



Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag

CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

Strategic Plan 2019-2021

Prepared by tng & Staff for review with Member First Nations

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Preparing our New Strategic Plan

Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child and Family Services (DBCFS) has set out to develop a new strategic plan. The new plan builds on the progress and accomplishments of the 2015-2018 Strategic Plan and sets a clear course for the foreseeable future. In preparing the new plan, DBCFS invited over 50 stakeholders¹ to participate in a two-day planning workshop. The workshop was held on June 12-13, 2017 and was facilitated by Brad Quinn of the governance consulting firm, *tng* www.tngleaders.com. *tng* was chosen because of their experience working with the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies and child welfare agencies throughout the province.

Input received at the planning workshop has helped the DBCFS Board of Directors and Management to refine the organization's mission, vision and values and identify a few, carefully chosen priorities that will guide decision-making and investments over the coming 3 years. The new strategic plan has been developed using a simplified version of a balanced scorecard framework² to ensure that all aspects of DBCFS's operation receive attention and are aligned in service to our mission. By using this framework, the Board of Directors and Management will be able to better set, monitor, measure and report on DBCFS' progress. This will ensure that DBCFS continues to be transparent and accountable to the children, youth, families and communities it serves and to its Member First Nations members and government.

Our new strategic plan describes *WHAT* priorities we will focus on achieving over the coming years and *WHAT* worthy outcomes we hope to achieve. It does not describe the details of *HOW* we will work, day-to-day, to achieve these priorities. The Executive Director and Management will develop an annual operating plan to define *HOW*, through focused projects and activities; we will achieve our high-level targets. Our annual, Board-approved budget will enable our Executive Director and team to bring these operational plans to life. Our good governance practices and strong Board leadership will ensure we stay on track and accountable.

We welcome your feedback about our new plan! It is designed to ensure that DBCFS achieves its Designation as an Indigenous Child Well-being Agency and remains focused on providing a culturally intelligent and wholistic approach to serve our children, youth, families and communities.

Building on Our Accomplishments

During the strategic planning workshop our stakeholders reminded us of the many important accomplishments that have been achieved during our most recent 2015-2018 Strategic Plan. These will be important building blocks as we move into our next phase of development.

- Bringing our communities closer together
- Uniting around a healthy vision for our children
- Maintaining open, honest communication
- Fostering trusting relationships
- Building a skilled and caring team
- Establishing strong leadership
- Staying focused and determined
- Creating solutions that meet unique community needs
- Infusing our culture in everything we do
- Integrating our traditional teachings
- Balancing indigenous and mainstream goals
- Persevering to push through obstacles

¹ Appendix A – List of Strategic Planning Workshop Participants

² A planning tool used to increase alignment and accountability. www.balancedscorecard.org

Understanding Our Environment

DBCFS will continue to face challenges in the years ahead. Fortunately, we also have strengths to offset these challenges. Our new strategic plan seeks to position DBCFS within this evolving and dynamic environment. Our strategic planning workshop input drew attention to the following:

Key Strengths

- Strong First Nations community support
- Shared vision and goals for our communities
- Respect communities' uniqueness
- Step-by-step success and foundation
- Resilience, persistence and dedication
- Culture integrated in everyday work
- Leadership throughout organization
- Geographic location
- Technologically connected
- Relationship with MCYS

Key Challenges

- Caught up in mainstream thinking/ways
- Integrating cultural component with families
- Human resource growing pains
- Fit and cultural training for staff
- Case load sizes
- Remote area access
- Foster home assessment process
- Communication breakdowns with communities
- Communication with partner agencies
- MCYS funding process

Our Core Commitments

DBCFS' highest-level commitments, or *promises*, are articulated in our mission, vision and values. These carefully chosen words seek to describe why we exist (mission), what we hope to accomplish by living out our mission every day (vision) and how we expect to behave and interact with one another along the way (values).

DBCFS Mission – Why we exist

“AANGWAAMWIN”

KEEP SAFE, TAKE CARE OF, PROTECT, GUIDE AND NURTURE ...Our children, our youth, our families, our communities, our Nations.

DBCFS Vision – What we hope to accomplish

“NIIGAANGAGANAABIMIN”

Looking ahead. Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child and Family Services provides wholistic services to honour and support our children, families, communities and Nations to sustain a strong, healthy and balanced foundation for life.



DBCFS Values – How we will behave and interact

The philosophy and approach of DBCFS is first and foremost, based upon the principles contained within the seven Grandfather Teachings of our people:

1. **Wisdom “Nbwaakaawin”** – This incorporates the idea of intelligence and the idea of "putting it to good use". Wisdom means the commitment to use what we know for the betterment of all.
2. **Love “Zaagidiwin”** – Love includes the selfless and non-judgmental love of all others as well as self-love.
3. **Respect “Mnaadendamowin”** – The importance of showing respect for and appreciation of others is necessary to be able to earn respect.
4. **Bravery “Aakdehewin”** – The willingness to "do the right thing" and to accept the consequences that flow from that, to always act with integrity.
5. **Honesty “Gwekwaadziwin”** – Flowing from courage is the need to always be forthright, to withhold nothing, both with others and with ourselves.
6. **Humility “Dbadendizwin”** – This is compassion at its most basic level. We all share the same value in the eyes of our Creator, and we are called to reflect on that value in all of our dealings.
7. **Truth “Debwewin”** – We must be truth-tellers to all both those with whom we have dealings and with ourselves.

Building on these seven teachings, we also value:

- **Inclusivity** – We encourage and foster an atmosphere that brings together all who have an interest to participate and bring support for children and families in need. We include all perspectives and faiths, both traditional and mainstream understandings that our people may be a part of, and recognize that it is from the things that individuals value that they draw their strength and internal power from.
- **Wholistic** – (Mind, Body, Emotions and Spirit) We believe that all aspects of life must be taken into account in arriving at good decisions with children and families.

DBCFS’ Strategic Priorities

DBCFS has established a few, carefully chosen priorities that will guide decision-making and investments over the coming 3 years. As mentioned, these priorities are set within the framework of a 'balanced scorecard' which includes five (5) categories: Children, youth, families, communities (as our clients), Partners, People, Internal Systems, Financial Accountability. The pages describe WHAT priorities DBCFS will focus on achieving over the coming 3 years.

Planning Category: Our Children, Youth, Families and Communities

DBCFS exists to support the wellbeing of indigenous children, youth, their families and the communities that support them. These are our ‘clients’. Our strategic priorities for our children, youth, families and communities include:

Strategic Theme: Expand and Enhance Our Services

C1. Ensure access to required services

- a) Complete our Designation as an Indigenous Child Well-being Agency
- b) Educate individuals and communities about the role, value and services of DBCFS
- c) Establish locations for service access / delivery
- d) Become a multi-service agency
- e) Create a network of safe places throughout our communities

C2. Ensure high quality, safe and culturally intelligent care and service

- a) Understand, adapt and apply child wellbeing best-practices; focus on early help
- b) Introduce and integrate traditional cultural ways into all of our services
- c) Support the process of restoration and healing

C3. Engage children, youth, families and communities to improve their service experience

- a) Seek out and listen to client needs/expectations
- b) Build trusting relationships, teams and circle approaches

C4. Engage and support our communities in being part of DBCFS' mission

- a) Involve communities in our service delivery
- b) Strengthen communities' capacity to better service their people
- c) Better connect services that support children, youth and families

Key 'Client' Outcomes

1. Designation achieved
2. Broader range of wholistic services available to communities
3. Clearly defined locations and areas served
4. Families know and trust DBCFS as a safe place for support
5. Families voluntarily access service centre / increase in voluntary service usage
6. Equitable access to services
7. More families served with decrease in crisis
8. Decreased court involvement

9. More children remain in family or extended family homes / fewer children in care
10. Begin process of healing families
11. DBCFS serves more indigenous communities
12. Restoration of child wellbeing responsibilities to the indigenous community

Planning Category: Our Partners

DBCFS depends on and works with many important groups and organizations to deliver services to the children, families and communities it serves. These are our 'partners'. Our strategic priorities for our partners include:

Strategic Theme: Pro-act to build and strengthen our partnerships

S1. Nurture our existing stakeholder relationships to increase support of our goals and strengthen our agreements and protocols

- a) Our First Nations and Indigenous Communities (Member First Nations, others)
- b) Our Sector Partners (MCYS, OACAS, other Child wellbeing agencies, etc.)
- c) Our Community Partners (Mental Health & Addictions, Education, Health, Law enforcement, etc.)

S2. Expand opportunities to collaborate/partner/build relationships with new stakeholders

- a) Identify and build relationships to advance multi-service agency goals
- b) Increase awareness and educate stakeholders about DBCFS' culturally intelligent and wholistic approach
- c) Integrate / include stakeholders in our advisory and planning forums

Key 'Partner' Outcomes

1. Partners are familiar / knowledgeable with the care framework
2. Increased partners' confidence and support of DBCFS
3. Partners see DBCFS as a trusted 'one-stop-shop' / source of expertise
4. Partners treat DBCFS as a true partner
5. More seamless care for children and families
6. Decreased crisis events

7. Expanded youth justice services to entire catchment area
8. Better coordinated service delivery

Planning Category: Our People

DBCFS depends on a skilled and committed team of people that includes staff, management, volunteers, alternative care providers and the Board of Directors. These are our 'people'. Our strategic priorities for our people include:

Strategic Theme: Ensure a competent, confident, engaged and sustainable team

P1. Recruit, hire and train to ensure the best talent throughout the organization

- a) Engage our communities in the recruitment process
- b) Hire the right 'fit' for DBCFS and our communities
- c) Provide training on the wholistic service model
- d) Provide training on the full range of traditional cultures

P2. Establish and reinforce a culture of accountability

- a) Ensure clear roles and responsibilities for all positions
- b) Establish and implement a reliable performance management system
- c) Ensure strong organizational governance

P3. Ensure a safe, engaged and healthy workplace

- a) Adhere to all workplace legislation and guidelines
- b) Recognize and fairly compensate our talent
- c) Support and ensure access to resources to support personal wellness

P4. Establish and maintain a strong alternative care system

- a) Outreach and recruitment of alternative care givers throughout our communities
- b) Coordinate with our Child Wellbeing partners

Key 'People' Outcomes

1. Strong pool of interested candidates for/from all communities
2. Well qualified and capable (knowledgeable, skilled) staff

3. Staff and volunteers aligned with mission, vision and values of DBCFS
4. Full staff complement
5. Healthy, happy and motivated staff; workplace satisfaction/engagement levels
6. Low turnover and absenteeism rates
7. Strong pool of alternative care homes
8. Staff and volunteers act as ambassadors for DBCFS
9. Well qualified and capable Board Directors

Planning Category: Internal System Priorities

As DBCFS evolves and expands its mandate it will need to continue to evolve its internal processes and systems to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of the resources used to deliver client services. These are our 'internal systems' and include our information management systems, business processes, and supporting technology to name a few. Our strategic priorities for our 'internal systems' include:

Strategic Theme: Ensure high levels of efficiency and effectiveness to optimize the resources available to serve our clients.

I1. Ensure clear, reliable and usable documentation

- a) Develop/enhance operational and governance policies and practices
- b) Train staff on operational policies and procedures
- c) Train Board Directors on governance policies and practices

I2. Use technology to ensure better, more efficient service

- a) Resolve IT/IS issues
- b) Develop communication/information sharing protocols/systems
- c) Ensure staff have technology that supports better service and care

Key 'Internal System' Outcomes

1. Comprehensive policy and procedure documentation
2. Improved knowledge management
3. Improved business continuity

4. Improved staff, volunteer, and Board alignment to systems
5. Improved case management
6. Improved accountability and transparency
7. CPIN decision finalized

Planning Category: Our Financial Accountability

DBCFS depends on financial resources obtained from the government and is accountable for the ethical and responsible stewardship of these resources. This is our 'financial' accountability. Our strategic priorities for our 'financial' accountability include:

Strategic Theme: Develop the capacity to grow and sustain our services

F1. Ensure adequate, predictable and sustainable funding

- a) Advocate for a long-term comprehensive funding model
- b) Ensure more flexibility in spending within the funding model
- c) Establish non-government funding solution(s)
- d) Identify and pursue indigenous resource pools
- e) Advocate for other types of government funding opportunities
- f) Establish contingency and alternative financial scenario plans

F2. Ensure accurate and transparent reporting

- a) Adherence to MYCS requirements and accountability agreement(s)
- b) Full and regular financial reporting to Member First Nations (in accordance with bylaws)
- c) Regular review and update of financial policies

Key 'Financial Accountability' Outcomes

1. MCYS and funder accountability
2. Increased funder trust and confidence
3. Increased DBCFS Member First Nations trust and confidence
4. Expanded alternative and less restrictive revenue sources
5. Better coordinated indigenous resources and services
6. Sufficiency, predictability and sustainability of service delivery

7. Improved nimbleness to respond to opportunities
8. Increased Community buy-in / expanded Community Support

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Appendix A – Strategic Planning Workshop Participants

First Nations

1. Nora Sawyer
2. Julie Bothwell
3. Melissa McKeown
4. Lynn Eves
5. Tina Howard
6. Ashley Hackshaw
7. Laurie Carr
8. Crystal Cowie
9. Donna Big Canoe
10. Shannon Crate
11. Pat Big Canoe
12. Susan Hoeg
13. Hayley Williamson
14. PJ Sandy
15. Shelley Monague
16. Karen Sandy
17. Marie Norton
18. Joanne Sandy
19. Barron King
20. Laird Hendrick
21. Myrna Burnside
22. Cathy Tolles
23. Mandy Berard
24. Leanne McRae-Douglas
25. Nemke Quarrington
26. Stephanie Sandy

Staff

1. Kathryn Wilson
2. Amber Crowe
3. Sally Rivers
4. Laurie Paudash
5. Lauchlin MacInnes
6. Lindy Shearer
7. Nikki Paudash
8. Neil Monague - Elder
9. Mary Robertson
10. Camille McCue
11. Gareth Hurry
12. Willow Hill
13. Christa Lewis
14. Virg Roote
15. Pamela Johnston
16. Chuck Patterson
17. Crystal Smoke
18. Jade Crowe
19. Carrie Wilson
20. Julie Virgoe
21. Pat Lake

Facilitator

22. Brad Quinn – Facilitator, tng