



Executive Profile

Chief Executive Officer – Children's Aid Society of Toronto

The **Children's Aid Society of Toronto (CAST)** is one of the largest child welfare organizations in North America. Since 1875, CAST has been keeping children and youth safe, strengthening families, and providing alternate care for children and youth who are unable to remain in their homes. CAST works with families from a wide range of backgrounds, and is focused on early intervention, providing assessments, crisis intervention, counselling, and services to prevent child abuse and neglect. CAST's vision is *"a city where children are safe, families are strong, and communities are supported."* See www.torontocas.ca for more details.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will lead the organization in accordance with the Child, Youth, Family Services Act, providing leadership and direction to the Senior Leadership Team and supporting the Child Welfare Institute (CWI) and its annual performance, with a \$156 million operating budget, six (6) direct reports, and 800 staff in multiple locations across the City of Toronto.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Defining and developing CAST's purpose, strategic plan, goals, objectives, policies, plans and programs, which shall weave in equity, diversity, and inclusion principles, and execute them in accordance with corresponding KPIs and community needs.
- Informing and consulting with the Board on all matters relevant to CAST's mandate and working with the Board's sub-committees to ensure open communication, effective governance and compliance with financial policies and procedures.
- Providing oversight for the preparation, presentation, and interpretation of budgets and business plans, approving annual budget submissions to the Board, providing input and oversight for the overall financial management and annual audit, and implementing systems to ensure accountability and transparency.



- Creating and leading CAST's equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) initiatives to support differences and encourage different perspectives while ensuring that CAST's Code of Ethics, Confidentiality, Anti-Oppression/Anti-Racism, Harassment and Discrimination policies are incorporated into self and team. Consulting with stakeholders to further CAST's equity, diversity, inclusion (EDI), and anti-oppression objectives and to ensure CAST's responsiveness and accountability to diverse communities.
- Developing and maintaining a positive relationship with staff and labour representatives, ensuring that organizational values are embedded within all programs and activities and fostering a supportive culture across all divisions and locations.
- Ensuring an ongoing productive and collaborative relationship with the CEO of the Children's Aid Foundation of Canada and the Foundation's Board of Directors.
- Ensuring effective, collaborative engagement with the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services ("Ministry") and community partners to advance and enhance awareness, understanding and support of CAST's goals, objectives, services, programs, and performance.
- Participating in provincial groups and forums such as the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) and collaborating with agencies and community groups in the development and coordination of child welfare programs, ensuring that opportunities for integration, mergers or shared services are explored.
- Representing or directing communications with the media, public, other social services agencies, provincial ministries, and policymaking/funding bodies on controversial and sensitive matters. Being available on a 24-hour basis, seven days per week, to respond to CAST emergencies and mobilize resources. Continually, positively, and passionately work to raise the profile of CAST and its services to all people and partners and address emerging child protection and welfare needs, issues, and challenges by working closely with the senior management team, community partners/stakeholders and Ministry where appropriate.

KNOWLEDGE, QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

- Demonstrates a strong understanding of and commitment to anti-oppression, anti-discrimination, anti-racism (including anti-Black racism and anti-Indigenous racism), equity, diversity, and inclusion. Recognizes and understands the importance of effective leadership within a diverse service delivery environment, particularly in communities historically marginalized by CAST.



Understand the distinction between equality and equity, as well as the differences between equity, diversity, and inclusion, and acknowledge the imperative for provisions and outreach tailored to diverse communities, with a specific focus on understanding the profound impact of child welfare has on these marginalized populations.

- Has a track record of successfully integrating equity, diversity, and inclusion into strategy and initiatives, resulting in positive transformations in organizational culture, attitudes, and service delivery. Understands the underlying causes—including societal and systemic—for the disproportionate representation of Indigenous and Black families in the child welfare system and is committed to driving systemic change aimed at reducing disproportionate representation as part of CAST's strategic plan.
- Compassionate, inspirational people servant leader, teambuilder, change agent and strategic thinker with knowledge and understanding of child welfare and social services, issues, problems, and future directions to have the capability to set a long-term vision for client services, staff support and management training. Experience working with large labour unions and in collective bargaining. Willing to understand the dynamics and history of an organization to provide effective leadership of change in a deeply ingrained culture.
- Approachable, visible, open, engaging, honest, collaborative, organizationally agile, able to connect directly and actively with 700+ front-line staff, respect, and value their workload and personally communicate with the CAST community overall. Able to foster new partnerships and relationships within the broader child welfare sector, interact with CAST employees at all levels from grassroots to senior management and provide situational leadership, especially in times of crisis.
- Strong financial, business and risk management acumen, with experience providing oversight to financial reporting, budgeting, internal audits/controls, and enterprise risk management processes. Able to comprehend and challenge financial information and communicate with the Board on financial matters on a strategic level to balance budgets and ensure financial transparency and compliance.
- Experience reporting to and working with a Board of Directors, advising Boards on issues, trends, operations, and changing client needs to ensure effective decision-making. Understands Board governance and can build strong relationships and collaborate with a strong, involved Board with 19 members, each who have personal experience with child welfare.



- Confident, courageous, and can stand firm in their beliefs, even under pressure from internal and external sources. Transparent in communicating with the Board to ensure that members have a complete picture of the issue, including negative messages. Able to accurately assess, evaluate and develop improved policies and strategies, develop solutions, make strategic, financially sound decisions, and make thoughtful, impactful recommendations to the Board.
- Able to formulate and articulate a long-term vision and a 5-year strategic plan and then work with the Board and team to implement the plan, while adapting to challenges and changes in funding, legislative frameworks, and child welfare system redesign. Has a track record of leading change and delivering quality programs and services in times of significant financial constraint.
- Strong emotional intelligence and ethical foundation, with values and beliefs that align with CAST's Board, leadership team, and staff. Able to leverage and demonstrate these values and beliefs to lead change with compassion while balancing operational needs. Has the capacity and experience to drive a shift in organizational culture and morale that will build stability and motivate internal teams to work together to deliver the best possible services to families as the model of child protection, child wellbeing and family strengthening in Ontario evolves.
- Able to listen and understand the role of staff that are directly serving clients day to day to acknowledge their challenges, benefit from their institutional knowledge and introduce initiatives to support their desire to provide the best services possible to families.
- Ideally has child welfare sector experience and is a subject matter expert, but broader public sector executive leadership experience is acceptable. Is sensitive to the fact that there are complex regulations and a multitude of stakeholders and community partners. Demonstrates a passion to learn and to make positive and impactful changes and improvements in systems, services, policies, and culture. Understands how children's services systems are entwined with mental health, police, legal, healthcare, developmental and community services, and education sectors and influence positive, open dialogue with each for open communication and mutual benefit.
- A master's degree in social work, applied social sciences or the equivalent is an asset, with extensive public sector senior leadership, management and business administration skills and experience, with the capacity to unite and lead a large, complex, highly diversified, government-funded, unionized child welfare organization with a \$156M operating budget and 800 primarily unionized front-line social workers working remotely/hybrid.



- Coach/mentor leadership style, able to inspire, motivate, direct, support, coach, and delegate to the senior leadership team. Able to discern strengths and qualities in the team that will make CAST successful, bring out their best and let them excel. Willing to leverage direct reports to develop an understanding of issues and to make informed decisions.
- Results-oriented – sets goals, objectives, and strategies, establishes a sense of direction, articulates measures, and motivates leaders to persist, overcome obstacles, develop solutions, and achieve success. Able to engage partners and other agencies and use data and persuasion skills to move “talk” into “action” at a provincial level.
- Excellent communication skills to represent CAST to the public, media, community partners, stakeholders, provincial government ministries and other social services/policy agencies; to effectively negotiate and advocate for funding, exchange expertise, develop policies, discuss, and recommend strategies and programs; and to advise the Board to effectively manage highly visible, sensitive, and controversial matters.
- Able to build and maintain strong, meaningful, collaborative relationships with other children’s aid societies, especially the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Toronto, Native Child & Family Services, and Jewish Child & Family Services to ensure that all Toronto families receive equal service.
- Recognizes that CAST is the largest board-governed child welfare organization in North America and sets an example in Ontario and across Canada in representing the sector, families, and how it manages its relationships with other social services agencies and in collective bargaining. Has empathy, strength of character and integrity in the face of conflict. Has the ability to embrace scrutiny from demanding stakeholders and knows when to seek advice and counsel.
- Able to provide leadership to many stakeholders and service providers and to be front facing with other social services agencies. Strong political acuity, agility, versatility, and negotiation skills. Has confidence to challenge when necessary and understands the dynamics of how to manage complex relationships with funding organizations, unions, community partners, and the Ombudsman.
- Able to advocate to/collaborate with provincial ministries to directly respond to inquiries, recommendations, Ministerial directives, reviews, and transfer payment risk assessments; to be proactively transparent, address funding gaps, negotiate for funding, flag issues when they arise, find alternative sources of revenue and/or take action to address operational costs to ensure continued long-term financial sustainability of the organization, as well as compliance and



accountability with ministry guidelines and with CAST's internal financial policies and procedures. Able to leverage data, analytics, and technology to support, streamline and improve service delivery.

HOW TO APPLY

To express interest in this exciting opportunity, email your cover letter and resume by January 31, 2024, to:

Patrick Rowan, Partner

Feldman Daxon Partners

Tel: 416-515-3302

Email: prowan@feldmandaxon.com

CAST is an equal-opportunity employer. Please advise us if you require accommodation due to disability during the recruitment and selection process and we will work with you to address your need.

We welcome and encourage candidates with diverse identities and lived experiences. We understand that there are barriers in our society that have prevented some groups from accessing opportunities. You do not need to meet every single requirement to apply. If you are excited about this role and our mission, we encourage you to apply even if your experience does not align entirely with the knowledge, qualifications, experience, skills, and abilities listed here.

We thank all candidates for their interest; however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

