

A Strategic Framework For Jewish Family Services 2007-2010

Version 2.5 **ADOPTED** 18 December 2006

Preamble

Our strategic plan rests upon a foundation which infuses it with certain values and assumptions, through which the plan must be interpreted. This foundation comprises our Vision & Mission, our understanding of Our Value to the Community, and the Values which guide our operation as an organization.

Vision & Mission

We envision a world of economic and social justice; a world where individuals, families and communities care for and support themselves and one another.

To this end, we provide strength & support to individuals & families in need, in a manner sensitive to Jewish values.

Our Value to the Community

Jewish Family Services provides unique value to the community because we fill particular niches in the constellation of available services.

One niche arises from our foremost responsibility to be attentive to the needs of the Jewish community in ways that wider community services may not be able. This is particularly true where a Jewish cultural sensibility is a crucial component of service design and delivery.

Other niches arise from our response to the Jewish teaching that we have a responsibility to help others and contribute to the healing and restoration of a broken world (“tikun olam”). Where we have developed particular areas of expertise, we offer those to the wider community, and build on those competencies.

What We Value

About our clients: We believe in the intrinsic value of every individual client and program participant. We value the diversity that exists among them, and resist making reproachful judgements about them. We believe in their right to make informed choices about their lives and our vocation to help them to do so, as far as we are able.

We believe that change often takes time and many tries; therefore we will not judge or turn away clients who return repeatedly seeking new chances to improve their lives.

We believe that what our shared humanity gives us in common is far more significant than what sets us apart from those who seek our help. We are entrusted to use the power and advantage we have, as service providers, only in the clients’ & participants’ best interest.

About our services: We value high-quality programs & services that make a real and meaningful impact on peoples’ lives. To deliver such services requires hiring and retaining the best staff we can, and compensating them fairly. It requires designing and running programs and services that use best practices and are evaluated for effectiveness. It requires working together to maximize the synergies of different types of staff and volunteers.

About our workplace: We aim to ensure that the Jewish Family Services workplace is one which fosters the values articulated above. Such a workplace has the following characteristics:

- A Happy, Safe & Healthy Place to Work- we believe that our clients are best served by staff who enjoy their work.

- Caring & Respect- we value each individual that is part of our team, and provide as much support as possible, without compromising the integrity of our work, to ensure each person is working to his or her capability.
- Multidisciplinary Teamwork- we understand and respect the different roles and contributions each staff person makes, and strive to work collaboratively for the best outcomes for clients.
- Participatory Decision Making- while respecting the responsibilities that come with legitimate authority, we seek and provide input into the planning and decision making of one another within the organization.
- Freedom to Be Creative- each staff person has unique ideas, gifts and perspectives in achieving the goals of their own jobs. We support staff members' well-considered suggestions for new activities and directions, and are willing to try promising new things despite a lack of certainty about their likelihood of success.
- Striving For Excellence- we believe that something worth doing is worth doing as well as it can be done, within the limitations that may be imposed.

Strategic Directions

1. A New Commitment to Excellence

Jewish Family Services deliberately strives for greatness, by delivering superior performance, making a distinctive impact, and achieving lasting endurance¹. We do this by maintaining a clear focus on our mission and disciplining ourselves in all parts of the organization.

Striving for greatness is a value which underlies all other strategic directions, and the goals and action plans that derive from them.

2. Growth of Agency Capacity

The under-capacity of our infrastructure limits our ability to utilize existing resources and acquire new ones to carry out our mission. It also reduces our resilience to internal and external changes, exposing the agency to significant risk. Our infrastructure is further challenged by growing requirements for accountability from the community.

In order to pursue greatness and the achievement of our mission, **we will increase our infrastructure capacity, through the direct application of resources, and through mission-appropriate program growth which is accompanied by infrastructure support that will benefit the whole agency.**

GOALS (proposed)

1. Research and describe an optimal infrastructure for the agency, including a rationale and budget
2. Set an administrative percentage rate that reflects the cost of an effective infrastructure, and incorporate into funding submissions wherever possible
3. Prioritize & expand programs where need is demonstrated
4. Undertake an assessment of risks in the agency's operations
5. Prioritize and determine cost of management of risks

¹ Described by Jim Collins in *Good To Great and the Social Sectors*; Boulder, USA: Jim Collins, 2005.

3. Increased Resource Development

Program-specific funding restricted by funders and donors does not supply adequate resources to meet the demands of the programs they fund, nor to contribute what is required for research and development of new programming and related infrastructure. To use volunteers to full advantage requires a dedicated function to support their involvement.

We will annually raise significant new, non-restricted funds for these purposes.

We will develop the capacity to utilize volunteers fully within the agency.

GOALS (proposed)

1. Develop a five-year fund raising plan
2. Run one fund raising event each year
3. Secure resources for a staff position to develop and implement a fund development program
4. Secure resources for a staff position to develop and implement a volunteer co-ordination program

4. General Services for the Jewish community

Our primary unique contribution to society is to offer services to members of the Jewish community in ways which are appropriate to Jewish culture and sensitivities, which are not offered by wider-community services.

We will seek opportunities to offer services to the Jewish community which ameliorate problems and enhance family and individual well-being.

In particular, **we will improve and develop services to Jews who are marginalized from the mainstream.**

GOALS (proposed)

1. Expand services for new Canadians
2. Survey the Jewish community to determine unmet needs which fit the agency's mandate

5. Increased Support From the Jewish Community

Insofar as some of our services are directed to the Jewish community, and most wider-community dollars do not support a mandate narrowed by cultural considerations, Jewish community support is critical to the provision of Jewish-focused services.

We will build a closer relationship with the Jewish community which results in it assuming greater financial responsibilities for Jewish-focussed programming.

GOALS (proposed)

1. Increase awareness in the Jewish community of how the agency benefits the community
2. Develop a case for greater funding support and present it to key decision makers in the community

6. Further Development of Our Niches in the Wider Community

We presently offer services that make valuable, recognized contributions to the community because they fill specific niches and are delivered with high quality. The demands exceed our capacity, and thus these program areas and the competencies which the agency has present opportunities for growth.

We will expand existing services and develop new ones which build on our unique competencies.

GOALS (proposed)

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| 1. Identify the areas where we have a special competencies or expertise in the wider community |
| 2. Seek partnerships, collaborations and funding for expansion |

7. Increase Effectiveness in Governance

For the agency to be great, the Board must carry out its functions with diligence and excellence in order that it give bold and wise leadership to the agency, engender community support, and ensure accountability for the agency's performance.

The Board will clarify and affirm its roles and strive to govern with excellence in leadership and accountability.

GOALS (adopted)

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| 1. Develop job descriptions for board positions, including expectations, qualifications, interests, experience |
| 2. Develop a recruitment procedure which includes an assessment of the Board's needs (e.g., particular area of expertise) |
| 3. Orient new board members in the board's model of governance and its current policies at the time they commit to joining the board |
| 4. Ensure that current board members (at the time of adoption of this plan) have been fully oriented |
| 5. Develop and implement a process for monitoring that the Board is governing according to its policies |
| 6. Develop a policy regarding the Board's role in fund raising |