



Strategic Plan 2022-2025

Final Report

June 14, 2022

SNmanagement

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1. INTRODUCTION

Early in 2022, East York East Toronto Family Resources (EYET) initiated a strategic planning process aimed at reviewing, renewing and re-setting its strategic directions as a multi-service agency serving residents of East York and East Toronto. The goal of the planning exercise was to position the agency and its work to achieve maximum relevance and impact as a mid-sized, multi-service non-profit.

SN Management was contracted by EYET to carry out the following planning objectives:

- Conduct an Environmental Scan, including an internal and external assessment and produce a Strategic Planning Discussion Document;
- Identify key strategic themes and opportunities based on stakeholder engagement and consultation;
- Facilitate planning session/s with the Board and Steering Committee to: generate potential priorities, goals and objectives; identify performance indicators, and align the vision, mission and values;
- Develop and finalize the strategic plan, and
- Provide recommendations to the Board for tools that will facilitate progress monitoring.

Key questions were used to guide the collection and analysis of data and information in preparation for planning and priority setting activities.

- What are the key needs of the communities EYET serves - how have the communities changed; how are they expected to change and what does this mean for EYET?
- Do EYET's mission, vision, values and services align with the needs or anticipated needs of the community it serves?
- What factors internal or external to EYET impact or may impact its ability to meet community needs or community changes?
- What strategic challenges or opportunities are raised for EYET in consideration of the internal or external environments that it operates in?
- Where are the opportunities for EYET to lead, to innovate or to excel?
- Which of these challenges/opportunities should EYET address and when - right now; in the short term; in the future?
- How does EYET move forward? What are the priorities, goals and objectives?

Close to 150 clients, community members, staff and external stakeholders were engaged as a part of an Environmental Scan.

This document presents highlights from the Environmental Scan and the new strategic plan developed by the Board of Directors with the support of the Executive Director.

2. REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS STRATEGIC PLAN (2017 – 2019)

A review of the organization’s performance against its last strategic plan, as highlighted in the table below, shows that EYET has been successful in achieving a number of planned outcomes.

Priority	Outcomes
<p>Improve and enhance the visibility of EYET’s brand in order to increase client base and to be recognized for our work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access to clients through expansion of permanent and itinerant/satellite sites • Increased brand visibility through signage • Expansion into new communities/areas • Enhanced profile as a partner (TESS, school boards, funders) • Strengthened brand as a provider of high quality childcare by expanding to a 4th site • Strengthened reputation for providing training (Housing Sector Training) • Strengthened programs models for all three areas of core programming
<p>Develop all levels of EYET’s workforce to ensure we have the knowledge and skills needed to support community need and expectations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened and reorganized the management team structure to improve lines of reporting and department oversight • Competency based performance management for managers and supervisors • Workforce development strategy specifically for Early ON to reach 75% RECE target • Initiated professionalization of the childcare workforce low external support system • Adjusted wages as part of the recruitment and retention strategy
<p>Ensure that the agency is in a financially secure position and able to respond to any future funding changes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doubled the size of the operating budget over the past five years: • Successful in most program areas • Exception is housing help centre – funding levels frozen for years • Strengthened training arm of the housing program to generate income; positions EYET as a competitor in the training market • Balanced budget and financially secure with year over year operating surpluses • Solid operating reserve which was leveraged this to start up Crescent Town daycare • Negotiations for the 1st and 2nd collective agreements resulted in enhancement that were affordable for the organization
<p>Cultivate and maintain strategic partnerships to strengthen our purpose</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong partner for City of Toronto Children’s Services and SSHA • Steering Committee member for the development of the Early ON Framework • Providing value add to SSHA through Housing Sector Training Program • Strong partnerships with TDSB and TCDSB • Participating on planning tables that fit our mandate: Housing Help Services Network

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established or sustained partnerships with organizations that are important to delivery of fixed and satellite/itinerant services: TESS, APOD, Anglican Diocese of Toronto, Crescent Town
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3. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

To help inform our understanding of community trends and needs, socio-demographic data¹ was collected and reviewed for the City of Toronto and the six neighbourhoods in which EYET’s main facilities or programs are located:

- Taylor Massey
- Thorncliffe Park
- Regent Park
- Old East York
- Danforth
- South Riverdale

Key changes noted to have taken place between 2011 and 2016:

- Greater percentage of seniors
- Greater percentage of immigrants, but fewer recent immigrants
- Higher visible minority population
- Greater percentage of people renting

In terms of the neighbourhoods in which EYET sites are located Taylor Massey, Thorncliffe Park and Regent Park stand out in comparison to the City of Toronto due to the following:

- More children and fewer seniors but also greater percentage of seniors living alone
- Lower household and family income; greater percentage of the population living below the low income cut-off and higher unemployment rates
- Higher immigrant population and percentage of people who do not speak English as their first language or in their homes
- Much higher visible minority population
- Greater percentage of renters as well as greater percentage of people living in unsuitable, unaffordable and inadequate housing
- Greater marginalization (marginalization is a combined measure of 18 variables representing residential instability, ethnic concentration, dependency and material deprivation)
- Higher rates of premature mortality and low rates of self-reported mental wellbeing

¹ It should be noted that much of the socio-demographic and health data is from 2016.

Client Data

Socio demographic data regarding EYET clients was not available. Through survey feedback, staff indicated the following are some of the key issues impacting clients:

- Economic – unemployment, precarious employment, living on fixed incomes (OW)
- Social isolation – racism, discrimination, violence against women, barriers to service, exacerbated by COVID
- Housing – lack of affordable rents; housing that is not safe or appropriate
- Food insecurity – growing reliance on food banks and other food programs
- Health – lack of health services, families with special needs children experience stigma and lack of supports
- Mental health – exacerbated during COVID, stigma, shame and lack of services
- Childcare – lack of affordable and quality care
- Language barriers – newcomer families need resources and referrals to settlement and language specific supports
- Family supports – need for services that are inclusive of diverse families (single, young parents, LGBTQ2S+ , racialized, etc.) and which are designed to address the unique needs as identified directly by community members

4. PEEST ANALYSIS

To understand how the external environment may influence or impact EYET in its ability to meet community needs or community changes, political, economic, environmental, social and technological (PEEST) factors were identified. Some of the key factors are highlighted in the table below.

Dimension	Key Factors
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unpredictability: elections every 4 years + pandemic + continuous health system transformation; election results bring continuity at the provincial level for four more years • Historical and current policies and models rooted in colonization and white supremacy • Increasing political divisiveness, polarization and lack of tolerance
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 years of COVID related disruptions will be followed by disruptions due to fiscal restraint and austerity measures • Human resources crisis has emerged; competition will become more pronounced • Variable compensation levels • Compensation and labour relations issues emerging from COVID (i.e., mandatory testing and vaccines) • Rising rates of precarious employment and income disparity exacerbated by COVID
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate crisis

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing prevalence of natural disasters that will require planned responses (fires, evacuations, pandemics, etc.) • Increase in climate migrants and refugees • Greater focus on sustainability • Procurement • Infrastructure/planning • Seeing trend towards divestment from fossil fuels • Lasting impact of COVID-19 (mutations)
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the midst of a sea change • COVID-19 pandemic • Rapid gentrification • Growing economic disparities; affordable housing crisis and growing food insecurity • Anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism movements • Growing attention to mental health and addiction (MH&A) issues /crisis • Recognition understanding of intersectionality (i.e. racialization and poverty) on health and wellbeing • Concern about lack of readiness for an influx of refugees and immigrants once borders open • Movement of populations from urban to suburban/rural areas • Aging population coupled with rise of gen-x and millennials • Younger people coming out; gender diverse youth lacking supports • Broader understanding of inequity and impact of lack of access to social determinants of health (SDH) in the general population and among decision makers
Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barriers to digital access and digital equity • Increased threat or vulnerability to cyber breaches and privacy considerations • Lack of capacity/resources to use emerging technology or protect against threats • System shift -widespread adoption of virtual care and services • Impact of COVID on community engagement - digital engagement leaves people out • Fragility of science/research in wake of populism • Funders investing in virtual care

A Note about Housing and Childcare/Family Services

Housing: Many of Toronto’s residents experience housing insecurity. Almost half of renter households spend more than 30 percent of their before-tax income on housing and more than 100,000 households on the waitlist for social housing. The 2020 average market rent for 1 bedroom apartment is \$1,374/month and for bachelor \$1,148/month, while the OW and ODSP shelter portion is \$390/month

and \$479/month. In 2021, more than 9,000 people experiencing homelessness on any given night. There is an overrepresentation of Black people, Indigenous Peoples and youth in Toronto's homeless population

At the same time, there is a unique policy moment to leverage. The City has committed to a vision of ending chronic homelessness with the HousingTO Action Plan, the Province of Ontario is working toward a vision of ending chronic homelessness by 2025 and the Government of Canada has committed to ending all chronic homelessness in Canada by 2028.

Childcare/Family Services - Childcare is the most significant cost – behind shelter, savings and debt - for most families. The childcare workforce is female dominated, racialized and among the lowest-paid sectors. Employment in childcare dropped 21 percent during the pandemic compared to three per cent among all other workers. This year, Smart Start Hubs were introduced by the province to provide access to compressive range of services and supports for families with special needs children

As of March 28, 2022, Ontario is part of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. \$13.2 billion will be distributed over six years. The agreement brings parent fees down to an average of \$10 a day (by 2025) and will add 71,000 spaces (+15,000 recently developed). The City is waiting for implementation details, including the child care fee refund process; eligible fee refunds will be retroactive to April 1, 2022. At the same time, there is no expansion for EarlyON foreseen in the near future.

5. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

During the month of March 2022, a series of stakeholder engagement activities were conducted. More than 150 people, representing diverse perspectives and stakeholder groups participated in the planning process:

- Focus group with the Board of Directors (~ 8 participants) and an additional 6 Board members completed an electronic survey
- Interviews with the Executive Director and Managers (5)
- Interviews with funders (3)
- Electronic survey completed by:
 - 77 clients (1200 were sent the survey)
 - 57 staff (74 were sent the survey)
 - 9 partners and colleagues (30 were sent the survey)

This section highlights the overarching/common findings as well as distinct findings from different stakeholder groups. Please refer to the Environmental Scan provided under separate cover for additional information and results.

Overarching Themes

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nimble, flexible (i.e., COVID response) • Programs that are relevant/needed • Caring, welcoming and non-judgement staff • Experienced leadership • Accessible program locations and hours • Good partner • Sound reputation, reliable and trusted 	<p>Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance program quality and evaluation • Strengthen focus on equity, inclusion and diversity • Assess and expand all three core areas of programming • Implement regular client/community satisfaction and engagement processes • Invest in staff compensation and development • Enhance workplace/staff wellness • Improve communications, staff engagement/satisfaction and union management relations • Strengthen infrastructure, including management, administration and facilities
<p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide needed supports to low income families by adding childcare spaces • Enhance infrastructure by growing childcare • Strengthen parent/caregiver supports in EarlyON • Grow housing revenues and supports • Enhance Housing Sector Capacity Building • Strengthen partnerships • Build workforce • Add service locations 	<p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EYET has expanded – more clients, locations, staff and partnerships • EYET is delivering programs and services that are relevant/ appropriate to diverse communities and their needs • EYET uses best practices, data and client input to inform program design and delivery • EYET is an employer of choice - staff are well compensated and express high satisfaction with EYET • All EYET staff are rewarded for being creative and innovative • EYET has strengthened its administrative capacity and is operating out of optimal facilities

Client Feedback

It should be noted that feedback from clients was received primarily (92%) from people who use EYET's child and family programs. Less than 4% use the housing help services.

What do you value most about EYET?

- Child centered programming/respectful of children
- Activities for children to learn and grow

- Ability to get information and access resources
- The staff – caring, non-judgemental, helpful, friendly
- Hours and locations – accessible, convenient
- Opportunity to connect with community members and other parents
- Virtual access option
- The space and facility – well organized, clean

What can EYET do better?

- Childcare: improve communication with parents; offer flexibility with the summer program; enhance program hours (weekends) and increase program locations; improve the quality of programming (i.e., improve food, offer more activities or more age specific activities, etc.)
- Utilize the website to improve information sharing (i.e., a calendar of activities that is available well in advance)
- Increase and improve on-line service delivery
- Enhance access to affordable housing and childcare

What services should EYET be offering?

- Employment supports
- More housing supports
- More childcare and EarlyON programming
- More virtual programming
- Enhanced hours – weekends, afterschool
- Enhanced programming for children – before and after school; outdoor activities and for older age groups (5 – 10 years)

External Stakeholders

Most respondents describe EYET as being responsive to community and a respected and desirable partner. When asked about its strengths, stakeholders indicated that EYET delivers responsive services that are needed by the community, including a continuum of supports for families with children. They also noted that EYET has skilled leadership and is an accountable organization.

When asked what EYET needs to do better, respondents recommended:

- Returning to in person service delivery and being very intention in the use of virtual delivery
- Strengthening the quality of services (i.e., supports may look different from site to site in response to community needs)
- Improving recruitment
- Enhancing staff engagement
- Building community capacity and community leadership roles in the organization
- Strengthen supports available to parents who participate in EarlyON programs (i.e., social support, information and referrals)

External stakeholder suggested the following priorities for EYET:

- Deliver culturally appropriate, accessible, equitable and welcoming services
- Engage parents/community members in the organization (i.e., Advisory Committees, feedback mechanism)
- Assess and evolve current services to ensure they align with changes in the community and the policy environment
 - Strengthen EarlyON focus on parent support, community development and system navigation
 - Align staff skills with program objectives and changing community needs
- Enhance program quality
- Strengthen promotion of programs and services
- Provide supports that help to address the long-term impacts of the pandemic with clients:
 - Housing
 - Mental health

Staff Feedback

The table below highlights key strengths and limitations as expressed through the staff survey.

Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The workforce – committed and caring • Experienced leadership • Board and leadership relations • The organization is reflective of the communities it serves • EYET is honest and open with clients, • EYET is accountable for its performance (i.e., through policies and reporting) • EYET is responsive to regulatory requirements • The breadth of front-line services and commitment to best practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of enough staff/enough qualified staff to deliver the highest quality services and/or meet regulatory standards of practice • Infrastructure (facilities) and administrative capacity does not optimize service delivery and operations • Lack of regular client needs assessment or assessment of satisfaction with programming • Limited outcome measurement or reporting • Need to improve staff satisfaction and meaningful engagement of staff in program planning • Need to improve connections between staff • Need to improve relations between staff /union and management • Need to develop a workplace that fosters trust, respect and creativity

Staff identified the following as priorities for the coming 3 years:

Programming

- Expand all three core areas of programming – more childcare spaces, more locations; more staff, more partners
- Enhance programming (i.e., more workshops, responsive to different populations)
- Improve program resources, materials, supplies and program facilities
- Strengthen partnerships

Community Engagement

- Put in place processes for clients and communities to identify needs and inform programming

Human Resources:

- Recruit enough staff with the qualifications required to deliver services
- Invest in staff training, development and succession planning
- Focus on communications, team building and staff engagement
- Enhance workplace/staff health, mental health and wellness

Leadership and Administration

- Strengthen relations between management and staff
- Develop systems that promote and reward creativity and innovation
- Develop Board governance capacity
- Building efficient administrative processes for staff (e.g. payroll, benefits, HR supports, etc.)

Board of Directors

Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality provider of childcare • Provides jobs for ECEs • Well positioned to participate in \$10 day childcare and open up childcare to new communities • Organizational commitment to diversity seen in clients, staff and Board • Resilient and responsive – COVID • Breadth of services to support people with different needs • Long history, well known, trusted, reliable and respected • Knowledgeable and experienced staff • Strong leadership • Strong training and policy development and implementation • Solid financial health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responding to the long-term impact of COVID – among staff and an in the community • Union management relations • Lack of clarity regarding the impact of online service delivery on client /community access • Human resources shortages and succession considerations; need to clarify EYET’s HR capacity and strategy • Operational implications of transition to \$10/day childcare (i.e., human resources, quality) • Ensuring Board continuity and diversity of Board composition • Organizational/administrative capacity given the growth in the organization over the past five years

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good partner • Good position to secure funding for housing help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong funder relationships, especially with City of Toronto • Need to address management team succession planning
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The following are three year priorities identified by the Board:

- Develop organizational succession plan
- Assess programs and use data/evidence to determine organizational growth/expansion
 - Childcare
 - Housing
- Evolve/determine virtual service delivery models
- Strengthen agency wide performance measurement and reporting (i.e., evidence based targets and outcomes reporting)
- Strengthening Board continuity and diversity
- Reduce reliance on City/government funding
- Strengthen HR program
- Address emerging community needs - mental health

6. KEY THEMES

Review and analysis of the information collected during the planning process highlights a consistent set of themes as well as opportunities specific to these themes.

Program Development and Expansion

EYET delivers programming in three core areas of focus - childcare, family support and housing help. These programs address relevant community needs/issues and are valued by clients. There is strong agreement among stakeholders that EYET should assess, enhance and expand programming in these three areas taking into consideration shifts in the policy and funding landscapes.

A Culture of Engagement

The public sector has increasingly integrated processes and practices for client and community engagement in program design and delivery. Many stakeholders agreed that EYET can enhance program relevance and effectiveness by ensuring that client voices are informing the directions of programs and the agency as a whole. Using community voices and stories can help to strengthen EYET's capacity to communicate its impact.

Workforce Development

EYET is recognized for delivering high quality programs. There is very strong agreement that emerging from COVID, EYET can focus strategically on recruiting, supporting and developing a workforce and aligning skills and competencies with current and future programming. This may include enhancing

social work or community development expertise in EarlyON. In addition, there was feedback from many stakeholders about the need for an organizational succession plan.

Workplace Wellness and Staff Engagement

While EYET is a high performing organization, feedback indicates that there is an opportunity to improve the workplace environment for staff. Emerging from the pandemic EYET can identify and implement leading processes and systems to promote wellness, staff connections and engagement. It is suggested that the organization improve its communications with staff and engage staff in program design and delivery. By enabling all staff to work to their fullest capacity EYET can enhance staff satisfaction and retention.

Infrastructure

EYET has grown significantly over the past five years. There is agreement among some stakeholders that the organization's infrastructure has not kept pace with this growth. It was suggested that EYET review its facilities and administrative requirements with an eye to optimizing workplace and program delivery environments and operations over the coming years

Performance Measurement and Reporting

Evaluative information regarding service impact, outcome or client experience was not available to review for this process. There is strong interest in strengthening data driven/evidence-based decision making to ensure EYET's programs are responsive to the needs of diverse communities; that programs and services are effective, and that EYET is providing the greatest value. EYET can draw on data and information to demonstrate its brand value in a competitive environment.

Growth

EYET has increased its revenues considerably in the past five years. With investments coming to childcare and housing, there is strong likelihood that EYET will continue to grow and in doing so continue to provide needed supports to the community. EYET has been very intentional in its growth with a focus on its three pillars and revenue coming primarily from the City of Toronto and childcare fees. There is some feedback that EYET, given its strong financial position, can be bolder in establishing growth goals that may be non-traditional (i.e., diversify funding sources and revenue streams) to enhance its impact.

Governance

Like many non-profits, the EYET Board can experience challenges with recruiting, retaining and developing Board members and ensuring the Board is diverse in terms of its socio-demographic composition and skill set. There may be opportunities for strengthening governance functions by applying best practices related to Board recruitment, retention and development, Board development, etc.

7. STRATEGIC PLAN 2022 – 2025

Three strategic directions supported by goals, objectives and performance measures have been identified to guide EYET’s decisions and activities over the coming three years.

1. **Service Delivery:** EYET will enhance, extend and expand programming in core service areas
2. **Organizational Performance:** EYET will be better positioned to meet the changing needs of the community and the work of the organization
3. **Organizational Governance:** EYET will improve Board effectiveness and strengthen organizational impact

1. EYET will enhance, extend and expand programming in its core service areas			
Goals	Objectives	Performance Measures	
		Process Outcomes	3 Year Results
Enhance client engagement in program planning and quality improvement	Create and implement a client feedback and experience system (CFES)	By January 2023 the CFES is initiated and client feedback is informing continuous quality improvement at EYET	
Increase access to programming in core service areas	Develop and implement a stakeholder and community outreach strategy (SCOS)	By June 2023 EYET has implemented the SCOS and begins reporting on new awareness and utilization measures for core service areas	
Grow programs based on strategic analysis of core program areas	Conduct a strategic analysis of EYET’s core service areas	By June 2024 EYET is implementing growth plans for its core service areas	
	Develop and implement growth plans for core service areas based on analysis results		

2. EYET will be better positioned to meet the changing needs of the community and the work of the organization			
Goals	Objectives	Performance Measures	
		Process Outcomes	3 Year Results
Attract and retain a diverse and skilled workforce that can meet changing community and organizational needs	Develop a leadership succession plan (LSP)	By January 2023 EYET's leadership succession plan is in place	
	Develop and implement a workforce recruitment strategy and activities	By October 2023 EYET has developed and is implementing its strategies for workforce recruitment and practice development	
	Develop and implement a practice development strategy and activities		
Improve employee satisfaction and engagement	Develop and implement activities that promote staff connections and engagement	By January 2023 there are regular activities that foster staff connections	
	Create and implement a staff engagement system	By January 2023 , the staff engagement system is in place	
Ensure EYET's business processes support efficiency and strategic priorities	Put in place a process for reporting EYET business processes to ensure that they align with the strategic priorities of the organization	On an annual basis EYET is reporting its business processes to ensure alignment against its strategic priorities	

3. EYET will strengthen its governance capacity and effectiveness			
Goals	Objectives	Performance Measures	
		Process Outcomes	3 Year Results
Create clear systems and processes for monitoring and reporting of organizational performance	Develop and implement a Performance Reporting Framework	By September 2022 governance and operational level KPIs are identified	
		By June 2023 , the Board is reviewing semi-annual performance reports	
		The Board is reviewing the strategic plan annually	
Enhance Board governance processes and practices	Develop a governance succession plan	By September 2022 EYET's governance succession plan is in place	
	Review and update Board policies and process	As of September 2022 , the Board has in place annual Board work plan including an annual learning plan	
	Establish a Board development plan		
	Review and update EYET's vision, mission, and values	By August 2023 EYET will have a renewed vision, mission, and values	

8. CONCLUSION

This plan provides a compelling and well considered blueprint that will guide EYET over the coming three years. Collectively, these future directions will enable EYET to strengthen its role in and contributions to the east York and east Toronto families.

