



2020-2023
STRATEGIC
ACCOMPLISHMENTS





Core Values + Guiding Principles

As we work to provide integrated, inter-generational pathways to success, we are committed to:



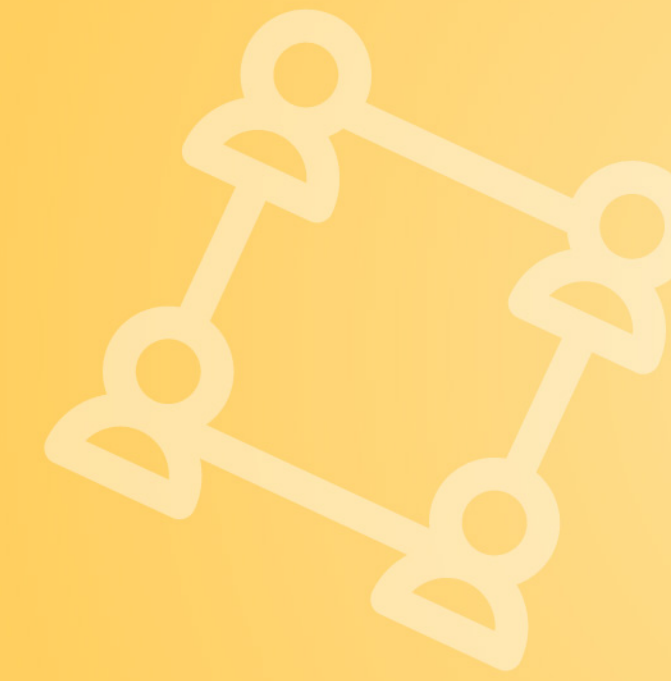
Excellence:

Providing the highest quality programs and services based on data-driven, innovative practices and continuous improvement



Accessibility:

Connecting qualified clients to integrated services in multiple locations



Collaboration:

Shaping coordinated multi-sector solutions as trusted and respected partners



Inclusion:

Educating and empowering culturally competent and diverse staff, board and clients in service delivery and governance



Advocacy:

Bringing compassion and first-hand experience voices to community conversations and policy makers



Strong Stewardship:

Managing all resources with transparency and accountability for efficient service delivery, client outcomes and organizational results



2020 - 2023

STRATEGIC GOALS

vision

Step Forward helps people find hope, believe in their future and take steps to make it a reality.

mission

Our mission is to propel educational attainment and economic self-sufficiency for multiple generations throughout Cuyahoga County.



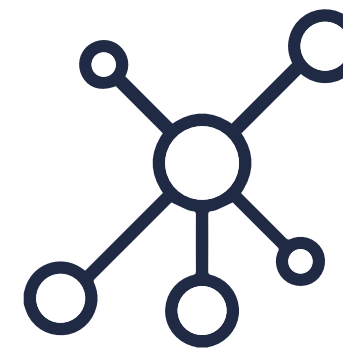
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Increase educational attainment



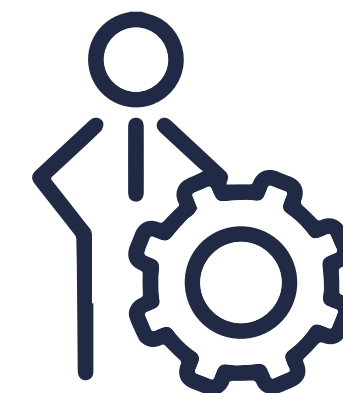
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Strengthen economic self-sufficiency



3

Enhance network-wide strategic alliances



4

Model Operational Excellence



5

Ensure financial strength and sustainability

GOAL #1

INCREASE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

HEAD START
2020 - 2023

20

YEAR ONE

- Implemented program requirements to administer Teaching Strategies Gold to enrolled children, and to administer and use DECA
- Began entering family goal sheets in Child Plus
- Head Start staff required to track absenteeism and contact parents
- Established monthly meetings to review COLA utilization

21

YEAR TWO

- Opened Friendly Inn Head Start

22

YEAR THREE

- Completed lead-free environment assessments
- Began the relaunch of Parents as Teachers program
- Began engage key high schools to help with teacher recruitment



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GOAL #2 STRENGTHEN ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
2020 - 2023

20

YEAR ONE

- Established new partnerships to support families impacted by COVID
- Created virtual programming to increase and maintain outreach
- Began offering stipends as incentive to motivate completion of programs
- Began offering virtual job fairs
- Established new partnerships to identify and partner for staff professional development and to increase opportunities for higher wages

21

YEAR TWO

- Enhanced focus on providing emergency services such as rental, mortgage, sewer and water assistance

22

YEAR THREE

- Developed relationships with key partners such as Cleveland Housing Network, Brenda Glass, CMHA and East End Neighborhood House



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GOAL #3

ENHANCE NETWORK-WIDE STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
2020 - 2023

20

YEAR ONE

- Created auto repair program
- Identified gaps in service locations
- Renamed Workforce Development; now referred to as Professional Development services
- Board passed incentive policy for bilingual staff in order to diversify staff and reach

21

YEAR TWO

- Partnered with Seeds of Literacy for adult literacy training to enhance job readiness
- Opened Middleburgh Heights NOC to expand services (bilingual staff assigned)

22

YEAR THREE

- Strengthened relationships with Ohio Means Jobs, CMHA, etc. for professional development
- Continued to offer virtual and in-person job fairs
- Increased brand visibility by attending community events, sharing posts with universities and colleges
- Launched BizLibrary
- Opened South and East NOCs to expand services in Cuyahoga County
- Relunched in-person career training and career fairs

step
forward

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GOAL #4 - 5

MODEL OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

FINANCE
2020 - 2023

21

YEAR TWO

- Enhanced budget monitoring through Power Bi dashboards and monthly meetings
- Continued bi-weekly meetings with OACAA and OHSOI to discuss best practices and address challenges in service delivery
- Launched Step Forward rebrand
- Step Forward hosts Town Hall June 30, 2021 to discuss state of poverty
- Development consultant reviews board structure, identify manager and resource needs
- Expanded staff roles to include purchasing
- Engaged Wipfli to manage financial system conversion

22

YEAR THREE

- Began offering incentives to new hires for staff recruitment
- Dr. Chisholm continues to meet with partner CEOs to reintroduce Step Forward
- Continued efforts to recruit bilingual and ethnically diverse staff at Step Forward sites
- Completed CARF training and earned three-year accreditation
- Completed training on Federal Interest Policy
- Implemented Sage Intacct, a more efficient cloud-based financial system, allowing us to self-service reports and dashboards
- Submitted funding applications to KeyBank and received \$46,000 to support Professional Development Services and Board-to-Board retreat
- Identified fundraising goals to implement in 2023
- Incorporated PayPal donation link on website



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\$47,090,844

in COVID assistance funds was distributed to Cuyahoga County individuals and families



\$11,763,850

was distributed to Cuyahoga County families who applied for utility assistance



62,500+

households received utility assistance through Step Forward's Home Energy Assistance Program



2,748

Step Forward Head Start students successfully transitioned to kindergarten



392

individuals successfully completed Step Forward's professional development programs



100+

expectant mothers received support services and baby items in preparation of their newborns from Step Forward

*Between 2020 and 2023

Who we are

As the state's designated anti-poverty agency for Cuyahoga County, Step Forward is tasked and trusted to lead the fight on the ground against poverty in our community. The nonprofit organization helps low-income individuals and families address immediate needs and build long-term skills to transform their lives through early childhood education programs, home energy assistance, personal development such as counseling, Baby and Mommy Support and parenting groups and professional development including adult skills training and employment connection.

Step Forward offers services at 14 locations throughout Cuyahoga County; the agency directly operates nine Head Start sites, four Neighborhood Opportunity Centers, and the Home Energy Assistance Program.

Our services are at no cost to income-eligible residents.

Our services



Head Start



Emergency Assistance



Personal Development



Home Energy Assistance



Professional Development



Do you want more information?
Contact us today!

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Where We Serve

