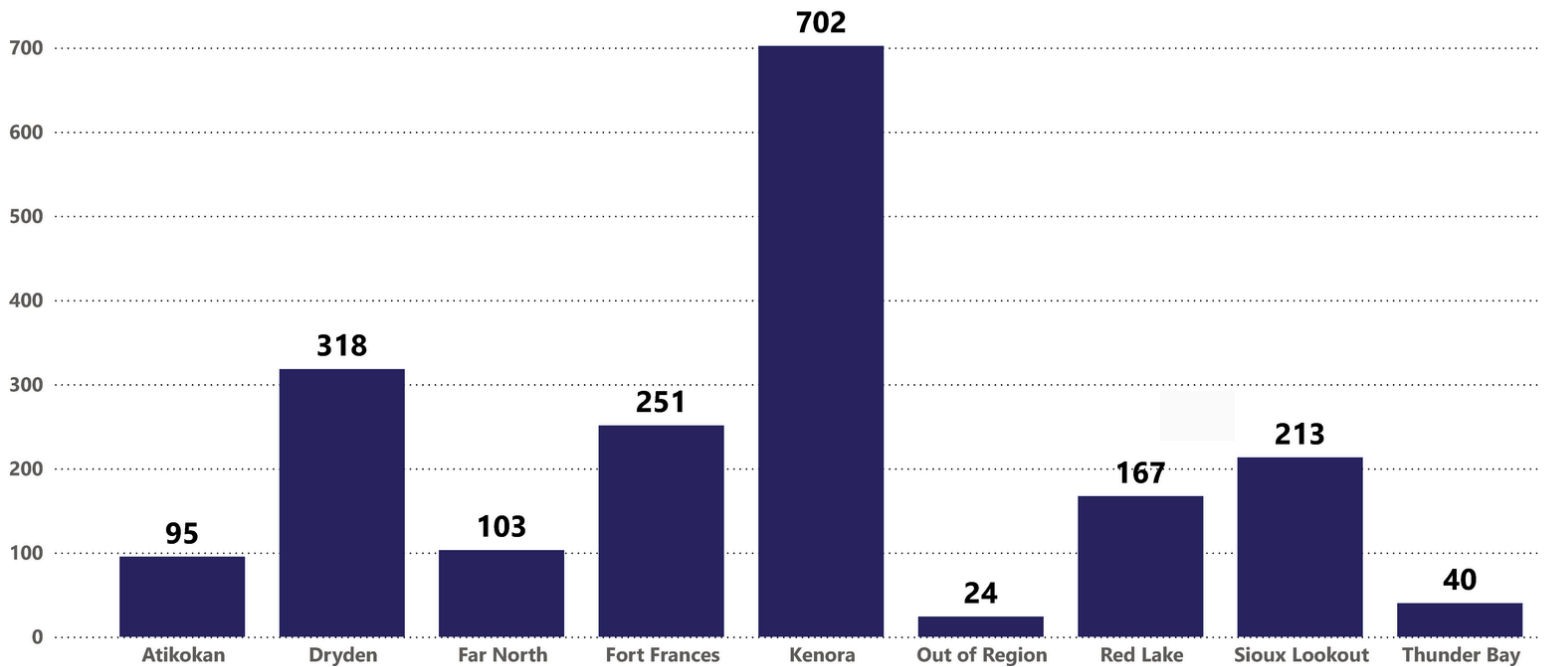
FIREFLY continues to strengthen its Early Years Mental Health Program by enhancing services for children aged 0–6 by integrating evidence-informed practices, supporting early identification and intervention, and building capacity among frontline staff. This collaboration is focused on ensuring that the youngest members of our communities receive timely, developmentally appropriate, and family-centered mental health support. Through regular consultation, training, and program refinement, FIREFLY is advancing its commitment to delivering high-quality, accessible mental health care for young children and their caregivers across the region.

FIREFLY is partnering with Shoal Lake 40 First Nation to deliver accessible, community-based mental health services. As part of this collaboration, a registered counsellor is now available full-time to provide counselling and therapy directly in Shoal Lake 40 First Nation. The partnership includes oversight of in-school children's mental health services, capacity-building initiatives, and community workshops to support children, families, and caregivers. This partnership reflects a shared commitment to improving mental wellness outcomes for the Shoal Lake 40 First Nation community in a way that honours local values and leadership.

As part of the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services' LIFT (Leading Innovation for Transformation) strategy to reduce waitlists and improve service access, FIREFLY has introduced several key initiatives. These include offering self-booking for 'While-You-Wait' programming, expanding summer programming to include both individual sessions and group camp models, and moving away from traditional 30-minute SLP therapy sessions to more flexible formats. FIREFLY has also increased the use of small group (Tier 2) therapy and introduced new priority level pathways, including the addition of a mild pathway to better match service intensity with client needs.

Centralized Intake

Clients Referred by Site



Out of Region clients referred are receiving One Stop Talk services.
Thunder Bay clients referred are receiving Urgent Response Services.

Offering SmartStart Hub Services

SmartStart Hubs are an entry point to children's special needs services that support the early identification of children's and families' strengths, goals, and needs, and help children and families get the help they need sooner. SmartStart Hubs are not the only way to access children's services, nor do families have to go through the Hub to access other programs and services.

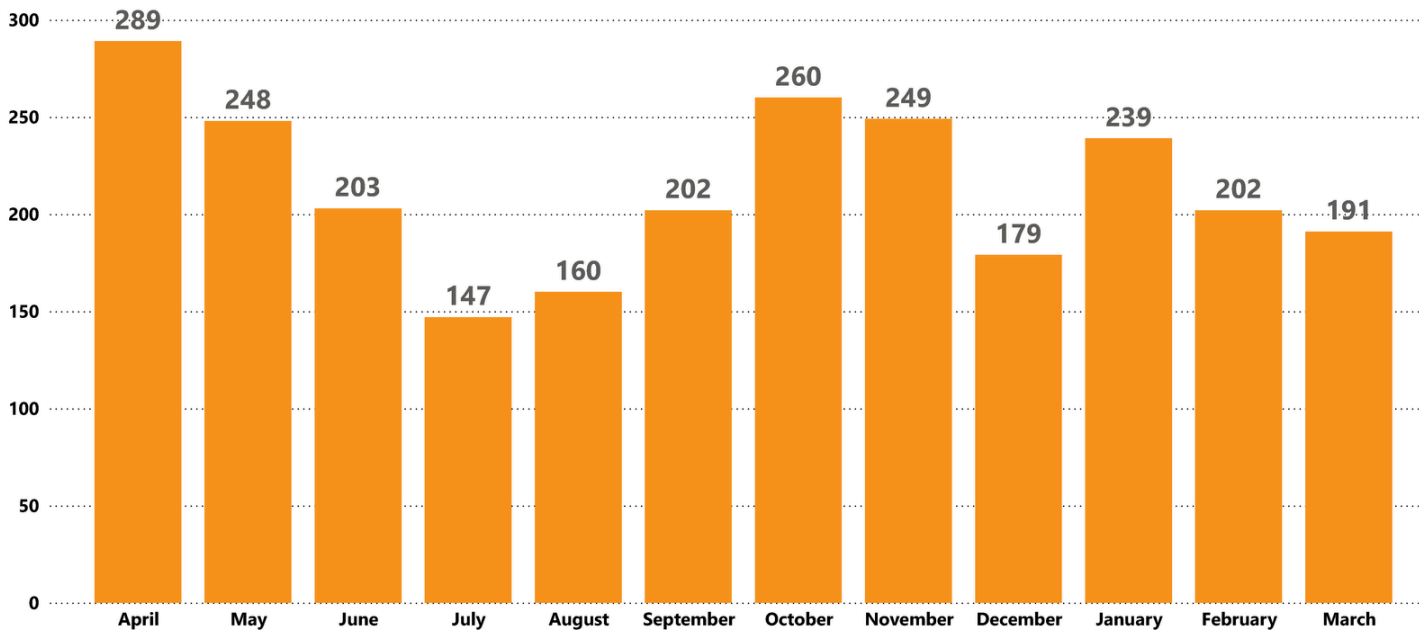
Our Centralized Intake is in Partnership with:



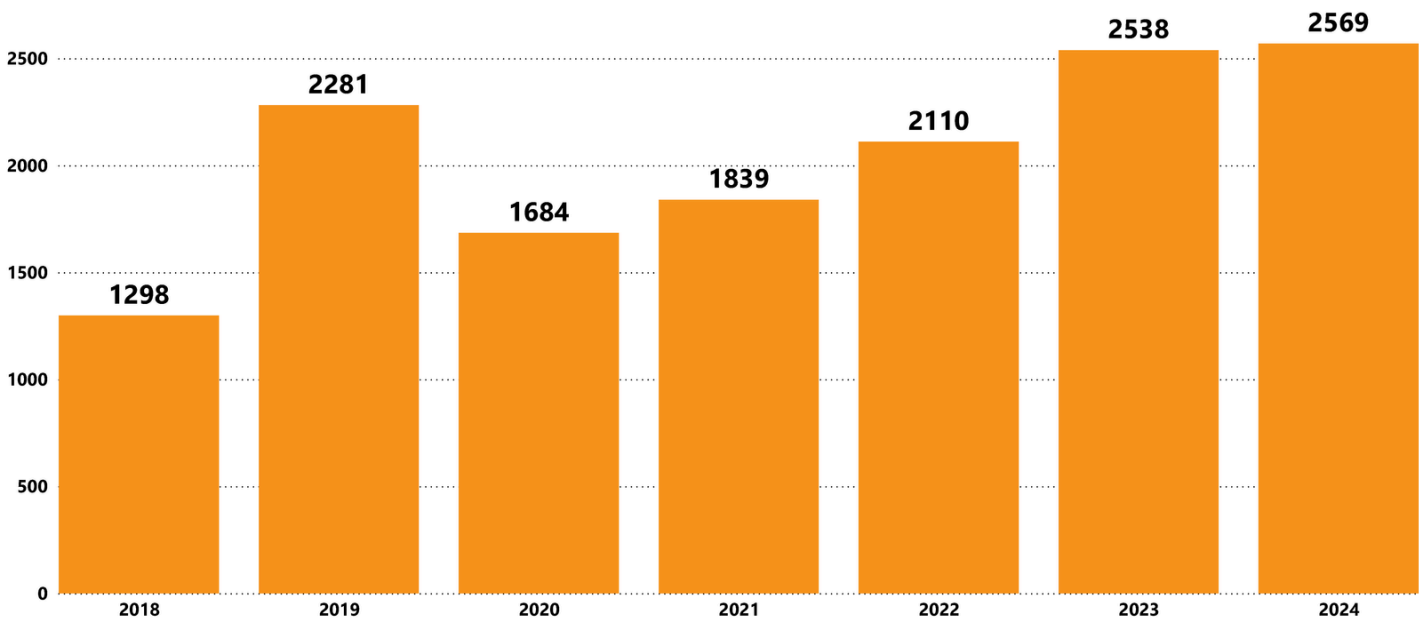


Referral Trends

2024/25 Referrals to FIREFLY by Month

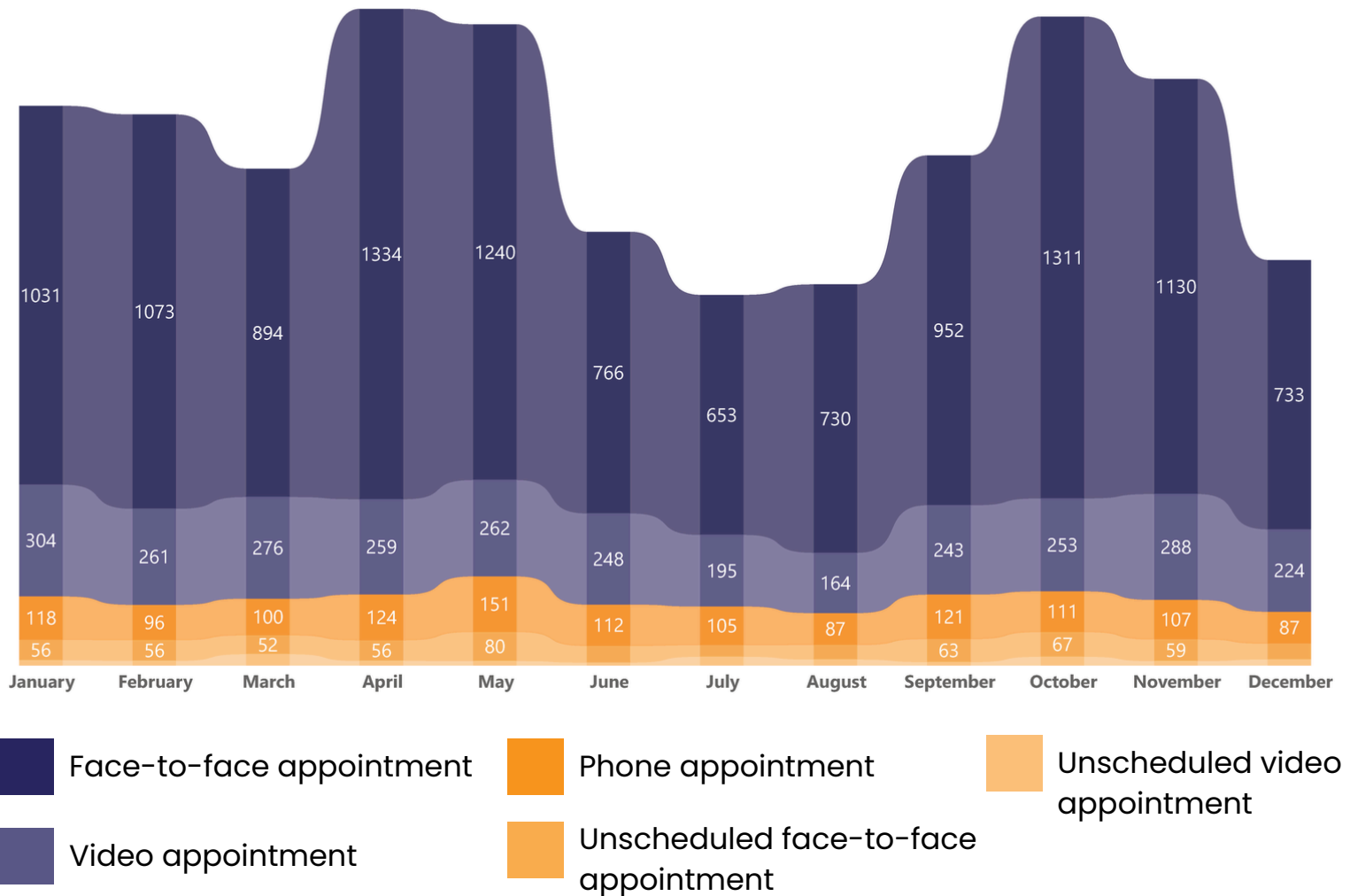


Yearly Referrals to FIREFLY Since 2018



Referral numbers dropped at the onset of the pandemic but have been steadily increasing year over year and have now exceeded pre-pandemic referral numbers.

Ways Clients Access Service



Service by Delivery Type

FIREFLY staff work to provide services in creative, safe, and barrier-free ways based on the preferences of our clients and their families.

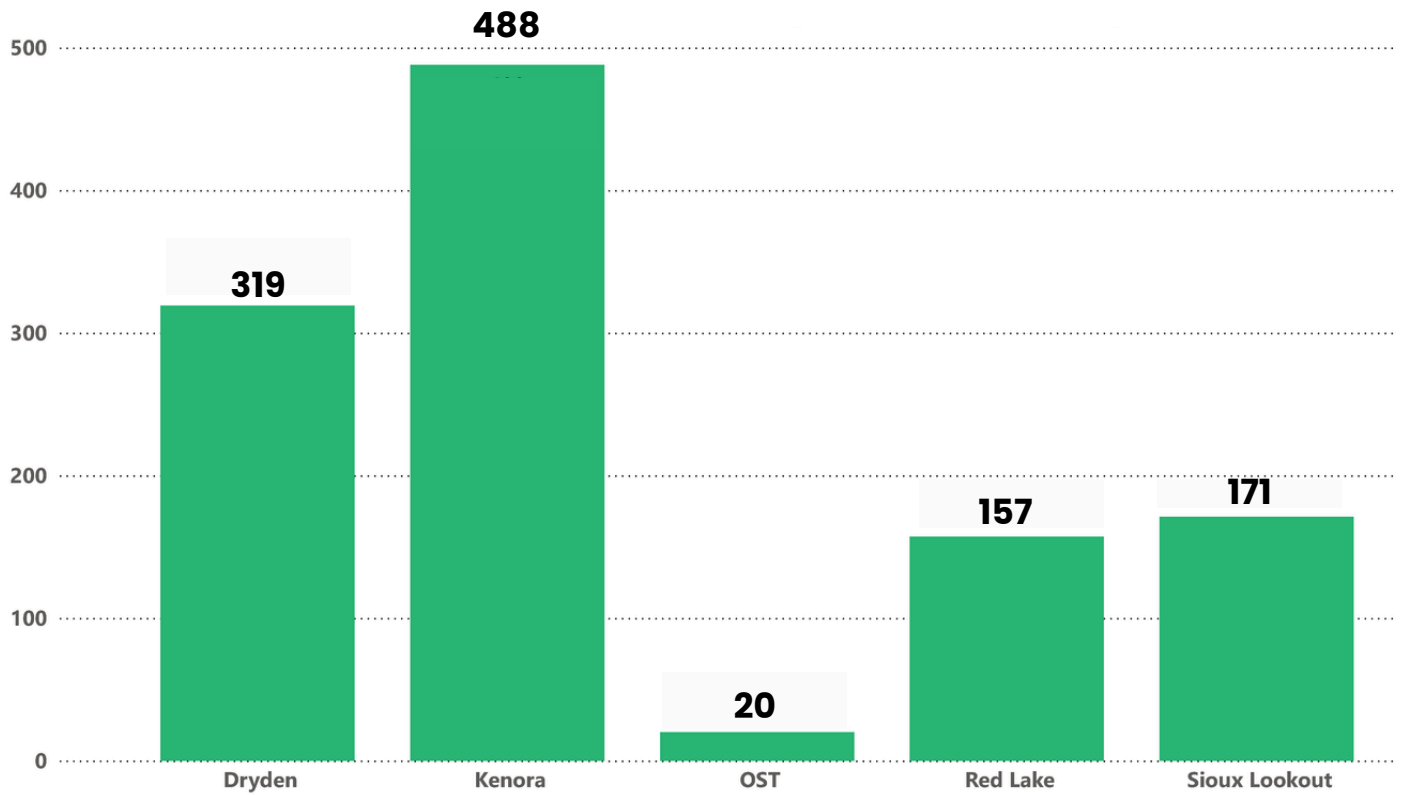
The graphic above demonstrates the many ways clients receive services.

Child and Youth Mental Health (CYMH)



HEALTHY PEOPLE. RESILIENT FAMILIES. VIBRANT COMMUNITIES.

Clients Receiving CYMH Services by Site



- OST – One Stop Talk



In-School Counselling Partnership

with Keewatin-Patricia District School Board

Top 5 Concerns:

- Anxiety, Panic, Worry (67)
- Difficulty Managing Emotions (41)
- Depression or Low mood (36)
- Loss and/or Grief (15)
- Isolation and Loneliness (13)



Other Presenting Concerns at Intake (12 or less)

- Attention and Concentration
- Family Conflict
- Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviour
- Trauma Related Stress and Maladjustment/Abuse
- Aggression, Physical fighting, or Oppositional behaviours
- Self-harm/Non-suicidal Self-injury
- Eating or Weight-related Concerns
- School Based Concerns
- Self Esteem Issues
- Abuse
- Attendance issues, Skipping classes or Truancy
- Behavioural Concerns
- Learning Difficulties (including virtual)
- Conduct Related Concerns
- Developmental Concerns
- Harassment or Bullying
- Mental Health Support Services
- Gender Identity Concerns
- Problematic Substance Use (alcohol, tobacco, cannabis or other drugs)
- Body Image Concerns
- Caregiver Separation or Divorce Issues
- Gaming Addictions
- Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour
- Rehab-Related Concerns

CYMH Services

SNAP® (Stop Now And Plan)

SNAP®, which stands for Stop Now and Plan, is an evidence-based cognitive-behavioural model that teaches children struggling with behavioural issues, and their caregivers, how to manage their emotions and behaviour by getting them to stop, think, and plan positive alternatives before acting impulsively.



15
CLIENTS SERVED



12
CLIENTS SERVED

Complex Special Needs

Complex Special Needs funding provides additional service(s) that fall within the Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services' mandate to eligible children and youth whose complexity of need is beyond the capacity of the family and local services. This program aims to decrease health and safety risks of children/youth.

Tele-Mental Health

Tele-Mental Health is a Telepsychiatry program that allows for the provision of virtual psychiatric consultations from SickKids Hospital.

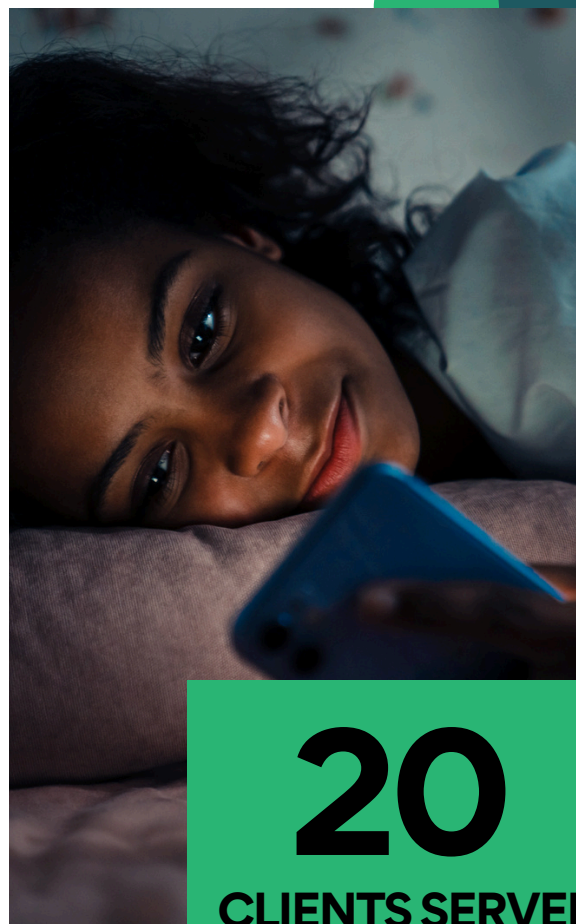
72
CLIENTS SERVED



ONE STOP TALK

Services are provided through an integrated network of infant, child, and youth mental health agencies across Ontario.

FIREFLY is a One Stop Talk service provider. One Stop Talk offers children, youth, and their families immediate access to free virtual mental health supports when and how they need them. The program provides single-session counselling support and ensures direct referral to additional services when needed.



20
CLIENTS SERVED



Triple P (Positive Parenting Program)

Triple P is a parenting program that provides parents and caregivers with a toolbox for parenting, allowing parents and caregivers the opportunity to choose the strategies they need.

Triple P is an evidence-based program built around knowledge of child psychology and best practice.

18
CLIENTS SERVED

Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

The CAPS program is a multidisciplinary outpatient service for children and youth (ages 0-17) in Northwestern Ontario who require psychiatric services to address complex mental health needs.

The FIREFLY CAPS team connects clients with existing psychiatric service providers that offer assessment, consultation, diagnosis, and intervention. The CAPS team coordinates and supports this psychiatric service provision by providing intake, triage, screening, assessment, case management, follow-up, and discharge planning.



177
CLIENTS SERVED



53
CLIENTS SERVED

Eating Disorders

FIREFLY offers Eating Disorders services upon receiving a referral where body image and/or disordered eating concerns are present, mental health services and dietitian services are offered to children, youth, and families. The Registered Dietitian works in partnership with the Counsellor to provide assessment and intervention to clients. The Registered Dietitian is available for in-house consultation when clinicians have queries regarding clients with body image and/or disordered eating concerns.

Youth Justice Services

Youth Justice Services are for youth who are aged twelve to seventeen years at the time they were involved in a crime. Services include a variety of cognitive-based behavioural interventions provided on an individual, family, and/or group basis. FIREFLY operates the Youth Mental Health Court Worker Program in Kenora and Dryden. This is a mental health diversion program which assists youth who are considered appropriate for diversion to access mental health services and support. FIREFLY also operates the Youth Justice Committee program in Dryden. This program offers an alternative to the formal court processes for young people, using a restorative justice approach stressing accountability and responsibility.

20

Youth Justice
Committee

9

Youth Mental
Health Court
Worker

22

Section 34
Assessments

3

Youth Justice
Counselling

Parenting Mental Health Support Worker

RoxAnne Daignault works as the Parenting Mental Health Support Worker at FIREFLY. Through this partnership program she offers one-on-one as well as group sessions that focus on connecting all parents and caregivers in Northwestern Ontario to be able to share, feel heard, feel seen, and feel supported while caring for loved ones struggling with mental health.

Since inception in November 2023, 27 caregivers have attended one-on-one sessions, while 94 people have joined the group sessions.



44

GROUP
SESSIONS

87

ONE-ON-ONE
SESSIONS

Community Partners



Lake of the Woods
District Hospital



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Fort Frances Branch
Mental health for all

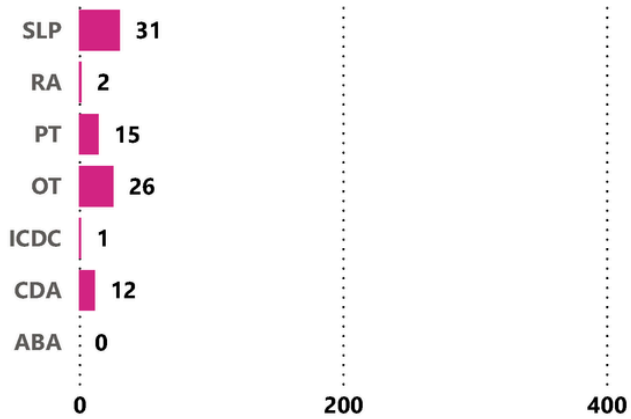
Child and Youth Development Services (CYDS)



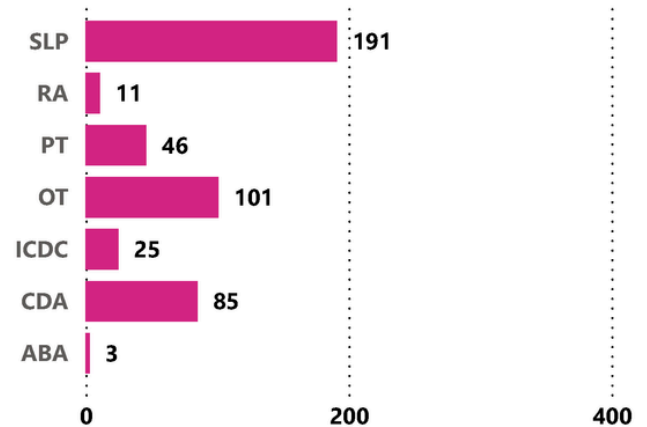
HEALTHY PEOPLE. RESILIENT FAMILIES. VIBRANT COMMUNITIES.

CYDS Clients by FIREFLY Site

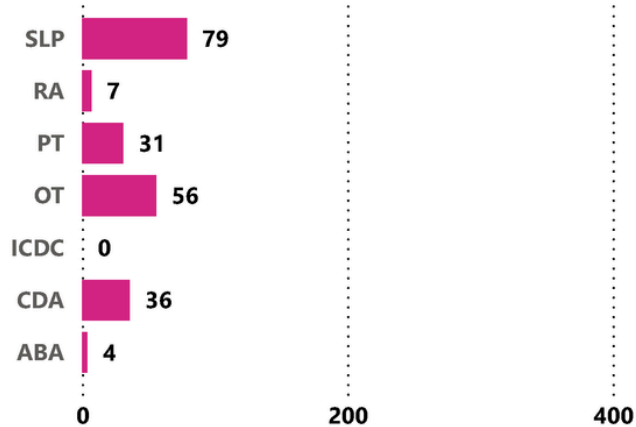
Atikokan



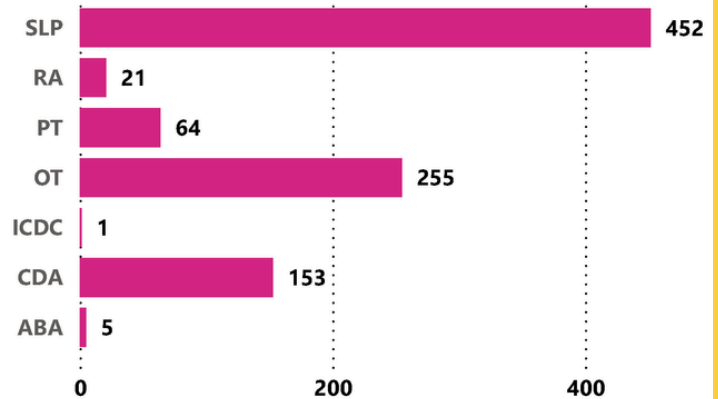
Dryden



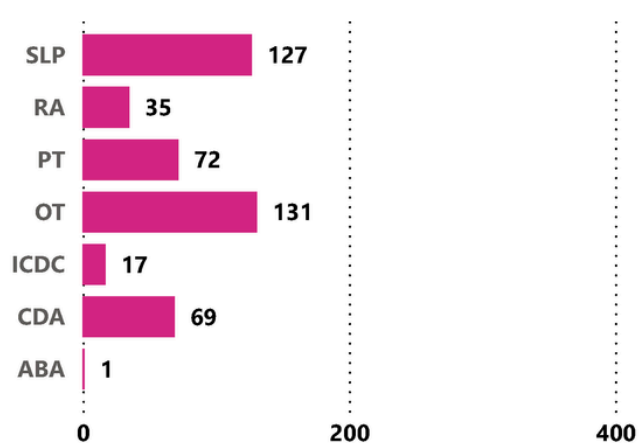
Fort Frances



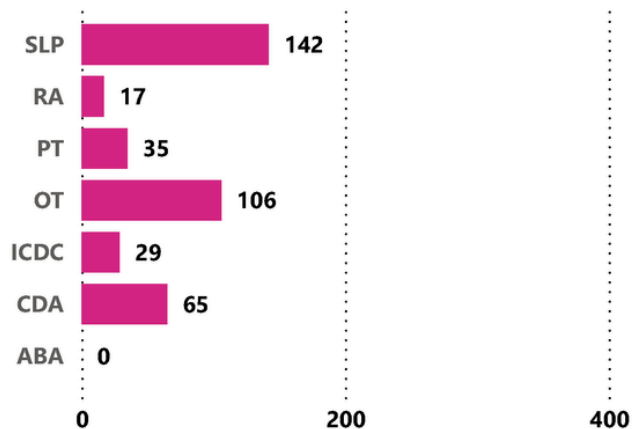
Kenora



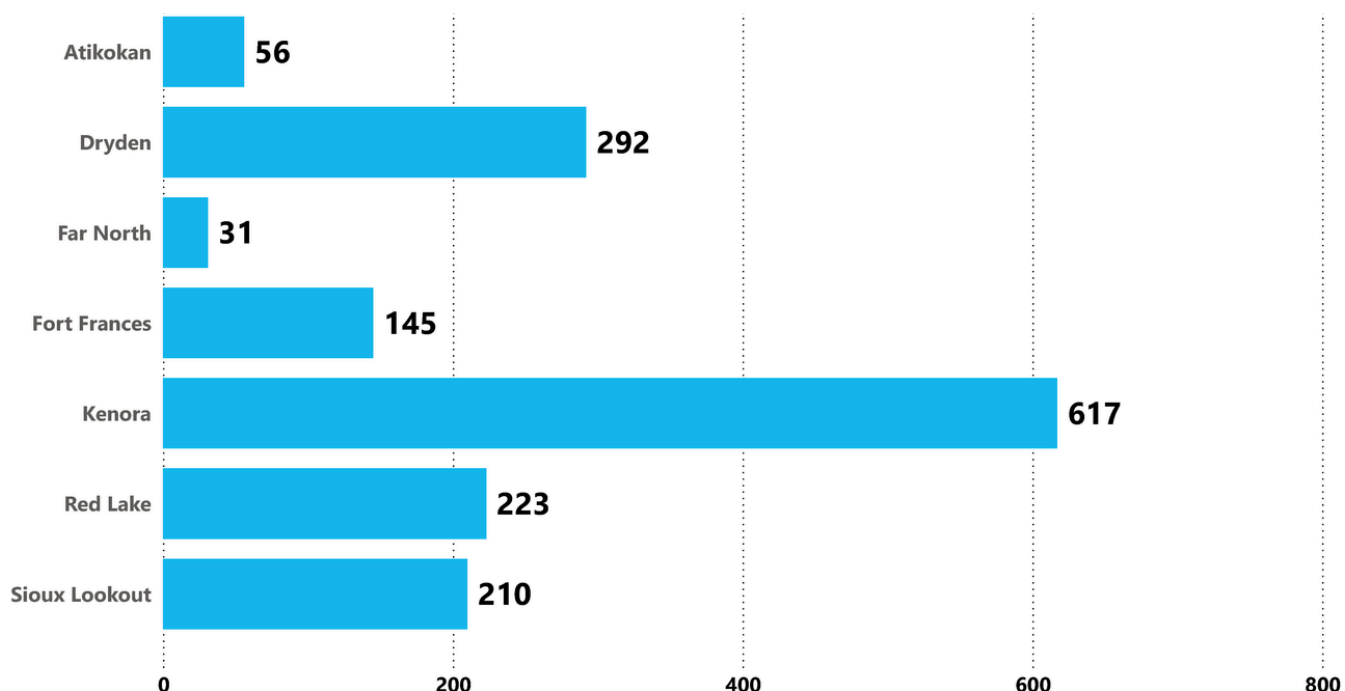
Red Lake



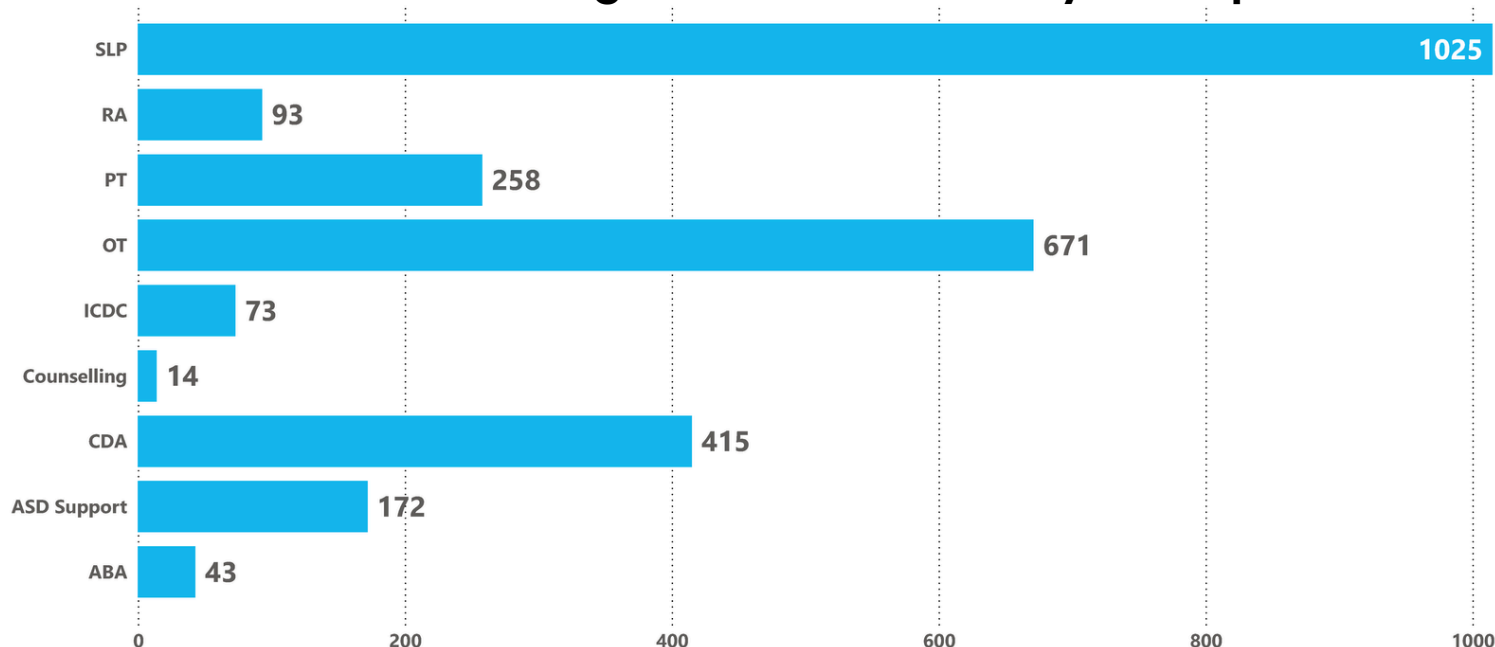
Sioux Lookout



Clients Receiving CYDS Services by FIREFLY Site



Clients Receiving CYDS Services by Discipline



- SLP – Speech-Language Pathologist
- RA – Rehabilitation Assistant
- PT – Physiotherapy
- OT – Occupational Therapy
- ICDC – Infant and Child Development Consultant

- CDA – Communication Assistant
- ASD Support – Autism Spectrum Disorder Support
- ABA – Applied Behavioural Analysis

Specialty Services

Pediatric Clinic

This clinic, offered at our Kenora site by Dr. Jennifer Coombs, Pediatrician, focuses on addressing concerns with developmental delays, ADHD/ADD, anxiety, complex motor challenges, and cerebral palsy. An extra 14 pediatric clinic clients (with only 1 no show) attended in-person appointments this past year with Resident physician, Dr. Kayla Edison in Winnipeg.

Future Plans: FIREFLY will work to expand the focus of the Pediatric Clinic and partner with local service providers to better meet the needs of clients within the region.



82
CLIENTS SERVED



18
CLIENTS SERVED

Seating and Mobility Clinic

The Seating and Mobility Clinic offers children and youth unique ways to participate in daily life at home, school or in the community by prescribing custom and off-the-shelf equipment, including:

- Supportive seating systems
- Specialized stroller systems
- Manual wheelchairs
- Power wheelchairs

Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists assess your child and work with local vendors to determine the most appropriate equipment.

Future Plans: Increase partnerships with local vendors

Complex Feeding & Swallowing Clinic

This clinic is for non-emergency, complex feeding and swallowing concerns. The interprofessional assessment team—which includes Occupational Therapy, Speech-Language Pathology, and a Registered Dietitian—will collaborate with your team to support clients who may experience:

- Oral motor difficulties
- Risk of failure to thrive in infants
- G-tube feeding needs
- Problem Feeding

For clients who do not meet the clinic's referral criteria for feeding concerns, parents and caregivers are encouraged to view the Supporting Your Picky Eater video available on the FIREFLY website.

Future Plans: Further development of the Problem Feeders pathway.



89
CLIENTS SERVED

Augmentative & Alternative Communication Clinic (AAC)



142
CLIENTS SERVED

This clinic is a certified General Level AAC Clinic through the Assistive Devices Program (ADP). An Interprofessional team of Occupational Therapists and Speech Language Pathologists work together to identify, recommend, and assist in securing funding for tools that support spoken and written communication for children and youth who may be:

- Nonspeaking;
- Have limited spoken communication;
- Have severe speech errors, making it difficult for others to understand them;
- Physically unable to produce written communication that is functional for their day-to-day needs and desires.

The clinic team supports the client's family and community team members to continue with the prescribed communication strategies.

Future Plans: Obtain funding as well as increased role for full complement of AAC Service team staffing to support follow-up services.

Partnerships

Kenora Chiefs Advisory



79

OCCUPATIONAL
THERAPY
CLIENTS SERVED

56

PHYSIOTHERAPY
CLIENTS SERVED

300

SPEECH-
LANGUAGE
PATHOLOGY
CLIENTS SERVED

1257

OCCUPATIONAL
THERAPY
ENCOUNTERS*

730

PHYSIOTHERAPY
ENCOUNTERS*

6030

SPEECH-
LANGUAGE
PATHOLOGY
ENCOUNTERS*

*

Encounters: This number includes all modes of service provided to each client, i.e. in-person visit, phone call, attempted contact, no show, virtual visit, etc.

Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority



15

PHYSIOTHERAPY
CLIENTS SERVED

1

PHYSIOTHERAPY
ENCOUNTERS*

1

PHYSIOTHERAPY
GROUP SESSIONS

368

SPEECH-
LANGUAGE
PATHOLOGY
CLIENTS SERVED

2732

SPEECH-
LANGUAGE
PATHOLOGY
ENCOUNTERS*

113

SPEECH-
LANGUAGE
PATHOLOGY
GROUP SESSIONS

*

Encounters: This number includes all modes of service provided to each client, i.e. in-person visit, phone call, attempted contact, no show, virtual visit, etc.

Respite

Respite is a periodic, short-term break to relieve a family of the responsibility of daily care of a family member with a physical and/or developmental disability. Respite creates greater opportunities for all family members to live actively and participate in community activities and allows parents/caregivers time for themselves.

41

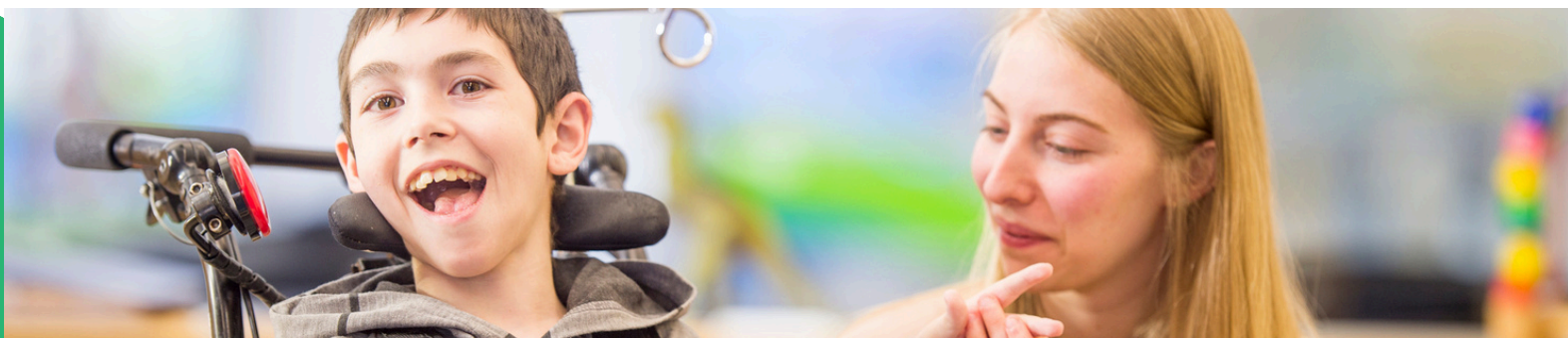
In-home Respite

261

Enhanced Autism Spectrum
Disorder Respite

88

Out-of-home
Respite



Coordinated Service Planning

Coordinated Service Planning supports families with children and youth with multiple or complex special needs. Coordinated Service Planning links families to services and ensures that all the professionals involved with the family are working together as a team.

243
CLIENTS SERVED

Autism Services

FIREFLY offers professional assessment, intervention, and treatment services for children and youth under 18 with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Through the Ontario Autism Program (OAP), FIREFLY also provides a wide range of programs and services designed to meet the diverse needs of children and their families.

Ontario Autism Diagnostic Hub

The Northwestern Ontario Autism Diagnostic Hub is a collaborative partnership established to meet the immediate need of autism diagnostic services in Northwestern Ontario with funding transfer from Child and Community Resources (CCR) to accomplish this. The Autism Diagnostic Hub is a partnership between FIREFLY and five other agencies within our service area.

135

**Number of
children referred**

105

**Number of assessments
completed**

83%

**Percentage of children and
youth that received a
diagnosis of ASD**



51

CLIENTS SERVED

Urgent Response Services

Urgent Response Service is a time-limited, rapid service response for children and youth with Autism, registered with the Ontario Autism Program (OAP). Eligible families can receive up to 12 weeks of services and support which are specifically designed to address a behaviour of concern.

This service is intended to address one specific high-risk behaviour need with a focus on preventing further escalation of risk of harm to self, others, and/or property.

Autism Services cont'd

Core Clinical Services

FIREFLY supported clients with core clinical budgets in the following needs areas:

- 6 Applied Behavior Analysis
- Mental Health Services (counselling and psychotherapy) are now also available.

Entry to School



The Entry to School Program helps children develop school-readiness skills and provides transition supports as they enter kindergarten or Grade 1 for the first time. The group-based program is delivered by multi-disciplinary staff with expertise in:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Applied Behaviour Analysis
- Speech-Language Pathology
- Occupational Therapy
- Early Childhood Development

18

CLIENTS SERVED

Direct Intervention

Up to 15 hours per week skill-building program, focused on helping children develop school-readiness skills in six areas: communication, play, social interactions, functional routines, behavioural self-management, pre-academics, learning and attention.

18

CLIENTS SERVED

Transition Phase

Families and educators can access consultation services from entry to school program staff, as needed, during a child's transition phase.

Early Years



HEALTHY PEOPLE. RESILIENT FAMILIES. VIBRANT COMMUNITIES.



EarlyON

EarlyON Child and Family Centres offer high quality, free drop-in and scheduled programs for young children and their families where they can learn, grow, connect with others, and learn about supports in the community. FIREFLY operates two sites in Kenora and one in Sioux Lookout.

6,182*
PARENT/CAREGIVER VISITS

6,629*
CHILD VISITS

*Data from the calendar year 2024.

Highlights

- All staff in our three locations are now IAIM certified as Infant Massage Instructors. This allows us to provide more opportunities for Infant Massage classes, a favourite with families.
- The Kenora site has a new community partnership with the Lactation Consultant from the Sunset Country Family Health Team. She visits once a month during Baby Beginnings to answer families' questions and concerns about their infants' feeding and development.
 - The Sioux Lookout location has an improved direct entrance into our centre now situated at ground level with plenty of room for stroller parking.
 - Outdoor programming continues to expand in all of our locations. We offer a variety of activities such as Fresh Air Fridays, Day at the Market, Stroll n Roll walks, Feeding the Birds at Vernon Trails, Family Outings to Falcon Lake and several other pop-up events.





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PARTICIPANTS

Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP)

The Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program helps improve the health of pregnant people, new parents and their babies who face challenges that put their health at risk in Kenora, Red Lake and Ear Falls.

Community Action Program for Children (CAPC)

The Community Action Plan for Children promotes the health and wellbeing of children up to the age of 6 years, who face challenges that put their health at risk in Kenora, Red Lake, and Ear Falls.

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PARTICIPANTS

Highlights from CPNP and CAPC:

- The Community Action Program for Children is a new program FIREFLY successfully launched in November 2024.
- All staff are now IAIM certified as Infant Massage Instructors and offer Infant Massage classes or individual sessions. It is a highly popular program with clients.
- Kenora staff are trained in Car Seat Safety & Inspection and now provide education and support in this area. Service is most requested prior to newborn's discharge from the hospital or when families are transitioning their children between car seats and booster seats.



Indigenous Professional Learning Opportunities & First Nation Resource & Support Programs

The Indigenous Professional Learning Opportunities Program (IPLO) provides learning experiences and resources to early childhood educators and leadership working in early learning programs located on reserve in Ontario.

The First Nation Resource & Support Program helps with program start up, meeting licensing requirements and facilitating regional networks for early learning programs located on reserve in the FIREFLY and Thunder Bay regions.

Highlights

- A Tasty Tales cookbook was created to distribute to all First Nation Early Learning Programs in the province. The cookbook has traditional and favorite recipes from the Thunder Bay District Early Learning Programs.
- Staff participated in a week long Reggio Emilia Canadian Study Tour. The Reggio Emilia approach helped inform Ontario's Pedagogy returning to the root of learning alongside children complimenting the Indigenous worldview. Staff are weaving this learning into the new resources and supports provided to First Nation Early Learning programs across the province.
- A new online resource was developed and is now available to access on the First Nation Early Learning website, "Gifts from Mother Earth". It follows the seasons and highlights resources to help educators find culture and language activities and view stories from Elders.

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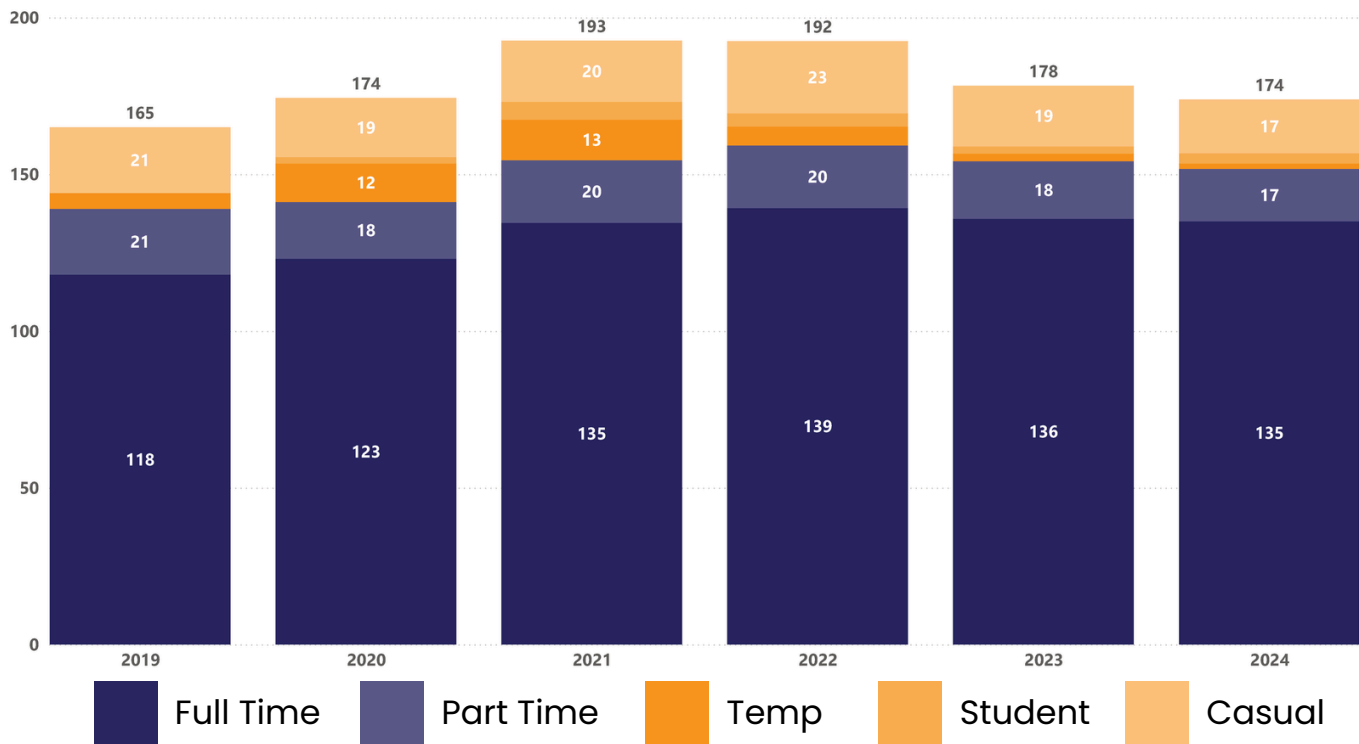
**First Nation Child Care
Centres & Child and Family
Programs on reserve with
access to both programs
throughout Ontario**

49,000

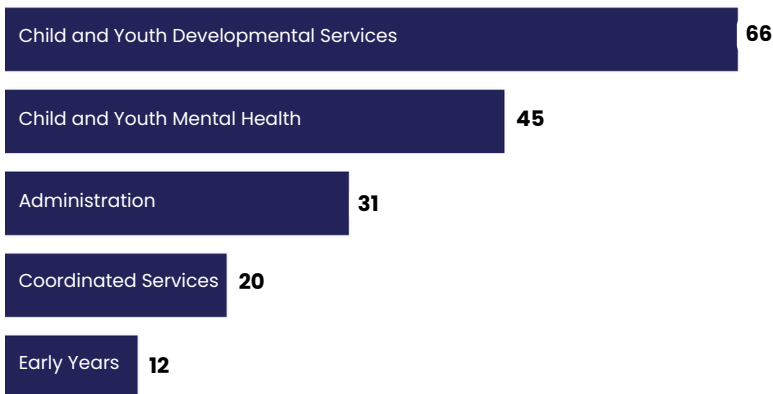
**First Nation Early
Learning
Collaboration
Website page
views**

Human Resources

Average Monthly Staff by Employment Status



Staff by Department



Recruitment



Years of Service



Employee Service Awards

40 YEARS

Lori Kutney

Finance Officer

15 YEARS

Krista Olson

Clinical Manager

Treena Wallace

Rehab Clinic Coordinator

20 YEARS

Wanda Gordon

IPLO Coordinator

Jennifer Armit

Intake Worker

10 YEARS

Barb Larkin

Administrative Assistant

Lorelei McCool

ASD Diagnostic Hub Coordinator

Amanda Brennan

Clinical Manager

5 YEARS

Aislinn Ivey

Counsellor

Karen Pries

Physiotherapist

Meagan Empey

Occupational Therapist

Courtney Bloemberg

Speech-Language Pathologist

Lindsey Peeters

Counsellor

Christine Smith

Service Coordinator



Client Experiences

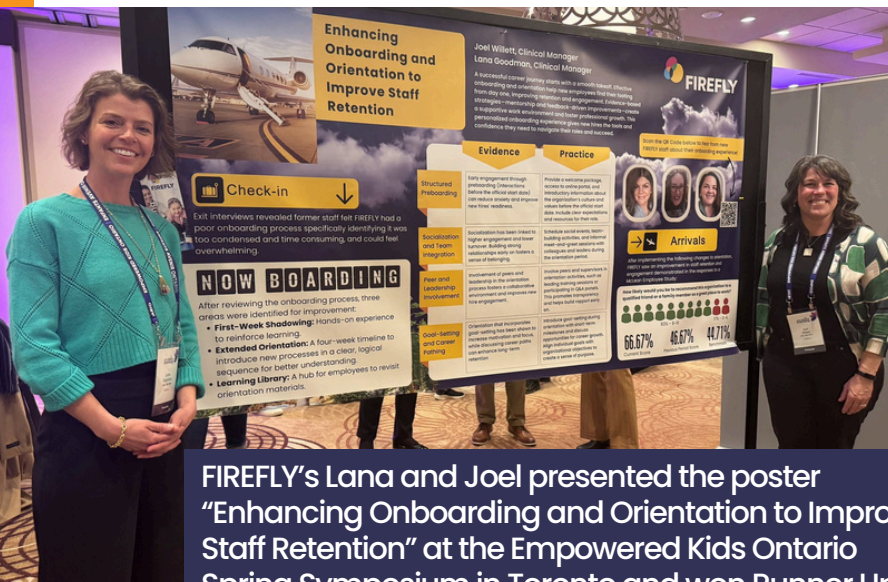
“When our son was diagnosed with autism last fall, we were amazed by how smooth and timely the process was. From the initial assessment to receiving the diagnosis, everything moved quickly. Since then, the support from our occupational therapist, who works closely with his school team, has been incredible! It can be so overwhelming to get a diagnosis but with the help of our amazing OT (and soon SLP), we really feel like we’re giving our son the strongest foundation to thrive in his own way.”

“This winter, we faced an unexpected and challenging situation with our youngest child. We needed help getting her back to school and on the path to recovery. FIREFLY stepped in at a critical time and supported us every step of the way. They worked closely with us, our child, and the school to ensure she received the care and guidance we all needed.”

“We have had nothing but a positive experience with our daughter’s counselling at FIREFLY. From the intake process, to flexibility in making and rescheduling appointments, a meaningful and comfortable connection with her counsellor, the practical and age appropriate advice and strategies presented in fun, light hearted ways...it’s all been with ease, care and a lot of support. When you first acknowledge your child and family may need counselling, the last thing you want is another stressor!

Our daughter has grown in that she is comfortable with the idea of counselling and the use of strategies. She is now willing to work through tough moments more often, rather than explode. Overall, it’s given us language to use together and ways to cope with big feelings as a whole family.”

FIREFLY in the Community



FIREFLY's Lana and Joel presented the poster "Enhancing Onboarding and Orientation to Improve Staff Retention" at the Empowered Kids Ontario Spring Symposium in Toronto and won Runner Up for People's Choice Award.



FIREFLY's Athena and Kierstin had a lot of fun at an Open House at Sioux North High School back in September.



Dryden FIREFLY staff took part in the 2SLGBTQIA+ Pride Fair during Pride Month last June.



For the second year, FIREFLY staff have enjoyed taking part in the #SelfLove campaign at both high schools in Kenora during Eating Disorders Awareness Week in February. Staff helped hold a number of events throughout the week.



FIREFLY's Anna reads to a classroom in Red Lake during Autism Awareness Week. This year saw lots of activity from FIREFLY staff out in schools across the region.



Atikokan FIREFLY staff enjoyed a nice spring day by helping make their community a cleaner place!

THANK YOU!

Community Partners and Funders

- All Nations Health Partnership Ontario Health Team
- Assistive Devices Program
- Anishinaabe Abinooji Family Services
- Behaviour Innovations
- Best Start Network –Rainy River District
- Bimose Tribal Council
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- Capitalize for Kids
- Chad Clower – Speech-Language Pathologist
- Child & Community Resources
- Child Development Institute
- Children's Center Thunder Bay
- Children's Mental Health Ontario
- City of Kenora
- Community Counselling and Addictions Services, Red Lake
- Community Living Atikokan
- Community Living Dryden-Sioux Lookout
- Community Living Fort Frances and District
- Community Support Centre – NW
- Confederation College
- Conseil scolaire de district catholique des Aurores boréales
- Creative Therapy Associates
- Creighton Youth Services
- Dearborn Therapy
- Dryden Native Friendship Centre
- Dryden Regional Health Centre
- Dryden Regional Mental Health and Addiction Services
- Engage Learning
- Empowered Kids Ontario
- George Jeffrey Children's Centre
- Giishkaandago 'Ikwe Health Services
- Government of Canada – Jordan's Principle
- HAEPI SLP Therapy Services
- Harmony Centre for Community Living
- Hoshizaki House, Dryden
- Keewatin-Patricia District School Board
- Kenora & Lake of the Woods Regional Community Foundation
- Kenora Association for Community Living
- Kenora Catholic District School Board
- Kenora Chiefs Advisory
- Kenora District Services Board
- Kenora Public Library
- Kenora-Rainy River Districts Child and Family Services
- Kenora Youth Wellness Hub
- Kiiwetinoong Healing Waters Ontario Health Team
- Knowledge Institute on Child and Youth Mental Health and Addictions
- Lake of the Woods District Hospital
- Mary Berglund Community Health Centre
- Meno Ya Win Health Centre
- Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Health
- NeChee Friendship Centre
- New Starts Women's Shelter
- Nigonikaapawitang Nanadaamowin Program
- Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre
- Nodin Child & Family Intervention Services
- Northwestern Health Unit
- Northwest Catholic District School Board
- NorWest Community Health Centre
- Northern Ontario Psychology Internship Consortium
- Northern Ontario School of Medicine University
- Ontario Telehealth Network
- Ontario Provincial Police
- Parents for Children's Mental Health
- Partners for Planning
- PRO KIDS (Positive Recreation Opportunities for Kids)
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- Rainy River District School Board
- Rainy River District Ontario Health Team
- Red Lake Indian Friendship Centre
- Red Lake Margaret Cochenour Memorial Hospital
- Saakaate House
- Shoal Lake 40 First Nation
- SickKids Hospital
- Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority
- Sioux Lookout Ontario Health Team
- St. Joseph's Care Group
- Sunshine Minds
- Surrey Place
- Therapeutic Paws of Canada
- Thunder Bay Regional Hospital
- Tikinagan Child and Family Services
- Treaty 3 Police Service
- United Native Friendship Centre
- Waasegiizhig Nanaudaweyewigamig
- Weechi-it-te-win Family Services
- Wesway



FIREFLY

FIREFLY Offices

Atikokan

211 Main Street
Atikokan, ON P0T 1C0
807-597-4528

Dryden

75C Van Horne Avenue
Dryden, ON P8N 2B2
807-223-8550

Ear Falls

5 Spruce Street
Ear Falls, ON P0V 1T0
807-222-2257

Fort Frances

281 2nd Street East, Unit G
Fort Frances, ON P9A 1M6
807-274-9251

Kenora

820A Lakeview Drive
Kenora, ON P9N 3P7
807-467-5437

Red Lake

201 Howey Street
Red Lake, ON POV 2M0
807-727-9064

Sioux Lookout

86-A Third Avenue N
Sioux Lookout, ON P8T 1L2
807-737-2086

Thunder Bay

717 John Street
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 1Z7
807-627-0883

EarlyON Centres

Kenora

24 Main St S
Kenora, ON P9N 1S7
807-467-5530

Kenora Minto

1181 Minto Ave, Unit 26
Kenora, ON P9N 3K1
807-468-3161

Sioux Lookout

89 First Ave N
Sioux Lookout, ON P8T 1B5
807-737-2086