



International
Social Service
Canada

Service Social
International
Canada

2021

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2022

ANNUAL REPORT

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Sylvie J. Lapointe
Executive Director

Une version francophone est disponible

WELCOME FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I think that like many of you, I appreciate taking stock and reflect on the last few months, to measure our successes, take inventory of all that we have learned and accomplished but also take note of where, as an agency, we could make changes. As I reflect, I also wonder, where did the time go? They say the older we get the more time flies by quickly. So, is it me or ISS getting older? When you work for a network that will soon celebrate 100 years, you always feel young!

I want to begin this word of welcome, by thanking you, the clients and the agencies that support us, month after month, file after file! You are, in my opinion, true defenders of human rights, allies and advocates of children and families. By accessing ISS Canada services for your clients, you truly understand the concept of what the best interests of the children and families are. I tell many of you every day, the work that you do is admirable and thank you for trusting us with your most complex and delicate files.

I want to show my gratitude by acknowledging the hard work of the Board of ISS Canada. Howard, Robin, Sophie, Arielle, Michaela, Joanne, Sarah, Stacey, and Kevin ISS would not be this successful, professional, and productive agency that is quite unique. All of you have contributed so much, working tirelessly with me on various sub committees, drafting policies, statements and moving our strategic plan forward and mostly supporting and advising me in decision-making, all while keeping in mind, the best interest of the agency. You did all of that, with grace, patience and all the while smiling.

ISS Canada is strong thanks to a devoted Board, but also successful because of my colleagues. Anne-Josée who handles most of the complex cases, Adriana who still carries a caseload while going to school, and Wendy who after a year with us has gained much knowledge about record checks.

Quentin, who handled all our communications, making us present on social media. And thank you to Lori, who makes sure our check book balances. Each of you are making ISS Canada triumph!

ISS Canada has a strong plan for moving forward, and one of the things we did this year, was to create a statement on strategy that will guide us moving forward. Our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Belonging statement will soon be available on our website.

ISS Canada continues to be quite active at the international level having representation at all levels. For myself, for the last 4 years, I have been the vice-chair of the Professional Advisory Committee, it has been a great pleasure to play such an important role alongside fellow ED/CEO from around the world. The group of like-minded individuals has inspired ISS Canada to follow suit in pursuing research relating to Kinship care and how we can better explore options for children in care. We are currently in the first stages of collaboration with a partner and hope to have data to share in the coming months.

Dear friends and colleagues of ISS, enjoy our annual report.

Sylvie J. Lapointe

Executive Director of ISS Canada



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR



Despite the current global challenges, ISS Canada has maintained and increased its services

to families and children and for this I extend my personal indebtedness to our staff and volunteers.

It is their dedication to our mission that assured that that ISS services were maintained. My personal thank you to Sylvie, our executive director, as well as her staff group, Anne Josée, Adrianna, Wendy, and Quentin for their commitment to serving clients through another exceptionally challenging year. Your skills are extraordinary. Bravo! A very special thank you to our bookkeeper, Lori, whose volunteer time has been an extraordinary gift to ISS Canada.

As a member of the ISS Governing Board, I will address some of the global work of ISS emanating from the office of the ISS General Secretariat (GS).

The picture of resilience of ISS develops from its history. ISS was born 98 years ago following massive migrations the Americas. Its focus was to provide tracing and family reunification services for those individuals and families who became separated by borders and distances. ISS has stayed loyal to this original mandate and has grown to become a professional, agile, and flexible organization, able to cut through multiple threats and trials, Covid 19 being one of them but certainly not the last.

A concerted effort among all the ISS organizations and entities, be it the Governing Board, the Professional Advisory Committee, the Casework Coordinators Group, and the devoted staff at the GS office has allowed ISS to ride very rough waters keeping a very high output of quality services, handling an average of 75,000 cases and enquiries worldwide every year.

ISS, via its International Reference Centre (IRC), continued its active participation in various expert groups, such as the Global Policy and Advocacy Working Group, The Hague Conference on International Law Working Group on Preventing and Addressing Illicit Practices in Intercountry Adoption and the HCCH Experts' Group on the Parentage / Surrogacy Project. Further.

The IRC continues to promote

the highly regarded, Verona principles

for the protection of the rights of the child born through surrogacy, the product of a multi-year and global consultation process. Similarly, ISS research capability draws on nearly 100 years of experience managing individual cases. ISS publishes specialized papers and guidelines that target professionals and the public at large to provide information about rights and responsibilities in cross-border situations. Guided by international public and private law related to human rights and children's rights, ISS uses relevant benchmarks of international standards to implement all activities and influence decision makers.

ISS will press on with recruiting new members according to its strategic expansion country list consolidating worldwide presence. With the ISS basic casework training being compulsory, additional efforts will be deployed to secure additional thematic and specialized training for ISS professionals.

Stemming from its strategic priorities, the ISS GS plans to focus on several transformation targets ahead of its centennial anniversary in 2024. The GS is undertaking to create and adapt its tools and training to transform its monitoring and evaluation methods into social impact measurement. It plans to continue to develop a capacity to reach a larger public and diversify and solidify its funding base. With highly specialized support, the GS is developing new technologies using artificial intelligence and machine learning towards bringing improvements to our current social work service delivery methodology, to eliminate repetitive work, cut costs, save time for ISS caseworkers, and allow them to remain focused on the children and families served.

The Governing Board members, Board members of ISS Canada, staff, volunteers, and partners, all deserve a huge hug for continuing to keep our organization thriving and well respected as a stalwart and long-standing global social service agency with our significant presence in Canada.

OUR BOARD MEMBERS



Howard Nadler,
Québec
-
Chair



Robin Pike,
British Columbia
-
Vice-President



Sophie DeLadurantaye,
Ontario
-
Treasurer



Joanne Bezzubetz,
Ontario
-
Member

Mission

ISS Canada mobilizes international networks to protect and reunite children, individuals and families separated by borders.

Vision

ISS Canada envisions a world where the rights of children, families and individuals are protected, defended and supported in situations of forced or voluntary migration.

Values

ISS Canada believes in a world where people are safe, protected and supported without discrimination.

ISS Canada believes that people have a right to a safe environment that supports positive development of their well-being and sense of belonging.

ISS Canada is committed to human rights, social justice, professional integrity and service excellence.

ISS Canada promotes and protects the integrity and dignity of all human beings.

ISS Canada believes in the strength of its global network and partnerships with national and local organizations.



Michaela Bily,
Alberta
-
Member



Stacey Noronha,
Ontario
-
Member



Sarah Crowe,
Ontario
-
Member



Kevin Kane,
Saskatchewan
-
Member

“
Working together with the ISS program allows us an added layer of security to ensure we have thoroughly screened applicants. When we didn't have access to the ISS program, it felt as though we were potentially missing some information. The ISS program provides us with the peace of mind we need in order to complete our work. - Social worker, British Columbia

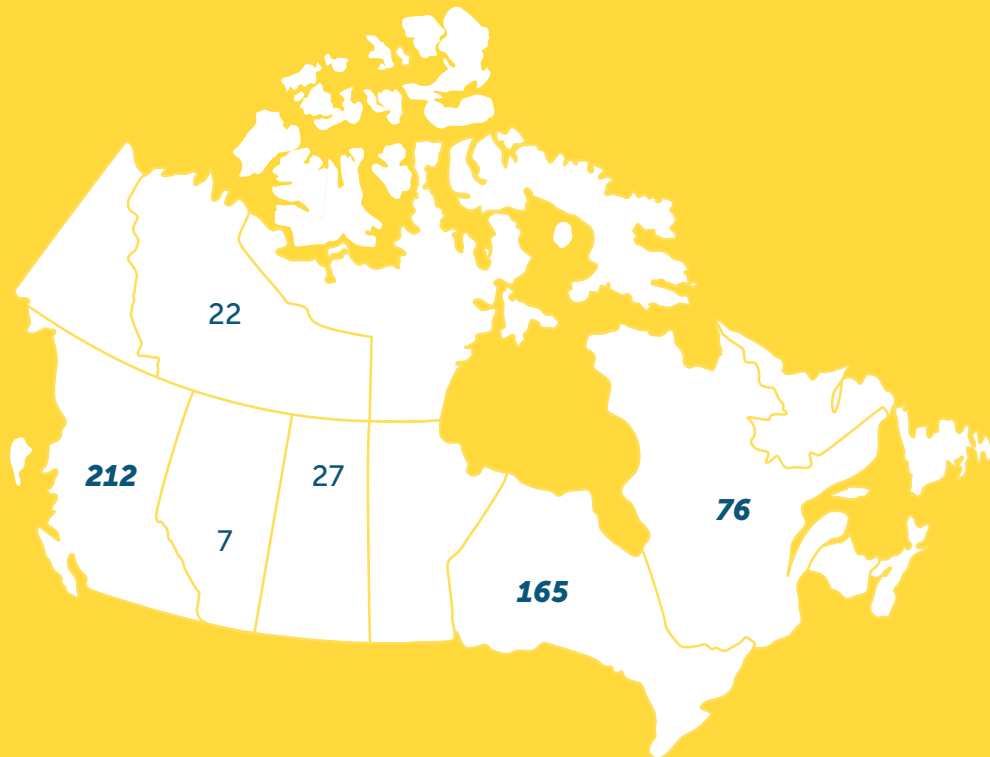
After obtaining a home study for the purpose of visitation:

Our youth in care had the most amazing trip and it definitely was helpful to understand her family rich identity.

Thank you for making it possible with your outreach and support in South America. It was reassuring that someone can speak of the location, amenities and neighbourhoods. We have seen a change in her since coming back from visiting family, she is more confident and doing better in school. - Youth in care worker, Ontario

Of 578 cases that were processed between April 1, 2021 and March 31, 2022 in Canada, 45 were referred to us by our ISS partners.

The remaining cases were sent to us by the various provinces represented on the map.



“
Reunification of the brother and sister after he was adopted as a baby and raised in another country:

Well, ISS Canada, thank you so much! The meeting went very well other than I was on the verge of tears the whole time. It was wonderful and the connection was spiritual. He is my brother. I want to thank you and your team from the bottom of my heart for making this happen. I am planning a trip to visit my brother in his country next year. What a wonderful job you have and did. - Child protection service, Québec

Working together with the ISS Canada allows us an added layer of security to ensure we have thoroughly screened applicants. ISS Canada provides us with the peace of mind we need in order to complete our work. - Child welfare social worker, Manitoba

ISS CANADA INTERNATIONALLY

ISS Canada mobilizes international networks to protect and reunite children, individuals and families separated by borders. Between April 1, 2021 and March 31, 2022, ISS Canada sent no less than 438 files to different countries from every continent. Here is the list of the 20 countries to which we sent the most files during this period.

Pays	Total
United States	108
United Kingdom	63
Jamaica	35
Australia	32
Mexico	26
Germany	20
Philippines	19
France	17
India	14
Hong Kong	12
Ireland	12
Nigeria	12
Brazil	9
Switzerland	9
Netherlands	8
New Zealand	8
South Africa	8
Guyana	7
Colombia	7
Iran	7
Chile	5
Total	438



- Child Protection
- Adult Protection
- International Child Abduction
- To obtain RC and PCC for foster, adoption, employment



- Biological Parent Assessment
- Post Adoption Tracing
- Assessments for Permanent or Temporary Placements
- Family Reunification
- Kindship Placement



- Deportation
- Record Checks
- Unaccompanied Minors
- Immigration



- International Child Custody
- International Child Abduction

Want to learn more about what we offer ?

Check out our website <https://issc-ssic.ca>

KINSHIP CARE: NO BORDER CAN STOP THE LOVE OF A SISTER...

Two children, ages four and two, were removed from parental care via emergency removal due to neglect and lack of supervision from their mother. They were placed in a foster home, since their mother was hospitalized as she required mental health support. The children stemmed from two different relationships. Unfortunately, both biological fathers were deceased (one from natural causes and the second from COVID complications), and the children had no other family members that were available to care for them in the city where they were living.

When local child protection services were assessing the situation of the children and trying to come up with a plan, they spoke to the half-sister residing in Canada. She was adamant, even though she was not expecting this at this point in her life (in her 20s), that she wanted to give her siblings a stable and loving home. The local child protection reached out to our ISS partner to ask ISS Canada to arrange for a home study.

The children's sister and her partner sat down with the assessor and shared their history, their goals and current situation. The home assessment was one of the most positive home studies to come across our desks. Despite her young age, the sister was financially stable, had a good home and had a plan for her siblings. She was also open about how she handles conflict, stressors, and life in general.

The sister also explained how she had a strong support system in her extended family, friends, and community. The assessment was so positive that the child protection agency in the other country did not hesitate, the children would move to Canada and be with their sister.

A follow-up report was shared with us a few months later. The children were thriving in their sister's care. She and her partner had moved to a new location and the children were settling in well with their sister and partner in their new home in a friendly neighbourhood that is close to parks, schools, medical clinics, and recreational facilities.

One of the children was now enrolled in Junior Kindergarten and was also getting better at identifying their feelings and communicating their needs.

The youngest of the siblings was attending a local daycare since their arrival in Canada and their speech and social skills have greatly improved. The social worker reported that the sister and partner were providing healthy meals, a regular and consistent routine, and many opportunities for outdoor play. The children have been warmly welcomed into the family, and the family has received much support from family members.

She concluded her report by saying:

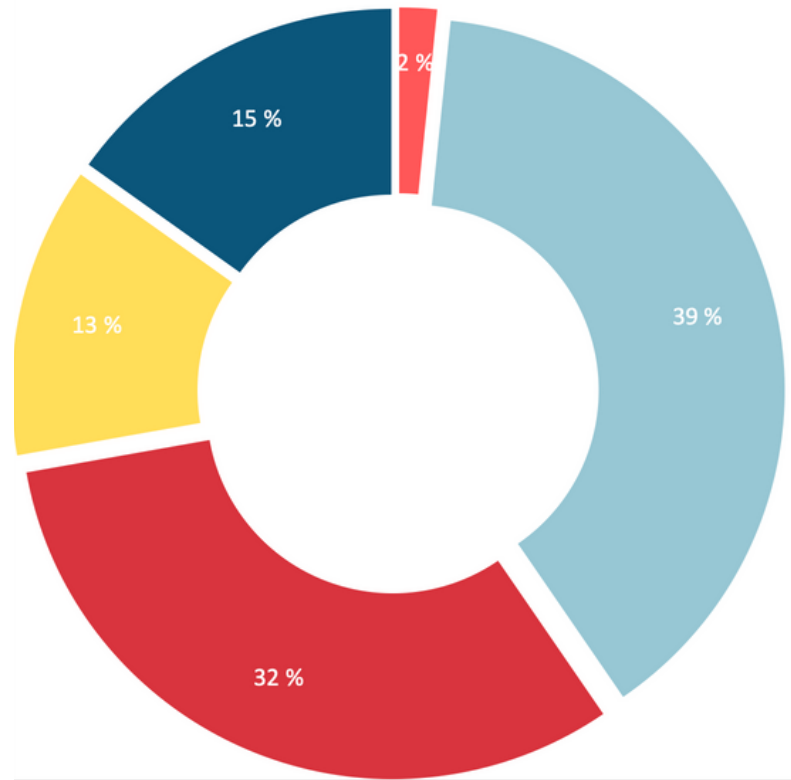
"These children are very happy in their new placement!"



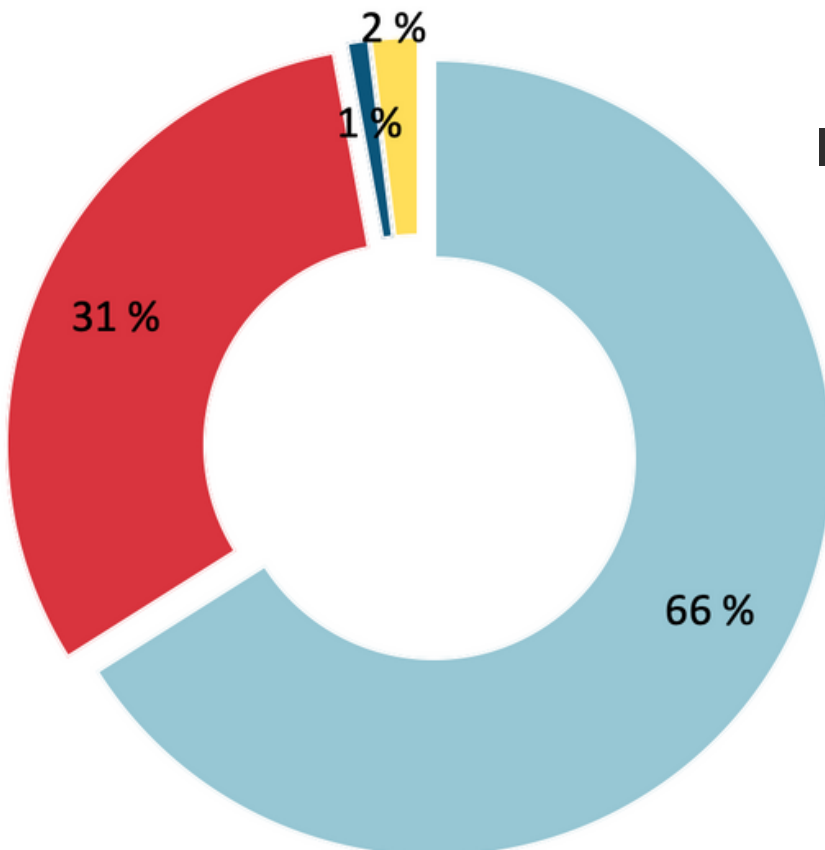
REVENUE AND EXPENSES

2021-2022 ISS CANADA REVENUE

- *BC Adoptions*
- *Casework Revenue*
- *Ontario Independent Revenue*
- *Saskatchewan Revenue*
- *Service Revenue Other Provinces*



2021-2022 ISS CANADA EXPENSES



- *Services*
- *General and Administration*
- *Organizational Development*
- *Governance*

STRATEGIC PLAN

Core strategy #1: NEW SERVICES/PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Stay relevant/future oriented: ISS Canada will explore, through a needs assessment, what could be our clients future needs and making sure that we are equipped to meet their required services.

Core strategy #2: STAFF DEVELOPMENT/SUCCESSION PLAN

Invest in our people -The board acknowledged that a focus on staff, volunteer and board growth is essential, their successes are ISS Canada successes. ISS Canada will be ensuring that staff, board, and volunteers continue to expand their knowledge base and professional development.

Core strategy #3: ISS CANADA SPECIALITY/INTERCOUNTRY SOCIAL WORK

Continue to Develop the Network both nationally and internationally ISS Canada believes that we are only as strong as our Network and our partners. Without a strong network we cannot complete our work, work with children and families that need our support. ISS Canada will continue to lead in the network core groups and will continue to expand its partnerships with national partners.

Core strategy #4: STRENGTHENING OUR ETHICAL PURPOSE

Ensure that our work aligns with the ISS values. ISS Canada will develop a Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, Accessibility and belonging statement that will guide the Strategic Plan and all future work, Human Resources, and business.





Board members and staff of ISS Canada gathered on September 17th in Ottawa.

Our board members and staff acknowledge the dedication and support of our stakeholders and our global network partners.

Contact



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Don't forget to follow us on social media



@ISS_SSICanada



<https://issc-ssic.ca>



ISS Canada / SSI Canada



International Social
Service Canada

This annual report was made possible by the contributions of staff and board members, as well as Caroline Fabre, who conceptualized and formatted it.