

# 2015 Annual Report



**Owl**  
Child Care  
Services of Ontario

## Our Vision

A part of your family — for this generation and the next

## Our Mission

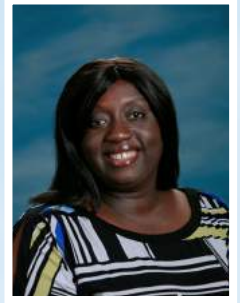
Owl Child Care provides nurturing, play-based early learning to support each child in realizing their potential while giving families peace of mind.



**LEARNING • CARING • SHARING • GROWING**

# Message from the President

**Sonia Dennis**



I have served on Owl's Board of Directors now for three years; as a director, president-elect, and now as president. In these roles, I have also served on the nominating committee, governance committee and now a task group that is looking at how we are incorporated. A lot has transpired in these past three years that confirms that Owl is a high performing organization with strong leadership – by the board and our executive director, Lori Prospero. The focus on quality and professionalism is evident in the educators who work with our children every day; in the care and attention to healthy eating by our cooks, and in the attention to detail and focus on advocacy we see in our management and administration teams. I am truly privileged to serve this organization and express my sincere thanks to every employee, volunteer and member for each of you plays a role in Owl's success.

The Board's focus is on providing strategic direction, oversight and to ensure competent leadership. As I look back on our accomplishments for 2015, I am confident that we did just that. Here are some highlights:

1

## **Advocate for Children**

In 2015, after seeking feedback from Owl members and engaging in careful deliberation and debate, the Board made a commitment to advocate for a universally accessible, high quality, regulated and non-profit child care system. Management responded to this direction through an information and advocacy campaign ahead of the federal election.

2

## **Explore our Potential**

Our strategic plan includes a priority to assess the feasibility of expansion, with a particular emphasis on expansion into other markets within south western Ontario. In 2015, the Board of Directors allocated necessary resources to support management in hiring a consultant to take on the onerous and important task of assessing feasibility across 15 municipalities. This work will culminate with an Expansion Strategy Report to be issued to the Board in May 2016.

3

## **Board Oversight**

The Board continues to refine its work in this area. In 2015, a new Policy Compliance Monitoring system was put in place. Throughout the course of the year, the executive director provides a compliance report on each governance policy. The Board also implemented a new tool for evaluating the executive director on an annual basis. Together, these tools support the Board in its oversight role by providing a framework for which to monitor and reflect on continuous improvement.

As we head into 2016, the Board will continue to set strategic direction through the creation of a new strategic plan to guide the organization from 2017 – 2020. We'll reflect on our long-term plan – which provides a vision for what Owl may look like in 2032. Will Owl be the employer of choice for RECEs in the markets we serve? Will Owl become the provider of choice for families in a new universal child care system with Owl centres across multiple markets in Ontario? Will Owl be recognized as a subject-matter expert on early childhood education and care and be sought out by government consultation?

With the dedication, passion and expertise on our teams, I am confident that Owl Child Care will continue to thrive as we move into our 35th year and beyond!

# Executive Director's Report

Lori Prospero, CAE



Rock, Paper, Scissors...oh my



As I reflect back on the year ended December 31, 2015, I'm reminded of the game Rock-Paper-Scissors. No doubt, you're familiar with this game often used to make decisions on the school yard or among friends. But, how does that relate to Owl, you ask? The obvious answer is that it's a form of play. Play is the foundation for learning – it's the way in which we help each child to reach their full potential. In fact, there are nine different types of play that children learn as they grow and develop: solitary play, risky play, sensory play, parallel play, dramatic play, rough and tumble play, constructive play, active play and cooperative play. See pg. 3 for the types of play explained.

Let's look at Rock-Paper-Scissors in another light. According to Steve Boese, "No matter which option you choose, there is another option that can beat you. There is not one 'right' answer that you can select that will guarantee success over and over again. The trick is assessing your opponent, understanding their tendencies, (as well as your own), and making the "best" choice, not necessarily the "right" one"<sup>1</sup>. Here at Owl, we also have three things at play: Legislated Requirements, Strategy, Talent. Let's take a minute to examine each of these:

- **Legislated Requirements:** In 2015, the Child Care and Early Years Act came into force replacing the 70-year old Day Nurseries Act. The new Act, and subsequent regulations are the foundation of the government's commitment to modernize child care.
- **Strategy:** The strategic plan is our rock, our foundation. This board-directed document provides future direction for Owl, ensuring long-term sustainability.
- **Talent:** Talent refers to our employees, the talented group of RECEs, cooks, and support staff who deliver our programs and keep us on track.

Just like *Rock-Paper-Scissors*, Owl has to anticipate new legislative requirements, adjust its strategy to either help inform those requirements through advocacy or to respond to new requirements. Then Owl must ensure that our educators are prepared for the changes and feel supported to help each child realize their potential while giving families peace of mind. Sometimes it's a balancing act, but it's one that we are becoming more experienced at. Speaking of reflecting on strategy, below is an update on progress towards achieving our strategic plan.

## Strategic Priority 1: Strong Organization



	2015 RESULT	PLAN TARGET
Enrolment capacity	89% full-day 73% school-age	Overall at 85%
Member satisfaction	97%	Not less than 90%
Overall job satisfaction	100%	90% or above
Turn-over rates		
• full-time positions	4%	Not more than 10%
• part-time positions	36%	Not more than 20%
• long-term (15+ years employees)	0%	Not more than 8%
Staff compensation	↑ 5.7% since Jan 1 2014	↑ 5% by 2017
Board Assessment – Leadership	7.0	Not less than 6.5 out of 8.0

Continued...

<sup>1</sup> Boese, S. (2014, November 5). Culture - Strategy - Talent: It's the Organizational Game of Rock - Paper - Scissors. Retrieved from <http://www.hci.org/lib/culture-strategy-talent-it-s-organizational-game-rock-paper-scissors>



### Strategic Priority 2: Explore our Potential

In 2015, we hired an external consultant to assess feasibility of expansion into 15 other markets in southwestern Ontario. This research includes a full demographic and child care profile on each community, including opportunities for child care growth. This work will culminate with a final report to the board in 2016 that outlines plans for the next 5-7 Owl locations.

### Strategic Priority 3: Advocate for Children

In 2015, Owl's government relations advisory committee surveyed Owl members regarding federal party platforms as they related to child care policies. Survey results then informed an advocacy campaign to support members in making an informed choice at the polls. In addition, Owl became a member of the Ontario Coalition of Better Child Care, provided feedback to the Ministry of Education on the Child Care & Early Years Act and subsequent regulations, and submitted letters to provincial and federal Ministers in support of a Shared Framework for Building an Early Childhood Education and Care System for all.



## Nine Types of Play and Their Benefits

Play is a natural instinct that fosters learning, builds self-confidence, improves communication, and nourishes creativity and general well-being. Each kind of play has a dramatic effect on a child's growth and development. Owl encourages free play in all forms!<sup>2</sup>

#### Solitary Play

Strengthens independence, decision making, creativity, allows for exploration at own pace, promotes relaxation

#### Risky Play

Encourages confidence through challenges, provides real-world experiences, sense of wonder, allows for children to learn from their mistakes

#### Sensory Play

Children discover cause & effect, develops cognitive skills through the 5 senses, improves fine motor skills

#### Active Play

Improves fitness levels, good for brain development, develops large motor skills and coordination, relieves stress

#### Dramatic Play

Nurtures creativity, imagination, improves vocabulary and language skills, fosters curiosity, experimentation and open-mindedness

#### Rough and Tumble Play (free-form, vigorous play)

Improves decision making skills, relieves stress, provides cardiovascular fitness, helps to discover boundaries and respect

#### Constructive Play (involves building with equipment and materials)

Builds imagination, fosters cooperation and teamwork, provides a foundation for mathematics, children can learn to brainstorm and plan

#### Parallel Play (playing alongside others without interacting or influencing)

Boosts confidence, encourages self expression, eases transition from solo to group play, builds social skills through observation and imitation

#### Cooperative Play (children working together)

Develops communication and compromise skills, encourages self expression, teaches teamwork, promotes sharing and empathy

<sup>2</sup> Hart, K. (n.d.). 9 Types of Play and Why They Matter. Retrieved from <http://www.aaastateofplay.com/9-types-of-play-and-why-they-matter/>

# Board of Directors

On behalf of the management, staff and families, we'd like to thank our 2015 directors for volunteering their time to serve on Owl's Board.

Directors provided leadership, expertise and insight to help Owl achieve its mission. Through their guidance and dedication, we will continue to provide an essential service for families.

# Thank You!



**Sonia Dennis, President**

Nominating  
CNCA Transition Task Group, Chair

**Kevin Viana, Past President**

Nominating

**Shruti Agarwal, Secretary**

Governance

**Andrea McLean, Treasurer**

Finance & Audit, Chair

**Deborah Attwood**

Nominating, co-chair

**Corrie Ballantyne, President-elect**

Governance  
Nominating

**Jennifer Banfield**

Governance

**Tim Brubacher**

Governance

**Jamie MacDougall**

Governance, co-chair

**Sarah Fillion**

Nominating

**Jeremy Green**

**Katrina Hitchman**

Nominating, co-chair

**Kyle Mortimer**

**Joanne Tam**

Finance & Audit

Thanks also to our committee members for their service

**Finance & Audit:**

Doug Laginskie  
Melissa Graham

**Governance:**

Melissa Barnes  
Janine McQuarrie-Russell  
Jonas Duarte  
Julie Wilson

**CNCA Transition Task Group**

Kevin Henry

# Treasurer's Report

Andrea McLean, CPA, CMA



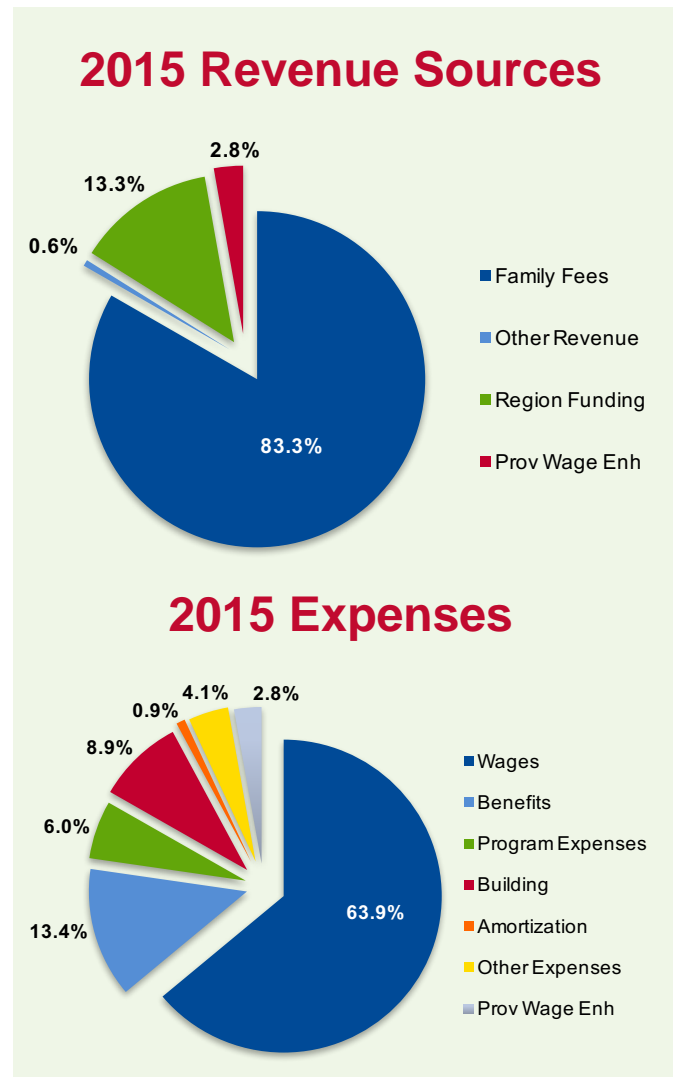
I am pleased to report that Owl's financial position improved significantly during 2015. Key highlights include:

- Minimal deficit of \$31,576
- Maximization of Risk Management Reserve and Renovation/Capital Reserve funds
- Revenue increase of 10.4%
- Consistently high percentage of operating expenses allocated to wages and benefits
- New Provincial Wage Enhancement Funding distributed to qualifying staff

Owl made great strides during 2015 to recover from its significant 2013 and 2014 deficits (\$219,581 and \$363,414, respectively) and end the year with only a minimal deficit of \$31,576. This trend is expected to continue as the Owl Board of Directors approved a 2016 budget with a slight surplus of \$2,447. The Accumulated Surplus & Reserves policy was also revised to more closely reflect potential risk, which allowed the Risk Management Reserve and Renovation/Capital Reserve funds to attain their maximum targets of \$500,000 and \$100,000, respectively.

Revenue increased by 10.4% from 2014 due to increases in revenue from child care fees and grants. The annual operating funding from the Region of Waterloo, which is fully utilized to enhance employee wages, increased by over \$40,000. Owl also received funding from the Region for floor replacements, appliances, and repairs.

In 2015 the Ontario government announced an investment of \$269 million over three years to support wage enhancement for child care workers. Owl applied for this funding, which provided qualifying program staff a wage enhancement of up to \$1 per hour plus up to 17.5% in benefits, and paid out \$181,174. The government recently announced that this funding will continue in 2016 and increase to \$2 per hour, so Owl will apply for this funding again.



Expenses increased by only 4.4% from 2014. Similar to previous years the majority of Owl's expenses (77%) were for staff wages and benefits. Investing in Owl's employees continues to be a key priority since without their hard work and dedication Owl would not be the organization that it is today. I want to express my sincere thanks to all of the devoted Owl staff who create a quality, nurturing environment for the children that are entrusted to Owl's care.

In conclusion I also want to thank the Finance & Audit committee members consisting of Melissa Graham, Doug Laginskie, Joanne Tam and Lori Prospero, for their commitment and guidance during the year; Owl's Accounting Manager, Thomas Hemming, for his invaluable inputs and exemplary work and the accounting team of Brenda Kennedy and Dianne Levasseur for their essential contributions.

# 2015 Staff (as of December 31, 2015)



"Happy daughter, happy mom. And all thanks to Owl staff. Owl is fabulous for our daughter and our family. We refer to it as our daughter's "utopia". The staff are experienced, warm, calm, and creative - adept at fostering emotional, social, and intellectual growth in young children. What I love the most is the strong sense of community among the teachers. We don't have a big family but now my daughter has the chance of having one."

*Mihaela, Owl Member*

## Administration

Brenda Kennedy  
Deanna Hope  
Dianne Levasseur  
Kristen George  
Kristine Parsons  
Lisa Cook  
Lori Prospero  
Thomas Hemming

## John Sweeney

Ashley O'Connor  
Brittany Marton  
Deb Binkle  
Debbie McNaney  
Emily Burns  
Fiona Taylor  
Holly Brenton-Battiste  
Janeth Rodriguez  
Jennifer Schiedel  
Jessica Rau  
Joanne Neeb  
Judy Sgarbossa  
Kelley Oliver  
Melissa Meaney  
Michelle Hiebert  
Sara Byrne  
Shameema Afroz  
Shamini Jude

## Lincoln Road

Courtney Parker  
David Eales  
Deb Wintrip  
Denise Sharpe  
Elaine Goldberg  
Heather Bonnett-Culberson  
Jaime Hopkins  
Kate Delemere  
Kathy Dunk  
Leanne Wolfe

## Lisa Brown

Mary Klug  
Melody Brubacher  
Nancy Lazo  
Nidya Gamboa  
Sarah Simpson  
Shannon Swanson  
Simone Haughton  
Tracey Ruppenthal

## Our Lady Fatima

Abbie Cocks  
Ashley Allgood  
Chloe Ferrier  
Janice Chubbs  
Lisa Rintoul  
Maria Falcao  
Melodie Kuehl  
Natalija Dragovic  
Sarah Holland  
Shannon Boyer  
Shazad Alia  
Susan Eggleston

## Saint John Paul II

Alyssa Williams  
Amy Keirstead  
Ann Fetter  
April Sallans  
Cara Kieswetter  
Connie Dowdall  
Corine Losier  
Cristina Faria  
Jacquie Babineau  
Jane Cowan  
Jennifer Silva  
Judy Hackbart  
Kara Moshier  
Karen Sutton  
Kathleen Henderson  
Kathleen Verbeke

## Keiko Watanabe

Kim Hilton  
Lesley Highmore  
Lisa Erb  
Sara Arndt  
Shalyn Reinhart  
Syreeta Vassel  
Tami Sutton

## St. Luke

Alisha Williams  
Ashley Dekker  
Barbara Florencki  
Christine Wagg  
Debbie Bourbonniere  
Gabriela Costisor  
Kiva Brown  
Marianne McKinnon  
Nancy Vanderweide  
Sarah Brown  
Shannon Bell  
Stephanie Simpson  
Taylor Ham  
Velvet Bernard  
Victoria Koupriakova

## St. Nicholas

Ashley Vandermyer  
Celine Burley  
Denise Acton  
Gerri-Lynn MacMillan  
Grazyna Sarna  
Joanne Roga  
Keri Neeb  
Lisa Preiss  
Lynette Wagner-Mills  
Mary Pearson  
Samantha Hatzinger  
Taylor Lodge

## St. Matthew

Betty Glied  
Brittany Huffman  
Courtney Taylor  
Elaine Armstrong  
Heather Bonnett-Culberson  
Joanne Thorpe  
Josephine Alishaw  
Keri Flynn  
Marianne Butler  
Melissa Reid  
Nadine Duimering  
Patti Gear  
Rebecca Toohey  
Rukmanie Abdulla  
Shannon Crawford

## Casual Staff

(working >100 hours in 2015)  
Anika Grahovac  
Anisa Sulub  
Ann Gao  
Ayata Karimi  
Barb Bauman  
Bonnie Miller  
Cassandra Plezer  
Jeanie Green  
Joanna Turski  
Kelsey Engel  
Kitty Uffelmann  
Lina Vasquez  
Patricia Minielly  
Qin Wang  
Sonya Hernandez-Dubon  
Svetlana Rabrenovic

# Soaring high for over 30 years

## Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo

### Administration Office

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### Owl-Lincoln Road

145 Lincoln Road  
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### Owl-Our Lady of Fatima

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### Owl-Saint John Paul II

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519-883-1998 stnicholas@owlchildcare.org



[www.owlchildcare.org](http://www.owlchildcare.org)