CATHOLIC CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY
BUSINESS PROCESS DOCUMENTATION.

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Since 1954, the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton (CCASH) has protected children from neglect and abuse while providing support to families trying to meet the needs of their children. Their staff of 185 supports more than 700 children at any given time throughout Hamilton. The entire organization is proud of the work they do and the mantra they support, Care Beyond Belief.

As a publicly funded agency, CCASH needs to be prudent with their finances. Every dollar needs to be spent wisely to ensure the maximum benefit for the children they serve. CCASH relies on their financial software to show where money is being allocated. However, the mid-market ERP system that was in place when director of finance, Gail Bury, joined CCASH in 2007 was not functioning as needed. "The system was not user friendly," said Gail. "It was difficult to write reports and the general ledger was extremely cluttered. We also did not have good support." It was time to move off of the system that CCASH had used for the last five years.

Having been through multiple system transitions, Gail had vast experience to pull from. To ensure a successful implementation, there are two critical areas: one is to make sure that users are comfortable with the system and two, that the organization's entire set of processes are thoroughly documented.

To begin preparing for the transition, CCASH enrolled their users in a Sage 300 ERP overview course at Mohawk College. "We wanted to begin educating our people as early as possible," said Gail. "As a result, they were more involved during the implementation and they had a clear sense of the efficiencies they would gain with Sage 300 ERP. They came up with ideas to improve our organization's effectiveness and were excited about it."

"The best investment we made on this project as having BAASS come in and completely document our processes before implementation. We recognized that doing a project like this without a process review was a waste of money. Because they have such deep understanding of Sage 300 ERP (formerly ACCPAC) and our organization, BAASS was able to show us how we could do things better in Sage 300 and what that transition would look like," said Gail. "Having BAASS" expertise and doing the process review ensured we got the best value for our money." The documented business processes served as a blueprint for the Sage 300 implementation.

With the detailed preparation complete, CCASH was ready to begin using Sage 300. "We were so prepared that the day we cutover

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almost a non-event," said Gail. "Our team was ready and excited for the change."

BAASS was responsible for the implementation, training, and overall project management. "We learned during the process review that we were tracking too much detail on some expenses, while other expenses were not being tracked enough," said Gail. "BAASS helped us to reconstruct our chart of accounts so we have the right level of detail available." CCASH now has a streamlined chart of accounts that gives them the information they needed quickly – no more wasting time sorting details line by line and far fewer coding errors.

CCASH now has easy access to data and has made running reports a whole lot smoother. "The difference between running a trial balance is night and day in terms of time, effort and clarity of information," said Gail. "We also can more easily identify cost drivers with some customizations that BAASS did for us. For example, we maintain savings accounts for children in care. BAASS streamlined this process by integrating our children-in-care database with Sage 300 ERP." This has reduced keystroke errors and duplicate data entry.

"Bank reconciliation used to be a manual process that took half a day to complete,' said Michelle Anderson, CCASH's accounting supervisor. "Now it takes less than an hour a month to reconcile." CCASH processes 500–750 cheques monthly.

CCASH's Board of Directors is pleased with the improved security features related to cheque printing. "We have three bank accounts and had to maintain the associated cheque stock," said Gail. "BAASS recommended a product, PrintBoss, which allows us to print the appropriate routing information on blank stock and only when needed. This is far more secure and cost effective."

CCASH also has reduced their vendor list by 75% as there was no automated way to purge vendors in the old system. Additionally, they have reduced the number of forms they use. "The list is endless of the differences between the old system and Sage 300 ERP," said Gail. "Every bit of cost saving, whether on paper or people, allows us to use more funds to help the children we serve."

In the next few months, CCASH plans to implement the Sage 300 payroll module. This will give more insight into payroll details since the data will be managed internally instead of with an external service.

"Our team is so much more productive," said Gail. "We are able to maintain increasing demands with the same number of staff. BAASS has been a big part of this success. Their knowledge and level of support is impressive. Sage 300 is a predictable and reliable solution. However, whenever we need something, BAASS is here to help.

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– Gail Bury