



Ontario Final Agreement

Engagement and Pre-Implementation Gathering

 January 13 - 15, 2026

 Valhalla Hotel and Conference Center, Thunder Bay, ON



Payukotayno: James & Hudson Bay Family Services

Irene Tomatuk, Executive Director January 2026

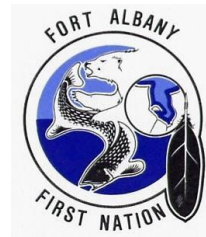
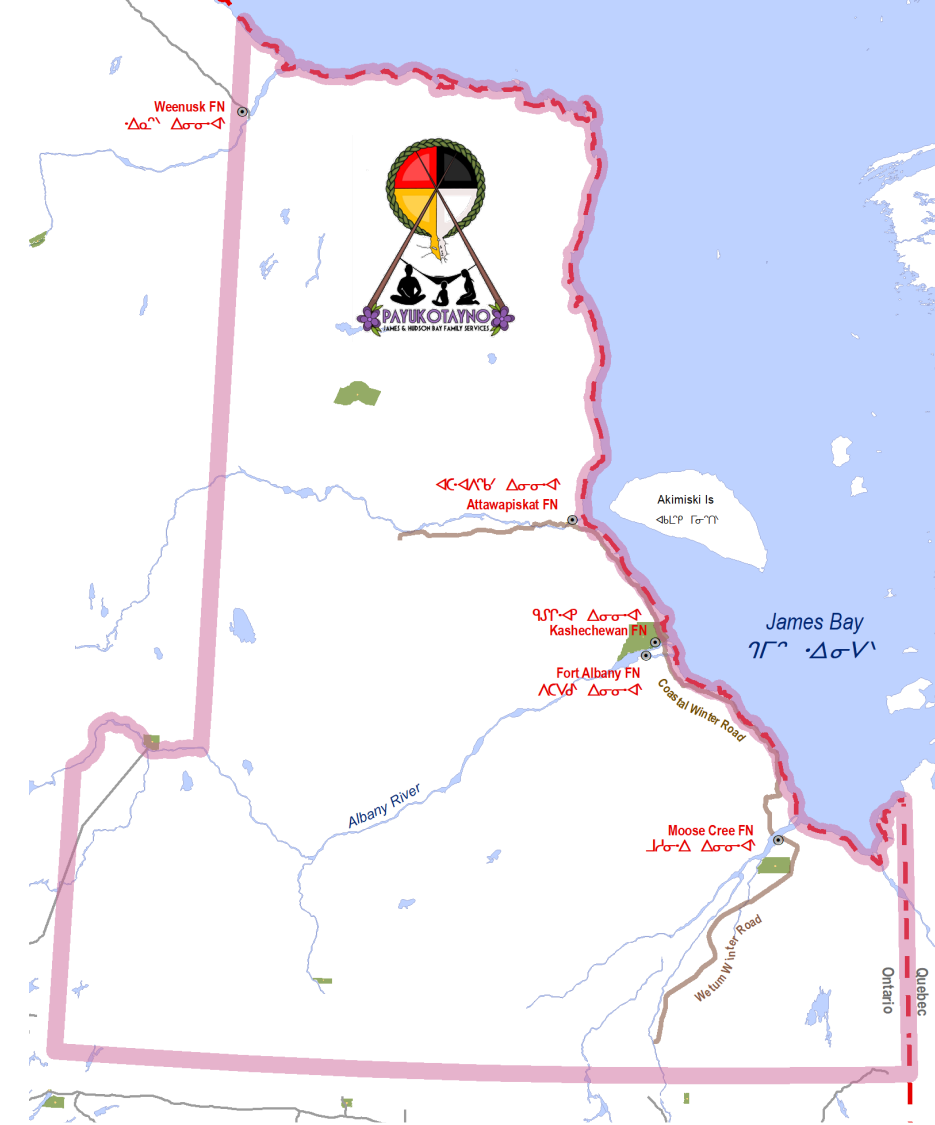


VhdUa°

Payukotayno:J&HBFS

Our families and communities are healthy and empowered to nurture and care for their own.

In partnership with our communities, Payukotayno delivers culturally appropriate services for the safety and well-being of children and families.



Why this Matters for Families

- Overcrowded housing, income insecurity, & health access continue to drive child welfare involvement
- System reform timelines do not align with family needs
- Stability, prevention, and continuity remain essential

Children in Care (2021-2025)

42% increase since 2021

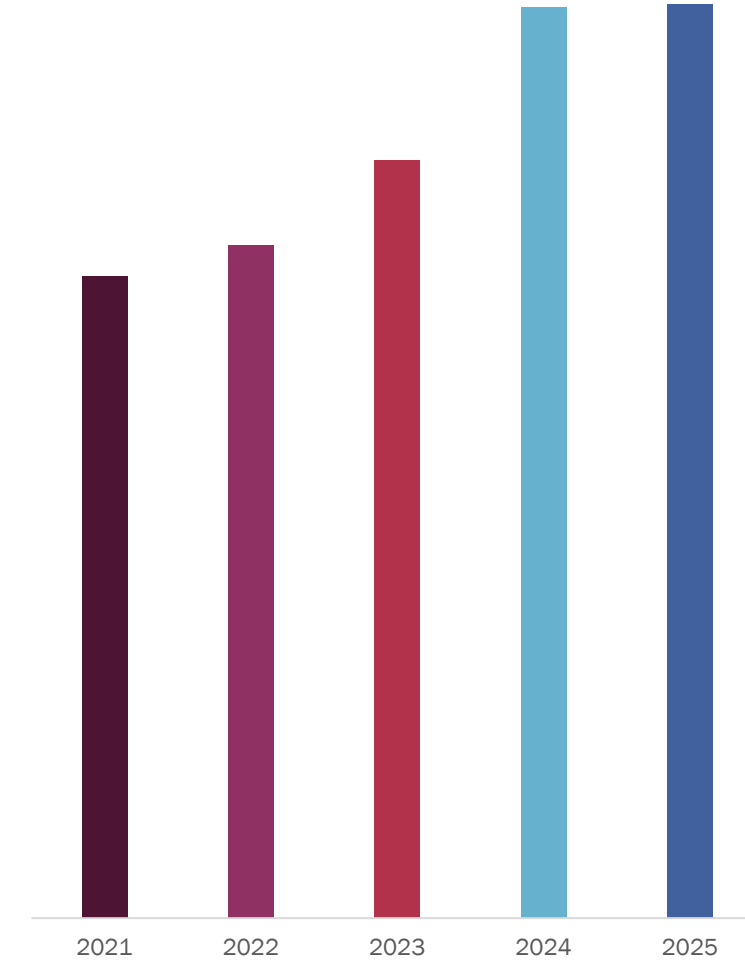
Growth accelerated 2022-2024

Numbers have stabilized at a higher baseline

This is not a temporary spike

Stabilization reflects containment under pressure, not recovery

Ongoing strain on placements, workforce, and prevention



Key Challenges

Rising Demand & Complexities for
Services

Systemic Underfunding

Operating under CYFSA

Accountable to First Nations, courts, &
funders

Preparing for OFA & C-92 while delivering
current services

What We are Doing

Maintaining services without disruption

Supporting prevention and least-disruptive measures

Strengthening FNRS and advocacy supports

Preparing for planning requirements without presuming outcomes



Initiatives & Achievements

- First Nation – Agency Engagement Table
- Customary Care Placements & Family Unity
- Reduction in Southern Placements
- Children’s Mental Health & Youth Services
- Ready, Set, Go Program
- Prevention House Programs
- Child & Family Intervention Program
- Natural Helpers Initiative
- Nurturing the Seed & Pathways Programs
- Education Partnerships
- Program Development & Training Initiatives

Service Delivery Model

Recommendations from the Deputy Chiefs/ FN Representative Services Working Group

Agency is focused on the safety and well-being of children and youth through protection services

First Nation will provide a prevention and intervention - active role

Ensure information sharing becomes evident within the First Nations and Agency

Assist each other's program to provide culturally-responsive services that meet the community's unique needs and requirements

Representative Services

Safety & well-being of children
Advocacy for First Nation

First Nation

Safety & wellbeing of membership through prevention services

P:J&HBFS

Protection services for children & youth



Collaborative Advocacy

Canadian Human Rights Tribunal
Mandated Reforms

Strengthening First Nation Representative
Services

Jordan's Principle

Preparing for OFA Without Assuming CHRT
Approval

Reform of the 1965 Welfare Agreement

Bill C-92 and respecting jurisdictional
pathways

Risks we are naming honestly

Moving Forward Initiatives

Strengthening Nation-Agency
Coordination

Integrated Planning & Accountability
Frameworks

Addressing Structural Determinants
of Well-being

Workforce Stability & Service
Capacity

Conclusion

Humility & Kindness

Responsibility & Accountability

Acting with Care Despite Uncertainty



family First Nation Agency
child community services governance leadership
support reforms now legal time Ontario role issues housing funding
expectations today Board work need outcomes Tribunal central authority prevention Agreement service decisions timelines reform current accountability law real priorities planning working supports Final without
us based needs broader transition conversation