

# Cultivating Curiosity, Growing Our Impact

Strategic Plan 2023-2028

## Foreword: Our New Directions

Our last five-year [strategic plan](#), published in 2018, began with the words, “We are living in a time of flux and change.” During the subsequent five years, Good Shepherd Services (GSS) has been through, along with the rest of the world, a pandemic, and racial justice reckoning, as well as, more unique to our agency, the transition to a new CEO and a fundamental internal restructuring—flux and change beyond what we could have ever imagined.

What has not changed is our commitment to [our mission, vision, and values](#). GSS is proud of what we accomplished over the past years and excited to present, in this document, what we hope lies ahead for us. If the last few years have taught us anything, it is that we cannot predict the future. But we have also learned that adversity and change can make us stronger. This new strategic plan presents some ways we believe we can change to continue to live our values in how we work and improve outcomes for our participants.

**Michelle Yanche**  
CEO, Good Shepherd Services





# Table of Contents

## I. Executive Summary

## II. Our Process

## III. Our Strategic Directions

- Participant Voice: Expand our commitment to youth and family voice
- Economic Mobility: Embed economic and social mobility efforts across all programs
- Mental Health & Wellbeing: Build and align mental health services
- Collaboration & Integration: Enhance integration and alignment agency-wide to improve collaboration and impact
- Talent: Attract and develop staff talent as emerging citywide leaders
- Drive Impact: Establish systems and practices to measure goals, learn from data, and maximize impact



## About This Document

This document gives our stakeholders an opportunity to understand our vision and engage in our work in ways that are accessible and action-oriented. Readers can dive into specific ideas that interest them in greater detail, including the voices of participants and staff who informed our planning.

For example, as we discuss creating engaging programming where participants can gain skills, readers will find links to [analysis of data collected across programs](#), and videos of participants giving voice to that idea.





# I. Our Executive Summary

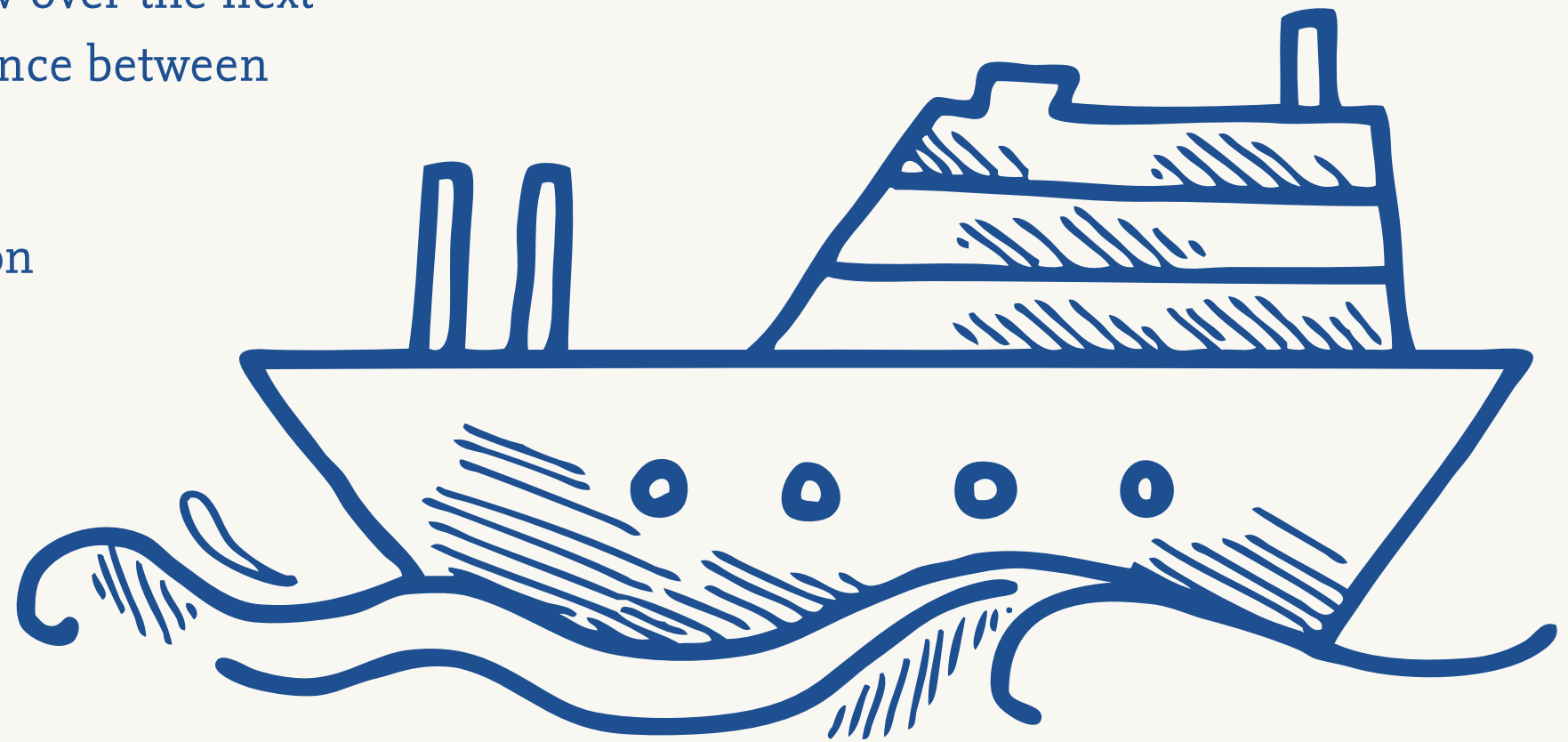
## Our Goals for this Plan

This strategic plan establishes a vision for how GSS will grow over the next five years. We will build on our strengths to bridge any distance between our present work and our aspirational future.

The purpose of this plan is to guide our journey of innovation and impact. To achieve our goals, we will:

- ✿ **Reimagine** how we do our existing work
- ✿ **Learn** how to do new work
- ✿ **Focus** current resources and raise new ones to do either of the above

Navigating through the seas of change brings growth and opportunity. An exciting vision and framework will allow us to build support for the hard work required to make these changes.





# We cultivate our direction and purpose, always guided by our Mission, Vision and Values

## Mission

Guided by social and racial justice, Good Shepherd Services partners and grows with communities so that all NYC children, youth, and families succeed and thrive.

## Vision

We envision a New York City where children grow up in thriving neighborhoods, and all individuals and families can build on their strengths to realize their fullest potential.

## Values

Compassion    Commitment    Optimism    Learning  
Bold Leadership    Responsiveness



# Six Directions to Get Us There

These strategic priorities were identified through an agency-wide collaborative process to help advance our mission.

- ✿ **Participant Voice:**  
Expand our commitment to youth and family voice
- ✿ **Economic Mobility:**  
Embed economic and social mobility efforts across programs
- ✿ **Mental Health & Wellbeing:**  
Build and align mental health services
- ✿ **Collaboration & Integration:**  
Enhance integration and alignment agency-wide to improve collaboration and impact
- ✿ **Talent:**  
Attract and develop staff talent as emerging citywide leaders
- ✿ **Drive Impact:**  
Establish a system and practice to measure goals, learn from data, and maximize impact





# Commitment to Anti-Racism and Equity Embedded in Each Direction

In December 2019, GSS adopted a mission guided by social and racial justice. In doing so, we have been shifting policies, practices, and culture to be equitable. This agency-wide commitment requires analyzing all aspects of our organization to restructure, rethink, and revise our approach going forward. This plan applies our Equity Framework to identify gaps and shape strategic directions that advance liberation, healing, and justice.

## Equity Framework for Liberation, Healing and Justice

### Self-Awareness & Cultural Humility



# II. Our Process



# Approach & Guiding Principles

## Start with the end in mind

All feedback sessions began by asking stakeholders where GSS should be in five years



## Broad participation

Multiple avenues for participant, staff, partners, and board involvement



## Interactive & transparent methods

Gather feedback from stakeholders and allow staff to view our planning week to week



# Collaborative Decision-Making Process





# Start with the End in Mind

## Our Overarching Framework

### What is our vision for a successful GSS?

- ✿ Create opportunities for communities to thrive and overcome systemic barriers.
- ✿ Build an impact-oriented culture that is grounded in anti-oppressive practices and racial justice in a supportive staff environment.

### How is GSS organized to achieve those goals?

- ✿ Through GSS' recent restructuring, we defined and developed three program divisions supported by several support divisions.



# Program Divisions

## Creating Opportunities for Communities

Communities can be defined as affiliations between PEOPLE, PLACES, or INSTITUTIONS. Our programs are structured into three divisions that reflect these types of affiliations:

**Youth and Family Wellbeing** works to improve outcomes for PEOPLE, which includes children, youth, and families, as well as adult survivors of domestic violence, through programs from Out of Home Care to Preventive services.

**Community-based** works to improve outcomes for neighborhoods in PLACED-based programs, such as community centers, antiviolence programs, and youth justice initiatives, as well as connects communities to resources.

**Education and Vocation** works to honor the voice and choice of participants and collaborates with community INSTITUTIONS to provide educational and vocational opportunities that contribute to economic mobility so participants can succeed and thrive.

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Our program divisions are assisted by the following support divisions--Administration & Finance, Anti-Racism & Equity, Development, Executive Office/Legal, Human Resources, and Impact & Strategy--working to ensure our internal processes reflect the organization we want to be.





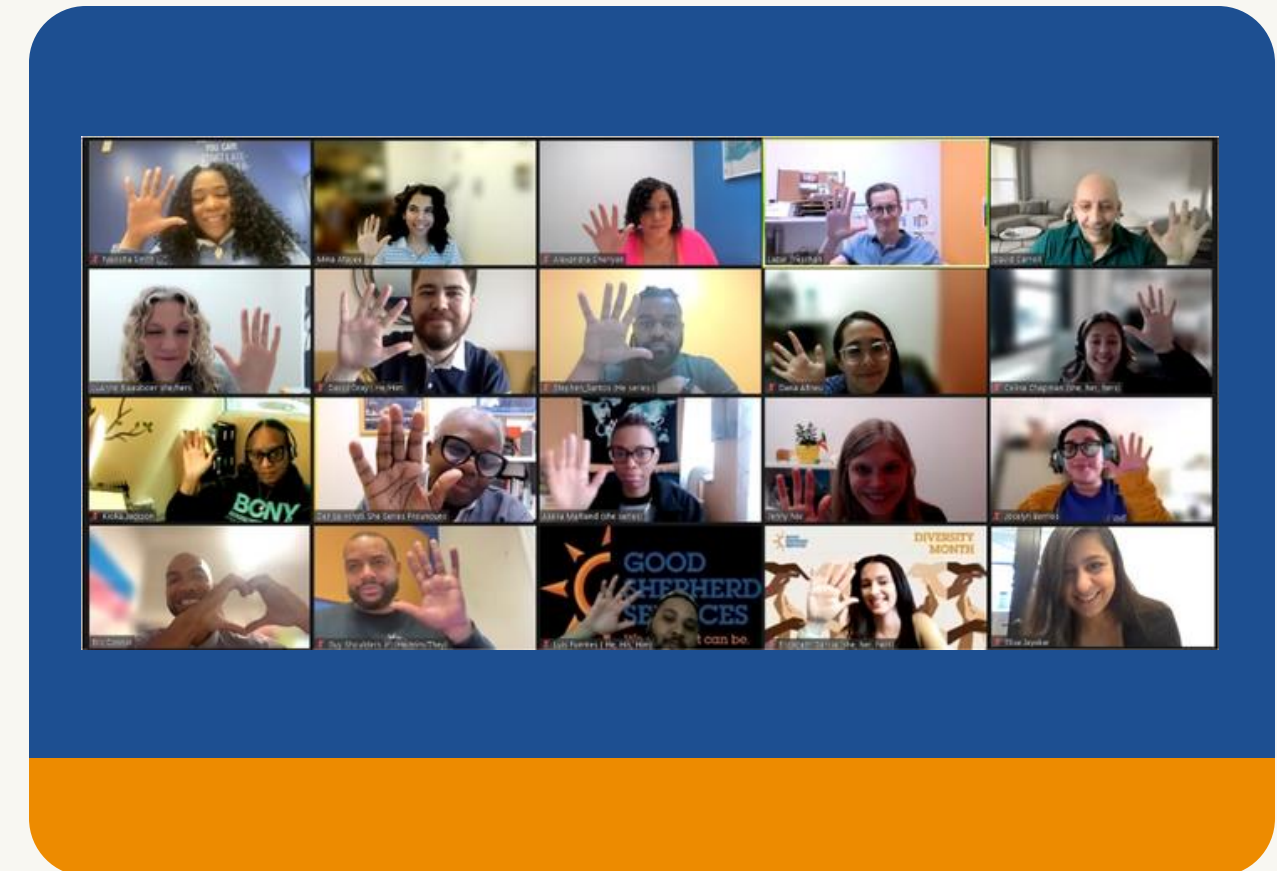
# Methods

We created an internal design team and strategic planning working group with representation across GSS.



We used diverse ways of collecting information from participants, staff, board, and external partners including:

- Participants: focus groups, interviews, and surveys across program areas
- Board members and external partners: individual interviews
- Staff: visioning sessions with teams across the entire agency; survey; two-day planning summit with 100+ participants





# Findings

## Feedback from our Stakeholders

### What GSS Does Well



Provide engaging and impactful services



Align the GSS mission and values to our daily culture and community



Create safe spaces where participants feel they belong

### Where GSS Can Grow



Consistent alignment and accountability



Professional development and holistic supports for staff



Amplify participant voice



Enhance mental health services



# Strategic Planning Summit

On June 15-16, 2023, 100+ GSS staffers came together to determine our next strategic directions. They reviewed three broad sets of materials:

- Feedback collected from participants, staff, and external partners about what GSS does well and how we should grow over the next five years
- Information from visioning sessions conducted with every program and support division about how to balance our shared goals and approaches with the important distinctions across our programs and communities
- Each individual's vision for the future of GSS



Through a sequence of structured activities, we developed six directions to help us continue growing into the organization we know we can be.



**IV. Our Strategic Directions,  
2023-2028:  
How We Will Grow**



# 1. Participant Voice

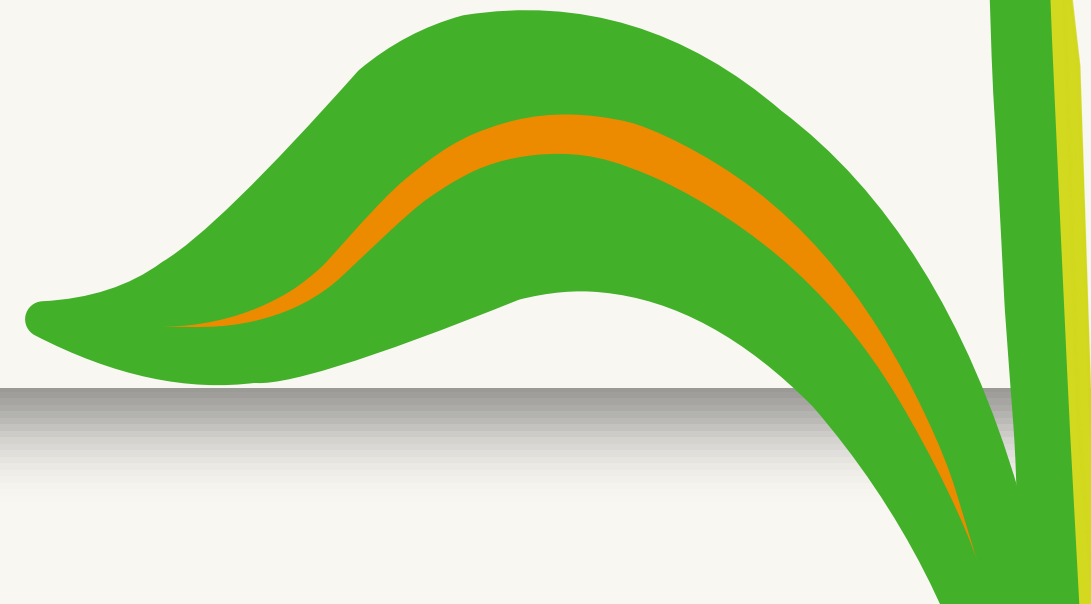
## Expand our commitment to youth & family voice

### What does success look like?

- ✿ Participants partner in the development of GSS initiatives
- ✿ Existing GSS participant voice structures are empowered
- ✿ Programs better reflect and respond to local needs

### What actions will get us there?

- ✿ Empower and support the Youth Advisory Board (YAB) to participate in tangible, high-importance projects, such as reviewing and providing feedback on new initiatives, and directly engaging with our Board of Directors
- ✿ New training for staff and external partners on how to engage families in effective therapeutic modalities
- ✿ Neighborhood- or borough-based advisory groups of participants and community members



## 2. Economic Mobility

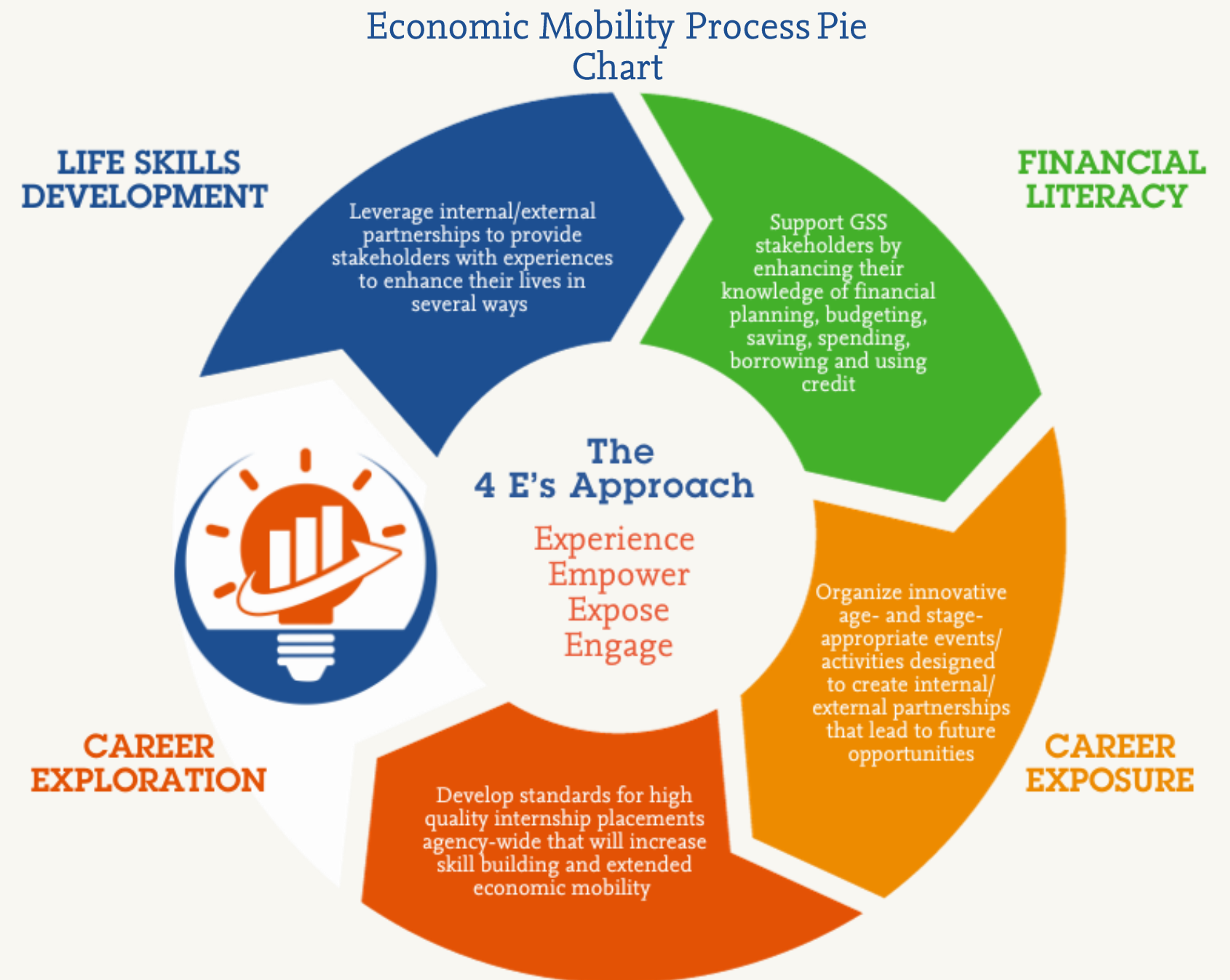
### Embed economic and social mobility efforts across all programs

#### What does success look like?

- ✿ Programs can easily access and connect to economic mobility program options
- ✿ Framework for identifying needs and implementing economic mobility work across programs

#### What actions will get us there?

- ✿ Interactive tool for programs to connect to ongoing economic mobility opportunities
- ✿ Formalize internships across program and support areas
- ✿ Participant-to-employee career pipeline





## 3. Mental Health & Well-Being

### Build and align mental health services

#### What does success look like?

- ❁ Standardized mental health practices and procedures across programs rooted in evidence-based models
- ❁ Clinical and core team of in-house mental health staff with systematic, ongoing training and professional development
- ❁ Improved implementation of our current mental health licensure to expand our range of services
- ❁ Increased youth and family access to in-house, long-term mental health support, including the opening of a new clinic

#### What actions will get us there?

- ❁ Build capacity of GSS mental health staff through training in clinical tools
- ❁ Develop and implement a mental health curriculum for new hires and current staff
- ❁ Conduct focus groups with program supervisors to assess current offerings
- ❁ Create new cross-agency mental health collaborations (including Trauma Informed Practice)



## 4. Collaboration & Integration

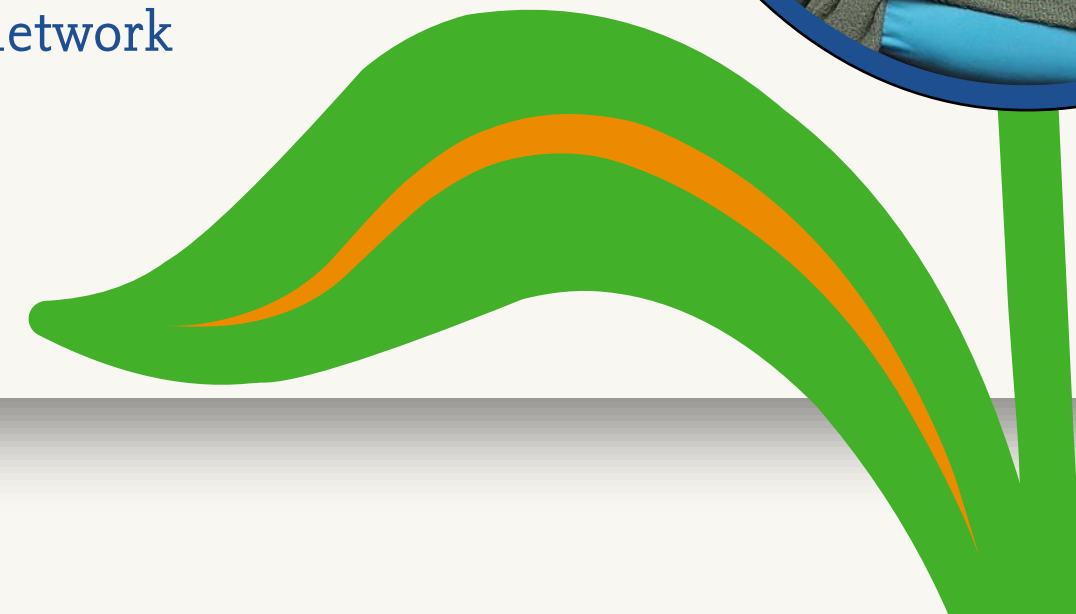
### Enhance integration and alignment across GSS to improve collaboration and impact

#### What does success look like?

- ❁ Participants benefit from greater resources when programs leverage each others' strengths
- ❁ Staff see how their program or work ladders up to our broader, shared goals as an agency
- ❁ Staff consistently uses systems and processes for collaboration

#### What actions will get us there?

- ❁ Internal/external referral system that would allow participants to get seamless services across GSS programs or from our agency to the appropriate next steps in another organization
- ❁ New digital program directory where staff can easily access information about all programs and connect participants to services in our broader network
- ❁ Clear tools, policies, and procedures for how we communicate and collaborate to expand the impact of our programs





## 5. Talent

### Attract and develop staff as emerging citywide leaders

#### What does success look like?

- ❁ Staff develop skills that will help them advance in their role
- ❁ Staff develop skills that help GSS achieve its strategic goals
- ❁ Prepare the next generation of NYC nonprofit leaders

#### What actions will get us there?

- ❁ Consistent supervision processes, protocols, and support systems to increase supervisory skill development to better meet the needs of their supervisees
- ❁ Staff Summit, a day dedicated towards learning, staff development, relationship building, and reviewing data-driven reports/impact
- ❁ Ongoing review of pay equity across roles and ensure that all staff are at market rates



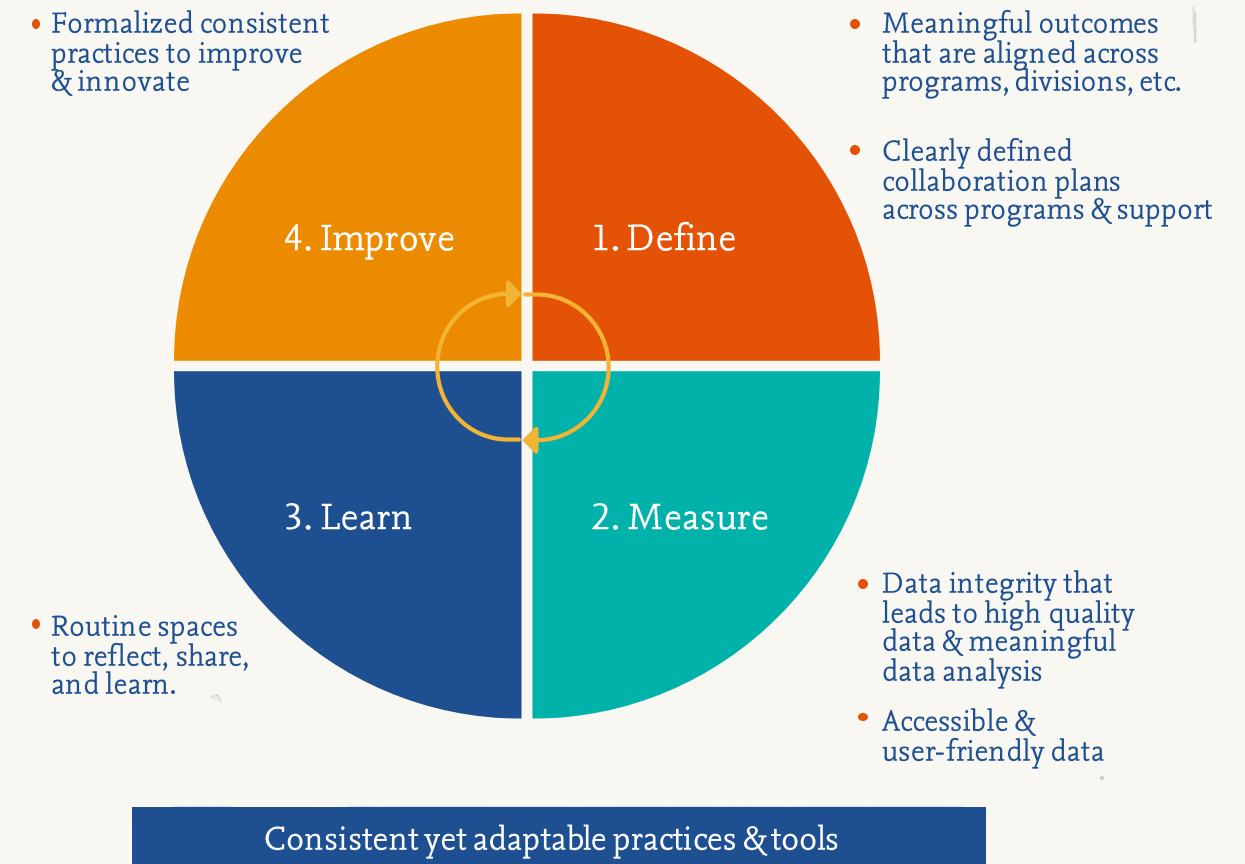
# 6. Drive Impact

## Establish systems and practices to measure goals, learn from data, and maximize impact

### What does success look like?

- ✿ **Define:** Programs and support teams can access and use data that is meaningful to them, along with tools, processes and supports for how to define, learn from, and collaborate around practice.
- ✿ **Measure:** Refresh agency-wide tools that focus on how program and support team activities contribute to specific outcomes.
- ✿ **Measure:** effectively tell the story of our impact in communities, as well as our progress toward becoming an anti-racist organization.
- ✿ **Learn:** Program area-specific collaboration models, e.g., Afterschool Core Team, Prevention Practice Core Team--to provide the interpersonal conditions for productive information-sharing and problem-solving.

### What does it take to become an impact-oriented learning organization?



## 6. Drive Impact

### Establish systems and practices to measure goals, learn from data, and maximize impact (cont'd)

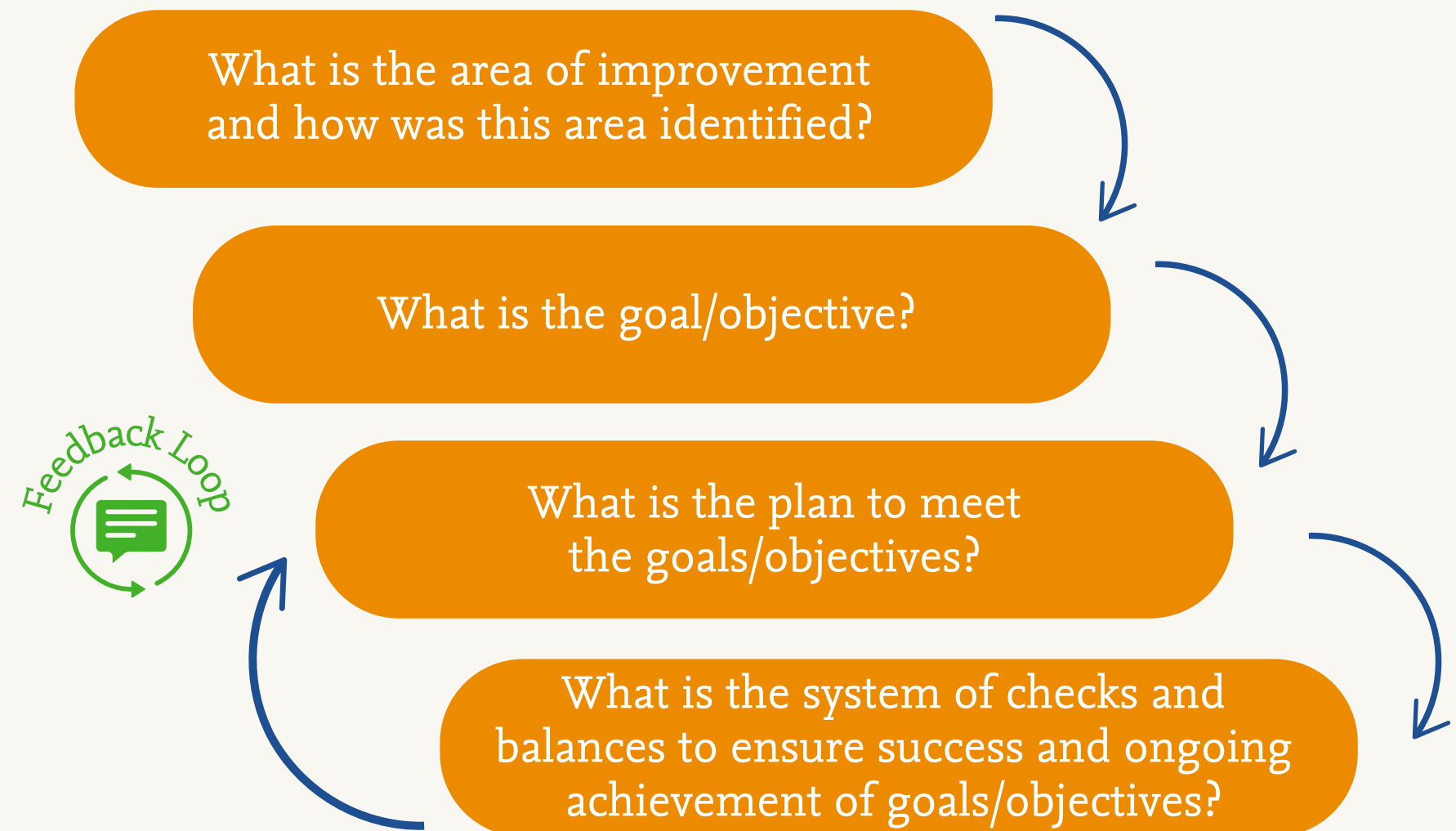
#### What does success look like?

- ✿ **Improve:** Collaboration and evaluation plans across all programs; training staff in learning and collaboration tools to better understand impact
- ✿ **Improve:** Use of a problem-solving tool

#### Underlying Factors

- Strong collaboration between Program and Support teams allows for open and honest communication and partnership
- Ability to use data to identify issues as well as monitor improvement and ongoing success

#### Problem-Solving Tool








# How We Will Hold Ourselves Accountable

We are committed to internal and external transparency and accountability for our strategic directions. We have already invested resources in our plan's implementation by hiring an Assistant Director of Strategic Initiatives. We plan to have a public tracker of our strategic plan work, updated regularly, to assess our progress in meeting each priority.

View an example of a tracker from [Rowan University](#) below.



<b>DEI Strategic Priority</b>	<b>1D. SJICR will conduct a curriculum review of all current SJICR training offerings</b>
Creating a more inclusive and equitable campus community	Department: Social Justice, Inclusion, & Conflict Resolution
	<b>Goal:</b> Goal #1.: To enhance the capacity for social justice work at Rowan University through education and training.
	<b>Objective:</b> SJICR Staff through benchmarking and curriculum building will implement new opportunities to develop skills and practice social justice through a new Social Justice Leadership Retreat and Allyship Training Program
	<b>Expected Outcome:</b> A report will be completed making recommendations for curriculum redesign.
	<b>Timeline/Target Date:</b> Summer 2020
  	<b>Diversity, Equity, &amp; Inclusion (DEI)</b>



## Thank You

This strategic plan blossomed from our shared commitment to cultivating success. Moving forward, we will sow seeds of change and nurture our strategic directions so that Good Shepherd Services may continue blooming for the benefit of our beloved communities.

Our Strategic Planning Design Team and Working Group (SPWG) guided our six-month planning process. They also helped design the collection of information from our Executive Team, staff from across the agency, our Board of Directors, participants in various GSS programs, and a range of external partners.

The GSS Program Evaluation & Planning (PEP) team, including Jenny Nix, Stephanie Mui, Andrea Gangoo, Cindy Molina, Izmira Tawfeek, Willa Evans, Hanna Park, Kiani Oro, and Lauren Olson, provided invaluable support in analyzing stakeholder feedback.

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# Acknowledgments

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