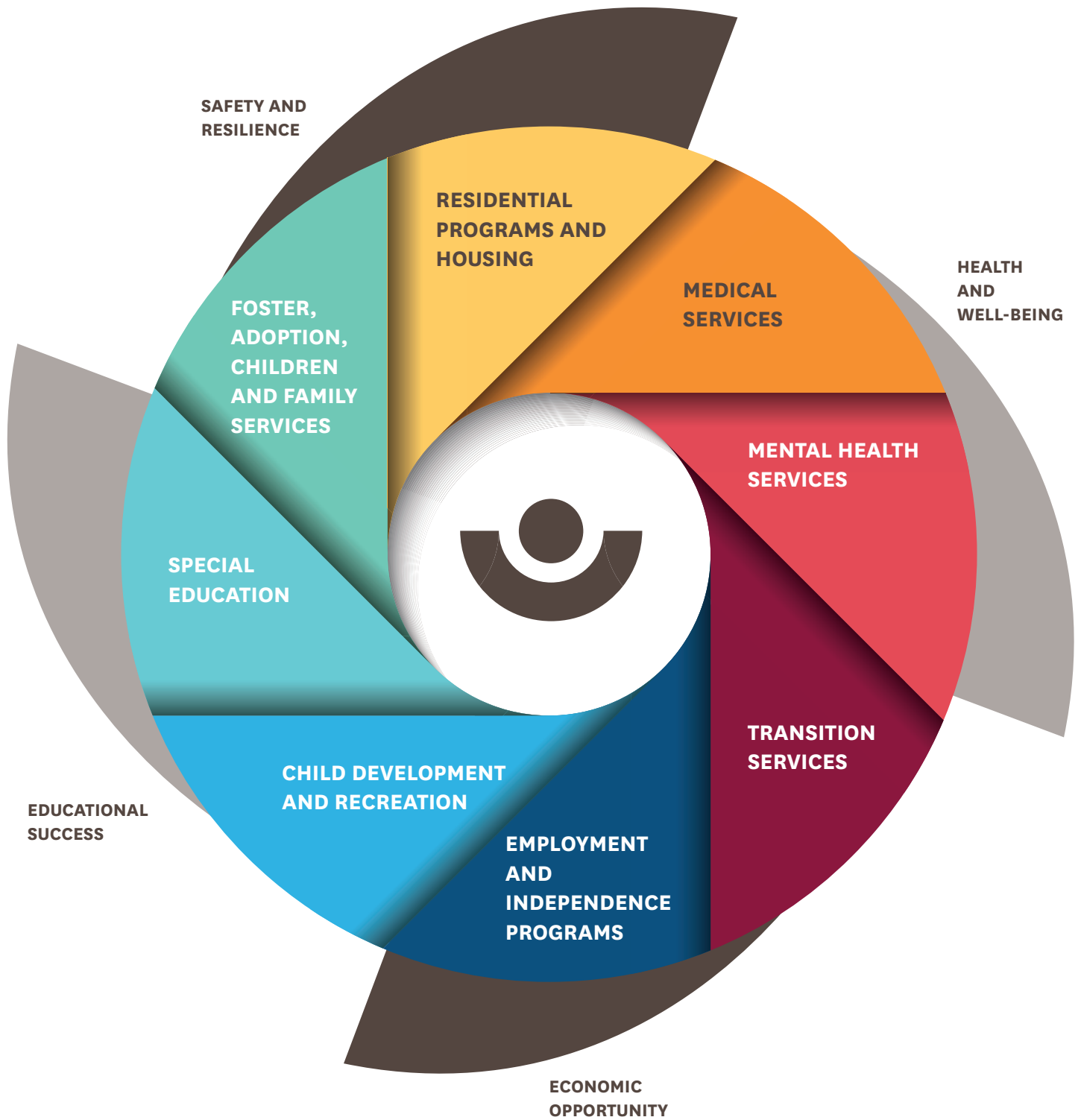


We stand in the gap.  
We change the future.

We embrace the spirit of our name:  
we forge ahead,  
we find a way,  
whatever it takes.

## **Strategic Plan 2023–2028**





We began this strategic planning process as the world was emerging from one of the most disruptive periods of our lives. The pandemic was especially devastating for the most vulnerable children and families, including those in Wayfinder's programs: people of color, low-income families and those with disabilities. We know that the road to recovery for our clients is not easy, but we are steadfast in our resolve to provide the expert support they need.

### **The Process**

In fall 2022, we launched strategic planning by taking stock of who we are as an organization, what distinguishes us from similar organizations and what we are most passionate about. In developing the plan, we drew upon insights from staff, board members, experts and community partners.

### **Looking Back**

COVID-19 and the related health, social and economic crises shook the world just one year into our last strategic plan. We responded nimbly and swiftly, ensuring that our programs ran without interruption. At the same time, we maintained focus on achieving our strategic goals. The prior strategic plan coincided with the end of Miki Jordan's remarkable tenure as CEO and Jay Allen's seamless transition into the role.

### **Looking Forward**

Jay became CEO on July 1, 2023. He has dedicated more than 20 years to Wayfinder, joining in 2000 as vice president of programs and serving most recently as president. The board of directors is thrilled that someone with his vision, commitment and integrity will steer Wayfinder into its next phase.

As we navigate the post-pandemic landscape, the only certainty is that things will be different and that Wayfinder is well-prepared to meet this moment. The five initiatives in this plan will keep Wayfinder on course: Expand Quality and Impact; Invest and Build Capacity; Strengthen Financial Sustainability; Advance Inclusion, Build Belonging and Opportunity; and Enhance Governance.

As Wayfinder moves forward, we will continue to meet the needs of the whole person through integrated, comprehensive services. On the facing page is an infographic that looks like the lens of a manual camera. This illustrates how our services can overlap or expand to meet a client's individual needs. Our programs meet these needs in four key areas – health and well-being, educational success, economic opportunity and safety and resilience – which are the building blocks of human potential.

In the coming years of change, our partners and donors will continue to provide the vital assistance that helps Wayfinder meet the needs of children, adults and families facing complex challenges. Thank you for your generous support of our work!

Jay Allen, President and Chief Executive Officer

Glenn A. Sonnenberg, Board Chair

Elworth (Brent) Williams Jr., 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**

**Collaborative**

We can't do it alone and we must do it together. We believe that fostering an environment where every voice is valued and respected leads to innovation. We work in partnership to address the holistic needs of children and families.

**Driven**

We do whatever it takes. We never give up. We take every opportunity to move forward in our strategic direction and to create meaningful change. Our tenacity and passion drive us to innovate and persist, no matter the challenge.

**Empathetic**

We seek to develop a deeper understanding of our children, families and one another by being inclusive, caring and authentic. We work to embed empathy into our decision-making, interactions, and actions.







## What distinguishes Wayfinder from all the rest?

Wayfinder Family Services improves the health, well-being and quality of life for children, youth, adults and families who are facing difficult life and health circumstances. We are the only human services organization in California with specialized programs for 1) vulnerable children, youth and families and 2) individuals of every age with vision loss, or intellectual/developmental disabilities. We work beyond traditional silos and tackle the complex, intersecting issues faced by children and families. As Wayfinder Family Services, we stand in the gap and change the future, embracing the spirit of our name: we forge ahead, we find a way, whatever it takes.



## Five-year target

We believe that everyone deserves a safe haven, a loving family and a chance to thrive. Our goal is to meet the needs of at least 30,000 children, youth, adults and families across the state each year through comprehensive, promising and evidence-based practices; innovative programming; community-based prevention and intervention services; and collaboration across systems.

# The issues and trends that shape our strategy

**Upstream Intervention.** Preventing a health issue saves lives and costs less than downstream treatment. Upstream intervention, or primary prevention, addresses the social drivers of health, which are the underlying social and physical conditions that impact people's lives and well-being.

**Health Inequity.** Even before the pandemic, low-income children and families of color, who make up most of Wayfinder's clients, experienced disparities in access to health and mental health care. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated these differences, and the long-term consequences continue to reverberate through Wayfinder's programs and the social service sector.

**Mental Health.** The unfolding mental health crisis began before the pandemic. COVID-19 exacerbated the stresses youth already faced living in neighborhoods with minimal resources, leading the U.S. surgeon general to declare a "mental health pandemic" for youth. The impacts are especially severe for low-income Black and Latino children who are most of Wayfinder's clients.

**Disproportionality.** Certain groups of children are overrepresented in the child welfare system: Black, Latino, American Indian/Alaska Native, LGBTQ+, and those with physical, medical, developmental or mental health disabilities. These same populations are underrepresented in preventive programs and upstream intervention.

**Innovative Funding Approaches in Healthcare.** California has launched a multiyear plan to transform Medi-Cal so that it is more equitable, coordinated and centered on the whole person. California is investing in home- and community-based services in partnership with nonprofits and others to address the social drivers of health. Also, Medi-Cal and private insurers are shifting to value-based care, which reimburses providers for outcomes that improve quality of life.

**Partnerships.** No organization can do it alone. Wayfinder continues to cultivate deep partnerships with public agencies and private organizations to positively impact the ecosystem of human services. These partnerships across sectors are crucial to achieving meaningful impact for individuals and communities.

**Staff Wellness and Retention.** Staff wellness promotes retention, which is a critical issue across health and human services. Wayfinder, like other providers, must continue to focus on staff wellness and growth to retain our excellent staff.





## **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES**

**EXPAND QUALITY AND IMPACT**

**INVEST AND BUILD CAPACITY**

**STRENGTHEN FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

**BUILD BELONGING AND OPPORTUNITY**

**ENHANCE GOVERNANCE**



## **EXPAND QUALITY AND IMPACT**

Scale our impact to meet the needs of at least 30,000 vulnerable children, youth, adults and families across the state each year through promising evidence-based practices, innovative programming and collaboration across systems.

The stakes for California children, youth and families are high. California ranks 35th of all states in children's overall well-being. Wayfinder is dedicated to meeting the complex needs of children, youth and families throughout California through comprehensive prevention and intervention services. Our services are needed now more than ever, and we are determined to do whatever it takes to bring our high-quality services to more communities throughout California.

## **GOALS**

1. Launch at least five new promising and evidence-based, trauma-informed services that address the social drivers of health.
2. Deliver high-quality programs in more counties between San Diego and Sacramento.
3. Further integrate Wayfinder's core programs and services to increase client access and deliver comprehensive services in every region.
4. Work in partnership with trusted community providers and leaders to strengthen the social service ecosystem in the state.
5. Consider merger or acquisition opportunities.



## INVEST AND BUILD CAPACITY

Invest in the people, systems, processes and practices that promote organizational excellence and agility.

Investments in people, systems and spaces are necessary for an organization to thrive. We will ensure we have a strong, resilient workforce and the infrastructure to make a lasting, positive impact on the communities we serve. As a high-impact organization, Wayfinder will continue to thrive by preparing for change and responding nimbly to shifts in the sector and world around us.



## GOALS

1. Enhance the employee experience by investing in staff wellness, growth and development.
2. Determine the highest and best use of real estate and locations.
3. Invest in data and technology infrastructure to support program and operational design, planning and implementation.



## **STRENGTHEN FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

Optimize existing and emerging revenue streams to fund the vision of Wayfinder Family Services now and into the future.

Wayfinder will continue to fortify its financial stability in order to have maximum impact on the people we serve. The organization has stewarded funds wisely and pursued diversified opportunities to support our life-changing work. While strengthening financial stability, we will always seek funding that advances our mission and vision, and benefits children and families.

## **GOALS**

1. Invest in a strong, sustainable fundraising program in California.
2. Maximize operational efficiencies across the organization.
3. Maximize our public partnerships, contracts and reimbursement rates. Ensure rates contribute to financial sustainability.
4. Leverage new public-sector funding opportunities that advance whole-person care.



## **BUILD BELONGING AND OPPORTUNITY**

**Integrate the values of belonging and opportunity into all aspects of the organization.**

Building belonging and opportunity has been at the heart of our work throughout our 70-year history. Sharing different points of view, perspectives, lived experiences and backgrounds is an integral part of our success. Wayfinder will expand opportunities and make certain that individuals feel respected and valued while being their authentic selves.



## **GOALS**

1. Implement business practices and policies that reflect Wayfinder's commitment to building belonging and opportunity.
2. Provide all staff with opportunities for growth and leadership.
3. Leverage staff and client voice to drive program quality and improvement.



## **ENHANCE GOVERNANCE**

**The Board of Directors of Wayfinder Family Services will be well positioned – today and into the future – to advance and accelerate the impact of Wayfinder Family Services.**

The Board of Directors of Wayfinder Family Services is committed to positive social impact and the communities we serve. In addition, the Board of Directors values best practices in governance and interconnection among its members. The board is fully invested in Wayfinder’s mission and integral to the organization’s success.

## **GOALS**

1. Conduct two of the four annual board meetings in person and include presentations from experts to help board members examine emerging trends and key issues in the sector.
2. Enhance the onboarding experience for new board members, including a new-member orientation and mentoring program.
3. Continue to recruit new board members who appreciate the life experiences of our clients.



## LEADERSHIP AND PARTNERS

### Board of Directors

#### Chair

Glenn A. Sonnenberg

#### Vice Chair

Linda Myerson Dean

#### Secretary

Scott M. Farkas, Esq.

#### Treasurer

Erica Fernandez

#### Immediate Past Chair

Elworth (Brent) Williams Jr.

#### Members

Jay Allen

Harold A. Davidson

Timothy E. Ford, Esq.

Robert D. Held

Steve L. Hernández, Esq.

Jonathan I. Macy, M.D.

John Nicolaus

Fernando Villa, Esq.

Tara Voss

Stevie Wonder

#### Impact Council

Nicholas (Nick) Aull

Kylene Barker

Brian Barreto

David Berg

Christina Bjornstrom

Otis Blum

Robert Luce

Zuber Memon

Maya Polackal

Jason Russell (Co-Chair)

Anita Siraki

Jon Steinberg

Camilla Walker (Co-Chair)

### Community Council

Suzi Bertino

Erica Fernandez

Lindsey Fudge

Jean Minton (Co-Chair)

John Nicolaus (Co-Chair)

Teri Renfrow

Anna San Juan

Dave Wraa

### Senior Leadership Team

Jay Allen

President and

Chief Executive Officer

Dawn Vo-Jutabha, PhD

Executive Vice President and

Chief Operating Officer

Fernando Almodovar

Executive Vice President and

Chief Financial Officer

Blythe Cotton Maling

Executive Vice President

and Chief Philanthropy and

Corporate Affairs Officer

Carmen Garcia

Executive Vice President and

Chief People Officer

Donna Roberts

Senior Vice President and Chief

Administrative Officer

Allison Burdett

Vice President, Visual

Impairment and Developmental

Disabilities Services

### Senior Leadership Team (cont.)

Sugey Dominguez

Vice President, Finance and

Accounting

Carol Ramirez

Vice President and Chief Program

Officer

Ani Sargsyan, LCSW

Vice President, Quality, Risk and

Performance Improvement

Tony Weaver

Vice President, Clinical and Housing

Services

### Key Experts and Partners

Richard Louis III

Vice President - West Region

Open Minds

Lee Nasehi

President & CEO

VisionServe Alliance

Brandon Nichols

Director

Los Angeles County Department of

Children & Family Services

Jeff Schaffer

President

JMC Philanthropic Services

Joe Xavier

Director

Department of Rehabilitation



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