



STRATEGIC PLAN (2023-2024)

Note: The Agency's Strategic Plan was reviewed and updated by the new Executive Leadership Team in July 2022.

I. Mission Statement

Key's mission is to assist children and their families in developing positive life skills so that they may pursue productive and rewarding lives.

II. Vision for the Future

Key envisions that the children and their families with whom we work develop strategies to help them heal from trauma, reach their goals, and experience overall well-being.

To this end, Key will:

- Meet the needs of children and their families by continually developing innovative program models that are exciting to staff, funders and the public.
- Expand the organization's capacity to provide culturally appropriate services to new populations.
- Review potential opportunities to further develop, improve and strengthen its program models; particularly using evidence-based treatment models.
- Provide a high level of clinical expertise to include ongoing professional development opportunities and advanced supervision.
- Expand staff training opportunities to include specialty positions like clinicians, occupational therapists, and nurses.
- Improve its collection and use of data and technology to analyze outcomes and develop effective programming for its clients.
- Work closely with funders and other stakeholders in an innovative, effective, and responsive manner to ensure the services are reflective of the needs of children, youth and families.

III. Environmental Scan/ SWOT Analysis (*strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats*)

This strategic plan addresses the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats which apply to Key currently and in the foreseeable future:

Strengths

- Committed and experienced Management Team, clinical, administrative, and supervisory staff.

- Program services are client and family driven with a focus on recognizing individual strengths and resiliency.
- Management Team members are very skilled, operate as a well- functioning team and can multi-task several projects simultaneously.
- Strong, well-functioning collaborative team approach developed over many years across all programs.
- Excellent reputation within the communities we serve and with stakeholders.
- Excellent training and on-boarding programs for new staff that continually evolves based on new policies and practices.
- Services provided as needed, 24/7.
- CARF Accredited in all of Rhode Island's programs since 2008 and Massachusetts since 2021.
- Key continues to expand its services with Triple P®, an evidence-based parenting model, as well as Parenting Capacity Evaluations through Childrens' Charter. Expansion to include ASAP evaluations and Neurofeedback is in process.
- Above average starting salaries for entry-level human service workers in comparison to other human service providers.
- Ability to maintain our market niche by providing excellent service and being responsive to the needs of children, families, and our funders.

Weaknesses/Challenges

- Increasingly difficult to hire direct care, clinical and registered nurse employees.
- Low unemployment rate, and difficulties filling vacancies with qualified applicants.
- Human service's lower wages in comparison to other industries and for-profit companies, and a challenging client population experiencing more behavioral health issues.
- Former President and Chief Operating Officer retirements in 2022, each with over 40 years of leadership in the organization. Prior to that the Director of Management and Human Resources retired in 2021 and the Chief Financial Officer retired in 2020. These retirements created an entirely new leadership team within two years.

Opportunities/Growth

- Continue CARF Accreditation in Rhode Island and Massachusetts group homes to maintain quality services and a high level of professional standards.
- Continue to improve use of technology to improve client care and increase efficiency by expanding clinic's medical records system Evolv® in MA and RI in non-clinic program models.
- A new executive leadership team presents an opportunity to explore new ideas, new energy, and opportunities for improvement for Key.
- Key will seek opportunities to expand non-residential, community-based services, i.e., ASAP evaluations, Parenting Capacity Evaluations and Neurofeedback.
- Explore interest from similar agencies seeking a merger with Key.
- Continue analysis of job descriptions and staff responsibilities for opportunities to restructure and increase efficiency.
- Developing in-house IT supports by hiring an IT Manager.

- Hire a recruiter trainer/social media coordinator to increase Key's exposure on social media and employment platforms.
- Continue building training, policy, and practice around Risking Connection ®, a trauma informed framework, in all service models. By embracing this philosophy, Key is confident that with continued training and practice our therapeutic framework will allow for improved relationships among staff and clients, a decrease in reliance of physical intervention and an increase in staff retention.
- Increased rates for congregate care in Massachusetts have provided an opportunity to augment current models to best meet the needs of youth in care.

Threats

- The RI state budget does not reflect the current need for continued funding of all residential and community-based services.
- Continued difficulty recruiting and retaining direct care staff in this full employment economy.
- Difficulty attracting and retaining direct care staff, clinicians, and nurses.
- Larger agencies with more internal diversified capabilities and service model alternatives including Community Behavioral Health Clinics.

STRATEGIC GOALS – IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

GOAL 1: Maintain a strong financial position and allocate appropriate financial resources that will allow Key to recruit and retain its most valuable resource, its employees. Key recognizes the critical role that qualified personnel play in the success of our organization and the youth and families we serve.

Objective 1. Maintain financial stability.

- Conduct quarterly reviews of performance for Alternatives for Youth Foundation, Inc. with anticipated returns that match financial benchmarks.
- Conduct quarterly operational budget reviews with an expectation of a 1-3% increase in Key's fund balance each year.
- Show a balanced budget in each fiscal year.

Objective 2. Workforce/Resource Allocation

- Dedicating resources and planning to attract and retain staff, by remaining a top competing agency by offering the highest salaries for direct service staff in RI and MA, and competitive clinical salaries.
- Continue to assess financial allocations to include sign-on bonuses and quarterly retention bonuses.
- The Human Resources Department to work with the Management Team to become a "workplace of choice" by surveying employees, analyzing current benefits trends and retention strategies as identified in Goal 4

GOAL 2: Enhance training and skills development opportunities for all levels of staff throughout the organization to support and retain staff.

Objective 1. Provide enhanced training content focused on policies and job standards during the new employee onboarding period.

- Convene an agency-wide steering committee to focus on recommendations for new employee foundational training using a cross functional collaborative training teams' approach, beginning January 2024.

Objective 2. Reinstigate supervisory level Human Resources training so that supervisory staff gain a management framework for implementing Key's policies and best practices, starting Fall 2022.

Objective 3. Support employees who have Board certified professional licenses by analysis of costs for providing license reimbursement, by Spring 2023.

GOAL 3: To become a workplace of choice in a challenging economic environment.

Objective 1. Recruiter/Trainers will track (via interview process and training) why current direct care staff choose human services and what benefits are most important to them. HR staff and management will continue to track (via exit interviews) why staff choose to leave the field.

Objective 2. Carol Malone, Recruitment and Training Manager to convene quarterly agency-wide recruitment and training committee who function to analyze applicant and hiring data and make recommendations for more effective recruitment strategies.

Objective 3. Findings of results in Objectives 1, 2 and 3 will be utilized to structure targeted hiring and retention strategies. Responsibility, Patricia Fokas, Director of Human Resources, Carol Malone, Recruitment/Training Manager, CFO, David Burke and President/CEO, Tammy Mello.

GOAL 4: To provide the structure, staffing patterns, training, and compensation necessary to recruit and retain qualified staff at all levels of the organization.

Objective 1. Patricia Fokas, Director of Human Resources, David Burke, CFO and President/CEO, Tammy Mello will analyze and draft recommendations for salary/wages based on competitors in the market to ensure Key remains highly competitive.

Objective 2. Maintain annual review of job descriptions to ensure they reflect essential job functions of each position and are aligned with the current organizational structure.

Objective 3. Use salary surveys, local employment office data, Key administered surveys, national, and local benchmarks, etc., to measure hiring and retention success.

Objective 4. Maintain a positive work culture and high employee morale.

- Mentoring program to include specialty positions (Assistant Regional Directors, Nurses, Clinicians, Occupation Therapists) to be developed by Management Team with assistance of Patricia Fokas, Tammy Mello, and Carol Malone.
- Develop ongoing management training. Management training topics to be determined and implemented by Carol Malone and Patricia Fokas.
- Susan Barry, Benefits/Worker's Compensation Supervisor will explore employee recognition platforms as an alternative to the current recognition program and provide information to the Management Team. Reviewed and approved by Management Team.

Objective 5. Patricia Fokas, Director of Human Resources, will extract quarterly hiring and termination data from HRIS to determine trends for organizational policy changes.

GOAL 5: Explore establishing a new executive level clinical director position to develop and implement trauma-informed clinical standards and practices in all programs and services throughout Key.

Objective 1. Develop a job description and pay scale for a Director of Agency Clinical Services.

- Conduct a scan of job descriptions in other like agencies and benchmark salary analysis to ensure a competitive pay structure.

Objective 2. Recruit and Hire a Director of Agency Clinical Services with projected start in Spring 2023.

- Create intra-agency job post to provide opportunities for qualified current clinical staff to apply.
- Develop external job post and candidate selection criteria.
- Develop a selection process for executive team with opportunity for participation from management team.

Objective 3. New Director of Agency Clinical Services will concentrate on improving and expanding the agency’s clinical services throughout all programs and services with a foundation of trauma-informed practice.

- Develop a training program for all clinicians that offers a wide range of clinical topics and allows for cross training between regions and program models.
- Utilize the Regional Clinical Directors and Clinical Supervisors in a leadership role in each region to ensure a high quality of service and implementation of training sustainability plan in the field.
- Focus on increasing collaboration between clinical, nursing, and occupational therapy teams for a holistic approach to treating the child.
- Clinical team to catalog current clinical practice models and research other evidence-based, clinical approaches that would benefit our client population.
- Considerations will be made for enhancing agency-wide effective use of Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavior Therapy (TF-CBT), Neurofeedback and Positive Parenting Program (Triple P).
- Restorative Approach® (RA), is phase 2 of implementing Risking Connection, Key’s trauma-informed framework. Clinical and supervisory staff will be trained to facilitate RA in 2023 and implement agency-wide staff training in January 2024 with the goal of infusing the Restorative Approach in Key’s residential programs by the end of calendar year 2024.

GOAL 6: Enhance Technology

Objective 1. Continue to work with current IT provider to assess current technology infrastructure and to determine ongoing technology needs and solutions, David Burke, CFO.

- Increase cyber insurance policy by \$3M.
- Purchase Verizon Jet packs to cover internet disruptions.

Objective 2. Create an internal IT Manager position to build technological expertise.

- Determine short-term technology fixes to implement immediately.
- Conduct research of other agencies and their use of technology best practices.
- Install SonicWall firewall protection to all regional offices.

- Objective 3. Explore hiring an IT tech to support the IT Manager.
- To increase expedited internal support to regional staff.
 - Monitor suspicious incoming emails.
 - Monitor NVR cameras systems.
- Objective 4. Implement client electronic health record system in all regions by the end of calendar year 2024. David Burke, CFO
- Objective 5. Patricia Fokas, Director of Human Resources will lead the HR Department initiative to pilot and roll-out an electronic onboarding system through its ADP HRIS throughout the agency starting in Jan 2023, with full implementation by Summer of 2023. Objective is to modernize and streamline human resource functions that are paper driven.

GOAL 7: CARF Accreditation

- Objective 1. Maintain CARF reaccreditation in Rhode Island & Massachusetts.
- Kara Ludy-Speight will work with RI and MA regional staff to complete annual mock studies, review, and implement any changes made to CARF standards annually, and complete all annually required documents and systems. Kara Ludy-Speight, Quality Assurance Manager and Directors.
- Objective 2. Implement a Formal Quality Assurance Committee
- An agency wide committee, comprised of the Executive Team and selected Main Office and regional champions, to meet quarterly and drive identified quality improvement initiatives.
- Objective 3. Develop electronic benchmarking tools and dashboards to better manage CARF Performance Improvement Outcome Measures by the end of calendar year 2024.