



# Strategic Plan 2024-2026

Adopted 8/1/2023



## FAMILY PATHS STRATEGIC PLAN FY 2024-2026

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### 2024-2026 Strategic Plan Executive Summary:

After three long years of delivering services through the COVID-19 pandemic and all its challenges, Family Paths has emerged well positioned to address the pressing needs of vulnerable children and families by strategically growing our programs, building new community connections, improving our systems and investing in our leadership.

As we look ahead, growth has three themes:

- ❖ Growth in scale to support and serve more families, with expanded services.
- ❖ Growth in the ways we seek to have an impact to fulfill our mission.
- ❖ Growth in our staff and internal leadership to support our staff.

Thank you to our Board and funders for their ongoing partnership. Thank you to our staff for their dedication and commitment to delivering high quality services. And most of all, thank you to the families who trust us with their hopes and their struggles, it is a privilege to walk beside you.

~Barbra Silver, LMFT  
Executive Director

### **Key findings:**

- Family Paths is flexible and adaptable to emerging trends and has a long track record of maintaining good relationships with key funders and community partners.
- We have been able to hire new clinicians and peer/family partners and invest in their training during a historical mental health workforce shortage.
- We grew community outreach, which brings new opportunities for partnerships and enhanced visibility.
- We successfully served new populations as a result of receiving new funding to serve young parents with juvenile justice involvement.
- We significantly grew our geographical reach due to computer access to our parenting classes.
- We see that parents have more options of where to get their parenting information and we see we have a role to play in supporting them.
- We are in a strong financial position, with healthy net income reserves to allow us to make strategic investments.

### **Key opportunities:**

- Innovate program designs to meet emerging needs of parents and youth and increase collaboration across our programs.
- Improve our workflow to support a primarily hybrid workforce who can work flexibly from both home and office and improve our internal systems to better support the operations of the agency.
- Bring in new revenue and plan for strategic growth.

### **Key areas of growth:**

Family Paths is committed to strategic growth that is in alignment with our mission to strengthen families. We will develop specific criteria to assess growth opportunities, so we make mindful choices with high likelihood of successful implementation and sustainability.

We will focus growth in three areas:

- Population: Increase our focus on young parents and those involved in juvenile justice and foster care as well as fathers and co-parenting support. Continue to prioritize BIPOC and LGBTQIA-2SP communities.
- Geography: Expand our geographical reach outside of Alameda County.
- Leadership: Invest in key leadership positions to set the stage for growth:
  - Hire an Chief Operating Officer to support operations and allow the Executive Director to focus on external relationships, Board development and innovative programming.
  - Hire a Development Director to seek out new revenue sources including larger foundations and government contracts.

### **Welcoming Statement**

Family Paths is a welcoming and inclusive agency dedicated to strengthening family relationships by providing mental health and supportive services with respect, integrity, compassion, and hope. It is important to us that every client feels welcome and safe, and that they receive treatment in a non-judgmental fashion.

We are a caring service agency that is willing to go the extra mile to support each other and our clients. We acknowledge that our clients come to us with many strengths, and we begin work “where they are at” to reach their desired goals. We know there is more than one path to reach a goal and we are here to support that journey.

We define a “parent” as anyone who emotionally and physically protects and is raising a child, regardless of biological ties. We know that each parent who seeks support from Family Paths is affected by their socio-economic context, and we value diversity in family structure.

We are committed to serving all families: This includes families that are multiracial, foster/resource families, LGBTQIA-2SP (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual/Ally, 2 Spirit, Poly) families, single parents, and kinship caregivers.

## Introduction

Founded in 1972, Family Paths has a long and rich history, which began as a 24/7 volunteer run parent support hotline. In the ensuing years we've become an agency that provides a wide range of mental health and supportive services for children and families. Our Parenting Stress Helpline continues to be the backbone of the agency and is what makes Family Paths unique among mental health and family support services in Alameda County by providing a strong, ever-present safety net for children and families. Family Paths is an acknowledged leader in the field of Parent Education and Fatherhood and Co-parenting and has been hired to provide training to other nonprofits and for-profit organizations in the Bay Area.

Having persevered through the COVID Pandemic, Family Paths has only become stronger. The Board and staff have continued to innovate with new and modified programs and flexible service delivery to serve an ever-broadening community both in terms of geography as well as clientele. For example, Family Paths is now serving teenage and young parents involved with the juvenile justice system to help them grow their parenting skills to best support their children.

We have emerged from the pandemic in healthy financial positioning. A key element of Family Paths' financial success is the excellent relationship we maintain with our government funders. Government funding is over 90% of our total revenues. Contrary to common wisdom, the well-known consulting company Bridgespan wrote a seminal article based on extensive research concluding that nonprofits that have over 70% of their funding coming from one source post the greatest growth over time. Thus, Family Paths is in a very sound financial position, with a high likelihood of continued and expanded funding in its primary funding source.

Although the official COVID-19 pandemic has ended, its impact on children and families persists. We are very aware that the United States Surgeon General issued a national youth mental health advisory raising the flag on the mental health crisis our society now faces:

*“Since the pandemic began, rates of psychological distress among young people have increased. The pandemic is most heavily affecting those who were already vulnerable. This includes youth with disabilities, racial and ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ youth, and other marginalized communities.”* [Read more information and download the advisory at: https://hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/priorities/youth-mental-health/](https://hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/priorities/youth-mental-health/)

Family Paths has an important role to play in addressing this crisis regionally, which we understand impacts not just vulnerable youth but also their parents/caregivers who love them. With recognition that there is also a national shortage of mental health clinicians, we are looking at new ways to reach diverse families and continue to build community partnerships to broaden and strengthen our reach.

Geographically, Family Paths is receiving parent education referrals from throughout Alameda County and increasingly from sources outside of the County, including from as far away as Los Angeles. The organization is seen as a leader in this field, and an organization that is continuing to raise the bar on the breadth and depth of its services. We see the growing volume of these referrals as a vote of confidence in our services as well as our ability as an organization to partner with other organizations.

As this broader environment of mental health services, parent education and family support continue to evolve, we aim to remain as forward thinking as possible, while remaining flexible and ready to adapt to new challenges. Being flexible and adaptive also includes changing the fundamental way we work together. We plan to continue a primarily hybrid work environment that was born out of necessity during a 3-year pandemic. This will require deliberate actions to enhance staff connections and communications and workflow.

We have launched the Family Paths Advisory Council (FPAC), the latest iteration of our long commitment to multicultural organizational development. FPAC has cross program representation to create, nurture and sustain an inclusive culture that prioritizes Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Trauma Informed Practice, in support of celebrating, valuing, and enhancing a culture of belonging that we strive for in the workplace and community.

We will continue to be vigilant to make sure our voices and actions are used to represent the needs and concerns of the vulnerable communities we serve and in alignment with our mission to strengthen families and support a just and equitable society.

### **Strategic Planning Process 2023**

The strategic planning process took place over the first six months of 2023 and was led by a Board/Staff Strategic Planning Committee and supported by Michael Allison Consulting. Four subcommittees involved additional staff and board members and led deeper dives into the areas of Program Strategy, Financial Sustainability, Organizational Infrastructure, and Leadership.

Each of the subcommittees met to develop a set of priorities in each of these domains. A total of 12 staff members and 7 board members participated in one or more of the subcommittees. After the subcommittees completed their respective work, the full Strategic Planning Committee met once more to review and provide input into the final plan.

### **Who We Are: Mission, Vision, Values, Guiding Principles**

#### **Mission**

Family Paths strengthens family relationships by providing mental health and supportive services with respect, integrity, compassion, and hope.

#### **Vision**

A safe home for every child

#### **Values**

Respect in our communications

Integrity in our actions

Compassion for our struggles

Hope for the future

#### **Guiding Principles**

- ❖ We nurture and promote emotional well-being, safe and healthy children and families, and a fair and socially just community with equality of opportunity.
- ❖ We appreciate our diverse clients and their families, who allow us to enter their lives in partnership. We are humbled by their dignity and challenges, heartened by their courage and resiliency.
- ❖ We value our dedicated staff who are committed to the highest standards of cultural competence, dynamic leadership, ethics, and leading-edge practice.
- ❖ We are responsible to our funders and donors to ensure effective and lasting outcomes with gratitude for their continuing support.
- ❖ We are committed to providing support to families 24 hours a day.

## Family Paths Services

### Clinical Programs:

**Families in Transition program (FIT)** provides a flexible and comprehensive model of mental health services aimed at supporting children, adolescents, and their families with Medi-Cal who are experiencing complex traumas and instability in their lives. The flexibility of our program allows us to work with children in the environment that best meets the child and family's needs, for example in home, schools, telehealth and in the community.

**Treatment, Intervention & Prevention Services (TIPS)** provides free or sliding scale office-based and telehealth for children, parents, and families, not otherwise covered by Medi-Cal or other insurance. Treatment addresses a range of issues including exposure to trauma, abuse, family and community violence, divorce, loss, and stress.

**Finding Peace Within** is our award-winning, skill-based support group for women who are experiencing symptoms of past trauma. We teach trauma survivors simple and practical steps toward living more calmly and at ease in their daily lives.

### **Service Provider Trainings**

Family Paths sponsors community trainings free of charge to those in Alameda County who work with, or on behalf of, Alameda County Foster Youth and Families. Our trainings are developed to help those in mental health or related fields have the latest information on topics relevant to supporting vulnerable children, youth and families impacted by traumatic events and life circumstances. All our training courses emphasize the importance of culturally responsive practice and the complexities that children and families in the foster care system face, as well as helping children and families at risk of system involvement.

### Family Services Programs:

**Building Opportunities & Outreach for Support & Treatment (B.O.O.S.T.)** provides case management and therapeutic services to assist parents with CalWORKs eligibility transitioning from welfare to work. We offer counseling, referrals to parenting and life skills classes, substance abuse recovery support, and connections to community and job resources to remove barriers to self-sufficiency. Our priority is helping parents meet their personal, educational, and financial goals in order to attain stable lives for themselves and their families.

### **Parenting Stress Helpline/Foster Parent Advice Line**

Our Parenting Stress Helpline provides free and confidential counseling, information to anyone in need of parenting support and specialized support for foster/resource parents and relative caregivers. Our Helpline has access to nearly 900 community resources from our vast database. Callers have access to caring parent support counselors or our Foster Parent Community Advocate for one-time anonymous calls or regular call backs to address parenting or family concerns, refer to Family Paths' services, or provide other Alameda County resources.

### **Parent Education**

Our Parent Education courses provide free or sliding scale classes for all types of families – expecting parents, parents of children of all ages, foster and kinship care providers, adoptive parents, LGBTQ+ families and others involved in parenting roles. We offer Family Paths' evidence-informed Positive Parenting classes and innovative Fatherhood & Co-Parenting: Beyond Conflict series, as well as the evidence-based Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors™ and Nurturing Parents™ curriculums. All classes are designed to provide parents with an understanding of parenting and co-parenting skills and knowledge, particularly in the areas of child development, communication, discipline and self-awareness, while emphasizing the importance of self-care and a non-judgmental stance. Classes are offered in English and Spanish via on-line platforms and in person.

### **Community Outreach**

Our outreach team works to spread the word about our mental health and supportive services to the Alameda County community at large. Our team and volunteers table at community events, offer presentations at places of work, and other settings to make sure families and providers, school

counselors and teachers, law enforcement and health care settings have the information to connect us to those who can benefit from our services.

### **Strategic Areas of Focus**

#### **Client Services//Program Strategy**

Goal: Continue to increase our reach into multiple communities and grow our impact with the communities and individual clients we serve.

Build on Family Paths' role as a leader in strengthening families and in social justice arenas that impact our clients' lives with a focus on father inclusion, LGBTQIA+ welcoming, cultural, and linguistic responsive practices, and parent partnership. Client services will continue to be trauma-informed, using evidence-informed and evidence-based approaches with measurable outcomes.

#### Key assets:

- Skilled and dedicated staff, deep expertise in parenting support, and a breadth of ways in which we can provide services: in the community, via telehealth, phone and in person in our two offices.
- A commitment to a learning environment and investment in training.
- An ability to be flexible and adaptable to emerging trends and a long track record of maintaining good relationships with key funders and community partners.
- A strategic Outreach program, that is creating ongoing networking opportunities throughout the County to reach and welcome new families into our work, and to engage in partnerships with other organizations.
- Our Parenting Stress Helpline continues to be a primary public facing resource to individuals, families, and other agencies to provide connections to needed support whether through our own programs or to other resources in the community.

#### Strategy 1:

Enhance and innovate our Family Support Program services to address current and emerging needs within the various communities we serve, including young parents who are system involved, fathers with father specific programming, and stressed parents of various backgrounds.

#### Strategy 2

Examine the realignment of our Clinical Programs, redefine program management responsibilities, and implement necessary adjustments to the program structure to improve integration of service delivery and clinical training. Explore the feasibility of expanding group service delivery to a wider audience.

#### Strategy 3:

Leverage the knowledge and expertise across programs to increase collaboration between services to better serve families.

#### Strategy 4:

Engage program staff in community outreach to be better connected to community needs and introduce our services directly to community members to address mental health and parenting concerns.

#### Strategy 5:

Continue to implement effective evidence-informed, trauma-informed and culturally and linguistically appropriate service delivery to community members, with a focus on African American/Black, Latino, and Asian/Pacific Islander families and members of the LGBTQIA-2SP communities.

#### **Administrative Infrastructure and Technology:**

Goal: Improve our internal systems, organizational structure, and criteria for intentional agency growth that takes into account infrastructure impacts. Support a primarily hybrid workforce who can work flexibly from home, office and various remote locations.

#### Key assets:

- Skilled and dedicated staff who work creatively to solve problems.
- Significant investments over the past few years in our in-house technology to update our tools to better track our work, and to share information more easily.
- Ability to work on a modest budget and a team who can be available in person and remotely to support staff with their technological needs.
- Owning our Oakland building with the opportunity to downsize our own use of the building and earn income from property rental.

#### Strategy 1:

Hire a Chief Operating Officer to oversee operations – HR/IT/Finance/Facilities - to streamline processes, improve workflow, help examine organizational structure and implement change management practices.

#### Strategy 2:

Provide training in-house to ensure all staff are sufficiently familiar with, and capable of taking advantage of, our recent investments in agency-wide communications technology.

#### Strategy 3:

Continue to seek ways to take advantage of the building we own for our own purposes and to lease out unused space (in Oakland and Hayward) as an additional source of revenue.

### **Financial Stability**

Goal: Maintain current successful relationships with government funders and pursue new options for bringing in both contributed and earned revenue.

#### Key Assets:

- Over the past three years our revenues have grown an average of 10% per year. We have steadily increased our revenues from \$5 million to \$6.5 million to support growth in both our program work as well as to improve our operations infrastructure.
- We were able to grow our net assets and did not need to dip into our reserves.
- Given that we own our building, and we have net unrestricted assets of over \$3 million, we have substantial security and the opportunity for selective investments to support further growth.
- As future beneficiaries of a Charitable Remainder Trust, we will have additional investment opportunities and strategic investment.
- We maintain an excellent relationship with our government funders which creates a strong financial position with longstanding and renewable contracts.
- The Board has a tradition of 100% giving, with a give or get policy established and a desire to contribute their skills and knowledge to benefit the agency.

#### Strategy 1:

Hire an experienced Development professional with a proven track record writing government requests for proposals and securing government and large foundation funding. The position will also support the culture of giving within the Board and provide opportunities for increasing our network of donors.

#### Strategy 2:

Continue government contracting and seek out new government opportunities at the State and County level that meet our internal criteria for growth.

#### Strategy 3:

Increase earned revenue. Family Paths has already implemented an earned revenue strategy to provide Parent Education classes to the clients/staff of other organizations. As we are seen as experts in the field, more opportunities for earned income should be assessed, including intern and clinical training, licensing curriculum and space rental.



## **Leadership: Board and Management**

Goal: Nurture and support effective and sustainable leadership at the Board, Executive Director and the staff levels and between the Board and staff.

Key assets:

- Family Paths has the advantage of long tenure of key individuals on both the staff and board.
- There are very constructive relationships both within and between the board and the staff.

### Strategy 1:

Create a Board Governance Committee. The function of the Governance Committee is to create more intentional management of the board, including its relationship with staff. The Governance Committee will oversee, in partnership with the Executive Director, new board member recruitment, board member evaluation, ongoing board member training, and in general seek to ensure that all board members are clear on their individual and shared roles and to allow for more meaningful self-governance in partnership with the Executive Director and staff.

### Strategy 2:

Focus the Executive Director on creating sustainable and strategic agency growth, representing the organization in the community and pursuing various external partnerships and internal program innovations that will help the agency thrive.

### Strategy 3:

Invest in professional development for all managers. Provide ongoing training in multiple areas including leadership and management, as well as cross collaboration and actively participating in team building efforts.