



**Strategic Plan**  
**Family & Children's Services 2023 – 2026**

## **Mission**

We inspire hope and well-being for people of all ages by providing counseling, education and support.

## **Vision**

For everyone to feel welcome to come as they are and leave as they would like to be.

## **CEO Letter**

Family & Children's Services is at an exciting and hopeful time. The agency is approaching our 100 year anniversary in 2025! This milestone is a time to celebrate and honor our history while focusing on preparing for a sustainable future. A successful 100 year history has had examples of implementing changes that moved the agency forward. This new milestone is also a time for positive changes.

Through extensive research and planning, the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan includes calculated goals and objectives. This plan lays out details on how, why and where our resources can best fit the community needs. Through the pandemic the agency has learned the importance of being able to adapt, leverage technology and the importance of our partnerships. Further, the agency once again learned the importance of having talented employees. Therefore, our internal and external plans include focusing on building specific programs while making sure we retain our talented staff.

While we anticipate challenges and know there will be unforeseen obstacles to maneuver, we also know our future is bright. Planning, determination and resiliency will lead the agency into the beginning of a new century of service.

Joe Blewett  
CEO  
Family & Children's Services

## **Process**

### **Environmental Scan**

Under the long standing recommendation from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), an Environmental Scan, also known as an Internal/External Audit, was conducted in 2021. Alan Brown, LMSW, Circlewood Solutions non-profit consultant, conducted an in-depth environmental scan from late June to mid-October 2021. The work included interviews with key community leaders, referral sources, staff, and leadership of the organization. The consultant also reviewed organizational service data, feedback from participant satisfaction surveys, and United Way formal report feedback. The intent of the scan was to identify key external issues, relevant social trends, and opportunities and threats that are currently or will potentially impact Family & Children's Services ability to fulfill its mission and vision. The findings and recommendations from the Environmental Scan are influential and pivotal in determining the direction and opportunity for FCS. Due to the significance and details of the report, a Long Term Strategic Planning Committee (LTSPC) was formed to begin planning FCS' future.

## **Long Term Strategic Planning Committee**

Courtesy of the United Way of Midland County, a consultant was sought using the Catchafire platform that connects experienced and talented consultants to non-profits, at no cost to the organization. Tom Chappel was recruited to guide FCS's strategic planning process. Tom has been Chief Evaluation/Planning Officer at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta since 2001. Before joining CDC, Tom was a senior manager/ VP in the health/public health practice of several large consulting firms. Since volunteering with Catchafire he's done 60+ consultations in these same areas with non-profits organization in the U.S. and globally.

CEO Joe Blewett and Tom Chappel identified and recruited various FCS stakeholders to join the LTSPC. These committee members met regularly from Fall 2021 and into summer 2022. They followed the following process:

- Reviewed the Environmental Scan
- Conducted surveys and fact finding projects
  - Ranked 16 FCS programs
- Reviewed internal resources
- Sought community gaps
- Explored partnership Opportunities
- Reviewed the current and potential market position

### **The LTSPC members include:**

Joe Blewett, FCS CEO

Westphal, Tanya, FCS Access Coordinator

Merry Jo Brandimore, FCS Board Chair

Terri Derrick, FCS Board Member

Andrea Plouff, FCS Fund Development Director

Matt DeVries, Jolt Credit Union VP of Marketing

Stacie Lewis, Former FCS Intern and current Outpatient Therapist/ EAP Coordinator

Diana Brookens, MyMichigan Volunteer Coordinator/Former FCS Board Member

Samantha Huebler-Davis, FCS Director of Clinical Services

Sue Kackmeister, FCS Operations Director

Christin Rousseau, Senior Services/Former FCS Outpatient Therapist

Tad Hupfer, FCS Outpatient Therapist

Tom Chapel, United Way Catchafire Consultant/CDC

### **Emphases in Strategic Plan**

The strategic planning effort encompassed three areas:

- Part 1: Selecting programmatic focus areas
- Part 2: Internal resources, especially staffing
- Part 3: Fundraising and branding, especially in anticipation of FCS' 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary

### **Part 1: Focus Areas**

While determining which business areas to apply resources, one question was asked: Should FCS provide one specific niche area of services or attempt to be all things to all people?

This question has plagued FCS for a variety of reasons. These reasons include, but are not limited to:

- Designing programs around people, and the program suffers as people leave.
- Turnover of leadership and employees.
- Lack of marketing and branding identity.
- Changing community needs.

Therefore, it was determined to focus on 6 service areas that are attainable, sustainable and retention proof.

**1. Family Support:** FCS has committed to providing support to families. This includes counseling services and support to:

- Divorced/Separated Families
- Co-parenting
- Blended families
- Unmarried parenting couples
- Single parenting
- LGBTQ partners choosing to parent

Develop a comprehensive overview class that would appeal to all of these audiences. This class will be used as a feeder to individual therapy. If multiple staff can lead the class it will lessen the attrition risk.

### **Court Mandated Services for Families:**

FCS must develop a better relationship with the courts. Improving the relationship through the CEO, Board Members and community stakeholders will increase referrals and provide better outcomes to the community.

Even if court mandated clients do not continue after their mandated participation, the courts and advocates will continue to refer clients. This also improves the awareness for FCS in the county.

### **2. Focus on School Aged Children/Youth**

Our clinicians need to build sustainable relationships with schools for clinical work. This includes improving and expanding the current relationships with schools to:

- Provide additional clinical services and therapy groups to schools.
- Navigate and capitalize on state and federal funding.
- Provide trainings for educators.
- Leverage existing Board of Director and community stakeholder relationships.
- Expand the reach of and number of schools served.
- Increase the number of Interns under the direction of the Intern Coordinator.

### **3. Special Population: Older & Aging Population**

- Expand existing program services to Senior Services (SS) by adding to existing therapist's case load and adding counselors. This includes recruiting counselors who are credentialed for Medicare.

- Address staff recruitment challenges by placing specific recruitment ads to those who practice and/or have a passion for gerontology therapy.

#### **4. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**

There is a large opportunity to expand EAP services and increase demand among existing and new partnerships. EAP's can feed into long-term clients.

- Identify an EAP Coordinator from the clinical staff to specifically oversee partnerships, contracts and EAP services.
- Expand and leverage existing relationship with Fisher Companies. Fisher Companies is a regional leader in providing mental health workplace support.
- Increase resources to promote services within existing and new partners.
- Encourage EAP clients to convert to long-term clients and offer counseling to family members.
- Have the Access Coordinator monitor the ebb and flow of surge in services throughout the year to avoid a bottleneck in services.
- Perform more presentations to workplaces.

#### **5. Rural Population**

Provide therapy services at a partner location in a rural area. Offer telehealth or in-person services with a focus on face-to-face services for when telehealth executive orders are lifted.

- Recruit therapist to work in rural location part-time for where they reside.
- Explore partnership opportunity with West Midland Family Center or similar non-profit to provide space for free or low cost.
- Apply for rural-focused grant to provide revenue for services.
  - Use interns for grant paid services.
- Discover win-win-win relationships with location, therapist and clients.

#### **6. Hospital Release and crisis follow up**

Challenging logistically, however, ultimately worth pursuing to fill a community need and create long-term, high volume referrals.

- Partner with MyMichigan behavioral team and educate on FCS outpatient services.
- Identify clinician to be available specifically for MyMichigan referrals.
- Prepare for insurance and reimbursement issues to be compensated by health system, foundation or grant funding.
- Build collaboration opportunities with MyMichigan, for example Medication Administrative Treatment for 2 way referrals.

### **Part 2: Internal Relations**

Through the Environmental Scan and LTSPC, Recruitment and Retention of staff was identified as a key strategic need. To that end, several strategies have been implemented to decrease employee turnover and improve recruiting efforts. During the FCS 2022 All Staff Retreat in July, the agency determined the need for specific values that would improve and sustain a positive work environment. These values are known as “The FCS 6” (See Appendix) and include:

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Respect
- Accountability
- Empathy
- Transparency

### **Recruitment & Retention Committee**

A group of employees, that includes administration, is meeting bi-monthly, has developed strategies to decrease turnover and improve retention.

### **Part 3: Fundraising and Branding**

#### **Mom Prom**

The Great Lakes Bay Region Mom Prom is one of the highly attended events in the area. Now that the event is established, well attended and well known the shift must focus to two areas:

1. Maximizing Revenue
  - Increase sponsorship opportunities to secure an additional \$10,000 in revenue.
  - Increase the number of silent auction items to 90.
  - Increase ticket sales through increased ticket price and increased table numbers instead of individual tickets.
  - Reallocate resources from the Fashion Show event towards The Mom Prom.
  - Increase revenue total event YoY by 10%
2. Mission Integration
  - Increased FCS signage: Banners, paper signs, electric signs.
  - SWAG with branded logo: Cups, glow sticks, giveaways.
  - More announcements on site, such as from DJ and emcee.
  - Clearer social media: Include #Hashtag for FCS in all announcements.
  - On-site event such as a Self-Help Wall or Hashtag wall.

#### **Donor relations**

The FCS Fund Development Director must increase the number of donors and the total revenue.

- Leverage digital platforms in more electronic announcements.
- Increase the number of donor asks through a variety of mailers, emails and in-person meetings.
- Have CEO hold monthly one-on-one meetings with potential donors.
- Identify potential donors and increase the number of contact with each potential donor.
- Host Legacy giving presentations to one potential donor monthly.

#### **2025: 100 Year Celebration Fundraising Event**

The 100 year celebration of FCS' inception is a distinguished milestone and a chance to honor our past while implementing a vision for the future. This anniversary is also an opportunity to raise funds to help support our future vision.

Under the direction of the Fund Development Director a committee will be formed to help with the planning of this event. This committee will be responsible for:

- Selecting the type and location of the event.
- Fundraising avenue.
- Invite list.
- Recognition.
- Event program.
- Annual awareness campaign.

### **2025: Rebrand/Marketing Efforts**

There have been some long-time concerns that the name of the organization is too generic, causing confusion and misidentification as a child care organization or as part of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Some people understand the name as implying that the organization only serves children or focuses on children's issues exclusively.

Findings from the 2021 Environmental Scan confirm this issue:

- *This is an issue that has been discussed before, resulting in minor alterations. Feedback from interviewees includes concerns that the name is too easily confused with child protective services or as a child care /child focused organization. There is nothing in the name that implies counseling or therapy support. But name changes are never easy and must be well thought through in regard to timing and unintended impact.*

To address this concern, a Branding Committee was established to address this topic. Under the direction of Catchafire Consultant Tom Chapel, the committee continues to explore the possibility of changing the name. Some options instead of a name change could include rebranding, a new logo and an emphasis on marketing efforts of an adjusted name or the original name.

### **Branding Committee Members include:**

Merry Jo Brandimore, FCS Board Chair  
Westphal, Tanya, FCS Access Coordinator  
Ashley Ghose, Wellbeing Coach  
Sue Kackmeister, FCS Operations Director  
Samantha Huebler-Davis, FCS Director of Clinical Services  
Andrea Plouff, FCS Fund Development Director  
Donna St. John, Executive Director at Home To Stay  
Tad Hupfer, FCS Outpatient Therapist  
Kathryn Tate, Executive Director at The Legacy Center  
Trena Winans, Director of Education at Senior Services  
Terri Derrick, FCS Board Member

Tom Chapel, United Way Catchafire Consultant/CDC  
Joe Blewett, FCS CEO

The long-term goal is to determine if a name change and/or rebrand is necessary. Any rebrand would coincide with the 2025 100 year celebration. There will continue to be a review of this topic for the foreseeable future.



## Appendix: Retention Trends and FCS Team Values

### Recruitment & Retention Focus Area

Year	Turnover Rate
2019	43%
2020	41%
2021	14%
2022	5%
2023	Goal: >25%

Goal: Maintain a turnover rate of <25%


Strategy: Ensure every current and new employee acknowledges the FCS 6.

Strategy: Hold bi-monthly R&R Committee Meetings

# Family & Children’s Service’s Team Values



Communication




Respect



Teamwork


## “FCS 6”



Empathy



Accountability



Transparency

# Family & Children's Service's Team Values



## 1. Communication

Exchange information. Convey clear, strong and regular messages. Solicit feedback, ask questions and respond to everyone. Share ideas and details. More than 90% of communication is nonverbal.



## 2. Teamwork

Work collaboratively with others to achieve a goal. Cooperate. Partner. Build relationships. Be helpful. Build a sense of community. Be vulnerable. Share successes. Understand our mission.



## 3. Respect

Treat others how they want to be treated. Trust and care for one another. Be supportive and fair. Do not underestimate the power of kindness.



## 4. Accountability

Take responsibility. Be self-honest, value others and do the right thing. Without accountability, work becomes chaotic. Follow up with others.



## 5. Empathy

Respect and understand your colleague's emotions and feelings. See a situation from their point of view. Listen to others and never assume.



## 6. Transparency

Be open, honest and straightforward with everything – good or bad. Be available, answer questions and explain decisions. Share information.