

A world
where
everyone
has the
opportunity
to thrive



Strategic Plan 2019–2022





OUR TEN YEAR TARGET

To provide comprehensive prevention and intervention services in the communities throughout California where our children and families live.

Since 1953, Wayfinder Family Services has been defined by our commitment to serve the most vulnerable. What began as a focus on serving those with vision loss has evolved over the years. Our services now reach more people than ever before—from those with profound special needs to foster youth with serious medical conditions or trauma and their families.

At the outset of this strategic planning process, we asked ourselves what more we could do to help children and families thrive. In developing the plan, we drew upon insights from staff, board members, field experts, and valued community partners. We also drew inspiration from the Alliance for Strong Families and Communities' 10 Commitments of High-Impact Organizations. The goals contained in our Strategic Plan focus on the four commitments that resonate most with our work at this point in time: **executing on mission, advancing equity, measuring that matters, and investing in capacity.** They consider how we retain and grow our niche serving children with special medical needs, health needs or complex and multiple disabilities; how we expand prevention and intervention services for children, youth, and families in the communities we serve; and how we use our voice and expertise to transform the systems of care in the state. Please read on. Thank you for joining us for this exciting next chapter.

Miki Jordan, President and CEO
Elworth A. E. (Brent) Williams Jr., Board Chair
Scott Farkas, Immediate Past Board Chair



OUR VISION

An equitable world in which every child and family has the opportunity to reach their full potential

OUR MISSION

Wayfinder Family Services ensures that children, youth and adults facing challenges always have a place to turn.

OUR VALUES

Inclusive

We honor the fundamental value and dignity of all individuals. We strive to create a culture in which everyone is accepted and encouraged to fully participate.

Empathetic

We seek to develop a deeper understanding of our children and families. We work to embed empathy into our decision-making, interactions, and actions.

Collaborative

We can't do it alone and we must do it together. We work in partnership to address the holistic needs of children and families.

Whatever it takes

We never give up. We will always be there for our children and their families.

Innovative

We are agile and forward-thinking. We continually seek out better ways to help children and families thrive.

Driven

We take every opportunity to move forward in our strategic direction and to create meaningful change.



Our Why

We believe everyone deserves a chance to reach their full potential.

What We Do

Wayfinder provides a range of trauma-informed services to help each client discover their path to sustained well-being.

A Chance to Thrive

Early intervention, special education, recreation, independence, workforce development and mental health programs give people of all ages who have disabilities the opportunity to thrive.

A Safe Haven

Safe, temporary shelter for youth who have been removed from their families due to maltreatment; residential therapeutic program for foster youth, many of whom have chronic medical or mental health conditions; and medical and mental health services for youth who are in the child welfare system.

A Loving Family

Foster care and adoption services that match children and youth with families that can provide safe, loving homes.

Our Reach



- 14 locations
- Programs and services throughout California
- Main Campus in Los Angeles, CA



16,500

children, youth, adults, and family members served annually



\$0.00

charged to families



1,000,000 +

hours of critical, trauma-informed services provided each year



90%

low income clients



84¢

of every dollar raised spent on direct services



The issues and trends that shape our strategy

Upstream Intervention

There is a growing recognition that an individual’s ZIP code, socioeconomic status, and race have an outsized influence on health and other outcomes. Rather than play catch-up downstream, upstream interventions seek to tackle the social determinants of health—the underlying social and physical conditions—that impact the health and well-being of individuals, families and communities.

Disproportionality

Research has documented the overrepresentation of certain racial and ethnic populations in the child welfare system and underrepresentation for those same populations in other service-delivery systems, including those for children with vision loss or developmental disabilities.

Specialization

With the shift in service-delivery systems toward family- and community-based settings, there is a pressing need for more resources for families who can support children and youth with specialized needs.



Systems Change

The traditional split between service and advocacy is dissolving as organizations leverage and translate their on-the-ground experiences with impacted families into policies that strengthen individuals and communities.

Strategic Partnerships

The challenges individuals, families and communities face call for integrated, whole-person care. No one organization, system or funder has the capacity to meet the demand. The more organizations that work together to scaffold families and communities, the better.



Strategic goals

This strategic plan serves as a roadmap for what lies ahead for Wayfinder over the next three years.



Executing on Mission

Build out the continuum of supports for the populations we serve.



Advancing Equity

Integrate the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion into all aspects of the organization.



Measuring that Matters

Grow and sustain our capacity to use information to improve outcomes.



Investing in Capacity

Enhance the operating systems and functions that support high performance.



EXECUTING ON MISSION

Build out the continuum of supports for the populations we serve.

In the last decade, we have made great strides in building out the continuum of supports for children with vision impairment and multiple disabilities—from early intervention for infants and toddlers, to recreation programs for children, to residential and workforce development for teens and young adults. Looking ahead, we seek to further build out supports on the child welfare side—including prevention and early intervention, mental health, and transition-age youth services—and further integrate our services so that children and families benefit from all that Wayfinder has to offer.



STRATEGIES

1. Expand mental health services.
2. Grow foster care and adoption services, including transition age youth services and supports for specialty populations.
3. Continue to expand youth transition services for those with vision loss and developmental disabilities.
4. Develop preventative services to address the social determinants of health.
5. Integrate select programs and services with managed care.



ADVANCING EQUITY

Integrate the values of diversity, equity and inclusion into all aspects of the organization.

This goal considers how we eliminate systemic racism and implicit bias and put equity at the center of our work. It includes a push to further integrate client and family voice in goal-setting and decision-making. It recognizes our role as employers in creating economic, educational and leadership opportunities for staff from underrepresented groups. It acknowledges the role of the board of directors as stewards and champions of this organization, and the need for more members who represent the interests and needs of the communities we serve. It calls for our taking a more active role—and partnering in new ways—to impact the larger systems and policies that perpetuate inequities.



STRATEGIES

1. Leverage our expertise and brand to advocate for changes to the systems and policies that impact children and families.
2. Work in partnership to achieve sustained improvements in the neighborhoods we serve.
3. Ensure that staff from underrepresented groups have access to growth and leadership opportunities.
4. Incorporate client and family voice in treatment planning, service design and organizational goal-setting. (also see Measuring that Matters).
5. Recruit new board members consistent with the principles of equity and diversity.



MEASURING THAT MATTERS

Grow and sustain our capacity to use information to improve outcomes.

How are we making a difference? How is our work tied to meaningful, measurable changes at individual, family, and community levels? These are the questions that underlie and animate this plan goal. It considers how we institutionalize a culture of continuous learning in all levels of the organization and how we help staff use data to make the connection between individual action and overall mission. It calls for investments in systems and capabilities to draw on data from a range of sources to measure outcomes.



STRATEGIES

1. Improve performance measurement at all levels to better link efforts and outcomes.
2. Use internal and external data for continuous quality improvement.
3. Incorporate client voice in treatment planning, service design, and organizational goal-setting (also see Advancing Equity).



INVESTING IN CAPACITY

Enhance the operating systems and functions that support high performance.

The pace of political, technological and scientific change demands new ways of working. At Wayfinder, we pride ourselves on our willingness to rise to this challenge and to step into new service areas to better meet the needs of clients and families. Our continued ability to do so is predicated on a strong, yet nimble, operating infrastructure. This goal considers the necessary investments in our people, systems, and spaces to thrive in this dynamic, shifting landscape of need and opportunity.



STRATEGIES

1. Further build the skills and leadership of staff.
2. Fully utilize, integrate and where possible, streamline existing data systems.
3. Raise the visibility of and establish Wayfinder as a “charity of choice” for individual and institutional donors.
4. Modernize and improve our spaces for the benefits of clients and staff.



Guiding principles

As new opportunities emerge, the following principles will guide our thinking.

1. Our program and service growth will focus on clients ages 0 to 26 years and their families.
2. We are open to new opportunities and partnerships—beyond those cited in this plan—as long as they are consistent with our mission and these guiding principles.
3. Any new program must link to or support a long-term outcome area (i.e., health and well-being, economic opportunity, educational success, safety and security).
4. Program expansion will focus on meeting the needs of clients in the communities where they live.
5. Any new program or merger must meet its direct and shared costs; revenue for new programs must achieve a threshold of \$1 million, after a reasonable ramp-up period, unless otherwise approved by the CEO.
6. In cases where we have need to close an existing program, we will work proactively to develop a plan to replace shared costs.



How we know we're making progress

All of our work is in service of improving the social determinants of health for our clients and families, with a focus on health and well-being, economic opportunity, educational success and safety and security. Here are some of the measures we'll use to track our progress.

1

Clients achieve their individual treatment goals.

2

Clients improve their day-to-day functioning.

3

Child welfare clients successfully transition to a lower level of service, back to family, to an adoptive family, or to a transition program.

4

Clients with vision loss or disabilities successfully transition to school, employment or an independent living situation.

5

Overall client satisfaction rate is high.

The planning process benefited from the input of staff and board members who provided feedback at key intervals via focus groups and surveys. We would also like to extend deep gratitude to the individuals who participated in the strategic planning process.

Board of Directors

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**Wayfinder is a proud member of the Alliance for Strong Families and Communities, a national strategic action network of health and human service agencies. The Alliance's commitments of high-impact organizations guide our actions and inspire our goals.*

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