



Community Feedback, Ideas, and Suggestions from the FamilyWorks Strategic Plan Town Hall Wednesday, March 6th, 2024

FamilyWorks invited our community to a town hall event where they could hear about our new strategic plan (read an overview of the plan [here](#)) and share their thoughts, ideas, and suggestions for how we should begin to put this plan into action. Thank you to everyone who attended – your feedback will help shape the implementation of our strategic plan and ultimately will allow us to grow intentionally and serve more families in North Seattle. Below is what we learned through this event.

Strategy 1: Enhance and expand programming for families across physical locations, mobile sites, and through partnerships. Increase the number of families we serve, with a focus on helping families build supportive community connections, strengthen social capital and networks, and improve family well-being. Expand and enhance our food and economic security programming.

- Expansion of Programs – is there a more holistic way of thinking of growth other than just increasing the number of families served?
- Enhance Programs – lower barriers to access programs, including looking at the times we offer playgroups and offering programs outside of traditional business hours, and offering open houses
- Technology – using technology to do targeted advertising to specific zip codes and demographics, and look into low-cost ad grants
 - Goal is to increase public exposure to Text-to-Go/online market
- Grassroots – We should outreach to (post flyers/posters about our services) and explore potential partnerships with:
 - Little Neighborhood Pantries and mutual aid organizations
 - Public spaces like:
 - Parks
 - Community Centers
 - Libraries
 - Health providers serving families

- Pediatricians
- Dentists
- Childcare locations, particularly those serving families in voucher/subsidy programs
- Places of worship – engage with religious leaders
- Cultural organizations to not just identify potential program participants, but also to improve language access and cultural competency and share cultural resources

Strategy 2: Invest in holistic program design. Evaluate/audit programs to ensure they align with FamilyWorks’ operating model and effectively serve families furthest from justice. Implement opportunities for participant feedback and program co-design to ensure programs are accessible and effective for families. Understand how our food access and family support programs are linked so we can provide the most critical family supports and develop internal structures to support integration across programs.

- As FamilyWorks plans the new Participant Advisory Committee (PAC), look to other orgs with participant advisory groups for ideas, inspiration, and lessons learned
- Identify PAC members via Text-to-Go/online marketplace
- How do we better link our food and family services?
- Interactive capability for other services via our online marketplace
- Audit programs/services
 - New staff can bring fresh eyes on programs and partnerships, so leverage the Food Bank Manager transition to identify opportunities for improvement
 - MOUs (Memorandum of Understanding) audit – what do we want our partnerships to look like?
- Bringing along our community as we partner differently
 - Highlight other services and locations

Strategy 3: Deepen collaborative relationships. Develop and enhance strategic partnership with other service providers to offer a broad range of family support programs. Engage with other service partners to create and maintain a referral process to serve those with needs and obstacles that FamilyWorks programming cannot meet.

- There is a big need around youth mental illness, so partnerships with schools and mental health organizations are important.
- Partnerships are central to FamilyWorks’ success and will help families learn more about our services and meet them where they are in the community

- There is a big opportunity for more thought partnerships with other human service agencies
- Program participants are often connected to other services/organizations, so ask them who we should partner with (and who we should not). Community Connectors also have these connections.
- Potential partners FamilyWorks should explore include:
 - Coalitions and collective action orgs
 - Wallingford/North Seattle orgs
 - Libraries
 - Community Centers
 - Affordable housing developments
 - Pediatrician offices
 - Healthcare orgs
 - Literacy orgs serving kids and families
 - Local government
- Cross-market with other nonprofits to spread the word.
- Leverage social media, neighborhood FB groups, and private listservs to reach more people
- Look at partnering with culturally-specific organizations both in terms of outreach, but also to better serve those populations in culturally relevant/affirming ways
- Do we track our partners and how they're doing?
 - Both formal and informal ways of evaluating
- Connect with fundraising and communications staff at other food banks/food justice orgs and family support orgs to share resources and learn from each other
- How are partnerships managed?
- Partnering with foundations and funders, particularly around the family resource center work. There are also coalitions of funders – can we connect with them?
- Program Managers should meet with all community partners to share where FamilyWorks is going via the one-sheeter and ask partners where they feel they might fit in

Strategy 4: Strengthen organizational capacity. Strengthen our fundraising capacity and assess funding shifts and their impacts on our fund development strategy. Communicate effectively to stakeholders about FamilyWorks' strategic direction and goals. Create a plan and a timeline for evolving programs and adding additional programming. Evaluate what resources and staff are needed to achieve these strategies and tactics, including looking at staffing structures, and adding additional staff positions, benefits, and supports.

- Create flyers to share in community locations to increase awareness of our two locations and help drive more donations

- Reach out to government
- Hiring great staff and retaining them
 - Investing in wage equity to both attract new highly qualified staff and retain our existing ones, as well as ensure staff earn a living, thriving wage
- Send out newsletters and testimonials to report on our progress on our strategic goals, tailored to the audience (participants, staff, donors, volunteers, partners, community members, government, etc.)
- Communicate publicly what FamilyWorks does to support and invest in staff
- Share staff stories and testimonials to increase credibility and add the personal touch – people are more likely to engage with our programs, volunteer, and donate if they feel personally connected to our staff
- Build out our corporate strategy to better engage with companies and identify new prospects for partnership
- Increase our social media presence and explore adding new platforms such as TikTok
- Do a demographic survey of our donors and community to explore who our supporters are and identify better ways to engage them
- Create opportunities for events at lower donation levels (vs. the \$175 ticket price for Sunday Supper) and develop additional engagement opportunities to build connections with donors and supporters
- Look into creating branded giving circles with a cool name that will give supporters FamilyWorks swag (stickers, tote bags, etc.)
- Merchandise to increase brand recognition
 - QR codes
- Mulch Madness favorite vegetable bracket poll