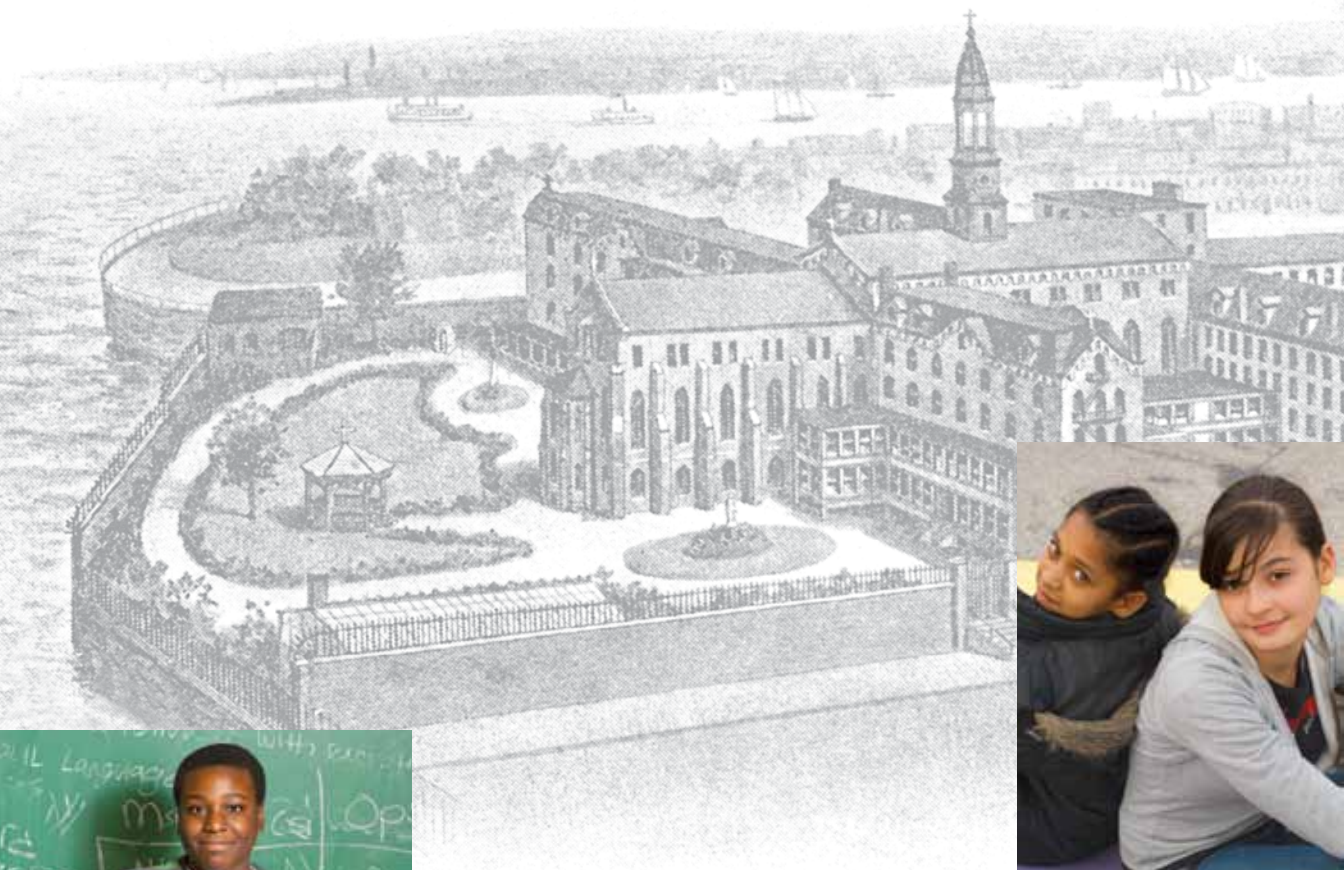




Evolution of a Mission-Driven Youth Development Agency Making a Difference





Good Shepherd's roots go back to 1857, when three Sisters of the Good Shepherd came to New York City and established the House of the Good Shepherd to address the needs of homeless women and girls. Today, through its diverse programs, the agency continues to help the city's most vulnerable children and youth take ownership of a more promising future.

Evolution of a Mission-Driven, Youth Development Organization Making a Difference

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FOREWORD

Today's children and youth face a rapidly changing world where preparation for adult lives in which they can make contributions and experience satisfaction is more challenging than ever before. Good jobs increasingly require more in-depth learning – strong communication and collaboration skills, the ability to solve complex problems and imagine solutions, and the ability to learn new academic content and apply it in unfamiliar situations. Civic life also has new demands for these skills as each of us must weigh in on complex problems like climate change, energy conservation, immigration policies, and terrorism. And having a positive family life which has always required growing personal maturity now requires individuals to manage rapidly changing cultural and social mores as well. To prepare for these complex career, citizenship and personal challenges, today's youth not only have to use and integrate traditional basic skills but also master more complex learning. And they need to form personal identities that incorporate characteristics such as confidence, curiosity, a sense of self-agency, problem-solving, the ability to change and bounce back from adversity, integrity and ethical judgment, and positive engagement with diversity.

Good Shepherd Services (GSS) is an extraordinary example of a children, youth and family services agency that is leading the non-profit field and influencing public education to innovate to effectively support young people to meet these life challenges. GSS is an agency that has a clear, well-articulated mission and ethos of respect for the dignity of each person that permeates its programs and informs its signature strengths-based approach to program design. It is an agency that produces novel yet practical solutions to persistent problems in youth development, community services, and education reform, combining engagement and empowerment of its program participants with programmatic expertise from research and professional learning in all of its work. Through its work in those areas, Good Shepherd has made New York City work better for countless young people, families and neighborhoods.

The full story of GSS is rooted in work that began over 150 years ago, but the modern day agency was incorporated in 1947. Two consistent themes are reflected in the work through all these decades: attention to quality and willingness to change and improve to meet the needs of participants. This monograph will describe key component programs of GSS. As someone who has known the agency for almost three decades I have personal experience of its outstanding contributions to service provision and learning for the field in three areas:

- Models for enriching youth and community development
- Models for innovative school design and delivery to change the trajectories of high-poverty students
- Advocacy to promote public policies that foster positive child and youth development and effectiveness in service provision.

The Red Hook Beacon: enriching youth and community development

In 1991, GSS opened a Beacon school-based community center in Red Hook, Brooklyn, then one of the ten neighborhoods in New York City with the highest rates of child poverty, foster care placement, and juvenile arrests. Red Hook was also a neighborhood that faced challenges of isolation, cut off by a major highway and poorly served by public transportation. With support from public youth services funding, enhanced by the agency's private fund-development efforts, the Red Hook Beacon kept a centrally located public school open from early morning through late evening every day of the week. Not only did GSS offer after-school enrichment, adult education, recreation activities and employment counseling but the Beacon incorporated innovative practices from the start. These included novel aspects such as the following: participation through membership—although services were free, individuals were invited to join as Beacon members and to volunteer their time in service activities; strong linkages with the host school so that the experiences in the school and the Beacon could, over time, be mutually reinforcing of the positive youth development approaches of the model and increase an ethos of high expectations for academic achievement among all; a youth leadership program that engaged a diverse group of adolescents in community problem-solving and gang prevention; and integration of positive youth and family development programs with provision of intensive interventions for families and youth with serious child welfare, criminal justice, and employment problems.

The Good Shepherd Transfer School Model: innovative school design and delivery to change the trajectories of high-poverty students

In 1980, GSS was a pioneering human services agency in entering public education with a holistic approach to designing a school that would engage youth who had dropped out of school or were near to dropping out and see them through to graduation. South Brooklyn Community High School (SBCHS), begun as a Red Hook-based annex program to a 2,000-plus student Brooklyn high school, applied the philosophy of positive youth development to education, creating a program with intensive supports but also challenges for young people to take control of their lives and build both competencies and identities that would enable them to move in positive directions for their lives. SBCHS innovated with experienced-based learning and internships combined with academics and with peer leadership.

In 2002, with the City's New Century High School initiative, GSS and South Brooklyn met the challenge of becoming an independent high school that would continue to serve the same student population but would bring them to a more academically demanding Regents diploma that would allow students to go on to post-secondary education. As the school began to succeed, GSS took on a broader commitment in which I was fortunate to be a partner. From 2002 until 2007, I served as Senior Counselor to Schools Chancellor Joel Klein and had responsibility for the City's high school reform strategy aimed at dramatically increasing academic achievement and the graduation rate

from New York City high schools. A core element was the multiple pathways to graduation strategy, an effort to understand the most effective approaches and school designs to increase the graduation rate of our students who had fallen two years or more behind in high school, and to implement effective new schools. We were able to recruit from GSS the expert who had led both the Red Hook Beacon and SBCHS, JoEllen Lynch, to develop and direct the multiple pathways strategy. Over the next three years, the New York City Department of Education (DOE) opened more than 25 "transfer" schools with many similar characteristics as South Brooklyn Community High School. GSS directly partnered in opening two replications of South Brooklyn, and numerous other agencies in the City, most inspired by GSS' model, participated in the new school development process of the DOE to partner in opening the additional schools. GSS' pioneering work in new school design integrated high expectations, rich academic content, intensive youth development supports and opportunities and transition planning for post-secondary education and employment. The field and thousands of students benefitted from this leadership.

Advocacy to promote public policies that foster positive child and youth development and effectiveness in service provision

GSS has always conveyed a vision of "the good city," maintaining that the entire City should be committed to positive development for children and youth. Thus, the leadership of the agency could never limit its mission to solely service provision. GSS has developed an advocacy component that emphasizes the importance of the work both from a values perspective and from a perspective of effectiveness. The latter has been an important signature aspect of its advocacy. GSS early on built assessment and evaluation into its program models and has consistently held itself accountable for achieving positive outcomes for its participants. The agency's advocacy has been strong and effective because it is built on both what is good for society and what is good-quality service.

GSS is an outstanding agency. We have much to learn from its work and knowledge about strengthening families and communities, engaging young people in positive activities and relationships, and preparing youth to lead good adult lives in careers, family, and civic life in an ever more complex world.

Michele Cahill

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The mission of Good Shepherd Services is to surround at-risk New York City youth with a web of supports that promote a safe passage to self-sufficiency. To achieve its mission GSS aims to:

Lead in the development of innovative youth development programs

Provide quality, effective services that strengthen participants' connections with family, school and community

Advocate for broader change

Introduction

In the more than six decades that Good Shepherd Services (GSS) has served New York's neediest children and youth, it has evolved from a small provider of residential care for adolescent girls to a large, comprehensive, multi-faceted youth development, education, and family service agency. Incorporated in 1947, GSS' work on behalf of New York's most vulnerable is underscored by its original mission and core values, which are driven by the belief that despite the challenges people face, if given the right set of supports and opportunities, they have the ability to change and grow over time. This unique strategy and commitment to building on people's strengths rather than focusing on their deficits has shaped GSS' growth and service model of strength-based youth development.

As GSS has grown, the agency has developed a results-driven organizational culture committed to supporting and sustaining quality programs and to developing the organizational infrastructure to support this work. The direction of the organization has been guided by regular strategic planning processes that not only have helped to identify areas for growth, but have also assessed the challenges ahead.

Much of GSS' success is due to its ability to implement effective organizational practices while remaining committed to its mission: *to surround at-risk New York City youth and their families with a web of supports that promote a safe passage to self-sufficiency*. This includes: leading in the development of innovative youth development programs; providing quality, effective services that strengthen participants' connections with family, school and community; and advocating on their behalf for broader change.

The agency's vision: *reframing relationships, embracing change and creating opportunities* is represented by a kaleidoscope, a metaphor for the mission-driven work at the heart of all its programs. In the kaleidoscope, the bits of colored glass reflect GSS' values and strength-based focus. While these disparate pieces of glass remain constant, through the movement of the kaleidoscope they come together to take on many different forms, just as the programs become different reflections of GSS' core values and mission.

Investing in both its staff and in the thoughtful development of its programs, GSS creates a foundation for its services firmly grounded in its philosophy of

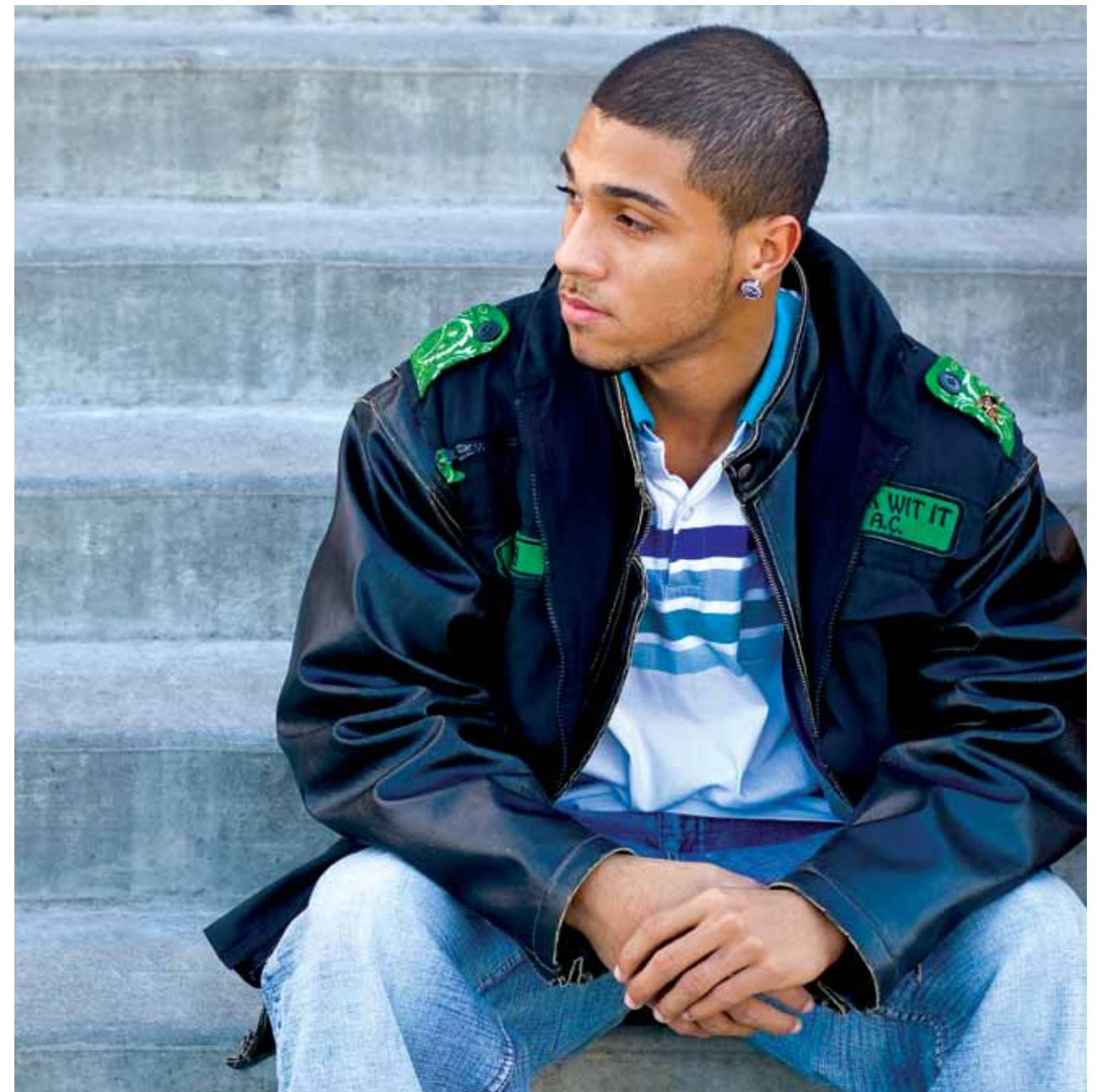
care, which reflects a commitment to helping all program participants reach their full potential. This, combined with a strong organizational infrastructure and creative, effective programming to meet the real time, real world needs and challenges of the youth and families it serves, has made GSS an innovator and visionary in its field.

Need Good Shepherd Services Seeks to Address

Urban youth growing up in high-poverty communities face multiple obstacles in their journey to independence. They live in neighborhoods stressed by high unemployment, substance abuse, violence, and crime. Many attend overcrowded public schools where far more students fail than pass, and those who lack strong family supports may have experienced abuse and emotional or physical neglect. As they grow older, many become caught in a spiral of failure that is difficult to escape. Without a high school diploma they end up disconnected, unemployed or stuck in low wage jobs, and are more likely to be incarcerated or victims of crimes than to be stable providers for their own families. These are the young people and their families with whom GSS has always worked. Its residential programs have served youth from all over the city while its community-based programs developed first in the high-need communities of South Brooklyn and later in the Bronx.

Urban youth growing up in high-poverty communities face multiple obstacles in their journey to independence. They live in neighborhoods stressed by high unemployment, substance abuse, violence, and crime.

Beginning with a focus on more recuperative residential programs and then moving to develop preventive counseling programs in the community to avoid costly out-of-home placement, over the years GSS has broadened its scope of services to include program models that address the emerging challenges young people face before more serious issues arise that require extreme and expensive interventions. Today, the agency employs both preventative and recuperative strategies, addressing the needs of youth in foster care, youth who have become disconnected from school, those involved with the juvenile justice system and those who are homeless, while also working with at-risk youth in a variety of settings to prevent them from becoming disengaged from family, school and the community. Through its interconnected network of community-based programs in the Bronx and Brooklyn, which provide a broad range of services, as well as through extensive residential and foster care services, GSS is thus able to provide a continuum of care to respond to the diverse challenges facing young people and families across New York City.



Today, GSS is a thriving multi-million dollar agency, one of the most effective and influential in New York City, providing an integrated continuum of residential and community-based services that offer supports and opportunities to thousands of young people and their families. This is how it evolved.

History and Evolution of Good Shepherd Services

Rooted in work that began in New York City in 1857 and incorporated in 1947 by the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, who continue to sponsor the agency, the first program GSS established was Euphrasian Residence in 1936, a residence for adolescent girls who could not live at home. Since that time, it has opened five more residences for adolescents in Manhattan, Brooklyn and the Bronx.

In 1972, after more than twenty years of delivering residential services, GSS recognized the need to provide family services before children required out-of-home care and opened its first community-based program, the Family Reception Center (FRC), in South Brooklyn. Soon after opening the FRC, the agency established the second of its Brooklyn-based programs, the Park Slope Mini School, a day treatment program for children ages 6-16 who were at risk of foster care placement. In this program model, the agency provided counseling services to children and their families and integrated them with special education services provided by what was then known as the New York City Board of Education. This was the first of what has become a broad range of innovative and successful educational support models based in schools that have been implemented collaboratively with the New York City Department of Education (DOE).

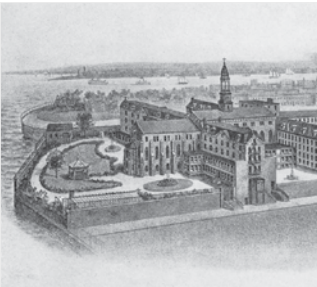
In support of professionalizing youth work across the agency, and, as part of its advocacy efforts to promote high quality care for vulnerable children and youth across New York City, in 1976, GSS created the Human Services Workshops, a training platform and vehicle for replicating practice both internally and externally. With the development of these workshops, GSS began to codify its practices and became a leading provider of in-service training for New York-area social service workers, teachers and other youth service providers and administrators.

Throughout the eighties and into the early nineties, GSS continued to develop and expand its community-based programs, including opening a teen parent and a domestic violence program. This period of growth was also shaped by the development of a number of school-based programs that involved close collaboration and partnership with the DOE. These programs marked the beginning of an expansion of school-based and community-based programs that were central to the agency's growth over the next 15-20 years.

History of Service in New York City

Milestones

The House of the Good Shepherd



Left: Euphrasian Residence
Below: Family Reception Center



Beacon participants with Mayor Dinkins in 1992



Left: GSS and McMahon Services for Children merged in 1996.
Below: SBCHS opened as a program in 1980 and became a freestanding school in a brand new building in 2002



<div>1857</div> <div>The Sisters of the Good Shepherd begin to work in NYC, establishing the House of the Good Shepherd for homeless women and girls.</div>	<div>1936</div> <div>Euphrasian Residence opens to provide shelter and detention to adolescent girls ages 16-21.</div>	<div>1947</div> <div>Good Shepherd Services incorporates.</div>	<div>1969</div> <div>Euphrasian Residence is formally reorganized and becomes the first Diagnostic Reception Center to open in NYC.</div>	<div>1972</div> <div>Family Reception Center opens in Park Slope, Brooklyn—the first program in what has become a network of community-based programs in South Brooklyn.</div>	<div>1976</div> <div>The Human Services Workshops is established to provide training for professional personnel serving New York City's youth and families.</div>	<div>1980</div> <div>South Brooklyn Community High School (SBCHS) opens as an alternative high school program for students who have been long-term absentees from John Jay High School.</div>	<div>1986</div> <div>Crossroads begins to offer attendance improvement and dropout prevention services to students in elementary and junior high schools in Brooklyn Community District No.15.</div>
<div>1991</div> <div>The Red Hook Community Center Beacon opens at PS 15 in Red Hook, Brooklyn to provide a range of afternoon, evening and weekend programs for young people and families in the community.</div>	<div>1992</div> <div>The Red Hook Community Center Family Counseling Program begins to provide counseling services to families at-risk of foster care placement.</div>	<div>1996</div> <div>Good Shepherd Services and McMahon Services for Children merge. Good Shepherd's continuum of services expands to include foster care and adoption as well as residential and community-based programs.</div>	<div>2002</div> <div>South Brooklyn Community High School (SBCHS) opens as a freestanding public school with an expanded student body.</div>	<div>2004</div> <div>The Chelsea Foyer residence, a supported, transitional housing program for young adults at high risk of homelessness, opens.</div>	<div>2005</div> <div>Good Shepherd assumes an entire network of services in the Bronx (formerly programs of Pius XII Youth and Family Services) serving more than 6,000 people annually.</div>	<div>2006</div> <div>West Brooklyn Community High School (WBCHS), the first replication of our SBCHS model, opens in Sunset Park, Brooklyn. GSS greatly expands its multiple pathways to graduation programs.</div>	<div>2007</div> <div>Bronx Community High School (BCHS) opens in September 2007.</div>

GSS opened South Brooklyn Community High School, the first of its high school programs for students with attendance and truancy problems, in 1980. In the early eighties, it also received funding to start attendance improvement programs in elementary, middle and high schools in the communities of South Brooklyn. And, in 1991, it opened the Red Hook Community Center Beacon at PS 15 to provide a broad range of after-school, evening and weekend programs to neighborhood youth and their families. The opening of the Beacon marked the first in a series of program investments in the Red Hook community, part of a strategy to build community supports for the children and youth served through the Beacon center, thus helping to revitalize the community. In the following years, the agency went on to develop more after-school programs to keep vulnerable children and youth safe and positively engaged in the hours when school is out.

In 1996, the first of two major program expansions took place when GSS and McMahon Services for Children merged. This merger enabled GSS to expand its continuum of services to include foster boarding home and adoption services as well as residential and community-based programs. During this time, the agency also continued to deepen its investment in the communities of South Brooklyn, expanding services to better meet the needs of the young people and families in these high-poverty neighborhoods.

The opening of the Beacon marked the first in a series of program investments in the Red Hook community, part of a strategy to build community supports for the children and youth served through the Beacon center, thus helping to revitalize the community.

In 1997, as part of its strategic plan ratified by the Board of Directors, the agency officially adopted youth development as the guiding framework for all GSS programs, helping to align programs and practice across the agency. This framework mirrored the traditional philosophy of service first developed by the Good Shepherd Sisters in their international work with vulnerable girls and women. In adopting the youth development framework, the agency committed itself to a strength-based approach in its community-based, residential and foster care work.

Beginning in 2002, GSS began a major programmatic expansion in the development of educational support models for youth at risk of dropping out of school and not earning a high school diploma. At this time, South Brooklyn Community High School (SBCHS), which had operated as a program of a neighborhood high school since its inception 22 years before, became a freestanding transfer school, committed to serving over-age and under-credited youth. GSS began to earn increasing recognition for its model and success with youth who had fallen off track in traditional high schools. Subsequently, in 2005, following the agency's engagement in a strategic business planning



process conducted by The Parthenon Group at the behest of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, GSS received Gates funding to replicate SBCHS in West Brooklyn and the Bronx and to codify the model. In close collaboration with the DOE, the agency has also worked with two other partnering organizations to establish three other replications of its transfer high school model by combining respective resources, including the community-based organization's expertise in youth development with the skills and knowledge of DOE teachers.

In a parallel process, GSS, in collaboration with the NYC DOE, began to pilot and implement other models developed as part of the DOE's Multiple Pathways to Graduation initiative, focusing on the education of over-age and under-credited youth. It soon became a lead partner and provider of these educational programs, which in addition to the new transfer schools, included Young Adult Borough Centers (YABCs) and Access GED programs. The YABC model is designed for students who are 17 and older and have earned 17 or more credits toward their high school diploma, and the Access GED model is a full-time GED program designed to support more students in earning their GEDs if it is no longer feasible for them to earn a high school diploma. Each of these models called for a community-based organization (CBO) to work as a partner with the DOE in providing comprehensive educational support services to the young people enrolling in these programs. Because of its demonstrated expertise working in partnership with the DOE, over time, GSS was awarded contracts to work with ten YABCs and two Access GED programs.

By integrating youth development approaches into academic settings and partnering with educators to develop more engaging and effective educational models for youth who have become disengaged from school, GSS has demonstrated the capacity of CBOs to be important partners in education reform rather than merely providers of services. This work has helped the agency to emerge as a leader in the development of educational models for youth who have fallen off track, the results of which are informing the national conversation about educational options for this population.

While expanding its educational programs, GSS also continued to work on the development of innovative residential models. In 2004, after years of advocacy, planning and fundraising, GSS opened the Chelsea Foyer at the Christopher, an innovative, supported, transitional housing program for 18 to 25-year old young adults who are homeless, at-risk of homelessness, or aging out of the foster care system with nowhere to go.

In July 2005, GSS once again significantly increased the services it offered, this time in the Bronx, when it assumed responsibility for the operation of the Bronx community-based services that had been part of Pius XII Youth and Family Services. This increased the agency's annual reach from 12,000 to 18,000 young people, and added a network of preventive programs, school-based dropout prevention programs, after-school services, and specialized programs working with young people who have dropped out of high school. Strategically, the acquisition made sense for the agency, as the Bronx-based programs served the same high-need populations as the agency's other

programs and had been developed utilizing the same youth development framework and strength-based interventions as GSS' Brooklyn programs.

By 2005, with the addition of the Bronx network of services and the development of new programs for disconnected youth, the GSS budget grew from \$28 million to more than \$40 million and now stands at more than \$60 million. While this programmatic growth was taking place, the agency was also focusing on developing the organizational infrastructure to support this growth, and has continued to engage in regular capacity-building activities to enhance program delivery, improve staff effectiveness and deepen program quality.

This overview of over 60 years of programmatic growth highlights consistent qualities that are hallmarks of Good Shepherd's work. While its strategies have evolved over time in response to the emerging and shifting needs of those it serves, it is the agency's deep commitment to an enduring set of core values that have guided decisions and contributed to its success through challenging transitions and the ups and downs of the economy.

Today, GSS is a thriving multi-million dollar agency, one of the most effective and influential in New York City, providing an integrated continuum of residential and community-based services that offer supports and opportunities to thousands of young people and their families. Its organizational competence was underscored in 2007 when it was awarded the inaugural New York Times Non-Profit Excellence Award for overall management excellence.

In 1990, in an effort to align programs across the agency and ensure that the mission would be known and understood by all staff, GSS initiated a mission effectiveness and values clarification process that provided all staff with an orientation to Good Shepherd's organizational values and philosophy of care.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD SERVICES APPROACH:

Developing Programs that Achieve Positive Youth Outcomes

Across its continuum of programs, Good Shepherd Services has consistently demonstrated a capacity to implement quality, innovative programs that achieve positive results for young people. There are several essential characteristics and organizational practices that provide the foundation for the excellence of GSS' programs. These include:

- A mission-driven focus
- Commitment to strength-based youth development
- Consistent strategic planning
- Program development driven by participant needs and innovation
- Advocacy to sustain programs and promote innovation

During the last decade, many nonprofits have had to cut back programs or move away from their mission in response to the economic downturn and state and local budget cuts. GSS, however, has been able to respond to these multiple challenges, staying focused on the needs of its clients while maintaining a commitment to its work, which is shaped by the agency's enduring mission and is firmly grounded in a youth development approach. This commitment is the foundation of all aspects of the agency's practice and determines how programs are developed and partnerships are built. It is also this commitment that ensures that the strategic growth of the agency is firmly mission-driven and values-based.

Mission-Driven and Values-Based

In 1990, in an effort to align programs across the agency and ensure that the mission would be known and understood by all staff, GSS initiated a mission effectiveness and values clarification process that provided all staff with an orientation to Good Shepherd's organizational values and philosophy of care.

Now, every year, Sister Paulette personally orients all new staff to the agency's mission, vision and values through a series of presentations that outline the origin and core values of GSS' work. "I think it's really important that I do the core values presentation to all new staff," said Sister Paulette. "After all, it is the core values that undergird all our work and are the foundation of both our program structure and our philosophy of care." The impact of this orientation

of all new staff is clear: “If you ask anyone who works for Good Shepherd what our mission is they will all be able to answer you—in their own words,” said Roland Knight, a 23 year-old Program Coordinator at the Brooklyn Red Hook Beacon.

It is this unique capacity to operationalize a mission-driven culture that unites and aligns all GSS staff in multiple sites and across diverse programs. The common thread that connects them is a consistent mission and vision, supported through mission effectiveness trainings and work groups, where staff from across the organization come together to address issues of common concern and share best practices.

The agency’s focus on mission and the values clarification process also laid the foundation for codifying GSS’ work through the Council on Accreditation (COA), an international, independent accrediting organization that develops, applies and promotes accreditation standards. By developing standards of practice based on its mission, GSS committed itself to serving the youth and communities of New York in a manner consistent with its core values of teamwork, communication, respect, empowerment, education and compassion.

Sr. Paulette clearly articulates the link between mission effectiveness and the COA process. “It’s critical that our staff understand and embody the agency’s values as they are keepers of the culture. They are on site, every day dealing with youth and families and they have more power than I do to ensure that the mission of GSS is reflected in our work. That’s why we conduct mission effectiveness training and that’s why we went through the COA process to clarify what we do and how we do it in a way that is recognized and valued in our field.”

Guided by this philosophy, agency leadership and the Board of Directors use the mission as a framework for long-term planning, program development and fund development, ensuring all new programs are measured against their ability to support and further the mission of the agency. According to Adel Ayad, Assistant Executive Director of Finance and Operations who has been at GSS for more than 25 years, “Our philosophy has always been to identify from the communities we serve what the needs are and then find funding to support them- and not to jump at RFP’s or public funding streams. This has allowed us to remain focused on our mission, making sure every penny we spend is in support of programs.”

From a business standpoint, making fiduciary and procedural decisions based on what fits with the organizational culture and long-term vision can be challenging, but GSS has developed a system that allows leaders on multiple levels to measure decisions regarding program expansion and fund development against the larger agency mission. This keeps all programs aligned, prevents the opportunistic chasing of funds and ensures that GSS will continue to grow without compromising who it is and what it does.

Strategic Planning

GSS’ focus on its mission helps guide the strategic planning process, which was first initiated in 1987. This was a critical juncture for the agency as it marked

the beginning of a commitment to long-term planning that has shaped its growth for more than two decades. Embarking on an agency-wide collaborative strategic plan every 3-5 years, GSS has developed a process that invites staff, program participants, the Board and agency leadership to participate in the planning and offer their perspectives on future directions and priorities for the agency. As a result of their participation, the strategic plans that emerge are broadly owned and understood by the whole organization and reinforce the connection between the agency’s mission, its core values and its long-term vision for program and fund development.

With every plan, the agency sets three to four strategic directions that are supported by a set of operational goals. These operational goals are developed based on program and operational needs and include a specific set of outcomes (assessed for viability given the current policy and funding climate), that are tracked, measured and reported on by those responsible for them. Building in mechanisms for accountability is essential to the success of the agency’s long-term planning process as it requires regular assessment of progress.

Since it was first initiated, the planning process has been used as a vehicle to forecast organizational needs, which includes a review of each of the agency’s program divisions, as well as the non-program aspects of its operations and activities, financial resources, administrative structures and staff strengths and capabilities. This has allowed the agency to adapt to changing circumstances and develop a coherent yet flexible strategy for projecting growth and addressing critical issues.

Embarking on an agency-wide collaborative strategic plan every 3-5 years, GSS has developed a process that invites staff, program participants, the Board and agency leadership to participate in the planning and offer their perspectives on future directions and priorities for the agency.

For example, one of the critical outcomes of the first strategic planning process was the establishment of an endowment in 1990. This shift away from a sole reliance on public funding streams helped position GSS for future program innovation. It also enabled the agency to tackle several major long-term initiatives, including a 1998-2000 capital campaign to refurbish buildings in Manhattan and Brooklyn, and to construct a major facility to house SBCHS in Red Hook, a community in which GSS operates several programs.

Another example of an outcome of a strategic planning process was the commitment in 2005 to significantly broaden GSS’ scope of work with young people who were disconnected and struggling to earn their high school diplomas. This decision, a recommendation by the senior leadership team and ratified by the Board, grew out of GSS’ extensive experience with the over-age and under-credited population as a result of the development of SBCHS, and a growing recognition of the enormous need for differentiated options for these

young people. At the same time, the DOE had committed to expand these programs as a part of its Multiple Pathways to Graduation initiative, which created an opportunity for GSS to grow its work in an area in which it had already developed expertise. This illustrates the way in which the planning process has helped the organization to identify and act upon opportunities that are consistent with its mission and core strengths.

Implementing a Comprehensive Youth Development Framework

In 1997, the GSS Board of Directors formally adopted youth development as the guiding framework for the agency's work. Prior to the formal adoption of this framework, GSS had been an active participant in Networks for Youth Development. This network included a group of youth development organizations, convened and led by the Youth Development Institute and was designed to support agencies in defining and sharing promising youth development practices. Participation in this network provided critical support to GSS as it moved to embed youth development across its continuum of programs.

In adopting this framework, the agency integrated a strength-based youth development approach with its clinical expertise so that it was able to both work with young peoples' strengths while also addressing the serious challenges and problems many of its program participants confront. The adoption of the youth development framework was consistent with GSS' philosophy that has always honored and recognized the strength and resiliency of each individual as they struggle to deal with challenging issues in their lives.

In contrast to a deficit-based model for working with youth, which begins with a focus on the problems and challenges young people experience in their lives, strength-based youth development focuses on "preparing young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through a coordinated, progressive series of activities and experiences which help them to become socially, morally, emotionally, physically, and cognitively competent."¹

These core youth development beliefs include:

- Valuing young people regardless of their situation.
- Recognizing youth for their strengths, potential, skills and remarkable resiliency.
- Promoting a young person's development rather than identifying and fixing his/her problems.
- Creating a safe and structured environment that fosters healing and positive growth.
- Developing caring and trusting relationships with culturally competent staff and other nurturing adults.
- Promoting high expectations, youth empowerment and genuine opportunities for young people to be involved in their own decision-making processes and goal setting while developing leadership skills.

Since that decision, GSS has placed a strong and intentional focus on implementing youth development principles across its many programs, developing and codifying practices that integrate youth development with the philosophy of care that has always formed the underpinnings of its work. Grounded in the belief that "each person's strengths are best expressed in a holistic framework that recognizes inter-relationships among individuals, families and the environment,"² the agency's youth development approach aims to provide services that help young people and their families develop the capacity to solve problems and achieve long-lasting self-reliance.

Throughout the non-profit community, GSS is known for its success at integrating its distinctive youth development approach into all its programs. This was underscored by a prominent foundation leader interviewed as part of the strategic planning process, who stated: "Good Shepherd is the embodiment of positive youth development. The agency lives it, breathes it, where others aspire to it."

Program Development, Partnership and Innovation

Over the past decade, GSS has gained broad recognition for its leadership in developing innovative youth programs. Within the GSS context, program development and innovation build upon current work and are focused in areas that are aligned with the agency's mission and target populations. Defining itself as a "learning organization," the agency views program development as an opportunity to identify and implement promising practices. In this capacity, it is continually seeking ways to improve program outcomes by exploring new and innovative strategies and working with accomplished partners. Programs evolve or are developed in several ways. They can be the result of a long-term planning process, in response to a policy initiative at the city or state level, or they can emerge as a result of needs identified from existing work.

For example, the agency's Beacon school-based community centers were developed in response to a city-wide initiative that launched the first ten Beacons in the summer of 1990. GSS was invited to operate one of the original Beacons in Red Hook and subsequently took over the operation of a second Beacon when the agency assumed responsibility for the community-based programs of Pius XII in the Bronx. While there are 80 Beacons in operation in New York City today, GSS has implemented specific innovations as part of the model. These include a nationally recognized youth leadership program, a social work group method for counseling which grew out of the agency's clear focus on youth development, a strong partnership with the host school, and effective integration of youth programming and family supports. The combination of these features makes GSS' Beacons among the most innovative examples of this model of programming in the city and around the country.

Another example of GSS' approach to program innovation is South Brooklyn Community High School, which originated in 1980 at the request of the Mayor's Office as part of a city-wide initiative focusing on the specific needs of young people who were dropping out of high school. The agency drew

on its experience implementing comprehensive programming for young people in both its residential and school-based settings to design a school that would work with adolescents who had dropped out and were returning to school. As discussed earlier, this model has been replicated five times in New York City, has informed school creation in other cities, and become a national model.

In addition to its community-based programs, in its family foster care work, the agency developed a model adolescent services department where it brought together caseworkers who chose to specifically work with adolescents and created a career ladder where they could obtain their advanced degrees. In addition, it included specialists to address the developmental needs of the adolescents in care, including their need for educational support and preparation for independent living. By integrating and interfacing the unit with other GSS programs in the Bronx community-based network and focusing on the specific needs of adolescents, the agency was able to develop targeted interventions, including forming networks with other CBOs providing support services to those in need. Line staff also developed a range of programs to prepare and support these young people as they aged out of foster care.

For more than 30 years, GSS has understood that schools are the central institutions in the lives of young people and their families..[and] developed organizational expertise in partnering with these institutions.

A key factor contributing to GSS' ability to develop and implement innovative programs is its commitment and ability to work in partnership with other institutions and organizations. Over the years, the agency has demonstrated expertise in developing and maintaining these types of working relationships, which involve both mutual trust and mutual accountability.

For example, for more than 30 years, GSS has understood that schools are the central institution in the lives of young people and their families. As a result, beginning in the 1970s, at a time when few community-based organizations were working with schools, GSS developed organizational expertise in partnering with these institutions that has enabled it to become a leader in the development of school-based models of service for children and youth. In New York City, partnering with CBOs has now become an accepted way of working. However, when these collaborations were just beginning, GSS was one of the leaders in developing practices to make them sustainable and effective and, today, is broadly recognized for its expertise in collaborating at all levels of the Department of Education.

The Foyer, a transitional housing and support program for vulnerable youth ages 18-25, is another example of innovative use of partnerships. In this instance, GSS partnered with Common Ground, an organization with expertise in supported housing and facility development. Working together to make the Foyer a reality, Common Ground was responsible for creating the physi-



cal space, and GSS took responsibility to design and implement the program (based on a European model) that would support these young people, who were aging out of foster care or homeless and needed housing and a supportive path to self-sufficiency.

GSS' strategic use of partnerships has enabled it to address gaps in service, leverage resources and work with organizations with different areas of expertise. Because of its willingness to build on existing infrastructures and collaborate with a range of organizations, it has been able to develop programs that help advance its mission and support young people from early childhood through high school and beyond.

All of the examples discussed in this section illustrate different paths to program development and innovation. These examples are more fully elaborated in the program profiles that are found on p.43.

Advocacy

Throughout GSS' history, a primary objective of its mission has been to “advocate for broader change.” This is done by connecting programmatic work to a larger policy and advocacy agenda in an effort to protect critical funding, strengthen policies that affect children, youth and families in need, and work for the development of new areas of public investment.

One of the leading voices for at-risk youth in NYC, the agency plays a vital role in public policy discussions and coalitions, and is especially active at the city and state levels. Although always an underlying principle of its work, GSS' formal advocacy work intensified in 1981 when it joined with a small group of service providers and advocacy organizations to launch the Neighborhood Family Services Coalition (NFSC), a voice in support of quality services for children, youth and families at the neighborhood level.

This public advocacy organization, now in its 30th year, continues to “encourage the highest quality of service, public accountability, and the most effective and efficient use of public funds.”³ In addition to NFSC, GSS participates in a range of other coalitions, focusing on adolescent needs, child welfare, out-of-school time issues, and collaborations with the Department of Education, to ensure that it is actively engaged in policy and public funding discussions that impact its programmatic work.

For GSS, the work of advocacy is directly linked to developing and sustaining effective programmatic efforts and is a fundamental aspect of many partnerships. While not all the agency's advocacy efforts have been successful, many have been instrumental in helping to protect critical policies and funding streams that directly affect GSS and other city-wide programs. For example, in the early years following the establishment of both the Beacons and South Brooklyn Community High School, there were efforts at the city level to reduce or eliminate funding that supported them. GSS worked tirelessly, both individually and in coalition, to protect public investment in these programs so that, over time, each would have the opportunity to demonstrate effectiveness, eventually becoming the established models they are today.

This advocacy work is part of GSS' ongoing commitment to strengthen, build and protect programs vital to its mission; to work to sustain, grow and when needed, blend funding streams; and to modify or create new policies to meet the changing needs of New York City's youth and families. The agency's successes at the city level have been pivotal to its ability to develop and sustain innovative programs.

Recently, in an effort to strengthen its advocacy work, the agency created a Director of Public Policy position. Given the political climate, and funding and policy changes over the last few years, this new position allows the agency to intensify its advocacy efforts. This basic tenet, to speak consistently on behalf of good practices and the policies that support them, is one of the most successful mechanisms GSS has developed to protect promising, innovative and effective programs, and ensure they are funded and sustained over time. The establishment of a dedicated public policy staff position is further evidence of GSS' commitment to maintain a strong advocacy voice as part of its mission.

“GSS has always been at the forefront of advocacy in New York City, understanding advocacy not as something to be done in *addition* to the work but, rather, as an intrinsic and critical *part* of the work,” said Michelle Yanche, GSS Director of Public Policy. “Most importantly, GSS recognizes the responsibility to advocate both for its own participants, programs and communities and also for all of the children, youth and families of New York City and for best practice in the field of human services as a whole. Each and every year, GSS' advocacy work translates into specific positive budgetary, legislative, policy, procurement and programmatic changes for the benefit of the children, youth and families we serve.”

1984

Hired a director to reorganize the fiscal operations of the agency

1993

Organizational assessment of community-based programs

1994

GSS received technical assistance

1997

Council on Accreditation (COA) process

2005

Business plan development for replication of high school model

2006

Comprehensive 3-year business plan development

BUSINESS STRATEGY:

Building an Organizational Infrastructure to Support Programs

For many youth development organizations, the constant push and pull between the cost of delivering high quality programs and the need to develop a coherent infrastructure to scaffold those programs often creates tension on how best to spend scarce resources. “Faced with overwhelming needs, these organizations usually choose to commit their available time and energy to raising funds to support direct service work rather than investing in capacity building”⁴ or infrastructure development. But, as has been the case with GSS, as organizations grow and demands intensify, it is no longer possible to separate the provision of direct services from systemic organizational supports.

More intentional focus on building GSS’ organizational infrastructure began in the mid 1980s. At that time, the agency was experiencing the strains of implementing its growing portfolio of residential and community-based programs without the organizational infrastructure to support them. In response to these challenges, the agency participated in a series of organizational assessments and capacity-building initiatives that specifically addressed these pressing needs and positioned it to continue to strengthen its internal capacity in response to changing demands. The key to the success of its involvement in these efforts was that, in each instance, agency leadership and the Board committed themselves to both act on the recommendations that emerged and raise the resources that were needed to implement them.

- In 1984, acting on the recommendations of consultants from the National Executive Service Corps, GSS hired a fiscal director who was charged with reorganizing the fiscal operations of the agency including computerization of fiscal functions and the creation of a separate HR Department. (Until that time all HR and finance issues had been handled by one department.)
- In 1993, after identifying this need through the strategic planning process, the agency embarked on its first organizational assessment of its community-based programs. The consultants from People Potential recommended the need to strengthen administrative support for these programs and provide

additional management training for several program directors who had been promoted during the agency's rapid growth, but who had no prior directing experience.

- In 1994, GSS was chosen as one of twenty youth-serving agencies to participate in the DeWitt-Wallace Readers Digest Management Initiative. This was a five-year project led by the Fund for the City of New York designed to help build the organizational capacity of New York City youth-serving agencies in order to improve program delivery. As part of this initiative, the agency received technical assistance to develop management and administrative infrastructures, already identified through the strategic planning and community assessment processes. Utilizing this opportunity, the agency implemented a training program for its new program directors and accelerated computerization across the agency, thus helping to facilitate its merger with McMahon Services for Children two years later.
- In 1998, the agency underwent the rigorous process of becoming accredited by the national Council on Accreditation (COA). This process provided an opportunity for a comprehensive internal assessment of policies and procedures as well as an external review of core programs and practices against the highest national standards. It included the submission of extensive documentation of key program and administrative areas; development and upgrading of program manuals, policies, and procedures; and a site visit by a team of peer reviewers. The accreditation award was received in January 1999. The COA process provided the impetus for the development of a comprehensive organizational manual, as well as the internal Risk Management Committee and Quality Improvement Department.
- In 2005, key staff from the agency worked with The Parthenon Group, a prestigious strategy advisory firm, to develop a business plan for replication of its model pioneered at South Brooklyn Community High School and made the determination to codify the model, move forward with two internal replications and to serve as a transfer school intermediary in supporting the planning and implementation of three additional schools as CBO/DOE partnerships.
- In 2006, with the support of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, a leading national foundation, and informed by the school replication business planning process, GSS worked with The Bridgespan Group, a highly respected strategic advisory firm, to develop a comprehensive three-year business plan that identified areas of continued programmatic work and the organizational supports needed to support them. It again partnered with the firm in 2008 to refresh this plan and develop its 2009-2012 strategic business plan.

Through these processes, GSS has developed a keen understanding of the critical connection between effective organizational capacity and the implementation of high quality and innovative programs. This is clearly demonstrated by the organization's ability to manage the merger with McMahon Services in 1996 and the absorption of the community-based programs of Pius XII in 2005. Both of these represented a major expansion of the agency's work and, in each instance, GSS was proactive in identifying the organizational supports that made it possible to manage this growth successfully.

The following are the core elements of GSS' organizational infrastructure that have enabled it to fulfill its mission and achieve positive outcomes for the young people, families and communities with whom it works.

- An engaged and committed Board of Directors.
- Strong executive and senior leadership.
- Ongoing training and staff development, including a leadership pathway for all staff.
- A strong focus on program results through developing, tracking, and assessing participant outcomes as well as program evaluation.
- Fiscal capacity and oversight.
- Institutional advancement through strong government contracts and private fundraising departments.

An Engaged and Committed Board of Directors

Over the past 30 years, GSS has worked intentionally to build a strong Board of Directors committed to the values and mission of the agency. The result is a highly aligned and motivated Board with full capacity and willingness to participate in all oversight responsibilities. Board members are representative of New York City and reflect a broad range of sectors and skill-sets, with particular expertise in finance, program operations, personnel policies and procedures, insurance, law and related risk management.

For GSS, the Board's understanding and support of the agency's mission and philosophy of care are crucial to its ability to effectively advocate for the agency. All new Board members undergo a thorough orientation and are introduced to GSS programs through the voices of staff and participants. "We use an orientation manual and site visits to familiarize Board members with [the agency's] programs. In addition, each [quarterly] Board meeting features a special presentation on a specific GSS program or area of work. Program leaders describe what they do and a program participant shares his/her story and helps to bring it to life," explained former Board President, Bob Niehaus. GSS also ensures a smooth leadership transition by designating the Board President Elect a year in advance of his/her official appointment. Said current President Jim Sullivan: "Chairing the Finance Committee and being a member of the Executive Committee for several years provided a great opportunity to work closely with Bob and create a seamless transition."

“We work to purposefully create a Board that shares our values and vision, that wants to give back and brings expertise to the table that we do not have. Our Board members have a wealth of knowledge in areas such as risk management, law, human resources and finance,” said Sr. Paulette. “We also work hard to really educate our Board about our programs and program participants so they understand the implications of the decisions they help us make and are fully engaged in the work of bringing in a range of resources to enrich our programs and ensure a strong infrastructure to support them.”

Unlike many non-profits whose Boards may only be loosely connected to the organization, at GSS the Board is an integral piece of the agency’s infrastructure, providing critical strategic guidance and resources that help programs grow and flourish.

Every two years, the Board completes a self-evaluation to assess its overall effectiveness, focusing on planning, leadership, finance, management and quality improvement. The Board also evaluates the Executive Director’s performance annually in writing against established performance criteria linked to GSS’ strategic plan in a process that includes a self-evaluation based on the goals and objectives of the plan’s implementation.

Unlike many non-profits whose Boards may only be loosely connected to the organization, at GSS the Board is an integral piece of the agency’s infrastructure, providing critical strategic guidance and resources that help programs grow and flourish.

Strong Executive and Senior Leadership

For GSS, strong agency leadership provides the foundation for quality program development and implementation, and sets the tone for interaction between staff at all levels of the organization. This begins at the executive and senior management level, where both an Administrative Team, comprised of top administrative and program leadership, and a Senior Leadership Group (SLG), made up of agency leaders who oversee all programs and support departments across GSS, including those on the administrative team, work closely with the Executive Director to assess the agency’s progress, challenges and future directions.

The smaller Administrative Team, akin to a cabinet, has been in place since the early 90s and meets monthly to deal with the more operational aspects of the agency including policy and human resource issues, funding and program management. The larger SLG was initiated in 1997, following the merger with McMahon Services for Children, in response to the need to create a larger leadership group that reflected the diverse work of a growing organization. The SLG meets at least five times a year to facilitate communication, provide for the sharing of promising practices across the organization, and engage senior staff in decision-making as it relates to strategic growth and mission.

According to Assistant Executive Director for Administration and Staff Development Laurie Williams, who sits on both teams and facilitates the SLG, both have fostered a collaborative environment and are open, healthy spaces where people feel free to express their opinions. “The culture at GSS is so different from most organizations; constructive dialogue is encouraged and truly reflects the agency’s core values. We believe in gathering people from across the agency for both input and the cross-pollination of ideas,” she explained.

GSS has positioned itself as a “learning organization,” and this too applies to senior leaders, who are continually given opportunities to reflect on and develop their leadership skills. Over the past several years, the agency has increased its commitment to developing its leaders. Beginning in 2007, GSS initiated its first retreat for senior staff led by an outside organization highly respected for its work in leadership development. The goals of this retreat were to: increase each senior leader’s awareness and understanding of his/her critical role as a leader; expand awareness of his/her personal effectiveness; identify areas of strength and areas for further growth; and prepare the senior leadership members to direct their own personal development as well as the growth of their teams. In addition, each year, all members of the SLG (and indeed all staff) have an annual review that includes goal-setting around professional development and training.

An internal leadership pathway, in tandem with training and staff support, has allowed GSS to develop its own leaders and has contributed to leadership stability across the agency. As a result, several members of the senior leadership team have long histories with the agency, many of them starting as program level staff.

Ongoing Training and Staff Development

Along with strong leadership, GSS has recognized the importance of having a trained and committed staff who are able to implement quality programs that are aligned with the agency mission. While many non-profits struggle to find competent and committed staff, GSS has become adept at developing its staff by creating an environment that values employees and encourages them to stay with the organization. Utilizing a combination of supervision, professional development, mentoring, and 360 evaluations, GSS has built a promotional ladder that enables staff to grow professionally and assume new roles with increased responsibility, as their skills and capacities develop.

According to Denise Hinds, Assistant Executive Director for Residential Programming, herself a product of GSS’ leadership pathway, GSS’ structure of staff support has contributed to the agency’s leadership stability over the years. Denise began working at GSS right after graduating college over twenty-six years ago, as a youth worker in a diagnostic center for young people in crisis. With the support of the agency and her supervisors, she went back to school to get her MSW and, concurrently, worked her way up through the agency; she now oversees all of the GSS’ residential programming. Denise feels that

the organizational and staff development supports provided by GSS give many young staff the opportunity to improve their practice and motivate them to move to higher positions in the agency. As she observed, “just the amount of training they [staff] receive, enables them to learn a lot here that will serve them well in their careers. But, generally the culture of the organization encourages staff to stay—or come back after they return to school. We treat our staff with the same respect as we treat the young person we work with—that’s why we have such a high caliber staff.”

The primary strategy to achieve staff accountability but also support ongoing professional growth and skill development is weekly supervision. It is expected that all staff members receive weekly supervision to address challenges they are facing, review their ongoing job performance and get support as they develop their capacities. The agency’s commitment to supervision is reflected in the extensive, targeted training it provides to new and more seasoned supervisors; the institution of an agency-wide workgroup on supervisory best practices; and the designation of 2007 as the Year of Supervision, a process that focused staff on this critical process.

Annual performance reviews are also designed to support staff development and, in 2006, were revised based on a strength-based competency model. Each year, all staff are expected to undergo this formal process, which includes: a self-evaluation, an assessment of job performance and goal achievement, fulfillment of corrective action plans, if applicable, and recommendations for further training/skill building, if required. In addition, these performance goals are regularly assessed as part of weekly supervision so employees are able to actively incorporate them into their daily practice, and staff members also participate in a six-month check-in with their supervisors.

In addition to supervision and regular performance reviews, GSS has always understood the importance and value of offering ongoing professional development to staff. For many years, these opportunities were offered solely through the Human Services Workshops, but, in 1999, GSS created its own internal training department to meet the needs of its growing and increasingly diversified program staff, following its merger with McMahon Services for Children.

The creation of this department is an example of infrastructure development driven directly by program need. Since it was established, the Training Department has become the centerpiece of the agency’s staff development infrastructure, helping to prepare staff to meet the ever-changing and increasing demands of the field of youth and family services. The Department’s commitment to addressing identified training needs in a timely manner helps to sustain staff competence and program quality; ensures that the agency remains in compliance with training mandates of funders and regulatory bodies; allows for cross-agency sharing of best practices and networking; boosts morale, thereby enhancing retention; and equips staff for promotion and transfer, thus helping the agency to build a more diverse management team.

In summarizing GSS’ approach to leadership and staff development, Sr. Paulette commented, “While it is a constant struggle to balance the needs of

such a large organization, we still want to stay connected to all our staff and offer each an opportunity to grow and excel.” This intentional focus on leadership and staff development across GSS illustrates the organization’s understanding of the critical connection between a strong and effective staff and the implementation of quality programs. Over the past twenty-five years, the agency has acted on its commitment by raising the private funds necessary to support this crucial human resource investment.

Ongoing Program Assessment and Documentation

GSS has always been committed to assessing its programs’ progress and outcomes, and formally developed an infrastructure for program accountability and codification of standards in 2000—the Quality Improvement Department (QI). For several years, this department worked to ensure that the agency adhered to the standards of the Council on Accreditation (COA) and that programs tracked numbers and basic service outcomes required by public grants and private funders. But in 2008, in response to a national trend of greater accountability for public dollars and a push to use evidence-based practice in school-based and after-school settings, the agency decided on a more focused approach to data collection and program evaluation. As a result, it underwent a major restructuring of its QI Department and in its stead established the Program Evaluation and Planning Department (PEP).

Over the years, quality improvement endeavors have played a key role in enhancing GSS services and helping programs measure impact and deepen quality. To this end, the Board and agency leadership identified PEP as an area of continued focus and investment, and as an outcome of the 2005-2009 strategic plan, committed to strengthening its ability to evaluate programs and develop and track outcomes. This included expanding the use of technology and data to inform practice in a tangible, user-friendly way. As a result, PEP developed an agency-wide outcomes framework and acquired a new database system in order to measure the success of all agency programs. PEP then worked with program leadership to establish goals, outcomes, milestones, activities, and indicators for their respective program.

This unified outcomes measurement system enables GSS to evaluate program effectiveness and impact on individual participants, and allows PEP to work closely with programs to track targeted, program-specific outcomes to which program staff hold themselves accountable, and which feed into broader agency outcomes. PEP also administers and processes annual participant, student, parent, and personnel satisfaction surveys. Data results are aggregated for each program, and staff and participants from individual programs meet to discuss the results and to identify and implement corrective actions.

Implementing new data systems across multiple programs has not been without its challenges, but with continued training and dedicated support, PEP is finding a balance between keeping the data system streamlined and user-friendly, yet complex enough to track key agency and funder-specific data. While it can be a struggle to make the input of data a part of staffs’ daily



routine, in addition to the day-to-day demands of service delivery, the agency has maintained its commitment to using data to inform practice, and works to support staff in integrating the use of data into their ongoing work.

“GSS’ investment in PEP reflects its commitment to continuously strive to provide the highest quality and most innovative services to youth and their families,” said Miranda Yates, Director of Program Evaluation and Planning. “PEP partners with program and administrative staff in developing and evaluating its programs and in promoting the use and analysis of data at all levels of the agency—from direct care to advocacy.”

Fiscal Capacity and Oversight

In addition to maintaining a well-ordered approach to leadership development and governance, GSS has developed a disciplined fiscal structure, which closely monitors fund development and allocation of resources and planning, annually reviewing the agency’s accomplishments against its strategic plan and sharing results with Board members, public agencies and private funders.

For many years, GSS relied almost exclusively on public funds to support its work. Then, in the early 1980s, initially in response to the rapid growth of its community-based programs, the agency began to develop its private fundraising capacity.

This practice of fiscal analysis is embedded in the agency’s long-term planning and includes forecasting, a process long used by for-profit organizations to assess upcoming economic trends and challenges. The result of this innovative use of forecasting has enabled the agency to anticipate possible impacts on its programs from changes in public support and project more accurately the need for private funding to sustain critical program initiatives.

The annual financial plan, an integral component of the agency’s long and short-range planning, delineates financial goals that are essential for meeting planning and quality improvement goals. As part of this financial plan, the agency sets percentage targets for overhead and program costs and regularly monitors those to ensure overhead costs do not exceed their allotted amount. And, when funds are tight, the agency looks to cut overhead costs first, before it cuts program costs.

Early on in its strategic planning, GSS identified the need to develop a coherent fiscal structure, but much of the work to solidify the financial infrastructure and build the capacity of the finance team was developed with the support of external consultants during the DeWitt-Wallace Readers Digest Management Initiative. Participation in the initiative allowed the agency to integrate technology into all areas of operations, including fiscal management, and to clearly articulate its financial strategies. By developing the capacity internally to manage, maintain and administer its own technology systems as part of the

Finance Department, the agency was able to streamline systems and go paperless long before many in its field did. Also, the ability to access financial data in real time made fund accounting, fund management, client tracking and service reporting much more reliable.

GSS understands the important link between sound fiscal management and quality program implementation. Crucial to this way of operating is the decentralization of program budgets and decision-making. “We produce regular monthly financial reports, and our fiscal department consults with the staff leadership team on how current expenses and revenues compare to budget forecasts, which allows staff to make early course corrections to avoid deficits. This is especially important in our field, because we have to deal with constantly changing revenues from government contracts,” explained Bob Niehaus, former Board President. This process of building fiscal accountability at the program level makes timely program planning and resource allocation possible and assures that, to the greatest extent possible, maximum dollars can be spent to support program activities.

Strong Government Contracts and Development Departments

For many years, GSS relied almost exclusively on public funds to support its work. Then, in the early 1980s, initially in response to the rapid growth of its community-based programs, the agency began to develop its private fundraising capacity. As new programs grew, it became clear that, too often, public funding provided the minimum level of support needed to run programs and that private funds would be required to supplement the public dollars. This would make it possible to deepen and expand services, and develop quality, innovative programs, while providing the infrastructure necessary to support them.

Today, the agency has a balanced approach to the fundraising necessary to support ongoing programs and create opportunities for growth and innovation. The Government Contracts Department is responsible for raising all public dollars.

In 1990, as part of its growing commitment to fundraising, GSS launched a campaign to establish an endowment. Then in 2004, following the recommendation of an external assessment, and in response to the need to diversify its funding base, the agency formally established a Government Contracts Department, which until then had been part of the Development Department. By splitting the work of fundraising between public and private dollars, the agency was able to hire staff with private fundraising expertise and to develop targeted strategies to attract foundation and private dollars, which until then had been overshadowed by the large government contracts and their related reporting and tracking requirements.

Today, the agency has a balanced approach to the fundraising necessary to support ongoing programs and create opportunities for growth and innovation. The Government Contracts Department is responsible for raising all public dollars. It is aggressive and strategic in responding to existing and potential sources of support that can sustain or expand the agency’s work. The work of this department is complemented by the Development Department, which raises private dollars and builds the endowment. This Department concentrates on foundation grants, fundraising events, corporate relations, individual giving and public relations and marketing.

Over the past 15 years, the mix of public and private support has changed. In Fiscal Year 1995, the agency received 92 percent in government and 8 percent in private and other support, while the current blending of resources is 83 percent public dollars and 17 percent private and other dollars.

To sustain and grow the agency’s broad array of programs, both departments work tirelessly to secure funds from the respective streams available to them. While the agency recognizes that government funding is its dominant funding source, it tries to mitigate funding risks by securing an expanded number of government funding sources, and when appropriate, find ways to blend funding streams and acquire additional resources through private support of its programs.

In many cases, securing private funds has been critical to maintaining innovative programming. At the two Beacons and the agency’s many after-school programs as well as the three transfer high schools, the agency raises substantial private dollars to ensure that it can provide the necessary levels of support to the young people attending these programs and sustain the enriched and innovative program features that are not funded with public monies.

5.1

Beacon After-School Center
at PS15 in Red Hook, Brooklyn

5.2

The Good Shepherd Services
Transfer High School Model

5.3

The Chelsea Foyer at the Christopher

5.4

Good Shepherd Services’
Family Foster Care
Adolescent Services Division

5.5

Funding and Policy Contexts

Program Profiles

GSS’ success as an agency is best illustrated by the programs it has developed and the communities of young people those programs have supported.

Following are profiles of four of GSS’ most innovative program models, each illustrating a different area of the agency’s work. While these programs vary in their strategies of support, they are all driven by the GSS mission and share the same fundamental youth development goals to support young people in their journey to self-sufficiency and success.

5.1

Beacon After-School Center at PS 15 in Red Hook, Brooklyn: Keeping Youth Safe and Engaged When School is Out

On a typical weekday, the Red Hook Beacon at PS 15, a school-based community center, is a bustling center of activity for many in the community. From the moment programming begins at 3pm (the time the regular school day ends and the Beacon after-school programs begin) to 9pm, when the doors are locked after evening teen and adult programs, the Beacon provides a range of after-school, academic support, enrichment, and community activities to the families in the neighborhood.

On a rainy Friday afternoon in late October, 150 elementary and 25 middle school students are scattered throughout the school building, excitedly diving into a variety of projects. Some are second graders eagerly sitting down to read a new book as part of *KIDZLIT*, a reading enrichment program developed specifically for use in after-school settings; while a group of third graders are drawing scary faces, cutting construction paper and getting ready to make Halloween masks.

On the auditorium stage, another group of fourth and fifth graders are working with instructors on their dance moves. In the adjacent gym, middle school students gather for *Community Circle*, a regular activity that allows students to get together and discuss what is happening in their lives, their schools and their communities while learning conflict resolution, critical thinking and

teambuilding skills. Led by students from the local high school, once Beacon participants themselves, the group uses a game of tag basketball to warm up and talk about how they are feeling today. As afternoon blends into evening, the families of many of the young participants filter into the building for family night, another of the many Beacon programs that connect family, school and community.

When the Beacon first opened more than 20 years ago, Red Hook was plagued by crime, and there was community resistance to participating in the various events at the Beacon because of the fear of violence. Yet, despite these challenges, the Beacon persisted, eventually becoming a community institution and a safe space for young people and families to gather.

Today, through year-round, after-school, evening, weekend and summer programming, the Beacon provides a safe, positive environment offering a range of services that strengthen the skills and confidence of over 2,000 Red Hook children, teens, and adults annually. A stable source of support and services for over two decades, in a community sorely lacking in resources, the Beacon is an anchor for many children and teens that would otherwise end up on the street after the school doors close.

Program Evolution and Need

The Beacon at PS 15 is located in Red Hook, Brooklyn, an isolated and underserved community in which unemployment, poverty, and crime pose significant risk factors to young people. While pockets of Red Hook have been gentrified over the last decade, three quarters of the residents still live in the Red Hook Houses, the fourth oldest and one of the largest NYC Housing Authority projects. At the Patrick F. Daly School (PS 15), the host school of the Beacon, 90 percent of students are eligible for free-lunch on the basis of low family income.⁵ These conditions place the youth of PS 15 at high risk for academic failure and disconnection from their families and the community.

The Red Hook Beacon was launched in 1990 as part of a major public initiative to address the problem of rising crime in New York. In response to this crisis, then Mayor Dinkins committed to both an expansion of the police force, and an expansion of school-based community centers. The goal was to provide a safe space in each community, bringing together schools and families to support the growth of children and youth; and to provide a platform upon which residents and local organizations could organize to support their children and address other concerns.

Red Hook was one of ten designated neighborhoods, and GSS welcomed the opportunity to significantly expand programming in this seriously underserved neighborhood, where it had been working in a more limited way since 1980; and to create a strong and vital partnership with the local elementary school, PS 15, so that both parties could realize their vision of building the school as the center of family and community life.

Program Approach/Core Components

Since the inception of the Red Hook Beacon, GSS has maintained a deep com-

mitment to planning and implementing programs that build on youth development practices and attract and retain youth while meeting critical developmental needs. The agency's strong youth development practices have provided the framework for the creation of rich programming offered to participants and are the foundation of all interactions between staff and participants.

Operating from 3-6pm for elementary and middle school students and from 6-9pm for students over the age of 12 on weekdays, the Beacon offers programming designed to sustain youth involvement from ages 6 to 24 and provide students with the opportunity to participate in a range of activities that ensure their interests are met and their voices are heard and respected. And, as they grow with the program, they are given opportunities to lead and take on increasingly responsible roles.

Through its afternoon programming, Beacon staff works to provide an educationally rich environment that reinforces lessons learned during the school day in new and creative ways, while at the same time providing opportunities for young people to expand their horizons, learn new skills, nurture special talents and interests and be active participants in their own learning. The after-school program for mostly elementary and middle school students provides academic support, including daily assistance with homework and more focused help in areas identified by teachers. Each year, a caseworker runs life skills workshops with themes determined by the needs of each age group. This year, students attended workshops on sharing, hygiene, communication and career awareness. Evening programs include sports and other physical activities that promote fitness and health as well as team building and decision-making. Other enrichment activities include dance and drama – both taught with the aid of external agencies and professional actors and dancers who help students write their own plays and choreograph their own dances.

Today, through year-round, after-school, evening, weekend and summer programming, the Beacon provides a safe, positive environment offering a range of services that strengthen the skills and confidence of over 2,000 Red Hook children, teens, and adults annually.

In addition to the afternoon, evening and Saturday programming during the school year, the Beacon runs an annual summer camp which enrolls approximately 200 children and offers a safe and supportive environment for local young people to stay active in age-appropriate activities that further their cognitive and social development while school is not in session. The camp also provides the opportunity for summer employment for local adolescents who are hired as camp counselors.

A core component of the after-school program is the *Pathways to Leadership* program, a signature innovation of the Red Hook Beacon, which engages youth, ages 9 to 18, in a range of community service and leadership

opportunities, and, as they age, allows them to assume more responsibility in pursuit of a paid position at the Beacon. Many of the tenets of positive youth development are evidenced in Pathways to Leadership: strong, caring relationships with adults, peers and younger after-school participants; opportunities to make a contribution and assume new roles and responsibility; incremental skill-building in critical thinking, decision-making and conflict resolution; and the chance to contribute to the planning and implementation of activities at the Beacon. From the experiences of helping others, serving as a role model and making a contribution, students gain enhanced self-esteem as well as a sense of purpose, responsibility and connection. They begin to develop the hard and soft skill sets necessary for successful employment.

The Beacon’s Pathways for Leadership initiative includes four leadership groups for pre-teens and adolescents. These include:

- *The Community Service Challengers*, ages 9-11 years, engage in skills building, leadership training and team-building activities as well as community service projects.
- *The School to Work Pathfinders*, ages 11-14 years, participate in weekly discussions, skills-building activities, community-service projects and extensive job preparation/career readiness workshops and activities.
- *The Leaders-in-Training (LIT)* group engages approximately 14 middle and high school youth, ages 13 to 14, in a stipended program consisting of two days of working with the younger youth in the Beacon after-school program and two days of group work and training.
- *The Scholars-in-Training (SIT)* group for older teens, ages 15 to 18, inspires leadership skills in young people by providing job training and employment for students. SITs work with the younger children at the Beacon for five hours a week, and their experience more closely mirrors that of regular staff.

Through these groups, the Beacon functions as a hub for youth employment and career readiness activities. Most specifically, youth develop skills in the provision of child care, and this ultimately leads to stipended internships and employment at the Beacon and other GSS after-school and summer camp programs.

Using the leadership pathway, 48 percent of Beacon staff has moved up the ladder from participant to paid staff, giving them insight into the interests, needs and challenges of the young people they now work with.

As a result, the Pathways to Leadership program enables GSS to build a workforce of young people who have grown up in the Beacon program, have internalized the culture and have a commitment to employment and giving back to the community that nurtured them. The model institutionalizes the

idea of youth employment as a key to youth development and has enabled GSS to use this best practice to optimally staff the Beacon. This initiative is also an example of a program innovation that was launched with additional federal dollars but that has subsequently been developed and supported through private fundraising.

Another integral component of the Red Hook Beacon is the provision of family support activities along with the after-school and evening programming. The agency’s Red Hook Community Center Family Counseling Services, a NYC Administration for Children’s Services-sponsored preventive program, provides individual, family and group counseling for 90 families from the Red Hook community, serving as many as 400 children and their families each year. An overwhelming majority of the children of the families who receive services at the counseling program are also enrolled in the after-school, and the program integrates casework staff into weekly Beacon activities so that caseworkers are more familiar and accessible to families who need assistance.

In addition, the Beacon provides other family strengthening and support activities. Friday nights are family nights and, with games, food and prizes, are a staple for many of the local families. Other family and community events include a Halloween Haunted House Party and a community Thanksgiving celebration, both of which are attended by several hundred children and families. All these activities help decrease isolation and encourage families to engage in school and community activities. Together, they promote parents’ sense of program ownership and help to establish the Beacon as a vital community institution.

5.2

The GSS Transfer High School Model:
Building Pathways to Brighter Futures

When 19 year-old students Melissa and Corey began their schooling experience at West Brooklyn Community High School, they were skeptical about all the promises the school made. Both had struggled at traditional high schools where they were anonymous, bored and disengaged, and both had fallen off track and were significantly behind in their credits toward graduation.

“At my old school I was truant all the time, hung out with the wrong crowd and got into some gang trouble. At one point I just stopped going to class and no one seemed to care, so I figured why should I?” said Corey. That was over a year ago, and, now, through a combination of goal-setting, accelerated credit accumulation and passing the Regents (state test), Corey is scheduled to graduate in June. “At this school there are no fights, no metal detectors, students respect the school and teachers respect us. I like coming here. I like how they know me—even if at first it was annoying—I know now they care and they helped me to care too.”

The GSS transfer high school model is a small, academically rigorous, diploma-granting high school serving students between the ages of 16 and 21,



who have dropped out or been excessively truant from traditional high schools. It is the voices of the students who have graduated from one of the GSS transfer schools that best describe its impact on their lives.

“When I first came to this school I came in with the same attitude that I had at my old school because I was bored and thought I’d be bored here too. But they helped me change my mind and my attitude,” explained Melissa, who had fallen off track in her sophomore year at one of the city’s large high schools. Like Melissa, other students at the transfer high school previously enrolled as ninth graders in a large traditional high school which they eventually stopped attending because they did not get the educational or personal support they needed to stay engaged. In contrast, the transfer school model emphasizes the school as a community that values each member and offers individual attention and support for each student.

“Here the teachers actually care about the students. They engage you in your classes and make them interesting and fun. The advocate counselors guide you and push you, but in the end you have to learn how to do things yourself. They teach you independence,” said 18 year-old Nancy.

“Here the teachers actually care about the students. They engage you in your classes and make them interesting and fun. The advocate counselors guide you and push you, but in the end you have to learn how to do things yourself. They teach you independence,” said 18 year-old Nancy. “I am on track and I am going to graduate and my mom is so proud of me. This school changed my life.”

Like many students who attend one of GSS’ three transfer high schools, the students quoted here were given a second chance to earn their diplomas and to plan and prepare for life beyond high school. This is the opportunity that the GSS transfer schools have provided to the hundreds of young people who have graduated from these unique schools since the pioneering program on which the model is based was first established in 1980.

Program Evolution and Need

According to a 2006 study conducted by The Parthenon Group at the request of the DOE, nearly 140,000 New York City youth, ages 16-21, had dropped out or were significantly off-track relative to expectations for high school graduation. Approximately half of all entering freshmen become over-age and under-credited during high school and many of these students end up leaving the system without earning their diplomas. The challenge of re-engaging these young people who have stopped attending school has existed in New York City and elsewhere for a very long time.

In 1980, as New York City began to focus on this issue, GSS was invited by the NYC Deputy Mayor’s Office of Youth Policy to work in partnership with the DOE to develop an educational model for this population. Respond-

ing to this invitation, GSS opened South Brooklyn Community High School (SBCHS) as a program of John Jay High School serving the many students who were dropping out of this large, neighborhood high school. Over the next 20 years, SBCHS continued to operate as a program of John Jay, the locally zoned school. GSS developed and refined the model, identifying practices that were effective in working with young people who had left school and providing the structures and supports that made it possible for them to earn their high school diplomas. In 2002, as a result of the success it had achieved during this period, SBCHS was approved to become an independent, diploma-granting transfer high school under the New Visions for Public School's New Century High School Initiative.

Program Approach/Core Components

The transfer school model developed by GSS integrates comprehensive supports for students with a rigorous academic program designed to help all students who attend earn their high school diplomas and pursue college or a career. Often it is assumed that young people stop attending school because of difficulties they confront in their lives. This model recognizes that, in fact, young people often leave school because they feel unsupported, anonymous or unchallenged in the high school they are attending. The GSS model is committed to offering students a different educational experience while also responding to the personal challenges they are facing.

The different experience begins with intake. Students are referred by high schools where they are enrolled but not attending or they learn about this option in their community or through friends. At intake, they talk through their previous challenges in school and discuss their readiness to re-commit to school. In consultation with the GSS staff, who are responsible for overseeing intake, they make the decision that this is a step they are ready to take. This begins the process of re-engaging these young people in their education. Then, when they start school, there is an orientation that introduces them to their classmates, their teachers and counselors so they begin to experience that they are joining a community of shared norms, high expectations and mutual responsibility.

The school size, (between 150 and 200 students) and the approach to working with them help create a personalized learning environment where each student's individual needs can be identified and addressed. Upon enrolling, all students are assigned an advocate counselor (AC) who is their primary source of support and guidance as long as they are attending the school. The students meet individually with their AC and also meet in groups twice a week to help develop a peer culture of support. The ACs also play a pivotal role in facilitating communication with teachers, other DOE staff and parents so that all the adults in the students' lives are working to support their progress toward graduation.

The instructional approach is designed to be both rigorous and engaging. Students enter transfer schools with a wide range of skills and capacities; some

are far behind; others are functioning at the appropriate grade level, but have become uninterested in learning. The goal is to provide a range of classes that meet student needs and are also aligned to state standards.

The academic year is divided into three twelve-week semesters and a summer session, which allows students to accumulate more credits each year than can be earned in a traditional high school. Students are also given feedback twice a month on how they are doing in each class they are taking so they can work with their teachers and ACs to address challenges they may be facing and achieve success in the class.

Along with a rigorous instructional program and comprehensive supports, students are assisted in making plans for what they will do after they earn a high school diploma. There are opportunities for paid internships, currently funded as part of the New York City Learning-to-Work Program, to give students the chance to have meaningful work experiences and explore career interests. In addition, the schools have college counselors to help them explore post-secondary opportunities, take the necessary tests and complete college applications as well as financial aid forms—they also remain in contact with graduates for up to a year after graduation. For almost all of these students, they will be the first in their family to go to college, and this support is critical to their pursuing specific plans beyond high school.

The Transfer School Model: Reflecting Youth Development Principles

Over all, the GSS transfer school model has developed its practices consistent with the principles of strength-based youth development. This framework has helped to shape the way the schools work with their students and the learning and community environment that is developed to support them.

High Expectations

The underlying philosophy of the model is that all students can and will achieve at high levels regardless of past performance. Every aspect of the school is designed to provide appropriate supports and continuous strength-based re-enforcement and feedback to help students sustain a high level of achievement and reach the personal goals they set for themselves when they enroll in the school.

Building Healthy Relationships

This model emphasizes the fundamental importance of helping students build healthy relationships with school staff, peers, family members and with the broader community. While students' ACs are their primary person for counseling and support, all the adults in the school are committed to forming caring and trusting relationships with students to help them both academically and personally. These relationships provide an anchor for students when issues arise inside and outside of school that may jeopardize their ability to reach their goals.

Developing Student Responsibility

Essential to the youth development approach of the transfer school model is the goal of helping students to take responsibility for their own learning and to take an active role in shaping the overall school community. This process begins at intake when students make the decision to return to school. Once they are enrolled, their AC reviews their transcript with them so they know exactly what they need to graduate. Every two weeks, they receive reports on how they are doing in class. In this way, students are expected to be active, responsible participants in their own learning and know fully the consequences of the decisions they make and the actions they take. Beyond their classroom work, students have opportunities to contribute to building the school culture through their participation in regular community meetings and other school-wide activities and celebrations.

An Active and Engaging Learning Environment

The approach to instruction in the transfer school is also intended to be consistent with the principles of youth development. Instructional strategies are designed to recognize students’ individual strengths, needs and learning styles. Teachers work with students to set high expectations and implement instructional strategies that encourage active participation, provide opportunities for both individual and group work cooperation and help develop their critical thinking and decision-making skills.

Partnership and Shared Leadership

The GSS transfer school model is designed as a partnership between the DOE and Good Shepherd Services. The DOE staff includes the principal, teachers, a guidance counselor and appropriate support staff. The GSS staff includes the program director, a team of advocate counselors as well as the coordinator of the Learning-to-Work internship program and the college advisor.

This partnership between DOE and GSS provides the foundation for the success of the model. The principal and the program director bring their respective skills in education and youth development and work together to create a learning environment that meets the academic, social and emotional needs of these young people who are striving to earn their high school diplomas. Through their collaboration and shared leadership, they develop a safe and supportive school culture and facilitate the effective integration of both DOE and GSS staff so that all can work together to help the students achieve their goals.

The GSS transfer school model has been successful in demonstrating that, given the appropriate learning environment, young people who have fallen behind or dropped out of school can be re-engaged and helped to complete high school. In developing this model, GSS was guided by the principles of youth development and the identified needs of young people for an engaging and personalized small school. As a result, many young people have had a second chance to resume their education, earn their high school diplomas and broaden the opportunities they will have beyond high school.

5.3

**The Chelsea Foyer at the Christopher:
Wrap Around Supports for Youth in Transition**

When you walk through the doors of the Chelsea Foyer at the Christopher in the heart of Manhattan’s bustling midtown, you might think you have entered a student residence at one of New York’s many prestigious universities. The newly renovated building boasts an impressive facade and entryway, a security desk and a cozy lobby, with comfortable couches arranged around a coffee table and a flat screen television, perfect for hanging out or watching a Yankees game. Down the hall are offices, a classroom and a community room—which functions as a meeting room, cafeteria and occasional party room. Downstairs is a laundry room, a computer room, study room, game rooms and more offices.

The 40 apartments or quads are the perfect size for New York living. On any given day, these apartments would be a hot commodity and an address to be envied; and they are—but not for the typical college student. In fact, the residents at the Chelsea Foyer have led anything but a typical life, and now, during their 18 to 24 month stay, they have a taste of the best New York has to offer and a shot at a stable, secure home and the prospect of a brighter future.

“I was so excited when I got the keys to my own place, and in the middle of Manhattan, man,” said 22 year-old Sharlene, a relatively new resident and one of the many that have spent their lives in and out of foster homes. “I really am on my own. I have no family, no support system. It’s hard to live on my own. But being here gives me a chance. With the help of the case managers I am learning how to be independent. Without this place my only other option would be homelessness.”

Like many of her fellow residents, Sharlene has recently transitioned out of foster care, but unlike some of her peers, she found the Chelsea Foyer before ending up on the street. “Many of the young people we serve have been homeless before, some as a result of being in foster care with nowhere to go afterward, others due to a range of challenges in their lives. These are the young people we work with and house,” explained Elizabeth Garcia, current Director of the Foyer—a transitional housing program for 18-25 year-olds who have aged out of foster care, are homeless, or are at risk of becoming homeless. The Foyer’s emphasis on this cross-population mentoring between young people who have been homeless and those who have left foster care and are vulnerable to homelessness is considered to be a core aspect of the program’s success.

Program Evolution and Need

Young adults who age out of the foster care system are at extremely high risk for homelessness. A 2007 study found that more than 20 percent of the approximately 25,000 young adults nationwide who age out of foster care every year will be homeless within two years of leaving care.⁶ In New York City, roughly 1,100 young people leave care annually, often without adequate adult



support. In response to this serious problem, GSS and Common Ground Community began to explore a partnership that would combine their respective expertise to implement a residential model for young people aging out of foster care. GSS brought its experience working with older adolescents in residential settings and Common Ground brought its knowledge of developing and financing residential buildings for low income homeless adults to this partnership. Together, they studied the Foyer model that had been developed and implemented in the United Kingdom for reducing young adult homelessness and decided to adapt its core elements to the residential model they were planning to establish in New York City. After several years of planning, the Chelsea Foyer opened its doors in May 2004 as a pilot program testing the applicability of the Foyer model for broader replication in the United States.

Ambitious goals are established. After two years at the Chelsea Foyer, participants are expected to have secured stable housing and be economically self-sufficient, able to hold jobs with benefits that provide enough income to meet their needs and avoid reliance on public assistance.

Envisioned by Common Ground and GSS as a place where young people who had grown up in institutions, or in families caught in multi-generational cycles of dependence on public assistance, could learn skills and develop a sense of broader opportunity, the Chelsea Foyer is another example of GSS' commitment to the development of innovative, evidence-based models that can be used more broadly to inform policy debates and enhance outcomes for youth within New York City and beyond.

Program Approach/Core Components

The Chelsea Foyer is a residence for young people who have aged out of foster care, are homeless, or are at risk of becoming homeless. Its goal is to provide these young people with a place where they can live in a supportive setting and receive help that will prepare them for independence and self-sufficiency.

Designed to be developmentally appropriate, the model emphasizes supporting young people as they learn to do things for themselves, practice independent living and internalize feelings of competence that will enable them to live independently post-Foyer. It combines both housing and support services, with the belief that young people cannot successfully develop, go to school and/or work if they have no home to return to at night. The Foyer model also recognizes the importance of having caring adults to support young people through their successes and challenges.

Development of the program and service delivery have been informed by GSS' strength-based youth development approach, providing a strategic balance between structure and freedom, high expectations and supports that

encourage young people in transition to do things for themselves, take risks and learn from their mistakes. Applicants are told: “We will not find jobs for you and we will not find housing for you but we will help you learn how to do these things yourself.” The program provides a safe, stable place to live as young people become employed, go to school, develop relationships and meet with case managers and independent living counselors to prepare mentally and emotionally for being on their own.

Ambitious goals are established. After two years at the Chelsea Foyer, participants are expected to have secured stable housing and be economically self-sufficient, able to hold jobs with benefits that provide enough income to meet their needs and avoid reliance on public assistance. Each participant’s path to self-sufficiency is guided by a personalized “Action Plan” developed and continuously revised by the young person and his or her case manager. The Action Plan is a centerpiece of the Foyer program model and, in keeping with a youth development approach, must be youth-driven and flexible, accommodating incremental progress and age-appropriate change in plans.

The program requires participants to be employed at least 20 hours a week, to be in school or vocational training, to meet with case managers twice a month, to participate in community life-skills development workshops, and pay a monthly program fee roughly equivalent to 30 percent of their income. “I am paying part of my earnings for rent—but it’s really going into a savings account so that when it’s time for me to leave here I have some money saved. It’s going to help me have a stable foundation,” said Stephanie, a 20 year-old formerly homeless youth who hopped from state to state for several years before landing at the Foyer. “I like the atmosphere here. My case manager feels more like family than staff. I’ve done a lot here—I completed a culinary program, got my food handler’s license, had an internship at the Foyer, and there is still a lot more I can do.” Stephanie has been at the Foyer for over a year—the longest she’s been anywhere for a long time, she said.

The program fee, a critical component of the model, is recorded monthly in the Action Plan and reviewed regularly in case management, where emotional issues associated with paying rent and taking financial responsibility can be explored. Seeing savings accrue over time has a tremendous impact on the young people’s confidence, and upon departure from the program, they can be used toward a security deposit or first month’s rent—a jump start that vastly improves a young person’s chances.

Four indicators are tracked to measure participant progress: employment, educational participation, payment of program fees and participation in monthly workshops. Monthly data is provided to case managers and used in case management to help the young person understand and evaluate his or her own performance and compare performance to Action Plan goals. This use of data has been extremely effective. “We have very high expectations for our residents and we need a way to hold them accountable on a regular basis, so they can eventually do that for themselves. The data is very helpful in showing them concretely what they have and have not done,” explained Elizabeth Garcia.

“Initially it is a struggle, but for those who are committed to the program that accountability becomes critical to their success.”

There is a careful balance of on-site and off-site supports. On-site case management support is provided for linkages to employment, education and vocational training. However, residents are responsible for buying their own food and cooking for themselves. There are no medical or mental health services provided on-site, and residents are expected to access them, as needed, in the community. Educational services such as GED preparation and tutoring also need to be accessed off-site.

Expectations of program participants include zero tolerance for fighting, drug sales or weapons possession. Discharge from the program is rare. In most cases, staff is able to work out problems or initiate a 30-day planned discharge.

Residents are supported by two categories of staff: case managers and independent living counselors (ILCs). Case managers meet twice a month with residents assigned to their caseload. They are in the residence between 8am and 10pm in two overlapping shifts from 8am to 4pm and 2pm to 10pm. Each case manager works one day per weekend every month. ILCs are on site during the late afternoon and overnight to provide adult support, independent living skill development and crisis management, as necessary. Over all, the staff who work at the Foyer have to focus on working with the young residents to provide the support they require while also intentionally challenging them to develop the independent living skills they will need when they leave the Foyer.

The staffing pattern requires that all residents also interact with a range of adults, including case managers, independent living counselors and program management. The development of “people skills” that results is an intangible but critical preparation for successfully navigating adult life.

A key aspect of the model is also the development of a community of adults and young people. Residents live among peers who share the same goals, they see each other go to work and school, test boundaries, suffer failures and achieve successes. Importantly, they learn they are not alone. Monthly community meetings work to reorient the residents towards holding oneself and others accountable, but offering ways to repair relationships and learn from mistakes. All residents are encouraged to attend, as they are a place where issues are discussed and achievements and milestones celebrated. Those who are successfully making the transition to adulthood bring along others who are struggling to take responsibility.

The aftercare component of the program has grown in tandem with expansion of the alumni population, who use the Chelsea Foyer as an ongoing resource for emotional support, letters of reference for education and employment, and linkage to legal services. Funding is being sought to adequately address the growing need for support of Foyer alumni.

The Chelsea Foyer was one of the first programs to draw attention to the connection between foster care discharge and homelessness. The program has also faithfully replicated key aspects of the UK model and was endorsed in

2006 by the UK Foyer Federation, although the percentage of formerly foster care youth is considerably higher than in the European model.

In its first six years, the program has developed capacity and built a culture for serving young people at risk of homelessness. Its emphasis on building financial self-sufficiency and developing the skills necessary for employment has shown success, and the program is considered an important resource for newer programs serving the homeless youth and post-foster care populations.

In summary, this program combines the best thinking in youth development – high expectations, caring relationships, challenging opportunities to grow and reach one’s potential and a strong sense of belonging with the need for transitional living arrangements for young adults.

5-4

GSS’ Family Foster Care:

Providing Specialized Services for Adolescents in Care

The offices of GSS’ Family Foster Care (FFC) Adolescent Services Division (ASD) in the Bronx are peppered with color, life, and a constant stream of teenagers walking in and out to go to training or counseling sessions, meet with their caseworkers, clock-in for an internship or just hang out. These young people, all in temporary foster care placement, are part of a unique GSS program designed specifically to meet the developmental needs of adolescents in family foster care—many of whom would otherwise age out of the system with little or no support systems, often after early histories of family trauma, multiple relocations and no stability.

“Every time I come into the office my caseworker gives me this big hug that makes my day feel better no matter what has happened,” said 16-year-old Ebony, who has been in foster care since she was 13. “I have had a really tough situation and would not have gotten through this without her [my caseworker]. She is always there, no matter what. She is persistent even when I blow her off. I know I can really count on her. I want to go to college and I know she will help to get me there.”

Of the over 200 adolescents served by the program each year, close to 45 percent are significantly behind in school and almost all require some type of academic assistance or tutoring, without which they will not graduate or earn a GED. One young man, who had completed all his coursework but was not able to graduate because he had failed the Regents Competency Test in Reading five times, was so discouraged that he became extremely depressed and gave up on the idea of obtaining a high school diploma. When the ASD Educational/Vocational Specialist learned of his situation she arranged for the young man’s birth father to meet with him at the GSS offices, and together they were able to convince him to accept one-on-one private tutoring three times a week to prepare for taking the test again. Several months later, he passed the Regents and has since received his high school diploma. He and the Educational Specialist

then worked together to identify community colleges to apply to and secured his entrance for the fall of 2009. Without the targeted support of the Specialist and the close attention given to him by his caseworker, this young man would surely have fallen through the cracks and aged out of the system without a diploma, becoming another faceless statistic in a sea of a foster care youth failed by the system.

Building on its expertise through working with foster care adolescents in residential programs, GSS developed its family-based adolescent services unit within its larger Family Foster Care (FFC) program, to ensure a more comprehensive, youth development- focused approach to addressing the unique and complex needs of foster care adolescents.

Program Evolution and Need

Adolescents in foster care face daunting challenges as they prepare to transition out of the system and many fare poorly once they leave care. A Chapin Hall study of 732 former foster care youth from the Midwest found that at the ages of 23 and 24, less than half were employed, 24 percent had experienced homelessness, more than 75 percent of young women had been pregnant since leaving foster care, nearly 60 percent of young men had been convicted of a crime and only 6 percent had a two or four-year degree.⁷ For many, there is a lack of hope and a foreshortened sense of the future. Given their developmental stage, as well as their traumatic histories, planning for the future is often an alien concept.

When GSS merged with McMahon Children Services in 1996, it became acutely aware of the unique challenges facing adolescents in family foster care. There was powerful anecdotal evidence, through record and case reviews, of a huge gap in services for this population, and it was clear that having adolescents randomly spread across case workers was not an effective way to begin to address the issues these young people were facing. Of particular concern was the need to ensure that youth were equipped with the skills, confidence, opportunities and supports needed to live independently after leaving foster care.

In response, and building on expertise gained through years of experience with young people in a residential setting, GSS first developed a pilot program to service this population and brought on new staff that specialized in adolescent development, who then trained a group of caseworkers to work only with adolescents. With the initial success of the pilot program, in 2000, GSS committed to creating an Adolescent Services Division to address the unmet needs of youth in foster care. The goal in moving from mixed caseloads of children and youth to teen-only caseloads in a dedicated division was to focus in a holistic manner on the adolescents’ developmental issues rather than just addressing their case management needs.

This program continues to evolve as the needs of the youth in care change, and the most recent addition is the implementation of the Sanctuary Model, an evidence-informed intervention to address and repair the damage caused by the youths’ past history of trauma.

Program Approach/Core Components

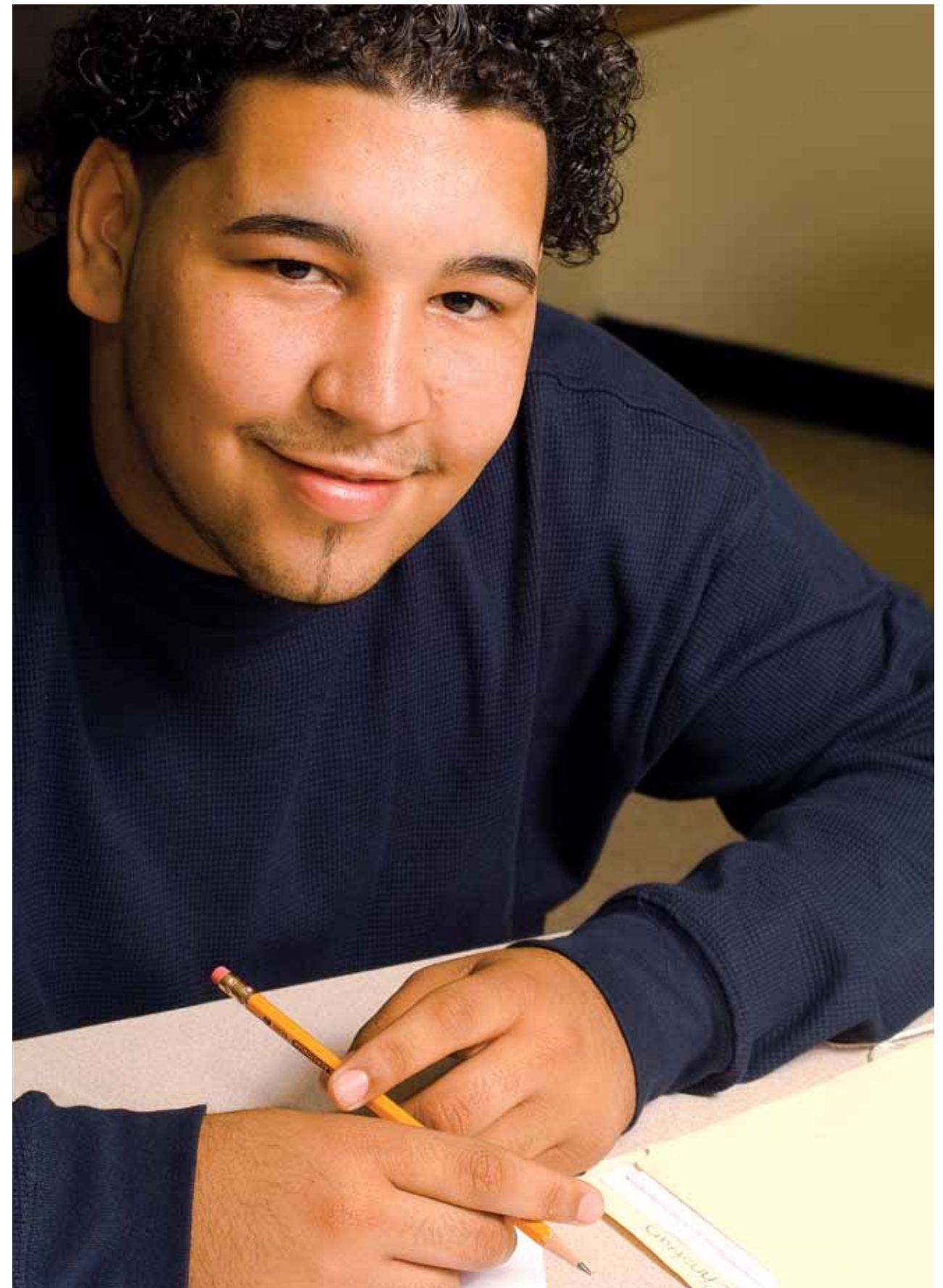
Today, GSS' ASD, one of the few in New York City, has a full time Administrative Supervisor, a Treatment Program Coordinator, a Preparing Youth for Adulthood Coordinator, four socio-therapists and, in addition to the usual caseworkers and supervisors, has a multidisciplinary team of specialists including an Educational/Vocational Specialist, a nurse, a Youth Development and Permanency Specialist, and a Job/Career Specialist. Designed using the signature GSS strength-based youth development framework, the division provides case management, substance abuse prevention, educational support, medical, job training, college prep and other services designed specifically for the adolescent age group. In addition, it has developed an aftercare component to continue providing needed services following discharge or aging out of the program.

According to Denise Padilla, the Administrative Supervisor for Adolescent Services, the division's biggest accomplishment is the ability to "truly focus on adolescent development issues and integrate services across a range of skilled staff, allowing us to strategize on how best to individually transition these young people out of care with the services and supports they need. This greatly increases the level of attention given to each young person and enhances their chances of a successful transition."

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Serving more than 200 youth, ages 12-21, annually, staff work in partnership with the young people to develop comprehensive, individualized services that build on their strengths, meet their specific needs and always include their voice. Youth are provided opportunities to develop leadership skills and engage in experiential learning; they are encouraged to make the office space their own by creating murals and decorating it with their handiwork. As they age and progress through the program, the young people are encouraged to make decisions about their care and to take on increasingly more autonomy as their transition date nears. In addition, staff, foster and/or adoptive families, and birth families work together as partners to devise a permanent plan for the young person's future.

Recognizing that the consistent presence of a caring adult is key to the healthy development of any adolescent, ASD staff work to ensure that no young person leaves GSS care without at least one adult upon whom he or she can rely for guidance and support. This begins with placement; approximately 70 percent of the youth are placed in the home of someone they know, and our staff works with youth and foster parents to build a relationship that will continue after foster care. ASD staff also work extensively with the birth family



towards reunification, wherever possible, and to promote healthy relationships even when a return home is not possible. The agency's mentoring program provides a positive support system through structured individual and group mentoring relationships with caring, competent adults and older foster care peers. Mentors inspire youth to develop new goals, interests and skills relating to jobs and careers, and can potentially sustain their connection with their mentee after the young person has left the program, providing the youth with a permanent connection to a caring adult.

The caseworker and specialists conduct assessments to determine the needs of each young person and to tailor a plan based on individual needs and strengths. The Educational/Vocational Specialist works to ensure that youth are placed in the educational setting that is right for them and oversees their academic progress, arranging for tutoring as needed so that they can achieve to their potential, and assists youth in developing and achieving post-secondary educational goals. If a young person is more interested and suited to a vocational path, this is identified and supported.

The Job and Career Specialist works individually and in groups to prepare youth for the world of work, helping them strengthen the soft skills needed to attain and maintain a job through internship opportunities, as well as conducting career inventories to help young people explore career options, and providing assistance with specific tasks such as resume writing, obtaining identification cards and conducting job searches. The goal is to help youth find a job so that they are prepared to be self-sufficient when they leave the program.

The Youth Development and Permanency Specialist works closely with each aging-out youth to identify as early as possible all housing options. She assists the youth in completing all of the paperwork for low income or supported housing and the ACS housing subsidy as this is a confusing and often frustrating system to navigate on one's own.

Life Skills workshops are a central component of the program. Youth meet monthly in age-appropriate groups to learn skills and discuss issues relevant to becoming independent, including managing a household, nutrition and physical wellbeing, money management and interpersonal relations.

To address the heightened mental health needs among ASD youth, GSS has been implementing the Sanctuary Model – an empirically supported trauma-focused intervention designed to target youth who are at risk for emotional and behavioral troubles as a result of experiencing distressing life events such as abuse, violence and neglect. The model addresses the treatment and recovery needs of youth by creating a “living-learning environment” where it is physically, psychologically, socially, and morally safe for youth, staff and foster parents. Rather than looking at inattentive, combative and non-compliant behavior as signs of willful acting out, an assessment of the adolescent's trauma history will often serve to reframe his/her behaviors and elicit empathetic and effective responses from staff and foster parents. The Sanctuary Model and trauma theory promote understanding that the presenting mental, emotional and behavioral difficulties of our young people are not something that is “wrong” with them,

but rather the effects of injury, and thus something that can be treated and healed. The young people, staff and foster parents can learn to answer the question “What happened to you,” which is a trauma-informed variation on the more pejorative “What's wrong with you?” The model promotes youth inclusion and provides them with tools to deal with past and current trauma.

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GSS' Adolescent Services Division is an exemplary model of services for adolescents in foster care. A direct result of a need identified through GSS' work with adolescents in its foster care programs, this highly successful program is a model for foster care systems around the country. “The ASD model was built on the strengths of the agency's residential programming for adolescents similar to how we develop an individualized plan for each youth that is built on their strengths,” said Mary Ellen McLaughlin, the Assistant Executive Director for Family Foster Care and Adoption Services, who oversees all aspects of GSS' FFC programs. “GSS has fully invested in this department, providing training, funding and ongoing support as needed to ensure our young people receive the highest quality services so more of them will leave the system better prepared, with stable housing, job skills and a caring adult in their lives.”

5.5

Funding and Policy Contexts

None of the four innovative models described in these profiles are totally funded by a single designated funding stream. Their support is realized by combining both public and private funds including support from major New York City foundations such as Robin Hood, the Tiger Foundation, Lone Pine, the Clark Foundation, the Charles Hayden Foundation, and the Pinkerton Foundation as well as corporations such as Barclays and BNY Mellon. They have all presented specific policy and funding challenges as GSS has sought to develop and sustain them. In each instance, GSS has been willing to meet these challenges as it has worked to plan, implement and maintain these innovations that bring needed services and opportunities to vulnerable young people and their families.

Red Hook Beacon

The Beacon community centers were started in 1990 as an initiative of the Dinkins administration. Over the next several years, the total number of

Beacons expanded to 80 city-wide. Initially, they were fully funded with New York City tax levy dollars. However, in the twenty years since they were established, there has been no increase in the funding for each individual Beacon. Over this period, GSS has sought to identify other public funds to support the Red Hook Beacon, while also raising private dollars to ensure that it can continue to operate the broad range of activities that it provides to the community.

Over all, the lack of increased resources poses a serious threat to the integrity of the Beacon model. Currently, GSS must raise substantial private dollars to sustain many of the innovative activities that are vital to the Beacon as a resource for the whole community. Changing priorities and policy shifts regarding programming in the after-school hours have made it challenging to advocate successfully for more funding for the Beacons. However, GSS will continue to work for a renewed public commitment to this model so that the Red Hook Beacon and others around the City can continue to sustain comprehensive programming for their communities.

Transfer School Model

The GSS transfer school model was initially funded with a grant from the New York Department of Youth and Community Development. Over the next twenty years, GSS expanded the design of the model and the overall cost of implementing it and began to raise the necessary private dollars to support it. In 2005, soon after its first transfer school (SBCHS) had become a free standing high school, the Department of Education launched the Learning-to-Work Initiative (LTW). This funding stream was initiated to support CBOs in implementing the paid internship program central to the LTW model and providing comprehensive services to the young people attending these schools. The establishment of this public funding stream to fund CBOs was an enormous step forward in validating the transfer school model. It has made it possible for many other organizations to undertake the work that was piloted by GSS.

Even with the LTW support, GSS continues to need and raise substantial private dollars to support its three transfer schools. However, the LTW funding that supports CBO partnerships with the DOE in operating these schools is a unique commitment to the transfer school model that is unmatched elsewhere in the country. Maintaining this funding, especially in difficult fiscal times, cannot be guaranteed. GSS continues to work with other providers to advocate for sustaining this vital funding stream so that the model can survive and continue to offer a second chance to young people who are choosing to return to school and earn their high school diplomas.

The Foyer

While the Chelsea Foyer has sustained a rigorous program and shown successful outcomes, GSS has struggled with ongoing challenges of identifying public funding to support the model. Overall funding for the Foyer's target population is enormously challenging. There is no federal funding for the mixed youth population, for youth ages 21-25 or for homeless youth. As a result,

GSS has had to piece together funding from a variety of city and state public sources in an effort to sustain the program. Currently, the Foyer is supported by five separate funding streams in addition to private support. Each of these funding streams has different requirements, and this has made it difficult to maintain the integrity of the model. In addition, it is cumbersome to manage so many funding streams and undermines the cost effectiveness of providing these services.

When the Chelsea Foyer was initially planned, several city agencies pledged their support for the development of the program. However, over time, many of the key individuals who initially worked with GSS and Common Ground to design the program moved on to different positions, and the pledges of public support for the model fell aside. However, the two founding organizations have maintained their commitment to the model and have worked tirelessly to identify the resources to sustain it. The ongoing challenges of funding the Foyer underscore the need for public funding for programs that serve young people who fall between the child welfare system and the homeless services system.

Adolescent Services Division

Much like its other strength-based youth development programs serving vulnerable youth, GSS has used private funding to develop and sustain its Adolescent Service Division, creating a dedicated unit to address the specific needs of adolescents in family foster care.

Given the current unprecedented government budget crises, as well as decreased availability of private support, GSS has had to prioritize services against probable budget cuts, and to aggressively fundraise to sustain the specialist positions in the Adolescent Services Division. The current caseload size and increasing government system demands on the time of caseworkers do not allow nearly enough time to meet the intense needs of each individual youth, particularly in terms of educational/vocational planning. The caseworkers are dealing with dependency issues of each adolescent while also trying to meet a wide variety of corrective and therapeutic needs. Given the importance of employment in achieving self-sufficiency, GSS believes it is crucial to maintain a specialist in this and other areas, and continues to work aggressively to sustain these positions through private funds.

Each of these programs demonstrates GSS' commitment to develop innovative models of service delivery that address critical needs in new ways. Together, they demonstrate the critical link between innovative program development and ongoing involvement in advocacy and private fundraising to sustain innovation. These examples illustrate that GSS has the unique organizational capacity to think creatively in designing and implementing innovative programs and to take on the ongoing work of advocating with policy makers and public and private funders that these programs are worthy investments. It is the agency's willingness to engage in both the program development and the advocacy that has enabled GSS to make important contributions to the field.

The mission of Good Shepherd Services is the foundation of all of its direct work with young people, families and communities. This focus on the mission and values of the organization has consistently guided the agency's program development and implementation.

Lessons for the Field

Good Shepherd Services has been strategic and intentional as it has developed programmatically and organizationally over the last 40 years. In reflecting on its organizational processes, it is clear that there are specific characteristics and practices that have contributed to GSS's ability to implement programs that achieve positive outcomes for those with whom it works. These practices have been essential to the success of GSS and are potentially applicable to other youth serving organizations. These practices include the following:

Mission-Driven Culture

The mission of GSS is the foundation of all of its direct work with young people, families and communities. This focus on the mission and values of the organization has consistently guided the agency's program development and implementation. It is the commitment to its mission that has provided the foundation for the organization's strategic planning processes and shaped its ongoing response to emerging community needs and trends in the field. It has also provided the framework for GSS' expansion and ensured that the growth of the organization is always aligned with its core values.

Investment in Human Capital

GSS recognizes the direct connection between the quality of its staff and the ability of the organization to implement effective programs. As a result, it has been committed to the development of strong leadership at all levels of the organization from the Board of Directors to staff at the front lines of service. Supporting this work and ensuring that the approach to leadership is consistent with the mission and values of the organization has required an ongoing investment of time and resources. In addition, the agency has made investment in staff development a priority throughout the organization. This has required a focus on training and ongoing support and supervision to enable all staff to continually develop their skills to perform their job responsibilities effectively and has directly contributed to the organization's ability to implement high quality programs.

Program Effectiveness and Impact

GSS has always had a strong results-driven culture and has been committed to

articulating goals and setting benchmarks to measure progress toward meeting these goals in all of its programs. In recent years, the agency has strengthened its processes for collecting data to assess the effectiveness of its programs and has involved staff in working with the data to identify successful practices and service gaps that are revealed by the data. This culture of accountability for outcomes ensures that program staff regularly reflect on data to determine program effectiveness and make appropriate changes to strengthen implementation and service delivery. This cycle of goal setting, data collection and reflection and then program adjustments based on this reflection process is the organizational practice that is the foundation for GSS’ focus on results, accountability and effectiveness.

Strategic and Financial Planning

Because of its strong commitment to deliver on its mission and leverage resources wisely, GSS places a high value on undertaking regular and comprehensive strategic planning. This planning is always linked both to organizational mission and capacity and to a rigorous assessment of current resources and potential changes in these resources, particularly in relationship to shifts in public funding streams. Through its consistent engagement in strategic and financial planning, the organization is able to be proactive in identifying its programmatic priorities and allocating its resources in ways that are consistent with these priorities.

Balancing Programmatic Growth and Organizational Infrastructure

As GSS has expanded, it has grown to understand that quality programs require a strong infrastructure to support them. It is challenging to maintain a balance between programmatic growth to meet the needs of the young people, families and communities with whom GSS works and the development of the organizational supports that facilitate implementation of effective programs. It requires continuous and sustained investment in building the infrastructure and developing organizational capacity at all levels to support the programs. Since public funding rarely provides support for organizational capacity building, maintaining this balance also requires the commitment to raise the private dollars that make this investment possible.

Efficient Organizational Structure

GSS has intentionally worked to build a culture of open and transparent communication that encourages information sharing and feedback from all its stakeholders including the Board, staff, participants and funders. As it has grown, it has developed the leadership and structures at the program level that support the flow of information across the organization and facilitate working to address common challenges and the sharing of promising practices.

Design: Designlounge, New York
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- 1 From the National Youth Development Information Center
<http://www.nydic.org/nydic/programming/definition.htm>
- 2 GSS staff handout 2009
- 3 <http://www.nfsc-nyc.org/mission.html>
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- 6 The Pew Charitable Trust Kids are Waiting Campaign and the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, Time for Reform: Aging Out and on Their Own, May 2007
- 7 Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, Partners for our Children, Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Care Youth, Outcomes at Ages 23 and 24, 2010



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