



First 5 Kings County  
Children and Families Commission

## Capacity Building Toolkit

# Module 1 – Strategic Planning

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## Acknowledgements

In September 2006, First 5 Kings County Children and Families Commission funded a capacity building initiative for its Family Resource Center (FRC) grantees. The objective of the capacity building initiative is to:

- 1) Assess the capacity building needs of service providers identified by First 5 Kings County and create a plan to address those needs, thereby strengthening their performance and accountability, and
- 2) Develop tools and deliver capacity building services to Family Resource Centers (FRCs) in order to strengthen their programs, practices and sustainability.

The Commission is funding a hands-on approach to working with staff, volunteers, board and/or other persons responsible for achieving results outlined in the individual organizational Capacity Building Plans developed for each FRC. Social Entrepreneurs, Inc. (SEI) is compiling and developing a variety of materials that will be shared with the FRCs through a combination of targeted coaching and technical assistance, including

- Leadership workshops
- Education and training
- Direct technical one on one assistance
- Toolkits, and
- Follow up

First 5 Kings County would like to thank the board, staff and leadership within each of the FRCs for the time, energy and commitment shown to participating in the activities that have led to this point. We recognize that each FRC's primary focus is on delivering needed services and supports to the children and families of Kings County. The time required to conduct the organizational self-assessments, review reports and capacity building plan, and provide feedback and recommendations to the SEI team is time away from serving those families.

We appreciate the commitment shown by the FRCs. The Commission believes that in the long-run, building the capacity of individual FRCs will lead to their increased sustainability; which will ultimately lead to more families and children accessing the critical services and supports provided by the FRCs.

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## Introduction and Overview of Governance Toolkit

The First 5 Kings County Children and Families Commission has established a Capacity Building Initiative for its First 5 funded Family Resource Centers (FRCs). Toolkits are one resource the initiative will use to build capacity. One toolkit for use by the FRCs relates to the governance of the organization. Development of this toolkit resulted from research on evidence based practices and tools to ensure the appropriate infrastructure and implementation of governance elements for nonprofit organizations. These tools and processes have been used successfully with organizations of varying size, complexity and purpose.

Why should effective governance matter to boards of nonprofit organizations? A few reasons:

- State and federal regulation of nonprofit organizations is growing significantly tighter, led by efforts to apply the federal Sarbanes-Oxley act to nonprofits, increased scrutiny of data reported by nonprofits on IRS Form 990 (such as administrative and fund raising costs), and state laws such as California's Nonprofit Accountability act adopted in 2005. *Boards are expected to be aware of and responsible for complying with new regulations.*
- 1.4 million nonprofit organizations were registered with the IRS in 2004, of which 845,233 were 501(c)(3) public charities; 47% of these were health and human service organizations. *Each of these organizations requires the time and talents of individuals to serve on the governing board and ensure fiduciary responsibilities are met. A well-designed board that utilizes its member's time efficiently to achieve the organization's mission in a strategic manner will attract and retain knowledgeable, caring and committed individuals.*
- In 2004, nonprofits of all types accounted for 8.3% of all wages and salaries paid in the United States and 5.2% of the total gross domestic product. *Board members are responsible for setting policy and providing oversight to ensure that the monies that are entrusted to the organization are used for the purposes intended. A board that understands its roles and responsibilities provides the fiduciary oversight required can ensure that needed services and resources remain in the community served by the organization.*
- California had 106,585 registered 501(c)(3) organizations in 2006, a 21% increase since 2001. Organizations are increasingly competing for foundation and other community funding supports. *When making funding decisions, individuals and grant makers more often consider how well the governing body has done its job in setting the organization's direction and planning for its sustainability.*

The toolkit is organized into two modules. This is the first module, which focuses on strategic planning, why it's important and how to create a plan that is meaningful and that the organization can use to achieve and monitor results. The second module is bound separately. It focuses on governance design issues. It presents information on why the way a board is designed is important to how well the board functions. Included are tools and worksheets which can be used to assist board members determine the design structure that is best suited for their organization's mission and purpose. Throughout both modules, links are provided to worksheets in the appendices and to outside resources where additional information can be obtained on a number of governance topics. Together they provide a valuable resource for nonprofit governing bodies and the organizations they serve.

## MODULE 1 – STRATEGIC PLANNING

### Module 1: Introduction and Overview of Strategic Planning

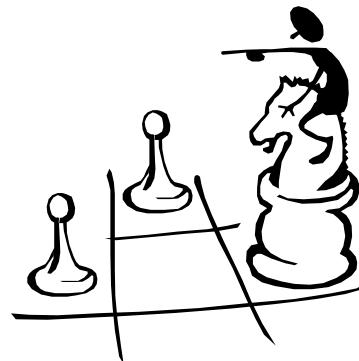
The Strategic Planning Module is the first of two modules contained in the Governance Toolkit. This module of the toolkit provides an overview of strategic planning, specific planning tools, and references to additional resources for users interested in exploring strategic planning in more detail.

Why is strategic planning important? Is it really worth the time and energy it takes?

A strategic plan is an important management tool. It sets a clear direction for the organization, improves performance, helps resolve current challenges and avoid future problems, and provides a framework for decision-making.

A strategic plan is specifically designed to move a group from the present to a desired future. For example, an organization that wants to improve the conditions affecting children and families in their community, such as illiteracy or drug-affected births, cannot be sure it will achieve that goal simply by naming the condition and deciding it should be different in the future. Yet this is the approach many organizations take. They assert their goal and then begin offering programs and services, or conducting activities in an attempt to achieve results. Yet, without a clear plan, it will be difficult to prioritize strategies and measure progress.

A strategic plan can be an effective tool for orienting board, staff and key stakeholders to the vision, core values and goals of the organization. It can help keep everyone “on the same page” and working toward the same results.



### ***Strategic Planning Module Components and Organization***

The components of this module were selected based on the organizational self-assessments completed by the Kings County Family Resource Centers (FRCs) in October 2006 as part of the Capacity Building Project funded through First 5 Kings County. This module is not intended to provide an exhaustive list of resources or instructions related to strategic planning, but rather provide tools and guidance for addressing specific areas of need and concern identified by individual FRCs. Links to additional resources or websites have been included throughout so that FRC staff and board members can obtain additional information and guidance as needed.

The module explains the value of strategic planning, and offers a suggested approach for creating a plan that is meaningful and that the organization can use to achieve and monitor results. Included are tools and worksheets to assist board members throughout a strategic planning process. Links are provided to worksheets in the appendices and to outside resources where additional information can be obtained on a number of governance topics. Since this module is expected to be delivered primarily by consultants, the explanations and descriptions will be geared toward that audience. However, FRC board and staff that participate in various strategic planning activities would be able to replicate the process using the tools and materials provided in the toolkit.

The Strategic Planning module is organized into five sections plus appendices:

- Introduction to Strategic Planning
- The Strategic Plan Document
- Preparing to Plan
- Tools for Creating the Plan Document
- Managing the Plan

Each section in this module begins with a brief introduction that explains the topics covered and lists any worksheets or tools that are discussed in the section. All tools and templates referenced in the section will also be provided electronically either as a download from an external website or from a companion compact disk (CD). Files located on a CD will be noted with an icon of a CD.



Whenever a new tool or worksheet is presented a “key” symbol and text box will be included. The box will contain “key” suggestions about who, when and how to use the tool.

## 1.1 Introduction to Strategic Planning

This section provides a short explanation of the purpose and benefits of planning that can be used with stakeholders and strategic planning participants. It lists a number of different planning approaches and provides references for readers who wish to learn more about various methods for developing strategic plans.

### ***Purpose and Benefits of Planning***

The purpose of strategic planning is to provide a solid framework for identifying needed resources in equipment, capital, and personnel. The strategic plan becomes the foundation for operational strategies and for educating stakeholders (board members, employees, funders, and consumers) about the organization's business direction and priorities. The strategic plan describes what the organization will do to be successful. In short, it becomes a map and blueprint for getting the organization from where it is now to where it wants to be.

As Dr. Joseph Steiner of Syracuse University stated, "Strategic planning is a collective process to make decisions and direct action that guide an organization from what it is to what it will become." Done properly, the strategic plan itself becomes a map that the Board and staff alike can use to reach a common understanding about where the organization should go and how it intends to get there.

Some important benefits that can be realized from strategic planning are:

- **Set a clear direction for the organization.** Better results are achieved when everyone is working together as a team, all moving in the same direction. Having a common direction that is compelling to people has been proven to help improve morale, reduce Board and staff turnover, and provide other benefits.
- **Improve performance.** The Amherst H. Wilder Foundation has identified numerous studies that consistently show that vision, planning, and goal-setting can positively influence organizational performance. Studies also show that both large and small businesses with

strategic plans outperform their counterparts without formal plans.

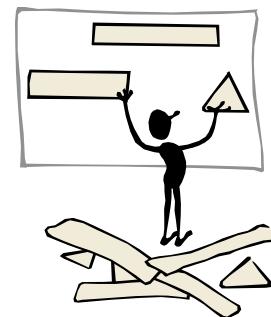
- **Resolve current challenges and/or avoid future problems.** The planning process enables an organization to objectively evaluate its internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external threats and opportunities. This enables conscious choices to be made regarding how existing problems will be overcome while proactively anticipating probable future difficulties and taking steps to avoid those difficulties.
- **Invest resources more effectively.** By having a clear set of priorities, managers and staff alike can make better decisions regarding where to invest time and money to strengthen the agency. People are able to ask the question, "how will this investment help us achieve our goals?"
- **Provide a framework for decision-making.** The planning process provides a useful opportunity to set guidelines regarding the types of decisions that must be brought to the Board, decisions that can be made with the approval of the Executive Director or other designated managers, and decisions that can be made by front-line staff.

## **Strategic Planning Approaches**

There are literally dozens of different theories and methodologies for strategic planning, each involving a different set of steps and each proven to work in certain situations. The immediate question is which approach is best for your organization? It is vital that the Board and Executive Director are fully committed to the planning process or else it is almost certain to flounder or fail altogether. For this to happen there must be consensus about the approach to take.

There are five primary approaches to strategic planning:

1. Foundational planning
2. Goals-driven planning
3. Critical issues approach
4. Scenario analysis
5. Capabilities-based planning



The steps for two of the most commonly used and blended approaches, Goals-driven and Critical issues, are compared in the table below.

<b>Goals-Driven Planning</b>	<b>Critical Issues Approach</b>
This approach to planning emphasizes defining where the organization wants to go, what it wants to accomplish, and using those goals as the driving force to determine how it will go about achieving the goals (the strategies). The Goals-driven approach is the most common form of strategic planning, mainly because it has been practiced the longest by virtue of being "the" approach to strategic planning taught in most business schools and books from the 1950's through the 1970's.	The critical issues approach mirrors the goal approach in defining the mission and performing a situation (SWOT) analysis, then uses the results of the SWOT analysis to determine the most significant issues facing the organization. Critical issues may be internal weaknesses that must be corrected, external threats to be mitigated, emerging opportunities to be pursued, addressing transitional issues such as the expected retirement of the Executive Director, or other such things that are expected

<b>Goals-Driven Planning</b>	<b>Critical Issues Approach</b>
<p>The basic steps in the process are:</p>	<p>to have a major impact on the organization.</p>
<p>1 <b>Clarify mission, vision and values.</b> As in foundational planning, and indeed all other forms of planning, the mission comes first. This step is used to define or reevaluate the mission of the organization, define the vision (what will it look like when the mission has been fulfilled?) and articulate the core values or principles held by the organization.</p>	<p>The basic steps are:</p> <p>1 <b>Clarify mission, vision and values.</b> Same as in the goals-driven approach.</p>
<p>2 <b>Perform a situation analysis.</b> This is a systematic way of analyzing the current and expected future situation of the organization in terms of its internal strengths and weaknesses as well as the external threats and opportunities. It is often referred to as a "SWOT" analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats). The analysis provides objective information to use in making decisions throughout the rest of the planning process.</p>	<p>2 <b>Perform a situation analysis.</b> Same as in the goals-driven approach.</p>
<p>3 <b>Develop goals.</b> The next step is to define clear, measurable goals or targets for the organization to achieve in the coming years.</p>	<p>3 <b>Define organizational mandates.</b> Organizational mandates are the formal and informal requirements of the organization, i.e. the items that it "must" adhere to. These mandates serve as constraints on the development of future plans; inasmuch that plans must either conform to all of the mandates or incorporate specific actions to change the mandates. For example, the articles of incorporation and bylaws of the organization probably impose specific limitations on what the organization can and cannot do; the organization either must operate within these parameters or must take steps to amend them. Informal mandates, such as an unwritten policy that all decisions of a certain type must be presented to the board, are also important to understand in the planning process.</p>
<p>4 <b>Define strategies to accomplish each goal.</b> Strategies represent the overall approach or methods by which goals will be achieved. The process typically used to</p>	<p>4 <b>Define and prioritize critical issues.</b> The results of the situation analysis are analyzed to identify all of the significant issues facing the organization. Each issue</p>

<b>Goals-Driven Planning</b>	<b>Critical Issues Approach</b>
develop strategies is to identify several alternative approaches for each goal, objectively evaluate the merits and drawbacks of each alternative, prioritize the options, and choose one or more strategies for each goal that represent the best available options.	is carefully defined so that everyone has a common understanding of what the issue is (and isn't). The issues are then prioritized, with the top five or so typically selected for action.
5 <b>Evaluate the impact on the organization.</b> The goals and strategies should then be tested to see if they are realistic given the expertise, time commitments, money, and other resources necessary to implement the strategies. This step inevitably results in changes to the goals and strategies, and also provides valuable information to use in budgeting and other short-term planning activities.	5 <b>Define strategies to overcome critical issues.</b> Strategies are then developed to address each of the top priority issues. The process for defining strategies is basically the same as described for the goals-driven approach: identify alternatives, evaluate the alternatives, rank them, and select one or two to implement.



Appendix A [A Comparison of Strategic Planning Approaches](#) contains a short description of all the approaches and their advantages and disadvantages. An [Organizational Mandates Worksheet](#) is provided in Appendix N (referenced in the table under the critical issues approach) The tool is designed to help Board members quickly identify what the mandates are and how each member feels about whether or not the mandate should be changed. The tool is described in more detail in Module 2: Governance Design Manual.

The strategic planning approaches are not mutually exclusive – elements of two or more approaches can be combined into "hybrid" planning processes. This reflects the premise that it is ultimately necessary for each organization to choose its process based on its unique situation, mix of people, time requirements, and other factors.

An additional factor to consider when selecting a process is whether the organization is updating an existing strategic plan or creating its first plan. If a plan is in place and has been effective, the best option is to update various sections using the original process, approach and design. This prevents the organization from having to reinvent work products that it worked hard to develop in the first place. It also validates that what they have been doing can be built upon and strengthened using lessons learned since the plan was first issued.

Where no previous strategic plan exists, the goals-driven approach is recommended, adding in some components of the critical issues approach.

## Additional Strategic Planning Resources

Following are a few of the many resources available to guide strategic planning.

### Alliance for Nonprofit Management. <http://www.allianceonline.org>

Information on a network of management support organizations specializing in assistance to nonprofits, plus access to an excellent set of management resources. Select the FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) area from the home page, then select Strategic Planning.

**Nonprofit Managers Library** <http://www.managementhelp.org>

Outstanding resource for nonprofit managers with practical advice, worksheets, book lists, and other resources on 24 topics relevant to nonprofit managers. Select the "Planning (Many Kinds)" topic for access to numerous resources on strategic planning.

**Strategic Futures** <http://www.strategicfutures.com/articles/stratpln/stratpln.htm>

Outstanding article titled "An Organization That Doesn't Plan Its Future Isn't Likely to Have One" that contains solid, practical advice on strategic planning. The site also contains free questionnaires for use by businesses and government agencies to evaluate their current strategic planning process.

There are quite literally thousands of books and articles available on the subject of strategic planning. The list below contains a few of the more practical (as opposed to highly theoretical) books that are targeted specifically to nonprofit organizations.

Amherst H. Wilder Foundation (1986). *Strategic Planning Workbook for Nonprofit Organizations*. St. Paul, MN: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation.

Bryson, John (1995). *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Bryson, John and Farnum Alston (1996). *Creating and Implementing Your Strategic Plan: A Workbook for Public and Nonprofit Organizations*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Peter F. Drucker Foundation (1998). *How to Assess Your Nonprofit Organization: The Five Most Important Questions You Will Ever Ask*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

## 1.2 The Strategic Plan Document

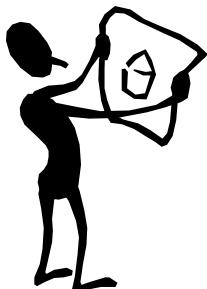
This section describes the various sections of a strategic plan and how to determine what an organization needs to include based on what their objectives are for planning. It also includes a sample table of contents with a link to the strategic plan and implementation plan templates available on the companion CD.



Tools in this section are available only on the companion CD, and include:

- Strategic Plan Template and instructions for what belongs in each section
- Implementation Plan Template and instructions for completing/update

### Strategic Plan Components



The exact components of a strategic plan document will be determined in part by the process used to create the plan. If the planning process includes conducting a strengths and weakness assessment or environmental scan, the plan document will need to reflect the findings so that the goals or strategies developed for the plan are anchored in current reality.

Following is a table of contents for a comprehensive strategic plan. Each section contains a brief description of what would be included. It includes sections that may go beyond the scope of basic strategic planning desired by

a particular organization. Therefore, the contents should be reviewed and modified (sections taken out or reordered) as needed to meet the specific planning objectives of the organization.

- Acknowledgements.** This page recognizes the individuals who lead or participated significantly in planning, and as appropriate, any funding sources or donors that underwrote the costs.
- Executive Summary.** This section summarizes the key information from all of the other sections of the strategic plan down into a 3-4 page executive summary. It needs to be written so that an outsider can easily read and understand the mission of the organization, its overall major issues and goals, and key strategies to reach the goals.
- Background and History.** This section provides readers with a general understanding of the organization, how the board and staff are structured, its current programs and services, and an organizational chart. It briefly outlines reasons for engaging in strategic planning (objectives sought), planning components and approach, and planning participants. It provides context and historical perspective for the planning process and a framework for readers who were not involved in creating the plan.
- Organization Framework.** This section describes the components that serve as the basis for the organization's design. Specific aspects include:
  - **Mission.** The mission statement clearly and succinctly describes the fundamental purpose for the organization to exist.
  - **Vision.** The vision statement gives a compelling view of the type of future that the organization seeks to create for the clients, members and communities being served.
  - **Guiding principles.** The guiding principles are the values or mutually held principles that are used for all decision making related to the organization,

Together, the mission, vision and guiding principles describe the philosophy of the organization.

- Situation Analysis.** The current reality for the organization, including internal strengths and areas to improve, external opportunities and threats, and other critical issues is summarized in the situation analysis section. The data (surveys, critical issues analysis, environmental scans, etc.) behind the summary should be contained in the appendices.
- Goals and Objectives.** This section lists all of the long-term goals (3 to 5 year statements of desired change) of the organization. Depending upon the planning approach it may also include shorter-term objectives or interim milestones.
- Strategies.** This section lists the specific strategies that will be pursued to achieve the goals and objectives; the specific courses of actions, such as implementing a capital campaign, expanding service sites or programs, developing a marketing plan. Where appropriate, strategies also note any additional resources or partnerships that will need to be acquired before starting.

- Evaluating and Updating the Plan.** This section describes how the organization will measure and report on its success and lessons learned. Specific milestones for progress are described, along with the resources and tools needed to conduct evaluation, and the method and frequency for reporting and discussing results. It also describes the process and timing for reviewing and updating the strategic plan document to reflect significant changes over time.

- Appendices**

The appendices should include information that is somewhat confidential, detail-oriented or that tends to change frequently. They may include the following:

- Detailed implementation plan that specifies objectives, action steps, responsibilities and timelines for completion (the major goals and activities to be accomplished over the coming fiscal year). Note: the implementation plan is sometimes issued as a separate document so that it can be easily reviewed and updated on a regular (monthly/quarterly).
- Details of the planning process, such as the dates, locations and major topics of the planning meetings, and key lessons learned throughout the process that would improve the next cycle of planning, etc.
- Details of situational analysis data gathering tools, information and findings generated during the external analysis (for example, environmental scan) and internal analysis (for example, SWOT analysis); identification of strategic issues identified during the analyses.
- Budget and financial planning information that describes the resources and funding needed, and how the organization expects to obtain and use the resources needed to achieve the strategic goals.
- Glossary of terms or acronyms used in the planning document.

## ***Implementation Plan Components***

The implementation plan document can be created as an appendix to the strategic plan, as noted above. However, since it is intended to be used by those responsible for implementing activities throughout the year, it is more easily updated and managed as a stand-alone document. The implementation plan contains the specific tasks, timing and persons responsible for carrying out the activities. It generally covers a 12 to 15 month timeframe and is only a few pages in length. There are four components in the implementation plan:

- Introduction and Background.** One or two paragraphs that describe the organization background and the major goals or objectives to achieve during the implementation plan timeframe. This helps orient any individuals who were not part of developing the strategic or implementation plan, but who are involved in achieving results.

**Figure 1: Implementation Timeline**

- Implementation Plan Timeline.** A chart that contains a summary of timelines for strategies and tasks presented in the document. This

Strategy	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Next Year
B1.2a													⌚
Task 1			9-1	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	6-30
Task 2			9-1	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	6-30
B1.2b													⌚
Task 1			9-1	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	6-30
Task 2			9-1	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	6-30
Task 3			9-1	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	⌚	6-30

allows plan users to quickly see what should be in process and what is on the horizon. Figure 1 provides an example of a timeline.

- Detailed tasks and timing for each strategy.** Contains detailed action steps necessary to implement the current year's strategies. Includes timeframes for completing, lead persons responsible, and partners or other resources needed. These are presented in a series of tables that can be updated to report progress over the year. The figure below shows an example of an implementation plan task grid used for managing the activities during a 12 to 15 month timeframe.

**Figure 2: Sample task grid**

Focus Area A: Organization Infrastructure and Capabilities		Lead Persons	Costs/Resources	Start	End
Strat. #	Description of strategy:	List of specific persons	If any	Date	Date
	1) List of detailed tasks for completing the strategy.	Who		xx-xx-xx	xx-xx-xx
	2) List of detailed tasks for completing the strategy.	Who		xx-xx-xx	xx-xx-xx
	3) List of detailed tasks for completing the strategy.	Who		xx-xx-xx	xx-xx-xx

## 1.3 Preparing to Plan

This section provides tips for organizing the planning process, including who should be involved. It presents tools and worksheets for gathering information from stakeholders prior to the planning session.

Why is organizing the planning process important? How does pre-planning data gathering make a difference?

Strategic planning does not have to be a complex, difficult process. Unfortunately, many people groan at the thought of participating in planning, largely because previous processes have not produced desired results, even after hours of work.

Tightly focused, efficient planning will often produce better plans than more lengthy and costly approaches. Board, staff and other stakeholders will be more inclined to use the plan and it won't be set on a shelf to gather dust. Pre-planning data gathering is one means of ensuring that the time spent together planning is focused on discussing critical issues and making decisions about the organization's strategic direction.



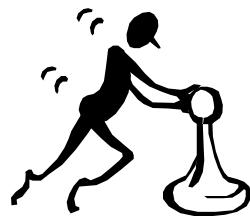
Tools included in this section and available on the companion CD:

- Board Pre-Retreat Survey
- Staff Pre-Retreat Survey
- Mission Statement Worksheet
- Vision Statement Worksheet
- Values Statement Worksheet
- Strengths and Weaknesses Worksheet
- Opportunities and Threats Worksheet
- Critical Issues Worksheets

## **Planning Considerations and Logistics**

Prior to beginning the planning process, the organization should decide the following:

- **Time horizon for the plan.** How far into the future should the plan look? If there are a series of urgent issues to overcome in a rapidly changing environment, a short horizon such as two years may be appropriate. In a more stable setting where major initiatives may be pursued that will take a long time to realize, a five-year window may be optimal. In most situations, a three-year time horizon with annual reviews is recommended.
- **Amount of time to allocate to planning.** A general determination should be made regarding how much time is available from board, staff, consultants, etc. to spend on the planning process. If the board is constrained such that it can only spend two hours a month on strategic planning, the planning process must reflect this reality or the plan will never be completed.
- **Target date for completion.** Some expectations should be set regarding when the final plan will be completed and adopted by the board. Having a deadline is important to help motivate action toward completing the necessary steps of the planning process.
- **Communication methods.** This involves defining how planning work will be incorporated into ongoing board activities (e.g. invest regular meeting time or set up special meetings or retreats) and other means of communicating the status of the planning process to the Board. The same issue applies for staff, who should be kept apprised of the planning process on a regular basis.
- **Who to involve in the process.** Best results are achieved from strategic planning processes that are very inclusive. By identifying and involving all types of stakeholders the plan can become more objective and realistic, taking into account the perspective of key stakeholders. At a minimum, it is essential that the Board and Executive Director work together to develop a solid plan.
  - The primary roles of the Board in strategic planning are to define and guide the process or approach to use, actively contribute to targeted steps in the process (such as contributing insights during a situation analysis), make decisions in the course of evaluating and selecting goals / issues / strategies, then review and approve the final plan.
  - Staff participation will help produce a more realistic plan, increase ownership of the plan, and help align everyone toward a common direction. The executive director should determine who to involve in the process and how to handle documentation and administrative support for the planning process (including who should write the actual plan document).
  - A planning committee should be established to maintain the efficiency of the process. The committee is responsible for ensuring that all planning work gets done, but is not expected to do all of the work. Typically, the committee would take on creating drafts of the plan and overseeing subsequent updates to reach a final version of the plan that is



approved by the board.

## **Pre-Planning Information Gathering**

This section contains specific tools to gather stakeholder input prior to planning and how that information can be used to expand engagement opportunities, buy-in, and make the planning sessions more efficient. It's important to note that it is not necessary, or even desirable to use all of the worksheets. Select only those that will help fill in the gaps in understanding and provide a basis for understanding what areas are important to address during planning and what areas already have strong agreement.

All of the tools and worksheets are contained in the appendices and are available on the companion CD.

### **Board Pre-Planning Survey**

This survey is designed to gather input from board members specific to the direction that should be set for the organization. All of the questions can be modified to gather feedback on specific topics. For instance, the current goals or objectives of the organization can be listed and board members asked to rate how important the goals are, or how much progress they believe has been made toward achieving results. Responses should be compiled anonymously into a single document and a summary prepared that shows how the board collectively rated or described certain conditions. The detailed comments can be provided as an attachment to the summary. The [Board Pre-Planning Survey](#) is contained in Appendix B and is also available on the companion CD.

### **Staff and Stakeholder Pre-Planning Survey**

Similar to the Board's Pre-Planning Survey, this survey is designed to gather input from staff or other stakeholders about the opportunities and threats or critical issues facing the organization. Again, all of the questions can be modified to gather additional feedback on specific topics. For instance, you may want to capture information from staff about changes in conditions affecting the target population, or whether there are any programs or services currently being conducted that should be modified or discontinued. External stakeholders can provide information about the public's perception of the organization and overall value of the program and services offered. Responses should be compiled into a single document and a summary prepared that shows how the board collectively rated or described



#### **PRE-PLANNING INFORMATION GATHERING TOOLS**

**Who?** These tools should be customized and issued by the planning facilitator or coordinator to the stakeholder groups involved in the planning process.

**When?** Issue prior to conducting the planning session(s) in which the topics will be discussed.

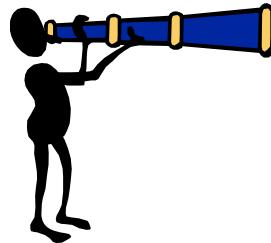
**How?** Decide which of the tools will be useful, based on purpose of planning and the level and timeliness of information already available. For example, if the mission and vision statement were reviewed and affirmed within the past year or two skip these worksheets. After selecting the tools to use for the organization, customize the various worksheets to the organization. Some of the worksheets can be combined. For example, if you are issuing a pre-planning survey you can incorporate questions about the mission and vision, or core values. Again, only use the tools needed (don't do more work than necessary to achieve the results). Determine person responsible for collecting and compiling responses; amount of time stakeholders have to respond (the due date) and issue the worksheets. Compile responses into a single document; identify areas of agreement and areas where more discussion is needed to reach agreement. Convene group, present results and work through each issue according to the meeting agenda.

certain conditions. The detailed comments can be provided as an attachment to the summary. If the organization is issuing multiple pre-planning surveys (to board, staff and external stakeholders) the summary document can compare and contrast responses across the groups.



The [Staff and Stakeholder Pre-Planning Survey](#) is contained in Appendix C and is also available on the companion CD.

## Mission and Vision Statement Guidelines and Worksheets



The **mission** and **vision** of an organization are the foundation upon which everything else is built. These define the fundamental purpose for the organization to exist, they provide direction by showing what the organization wants to accomplish and what its leaders believe in, and they give meaning to all of the work necessary to make the organization flourish. They are the roots of everything that is done by the organization. This overview provides suggestions for developing a mission statement and vision statement.

The mission statement is typically developed first. Mission statements articulate the "reason for being" of an organization, quickly and clearly conveying how the organization fills basic human needs. It can, but does not have to, define what the organization does and for whom they do it. A great mission statement is broad, fundamental, inspirational and enduring. It should serve to guide the organization throughout its existence, providing a compelling sense of purpose that is meaningful to everyone involved in the organization.

The vision statement is a vivid description of what kind of future the organization is trying to create. In other words, it is a clear and compelling goal that serves to unify an organization's efforts. An effective vision should stretch the limits of imagination, yet not be so unrealistic that it is total fantasy. Some have used the phrase "big, hairy, audacious goal" or BHAG. A terrific example of a BHAG was John F. Kennedy's commitment in 1961 that the U.S. would put a man on the moon by the end of decade. No one knew how that goal could be accomplished, but it became the rallying point for an effort that was unparalleled in the history of man – a very successful effort.



Appendix D contains a [Mission Statement Worksheet](#). This tool can be issued as a stand-alone document, or the explanation and questions incorporated into a pre-planning survey. The [Vision Statement Worksheet](#) is contained in Appendix E. This tool can also be issued as a stand-alone document, or the explanation and questions incorporated into a pre-planning survey.

## Values Statement Worksheet

Core Values, also called Guiding Principles, shape and influence the actions of a group. Core Values are those principles and beliefs that are held dear and which shape how people think and act within the organization, much like freedom is a core value of our country.



Appendix F contains a [Values Statement Worksheet](#). This worksheet helps groups identify their mutually held principles and beliefs so that a core set can be developed. Once agreed to, they become part of the strategic plan and organization's culture, and are used to guide actions and decision-making processes throughout the organization.

**Figure 3: Sample Core Values from Rural Area Knights Landing FRC**

Commitment	RAKL's actions demonstrate commitment to our mission, vision and goals, and to the individuals, the community, and the collaborating agencies we work with and serve.
Accountable	RAKL board, staff, and volunteers follow through on the commitments we make to the community, partners, funders, and each other.
Innovation	RAKL staff, board, and volunteers always look for innovative strategies that strengthen our work and relationships.
Compassion	Our conscious understanding of others' needs moves us to respond to those needs.

## Situation Analysis Tools

Good planning requires a thorough, honest assessment of the internal strengths and weaknesses of the organization. The purpose of this type of assessment is to identify strengths that can be capitalized upon in the future, and to clarify areas where improvements are needed in order for the organization to be effective or competitive in the future. Similarly, the environment that is external to the organization poses numerous opportunities and threats that must be taken into account in future plans. The purpose of an external assessment is to identify the conditions that may benefit the organization, as well as to identify external conditions that may hurt or at least threaten to hurt the organization. Together, these assessments are often referred to as a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis.



Appendix G, [SWOT Analysis Worksheets](#), contains two worksheets. The first assesses the organization's internal strengths and weaknesses, and the second assesses the external opportunities and threats. These worksheets should be issued prior to the planning session so that participants have time to think about the internal and external environment prior to discussion. Responses can be compiled and summarized, or participants can bring their "homework" to the planning session for discussion.

## Critical Issues Worksheet

The critical issues worksheet is used to determine the most significant issues facing the organization (similar to conducting a SWOT analysis). Critical issues may be internal weaknesses that must be corrected, external threats to be mitigated, emerging opportunities to be pursued, addressing transitional issues such as the expected retirement of the Executive Director, or other such things that are expected to have a major impact on the organization.



Appendix H contains the [Critical Issues Worksheet](#). This worksheet should be issued prior to the planning session so that participants have time to think about the most important issues facing the organization in the next two years. Responses can be compiled and summarized, or participants can bring their “homework” to the planning session for discussion.

Although the tools and worksheets presented in section 1.3 are presented as “pre-planning” tools, planning facilitators can incorporate the worksheets into the planning sessions (rather than issuing as homework). The choice to do this will be influenced by the type of planning, time constraints, and stakeholder preferences, among other considerations.

## 1.4 Tools for Planning

This section contains tools and worksheets typically used during the planning process. A brief explanation of the tool is provided, along with a link to the appropriate appendix. Topics covered in this section include: developing a planning agenda, long-range goals and short-term objectives, developing and evaluating strategies for achieving results, developing the plan document, and obtaining review and approval.



This section does not provide detailed facilitation strategies or approaches, as the targeted audience of this module are planning facilitators with experience leading group processes. Excellent resources for learning about facilitation approaches are contained at the end of section 1.1 Introduction to Strategic Planning.



Tools included in this section and available on the companion CD:

- Planning Agenda Template
- Goals Planning Worksheet
- Objectives Planning Worksheet
- Strategies Planning and Evaluation Worksheet

## Planning Agenda

The planning agenda will be determined by a number of factors, including how much time participants can commit to the process, constraints on meeting times (evening hours only, weekends, only during business hours). The planning agenda will also be affected by whether or not there is an existing plan, the level and type of experience (positive or negative) participants have with planning; and, if the group needs to conduct any other business for the organization during the time set aside for planning.

The planning agenda is designed to cover all aspects of the strategic plan that need to be reviewed, developed and ultimately approved. This generally includes a discussion of some or all of the following:

- Mission
- Vision
- Values
- Situation Analysis or Critical Issues
- Goals and Objectives
- Strategies
- Evaluation and Plan Updates
- Operational or implementation planning

Appendix I contains samples of [Sample Planning Agendas](#) designed to cover these topics in a one-day and two-day format. It should be noted that many organizations spread planning over more than two sessions. The agendas should be modified to meet the particular needs of the organization and planning participants.

## ***Developing Goals and Objectives***

Goal setting is done only after the foundation work is complete. This means that the group has developed or revised the organization's mission, vision and core values statements and understands how each is used to guide planning. It also means the group has reviewed, discussed and understands the implications of the situational analysis results (environmental scan, pre-planning data gathering, critical issues assessment, etc.). Each of these items is critical to the goal planning process.

The key questions related to goal planning are:

- What results for children, families and communities should this organization commit to achieving and sustaining in the long run?
- What is the specific change in the condition or well-being we are seeking?
- What will have the biggest impact?



Appendix J contains a [Goals Planning Worksheet](#). The worksheet can be issued prior to a planning session with participants asked to suggest goals. The worksheet can also be distributed during a planning session in which participants are asked to work in groups to develop one set of goals that are then presented and discussed with the large group. The specific approach used should reflect the objectives of the planning process, participants' experience and comfort with strategic planning, and participants' preferences for working independently or in group settings.

Objectives planning is helpful when the goals are long-range (3 to 5 years or longer). Objectives are intermediate steps (mini-goals) that can be used to signal progress toward the longer-term goal. Objectives must be specific, measurable, actionable, realistic and time-based.



### **PLANNING TOOLS**

**Who?** These tools should be customized and issued by the planning facilitator or coordinator to the stakeholder groups involved in the planning process.

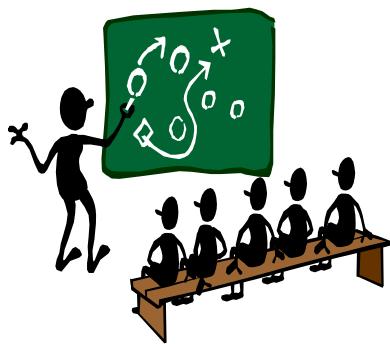
**When?** Issue prior to conducting the planning session(s) in which the topics will be discussed.

**How?** Decide which of the tools or worksheets will be useful, based on planning agenda topics. After selecting the tools to use for the organization, customize the various worksheets to the organization. Depending upon the facilitation approach, the worksheets can be issued as part of the meeting packet (at least one week before the work session). Be careful not to overload planning participants with paper or materials that could be distributed at the meeting. In general, if the information will help participants think about topics so they are ready to discuss them they can go out in a packet. If the materials apply to a group process that is dependent on interactions in the moment, wait to distribute the materials at the meeting. At a minimum an agenda should always be sent out prior to each of the planning sessions.



Appendix K contains an [Objectives Planning Worksheet](#). This worksheet should be distributed after the planning group has defined and agreed upon the organization's goals. Participants can work in small groups to develop proposed objectives, and then report out to the large group for discussion, modification and final selection of short-term objectives.

## ***Developing and Evaluating Strategies***



Strategies are the specific activities, programs, services and/or projects to be pursued in order to achieve each goal or objective. Strategies describe how results will be achieved, and who needs to be involved. Strategies often seem obvious to a planning group. If the objective is to reduce the rate of children in need of supervision (CHINS) by 10% per year for youth under the age of 13, a seemingly obvious strategy is to provide before and after school activities. Another strategy could be to expand existing programs and services to accommodate that group of youth. Which strategy is best? Is there another, better strategy that hasn't yet been considered?

Strategy development can be done as a group process during the planning session. In addition to the experience and expertise of the planning participants, strategy development can be strengthened by conducting targeted research into "what works". This toolkit does not address how to conduct research; planning facilitators will need to do that independently. Once the work is done it can be shared with the strategic planning participants as they are asked to work in groups and develop proposed strategies to achieve the identified goals and objectives.

### **Suggested Strategy Evaluation Criteria**

Specific criteria are suggested for making final decisions about which strategies should be selected and pursued by the organization. The worksheet incorporates the criteria and asks planning participants to rate the proposed strategies according to these criteria.

#### **EFFECTIVENESS**

- Relevance to the issue(s) – will the strategy really address one or more critical issues facing the organization?
- Cost effectiveness
- Risk / return characteristics
- Timing

#### **ACCEPTABILITY**

- Client impact
- Acceptability to the Board, staff, and volunteers
- Acceptability to the general public
- Acceptability to other stakeholders involved in children's services (e.g. networks, state office, other providers)

## **FEASIBILITY**

- Cost and ability to finance the cost
- Staff requirements
- Facility and equipment requirements
- Technical feasibility

## **CONSTRAINTS**

- Consistency with mission, vision, and values
- Legality (fit with organization purpose in the articles of incorporation and 501(c)3 filing, compliance with other applicable laws and regulations)
- Coordination or integration with other strategies, programs, and activities
- Fit with other organizational mandates



Appendix L contains samples of [Strategy Planning and Evaluation Worksheet](#). The worksheet is designed to be used by planning participants working in small groups or in one group if the size of the planning group is small (6-7 people). The evaluation criteria are incorporated into the worksheet so that the planning group can make informed decisions about strategy selection.

## ***Drafting the Plan***

Developing the strategic plan is best done as an iterative process. As the group makes and affirms decisions about the various plan components, for instance mission, vision, and values, those sections of the plan are drafted. Then the current draft plan is issued with the agenda prior to the next meeting. Participants are asked to review the sections and make note of any suggested changes or modifications. The suggestions and comments can be gathered via email or by handing in marked up copies of the plan to the person responsible for writing the plan. Any suggestions that modify the intent of the planning group need to be identified and discussed with the group prior to being incorporated into the next version of the plan.



Appendix W contains a [Strategic Plan Template](#). The person responsible for writing the document should copy and rename the template, and then customize it to reflect the name, address and other aspects of their organization. At this point, any of the areas of the template that will not be used should be deleted. For instance, if the organization does not want to include a budget in the plan, this section can be removed. Sections can also be reordered. As planning progresses, each section of the plan is updated until all sections are completed.



### STRATEGIC PLAN TEMPLATE

**Who?** These tools should be customized and issued by the planning facilitator or coordinator to the full planning team.

**When?** Ongoing throughout the planning process.

**How?** Work through decision-making processes for items on the planning agenda and then document decisions into template. Issue progressive versions of the document to participants as the planning process continues, conducting ongoing review and editing so that final version is nearly complete once the last planning session is concluded.

## ***Obtaining Review and Approval***

Since the planning participants have been conducting review and approval throughout the process, obtaining final review and approval is fairly straightforward. Once all sections of the

document have been completed, the person responsible should conduct a final technical review to make sure formatting, page numbering, spacing, spelling, etc. are correct. The final draft version can then be issued to the planning participants for final review and signoff. Depending upon the group, this process can be done via email, a facilitated meeting, or via web or teleconference.

If key decision-makers or persons responsible for approving and adopting the plan have not been involved in planning, they will need to be engaged now. (Optimally, they would have been kept informed throughout the planning process.) They should be presented with a copy of the plan in a forum that allows them an opportunity to ask questions and understand all aspects of the plan, including how thoroughly each element was considered. Any major areas of concern identified by this group will need to be addressed before the plan can be adopted.

## 1.5 Managing the Plan

The final section of this module presents tools and information needed to manage the plan so that it doesn't become just another document gathering dust on a shelf. The first topic that is addressed is turning the plan into action. The next aspect of managing the plan that is addressed (once there is a clear picture of what needs to occur, when it should happen, and who is responsible for leading the effort), is tracking and reporting on progress. Finally, suggested timing for reviewing and updating the plan is provided.

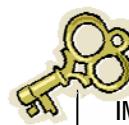
### ***Implementation Planning***

Creating an implementation plan that focuses on action steps and priorities identified for the first 12 to 15 months of the strategic plan is one of the best ways to ensure the plan will go from something static to a dynamic document that is used by the organization's board and management staff. Developing an implementation plan can only be done once the strategic plan components have been finalized.

Implementation planning involves determining where to start and who needs to do what, by when, in order to execute the strategies in the strategic plan. The implementation plan is a powerful tool for ensuring that the strategic plan remains visible and viable, rather than becoming yet another document that is prepared but never really used.

Developing an implementation plan involves four steps:

- First, the time period to be covered by the initial implementation plan must be determined first; this is typically one year.
- Next, based on the strategies developed and adopted in the strategic plan, specific action steps (tasks) are developed. Time and resource/cost requirements and/or constraints are also identified.
- Action steps are sequenced and assigned to individual people and/or small work groups to complete.



#### IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TEMPLATE

**Who?** These tools should be customized and issued by the planning facilitator or coordinator to the full planning team or a designated sub-committee.

**When?** After strategic plan is completed and signoff on strategies and timing is obtained.

**How?** Facilitated discussion to develop detailed task lists needed to carryout the strategies. Once draft implementation plan is completed it is presented to the large group along with information about how progress will be reported and the implementation plan updated.

- This information is organized into a consolidated work plan showing who needs to do what and by when.

 Appendix X contains an [Implementation Plan Template](#). The template is not contained in the appendices. The person responsible for writing the document should copy and rename the template, and then customize it to reflect the name, address and other aspects of their organization. At this point, any of the areas of the template that will not be used should be deleted. For instance, if the organization does not want to include a timeline of activities, this section can be removed. Also, sections, such as appendices, can be added if needed or desired. For instance, some organizations add a glossary of terms as an appendix.

## ***Progress Reporting***

The implementation plan document is intended to be a dynamic document; one which is updated to reflect progress and identify issues and lessons learned so that both can be applied to future strategic and implementation planning processes. The plan is meant to be carried into staff, committee and board meetings and kept at the forefront so that focus and momentum are maintained.

Prior to completing the current year's implementation plan the group should identify one or two people who will become the "keepers of the plan". These individuals are responsible for updating and issuing new versions of the plan that show progress to date, barriers encountered, lessons learned, and other issues that affect the plan.

There are two types of progress reporting. Milestones show progress toward the ultimate goals and objectives in the strategic plan, while process tracking shows effort and lessons learned. Both are important and necessary.

- **Milestone progress.** There will be a number of intermediate deliverables or milestones contained within the implementation plan. A list of the milestones for the current year should be prepared and monitored. At least quarterly, a progress report should be issued to key individuals for milestones in the current year. For example, if one strategy requires that a database of key stakeholders or community champions is developed so that the organization can regularly report progress and results to them, there are at least three milestones that can be reported:
  - Development and testing of the database
  - Populating the database
  - Issuing a progress report
- **Process progress.** Tracking and reporting on process focuses mainly on task completion, any barriers encountered and what was done to overcome them. Persons responsible for implementing specific strategies or completing tasks can keep an electronic copy or paper of the document and note completion dates, accomplishments, and any barriers encountered and addressed and then provide this information to the "plan keepers" on a regular basis (at least quarterly).

## ***Plan Updates***

Strategic plans should be reviewed and discussed at least annually. The board, management or planning team should consider:

- Are the mission and vision statements still valid, or have we changed so significantly over the year that they need to be revisited and revised?
- Are the goals still important? Or, have community conditions changed so dramatically that an issue has been resolved or a newer, more pressing situation has emerged which needs the organization's attention?
- Are there any strategies that no longer apply? Either because the goal is no longer valid, or because the approach no longer meets the evaluation criteria?
- Are any of the assumptions underlying the plan no longer valid? If so, what areas of the plan are affected?

However, unless external conditions and trends or internal operations have changed significantly, any modifications to the plan should be minor and apply to limited sections of the document (such as the appendices) or the situation analysis. Once the plan is reviewed, whether or not it is modified, it should be reissued with a new approval date to all stakeholders.

After the strategic plan is approved for the second year, then a new implementation plan can be developed that encompasses any carry-over items from year one, plus new strategies and tasks for the second 12-month period.

## **Appendices**

The following appendices contain worksheets and tools described in the various sections of the toolkit. Electronic copies of the worksheets and tools are also contained on the companion CD.

## ***Appendix A: A Comparison of Strategic Planning Approaches***

Each of the planning approaches has relative advantages and disadvantages. The selection of the optimal approach or a decision to create a hybrid approach can benefit from an understanding of these issues. The table below provides a comparison of the different approaches.

Approach	Advantages	Disadvantages
Foundational planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focuses planning around the most fundamental items: what is our mission and how do we deliver value to our customers</li> <li>Excellent proven tools are available to implement the approach, including a facilitator's guide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As implemented by Drucker and others, does not assess external forces (outside threats and opportunities)</li> <li>May miss planning to overcome critical issues that thwart attempts to be more customer-focused</li> </ul>
Goals-driven planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can be a proactive, "let's create our own future" approach</li> <li>Goals can be motivating for people to work on achieving</li> <li>Well-defined goals provide a good way to measure progress over the time period covered by the plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Goal setting does not come naturally to many groups; it can be a challenging approach to follow</li> <li>Goals need to be well defined or they can create confusion, even counter-productive behavior (especially if goals are unrealistic)</li> </ul>
Critical issues approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focuses on how to address the internal and external factors that are most important to the success of the organization</li> <li>Tends to produce realistic, balanced plans that reflect internal and external factors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can be a somewhat reactive approach ("let's overcome our problems" rather than "let's create our future")</li> <li>Must be carefully managed to focus on solutions and not blame as issues are uncovered</li> </ul>
Scenario analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forces a proactive, "let's create our own future" mentality involving big picture thinking</li> <li>Tends to hold people's interest better during the planning process</li> <li>Resulting visions of the future can be highly motivating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scenarios can be unrealistic and must be well grounded</li> <li>This approach often ignores existing or emerging challenges facing the organization, especially if a situation analysis is not included in the process</li> </ul>

Approach	Advantages	Disadvantages
Capabilities-based planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focuses on creating lasting capabilities within the organization rather than a series of strategies that are often dependent on the presence of certain highly skilled people</li> <li>• Innovative, leading edge approach to planning that can produce real differentiation from other service providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not well understood by most people</li> <li>• Little experience exists of how well the approach works in a nonprofit setting</li> <li>• Can produce myopic plans if the resulting strategic plan is based wholly around one or two capabilities while ignoring all other aspects of the organization</li> </ul>

## **Appendix B: Board Pre-Planning Survey**

**[Organization Name]**

### **Board Members' Pre-Planning Survey**

**Completed By:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date: [date issued]**

The [Organization Name] is preparing for its 2007 Annual Retreat. This year the board retreat will focus on the development of a long range Strategic Plan to help guide the organization. As part of the pre-planning activities, we are asking board members to complete a brief survey. We will use the results to inform and guide our planning.

Please take a few minutes and respond to the following questions in the manner most comfortable for you. Lists, key points or sentences can all be used to communicate core ideas. The questions are designed to gain an understanding your perceptions of the current situation and your suggestions for its future.

Please return the survey by **[enter date]** to **[person's name]** via email **[insert email address]** or fax to **[000-000-0000]**. Thank you in advance for your participation.

1. Please list three strengths of [Organization]:

2. Please list three areas to improve for [Organization]:

3. Please list three things that you see as opportunities for [Organization] in the next year:

4. Please list up to three threats facing [Organization]:

5. If [Organization] could achieve only ONE major goal over the next three to five years, what should it be?
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What motivates you to be involved with [Organization]?
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What would you personally like to achieve over the next year through your involvement with [Organization]?
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. For the time you spend at the retreat to be valuable, what one outcome would you like to achieve?
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. Please share any other thoughts or suggestions for making the planning retreat successful.

## **Appendix C: Staff and Stakeholder Pre-Planning Survey**

**[Organization Name]**

**Staff and Stakeholder  
Pre-Planning Survey**

**Completed By:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** [date issued]

The [Organization Name] is preparing for its 2007 Annual Retreat. This year the board retreat will focus on the development of a long range Strategic Plan to help guide the organization. As part of the pre-planning activities, we are asking staff and selected stakeholders to complete a brief survey. We will use the results to inform and guide our planning.

Please take a few minutes and respond to the following questions in the manner most comfortable for you. Lists, key points or sentences can all be used to communicate core ideas. The questions are designed to gain an understanding your perceptions of the current situation and your suggestions for its future.

Please return the survey by **[enter date]** to **[person's name]** via email **[insert email address]** or fax to **[000-000-0000]**. Thank you in advance for your participation.

1. Please list three strengths of [Organization]:

2. Please list three areas to improve for [Organization]:

3. Please list three things that you see as opportunities for [Organization] in the next year:

4. Please list up to three threats facing [Organization]:
  5. If [Organization] could achieve only ONE major goal over the next three to five years, what should it be?
  6. Please share any other thoughts or suggestions for making the strategic planning process valuable.

## **Appendix D: Mission Statement Worksheet**

### **Mission Statement Worksheet [Organization Name]**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

All aspects of planning depend on having a clear understanding of mission and values. The mission defines the fundamental purpose for the organization to exist. Together, the mission and values show what people in the organization believe in, giving meaning to the work necessary to make the organization flourish.

This worksheet is designed to capture feedback from board, staff and other key stakeholders about the organization's mission statement. Please review the information below and provide your opinion about the organization's current mission statement on the next page.

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A great mission statement is broad, fundamental, inspirational and enduring. It should serve to guide the organization throughout its existence, providing a compelling sense of purpose that is meaningful to everyone involved in the organization. Some examples of mission statements from corporate, nonprofit, and public organizations include:

- The Children's Cabinet, the largest children and family services agency in Nevada: *The Children's Cabinet is our community's stand to ensure every child and family has the services and resources to meet fundamental development, care, and learning needs.*
- Girl Scouts: *To help each girl realize her full potential.*
- Disney: *To make people happy.*
- Merck, the large pharmaceuticals company: *We are in the business of preserving and improving human life. All of our actions must be measured by our success in achieving this.*
- Apple, an example that incorporates "what" the organization does and "why": *To make a contribution to the world by making tools for the mind that advance humankind.*
- Social Entrepreneurs, Inc.: *To improve the lives of people by helping organizations realize their potential.*

**Mission Assessment.** The current mission statement of [Organization] is:

*[Insert organization's mission statement.]*

1. Do you think the organization's mission statement is broad, fundamental, inspirational and enduring? Why or why not?
2. Is it used to guide the organization? Why or why not?
3. Does it provide a compelling sense of purpose that is meaningful to everyone involved in the organization? Why or why not?
4. Please list any questions or concerns you have about the current mission statement.
  - 
  - 
  - 
  -
5. List any suggestions for how the mission should be changed. Attach additional sheets if you need more space than what is provided here.
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  - 
  - 
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## **Appendix E: Vision Statement Worksheet**

### **Vision Statement Worksheet [Organization Name]**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The vision statement is a vivid description of what kind of future the organization is trying to create. In other words, it is a clear and compelling goal that serves to unify an organization's efforts. Along with the mission statement, the vision statement provides a framework for planning.

This worksheet is designed to capture feedback from board, staff and other key stakeholders about the organization's vision statement. Please review the information below and provide your opinion about the organization's current mission statement on the next page.

---

An effective vision should stretch the limits of imagination, yet not be so unrealistic that it is total fantasy. Some have used the phrase "big, hairy, audacious goal" or BHAG. A terrific example of a BHAG was John F. Kennedy's commitment in 1961 that the U.S. would put a man on the moon by the end of decade. No one knew how that goal could be accomplished, but it became the rallying point for an effort that was unparalleled in the history of man – a very successful effort! Another classic example is the vision adopted by Ford Motor Company in 1909: "To democratize the automobile." Some examples include:

- Glenn County Child and Family Services: CaFS' vision is that communities recognize children as their future and value children, families and the early care and education professional.
- Alpine County Local Child Care Planning and Development Council: With the best interests of children in mind, all children in Alpine County have the right to experience a safe, healthy and nurturing childhood, with equal access to community services and supports.
- Rural Area Knights Landing FRC: RAKL envisions a community in which we work together to create a healthy, safe, flourishing community where individuals and families feel they belong, grow roots, demonstrate mutual understanding and respect, and celebrate achievements.

**Vision Assessment.** The current vision statement of [Organization] is:

*[Insert organization's vision statement.]*

1. Do you think the organization's vision statement stretches the limits of imagination? Why or why not?
2. Is it realistic? Why or why not?
3. Does it inspire people to work to create the future it describes? Why or why not?
4. Please list any questions or concerns you have about the current vision statement.
  - 
  - 
  - 
  -
5. List any suggestions for how the vision should be changed. Attach additional sheets if you need more space than what is provided here.
  - 
  - 
  - 
  -

## **Appendix F: Values and Guiding Principles Worksheet**

**Core Values**, also called Guiding Principles, shape and influence the actions of a group. Core Values are those principles and beliefs that are held dear and which shape how people think and act within the organization, much like freedom is a core value of our country.

Examples from other organizations include respect for others, integrity, professional excellence, caring and courtesy in all interactions, and the right to open and honest expression of ideas. Values statements can **act as a compass** to keep a group on course.

### **Values Assessment**

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS WORKSHEET AND BRING TO THE PLANNING SESSION.

In the first column of the worksheet below, please list what you believe should be the values held by [Organization] related to Family resource Centers. **If you have more than 8** Values listed, place an asterisk (\*) next to the five values that you consider to be the most important.

<b>Core Values for [Organization]</b>		<b>Place an asterisk (*) by your top 5 values</b>
<b>Examples:</b>		
<b>Commitment</b>	<i>We honor and uphold our commitments to this agency, our colleagues, and the children and families we serve.</i>	
<b>Communication</b>	<i>We communicate with families, colleagues, and the community in an open and clear manner that enhances understanding. We respect and protect confidentiality and hold ourselves to the highest professional standards.</i>	
<b>Families First</b>	<i>We consider the needs of children and families first. We support parents' in their roles as the primary educator.</i>	
<b>Flexibility</b>	<i>We accept change as a natural and necessary part of providing quality services to children and families. We approach change with a sense of creativity, flexibility, and openness to the ideas and suggestions of others.</i>	
<b>Growth &amp; Learning</b>	<i>Our ability to provide quality services is linked to our continued growth and learning. We support and take responsibility for our own and encourage others' professional growth.</i>	
<b>Leadership</b>	<i>We recognize that each of us leads by the examples we set. As leaders we seek to find and offer solutions for the problems and challenges that emerge.</i>	

<b>Core Values for [Organization]</b>		<b>Place an asterisk (*) by your top 5 values</b>
<b>Quality Service Delivery</b>	<i>The degree to which each of us meets our responsibilities impacts the quality of work we produce and the services we offer. We define quality for our programs, evaluate program and agency effectiveness, and continually improve service delivery.</i>	
<b>Respect &amp; Honor</b>	<i>We treat the families we serve and ourselves with respect and honor. We recognize that the individuality and uniqueness of each person makes this organization strong.</i>	
<b>Responsibility</b>	<i>We hold ourselves to high professional standards and conduct ourselves as educators and resources to the community at large.</i>	
<b>Teamwork</b>	<i>We recognize and value the role each individual plays in this organization. We value, promote and practice teamwork in order to support development of happy, healthy children and families.</i>	
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		

## **Appendix G: SWOT Analysis Worksheets**

### **STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES WORKSHEET**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Good planning requires a thorough, honest assessment of the internal strengths and weaknesses of the organization. The purpose of this assessment is to identify strengths that can be capitalized upon in the future, and to clarify areas where improvements are needed in order for organization to be effective or competitive in the future. Please complete both sections of the following worksheet, being as open and objective as possible.

**Strengths:** In the first column, please list the aspects of the organization that you consider to be real strengths – the assets, resources, or capabilities that have the greatest positive impact on the success of the organization and its ability to achieve its mission. For each one, use the second column to briefly list any ideas you have about how the organization can sustain or build upon these strengths. Feel free to attach additional sheets as needed.

Strengths	Ideas for Sustaining or Building on the Strengths

Strengths	Ideas for Sustaining or Building on the Strengths

**Weaknesses:** In the first column, please list the aspects of the organization that you consider to be important internal weaknesses – the deficiencies in resource or capabilities, or other liabilities, that are hindering the ability of the organization to achieve its mission. For each one, use the second column to briefly list any ideas you have about how the organization can reduce or overcome these weaknesses. Feel free to attach additional sheets as needed.

Weaknesses	Ideas for Reducing or Overcoming the Weaknesses

Weaknesses	Ideas for Reducing or Overcoming the Weaknesses

## OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS WORKSHEET

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The environment that is external to the organization poses numerous opportunities and threats that must be taken into account in future plans. The purpose of this assessment is to identify the external conditions that may benefit the organization, as well as to identify external conditions that may hurt or at least threaten to hurt the organization. Please complete both sections of the following worksheet, being as thorough and creative as possible.

**Opportunities:** In the first column, please list the external factors that offer a genuine opportunity to benefit the organization. Include environmental factors that might allow the organization to expand its services, or apply its capabilities to benefit a different part of the community. For each one, use the second column to briefly list any ideas you have about how the organization can take advantage of these opportunities. Please attach additional sheets as needed.

Opportunities	Ideas for Capitalizing on the Opportunities

Opportunities	Ideas for Capitalizing on the Opportunities

**Threats:** In the first column, please list the external conditions, trends, and other forces which are at least moderately likely to hurt the organization in some manner if not addressed. For each one, use the second column to briefly list any ideas you have about how the organization can reduce or overcome these threats. Attach additional sheets as needed.

Threats	Ideas for Reducing or Overcoming the Threats

Threats	Ideas for Reducing or Overcoming the Threats

## **Appendix H: Critical Issues Worksheet**

### **CRITICAL ISSUES WORKSHEET**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

In the first column of the worksheet below, please list all of the issues facing the organization that you believe should be addressed within the next two years. An "issue" can be anything requiring action. In the second column of the worksheet, next to each issue listed in the first column, enter a rating from 1 to 5 indicating the importance of the issue (1 = not important, 2 = minor importance, 3 = moderately important, 4 = very important, 5 = critical to organization's survival). Use additional pages as necessary.

Issues	Importance (1 – 5)

## **Appendix I: Sample Planning Agendas**

Following are three samples of planning agendas. The first planning session was conducted over one weekend. The second was conducted in one day. The third was conducted in three sessions over three months.

### **Sample 1: Weekend Planning Retreat**

#### **ABC Organization**

##### **Strategic Planning Retreat**

Saturday	June 10, 200X	9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Sunday	June 11, 200X	9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

LOCATION:

DIRECTIONS:

DESIRED OUTCOMES:

<b>Agenda</b>		
<b>Saturday</b>		<b>Time</b>
1. Welcome, Introductions and Overview of Planning Retreat		9:00
2. ABC – Self Assessment and Current Reality		9:10
▪ Brief review of year-end self-assessment results		
▪ Overview of the Constructing Connections project and work completed to date		
▪ Presentation and discussion of results achieved by ABC in the past nine months related to its three identified objectives and the six strategies selected for the 200X-200X Implementation Plan		
<b>Break – Activity</b>		10:45
3. ABC – Self Assessment and Current Reality (continued)		11:00
▪ Changes in conditions 200X- What does available data and information tell ABC about needs and priorities?		
▪ Review the Issues and Approaches sections contained in the 200X-200X Strategic Plan to determine the extent to which the issues have changed or are no longer valid		
<b>Lunch – Relax and Reconnect</b>		12:30

Agenda		
Saturday		Time
<b>4. Charting the Course to 2011</b>		1:30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review current mission for fit</li> <li>▪ What is the “big vision” for ABC over the next 5 years (what matters most?)</li> <li>▪ Develop specific goals and objectives for the 200X-20XX Strategic Plan which lead toward achieving the mission/vision.</li> </ul>		
<b>Break – Enjoy the Surroundings</b>		4:00
<b>5. Strategies and Strategic Relationships</b>		4:30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify and prioritize strategies to pursue during the 200X-200X implementation period to achieve the goals and objectives. This includes identifying any resources (personnel, capital, etc.) and any partners needed to implement the strategies.</li> </ul>		
<b>Dinner</b>		6:00
<b>Adjourn for Day</b>		7:00

Agenda		
Sunday		Time
<b>1. Review and Confirm</b>		9:00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review decisions and directions set on Saturday and test for validity, needed modifications</li> <li>▪ Affirm</li> </ul>		
<b>2. Implementation Planning</b>		9:30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop the specific tasks for achieving the identified strategies. Specify timeframes and assign responsibilities for leading/accomplishing the tasks</li> </ul>		
<b>Working Lunch</b>		11:30
<b>3. Retreat Wrap Up</b>		12:45
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Evaluate weekend</li> <li>▪ Next steps</li> </ul>		
<b>Adjourn</b>		1:00

## SAMPLE PLANNING AGENDA: ONE-DAY RETREAT

**ABC Organization**

### Strategic Planning Retreat

Date:

Time:

Location:

Address:

### Agenda

**Desired Outcomes:** Discussion and decision making required to draft the 200X-200X Strategic Plan updated document.

Time	Topic
9:30	1. Welcome and Introductions
9:45	2. Brief Overview of Community Needs Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Process</li><li>• Findings</li></ul>
10:15	3. Accomplishments and Lessons Learned in 200X-200X <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Program Accomplishments</li><li>• Initiatives and Partnerships</li><li>• Evaluation</li><li>• Family Support System Design – progress update</li></ul>
10:45	4. Mission, Goals, Objectives and Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review and affirm Mission</li><li>• Review current goals, refine as needed, affirm for 200X-0X</li><li>• Review current short-term objectives refine as needed, affirm for 200X-0X</li><li>• Review current indicators for measuring progress toward goals/objectives, refine as needed, affirm for 2006-07</li></ul>
12:00	<b>LUNCH – Onsite (Check in on process)</b>
12:30	5. Strategies: Proposed Programs, Services and Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussion of new reporting and tracking requirements and implications</li><li>• Review current strategies and determine programs, services and projects to include in the strategic plan</li></ul>
2:15	6. Fund Allocation Approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review and affirm funding priorities</li><li>• Discuss current funding process and identify/describe any needed changes to comply with new audit guidelines</li></ul>

Time	Topic
3:00	7. Evaluation Approach • Discuss current evaluation process and any changes needed to comply with new evaluation framework or improve results
3:45	8. Close and Next Steps

## SAMPLE PLANNING AGENDA: DAY ONE OF THREE

### ABC Organization

#### Strategic Planning Forum #1

Date:

Time:

Location:

Address:

#### Agenda

Desired Outcomes: Identify/affirm goals and focus areas to include in the Strategic Plan Update.

Timing	Topic
9:00	1. Welcome and Introductions
9:15	2. 200X Strategic Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Overview of process, timing and parameters</li><li>* Language and terminology</li><li>* Group decision making</li></ul>
9:30	3. Situation and County Profile Updates – review and discussion of changes, trends and implications <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Demographics</li><li>* Goal Areas<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Health Care</li><li>▪ Child Care</li><li>▪ Family Safety</li></ul></li><li>* Other</li></ul>
10:30*	4. 200X Goals and Focus Areas – based on current information and emerging trends, discuss options, prioritize choices, and finalize: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Goals - develop new, revise/affirm current</li><li>* Objectives - for each goal develop new, revise/affirm current</li><li>* Indicators of progress/success</li></ul>
12:30	5. Strategies – based on goals and objectives selected, a beginning discussion of lessons learned and suggested strategies for the 200X Strategic Plan
12:50	6. Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Includes working lunch</li></ul>

## SAMPLE PLANNING AGENDA: DAY TWO OF THREE

### ABC Organization

#### Strategic Planning Forum #2

Date:

Time:

Location:

Address:

#### Agenda

Desired Outcomes: Identify/affirm strategies, evaluation approach, and fund allocation approach for the 2007 Strategic Plan Update.

Timing	Topic
9:00 – 9:30	1. Review/Affirm Goal Planning Outcomes and Feedback
9:30 – 11:15	2. Strategies Selection <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Review and discuss menu of options presented</li><li>* Select top strategies to pursue</li><li>* Discuss/affirm outcomes to achieve</li><li>* Select indicators</li></ul>
11:15 – 12:20*	3. Evaluation Approach - Discuss current practices (what works, what could work better) and revise as needed to affirm <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Program evaluation process and responsibilities</li><li>* Strategic Plan evaluation process and responsibilities</li></ul>
12:20 – 12:50	4. Fund Allocation Approach - Discuss current practices (what works, what could work better) and revise as needed to affirm <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Funding Priorities</li><li>* Allocation Plan</li><li>* Allocation Process</li></ul>
12:50 – 1:00	5. Next Steps

\* Includes break and transition to working lunch

## SAMPLE PLANNING AGENDA: DAY THREE OF THREE

### ABC Organization

#### Strategic Planning Forum #3

Date:

Time:

Location:

Address:

Desired Outcomes: Affirm strategies and confirm leads; fund allocation approach, including funding options, levels and timing; and evaluation approach for the 2007 Strategic Plan Update.

Timing	Topic
9:00 – 9:15	1. Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Introductions</li><li>* Agenda Review</li><li>* Overview of Strategic Plan Template</li></ul>
9:15 – 9:45	2. Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Review changes made based on 9/24 meeting</li><li>* Discuss and confirm strategy leaders</li></ul>
9:45 – 11:00	3. Fund Allocation <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Options</li><li>* Approach</li><li>* Process</li></ul>
11:00 – 12:00*	4. Evaluation Approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Program evaluation process and responsibilities</li><li>* Strategic Plan evaluation process and responsibilities</li></ul>
12:00 – 12:50	5. Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* Discuss, modify and affirm Focus Area indicators</li></ul>
12:50 – 1:00	6. Next Steps

\* Includes break and transition to working lunch

## **Appendix J: Goal Planning Worksheet**

### **GOAL PLANNING WORKSHEET**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This worksheet is used to help define the most important goals that you believe your organization should pursue during the next three to five years. For purposes of this exercise, a “goal” is simply something specific that should be accomplished – starting a new service, improving or expanding existing services, reaching a certain level of funding, and so on. Try to define goals so they are SMART – Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, and Time-based (when you want to see the goal achieved). List the goals in the column on the left. Then, for each goal, indicate what benefit(s) will result for the organization and/or its customers by achieving the goal. Finally, in the last column, rate the importance of each goal on a scale from 1 (unimportant) to 5 (extremely important). Add more rows as necessary.

Goals	Benefit(s) of Achieving the Goal	Rating (1-5)
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

**Appendix K: Objectives Planning Worksheet****OBJECTIVES PLANNING WORKSHEET**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This worksheet is used to help define the intermediate objectives for the organization's prioritized goals. Objectives similar to goals, however they are shorter-term and lead to accomplishment of the goal. For instance, if the goal is to develop and launch a for-profit business whose profits are returned to the nonprofit organization to support programs and services, an objective could be to develop a feasibility study to identify the best business venture to pursue. For purposes of this exercise, an "objective" is simply something specific that should be accomplished. Try to define the objectives so they are SMART – Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, and Time-based and so they actually lead to achieving the goal they support. **Note:** this worksheet can only be used once the organization's goals have been determined.

1. List each of organization's goals in the column on the left. Leave two to three rows between each goal.
2. Then, for each goal, list one or more short-term objectives in the center column.
3. Finally, indicate how long (weeks, months or years) you think it will take to accomplish the objective.
4. Add more rows as needed.

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Proposed Objectives for Goal (Maximum of 3 objectives per goal)</b>	<b>Est. Time to Complete</b>
<i>Example Goal</i>	<i>Example Objectives</i>	
Children are ready for school academically and socially, and their parents are prepared to support them.	90% of all children leaving the FRC's programs will exit at 100% expected attainment / development level (based on DRDP).	3 years
	Increase parents' participation by 30% in learning and educational events.	2 years

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Proposed Objectives for Goal (Maximum of 3 objectives per goal)</b>	<b>Est. Time to Complete</b>
1.	1.1	
	1.2	
	1.3	
2.	2.1	
	2.2	
	2.3	
3.	3.1	
	3.2	
	3.3	
4.	4.1	
	4.2	
	4.3	
5.	5.1	
	5.2	
	5.3	

**Appendix L: Strategy Planning and Evaluation Worksheet****STRATEGY PLANNING AND EVALUATION WORKSHEET**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This worksheet is used to help describe the specific strategies that will be used to achieve the short term objectives. Strategies should only be developed for objectives that will be worked toward during the next 1 to 2 years. Conditions and situations change too frequently to invest time developing strategies beyond that window of time. Strategies describe **how** the organization plans to move forward and accomplish its goals and objectives. They outline the specific course of action to pursue, the persons that need to be involved, and where appropriate, note any additional resources that will be needed.

1. List each of organization's objectives to be accomplished in the next 1 to 2 years in the column on the left. Leave two or three rows between each objective.
2. Then, for each objective, develop one to three suggested strategies for achieving results.
3. Finally, using the Strategy Evaluation Guidelines (next page), rate each strategy on a scale of 1 – 5.
4. Add more rows as needed.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Proposed Strategies for Achieving Objective (Maximum of 3)</b>	<b>Rating (1-5)</b>
<i>Example Objective</i>	<i>Example Strategies</i>	
90% of all children leaving the FRC's programs will exit at 100% expected attainment / development level (based on DRDP).	Investigate supply of private consultants or other options to meet 10% needs (children with special needs or disability); confirm all consultants can write ISP/IFSP.	2
	Continue working with school district to co-locate EHS/HS on school sites and to prepare FRC staff to support early learning.	3
	Utilize home visiting model that uses developmental screening and needs assessment tools to set goals and measure progress.	5

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Proposed Strategies for Achieving Objective (Maximum of 3)</b>	<b>Rating (1-5)</b>
1.	A	
	B	
	C	
2.	A	
	B	
	C	
3.	A	
	B	
	C	
4.	A	
	B	
	C	

Evaluate each of the strategies listed in the table using a scale of 1 to 5, where equals 1 “not acceptable” (fits none or few of the evaluation criteria) to 5 “extremely acceptable” (meets most or all of the criteria).

## STRATEGY EVALUATION CRITERIA

Criteria to consider when selecting and defining strategies to be pursued by the organization:

### **EFFECTIVENESS**

- Relevance to the issue(s) – will the strategy really address one or more critical issues facing the organization?
- Cost effectiveness
- Risk / return characteristics
- Timing

### **ACCEPTABILITY**

- Client impact
- Acceptability to the Board, staff, and volunteers
- Acceptability to the general public
- Acceptability to other stakeholders involved in substance abuse treatment (e.g. networks, state office, other providers)

### **FEASIBILITY**

- Cost and ability to finance the cost
- Staff requirements
- Facility and equipment requirements
- Technical feasibility

### **CONSTRAINTS**

- Consistency with mission, vision, and values
- Legality (fit with organization purpose in the articles of incorporation and 501(c)3 filing, compliance with other applicable laws and regulations)
- Coordination or integration with other strategies, programs, and activities
- Fit with other organizational mandates

***Appendix W: Strategic Plan Template***

**[Organization Name]**

**Strategic Plan**

**Month, Year to Month, Year**

Name of Organization  
Address, City, State, Zip  
Phone and fax numbers  
<http://www.xxxxxxxxxx.org>

## ***Acknowledgements***

This page recognizes the individuals who lead or participated significantly in planning, and as appropriate, any funding sources or donors that underwrote the costs.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

[Update when document is done.]

## **Executive Summary**

This section summarizes the key information from all of the other sections of the strategic plan down into a 3-4 page executive summary. It needs to be written so that an outsider can easily read and understand the mission of the organization, its overall major issues and goals, and key strategies to reach the goals.

## **Organization Overview**

This section provides readers with a general understanding of the organization, how the board and staff are structured, its current programs and services, and an organizational chart. It briefly outlines reasons for engaging in strategic planning (objectives sought), planning components and approach, and planning participants. It provides context and historical perspective for the planning process and a framework for readers who were not involved in creating the plan.

### ***Background and History***

### **Current Programs and Services**

### **Organization Design**

### **Governance**

### **Staffing**

### **Organization Chart**

### **Planning Approach**

### **Participants**

### **Objectives**

## **Organization Framework**

This section describes the components that serve as the basis for the organization's design. Specific aspects include:

### ***Mission***

The mission statement clearly and succinctly describes the fundamental purpose for the organization to exist.

### ***Vision***

The vision statement gives a compelling view of the type of future that the organization seeks to create for the clients, members and communities being served.

## ***Guiding principles***

The guiding principles are the values or mutually held principles that are used for all decision making related to the organization.

## **Situation Analysis**

The current reality for the organization, including internal strengths and areas to improve, external opportunities and threats, and other critical issues is summarized in the situation analysis section. The data (surveys, critical issues analysis, environmental scans, etc.) behind the summary should be contained in the appendices.

## **Goals and Objectives**

This section lists all of the long-term goals (3 to 5 year statements of desired change) of the organization. Depending upon the planning approach it may also include shorter-term objectives or interim milestones, with the associated strategies identified during the strategic planning process.

## **Strategies**

This section lists the specific strategies that will be pursued to achieve the goals and objectives; the specific courses of actions, such as implementing a capital campaign, expanding service sites or programs, developing a marketing plan. Where appropriate, strategies also note any additional resources or partnerships that will need to be acquired before starting.

## **Evaluating and Updating the Plan**

This section describes how the organization will measure and report on its success and lessons learned. Specific milestones for progress are described, along with the resources and tools needed to conduct evaluation, and the method and frequency for reporting and discussing results. It also describes the process and timing for reviewing and updating the strategic plan document to reflect significant changes over time.

## **Appendices**

The appendices should include information that is somewhat confidential, detail-oriented or that tends to change frequently. They may include the following (use only the appendices that apply to the specific planning process and objectives for the organization):

### **A: Implementation Plan**

Detailed implementation plan that specifies objectives, action steps, responsibilities and timelines for completion (the major goals and activities to be accomplished over the coming fiscal year). Note: the implementation plan is sometimes issued as a separate document so that it can be easily reviewed and updated on a regular (monthly/quarterly).

### **B: Planning Process**

Details of the planning process, such as the dates, locations and major topics of the planning meetings, and key lessons learned throughout the process that would improve the next cycle of planning, etc.

### **C: Situational Analysis Data**

Details of situational analysis data gathering tools, information and findings generated during the external analysis (for example, environmental scan) and internal analysis (for example, SWOT analysis); identification of strategic issues identified during the these analyses

### **D: Finances**

Budget and financial planning information that describes the resources and funding needed, and how the organization expects to obtain and use the resources needed to achieve the strategic goals

### **E: Glossary**

Glossary of terms or acronyms used in the planning document.

***Appendix X: Implementation Plan***

**[Organization Name]**

**Implementation Plan**

**Month, Year to Month, Year**

Name of Organization  
Address, City, State, Zip  
Phone and fax numbers  
<http://wwwxxxxxxxx.org>

# Table of Contents

[Insert when document is completed]

## **Introduction and Background**

One or two paragraphs that describe the organization background and the major goals or objectives to achieve during the implementation plan timeframe. This helps orient any individuals who were not part of developing the strategic or implementation plan, but who are involved in achieving results.

## **Implementation Plan Timeline**

The chart below contains a summary of timelines for strategies and tasks presented on the following pages. Tasks that begin and end in the same month are shown with only the start date. Those strategies that have tasks continuing into the next plan year are noted in the "ongoing" column.

1. Customize the top row to show the month and year that the plan starts, (for instance, July 2007 or January 2008) and then continue the sequence.
  2. List the strategy number (should correspond to the strategic plan) and reference name for the strategy in the left column.
  3. List the individual number of tasks for the strategy and note their start and end points.

The highlighted rows in the table are an example of how to do this. These rows should be deleted.



## Implementation Plan: Month, Year through Month, Year

Update the tables on the following pages to show the strategy and detailed tasks, timing and lead persons. Add more tables as necessary by copying and pasting the blank template into subsequent pages. Add or delete rows as necessary for the specific strategy.

A sample table is shown below. Delete the sample table from the final implementation plan document.

**Figure 4: Sample Table of Detailed Tasks**

Strategy 1.1	Who	Start	End
Implement a process and structure for informing and engaging the broader community in making decisions that would replace community action meetings.	Staff, Board Subcommittee, Community Leaders Team	December 200X	May 200X Ongoing

### Task

1. Utilizing the subcommittee from strategy 2.1, and engaging other interested parties, establish a “Community Leaders Team” The purpose of the group is to voice opinions about community needs and priorities and to serve in an advisory capacity to the organization in designing a new process and structure for community action meetings.  
Subcommittee, the organization Staff December 200X Ongoing
2. Gather information about existing organizations and entities in the community, and develop a list, including contact information. Obtain research findings about effective practices for building community participation, including research and information available through the State First 5 Commission. Draft summary of findings to present at the community meeting in March.  
Subcommittee Researcher, Octavio December 200X January 200X
3. Using list developed in task 2, issue invitations to the broader community to join the new Community Leaders Team and to attend the March meeting.  
Community Leaders Team February 200X February 200X

Strategy 1.1	Who	Start	End
Implement a process and structure for informing and engaging the broader community in making decisions that would replace community action meetings.	Staff, Board Subcommittee, Community Leaders Team	December 200X	May 200X Ongoing

### Task

- 4. Convene a meeting of the Community Leaders Team and others to: explain purpose of group, review research findings, and brainstorm suggestions for developing a structure and process to replace community action meetings, and schedule follow-up meeting.
- 5. Summarize/document results and recommendations, including a description of processes, from the meeting and forward to participants prior to the second meeting.
- 6. Reconvene participants from first meeting to review, refine and affirm recommendations, including methods to inform all community.
- 7. Implement the newly-formed community action meetings, using the structure and processes developed by the community and Community Leaders Team.

Strategy #	Who	Start	End
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