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STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2024



**COMMUNITY
& FAMILY
SERVICES**
"Empowering People to Improve"

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PROMISE OF COMMUNITY ACTION



COMMUNITY
& FAMILY
SERVICES
"Empowering People to Improve"

Community & Family Services (CFS) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the reduction and ultimate elimination of poverty in Adams, Blackford, Huntington, Jay, Randolph, and Wells counties. Currently, CFS serves more than 4,828 households and 18,000 residents. CFS has pursued its mission since its incorporation in 1965 and strives to provide critical services to meet the changing needs of our communities.

We are proud to be among more than 1,000 Community Action Agencies (CAA) in the country striving to achieve such outcomes for our neighbors. CAA's are private nonprofit or public organizations that were created by the federal government in 1964 to combat poverty in geographically designated areas.

As a CAA, Community & Family Services changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

Our Vision

WE ENVISION OUR
COMMUNITIES
FULL OF
OPPORTUNITIES
AND RESOURCES
FOR EMPOWERING
COMMUNITY
MEMBERS TO
BUILD A BETTER
FUTURE FOR
THEMSELVES AND
GENERATIONS TO
COME.

Our Mission

WE STRIVE TO
ASSIST
INDIVIDUALS,
FAMILIES, AND OUR
COMMUNITIES
REDUCE OR
REMOVE THE
CAUSES AND
CONDITIONS OF
POVERTY.

COMMUNITY GOAL

01



Establish CFS systems of care in local communities to remove barriers, improve accessibility, streamline services, and maximize existing assets.

FAMILY GOAL

02



Increase access to safe, affordable, quality child care.

AGENCY GOALS



03

Create internal communications system to ensure both management and front line staff are informed and receive consistent communications.



04

Improve community awareness of the role, impact, and services of CFS.



05

Build stronger collaboration and engagement between programs.



06

Expand board of directors leadership capacity and governance ability.

GOAL



Establish CFS systems of care in local communities to remove barriers, improve accessibility, streamline services, and maximize existing assets.

Strategy 1: Launch CFS "one stop shop" mobile kiosks.

- 1.1 Use CharityTracker web based case management system to offer residents 24/7 access to connect and apply for CFS programs and services.
- 1.2 Recruit community partners such as township trustees, non-profits, and faith based organizations to offer instant application access on CFS mobile kiosks.
- 1.3 Develop employer based kiosk program to offer local companies a community investment opportunity while providing much needed benefits to at-risk employees.

Strategy 2: Establish CFS Community Care Networks.

- 2.1 Design network program model (brand identity, membership structure, benefits, partner recruitment materials).
- 2.2 Perform local community research including asset mapping and diagramming the current system of poverty fighting social service providers and organizations.
- 2.3 Identify, train, and equip staff to lead the establishment and coordination of all Networks.
- 2.4 Develop local Network Launch plans including member recruitment strategies, community awareness, and media engagement.
- 2.5 Mobilize Network members to engage in real-time shared case management by expanding utilization of the CFS CharityTracker system.

Correlating CFS Programs:

- Empower
- Energy Assistance
- Food Pantry
- Head Start
- Housing Choice Voucher
- Huntington House Homeless Shelter
- IERA
- Rapid Rehousing & Homeless Prevention
- Senior Community Service Employment
- Silver Lining
- Thrift Store
- Weatherization
- Women, Infants, & Children

GOAL



Increase access to safe, affordable, quality child care.

Strategy 1: Improve the quality of existing child care.

- 1.1 Assist home based child care providers in securing or increasing Paths to Quality levels.
- 1.2 Provide early childhood educators training and certifications for home based and faith based providers.
- 1.3 Ensure providers are aware of and connecting to all state and local resources to improve quality of care.

Strategy 2: Increase the number of providers in child care deserts.

- 2.1 Perform research and a comprehensive data review to identify high need, at risk communities in which few child care options are available.
- 2.2 Facilitate the development of public/private child care coalitions in at-risk communities to establish plans of action as well as a funding pool.
- 2.3 Launch a CFS center based day care center.
- 2.4 Work with federal, state, and post-secondary entities to create funding streams to support child care expansion strategies and programming.

Correlating CFS Programs:

- Empower
- Head Start

GOAL



Create internal communications system to ensure both management and front line staff are informed and receive consistent communications.

Strategy 1: Adopt new communication techniques to ensure frequent and consistent communication to staff.

- 1.1 Implement regular walk-in meetings between administrative team and program directors.
- 1.2 Relate ongoing feedback and concerns from program director to administrative team.
- 1.3 Explore and adopt a technology solution to create a relaxed and engaging platform for staff across all programs to communicate daily.
- 1.4 Ensure Family Forum engagement continues and is consistent.
- 1.5 Hold quarterly Virtual Town Hall meetings for all staff.
- 1.6 Ensure central office leadership hold 1:1 meetings on a regular basis with program directors.

GOAL



Improve community awareness of the role, impact, and services of CFS.

Strategy 1: Streamline messaging and brand positioning within CFS service area.

- 1.1 Equip and mobilize board members to serve as community ambassadors.
- 1.2 Ensure program directors are informed and equipped to communicate the role, value, and programs of CFS in the community.
- 1.3 Provide communications toolkit and empower Family Forum to act as brand ambassadors.

Strategy 2: Increase visibility and profile within CFS service area.

- 2.1 Expand central office's engagement and direct outreach in the community.
- 2.2 Maintain current and meaningful content on the CFS website.
- 2.3 Increase social media engagement and billboard placements.
- 2.4 Develop and implement a grassroots community outreach campaign to reach rural and senior populations.



GOAL



Expand board of directors leadership capacity and governance ability.

Strategy 1: Ensure board is informed of and equipped to meet governance responsibilities for the agency.

- 1.1 Provide board member education to ensure an accountability method is adopted to achieve CAR standard compliance.
- 1.2 Provide high performance board education opportunities to all board members.
- 1.3 Establish board led onboarding program to ensure members are informed and understand legal and fiduciary responsibilities

Strategy 2: Adjust board governance model to optimize performance and maximize member engagement.

- 2.1 Clarify and establish clear roles and responsibilities for officers, members, and committees.
- 2.2 Restructure role and responsibilities of standing committees and provide coaching for committee chairs.
- 2.3 Implement board accountability scorecard.



PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

EMPOWER PROGRAM

We believe the best way to Empower people, is to believe in them. The Empower Program is a 1-year program that focuses on 3 primary areas. The first area is Employment - Building partnerships with businesses and others to increase career opportunities for low-wage workers and job-seekers, as well as the pool of workers with skills that employers seek. The second area is Education - Expanding access to post-secondary education and skills training for adults and youth. The third area is Encouragement - We comment to walking along side you during our program to help with any challenge that might arise.

ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Energy Assistance Program provides financial assistance to low-income households to maintain services during the winter heating season. Income eligible families are provided a one-time benefit to their heating and electric companies to offset the high cost of utility bills. CFS provides the Energy Assistance Program to our six surrounding counties: Adams, Blackford, Huntington, Jay, Randolph and Wells Counties.

FOOD PANTRY

CFS Food Pantries work to provide food to those in need for free. Three locations within Blackford and Jay counties.

HEAD START

The Head Start Program provides children with a nurturing, engaging, and secure learning environment in order to help them gain the skills and confidence necessary to succeed in their current and future responsibilities in school and life. Each child is treated as an individual in an inclusive community that values, respects and responds to diversity.

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM (SECTION 8)

The Housing Choice Voucher Program is designed to help low income individuals and families find rental assistance which is provided through tenant-based "vouchers" that pay the difference between the total rent charge (including utility costs) and 30%-40% of a household's adjusted income. Participants find housing to fit their specific needs in the open rental market. It can be a family home, apartment, duplex or mobile home. Eligibility for the Housing Choice Voucher Program is based on a family's household income.



PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

HUNTINGTON HOUSE HOMELESS SHELTER

The Huntington House Homeless Shelter provides short-term housing for homeless women, women with children and women in recovery who are in need. Housing, meals and weekly case management is provided to assist and guide our clients to become independent and self-sufficient.

IERA PROGRAM

The Indiana Emergency Rental Assistance (IERA) program is designed to decrease evictions, increase housing stability, and prevent homelessness by helping renter households whose income has been negatively impacted by COVID-19 with rent and utility assistance. Qualifying applicants may also receive utility and/or home energy assistance.

RAPID REHOUSING & HOMELESS PREVENTION PROGRAM

The Rapid Rehousing & Homeless Prevention (RRHP) program offers various forms of financial assistance for those in crisis. The purpose of this program is to prevent homelessness by assisting with security deposits, rent arrearages, reconnection of inactive utility services, and prevention of utility disconnection.

The Homeless Prevention Program promotes financial stability through education and on-going case management guidance in regard to budgeting within our means, as well as an introduction to utilizing available local resources. Our goal is to keep people in a safe and sufficient home environment, with affordable housing costs.

SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Created in 1965, SCSEP is the nation's oldest program to help low-income, unemployed individuals aged 55+ find work. SCSEP matches eligible older adults with part-time training assignments for non-profit organizations. Participants build skills and self-confidence, while earning a modest income. For most, their SCSEP experience leads to permanent employment.

CFS provides the SCSEP program in the following counties: Blackford, Delaware, Grant, Jay County, and Madison County.



PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

SILVER LINING

The Silver Lining program is an opportunity store in Blackford County that is available to help families with young children. Silver Lining provides items that are beneficial to raising children such as diapers, wipes, new and used clothes, potty chairs, health care items, toddler beds, safety items, and much more.

THRIFT STORE

CFS Thrift Stores provide food and household items at a discounted rate. Anyone is free to visit our Thrift Stores during our business hours. Locations in Blackford and Jay counties.

WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) provides energy conservation measures to reduce the utility bills of low-income residents within our six counties. Clients are offered a permanent solution to reducing their energy bills by making their homes more energy efficient. This process includes protecting the home from the elements, such as wind, sunlight, and rain.

WOMEN, INFANTS & CHILDREN (WIC)

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, known as WIC, is a public health nutrition program that offers breastfeeding education and support, referrals, nutrition education, and supplemental nutritious foods to those who qualify. Women who are pregnant, breastfeeding up to a year after delivery, or non-breastfeeding up to 6 months after delivery, along with infants and children until they turn 5 years old are all potentially eligible for the program. WIC's income guidelines are 185% above the poverty level so many working families still qualify for the program.

CFS sponsors WIC within six counties: Adams, Blackford, Huntington, Jay, Randolph and Wells.