



Invest in Kids 2021–2024 Strategic Plan Changing Lives Through Proven Results

“A brighter future begins with me and my beautiful family.”

—Naomi, T., Mother of two and Nurse–Family Partnership® Graduate

Invest in Kids’ (IIK) vision is to ensure that every Colorado child has a strong start in life. IIK works alongside Colorado communities to adopt, implement, successfully scale, and sustain evidence-based programs that have the greatest long-term impact on young children and families experiencing poverty.

IIK has always worked towards a future where we can no longer predict child and family outcomes—including healthy pregnancies, child development, or school readiness—based on socioeconomic status or race. This strategic plan weaves IIK’s commitment to centering Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) throughout, including centering our client’s voices within all aspects of the organization. By doing this, we ensure that the experiences of parents, families, and communities who are most impacted by systemic oppression and inequities are informing our work at every level. This strategic plan will act as our guide to enact this vision and achieve our preferred future.



The Organization

Capably advocate for our programs, providers, and the families we serve.

Invest in Kids' team of experts work at every level, from the state capitol to local classrooms, to assess community need and address barriers to implementation and sustainable funding. Working in the fields of community health nursing, early childhood education and child and family mental health has us focused on some of the most demanding sectors in our state. Limited funding allocations and challenging workforce issues combined with the difficulties facing those we serve make our work very demanding and critically important.

To maintain high-quality program delivery, IIK will continue educating key decision makers at every level. We will strategize and advocate for sustained program funding to ensure the local providers of our programs have the resources they need to deliver with fidelity long-term. IIK will continue to be a leader in the delivery of evidence-based programs, remain aware of developing programmatic opportunities and knowledgeable of best practices that span the multiple disciplines of prevention and intervention work that we are involved in.

Additionally, IIK is looking forward to additional ways that we may advocate for Colorado families experiencing poverty or living in under-resourced communities. For example, shining a bright light on systemic inequities and system wide challenges that those receiving IIK programs experience.

- Communicate to partners and communities that IIK is undergoing a systemic shift in our identity as it relates to DEI work, and that we actively embody an antiracist organizational stance and lead and learn alongside one another in support of a greater systemic shift within our field.

Enhance our values, enrich our culture and support our Invest in Kids staff and volunteers to strengthen our communities today and for future generations.

IIK's most valuable asset is its staff and volunteers. The organization benefits from a high functioning culture that leads to strong retention of dedicated professionals. Remaining steadfast in our commitment to ongoing organizational improvement is a key component of our success and we have identified significant priorities for the coming years to sustain and enhance our organization.



- Operationally define and update our Values (Relationships, Equity, Fidelity, Accountable, Innovative, Stewardship), our Equity statement, our definitions of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and what we mean by family voice to ensure that family experiences and stories are incorporated throughout the implementation lifecycle and IIK programs.
- Include representation from across the organization, inclusive of individuals with varying degrees of decision-making authority, on the Equity Committee to together set organizational DEI goals, define priorities for annual DEI budget, including educational/learning opportunities, and identify strategies to assess organizational progress in meeting DEI goals.
- Further integrate DEI into the fabric of the organization in every way, including by simplifying the Equity Action Tool and process to ensure widespread, sustained use, committing to specific strategies to recruit diverse candidates for open positions and integrate a stronger family engagement element into the ongoing experience for all.
- Consider succession planning for all leadership positions and Board of Directors membership by recruiting strong passionate diverse people to fill the pipeline for Board of Directors and staff.
- Build alignment in how the organization onboards, orients, and engages staff, Board of Directors, and volunteers to provide the support they need to be IIK ambassadors, connectors and advocates of IIK's goals, practices and policies.
- Further enhance our organizational development to provide reasonable opportunities for staff that allows for and encourages professional and personal fulfillment.



Equitable Evaluation

In response to how to center families in the work of IIK, a need to demonstrate that families are the experts of their own experiences is evident. IIK must commit to systematically gathering and elevating the value of the family's experience in the data collected, such that this information is considered fundamental evidence that must be considered in tandem with quantitative data. It is essential that families have an opportunity to share their stories in their own voices, and that IIK supports families feeling seen and heard. This emphasis should include prioritizing and centering equity in IIK's program evaluations.

- Re-frame how IIK defines evidence, who is considered an expert, and whose perspective is centered in IIK's program evaluation process, including IIK's evaluation narratives.
- Increase IIK's internal staff capacity to apply and evaluate equitable evaluation principles and practices.
- Create a plan to apply and evaluate equitable evaluation principles and practices for all IIK programs.
- Examine the cultural relevance of data collection processes and instruments across programs and create a plan to tailor as needed.
- Authentically engage family experience, stories and voices.

Development and Communications

IIK has strengthened and grown its development and communications efforts in service to meeting increased fiscal needs of the organization. Moving forward, IIK will continue growing revenue by focusing on major and recurring gifts and securing new partnerships with foundations.

- Maximize unrestricted funding to fully support all three programs, maintain increased organizational growth, and ensure capacity to respond to unexpected opportunities.
- Integrate DEI learning into year-round fundraising activities and communications.
- Maintain a six-month operating reserve for maximum organizational health.



- Increase revenue from current individual donors, while working to broaden and diversify IIK's donor base.
- Develop new opportunities for funding to ensure the long-term sustainability of the organization.
- Prioritize organizational communications to clearly articulate IIK's critical role, impact of programming, and achievement of mission.
- Partner with Board of Directors and Development Committee to achieve the goals and objectives of the annual Fund Development Plan.

Finance and Operations

IIK continues to function at a high-level of operational, programmatic, financial, and organizational maturity. Maintaining a focus on continuous improvement toward sustainable and effective practices, IIK will focus on distinct capacity building projects to further enhance our ability to have a positive impact on the lives and communities we serve.

- Advance IIK's infrastructure to continually enrich our DEI strategic oversight and highlight the importance of our professional and personal growth.
- Optimize our technological infrastructure, cyber security, and governance to provide tools and technology-rich physical and virtual spaces that support meaningful connections across IIK and its communities.
- Enhance the employee experience through a culture of talent management, employee engagement, and wellness that leads to overall employee well-being, productivity, and retention.
- Promote financial best practices throughout IIK that enhance our fiscal management and cross-collaboration processes.
- Partner with Board of Directors and Finance Committee to achieve infrastructure and organizational capacity goals and objectives.



The Programs

Nurse-Family Partnership® (NFP)

Never before in our lifetime has public health experienced a crisis like the one facing the sector now given the COVID-19 Pandemic. IIK has accelerated critical adaptations in service to supporting nurses and prioritizing the caregivers benefiting from our program. As the impacts of the Pandemic carry on the needs of our client population increase and the negative impacts on the nursing workforce become even greater. Times remain uncertain and our commitment to delivering high-quality community health nursing care to strengthen the foundation of first-time expectant parents experiencing poverty has never been more critical.

- Continue our commitment to understand, acknowledge, and dismantle systemic inequities that exist within our work. We acknowledge the intersection of multiple systems of oppression that exist for families within the maternal and child health population and thus we shall ensure program delivery incorporates a focus on equity and social justice.
- Remain focused on the recruitment and retention of a highly skilled nursing workforce at the local level.
- Maintain commitment to ensuring fidelity to Nurse-Family Partnership's 19 model elements so that we can expect the same strong client outcomes that we've achieved in replication and were seen in the research trials.
- Focus on funding advocacy and identification of solutions for predicted state budget shortfall with the depletion of the Nurse Home Visitor Fund in FY25-26, ensuring we can maintain our current program saturation rate across the state.
- Assist local providers to incorporate social determinants of health into their nursing practice and engage them in conversations around DEI issues.



The Incredible Years[®] (IY)

Given the pandemic and its impacts, now more than ever there is a need for The Incredible Years to support social and emotional skills in young children. As we shifted to a virtual world in 2020, we overhauled our approach to provide virtual support, offer innovative training, remote coaching, and book studies. Experiencing a stressed and limited workforce coupled with low classroom enrollment is creating unparalleled challenges for our early childhood professionals. Parents, teachers and children need us to meet them where they're at in service to helping children gain the social and emotional skills they need to succeed in school and in life.

- Focus program expansion to highest need populations statewide while maintaining our commitment to current providers.
- Ensure that all aspects of program delivery (training content and process, coaching sessions, Local Implementation Team meetings) are informed by our Equity Lens and family voice.
- Plan for the long-term financial needs of The Incredible Years providers, allowing for expansion and sustainable delivery at the local level.
- Broaden scope and partnership of the Local Implementation Team (LIT) by adapting and innovating based on expressed and observed implementation successes and challenges learned from communities and the IY team.
- Utilize robust implementation and outcome data effectively to guide a comprehensive Continuous Quality Improvement process.



Child First[®] (CF)

We find ourselves at a crossroads in Colorado's history, where a Behavioral Health Administration is being formed, and at the same time a Department of Early Childhood is being established. This interaction echoes the intersectionality of Child First. The demand for services is profound due to Child First both providing prevention and intervention services, filling a critical gap in services for children and families - allowing the program to work to heal, protect and disrupt potentially toxic generational cycles.

- Work with local providers to employ a diverse workforce, honor relevant experience and have the capacity to provide services to non-English speaking families.
- Prioritize the high-quality sustainable program delivery of the first four Child First provider agencies (Cohort 1) through comprehensive training, coaching and use of evaluation data for quality improvement.
- Strategize and advocate for financial solutions that ensure the full cost of program delivery is reimbursable to local provider agencies.
- Develop and execute on an aggressive yet realistic vision for expansion.
- Educate key Colorado partners and engage in broader systemic initiatives to enhance referral networks in service to reaching our Coloradans most impacted by systemic and structural inequities.