



Child, Youth & Family Services
Director Certification Program

Governance certification and ongoing
Board development for child, youth
and family service agencies.



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Stronger Boards. Stronger Agencies.

Boards of child, youth and family service agencies carry a profound responsibility. From shaping long-term strategy to ensuring responsible financial oversight, Directors must be equipped with a deep understanding of governance that reflects the realities of this sector.

That's why **tng** - one of Canada's leaders in not-for-profit governance - has developed a sector-specific online program that builds Director confidence, improves board performance, aligns board and executive director relationships and enhances organizational sustainability. Having worked with child, youth, and family service agencies for over a decade, we know what boards require and have tailored this program to those specific needs. The course helps both new and returning Directors to develop the skills, judgment, and strategic mindset needed to govern with excellence. And, more than just a course, the program provides access to resources and expertise that reinforces the core learning. For many agencies, it can be the one-stop location for all their governance needs.



Many thanks to those agencies that have provided input to the resources we've assembled, and to CASDSM, FCSGW and BGCFS for their leadership and support, especially towards this new program.

Core Course - Governance Fundamentals: Developing Stronger Child, Youth and Family Service Boards.

From recruitment and orientation to continuous development and peer learning, **tng's** Child, Youth & Family Services Director Certification Program is a sector-specific, online training course designed to strengthen board performance at every stage. Built on decades of experience working with not-for-profit boards, this practical and accessible program supports Directors with clear guidance, real-world tools, and ongoing governance support, laying the foundation for effective, accountable, and confident board leadership.

Your agency's subscription to the Directors Certification Program includes up to 15 seats per year (Directors and senior staff) and provides seamless access to a full-service, no-fuss program:

Online, Self-Directed Course Content

Directors and participants can complete the program on their own schedule, from any device. Each agency will have the ability to set the length of time participants will have to complete the program.

Ongoing Access for Directors

Once enrolled, each participant retains access to the course and supplemental materials for the duration of their service as a Director with your agency, ensuring a consistent reference and learning resource over time.

Qualifying New Director Candidates

By request, this program was designed to allow Director candidates access to the first two modules, providing early insight into Board responsibilities and fostering alignment between expectations and motivations. This approach supports more effective recruitment and succession planning, contributing to long-term governance strength and continuity.



What's Included in the Program

1. Governance Fundamentals (Core Certification Course)

An engaging, sector-specific course that covers foundational governance concepts, duties, and best practices. Directors and staff earn a certificate of completion upon completing the program.

2. Private Forum + Ask the Expert

Your Directors can post questions in a private forum (accessible only to your agency and **tng**), and receive thoughtful, expert responses from **tng**'s governance advisors within one business day. In addition, Directors can use the forum for peer learning and to discuss the application of concepts within the course amongst each other (respecting agency/Director confidentiality of course!)



3. Annual Executive Director + Board Chair Leadership Roundtable

An annual facilitated session that brings together Executive Directors and Board Chairs from participating agencies for shared learning, peer exchange, and practical discussion on sector-specific governance challenges. Pre-scheduled and facilitated by **tng**, the forum is designed to strengthen the partnership between governance and leadership in a confidential, supportive setting.

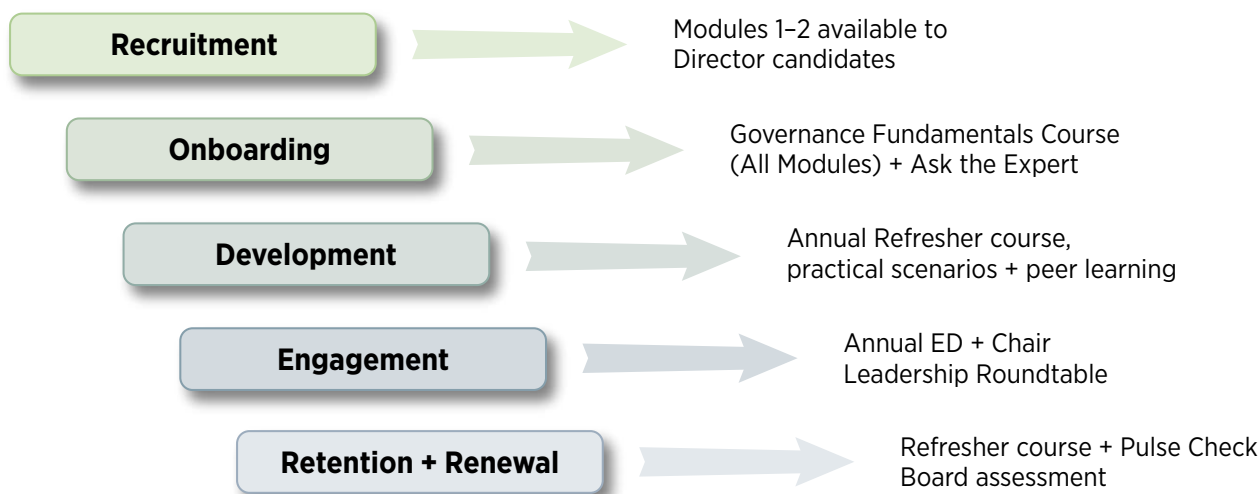
4. Annual Governance Refresher Course(s)

Designed for returning Directors who have previously completed the Governance Fundamentals, this online course includes customized case studies and knowledge checks that reinforce key principles and offer practical learning through real-world scenarios.

5. Annual 'Pulse Check' Board Assessment

A brief, anonymous online assessment that helps your Board assess its performance, identify emerging issues, and identify opportunities for improvement. Results are compiled in a confidential summary report with key insights to support ongoing development and governance effectiveness.

Governance Support at Every Stage



Governance Fundamentals Course Structure

The Governance Fundamentals course is organized into 8 core modules; each focused on building practical governance competence. The first two modules* have been designed to support Director recruiting.

Module & Title	Key Concepts Covered:
Course Introduction	How to navigate the course; how to access course support. Why governance matters. Why and how your agency is adopting this program.
1* The Role of Volunteers as Directors	Essential role of volunteers, why people volunteer, rewards of volunteering, characteristics of good Directors, introduction to Director duties, introduction to the work of the Board, framework for good governance.
2* Director Roles & Responsibilities	Introduction to the fiduciary relationship, code of conduct, terms of office and term limits, time commitment, application process, interviews, selection and orientation.
3 Board Structure & Legal Responsibilities	Overview of legislation, Ministry and OACAS ecosystem, agency bylaws, Board Governance policies, organizational overview, Director liability and D&O coverage.
4 Effective Meetings	What to expect at a meeting, ingredients of a good meeting, effective decision-making, the role of the Board Chair, the role of the Executive Director, meeting preparation, meeting participation, meeting minutes, in camera sessions, meeting evaluations, post-meeting reflections.
5 Effective Delegation	Delegation to Board committees, committee terms of reference and workplans, effective committee meetings, forming recommendations, the Board's role in committee accountability, the Board-ED relationship, executive limitations, ED roles and responsibilities, reporting structure, the Board's role in ED accountability, effective performance management.
6 Stewardship & Oversight	The Board's role in: monitoring performance, financial stewardship, risk stewardship, program quality stewardship, community engagement, media/advocacy, and the audit process.
7 Aligning Strategy, Performance, & Operations	Role of the strategic plan, planning framework and cycle, the planning process, approval, review and fine-tuning, performance outcomes (ministry required, KPI's, Scorecards and Dashboards) Tying it all together: strategic plan, operational plan, budget.
8 Optimizing Board Performance	Avoiding common governance issues, best practice standards and evaluations, board and governance work plans, Director training and development, Director succession planning, and recruitment.
9 Optional: Governance Leadership (for Vice Chairs & Chairs)	Understanding the role of the Chair, leading effective Board meetings, the Chair-ED relationship, managing Board dynamics, developing your leadership skills.

Modules are interactive and accessible. Interactive knowledge-checks are woven throughout, and each module concludes with a short quiz to assess progress. Following the completion of Module 8, participants will complete an exam that tests their understanding of fundamental governance concepts.

All content has been customized for child, youth, and family service boards, incorporating language, examples, and challenges drawn directly from sector practice and Ministry expectations.



Learners can easily see their progress at a glance. The course structure is represented and seen in an easy to follow, colour coded learning path. Once a module is completed, it turns to green and the user can proceed to the next section.



To enroll or learn more, contact us today!

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Why This Program?

Customized to the Child, Youth and Family Services Sector

- Every module, case study and assessment reflect the sector's unique context and the lived experiences of agencies' most common issues. Further customization (i.e. for your agency specifically) is available for a fee.

Supports Prospective, New and Returning Directors

- Supports more rigorous recruiting and composition goals.
- Annual refresher courses keep experienced Directors engaged and aligned.
- Annual Pulse-Check survey

Designed to Complement In-Person Governance Support

- The core certification course provides a consistent baseline, allowing in-person (in-house or advisor-supported) workshops and strategy sessions to go further, faster.

Strengthens Organizational Resilience

- Strong, consistent governance improves risk management, strategic alignment, continuity, public trust, and aligns with common Ministry compliance standards.

Trusted by Agencies Across Ontario

Over the past 30+ years, **tng** has worked with hundreds of not-for-profit and charitable boards across Canada, helping build governance confidence, policy strength, and effective leadership. We are known for our practical, respectful, and responsive approach – and we bring that same approach to this program. Below is some feedback from our Pilot Program Testers



“This program fills a long-standing gap in governance training for child, youth and family service agencies. The sector-specific approach ensures that directors gain not just generic governance knowledge, but practical tools that reflect the unique realities we face. What excites me most is how it strengthens board confidence, enhances the partnership between directors and executive leaders, and ultimately contributes to stronger, more sustainable agencies.”

Elaina Groves, CEO, CASDSM



“Governance is incredibly important to the overall success of an organization. This program provides everything from recruitment to onboarding and continuous development. The content is excellent, and the course is easy to navigate.”

Daria Allan-Ebron, Executive Director, Family & Children's Services of Guelph and Wellington County



“As a new Board Member, I found this program guide to be an invaluable resource. It addressed the many questions I had on a wide range of topics, from legislation to Board processes, and provided the clarity I needed to feel more confident in my role. The information was presented in an engaging and accessible manner, using a format that made it easy to absorb and retain. I believe this guide will not only help create better-informed Board members but also strengthen our collective ability to make thoughtful and timely decisions. It also serves as an excellent reference tool that I can return to as new questions arise, ensuring ongoing learning and consistency in governance.”

Naomi Vodden, BGCFS, Board Member



*“We all know that effective board members are those that take their governance role seriously. Board Members need to ensure the organization's stability and success by equipping ourselves with the necessary knowledge to act in the best interests of the organization. We need to understand our fiduciary duties, ensure strategic decision-making, manage risks, maintain financial oversight, and meet legal and regulatory obligations. The Child, Youth & Family Services Director Certification Program offered by the good folks at **tng** is the perfect tool to navigate the complicated world of board governance. It has raised my level of competence and confidence as a board member.”*

Selwyn Hicks, BGCFS, Board Member

FAQ's

How long does the course take to complete?

The Governance Fundamentals course takes approximately 6-10 hours to complete. Because it's self-directed, it can be completed in shorter sessions over time, or in longer sessions. It's up to each individual to determine what works best for them.

Can we set deadlines for our Directors to complete the course?

Yes. Each organization can set a course expiry date based on each person's enrollment date. We generally recommend allowing for 4-6 weeks for completion, though we recognize that this timing depends on each agency's unique requirements.

Has this course been validated by the Child, Youth and Family services sector?

This program was commissioned by a group of agencies in the sector, and they were involved in the development of the program from start to finish.

Does our organization need to manage user accounts or provide tech support?

No. Your annual fee includes course administration from **tng** and ongoing tech support from our learning management software provider, SkillBuilder.

How will we know when a Director finishes the core course?

Your Director will receive notification as well as their certificate; we will provide regular reporting while Directors are actively taking the course.

Is the Forum moderated?

Yes, our team will be moderating the forum and responding to posts in the "Ask the Expert" section.

Is there flexibility if we need more than 15 seats?

Yes. Additional seats are available for \$450 + applicable taxes each per year and can be added at any time.

What if we want additional customization?

Currently, each organization's course has the option for basic customization, such as the inclusion of your current bylaws. We are happy to offer further customization for a fee. Please contact us to discuss your needs.

Does this replace in-person Director Orientation?

Not necessarily. While it can be used as a stand-alone solution, our experience shows that in-person sessions are often very valuable. Delivering the foundational content online allows in-person sessions to focus more effectively on specific topics, making them more dynamic and engaging. Too often, we find that Director Orientation sessions are spent on the basics; this course is meant to cover those basics, plus topics that often get minimal attention.

What if some of the content needs updating? For example, if there are changes to legislation or other best practices?

We have scheduled annual updates to the course to ensure it remains current. Participating organizations will receive advance notice of the annual update and be invited to submit feedback and change-requests. We also welcome feedback and input from our program users at any time.



Next Steps

To enroll or learn more, contact us today!

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About tng

Experience Matters

Established in 1994, **tng** is focused on supporting not-for-profit organizations to embrace and harness the value of good governance. Our decades of hands-on expertise, library of proven resources and engaging personal style allows us to quickly assess, tailor and implement solutions to virtually every imaginable scenario that involves groups of volunteer Directors who are charged with stewarding and strategically leading their organizations.

We know that on the surface governance appears straight forward, yet somehow in practice, it seldom is. It is often complicated by the attitudes, expectations, level of competence, personalities and group dynamics that occur when purposefully diverse perspectives are assembled in the board room. Over the decades our experienced team has 'seen it all' and have succeeded in helping clients to navigate the twists and turns that can be expected as the composition of the board and their senior operational leaders change over time. If your board is experiencing some twists and turns of its own or simply wants to 'refresh' its commitments to good governance, rest assured we're here to help.



Our Experience in the Child, Youth and Family Services Sector

In 2012, **tng** was engaged to support Ontario's child welfare agencies' governance accountabilities. Since then, we have developed deep insight to the unique conditions of governing in these highly valued and often misunderstood organizations. This NEW comprehensive program builds on the insights we've gained from the many agencies that have leaned into our resources since those early days.



Following is a list of services **tng provides to our clients in each of our three areas of expertise:**

Governance

- Governance review / renewal
- Governance system / model design
- Board, director, chair and committee assessments
- Board education, development, and coaching
- Board succession planning and recruitment
- Board monitoring and reporting systems
- Governance policy manual development
- Policy / process benchmarking and gap analysis
- EDIA and anti-racism policy development & training

Leadership

- Crisis Management
- Culture Shaping
- Leadership assessment and development
- Executive coaching
- Succession planning
- Executive recruitment
- Interim CEO fulfillment
- Executive compensation
- Inter-organizational & stakeholder mediation

Strategy

- Environmental scans and assessments
- Stakeholder assessments and engagement
- Strategy formulation
- Strategic planning
- Operational planning and execution facilitation
- Organizational integrations / mergers
- Strategic Planning retreat facilitation



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A sector-specific online governance course for Directors and Boards

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