



Strategic Plan Updates 2023 Recap

Culture: Culture was a priority area for 2023. The team felt it was important to tackle this category first because we understand that a positive work culture and healthy relationships create the foundation for accomplishing the rest of our goals.

2023 Progress

- We tailored our interview process to emphasize a positive culture. We assess the applicants to ensure they are a good fit with our vision and mission.
- We incorporated the weekly Employee Spotlight, and Name that Tune.
- Committees are underway – the Health and Wellness committee organized pickleball, walks at the reservoir, cardio drumming, etc. Participants have the opportunity to win prizes to incentivize engagement. The Sunshine Committee coordinates monthly events to promote a positive culture through providing food, small notes of encouragement, games, etc. The agency holiday party provided an opportunity for all departments to spend time together and enjoy themselves.
- We have started the process of reviewing policies and procedures to provide clarification where needed and to create a more positive work culture through employee benefits when opportunities arise.
- Jenna sends out the development every week, which provides communication about upcoming events, new employees, Random Acts of Kindness nominations, and a trivia question where the first person with the correct answer receives a prize.
- Agency wide trainings with an emphasis on emotional intelligence and mental health are promoting team building, collaborating, and communication. We do potluck lunches for the trainings and eat together.
- Agency wide shared calendars help with efficiency and coordination.

Culture Summary – 2023 was a year of change, growth, and learning. We endured difficult times and we celebrated many successes. Going into 2024, our agency continues to morph into a healthier version of itself. It is our belief that we have made great strides to improve the culture of our agency and we will continue to improve throughout the next year.

2024 Goals

- Create an employee satisfaction survey to gain feedback from all staff on our strengths and areas to improve.

Resources: Expanding resources is one of the more difficult areas to tackle because of the level of coordination involved. The year ended with very promising developments as we secured grant funding to open more doors to partner with our community, provide crucial supports, and serve our most vulnerable youth.

2023 Progress

- Self-determined transportation is opening up more options for people who need transportation and want to use their waiver to fund it. We continue to encourage networking between providers/families and community support to enhance transportation options for individuals.
- Partnerships with both Family and Children First Council and Kaitlyn's Cottage are increasing our awareness of and ability to serve multi-system youth, a target population because we believe the earlier we can provide support, the higher chances of a success a family will have. We have found cost effective ways to fund our efforts through blended funding and grants.
- We established a partnership with Soil and Water and they have committed to providing summer camps for individuals with disabilities. We also have the opportunity to help fund camp options for multi-system youth through Kaitlyn's Cottage.

Resources Summary – 2023 got off to a slow start as we prioritized improving culture during the first quarter of the year. We ended the year on an extremely high note through the receipt of \$34,800 through the Keeping Families Together Grant and \$58,600 through the ARPA Grant.

2024 Goals

- Create a procedure for the implementation of respite care for before and after school for multi-system youth and families who need additional support.
- We are partnering with the county to provide adult changing tables and ADA signage in various county locations.
- We aspire to partner with a local park to build a barrier free bocce court to increase community integration.
- We will offer to purchase event and transportation vouchers for individuals with disabilities so that finances will not be a barrier to community participation. (ex. Ribfest, plays, county fair, Jazzfest)
- We plan to cover the cost of translation services for families who need assistance with meetings.
- We are purchasing a new television for the conference room and an owl (high definition camera and audio) to increase the ability for individuals to participate remotely.
- We will have the opportunity to pay peer leaders to mentor other self-advocates and provide inspiration for independent living.

Technology: The use of technology helps us all organize our lives and achieve higher levels of independence. As an agency that is striving for maximum efficiency and service coordinators who believe everyone should have access to technology that makes life easier, we have included the use of technology as a priority in our strategic plan.

2023 Progress

- We have new televisions in classrooms and conference areas for student learning, meetings, and training.
- We hosted DODD for board training on technology.
- The agency continues to reduce the use of paper and move to electronic communication methods.
- Paid Zoom accounts allow staff to stay connected during meetings that last longer than 45 minutes.
- We are utilizing Brittco for Incident Reports and Family Support Services to streamline processes and reduce the use of paper.
- The SSA Department, through discussions and training with staff, families, and providers have assisted them with becoming more familiar with how various forms of technology can provide support to individuals and their families, while also allowing for increased efficiency.

2024 Goals

- Continue to update computers per the schedule.
- Work through the retention schedule in order to eliminate unnecessary paper and utilize electronic filing systems.
- Increase security measures to protect confidential information.
- Increase use of technology by individuals served through discussion and training with staff, families and providers.

Engagement: this area relates to strengthening relationships with our community partners and other agencies to enhance the quality of our services.

2023 Progress

Hiring a full time Special Olympics and Community Inclusion Coordinator has gone a long way in enhancing both programs. Our basketball teams have doubled and we have goals to add more sports based upon the desires of the participants. The athletes are going to local schools for competitions to promote inclusion. Four athletes are participating in a leadership program to build their skills in the areas of sports education, advocacy, and leadership. Self-Advocacy is also growing steadily and the end of year parties provided a nice way for individuals to get to know Toby and one another better. Good Samaritan students are spending time with students at the other county schools through lunches, crafts, games, and volunteerism.

We host opportunities for local school students to come to Good Samaritan School to volunteer during holiday activities.

Agency staff and/or individuals served and their families volunteered at the Ribfest, Backpack Buddies, See the Able Not the Label Event, the Defiance County Fair, Animal and Me, Clean Up Your Parks Day, the Halloween Parade, Children's Lantern, Chocolate Walk, and Art in the Park.

Staff went into almost all the local public and parochial schools to read a book about inclusion to kindergarten students. Each student received a copy of the book which had a link to services on a QR code on the back cover.

2024 Goals

- We will continue our partnership with Soil and Water for the Grow With Us initiative that will end with a chili cookoff in the fall.
- We are starting a Speaker Series that will involve individuals with disabilities going throughout the community to discuss board services, their life experiences, and ways to get involved.
- We would like to fill the next possible board opening with an individual who is eligible for services.
- We want to create video testimonials about the impact of services on individuals and their families.

Other Noteworthy 2023 Accomplishments:

- Facilities/Safety Upgrades - new flooring throughout the building, security upgrades, more signage, two new buses, parking assignments to increase safety and reserve parking for visitors, no child left behind buzzers for buses.
- Increase in donations for Defiance County Special Olympics and Defiance County Self-Advocacy Group.
- In 2023 we put an emphasis on cultivating a well-rounded Leadership Team. This included the creation of the Human Resources Manager position, creating the roles of the Operations Manager and Facilities and Transportation Manager, and implementing a new Principal.