



FY25-26 Q4 Executive Director's Report

Client Services and Partnerships

Programs and Services

Counselling Service, David Kelley Services (DKS) and Walk-In Counselling (WIC)

Individual, Couple and Family counselling as well as groups continue to make a difference in the lives of FST clients. Our new funded Pathways to Counselling program successfully launched; we presented to FST's Options Adult team and to managers from the 6 other organizations providing developmental services case management in Toronto: Community Living Toronto, COTA, Family Service Toronto, Springboard, Surrey Place, Woodgreen and Unison. Our new PTC counsellor continues to take on new clients from these organizations. In PTC we also worked intensively on program development for our new PTC-Youth program, readying ourselves to launch in Q1. In DKS, the team participated in a training on providing gender-affirming care for trans and non-binary clients, with a legal political & social context. To support the WIC, we provided a full day training to staff, student and volunteer counsellors who support the WIC on Single Session Counselling with Couples.

Violence Against Women (VAW) and Seniors and Care Givers Support Services (SCSS)

On March 6th, the VAW team's International Women's Day (IWD) event was held at Church Street. Yoga, tea and bracelet making, vision boards, and games were among the activities that offered to 45 participants. The Arabic speaking IWD event was held on March 26 at Victoria Park Hub. Five organizations including Housing Help Centre, Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture, Working Women Community Centre, Access Alliance, Victoria Park Hub, and FST collaborated to host this event. More than 100 women attended. ChitChat and Mosaic groups prepared a meal and there were music, dance, connection, and laughter. For the Spanish speaking IWD event, 60 Latina women came together to explore the challenges of being women and Latina immigrants and to celebrate their strength and resilience. The Tamil IWD event was held on March 28th at the JC Banquet Hall in Scarborough. The theme was love, power, and relationships, celebration, and giving. Workshops were offered throughout the day along with meals for the 92 participants who attended. A summary of feedback from participants included: it was a great and a well-organized event/ the workshops were very useful where participants learned a lot/ participants did not feel judged.

The SCSS team continues to offer their individual support and group programs for seniors and caregivers including BOOST, Failure to Launch, and Gaining Strength and Sharing Stories, and the Spanish speaking seniors' group. The SCSS program provided supervisory support for 3 students whose student practicums have recently ended.

Next Steps-Partner Assault Response (PAR)

Q4 marked a period of sustained demand and operational intensity for the Next Steps PAR program. Key priorities during this quarter included strengthening compliance with Ministry standards, streamlining internal processes, and strengthening alignment with performance targets. The program also focused on preparing for the upcoming Early Intervention (EI) Assessment intake pilot through the

PAR Centralized Intake and Referral Service, transitioning to a virtual service delivery platform, renewing focus on service data quality, and advancing readiness for upcoming reporting cycles. This work will continue into the next quarter.

Community Engagement

Q4 was a busy and productive period for Community Engagement, marked by a wide range of activities and events. All groups participated in community field trips, including visits to the CN Tower, art classes, and other enriching experiences. The Afghan and Spanish-speaking Seniors groups successfully completed their narrative book writing projects and are now awaiting final publication, expected in April or early May. Updates will be shared once available. Many groups also hosted and participated in International Women's Day events on March 8, celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women and girls, while reflecting on the ongoing work required to advance gender equality.

Social Action and Campaign 2000

In February, we released the annual national report card in English and French, alongside compendium reports in Yukon, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. The national report card found that child poverty increased for the third year in a row, with an additional 30,000 children falling into poverty. We were successful in shaping media for the day and weeks following the release, receiving 84 media coverage counts online and on radio, and in nearly every province and territory, including national news headlines. We shaped the discussion at the federal level, with the national report card being cited more than a dozen times during question period in the House of Commons on The Economy and were invited to a follow up meeting with the policy advisor to the Secretary of State on Children and Youth.

Campaign 2000, Family Service Toronto, and partners, Disability Without Poverty, released the third annual Disability Poverty Report card that found 1.5 million people with disabilities live in poverty, including 890,000 working aged adults. We presented the findings at the first annual conference on disability research.

Strategy and Innovation has been working closely with Senator Rosemarie Moodie on her Private Member's Bill S-212 A National Strategy on Children and Youth. We appeared twice in the Senate to present on the urgent nature of child poverty and provided advice on strengthening the language of the Bill. This Bill passed in the Senate this quarter and is now being discussed in the House of Commons. This is a milestone achievement; if passed the Bill would entrench into legislation a strategy that must complete the elimination of child poverty.

Campaign 2000 partnered with the National Advisory Council on Poverty and Tamarak to host national conversations on poverty. Family Service Toronto, Social Planning Toronto and The 519 organized and hosted the Toronto agencies conversation, with a focus on poverty in immigrant, refugee and 2SLGBTQI+ communities.

The Senior Director, Strategy and Innovation represented Family Service Toronto on the Canadian delegation to the United Nation's Second World Summit on Social Development. Canada and heads of state from around the world recommitted to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, the first of which is to end poverty in all its forms. We participated in high level global dialogues on the role of poverty in family and community well-being, food security, healthy aging for seniors, youth employment in technology and innovation (Canada's official event) and cash transfers to end poverty and promote wellbeing.

Options Program

The Options Children program experienced a significant increase in referrals, largely driven by targeted outreach efforts. The team strengthened collaboration with partners beyond the immediate developmental services sector, including Silvercreek Early Years Development Centre, Access Alliance, and TDSB. Extensive planning is underway for the Children’s Services Conference on April 29, which will bring agencies together to share programs, explore services, and build connections. In parallel, initial discussions with Social Action have begun to address sector-wide funding challenges, growing waitlists, and rising child poverty, with a focus on identifying meaningful advocacy opportunities.

Passport

During this quarter, the Passport Program had 174 new approvals, and the team worked on onboarding the new clients to the program. The team facilitated 6 sessions about the program; 4 to different high schools and 2 transfer payment agencies.

The Service Access Unit coordinated attending an event through the TTC for International Women’s Day on March 8 at ST. George Station. Staff from FST attended and provided information to TTC riders about FST services.

Corporate Services

PassportONE (PP1)

PassportONE has successfully completed another fiscal year, navigating a continued increase in claim submissions. In Q4 25-26, 211,511 claims were processed—representing a 14% increase over the previous fiscal year—while total disbursements reached \$147.27 million, up 7% year-over-year. Processing time improved to an average of 1.73 days, demonstrating enhanced efficiency through optimized processes and strategic use of temporary staffing to manage year-end volumes.

In support of the OPAN workgroup, PassportONE administered a client survey between November 2025 and February 2026, receiving over 2,400 responses. A consolidated summary report has been shared with the workgroup. In addition, PassportONE supported the initiation of the PMF survey, which is scheduled to launch in Q1 of FY 2026–27.

To enhance risk mitigation and reporting, PassportONE has strengthened CRM capabilities for tracking and reporting overpayment cases. These overpayment reports will also be made available to Passport Agencies to support improved client monitoring. In addition, collaboration with Community Living Toronto has continued to progress, with key IT work completed in Q4 to support data sharing between the two systems.

Communications and Special Projects

- Communications continued its collaboration with the Strategy and Innovation team through development of joint objectives for the 2026-27 operational plan including an internal storytelling initiative to build capacity for generating stories for wider external use and media interest.
- Release of THRIVE mental health report created opportunity for Comms to work with and coach DKS staff to respond to media inquiries regarding stats showing rise in mental health issues in the Queer community.
- Work continued on FST’s PULSE intranet site for collaboration, engagement and connection to key resources including a Staff Directory, Documents Centre and space booking tool and weekly Staff Update.
- The department produced and published 12 weekly Staff Updates for Q4 with average readership of 75 to 80 per cent of staff.

- Q4 external communications through FST’s website and social media channels focused on several events including Black History Month, International Women’s Day and Social Work Week in March.
- The department also produced the final “published” version of our 2026-31 Strategic Plan entitled Embracing the Unknown.
- Preparation for construction of City of Toronto crisis training centre on Church Street 4th floor continued through Q4.

Technology and Business Intelligence (BI)

In Q4, the Tech & BI team delivered several key initiatives supporting service modernization and long-term planning. A major achievement was the successful development of the PassportONE integrated e-signature solution, which allows Passport Agencies to issue service agreements directly from the system. Clients complete the signing electronically, and the fully executed agreements are automatically saved back into the PassportONE CRM, improving efficiency, accuracy, and record management. Rollout is planned for Q1 of the 2026–27 fiscal year. The team also completed the development of a new five-year technology plan, providing a clear roadmap for future technology investments. The plan outlines priorities for infrastructure and equipment, cybersecurity, data and analytics, systems and processes, and staff skills and support to ensure technology continues to support FST’s strategic objectives.

Human Resources, Payroll and Volunteers

The Senior Director, People and Culture, has successfully expanded internal consulting services, securing a 2nd contract with Denise House, a women’s shelter in Oshawa.

Significant progress was also made with Newcomer Women’s Services, where a two-year collective bargaining process was successfully concluded, avoiding a potential strike. To support this work, Senior Director, P&C and Director, Finance was engaged, providing critical expertise throughout the process.

Following extensive consultation with leadership, a new performance management and compensation model was developed and implemented. This includes revised core competencies, a seven-step salary grid (transitioning away from a pay-for-performance model), and a simplified goal-setting tool supported by a clear process document. The new approach has been well received and is contributing to a stronger, more cohesive management culture. In addition, comprehensive succession planning was completed across all leadership levels. Each director and manager participated in individual meetings to review their organizational structure and staff development plans. The resulting succession plan is a living document that will be reviewed and updated annually.

Finance and Facilities

In Q4, Finance worked with Management to prepare a balance budget for F26-27 that included no additional program cuts that was presented to the Financial Affairs Committee and approved by the Board in February. All Q3 reporting to funders was completed and submitted in a timely manner. The Finance team continued to support Newcomer Women’s Services in their day-to-day operations.

Lease negotiations with the City of Toronto were held in Q4 and will be completed in Q1 of F26-27. The funding agreement for the 4th floor leasehold improvements was signed at the end of Q3 and the first installment of \$1.5 Million was received. It is expected that the 4th floor renovations will begin at the end of Q1 F26-27.