



# START WITH WHY

Building a Strong Foundation.  
Delivering Transformative Impact.

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**CHOICES FOR YOUTH**  
Strategic Plan 2016/17 - 2019/20





Jon  
Duke



Sheldon  
Pollett

A message from our

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

“ If we share the vision, we share the work, and we share the success for youth.

**On behalf of the board of directors, we are** pleased to provide this bold new vision for the future of Choices for Youth and the youth of our province.

As in everything we do, this plan represents the wisdom of our many partners, staff, and most importantly youth. Their voices, above all others, have to shine through for us to succeed. We are also pleased to note that in co-creating this vision with our many partners, our process has built consensus on the future we all want to see for youth, our organization, and our communities. If we share the vision, we share the work, and we share the success for youth.

This strategic plan also lays out our focus on delivering on this vision in a sustainable way. Through our many years of growth and development as an organization, we firmly understand that the responsible and effective investment in our people and future is our strongest asset in ensuring we are delivering the most impactful supports to youth. Understanding this stewardship is a defining characteristic of our organization.

We look forward with excitement and passion to maximizing all of the opportunities this plan articulates. We welcome all of our partners to join us in sharing this work. ■

*Jonathan Duke*  
**Jon Duke**  
*Board Chair*

*Sheldon Pollett*  
**Sheldon Pollett**  
*Executive Director*



Jill  
Doyle



Ayon  
Shahed

A message from the

# STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM

“ We should all feel a sense of ownership in this plan.

**We would like to take this opportunity to** share how grateful we both are to have had the opportunity of co-leading the 2016/17 - 2019/20 Strategic Plan. It has been a wonderful experience to be able to connect with stakeholders invested in our work; from our board of directors, young people, employees as well as community and national partners.

To everyone that we've requested time and energy from throughout this process – thank you for coming to every interview, conversation and gathering with such open minds and genuine care. With your help, we've been able to capture a powerful vision, and a diversity of ideas and hopes for the future of young people and the role CFY can play in supporting them.

A good strategic plan operates as a living document and we are both excited to see the commitments and priorities outlined in this plan come to life over the next three years. Having spent many months engaged in the planning process, we believe that this plan encompasses all aspects of the important work we aim to accomplish every day at CFY. We should all feel a sense of ownership in this plan, and it's essential that we do: It will take every one of us, working and innovating together, to achieve the ambitious goals laid out here.

We've envisioned an exciting trajectory for Choices for Youth. Let us not settle for anything short of fully realizing that vision. ■

**Jill Doyle**  
*Program Coordinator,  
Outreach & Youth Engagement*

**Ayon Shahed**  
*Director of Strategic Development*



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

These five priorities are the areas of focus to address the challenges identified in our environmental scan.

**Based on an empowerment philosophy, the** operating principles of Choices for Youth state that programming must meet the needs of young people, promote flexibility and innovative response, and be designed and evaluated in partnership with them.

The purpose of the CFY strategic planning process is to step back, evaluate the organization's course, and ensure that programs offered at Choices for Youth are aligned with and meet the needs of at-risk and homeless youth within the context of our community.

The three-year period of this strategic plan will be a time of enriching CFY's approach to its work. CFY will continue to innovate on program offerings to have the best possible

impact on the lives of at-risk and homeless youth. Concurrently, we will be building upon the foundations of the organization to deliver the ambition of those programs with effectiveness and excellence.

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**The following five strategic priorities** are CFY's response to the challenges and opportunities identified during the eight month environmental scan that was completed by the strategic planning team, through consultations and interviews with staff, management, board members, external experts, community partners and young people. ■

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Following the methodology and process outlined in this report, CFY is proud to share the Strategic Priorities that will lead the organization through 2016/17 – 2019/20



YOUTH HOUSING  
& SUPPORTS

## YOUTH HOUSING & SUPPORTS

Offer diverse and appropriate housing and supports, as well as transformative programs for at-risk and homeless youth.



EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE  
& UNIFYING CULTURE

## EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE & UNIFYING CULTURE

Strengthen our culture and support our people by evolving our philosophical approach to performance, leadership, learning and culture.



PROVINCIAL PLAN TO END  
YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

## PROVINCIAL PLAN TO END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Lead efforts, help define, and engage key partners towards the development of a plan to end youth homelessness in the province.



SECTOR-WIDE  
LEADERSHIP

## SECTOR-WIDE LEADERSHIP

Embed research, innovation, shared learning, and entrepreneurship in our approach to delivering impact in the housing and homelessness sector, and more broadly towards greater social justice.



SUSTAINABLE  
OPERATIONS

## SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS

Operate with a focus on efficiency and future planning to ensure that we can continue to effectively delivery on our responsibility to young people.



## Choices For Youth **Board of Directors**

Jonathan Duke  
**Chair**

Senior Director, Group M5

Steve Power  
**Vice Chair**

Partner, Grant Thornton

Lynn Zurel  
**Treasurer**

Chartered Accountant, Stonebridge Capital

Andrew Woodland  
**Secretary**

Legal Counsel, City of St. John's

Ross Reid  
**Consultant**

Chris King  
**Partner, McInnes Cooper**

Paula Walsh  
**Officer, Royal Newfoundland Constabulary**

Jim Murray  
**President, JSM Electrical Ltd.**

Kathy LeGrow  
**President & CEO, Pratt Representatives**

Chris Peddigrew  
**Partner, Wadden Peddigrew Hogan**

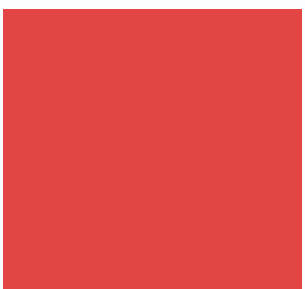
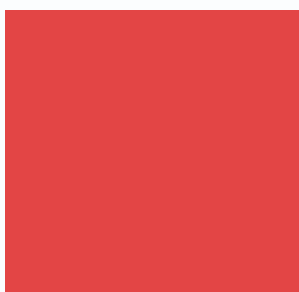
## A Note on the Organization & Implementation of the Strategic Plan

The process described herein was designed to capture a wide range of issues that the organization could choose to focus on, and embed a method of prioritizing those issues. In this way, the strategic plan is intended to be a management tool. In addition to guiding organizational efforts and decision making over the next three years, it can also be used as a record of the planning process and continuous reference guide to provide direction and motivation for the work being done.

The plan will be monitored and reported on by the Director of Strategic Development. For operational accountability, implementation of the plan is a shared responsibility that is being embraced by the core leadership at CFY. This consists of coordinators, management and the board of directors.

## Interviewees

Cheryl Coleman • Paula Soper • Andrew Harvey • Greg Quinn • Heather Roberts • Jane Henderson • Linda Warford • Sheldon Pollett • Colin Corcoran • Ayon Shahed • Erica Norman • Jill Doyle • Ashley MacDonald • Robert Cahill • Jolene Cooze • Morley Linstead • Bernie Ottenheimer • Stephen Gaetz • Angela Crockwell • Aisling Gogan • Colleen Simms • Ron Ellsworth • Travis Fowler • Chelsey Hicks • Sarah Brown • Jim Murray • Lynn Zurel • Andrew Woodland • Jon Duke • Chris Peddigrew • Chris King • Kathy Legrow • Robert Wilmot • Mica McCurdy • Melanie Redman • Katie Davies • Bruce Pearce • Kelly Holmes • Steve Power • Ross Reid • Paula Walsh • Kristi Zufelt • Input from other youth participants



# INTRODUCTION

This Strategic Plan is the result of an intensive eight-month process.

**The CFY 2016/17 - 2019/20 Strategic Plan** is a three-year action plan containing short-term, mid-term and long-term commitments for programs and operations at CFY.

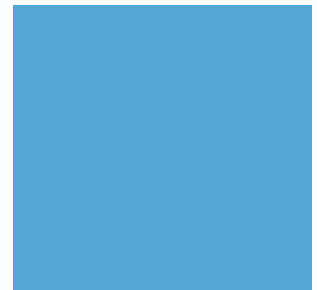
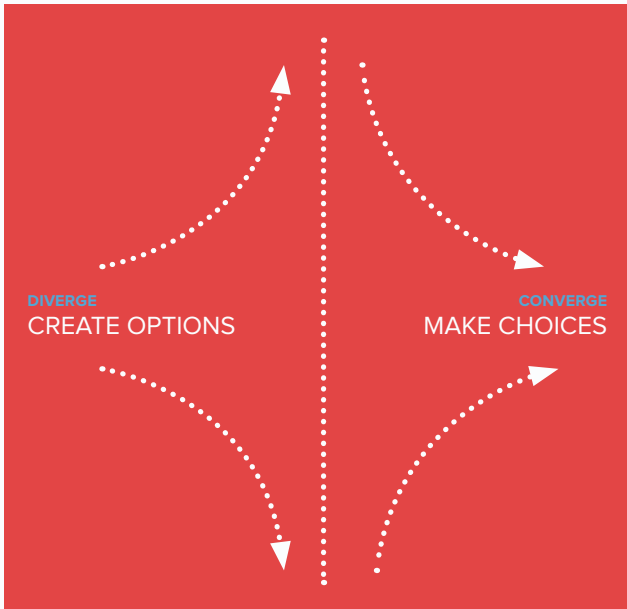
At its core, strategic planning identifies where the organization wants to be and how it is going to get there. Step-by-step, we examine the realities of the organization, its external environment, the challenges facing at-risk and homeless youth, and how this affects the future of the organization. Strategic planning influences the services we provide and how we provide them, our organizational design, our roles, our performance goals, and our financial priorities.

Since 2006, CFY has used three-year strategic planning cycles to determine the overall direction and goals of the organization.

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**This process has fostered an atmosphere of deeper engagement, including a richer shared understanding of the planning process and greater institutional investment in how this plan is implemented.**

**Figure 1:** Our planning process utilized divergent and convergent phases to ensure a broad set of conversations and ideas.



During past planning processes, we brought together staff, management, community stakeholders and youth for a one-day retreat. Together the group discussed all elements of strategy, followed by an official report and regular check-ins.

**This time, our process is different.** This strategic plan was developed through an eight-month long process involving management, the board of directors, community groups, external experts, staff, and youth. The strategic planning team guided our stakeholders through a process which asked them to reflect on CFY's mission, vision, and values that form our approach.

Our process embraced alternating divergent

and convergent phases (Figure 1) to ensure a broad and diverse set of relevant information was used to inform the commitments within the strategic plan.

This process has fostered an atmosphere of deeper engagement, including a richer shared understanding of the planning process and greater institutional investment in how this plan is implemented.

With the publishing of this strategic plan, and the next phase beginning, we can see that the planning process has been as transformative for the organization as the actions proposed in this document. ■

This development of this plan included Choices For Youth management, the board of directors, community groups, external experts, staff, and youth.





 CHOICES FOR YOUTH

# OUR HISTORY

We believe  
that all young  
people have  
potential.

**Choices for Youth was founded in 1990** with the closing of the Mount Cashel orphanage. From the very beginning, the organization has focused on providing vulnerable youth with choices regarding the decisions that affect their lives. Over a 25 year history, our philosophy has evolved from an in-care model to a harm-reduction and housing first approach. Fundamentally, we work from an empowerment and social justice lens believing that all young people have potential and that with the right set of supports, we can help them work towards their goals. Today, Choices for Youth

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**From the very beginning, the organization has focused on providing vulnerable youth with choices regarding the decisions that affect their lives.**

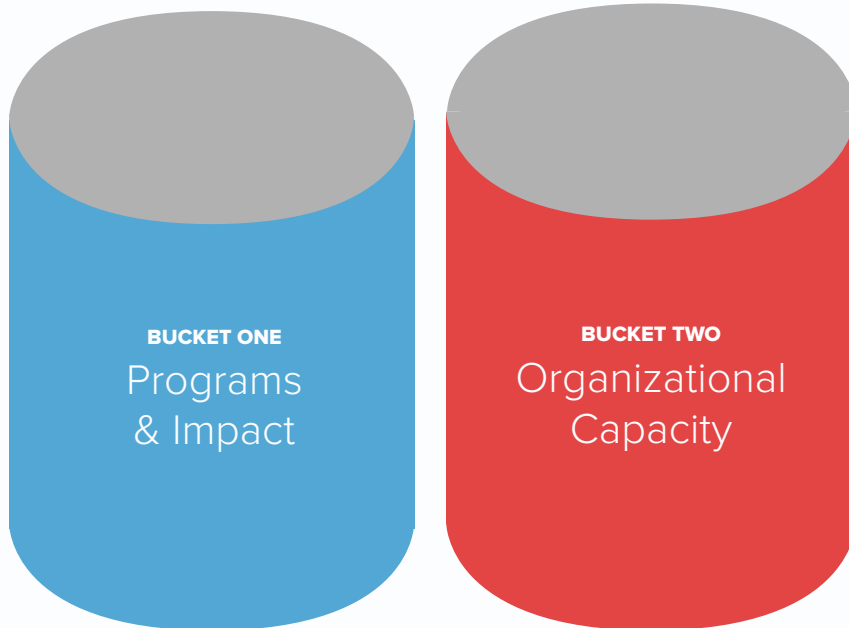
is a leading community agency that supports at-risk and homeless youth secure stable housing, education and employment. We tackle incredibly complex issues with an innovative spirit and a belief in possibility. ■

# METHODOLOGY

## The strategic planning team consists of two process leads:

Jill Doyle and Ayon Shahed. Oversight and approval came from the management team members and the board of directors.

The strategic planning team examined two distinct “buckets” to determine guiding priorities and investment decisions as Choices for Youth looks ahead to the next three years.



The process leads pursued topics that were less related to their day-to-day roles to provide a more objective and equitable perspective.

To better provide an objective and equitable perspective on the subject matter, the process leads chose to pursue the topic less related to their day-to-day roles at CFY. Jill Doyle (Program Coordinator, Outreach & Youth Engagement) examined operations, while Ayon Shahed (Director of Strategic Development) examined programming.

The process was bookended by the management team. This ensured that pre-existing priorities at the management table did not overly influence the outcome, and that the voice of youth, staff and partners were better represented. ■



# ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY

## VISION

**Choices for Youth is a dynamic, progressive, youth-focused organization that strives to improve quality of service, so as to enhance young people's lives and enable them to meet their goals.**

## MISSION

**A community-based, not-for-profit organization which provides youth with a range of supportive housing options, access to a variety of services that promote healthy personal development, and a sense of belonging within an environment of respect, tolerance, peace, and equality.**

**Choices for Youth strives to be a model of diversity and inclusion, and our board members, staff, volunteers, and program participants reflect the many faces, cultures, identities, abilities, and walks of life that make up our province. We are a learning-centred organization that values the perspectives and contributions of all people, and strive to incorporate the needs and values of diverse communities into the design and implementation of inclusive programs.**

We respect, value, celebrate, and welcome racialized people, all sexual orientations, women and trans people, Aboriginal and First People, people with disabilities, with mental illness, and those from all social strata.

## OUR CORE VALUES

- Act with empathy and kindness
- Choose to see the potential.
- Cultivate safe, inclusive spaces, and promote diversity.
- Work hard, with boundless ambition and strategic excellence.
- Inspire hope, and create opportunities that empower.

## OUR CULTURAL COMMITMENTS

1

### START WITH WHY

- Putting young people first
- Being champions for social justice
- Connecting to our individual sense of purpose

2

### CARE FOR ONE ANOTHER

- Feeling like family
- Building relationships based on trust and respect
- Understanding one another through conversations

3

### BE AGILE

- Responding to changing needs
- Striving to learn continuously
- Fostering innovation

*CFY is a registered Canadian charity #13088 9942 RR0001*



# SCHEDULE



## September

Interviews with management team, community and government partners, and experts to define thematic portfolios pertaining to Bucket 1.

Interviews with management team, board of directors and experts to define thematic portfolios pertaining to Bucket 2.

## October

Interviews with youth and staff to explore tangible actions and relative weighting of thematic portfolios pertaining to Bucket 1.

Interviews with staff, experts and board of directors to explore tangible actions and relative weighting of thematic portfolios pertaining to Bucket 2.

## October to November

Compile all information and develop preliminary document of entire set of findings and recommendations.

## January

Management team presented with findings and recommendations. Over a full day retreat and a half day meeting the management team collectively proceeds to make decisions based on the findings.

## February

Process leads rearrange and reorganize set of decisions into a comprehensive set strategic of commitments.

## March

Full day retreats with the management team, coordinators and the board of directors in order to create space for new input, modifications and to gather additional insights.

Integrate feedback from coordinators and board of directors and compile a final set of strategic commitments.

## April

Present strategic commitments to board of directors for approval.

SEEK  
APPROVAL  
ON PROCESS

## 20 INTERVIEWS

- MANAGEMENT
- EXTERNAL EXPERTS
- BOARD OF DIRECTORS
- NATIONAL PARTNERS

## 31 INTERVIEWS

- COORDINATORS & STAFF
- YOUTH
- BOARD OF DIRECTORS
- EXTERNAL EXPERTS

FIVE COORDINATORS  
FIVE STAFF  
TEN YOUTH

### PROGRAMS & IMPACT BUCKET 1

### ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY BUCKET 2

DIVERGE  
CREATE  
OPTIONS

THREE COORDINATORS  
ONE STAFF MEMBER  
FOUR BOARD MEMBERS  
THREE EXTERNAL EXPERTS

#### GOAL

DEFINE SET OF  
EXPLORATORY  
THEMES WITHIN EACH  
BUCKET

#### GOAL

DIVE DEEP TO EXTRACT IDEAS AND ACTIONS,  
AS WELL AS UNDERSTAND THE RELEVANT  
IMPORTANCE OF DIFFERENT THEMES

REVIEW,  
COMPARE  
& COMPILE

FULL DAY  
MANAGEMENT  
MEETING

CATEGORIZE  
COMMITMENTS

COMPILE  
& WRITE  
DOCUMENT

SEEK BOARD  
APPROVAL

SHARE BACK  
AND FINALIZE

LEADERSHIP RETREAT &  
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

Strategic  
Priorities Defined



# OUR STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

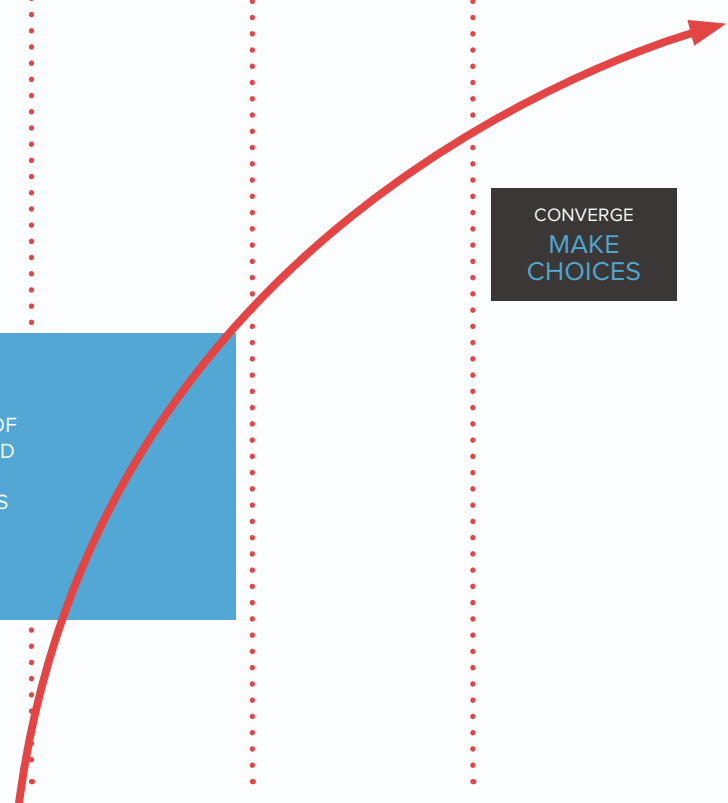
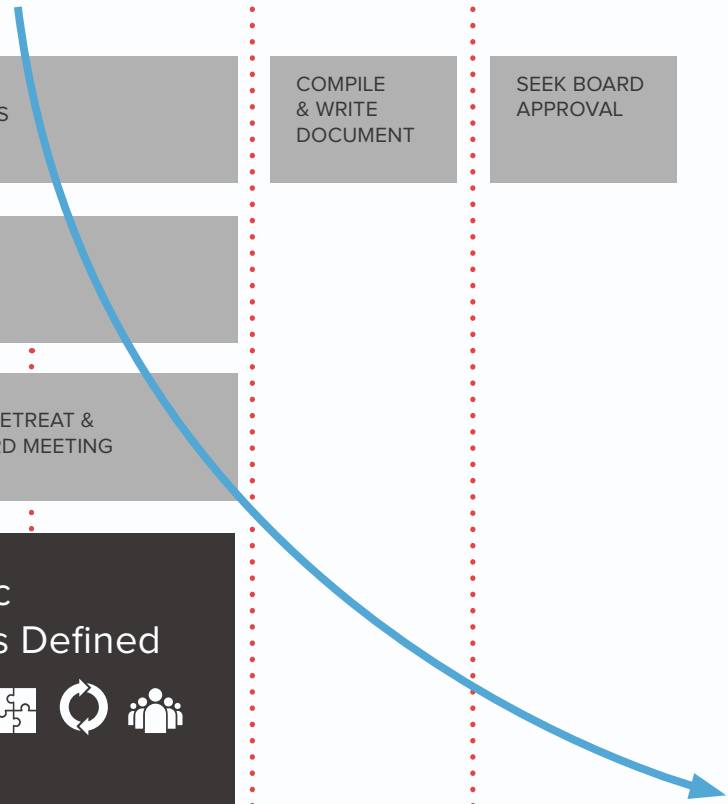
**GOAL**

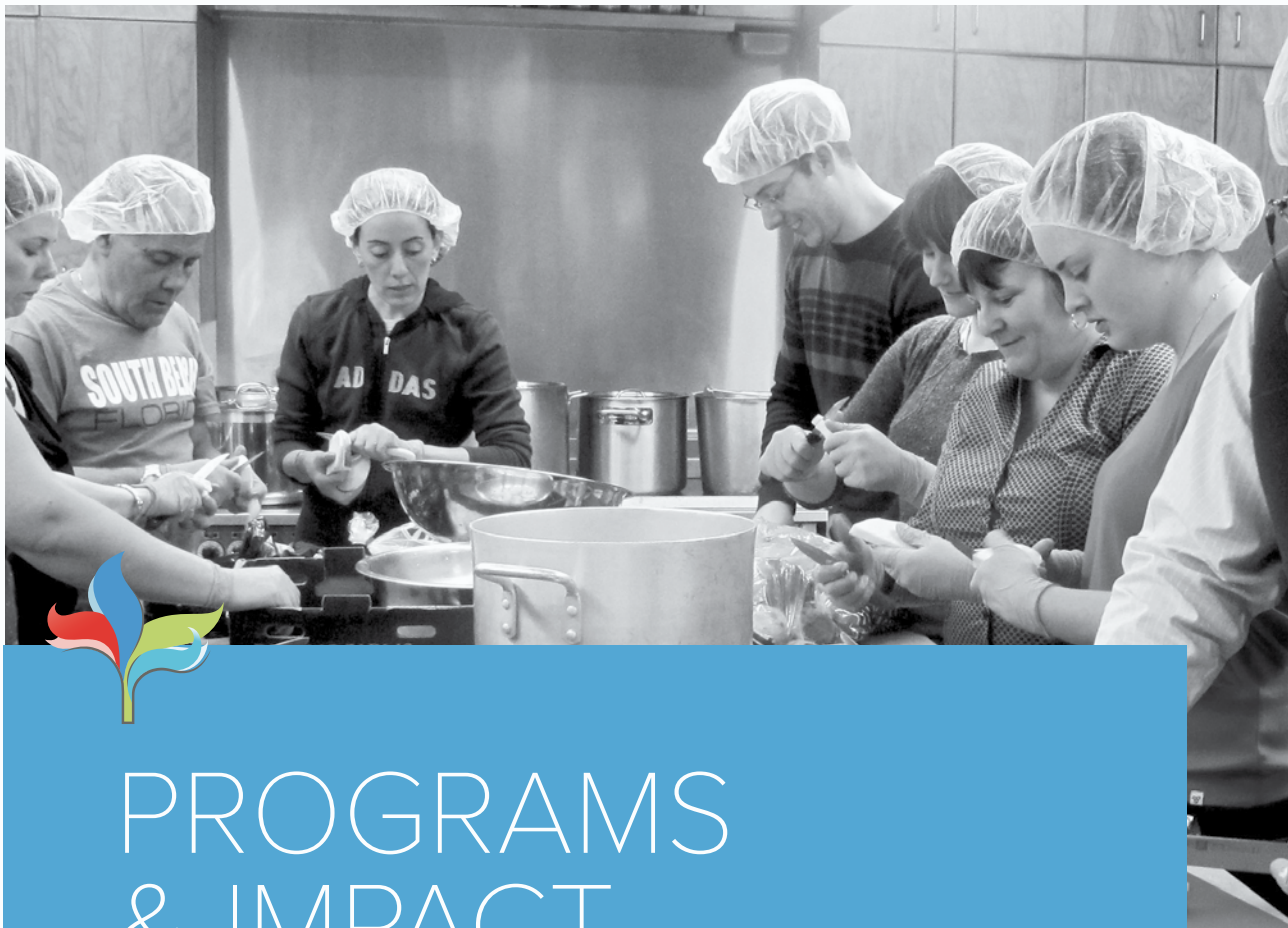
ANALYZE,  
DISCUSS,  
AND MAKE  
DECISIONS.

**GOAL**

MAKE SENSE OF  
DECISIONS AND  
CATEGORIZE  
COMMITMENTS

CONVERGE  
MAKE  
CHOICES





# PROGRAMS & IMPACT

## Ambition Statement

Design program offerings to have the best possible impact on the lives of at-risk and homeless youth.

**This part of the process attempted to capture** a wide range of issues that the organization could choose to focus on, and embedded a method of prioritizing those issues. Ultimately, the process delivered a set of organizational priorities to guide investments into program areas.

First, thematic categories were created based on input from experts, community and government partners, and management team members on specific issues that CFY is well-positioned to explore, or issues that were recommended by experts to invest in, in

order to deliver positive impact to at-risk and homeless youth.

Then, youth, program coordinators and full time staff shared their insights, independently ranked thematic portfolios, and advised on tangible short-term, mid-term and long-term actions that could be taken within each thematic portfolio. Youth rankings were weighted more heavily than staff rankings of thematic portfolios. The lists of tangible actions were aggregated to provide a set of actions that can be applied as goals for each thematic portfolio. ■





# ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

## Ambition Statement

Build the foundations of an organization that can deliver the ambition of Bucket 1 with effectiveness and excellence.

**Similar to Bucket 1, this part of the process** attempted to capture a wide range of themes that the organization could choose to focus on, and embeds a method of prioritizing identified themes.

First, national partners, the management team, and the board of directors generated a list of thematic portfolios for CFY to

pursue, organizing areas of focus regarding organizational capacity.

Then, program coordinators, the board of directors, and other identified NGOs independently provided their perspectives, ranked the thematic portfolios and advised on tangible short-term, mid-term and long-term actions related to each thematic portfolio. ■

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



**YOUTH HOUSING & SUPPORTS**



**PROVINCIAL PLAN TO END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS**



**EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE & UNIFYING CULTURE**



**SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS**



**SECTOR-WIDE LEADERSHIP**

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



### PRIORITY

# YOUTH HOUSING & SUPPORTS

**Offer diverse and appropriate housing and supports, as well as transformative programs for at-risk and homeless youth.**

We are excited to build another valuable resource and program hub for the community.

**At CFY, to continuously enhance our service delivery, and better understand the gaps specific to “higher risk” youth, we need to better understand what we do and how we do it.**

As a housing agency, there are decisions we make every day that shape our programs, and thus, affect the level of service that our clients receive. From our intake methods, to how we staff residential programs, to how we engage with landlords, each element must be attuned to the needs of our clients, while working in concert with all other programs within the organization.

For example, mental health supports have become integral to the discussion of youth homelessness. It is clear that homeless youth experience high rates of poor mental health, and that many youth are immersed in an environment characterized by substantial risk. Despite the frequent mental health challenges of homeless youth, the majority are not receiving any form of treatment. As such, our mental health services must be fully realized and as robust as our ability to offer housing solutions. To achieve this, we are committed to working with our partners to bring on-site counselling services to CFY by applying a distributed healthcare model and, ultimately, enabling youth to access mental health support while they are

**Mental health supports have become integral to the discussion of youth homelessness.**

waiting for longer term care.

Within our staff, we have tremendous capacity for education and training, and have offered many valuable educational opportunities for young people. One of our commitments is to compile a listing of all existing workshops, and move towards offering regularly scheduled educational opportunities for youth coming to CFY, such as GED, literacy and leadership.

Over the next three years, CFY will continue work to construct, open and operate the Young Parents Resource Centre (YPRC). The YPRC will provide housing and supports for 16 vulnerable young mothers and their children, a family resource centre, an expanded Momma Moments program, a daycare facility and on-site clinical health services.

Launching a capital campaign for YPRC is an incredible undertaking, and construction even more so. CFY has successfully managed large projects before, including the development The Lilly building, and we are excited to build another valuable resource and program hub for the community. ■

## Underlying Themes



COORDINATION

# SHORT TERM • 3-12 MONTHS

## YOUTH HOUSING & SUPPORTS



Complete a review of CFY's current housing options to explore methods of enhancing our service delivery, as well as to better understand gaps specific to "higher risk" youth.

### EXAMPLES:

- \* Critical staffing for residential programs
- \* Opportunities for better coordination between housing programs
- \* Operating and intake practices for various housing programs
- \* Collaboration or centralization models to conceptualize how all the various elements of our work can fit together

The findings will serve as a baseline for related mid-term and long-term objectives.



OPERATIONS

Offer annual workshops specific to the Tenancy Act, Landlord Rights and Tenant Rights, both for youth and staff.



COORDINATION

Continue preliminary work to launch the Young Parents Resource Centre capital campaign.

The YPRC will provide housing and supports for 16 young moms and their children, and include a family resource centre, a day care facility and on-site clinical health services. This model will incorporate wrap-around supports for young families so they can thrive and reach their goals in a supported environment.



COMMUNICATIONS

Formalize in-house counselling program at CFY.

One of the biggest barriers to success for young people is not having accessible mental health services and supports. By focusing on addressing this gap, youth will be able to access interim mental health support while they are waiting for longer term care.

### EXAMPLES:

- Description of the program, what it offers and its operational capacity
- Accountability structures and supervision models
- Dedicated space
- Shifting operational elements to Master's students on long-term placements at CFY



OPERATIONS

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### YOUTH HOUSING & SUPPORTS SHORT TERM CONTINUED...



COORDINATION

Compile all existing workshops for youth and using a lens of prevention to determine a foundational set of workshops that will be offered regularly at CFY.

We have tremendous capacity, knowledge and skills within our staff. This has resulted in many valuable workshops for young people.



COORDINATION

Work with the Youth Leadership Council to help them achieve success as defined by their own strategic plan document.

The YLC are the voice for all young people who come through the doors of CFY. By supporting their initiatives, we are empowering them realize their goals in breaking down barriers for other youth.



COORDINATION

Work with the Youth Leadership Council to collaboratively explore how to make their program accessible to more youth based on levels of responsibility and commitment.



## Underlying Themes



COORDINATION



OPERATIONS



OPERATIONS



COMMUNICATIONS



COMMUNICATIONS



COORDINATION



COMMUNICATIONS



COORDINATION

# MID-TERM • 12-24 MONTHS

## YOUTH HOUSING & SUPPORTS



Build a cohesive overarching housing program at Choices for Youth that integrates housing options, housing supports and relevant findings from the review of current options at CFY.

### EXAMPLES:

- Explore purchasing properties
- Developing a centralized intake for Choices for Youth
- Implementing a landlord engagement plan
- Restructuring housing options and supports
- Developing a CFY housing portfolio

Review and update policies and procedures to ensure safety of both youth and staff in all CFY spaces and in all potential interactions between youth and staff.

Create CFY alumni engagement opportunities.

### EXAMPLES:

- \* Alumni events and socials
- \* Alumni storytelling and written contributions
- \* Alumni featured at events

Launch the Young Parents Resource Centre capital campaign.

### CONTINGENT ON:

Securing resources to hire a dedicated Capital Campaign Manager.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

## YOUTH HOUSING & SUPPORTS SHORT TERM CONTINUED...



COORDINATION

Create a quiet room at the Outreach & Youth Engagement Centre for youth.

The OYE Centre is a busy place with lots happening most of the time. Sometimes though youth need a space that is quiet and calm where they can feel safe and grounded.

### CONTINGENT ON

Assessment and availability of physical spaces.



COORDINATION

Engage partners in order to pursue better access to mental health services for at-risk youth using a distributed healthcare access model.

Specifically, develop on-site access to mental health services at CFY sites, starting with the Outreach & Youth Engagement Centre.



COORDINATION

Create better access to health care services in the downtown core through active leadership with the Downtown Healthcare Collaborative.

This will include the assessment of physical and human resources to support care options at our sites.



COORDINATION

Create a suite of educational opportunities for youth coming to CFY including GED, literacy and leadership.

### CONTINGENT ON:

Partnership with other youth serving agencies and their capacity to contribute to a broader educational agenda.



COMMUNICATIONS



OPERATIONS

Develop a fully costed model for a Family Reconnect program at CFY.


When appropriate, the best option for all of us is to have healthy, supportive relationships that foster a sense of belonging. By intervening early with youth who experience homelessness, the focus on family reconnection is paramount. By having such a program connected to CFY, we will be able to nurture those relationships and potentially help youth from becoming homeless in the first place.

# LONG TERM • 24-36 MONTHS

## YOUTH HOUSING & SUPPORTS




Underlying Themes



COORDINATION

Begin construction of the YPRC.

**CONTINGENT ON:**  
A successful capital campaign.




OPERATIONS

Secure on-site mental services at the Outreach & Youth Engagement Centre.

**CONTINGENT ON:**  
Relationships and a successful rationale around distributed healthcare access, specific to mental illness.

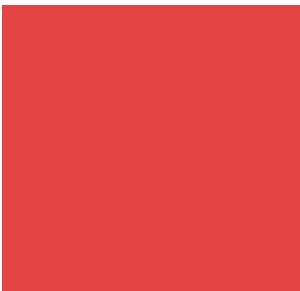


COORDINATION



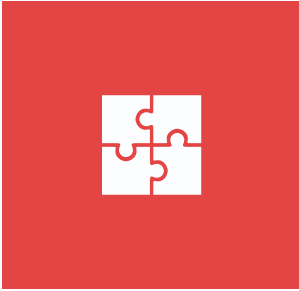
COORDINATION

Utilize the Family Reconnect Program model as a basis for proposals in order to secure resources and start operations.





STRATEGIC  
PRIORITIES



 **PRIORITY**

# EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE & UNIFYING CULTURE

Strengthen our culture and support our people by evolving our philosophical approach to performance, leadership, learning and culture.

Culture is the invisible connective tissue that holds us together.

**Working with at-risk and homeless youth** starts with believing in their potential. In the same way, we need to be certain that CFY is a place where our staff are supported, recognized, and encouraged to grow. Culture is the invisible connective tissue that holds us together. For CFY, fostering a unified culture of support means thinking about how we support our people.

It means establishing core training needs for CFY staff, and implementing a training schedule for sessions like trauma-informed practice, First Aid, coaching skills, and ASIST.

It means helping leaders develop capacity,

knowledge and skills in coaching, and reimagining our approach to performance and professional development plans for staff.

It means thinking about our responsibility as a part of the social justice movement, ensuring that equity, inclusion, safety, and diversity are always a part of the conversation.

With the growth of the organization, we also recognize that there is a real need for organizational capacity related to human resources to support the day-to-day needs of teams and staff, while keeping an eye on broader topics of employee wellness, organizational values, creating inviting spaces and social justice. ■

## Underlying Themes



HUMAN RESOURCES



HUMAN RESOURCES



HUMAN RESOURCES



HUMAN RESOURCES



OPERATIONS

# SHORT TERM • 3-12 MONTHS

EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE & UNIFYING CULTURE



Identify or create opportunities for staff to work on initiatives relating to community, provincial or national agendas and partner organizations.

Explore what “wellness” means for staff at CFY to inform how the organization can best support employee wellness.

By focusing on employee wellness, there is an acknowledgment that we understand and appreciate the job demands that employees face. Supported employees feel more connected to their work and feel valued by their employer which in turn promotes wellness

Review and update employee handbook for new hires.

Create an HR toolkit for managers and coordinators.

Develop capacity, knowledge and skills in coaching within the leadership team at CFY.

**CONTINGENT ON:**

Securing resources and partners to bring coaching expertise and experience.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

## EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE & UNIFYING CULTURE SHORT TERM CONTINUED...



HUMAN RESOURCES



OPERATIONS

Begin intentionally operationalizing organizational values and cultural commitments.

This translates to how CFY comes together as a team around staff experiences and how we create opportunities and spaces that reflects our values.



HUMAN RESOURCES



OPERATIONS

Complete a diversity assessment of the organization.

Being a diverse organization is about more than being open to diverse youth or youth issues. It's also about policies, leadership, diversity with employees and board members and with our approach to our work. This commitment will begin to explore where we are as an organization when we examine diversity more globally.



HUMAN RESOURCES



OPERATIONS

Review and update approach and practice around performance and professional development plans for staff to create a more direct and intentional link between performance and CFY's vision, mission and core values.



OPERATIONS



COMMUNICATIONS

Develop a structured internal communications plan to facilitate a broader feeling of connectedness and awareness across the organization, and to ensure information is shared between management and staff.



OPERATIONS

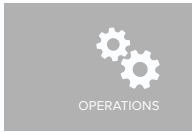
Revise and update board and staff recruitment packages to include explicit commitment to social justice, or a desire to explore and understand social justice.



HUMAN RESOURCES

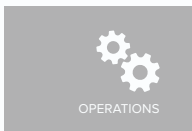
# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

## EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE & UNIFYING CULTURE SHORT TERM CONTINUED...

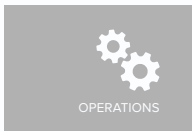


Introduce social justice topics into current format of special board meetings.

The board of directors performs an integral role in the success of CFY and the young people we serve. Connecting board members to the day to day work at CFY as well as broad issues that the organization is tackling, gives them a very real understanding of the challenges facing at-risk and homeless youth.



Propose satisfaction and assessment surveys for members of the board.



Create new opportunities for board member engagement. These will be board-driven and voluntary.

**EXAMPLES:**

- Being a program champion
- Media engagements
- Event champions



## Underlying Themes

# MID-TERM • 12-24 MONTHS

## EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE & UNIFYING CULTURE



OPERATIONS

Establish core training needs for CFY staff, implement schedule and plan accordingly.

### EXAMPLES:

- Trauma informed practice
- First Aid
- Coaching skills
- ASIST



HUMAN RESOURCES



OPERATIONS

Create a dedicated HR position within the organization.

The organization has grown substantially over the last number of years and employee's need additional HR support. The commitment will be to explore options that would best suit the current HR needs at CFY.

### CONTINGENT ON:

Ability to secure or divert financial resources for capacity building and organizational development, specific to HR.



HUMAN RESOURCES



HUMAN RESOURCES

Complete assessment of workload management for various positions across the organization.



HUMAN RESOURCES

Begin succession planning and developing leadership training plans.

Planning for change and being prepared for change is a key aspect when it comes to the success of any organization. Succession planning and leadership training will allow CFY to be forward thinking regarding key positions within the organization and promote leadership.



OPERATIONS



HUMAN RESOURCES

Build a diversity plan for the organization.



## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



### PRIORITY

# PROVINCIAL PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS

Lead efforts, help define, and engage key partners towards the development of a plan to end youth homelessness in the province.

The next three years represents an opportunity for the province to take a strategic approach to ending youth homelessness.

**From researchers across Canada, local studies and our own practice, we know the underlying causes of youth homelessness:** family breakdown, poverty, childhood trauma, addictions, mental illness, extreme forms of violence and abuse, disrupted educations and involvement with child protection. We also know that there is a better way to address these issues. That better way is being proven and is well-defined with examples across the country.

As the largest youth homelessness organization in the province, we have a responsibility to lead the efforts to help form a plan that embodies a smarter, and more effective approach to tackling youth homelessness.

The development of a **Plan to End Youth Homelessness in Newfoundland & Labrador** is the single most important initiative in our field today in the response to youth homelessness in this province.

No single entity can bring about the systemic and fundamental changes needed to end youth homelessness in NL. We must secure a government counterpart to co-lead the development of the plan, work effectively with

community partners and continue to our work with End Homelessness St. John's, supporting and collaborating on the important work that is being done in the field, as well as in the boardroom.

Across Canada, communities have come together around this issue. In Alberta, the province has initiated a 'family first'-oriented 10-Year Plan to prevent and reduce youth homelessness. Now in its fifth year, Alberta is leading the way in reducing youth homelessness with programs that are shifting the province's response away from just emergency services and towards prevention, housing and supports. With a clear commitment to lead and support the development of a plan that works in Newfoundland & Labrador, the next three years represents an opportunity for the province to take a strategic approach to ending youth homelessness.

As we continue our appeal to citizens, organizations and the government, we want to shine with the passion and professionalism that we know this project deserves. ■

## Underlying Themes

# SHORT TERM • 3-12 MONTHS

## PROVINCIAL PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS



COMMUNICATIONS

Develop and implement targeted engagement strategy with provincial government, the city, and community groups towards the development of a provincial plan to end youth homelessness.



COMMUNICATIONS

Secure government counterpart to co-lead the development of a plan to end youth homelessness.

### CONTINGENT ON:

Relationships with government departments and key individuals, as well as commitment from government to partner on developing a Provincial Plan to End Youth Homelessness in NL.



COORDINATION

Design public awareness or engagement opportunities specifically towards the development of a provincial plan to end youth homelessness.



COMMUNICATIONS



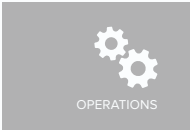
COORDINATION

Support and collaborate with End Homelessness St. John's as part of the St. John's Community Plan to End Homelessness.

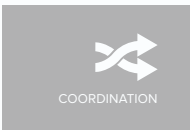
Collective impact and collaborative approaches to addressing social change is critical for making systems change for our clients. That collective voice is an important part of the work and advocacy we do for young people.



Underlying Themes



OPERATIONS



COORDINATION

# MID TERM • 12-24 MONTHS

PROVINCIAL PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS

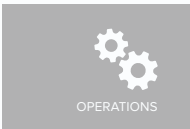



Work with government, national and community partners to develop and implement a provincial plan to end youth homelessness.

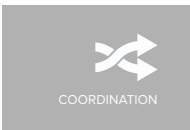
**CONTINGENT ON:** Securing the provincial government as a key partner in supporting the development and implementation of a Provincial Plan to End Youth Homelessness in NL.

# LONG TERM • 24-36 MONTHS

PROVINCIAL PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS



OPERATIONS



COORDINATION

Continue working with partners to end youth homelessness in NL.



STRATEGIC  
PRIORITIES



## PRIORITY

# SECTOR-WIDE LEADERSHIP

Embed research, innovation, shared learning, and entrepreneurship in our approach to delivering impact in the housing and homelessness sector, and more broadly towards greater social justice.

How we handle the challenges of the next three years will define us as a leader.

**Being a leader means having the vision and the strength to create, to innovate, and to show others what is possible.** In the sector of youth homelessness, we are leaders. Over the next three years, we want to think and act with a sense of **Sector-Wide Leadership**. As a lead agency in the homelessness sector, we can work with researchers to deepen our collective understanding of issues that impact at-risk and homeless youth in NL. Research can drive greater understanding and inspire new action to solve problems.

Our work in social enterprise is blazing a trail, and showing us ways to build skills and employ young people that are more impactful and sustainable. As we expand on the practical

## **We want to think and act with a sense of Sector-Wide Leadership**

expertise to support these initiatives, we will also be building new skills and seeking new partners.

The work we do with and for young people is not done in isolation. It takes multiple people, partnerships, community groups, supporters and advocates to get there. We value these relationships and want to ensure that the successes and challenges experienced within this sector are known to everyone.

How we handle the challenges of the next three years will define us as a leader, and it will define how effective we can truly be. ■

## Underlying Themes



COMMUNICATIONS



COORDINATION



COMMUNICATIONS



COORDINATION



COMMUNICATIONS



COMMUNICATIONS



OPERATIONS



COMMUNICATIONS



OPERATIONS

# SHORT TERM • 3-12 MONTHS

## SECTOR-WIDE LEADERSHIP



Establish a research (influence and attract) agenda for the organization.

Research can drive greater understanding and inspire new action to solve problems. As a lead agency in the homelessness sector we will aim to work with researchers to deepen our collective understanding of issues that impact at-risk and homeless youth in NL.

Establish an agenda and evaluation framework for social enterprise initiatives.

Significant opportunities can be created that build skills and employ young people in a way that is self-sustaining. By utilizing thoughtful and prudent processes, we can ensure that social enterprises contribute to the lives at-risk and homeless youth in an impactful and sustainable way.

Publish social enterprise white paper to help define provincial social enterprise strategy.

Create Social Enterprise 101 sessions for youth and staff.

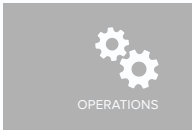
This will share overview, criteria and processes as it relates to new social enterprises at CFY, and build value and understanding regarding how social enterprise can be applied as a sustainable option to help achieve outcomes specific to employment and housing stability for youth.

Articulate CFY's Theory of Change in order to better understand our overarching model of impact, and as a resource for updating or developing program level logic models.

Theory of Change defines long-term goals and then maps backward to identify necessary preconditions to promote social change. Theory of Change explains the process of change by outlining linkages in an initiative, i.e., its shorter-term, intermediate, and longer-term outcomes.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

**SECTOR-WIDE LEADERSHIP**  
SHORT TERM CONTINUED...

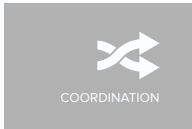


Create a data reporting and impact evaluation framework for the organization.




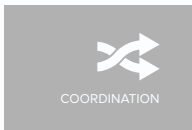
Host regular partner agency appreciation events.

The work we do with and for young people is not done in isolation. It takes multiple people, partnerships, community groups, supporters and advocates to get there. We value these relationships and want to ensure that all our partners know how important they are to the successes at CFY.



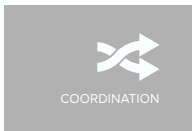
## MID TERM • 12-24 MONTHS

SECTOR-WIDE LEADERSHIP

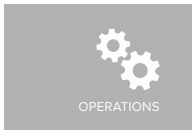
Influence and attract researchers in order to directly inform our practices and program models and to better understand the unique needs in Newfoundland & Labrador.

This will also be critical in supporting our efforts to impact systems and institutions impacting young people.



Convene government partners to share data reporting and evaluation framework as a starting point for future reporting systems.

**CONTINGENT ON:**  
Readiness of partner agencies and government departments to explore new approaches to data reporting and evaluation.



## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



### PRIORITY

# SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS

Operate with a focus on efficiency and future planning to ensure that we can continue to effectively delivery on our responsibility to young people.

We are moving  
from what  
simply works,  
to what works  
well.

**In 2013, CFY provided services and support** for 600 young people. Last year, we served over 1000. That's an increase of more than 40% in just three years.

To be effective in delivering impactful programs and offering long-term and systemic solutions, we must also look inward. Our goal, to this effect, is sustainability.

**Sustainable Operations** means operating with a focus on efficiency, future planning, and delivering on our promises to serve young people in need.

One element of this is financial planning. CFY is proud of its many partnerships with local businesses, governments and foundations. However, fluctuating economic conditions and changing priorities amongst funders is a potential risk that needs to be managed. For CFY, diversifying revenue streams means reducing that risk. To do this, we need a comprehensive long-range economic plan, encompassing everything from monthly giving campaigns to fundraising events. This also means setting financial targets for the new Social Enterprise initiatives: an expanding frontier for the organization, and what could be

**To be effective in delivering impactful programs and offering long-term and systemic solutions, we must also look inward.**

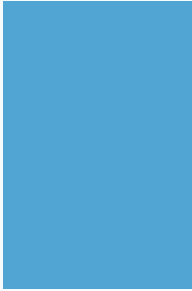
a major factor in our economic future.

When an organization develops sustainable operations, it is better prepared for unexpected revenue fluctuations and can avoid paralysis in times of austerity.

However, finance is just one piece. How are we managing our properties and physical spaces? Are our technological systems being maintained? Do we have a communications plan that gives voice to our people and programs? Do we have an emergency response in place for unexpected major expenditures?

In short, **Sustainable Operations** is about keeping our lights on and our doors open for the young people that depend on us every single day and making sure that we're there to help tomorrow, next year, and for as long as we're needed.

To make sure that happens, we are moving from what simply works, to what works well. ■



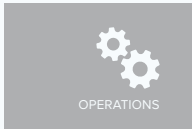
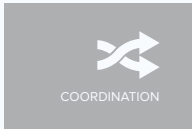
Underlying Themes

# SHORT TERM • 3-12 MONTHS

## SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS



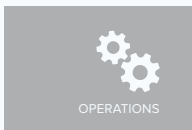
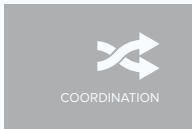

Conduct an assessment of the use and allocation of physical spaces.



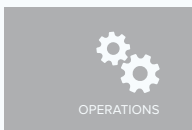
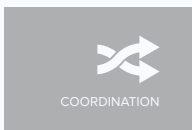
Diversify revenue streams with an intentional increase in the amount of unrestricted funds.

This will include:

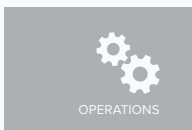
- A growing focus on individual monthly donors
- Social Enterprise agenda setting financial targets
- Accessing Federal funds



Improve budgeting process for all programs in partnership with coordinators and leadership from the finance team.

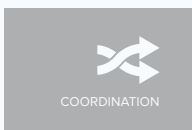


Update CFY servers.



Continue growing emergency fund for unexpected major expenditures.

**CONTINGENT ON:**  
Annual decision by board of directors based on year over year financial position of the organization.



## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS SHORT TERM CONTINUED...



OPERATIONS

Update financial policies and guidelines for the organization



COMMUNICATIONS

Develop a communications plan for the organization.

With an expanding set of programs and growing partnerships in the community, a communications plan will help to ensure effective community awareness and clear reporting of outcomes, while actively helping to break down the different forms of stigma faced by at-risk and homeless youth.



COORDINATION



OPERATIONS

Pilot internal weekly bulletin board for updates between programs.



COMMUNICATIONS

## MID TERM • 12-24 MONTHS

### SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS



OPERATIONS

Establish an overarching risk management plan for the organization as it relates to confidentiality, staffing, financial and legal risks.



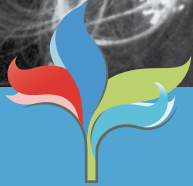
OPERATIONS

Linked directly to other initiatives and outputs of the Strategic Plan, review organizational structures to ensure that they reflect an intelligent and efficient approach to our evolving operations.



OPERATIONS

Develop financial plan for property and technological systems maintenance.



# THE PATH AHEAD

From the very beginning Choices For Youth has focused on providing vulnerable youth with choices regarding the decisions that affect their lives.

**Strategic plans are only as effective as the organization's ability to follow through on the commitments made within each priority.** To create a three-year-long work plan that anticipates changes in our economic and social context, we have developed structures

and gateposts to ensure that this plan effectively guides our upcoming initiatives, and continuously evaluates its progress. This section of the report will outline our approach to implementation.



# DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP

**Program coordinators, the management team, and the organization's board of directors** collectively make up the leadership at CFY. There is a dedicated effort to equip and empower this team to propel the organization towards greater impact and the commitments defined in the strategic plan.

Engaging the leadership in the early stages of strategic planning process has allowed each member to follow its

progress, and share in the ownership of the plan. Now, having built momentum throughout the planning phase, the leadership is ready to act as advocates during the implementation phase.

Furthermore, by design, this group of leaders is broadly based to ensure that all parts of the organization are connected to the plan through inspired and motivated leaders.

## MANAGEMENT TEAM PRIORITIES

**The management team at CFY oversees high-level operations and steers the organization in collaboration with the board of directors.** The management team is directly connected to the all of CFY's programs and impact reporting, communications and fund development efforts, social enterprise activities, financial and

administrative functions, human resources initiatives, and its strategic plan.

In 2015, in an effort to better support the organization, the Management Team established distinct roles on the team to complement our current set of activities. Currently, these are defined as follows:

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Oversees the whole organization and directly supports members on The Management Team.

### DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

*With Primary Responsibility for Social Enterprise*

Oversees all aspects of finance and general administration, and provides thought and operational leadership on the business development of strategic social enterprise opportunities.

### DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS

*With Primary Responsibility for Human Resource*

Oversees a specific set of programs, directly supports coordinators, and provides thought and operational leadership on human resource policies and initiatives.

### DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS

*With Primary Responsibility for Research Initiatives and Evaluation*

Oversees a specific set of programs, directly supports coordinators, and provides thought and operational leadership on the development and implementation of an organizational wide research agenda and evaluation system.

### DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

*Primary Responsibility for Strategic Alignment*

Oversees all aspects of fund development and communications, and provides thought and operational leadership on the organization's strategic direction and high-level initiatives.



## CENTRALIZED REPORTING & ACCOUNTABILITY

The role of the Director of Strategic Development, with a Primary Responsibility for Strategic Alignment, includes being tasked with developing regular reports to indicate

and highlight progress specific to the organization's strategic plan. This includes:

Tabling regular strategic plan updates at management meetings

Reporting to the board of directors bi-annually on the progress of the strategic plan

Engaging the management team, coordinators and the board of directors at annual gathering specific to the strategic plan

Checking in with and supporting the identification of leads for specific commitments within the strategic plan

Establishing narratives of success and/or learnings associated with each commitment

A key aspect of accountability is to provide clear insights on what the organization has learned by achieving or missing specific commitments within the strategic plan. For CFY, this means defining success more broadly than simply checking off specific commitments. For the purposes of the strategic plan, we are defining success as either achieving what a commitment describes and understanding how we achieved it, or not achieving what

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### Defining success more broadly than simply checking off specific commitments

a commitment describes and sharing why this is the case and what has been learned. ■



# CONCLUSION

**We have now officially begun the** implementation phase of the CFY 2016/17 - 2019/20 Strategic Plan.

With new perspective and clarity of purpose, CFY can move forward, confident that our programs and operations are ready to meet the needs of more at-risk and homeless youth within the community than ever before.

At its core, strategic planning identifies where the organization wants to be and how it is going to get there. Consequently, if our goal is increased organizational effectiveness and greater investment from our people, then every step of the way must be handled in the same

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**With new perspective and clarity of purpose, CFY can move forward, confident that our programs and operations are ready to meet the needs of more at-risk and homeless youth within the community than ever before.**

manner as the planning phase: with an openness to innovative approaches and collaborative action. ■



**START  
WITH WHY**

Building a Strong Foundation.  
Delivering Transformative Impact.

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**CHOICES FOR YOUTH**  
Strategic Plan 2016/17 - 2019/20