

STRATEGIC PLANNING SUMMARY

2022 - 2026



ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

Family Service Lincoln is a 501(c)3, founded in 1891 as the first charitable organization in Lincoln, Nebraska. The programming provided by Family Service has evolved over the years to meet the needs of families and fit the current conditions in our community. Today we provide case management, housing, behavioral health therapy, expanded learning opportunities, and nutrition programs to more than 6,000 families a year. Our mission of "Helping Families Thrive" embodies the impact we have across all five tracks of programming.



Behavioral Health

Strengthening families and supporting youth through therapeutic services.



Housing and Support Services

Providing coordinated resources and care to prevent housing crises and keep children safe and in the family home.



Child Care Food Program

Reimbursing home childcare providers for serving nutritious meals.



Women, Infants and Children

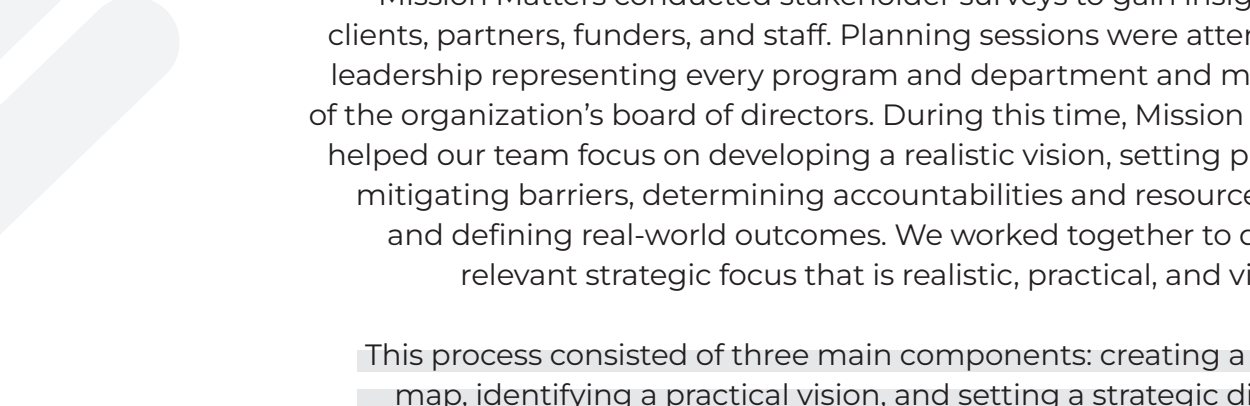
Providing food benefits, nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and guidance to help keep families healthy and strong.



Youth Development

Partnering with schools, families, and neighborhoods to provide expanded learning opportunities in safe environments, while helping to build stronger communities.

FAMILY SERVICE PROGRAMMING MAP



THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Family Service Lincoln worked with Mission Matters to facilitate our strategic planning process in 2021. Prior to meeting with our team, Mission Matters conducted stakeholder surveys to gain insight from clients, partners, funders, and staff. Planning sessions were attended by leadership representing every program and department and members of the organization's board of directors. During this time, Mission Matters helped our team focus on developing a realistic vision, setting priorities, mitigating barriers, determining accountabilities and resource needs, and defining real-world outcomes. We worked together to design a relevant strategic focus that is realistic, practical, and visionary.

This process consisted of three main components: creating a context map, identifying a practical vision, and setting a strategic direction.

CONTEXT MAP

The process of creating a context map was undertaken collaboratively by the planning team and consisted of an environmental scan in relation to Family Service Lincoln and the services we provide. The overarching question in the creation of this map was, "What do we need to understand about our current circumstances to make wise and strategic decisions about our future?" This was broken down and answered in the categories of: demographic trends, economic climate, human services trends, technology factors, community and participant needs, and general uncertainties.

Family Service Lincoln is seen as a leader in the community and in the human services sector.

(key theme from confidential interviews with FSL stakeholders)

CONTEXT MAP

What do we need to understand about our current circumstances to make wise, strategic decisions about our future?

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

- There is an increase in youth and families experiencing poverty throughout the communities we serve.
- Recruiting and retaining the staff required for programmatic stability is difficult within the current workforce.
- New American and refugee populations are growing, increasing diversity within our schools and service areas.

ECONOMIC CLIMATE

- The cost of living is continuing to rise.
- The pandemic continues to impact the economy in unpredictable ways.
- The pandemic has been financially challenging for nonprofits and community partners.
- Our neighborhood is expanding and projected to change significantly in the coming years.

TECHNOLOGY FACTORS

- There is an increased demand for virtual service provision.
- Hardware and tools must be made relevant and accessible to support the increasingly virtual landscape.

UNCERTAINTIES

- Recruitment, retention, and development of new staff is becoming more challenging.
- The impact of COVID-19 on service opportunities and funding streams is unpredictable and difficult to sustain.
- New opportunities to expand and grow programmatically pose questions for our team and leadership.

PRACTICAL VISION

Building on the findings of our context map, the planning team next determined a practical vision, asking the question, "What do we want to see in place in four years as a result of our collective actions?" This brainstorming exercise resulted in our team identifying the five main outcomes of: innovative programming, organizational pride, recognition as a pillar in the community, a thriving workforce, and operational excellence.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

In our final session, the planning team, "What and how worked through the question, "What innovative and substantial actions will move us toward our practical vision?" We collaboratively identified four main directions to prioritize in all planning and decision-making over the next four years: growing with the community, building a strong bench, creating a path for progress, and sharing our story.

Family Service Lincoln is a premier human service organization doing high quality work.

(key theme from confidential interviews with FSL stakeholders)

PRACTICAL VISION

What does Family Service Lincoln want to see in place within four years as a result of its collective action?

OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

- Systems and policies built with growth in mind
- Data-driven decision making

- Continue positive trend of increased board engagement
- Innovative and replicable programming

INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

- Flexible housing options
- Adaptability to changing community needs

- An environment and culture that is open to new opportunities
- Expansion of services

ORGANIZATIONAL PRIDE

- Recognition as a premier place to work

- A culture of celebration and ownership

THRIVING WORKFORCE

- Diversity in staffing
- A stable, committed, competent workforce
- Competitive compensation and benefits

- Leadership and staff development opportunities
- Succession planning

PILLAR IN THE COMMUNITY

- Clear brand identity
- Programmatic independence via new facilities
- Increased community connections and partnerships

- Increased community awareness
- Growth along with the neighborhood
- Community presence and measurable impact

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Family Service Lincoln has identified four areas of innovative and substantial action that will move us toward our practical vision. These strategic directions will be prioritized in all planning and decision-making over the next four years.

Within each strategic direction, the following potential actions were identified:

GROWING WITH THE COMMUNITY

- Developing housing and supportive programming, including tenant and sponsor-based options
- Expanding independence to provide programmatic independence and offer unique experiences
- Addressing services strategically to address emergent needs
- Leading in Youth Development through consistent, impactful and replicable programming
- Building on our legacy of collaborative work with new and expanded partnerships

SHARING OUR STORY

- Cultivating community-wide understanding of our role in Lincoln
- Celebrating our history and legacy of impact within the community
- Increasing the team's knowledge of programming, history, and impact
- Identifying and focusing on what sets our work apart from other organizations
- Sharing our stories of success with our community in an appropriate manner
- Utilizing communication platforms to connect with the community
- Fostering organizational pride within our team and board

CREATING A PATH FOR PROGRESS

- Refining and building all systems with long term growth in mind - no temporary solutions
- Removing dependence on individuals and placing it on procedures and systems
- Prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion in all systems, policies, and practices
- Establishing clear and effective internal communication policies and systems
- Maintaining strong infrastructure and a growth mindset in order to act on new opportunities
- Establishing community well-being as a "red thread" across all our work

BUILDING A STRONG BENCH

- Stabilizing our workforce through creative recruiting and retention strategies
- Prioritizing succession planning across the organization
- Developing leaders inside the organization through structured opportunities
- Establishing ourselves as a premier employer via culture, compensation, and upward mobility
- Prioritizing diversity and community representation in our workforce
- Generating an internal culture of celebration

Strong leadership and talented staff are central to Family Service Lincoln's success.

(key theme from confidential interviews with FSL stakeholder)



STRATEGIC PLAN IN ACTION

Family Service Lincoln's aim in this strategic planning process was to develop a set of overarching directions and goals which will inform and direct our team's decisions over the next four years. These strategic directions will be put into action in numerous ways, but most significantly in the form of our annual planning and performance and quality improvement system.

ANNUAL PLANNING

Annual Planning at Family Service Lincoln consists of short-term planning (1 month-1 year) conducted at the program or department level to identify specific goals and courses of action at the start of each calendar year. Plans will be created in line with the strategic directions and goals set within this document and be broken into smaller steps with specific ownership, deadlines, and deliverables.

PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Performance and Quality Improvement (PQI) is an organization-wide system that continuously uses data to promote efficient, effective service delivery, and achievement of our mission and strategic goals. This system provides us with Key Program Indicators (KPIs), allowing us to make informed decisions about the need to develop plans to foster program growth, improvement, or correct issues.