

**eliminating racism
empowering women**

ywca

west central michigan

**YWCA WEST CENTRAL MI
STRATEGIC PLAN:
October 2008- September 2012**

Executive Summary

This strategic plan serves as a road map or blueprint for improving the performance of the YWCA. The plan includes a vision of what the organization aspires to be, a mission stating the purpose of the organization, values that guide organizational behavior and culture, goals for achieving the vision and mission, and strategies and objectives that form the action plan for actualizing the goals.

In building upon the comprehensive strategic plan developed for 2003-2006, a major focus of the planning process was to incorporate the perspectives of key stakeholders. Board and staff had a variety of opportunities to participate in the process. The board and Leadership Team participated in assessing the organization using both SMART GROWTH and a facilitated strategic planning process. YWCA staff participated through the SMART GROWTH organizational assessment. SMART GROWTH is designed to facilitate an understanding of the strengths and challenges of the organization from a social change perspective. Beth Dilley facilitated both SMART GROWTH and the strategic planning sessions.

Following these formal sessions, a subcommittee of staff and board met to focus on the results. This subcommittee solidified the vision and values statements of the organization.

The planning process for 2006-2010 identified areas for strategic direction that required additional investigation prior to the identification of particular operational objectives. Specifically, the organization needed to determine the feasibility and need for a capital campaign. A capital campaign requires significant attention on the part of board and staff members and a strategic plan that is highly focused on operational objectives around fundraising and construction. While this investigation was taking place, YW board and staff implemented an 18-month action plan that acted as an extension of the 2003-2006 strategic plan.

Near the conclusion of the extension period, the YWCA Leadership Team held a retreat to review the highlights and challenges of the past few years as well as to discuss the opportunities and priorities for the near future. The YWCA staff is involved in many local and state collaborative bodies. Our retreat allowed an opportunity to incorporate the knowledge gained from these affiliations into our plan to strategically meet the needs of the communities that we serve.

In September 2008, the board of Directors and the Leadership Team held a retreat. The strategic planning session focused on organizational capacity in a variety of areas ranging from mission and vision to technology and facility. In addition, the strategic planning session allowed for information sharing regarding the changing community demographics and potential gaps in services. The afternoon focused on what it means to be a “robust” board. The focus on the latter was to prepare the board for a capital campaign and focused fundraising. Collectively the results of these meetings are summarized as follows:

Focus on the YWCA as an employer

- Competition for qualified staff will intensify in an environment with limited increases in revenue to support benefits and wages.
- Internal and external training initiatives have been enhanced.
- Internal training initiatives provide opportunities for staff education in order to ensure that the impact race and poverty have on issues of violence against women and children are understood.
- Internal training allows for an enhanced internship experience. Once they have completed their internships, YWCA interns enter the pool of prospective new employees within our community. This provides the YWCA, as well as the community, with potential staff who are well-trained and have an in-depth understanding of violence against women and children.
- We have been successful in our strategies to increase staff understanding of the interrelatedness between multiple forms of violence against women and children.
- Staff identify themselves by position not issue area ('therapist', not 'child sexual abuse therapist').
- The use of multitude communication vehicles has improved staff communication, but these require vigilance to ensure that they remain effective.
- People of color are underrepresented in Master's level and nursing staff. Current YWCA staff members represent the hiring pool in the community, but not the population served.
- Increasing the diversity of board and staff continues to be a priority. Both must reflect the changing demographics of the community and our mission.
- An increase in non-English speaking clients will require more bi-lingual staff. The pool of prospective employees with bi-lingual skills is very small and competition is intense.

Focus on the YWCA as a service provider

- The YWCA West Central Michigan continues to be a vital, evolving organization with the empowerment of women and girls at the core of all service provision.
- The YWCA West Central Michigan continues to be a recognized leader in areas of violence against women and children, and therefore, has significant impact on the direction of public policy, both locally and statewide.
- The YWCA is making positive movement towards the infusion of the elimination of racism in all facets of the organization as demonstrated by its involvement with Partners for a Racism-Free Community and internal anti-racism training of board and staff.

- Girls Incorporated at the YWCA West Central Michigan continues to be recognized as a provider of high quality prevention and intervention services through provision of curricula in area schools as well as through after-school and summer programming.
- The YWCA must expand services to underserved groups (e.g. domestic violence survivors of means, Latina women and girls, domestic violence survivors requiring forensic examination).
- COA reviews and internal consumer surveys express strong satisfaction with the YWCA's services.
- All funding sources report exceptional compliance and responsiveness to quality assurance standards.
- Expectations and limitations placed on services by funding resources will continue to influence intervention strategies and options.
- Limited marketing and community exposure due to lack of resources will impact consumer knowledge of and access to services particularly for underserved populations, However broad-based marketing may have limited impact because the issues the YW addresses do not resonate with people unless they (or their loved ones are directly affected).
- Location of services continues to be both an advantage and disadvantage for consumer access. The disadvantage is the absence of parking and the prevalent belief that the area is unsafe. The advantage is in being centrally located and easily accessible through mass transportation.

Focus on the YWCA as a partner/collaborator

- The YWCA understands the value of collaboration; and, insofar as it is able, seeks cooperative partnerships with like service providers.
- Changing community demographics require expansion of collaborations to ensure that we are responsive to the evolving needs of the community.
- The YWCA West Central Michigan will need to continue to demonstrate compliance with the Hallmark Impact Areas of the YWCA of the USA. Specifically, we need to increase our capacity to meet the hallmark standards in the areas of eliminating racism and the financial empowerment of women.
- A focus on keeping survivors “safe at home” and “permanent housing” reflects active participation in community initiatives and an association priority of being a learning and teaching organization that is responsive to changing consumer and community need.
- The addition of men on the board informs discussion, allows the YWCA to tap into new communities, and is a demonstration of our belief that all partners need to be at the table.

Focus on the YWCA as a Financial Steward

- The YWCA's main facility on Sheldon Blvd. continues to be an asset and a challenge. Major improvements in facility infrastructure are required—heating, air, phone systems, flooring, roof, utility efficiency, preferred LEAD cert. Underused space on the lower level is difficult to rent, while current spaces for many services do not meet the programs' needs. For example, the Counseling Center space lacks functionality for diverse forms of therapy that include children, family and adult services. The Supervised Visitation Program lacks private space. The Nurse Examiner Program needs more space as its service expands. The shelter also requires renovation to accommodate the needs of residents who smoke. At the same time, many programs are expanding off site to respond to the location needs of consumers. It is unclear if the community can support a capital campaign in order to improve services through facility upgrades.
- Administratively, the YWCA West Central Michigan continues to adapt itself to significant changes in conducting business in order to balance mission and margin. This includes enhanced use of technology and examination of old services in the face of changing consumer and community needs.
- Special events have met goals but struggle to be “unique.” One of the YWCA's two current successful events is being replicated throughout the community.
- Revenue has not declined, but it has become more restricted. For example, transitional housing funds must be applied to apartments not direct service staff.
- Energy expenses continue to increase.
- The economic climate of our state and country has the potential to negatively impact us both in governmental funding and in fundraising.
- United Way funding lacks the stability as the organization focuses more on specific impact areas and less on general community need.
- The response to the cut in funding through the GLR reinforced our belief that the community understands the critical nature of our services.

MISSION

The Mission of the YWCA West Central Michigan

Eliminating Racism
Empowering Women and Girls
Advocating for Justice and Equality

The Mission of the YWCA of the USA

The Young Women's Christian Association of the United States of America is a women's membership movement nourished by its roots in the Christian faith and sustained by the richness of many beliefs and values. Strengthened by diversity, the Association draws together members who strive to create opportunities for women's growth, leadership and power in order to attain a common vision: peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all people.

The Association will thrust its collective power toward the elimination of racism wherever it exists and by any means necessary.

The Mission of Girls Incorporated®

Inspiring all girls to be--- Strong, Smart and Bold

PREAMBLE

Our services and decision-making are guided and informed by 1) our intentional work in eliminating racism and the financial empowerment of women and girls, and 2) the YWCA West Central Michigan core competency areas of prevention and intervention services for women and children who are victims of violence.

VISION

We envision a community that embraces diversity, creates a safe and empowering environment for all women and children, and celebrates peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all people. The YWCA will be a leader in building and sustaining that community, working to empower women and girls by eliminating racism, confronting the issues of relationship and sexual violence, and addressing social, political and economic inequities.

CORE BELIEFS AND VALUES

- We believe that achieving economic, social and political empowerment for all women is inextricably linked to eliminating racism and achieving an equal, just, and sustainable society.
- We honor a woman's right to self-determination – freedom from fear, discrimination, coercion or violence – and consider this right fundamental to her empowerment.
- We value relationship building, collaboration and partnering. We recognize significant power imbalances in our society and seek to build alliances that include all voices in the work of social change.
- We live our values by:
 1. Creating a safe environment that allows everyone to feel secure in sharing their experiences, expressing their opinions, and taking risks.
 2. Seeking to understand, to connect with others, and build consensus.
 3. Approaching women's issues and programming from a holistic and gender-sensitive perspective.
 4. Building on the experience of those who came before, the insights of survivors, and state-of-the-art research and practices in order to create innovative solutions to social issues.
 5. Acting with integrity, discipline and excellence.
 6. Acknowledging the connectedness of all people – the healer and the healed are one.
 7. Acknowledging our connectedness to the environment – employing sustainable practices.
 8. Enjoying our work together, honoring respite, and being quick to smile.

Touchstones

- ✧ Acceptance
- ✧ Connection/ Compassion/ Respect (how we relate to each other/ others/ all things)
- ✧ Empowerment
- ✧ Freedom/ Equality (of all people)
- ✧ Innovation (our solutions)
- ✧ Integrity (true to our selves/ values)

OVERVIEW

The **YWCA's Long-Term Strategic Plan** provides an opportunity to identify overarching priorities, as well as, strategies and objectives. This long-term plan is designed to be a guide in determining tactics that will result in outcomes that support the objectives. In addition to the Strategic Plan, the YWCA will use a **Performance and Quality Improvement (PQI) Structure and Framework to** identify the role of the board, staff, internal and community stakeholders in determining and monitoring outcomes in specific program and administrative areas.

The YWCA will take objectives from the longer-term Strategic plan, and incorporate operational PQI specific objectives to be met in a **Strategic and PQI Annual Plan**. The short-term tactics and/or outcomes identified in an annual plan may be on going, may require more than a year to implement, or may be targeted to be completed in one fiscal year. Short-term planning will identify if the objective is new, an improvement on past performance or ongoing. The purpose of the annual plan is to be more responsive to the performance and quality improvement process and to provide information to staff and board that is relevant to the tasks at-hand.

The association continues to strive to be an Employer of Choice, Provider of Choice, Partner of Choice and Financial Steward of Choice. Throughout this document, goals and objectives will focus on the following:

- Infrastructure
- Prevention and Intervention programs focused on eliminating violence against women and children
- Hallmark Impact on the elimination of racism and the financial empowerment of women and girls
- Core Knowledge and Leadership
- Strategic Alliance and Partnerships
- Advocacy Presence
- Branding and Identity
- Communication

A: Employer of Choice

Goal One: We will offer high quality, culturally competent services provided by staff that are consumer-focused and dedicated to the mission, vision and values of the YWCA.

Strategy: Recruit and retain staff, interns and volunteers who are of sufficient number, expertise, commitment and diversity in order to carry out the YWCA's mission

Objectives and Tactics:

- To expand recruitment strategies in order to increase the number of bi-lingual (Spanish) staff and thus respond to the changing demographics of our consumers
- To expand recruitment strategies to increase the diversity of our staff to reflect consumer diversity in as much as possible, but minimally, to ensure diversity in the hiring pool
- To provide resources that allow for external training designed to enhance job skills for all staff
- To contribute to the competency of direct service staff through continuing education unit (CEU) certified trainings that increase their understanding of effective consumer interventions
- To establish and implement an ongoing employee-centered performance appraisal system aligned with strategic and quality improvement priorities
- To cultivate leading edge thought on mission-related issues through 1) the development of internal expertise, and 2) formal relationships with external experts and thought leaders, coalition networks and organizations in diverse content areas that correspond with programmatic priority areas
- To recognize and reward a job well done

Strategy: Develop and maintain high standards for cultural competency throughout the organization

Objectives and Tactics:

- To contribute to the competency of internal and community service providers through CEU certified trainings that increase the understanding of racism, sexism and the intersection with violence against women and girls
- To involve staff, through the Committee on Understanding Racial Equality (CURE), in defining goals, outcomes, and assessment strategies to ensure that the YWCA is a culturally competent organization

- To include among the above goals, an array of experiences that result in our staff acquiring the knowledge and professional competencies essential to service provision in a diverse community
- To meet Partners for a Racism-Free Community standards in all areas.

Strategy: Develop an internal communication structure that is comprehensive, inclusive and strategic

Objectives and Tactics:

- To develop and distribute an in-house newsletter that highlights the excellence of the YWCA's varied efforts
- To budget and prioritize staff group activities that allow for interdepartmental information exchanges and opportunities for "getting to know each other" activities
- To make available YWCA branded products that reinforce mission and goals
- To increase intranet options in communication
- To have a collective voice that is unified internally and prominent externally, conveyed through multiple communication venues and accessed regularly by internal and external stakeholders as an indispensable resource on issues of violence against women and racial justice,

B: Provider of Choice

Goal Two: The YWCA will expand and deepen our quality of service, while extending our reach to underserved populations

Strategy: Assure high level of service provision through rigorous attention to quality improvement standards

Objectives and Tactics:

- To meet the requirements to be in full compliance with the advance quality assurance standards of Girls Inc.
- To meet all standard requirements to be an identified Partner by Partners for a Racism-Free Community (PRFC)
- To meet the outcome standards as identified by the YWCA Performance Quality Improvement Plan
- To develop quality assurance measurement tools for those services that are not covered through current monitoring standards.

Strategy: Implement outreach and programming to identified underserved populations

Objectives and Tactics:

- To offer prevention services through implementation of the Girls Incorporated® Latina Initiative at GRPS middle schools with phase-in beginning in December 2009
- To expand prevention/ intervention services offered through the Counseling Center nonresidential programs to include responsible fathering services.
Development: November 2008 - April 2009; Implementation: May 2009
- To fully implement forensic examination services for domestic violence survivors, 2009
- To expand intervention services to underserved “women of means” who are survivors of violence through partnerships with OB/GYN practice groups, 2009

Strategy: With the use of ongoing program evaluation, services will be modified to reflect the current needs of consumers

Objectives and Tactics:

- To enhance domestic violence services by focusing resources on “Safe at Home”-initiatives and prompt re-housing strategies that are in alignment with the Vision to End Homelessness
- To enhance the domestic violence shelter’s capacity to be more responsive to survivors with critical safety needs and to be in alignment with the Vision to End Homelessness. Program guidelines will be altered to change length of stay expectations.
 - A reduction in the expected length-of-stay to 15 days will require revised program policies and procedures
 - Safety plans will be developed with realistic objectives based on the capacity of the community to meet survivor needs
 - Quality assurance measurements will be developed and monitored on a quarterly basis
- To expand preventing adolescent pregnancy services with a focus on girls age 13 years and under
- To expand personal safety programming to girls age 13 and under

Strategy: The YWCA will continue a process and methodology for evaluating current and new programs that take into consideration:

- Mission
- Strategic plan
- Core values
- Stakeholders
- Financial feasibility

Objectives and Tactics:

- All new and expanding programs will be evaluated using information that documents market, mission, cost/benefit, and core competency prior to consideration for implementation.

C: Partner of Choice

Goal Three: Educate and collaborate with community individuals, agencies and institutions to broaden support for, understanding of, and effectiveness of the YWCA services and mission

Strategy: Build a broad community understanding and support for our consumers through:

- Collaborations
- Advocacy
- Expertise
- Brand Awareness

Objectives and Tactics

- To build a strong advocacy presence and develop strategic partnerships, which will position the YWCA as a “go to” organization for the elimination of violence against women and girls, the elimination of racism and the empowerment of women and girls
- To create formal partnerships with strong, broad-based networks of allied entities for collaborative programming and support of outreach towards the mission of eliminating racism and empowerment of women and girls
- To be actively involved with Partners for a Racism-Free Community as committee members and as peer assessors with the intention of working with partners with similar aims and expanding the number of community businesses and organizations that strive to be racism-free
- To present sound organizational positions, content and priority decisions pertaining to advocacy, legislation and policy that are informed by authoritative analysis and are in alignment with our primary strategic partners—the YWCA, Girls Inc.[®] and the Michigan Coalition Against Domestic And Sexual Violence
- To educate and mobilize YWCA West Central Michigan stakeholders on critical legislative and policy issues in alignment with the advocacy priorities of the YWCA USA, Girls Incorporated[®] and the Michigan Coalition Against Domestic And Sexual Violence,
- To create community awareness of the YWCA brand and mission through enhancement of our external marketing strategy
 - a) Promote programming awareness
 - b) Encourage donor giving

- c) Proactively respond to public policy
 - d) Define, enhance, and communicate our areas of expertise
 - e) Differentiate ourselves from like-sounding or -serving organizations
- To ensure that the interests of YWCA advocacy priorities are represented before local, state and federal government by maintaining relations with the government through direct and coalition issue advocacy, political action and education

D: Financial Steward of Choice

Goal Four: The YWCA will have the financial capacity to fully and effectively implement the mission and quality assurance standards of the association

Strategy: Implement financial strategies to ensure the sustainability and growth of the organization

Objectives and Tactics:

- To alter amount and diversification of organizational revenues for programs and operations to no more than 63% from government resources and no less than 37% from contributions, special events, investment earnings, United Way, public and private grants, and service and training fees
- To expand the number and depth of YWCA and family/business foundation partnerships
- To enhance the affordability of services through expansion of third party reimbursement options for counseling services
- To expand affordable services through accessing Sexual Assault Forensic Evaluation (SAFE) reimbursement
- To evaluate staff utilization, programs, and services to ensure YWCA resources are being used effectively and efficiently
- To enhance the growth of the Caroline Putnam fund
- To reach full occupancy in the main building of the YWCA through tenant rental and/or program expansion

Strategy: Secure capital funds to upgrade the shelter and main building mechanical and technology, furnishings and to renovate for effective programming and furnishing

Objectives and Tactics:

- To fund capital improvements which will enhance the service environment and support the administrative and programmatic activities of the association
- To evaluate the community ability and willing to fund a capital campaign, a feasibility study will be conducted.
- To develop funding strategies that include foundation, government, community leaders and individual donor support of capital needs.
- To implement a successful capital campaign