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.

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CEO, Good Shepherd Services
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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

ACCESS
- INFORMATION
- PHYSICAL SPACES
- RESOURCES

OPPORTUNITIES & RESOURCES
- HIGH-QUALITY RESPONSIVE & RELEVANT PROGRAMS, EVENTS & CURRICULUM
- LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES
- COMPENSATION, BENEFITS & REWARDS

INCLUSION
- DIVERSE REPRESENTATION
- POWER SHARING & COLLABORATIVE DECISION-MAKING
- TRANSFORMATIVE CULTURE BUILDING

INTEGRATION
- EQUITABLE POLICIES, PRACTICES
- SUCCESSION PLANNING
- EXTERNAL ADVOCACY
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

**Divergence**
- **DEFINE**
  - PLANNING TEAM
    - 26 PEOPLE from across the agency
- **DISCOVER**
  - STORIES + IDEAS FROM
    - 700+ PEOPLE
    - Staff Survey
    - Board & Partner Interviews
    - Board Survey & Focus Groups
    - Environmental Scan
    - Participant Focus Groups

**Convergence**
- **DISTILL**
  - STRATEGIC PLANNING SUMMIT
    - 100+ PEOPLE
    - including Planning Team
    - & staff from across the agency
- **DECIDE**
  - Board, Design & Planning Teams transition
to agency-wide implementation
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.

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 staffs 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.
6. Drive Impact
Establish systems and practices to measure goals, learn from data, and maximize impact (cont’d)

What does success look like?

改善：协作和评估计划，跨越所有项目；培训工作人员使用学习和协作工具，以更好地理解影响

改善：使用问题解决工具

Underlying Factors

- 强烈的程序和支援团队合作，允许开放和诚实的沟通和伙伴关系
- 能够利用数据识别问题，以及监测改进和持续成功

Problem-Solving Tool

What is the area of improvement and how was this area identified?

What is the goal/objective?

What is the plan to meet the goals/objectives?

What is the system of checks and balances to ensure success and ongoing achievement of goals/objectives?
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.
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.

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