

STRATEGIC PLAN 2023 - 2026



Mother reading to her daughter and two classmates at Family Connections.

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

This is the sixth strategic plan that Family Connections has undergone since its formal designation as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) in 1999. This plan builds on previous plans by continuing work laid out in past years. The purpose of this plan is to define new focus areas in light of our ever-changing environment, and serve as a lodestar for our organization for the next three fiscal years.

The plan was developed in partnership with the Family Connections Executive Director, Board of Directors, staff, and input from key stakeholders such as donors, families, and community partners.

WHAT WE'RE DOING

Historically, Family Connections offered holistic support for families enrolled in our Early Learning Classes. While this single-access-point approach had a tremendous impact on the thousands of families we served throughout the years, the needs of our communities have shifted. According to a report by the County of San Mateo, [the county's new priority is to provide families with services through Family Resource Hubs or Child and Family Resource Centers, which provide the same or similar services as Family Connections through multiple access points.](#) Resource hubs or resource centers are generally centrally-located entities where families can access a variety of programming and services that are geared towards their unique needs.

Notably, Family Connections already has a strong alignment with this evolving approach to meet the needs of the communities we serve. Therefore, this strategic plan emphasizes our primary shift as an organization: adding new access points for families to receive tailored programming to address their unique needs. Ultimately, Family Connections will build on its strong foundation of Early Learning Classes, Parent Education, and Mental Health Services to offer our community a wide variety of programming – repackaged as Family Resource Hubs.

WHERE WE'RE GOING



*Currently, families need to be enrolled in a learning program to access these other services.

For details about access points, services, and plans for the future, please see Appendix A on page 9.



FOCUS AREAS

PROGRAM, FINANCIAL, & INFRASTRUCTURAL STABILITY

In continuation of the [2020- 2023 Strategic Plan](#), program sustainability and financial stability remain our overarching priorities. In this plan, we added infrastructural sustainability, which includes staff and board growth, retention, and resourcing. The nine focus areas based on these priorities for 2023- 2026 are defined in the following sections.

Tracking Progress

Note that specific goals for these focus areas will be set and incorporated in the Executive Director's and the Board's annual goals.

FOCUS AREA: PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY AND GROWTH

AREA 1: EXPAND

Expand geographies and families served: Through our Early Learning Classes and Mental Health Programming, we will seek to serve additional communities in need of our services in San Mateo County and/or Santa Clara County.

AREA 2: ADD ACCESS POINTS

Add access points that are responsive to the needs of the families and communities we serve (e.g., parent-child groups and mental-health wellness groups).

AREA 3: DEVELOP PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Develop and standardize key performance indicators (KPIs) for each new access point to measure success and growth that align with our communities' needs.

FOCUS AREA: FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND GROWTH

Maintaining a diverse and balanced funding stream helps us ensure financial sustainability for our organization. Outcomes are tracked through our Advancement Dashboard.

AREA 4: GROW BASE OF INDIVIDUAL DONORS

In partnership with the Board, explore and establish an appropriate growth strategy for individual donors which includes broadening and deepening our network of current and future donors. The strategy will include how to attract new donors and donor retention.

To ensure a balanced funding stream, Individual Giving should account for around 30% of our annual operating revenue.

AREA 5: GROW GOVERNMENT ALIGNMENT

Identify and apply for government contracts that align with our values and needs, and prepare the appropriate programming and services to qualify for these grants. This includes maintaining existing government contract funding levels and seeking replacement funding for First 5*.

To ensure a balanced funding stream, Government Contracts should account for around 40% of our annual operating revenue.

*First 5 of San Mateo County is sunsetting as an organization due to loss in tax revenue by FY 2024-2025.

AREA 6: GROW FOUNDATIONAL ALIGNMENT

Continue to prioritize and evaluate foundations that are aligned with our mission, offer sustainability for programming, and balance staff capacity with grant requirements.

To ensure a balanced funding stream, Foundations should account for around 30% of our annual operating revenue.

FOCUS AREA: *INFRASTRUCTURAL SUSTAINABILITY*

AREA 7: INCREASE EFFICIENCIES

Continue to build on the work already started to address inefficiencies in our operations, space and equipment. For example, centralize databases and communication systems to enhance data collection and evaluation.

AREA 8: ENHANCE BOARD RECRUITMENT & ENGAGEMENT

Continue to find ways to recruit, train, and engage a diverse and balanced board. Goals include deepening Board members' knowledge of our community, programming and vision and of best board and nonprofit practices so they can be successful in their roles in helping govern and serve as ambassadors for the organization.

AREA 9: ENHANCE STAFF SUPPORT & TRAINING

Provide staff with necessary support and training to implement the new Strategic Plan and programmatic shifts in ways that promote staff retainment, engagement, and a positive work environment. Support will include streamlining processes for all staff in order to create effective and efficient pathways for day-to-day operations. Training and ongoing support will include clear onboarding, role clarity and support, feedback, open communication, and professional development opportunities.



THANK YOU



Thank you to all of our supporters who have helped us reach 30 years of service! We are honored to partner with you and our community to build thriving kids through thriving families.

We would love to hear from you

To learn more about our programs and strategic plan, please contact our Executive Director, Eric Valladares.

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Appendix A. Services & Future Plans

	Focus for Strategic Plan	Justifications & Sustainability	
Existing Access Points	Nurturing Families Program	Explore opportunities to expand nurturing programs, including geographic expansion.	Aligns with mission and vision, highest demand, least competition; therefore, high opportunities for growth and expanding programming to meet demand.
	Co-op Preschool Program	Continue to evaluate and determine appropriate program scale.	Aligns with mission and vision, but demand is diminishing due to universal PreK and family need for full-day dropoff care. Currently, we only have PreK class due to competition.
	Young Scholars Program	Continue to evaluate and determine appropriate program scale and evolution to meet the needs of this age group.	More organizations in our service areas are providing more intensive services to this age group such, as Redwood City PAL and Healthy Cities Tutoring. This is in part due to learning loss experienced by grade school children because of the pandemic, which has garnered national attention. Therefore, there is a lower demand for our Young Scholar services at a time where families are requesting more intensive, daily support. At the same time, other components of our services are experiencing heightened demand that require our attention (e.g. Early Learning Classes and Mental Health).
Expanded Access Points	Mental Health Consultation*	Explore opportunities to expand MHC programs, including geographic expansion.	MHC is a highly sought service in San Mateo and Santa Clara County. Given alignment with our mission and vision, as well as our goal of increasing impact and reach, we will continue to develop programming in this area.
	Parent-Child Groups (TripleP)*	Increase access to this service which is currently limited to families enrolled in our Early Learning Classes.	We are committed to serving more families; therefore, opening these groups to the wider community will make our services accessible to families who could not otherwise access our programs. This also aligns us with funding opportunities that specifically call out the need for family resource hubs, which must offer services without requirement limitations to the public. Additionally, through our partnership with the San Mateo County Office of Education, TripleP (Positive Parenting Program)* has been identified as a county need. Therefore, we will continue to develop programming in this area.
	Mental Wellness Groups	Increase access to this service which is currently limited to families enrolled in our Early Learning Classes.	We are committed to serving more families; therefore, opening these groups to the wider community will make our services accessible to families who could not otherwise access our programs. This also aligns ourselves with funding opportunities that specifically call out the need for family resource hubs, which must offer services without requirement limitations to the public.
	Parent Education & Support Groups or Workshops	Increase access to this service which is currently limited to families enrolled in our Early Learning Classes.	We are committed to serving more families; therefore, opening these groups to the wider community will make our services accessible to families who could not otherwise access our programs. This also aligns us with new funding opportunities.
	Resource-sharing and Distribution	Increase access to this service which is currently limited to families enrolled in our Early Learning Classes.	We are committed to serving more families; therefore, opening these groups to the wider community will make our services accessible to families who could not otherwise access our programs. This also aligns us with new funding opportunities.

*Funding for these services was secured in FY 2022/23, but services will begin in FY 2023/24.