

Friends,

For nearly 100 years, our mission to change the way the world defines and views disability has been a guiding force. As Easterseals Midwest grows, this commitment continues to ground and inspire us. We are dedicated to helping people with disabilities live independent, fulfilling lives, while defending their civil rights and making the world a more inclusive place.

In the past year, we have seen tremendous growth: we added new service locations across the region, increased program offerings, and welcomed many new families and individuals to our community. We see this growth as a cause for celebration, while also recognizing our increased responsibility. As we approach the future, we hope to meet each challenge and opportunity with a clear vision and deep respect for the more than 4,600 individuals who look to Easterseals for care, respect, and support.

The following plan is an organized, comprehensive, and strategic approach to do just that. We plan to continue the process of enhancement in order to ensure that our vision is always aligned with the organization's future.

As we began creating the strategic plan, we considered many elements of our agency's structure. As board members, we clarified our mission and core values, while examining the internal and external forces that shape our strategic efforts. During this time, we identified opportunities for qualitative and quantitative growth, and began deeper discussions surrounding the five functions of our organization: **Advocacy, Development, Growth, Infrastructure, and Talent**.

We reviewed each component both individually and as part of our organization's collective structure, understanding that changes to one element would have far-reaching effects. Together, we gathered volunteer leaders and staff across the organization to provide context and collaboration within each focus area. To diversify the conversation, we also invited other industry thought leaders to share their feedback.

After a preliminary assessment, five committees were selected to represent our core areas. Each of these committees was then tasked with establishing a vision, goal, strategy, and outcome measurement for the strategic plan. What began as a profound conversation between board members quickly became a unified, strategic path forward. While we understand that this is only the first step, we believe this vision is a strong cornerstone upon which to build our future.

As we move forward, we will invest in the tools we need to execute our vision successfully. Our leadership team will support their staff with resources and guidance. Advanced advocacy efforts will continue to place us in front of policy leaders and decision makers, elevating the voices and rights of the people we support. Our development and marketing efforts will grow our movement in ways that support growth while bringing awareness to the life-changing work that happens within our organization every day.

Within these pages we are mapping the future of our organization and looking forward as the industry leader in advocacy and disability support. Together, we are building communities where all people – regardless of ability – have an equal opportunity to reach their goals, dreams, and aspirations.

Thank you for leading the way forward with us.

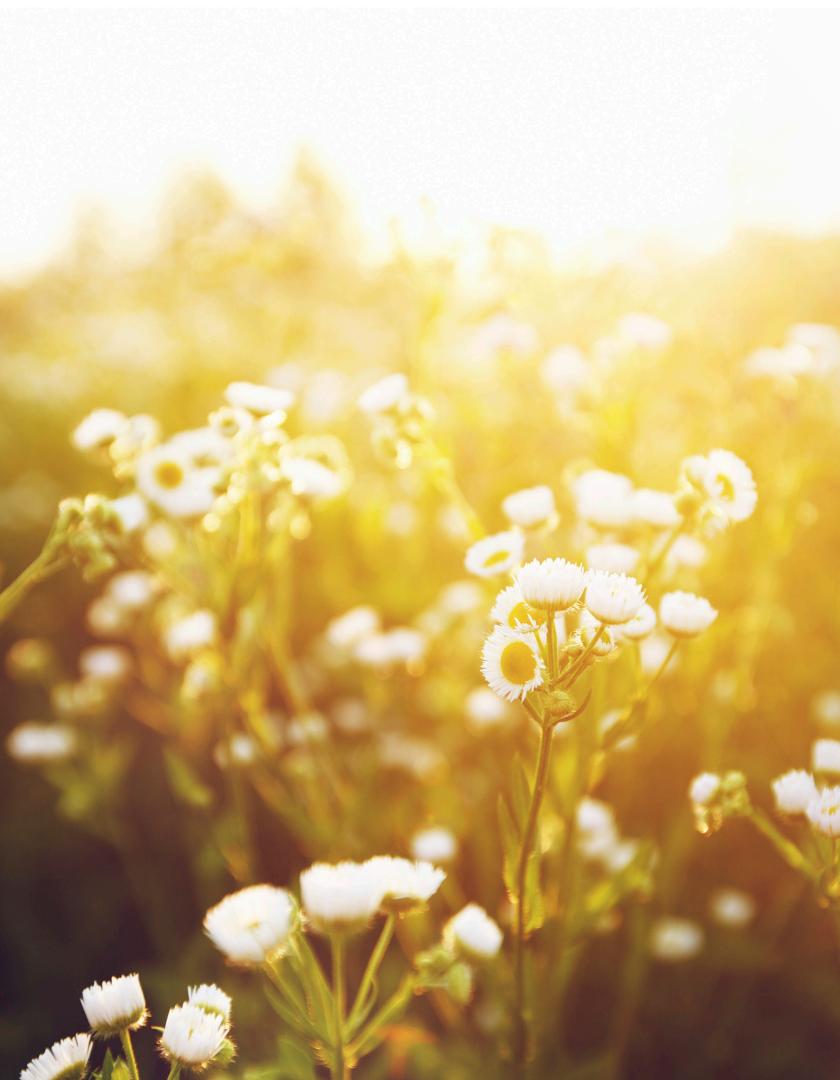
Sincerely,

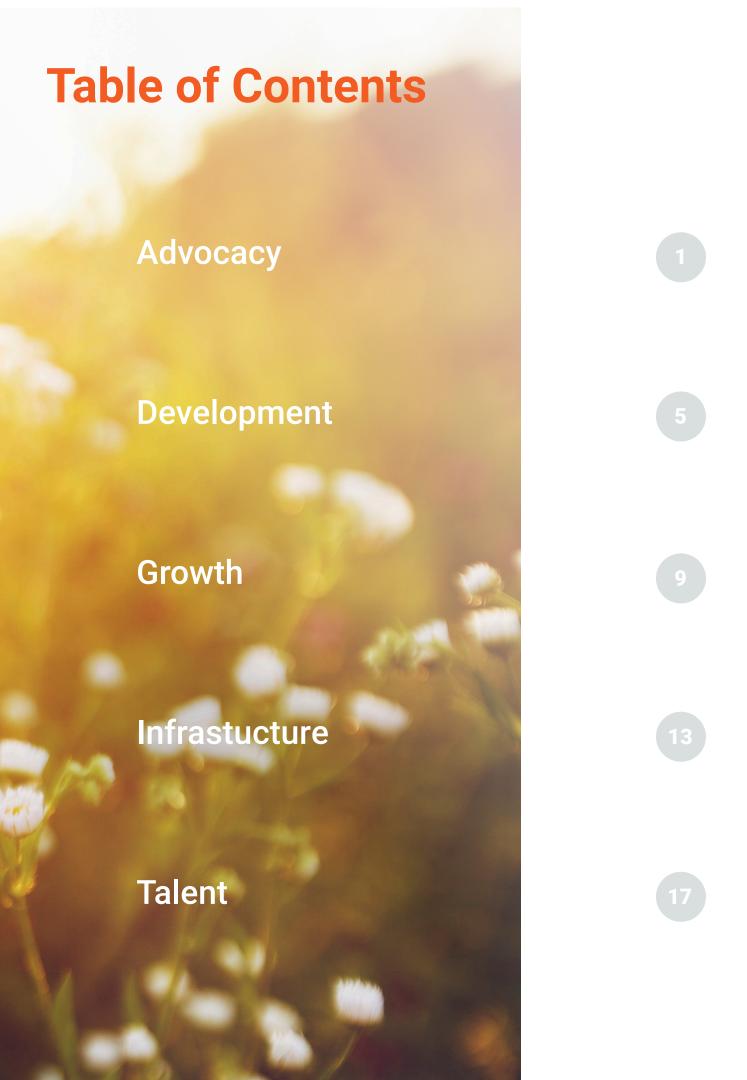
Sean DonlinBoard Chairman

Richard Harkwell

Strategic Plan Committee Chairman

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Advocacy

Easterseals Midwest provides essential programs that improve the lives of people living with a disablity. The government funding available on a local, state, and federal level is critical to the success of these programs and services—we work to ensure citizens with disabilities are welcomed as contributing members of society and afforded rights that people of all abilities deserve and are legally assured. We are here to elevate and protect the voices and rights of the disability community we proudly support.

With this in mind, the strategic planning for advocacy centers on public policy, awareness, and engagement.

These efforts work in partnership with our ongoing advocacy priorities; most notably the allocation of government funding and rate increases. Over the past three years, Easterseals Midwest has received an increase of 30+ percent (\$12 million) in governmental funding through rate-standardization, cost of living adjustments, and new client acquisitions. This success has expanded programs for Missourians with disabilities that are supported through us and many other organizations. With the possibility of block grants for Medicaid funding, both the rate increases and additional funding for services are at risk.

In order to better communicate our mission to key community stakeholders, the strategic plan for advocacy reflects a greater investment in our refreshed brand. We will strengthen relationships with our legislators, increase investments in marketing, and build on our reputation as industry thought-leaders.

Both monetary and non-monetary investments are critical to our efficiency and success.

We will invest in resources that advance the rights of people with disabilities. We will recruit, retain, and develop qualified volunteers and employees who have both a capacity for strong relationships and growth. These roles will emphasize and strengthen our position as the leading voice in the disabilities rights movement. Fiscal Year 2018 will focus on establishing a springboard for organized change and advocacy.

We will develop and implement successful communication and engagement tactics to identify, steward, and cultivate a sustainable movement. We will continue to invest in stakeholder retention strategies and find new, engaging ways to elevate the voices of the communities we support. We will establish avenues of community engagement for individuals with disabilities and their families in order to create positive experiences and share their voices with elected officials.

We will focus on analyzing successful efforts and implementing those insights on a broader scale. As our reputation continues to grow, our reach will extend beyond Missouri, Illinois, Kansas, and Washington, D.C.

These chronological and strategic efforts will further establish us as the leading voice, resource, and change-agent for individuals and families living with disabilities.

Advocacy

Key Themes

Brand Awareness Engagement Inclusion Influence

Legislation Living Wage Public Policy Rate Increases

Overview

Brand Awareness

Increase brand awareness to further Easterseals Midwest as an industry leader while growing our influence in public policy.

Engagement

Increase traditional, email, and social media engagement to bolster stakeholder action on behalf of the disability community.

Inclusion

Expand opportunities for the general public and other constituencies to advocate for the disability community.

Influence

Increase and amplify interactions with policy makers and communities.

Legislation

Educate and build relationships with new and returning elected officials. Continue to collaborate with other providers on relevant disability issues.

Living Wage

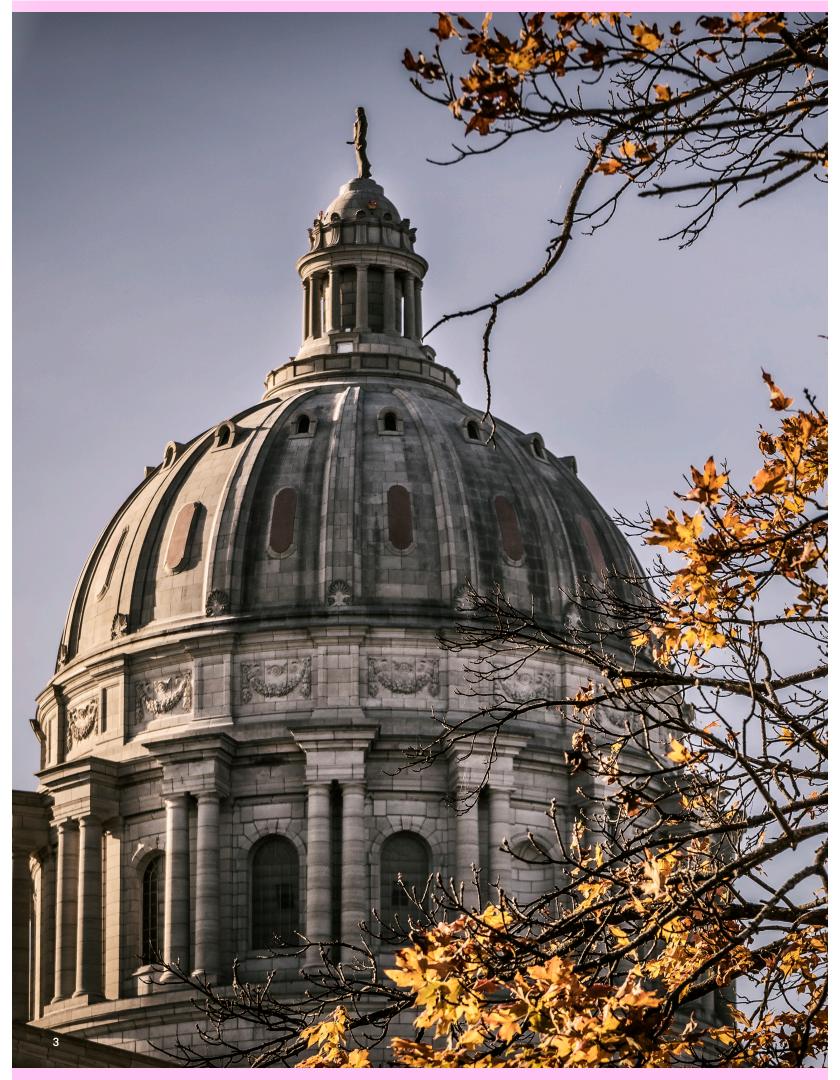
Work toward paying our direct support professionals a living wage through government rate increases.

Public Policy

Create a public policy initiative to increase the rates, visibility, and funding required to sustain the disability rights movement.

Rate Increases

Increase government funding rates to fully cover the costs of all services.



Advocacy Vision 2020

Our vision is to be the leading **voice**, **resource**, **and change-agent** for individuals and families living with disability.

Advocacy Goal 2020

Implement a public policy agenda to increase the rates, visibility, and funding required to support the movement, while obtaining a cumulative 8 percent rate increase across all government funded services by June 30, 2020.

Advocacy Objectives

Fiscal Year 2018

Invest in resources to meet the core needs that advance, promote, and support individuals and families living with a disability.

Fiscal Year 2019

Identify, steward, and cultivate relationships that advocate and sustain the disability rights movement.

Fiscal Year 2020

Guide the next phase of our movement's overall work by establishing practices and policies that advance the lives of people living with a disability.

Fiscal Year 2018

Hire or contract additional public policy experts to advance our movement.

Establish policy initiatives based on new and existing needs.

Develop and distribute our case for support to elected officials.

Advocacy Strategy

Fiscal Year 2019

Use donor retention strategies to develop and enhance relationships with legislators and advocates.

Build public policy awareness online and through social media.

Engage individuals and families in our grassroots public policy efforts.

Fiscal Year 2020

Organize and rally the next phase of our public policy and community action initiatives.

Increase the number of written and published op-eds to engage more communities in our movement.



Advocacy Key Performance Indicators

(Reported Quarterly)

Citations/publications in media outlets Legislator engagement (number of encounters) Net financial results of government funded services



Development

Our development strategy supports Easterseals Midwest's robust, diversified funding needs while also meeting the challenges facing those we support.

We will continue to practice responsible stewardship by investing in the data, technology, and staff necessary to develop our growing fundraising programs.

In fiscal year 2014, total development revenue was \$2.2 million; fiscal year 2015 totaled \$2.1 million, and fiscal year 2016 brought in \$3.8 million. To continue this momentum, we will commit to major gifts, volunteer engagement, successful events, annual fund, and expanding our fundraising footprint. We will also complete the endowment campaign over the next three years.

In order to accomplish our goals, our staff needs the board's support in the direct solicitation of major and principle gifts. Our strategic plan also requires the board to reinstitute the board and community volunteer development committee. Because our special events are so healthy, these items will not be the focus of this committee; instead, the committee will support our major gift initiatives. Additional staff and technology are needed for this process, and we will invest in these resources early.

To build a platform for success, we plan to invest in our organizational data. We will integrate new data and microtargeting tactics into our donor engagement and annual fund strategies in order to build a pipeline of major donors. To increase planned giving, we will launch a fully integrated marketing campaign.

Our goal is to create an organization that wants for little and provides the best support to the disability community and its evolving needs. To elevate our presence in the broader philanthropic community, we will further develop fundraising programs, meaningful partnerships, and long-term donor initiatives and strategies. These efforts will strengthen a variety of organizational efforts, including volunteer opportunities, event sponsorship, and a comprehensive cause marketing program.

We are confident that these resources will support our development efforts and continue to support our vision of being an organization with broad philanthropic support.

Our ultimate goal is to reach a point where each mission-driven priority is fully attainable.

Development

Key Themes

Annual Fund Board Engagement Corporate Social Responsibility

Data Integration
Direct Response

Overview

Annual Fund

Deploy new data and micro-targeting to our annual fund program to prospective future donors.

Board Engagement

Determine a yearly gift amount and grow the board alumni committee and membership program.

Corporate Social Responsibility

Engage corporations and businesses in multiple ways — including volunteer opportunities, event sponsorship, and cause-marketing programs.

Data Integration

Secure donor data from Easterseals, Inc. and integrate it into our primary event and donor database software.

Direct Response

Utilize direct response tactics to inform prospective strategies for our annual fund.

Donor Engagement

Use consistently branded messages and calls to action in all donor communication.

Endowment/Future Campaign

Complete the endowment campaign by June 30, 2020.

Events

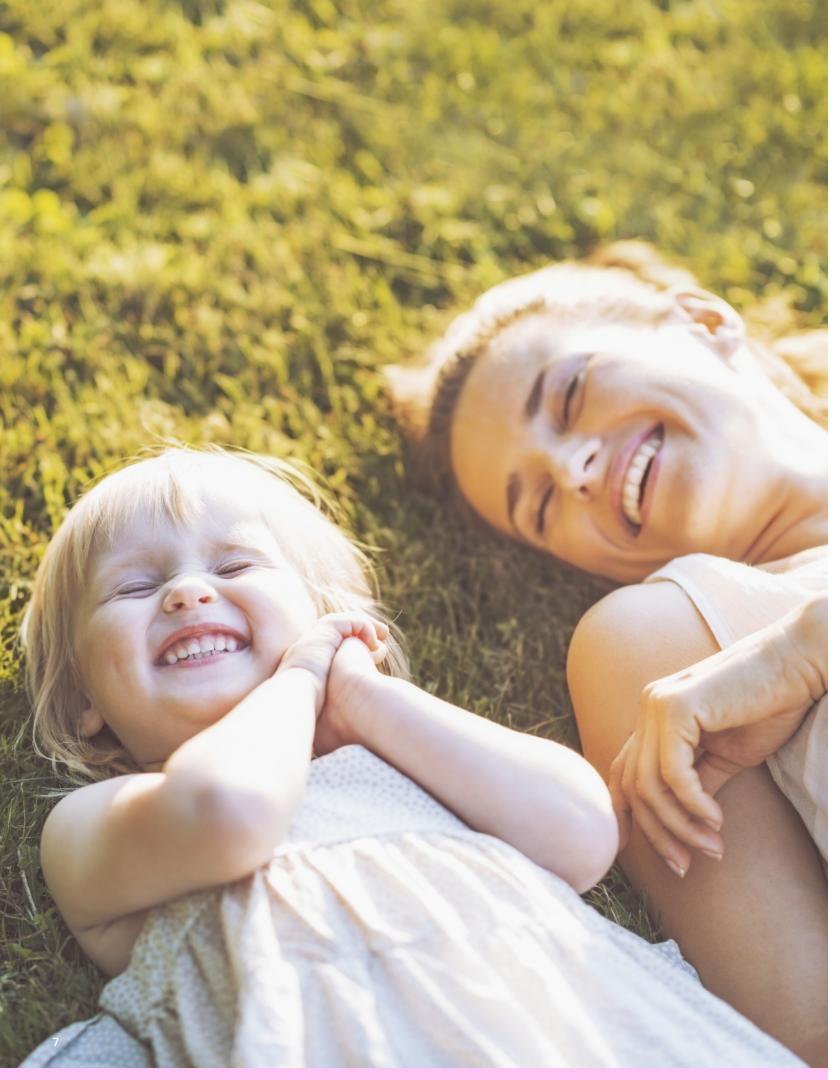
Critically evaluate the purpose, goals, and success of all special events. Be prepared to end events that no longer make financial sense or fit within our program.

Major Gifts

Increase participation in the President's Circle and Young Professionals committees.

Planned Gifts

Execute comprehensive marketing campaigns and solicitation strategy for planned giving campaigns.



Development Vision 2020

Our vision is to be an organization with **broad philanthropic support**, where every mission-driven priority is attainable.

Development Goal 2020

In fiscal year 2020, we will raise \$4 million in combined philanthropic revenue and complete the Endowment/Future Campaign.

Development Objectives

Fiscal Year 2018

Invest in data, technology, and staff to develop the foundation of a world-class fundraising program.

Fiscal Year 2019

Grow and strengthen our major gifts and corporate philanthropic programs.

Fiscal Year 2020

Enter the final phase

and complete Endowment/Future Campaign.

Development Strategy

Fiscal Year 2018

Implement a new primary donor database that integrates event management software.

Deploy new data, staff, and micro-targeting tactics for donor engagement, direct response, major gifts, and annual fund efforts in order to grow the pipeline of major donors.

Execute a full marketing and solicitation strategy for our planned giving campaign.

Fiscal Year 2019

Expand the Board Alumni and Young Professionals membership program.

Expand the President's Circle with the launch of the Leadership Circle.

Engage corporations and businesses through refreshed volunteer opportunities, event sponsorship, and a professional cause-marketing program.

Fiscal Year 2020

Launch the final public phase of the Endowment/Future Campaign through marketing, events, direct response, and targeted outreach to key stakeholders.

(Please note this goal coincides with Easterseals' 100th anniversary.)



Development Key Performance Indicators

(Reported Quarterly)

Non-duplicate donors Donor retention rate Unrestricted funds raised **Board Giving**



Growth

Our services are in high demand, and expansion is both qualitative and quantitative – the following growth strategy seeks to align both organizational scope and value. Evaluating need, current resources, and opportunities are necessary to further our mission to provide exceptional services to the developmental disability community.

The number of individuals we currently support has increased from 3,321 in fiscal year 2014 to 4,596 in fiscal year 2016. Program revenue has increased from \$37 million in fiscal year 2014 to \$41 million in fiscal year 2015, and \$50 million in fiscal year 2016. We anticipate program revenue to grow to \$59 million during fiscal year 2017.

The growth strategy for Easterseals Midwest considers multiple areas of expansion, including the evolving needs of communities that are served, underserved, and in need of initial services.

These opportunities speak to our commitment, while providing opportunity for a return on investment.

While components of alignment exist throughout each area of the strategic plan, growth strategy offers the clearest example of cross-functionality. As the economic, political, and healthcare climates continue to shift, there is an **advocacy** component that we must understand and guide. At our organization's core, there will need to be a convergence of **talent**. Strong leadership to navigate expansion is critical to the plan's success. We recognize the importance of **infrastructure**, and are committed to cultivating a seamless, efficient communication and data system for both staff and program participants. We also recognize the importance of supporting **development's** efforts to diversify additional funds to offset underfunded program areas.

During fiscal year 2018, we will initiate the expansion strategy by securing a stable platform as a springboard for growth. We will increase quality assurance enhancements, including extending the next phase of our direct service professional training and mentoring programs. We will also expand marketing investments within our territory, and continue to evaluate the viability of Easterseals as the leading provider of programs for people with disabilities in new areas for expansion.

Based on need, we will grow our current program offerings by pursuing opportunities to expand into new territories, including the Kansas City metro community (Missouri and Kansas). We will leverage our connections, and cultivate relationships with local communities and the Easterseals national network. We will promote innovation and our world-class services to both new and current program participants underserved by other organizations. We will secure a readiness plan for Medicaid Managed Care, and exceed national quality benchmarks on our existing and future programs.

As we grow our current strengths, we will look at new service lines based on impact and the need of underserved individuals. We will work to support those who need additional service and those currently waiting for services.

Growth

Key Themes

Capacity
Efficiency
Existing Services
Managed Care

New Services New Markets Quality

Overview

Capacity

Improve the recruitment and retention of direct support professionals to increase capacity for growth. Reduce the time for hiring in order to respond to the needs of new program participants. Create career pipelines for direct staff, supervisors, managers, and leadership staff.

Efficiency

Create the program infrastructure necessary to increase efficiencies for continued growth.

Existing Services

Expand existing services using data-informed need and viable market assessments. Evaluate the opportunities to replicate existing services throughout the Easterseals network.

Managed Care

Implement a readiness plan for Medicaid Managed Care. Proactively engage in negotiations with Managed Care organizations, state agencies, and legislators to ensure that Easterseals Midwest is participating in the design of Medicaid-funded services within our territory.

New Markets

Pursue mergers, acquisitions, and opportunities to expand services. Evaluate the need for services in regions of the current territory where we are not offering programs. Use needs assessment data to determine the best regions for expansion.

Quality

Exceed national benchmarks for quality measurements.



Growth Vision 2020

Our vision is to continue as an organization with **strong** and **sustainable** growth in both the quality and quantity of services we provide to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Growth Goal 2020

Create effective avenues for new program growth while expanding profitable existing services areas – increasing program revenue by \$7.5 million while supporting the needs of underserved communities.

Growth Objectives

Fiscal Year 2018

Develop the sustainable agency infrastructure needed for continued growth, conduct needs assessments in Kansas City metro market, and deploy brand awareness marketing.

Fiscal Year 2018

Advance the onboarding, recruitment, and retention of direct support professionals.

Increase quality assurance enhancements, including extended training and mentoring

opportunities.

Conduct an ongoing needs assessment of new and growing markets while continuing to expand our brand awareness marketing campaigns.

Fiscal Year 2019

Expand existing services using the results of community need assessments and our proprietary organizational strategy screen.

Growth Strategy

Fiscal Year 2019

Pursue opportunities to expand services outside of the current service footprint.

Use the Easterseals affiliation network to cultivate a community of learning and innovation.

Fiscal Year 2020

Provide new services based on the needs of our communities.

Fiscal Year 2020

Evaluate the viability of new program opportunities.

Implement a readiness plan for Medicaid Managed Care.

Exceed national benchmarks for quality measurements.



Growth Key Performance Indicators

(Reported Quarterly)

Hours of Service Provided Number of People Served (New and Retained) Satisfaction Rates Program Revenue



Infrastructure

Easterseals Midwest will continue to be an organization with an integrated infrastructure that promotes quality service, employee satisfaction, and improved efficiencies that allow us to support more people.

Infrastructure is a critical part of our current and future success—it is the way we use valuable data and communicate our milestones and achievements. Infrastructure is not only a brick and mortar function, but also the innovation, communication, and technological asset we need in order to grow as an industry leader. These varied and equally important aspects of infrastructure are considered in the following plan.

Our vision for enhanced growth, advocacy, talent, and development advancement drives the technological progress within this plan to ensure industry best practices and to reduce organizational risk, we have enlisted an information technology assessment firm to establish our baseline. Equipped with this important information, we will create a secure and compliant system to sustain our current programs while preparing to meet the need of those who are underserved.

The strategic process includes a Board Information Technology committee to support, recommend, and guide our current and future technological needs. With multiple site locations and touchdown spaces across our territory, we will develop an integrated strategy that enhances the collaboration between our office-based staff and the staff who work remotely.

As we near the final phase of implementation, we will secure a technology integration program that connects information resources across the organization. To ensure success, we will create and conduct staff training programs for each of these systems.

By advancing our technology infrastructure, we hope to be prepared to meet the growing needs of our community, funders, and the families who rely on Easterseals. The future of this plan will allow for a better working relationship with many funders—including the Department of Mental Health—who we will be able to bill in real-time, reducing errors while providing more timely payments. This supports our Return on Investment (ROI) goal of between 2% and 3% as the organization will likely reduce the caring costs found in our line of credit, improving our receivable accounts.

This strategy will improve real-time communication with family members: a participant portal will be available to loved ones seeking reports, care giver notes, and more. Productivity of our more than 1,700 staff members will improve, allowing for even better service to those we support. We will also be able to reduce repetitive data entry.

By investing in this strategy, Easterseals Midwest will be able to hire and retain top talent, have the tools to communicate with donors and advocates at a moment's notice, and most importantly be ready to meet the growing needs of the disability community.

Infrastructure

Key Themes

Assessment*
Collaboration

Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

Efficiency

Information Technology (IT) Board Committee

Remote Access Secure Data Streamlined Training

Telecommunication Systems

Overview

Assessment

Complete IT assessment and determine needs.

Collaboration

Develop integrated strategy to support synergy of office workforce, community-based and telecommuting staff. Support the creation of web-based communities for all stakeholders.

CRM

Complete transfer of data to Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and plan for all service area consolidation.

Efficiency

Create an integrated infrastructure that enables quality service, employee satisfaction, and improved efficiency. Review and analyze systems and processes to identify areas of strength and weakness that require adjustment.

Board IT Committee

Organize structure of IT Board committee. They will support, recommend, and guide our technology needs both now and into the future.

Remote Access

Expand and improve remote access to the organization's information and data resources.

Secure Data

Ensure secure access to resources through authentication and identity management technologies.

Streamlined

Implement a streamlined communication structure to enable transparent and increased collaboration across departments, programs, and staff.

Training

Create and conduct continuing education programs for newly implemented IT systems.

Telecommunication Systems

Implement telecommunication tools that allow staff, volunteers, and clients to successfully communicate by using the results of IT assessment (phone system consolidation and video conferencing capabilities).



Infrastructure Vision 2020

Our vision is build an integrated infrastructure that promotes quality service, employee satisfaction and retention, and improved efficiency and communication for our organization.

Infrastructure Goal 2020

Create a **secure**, **integrated**, **and compliant** infrastructure to increase organizational capacity and support more people while improving our return on investment.

Infrastructure Objectives

Fiscal Year 2018

Secure infrastructure to support new systems. Identify the data needs and strategies necessary for long-term success.

Fiscal Year 2019

Review systems, processes, and policies organization-wide. Provide ongoing training for core competencies and system functionality.

Fiscal Year 2020

Implement secure systems in program and support areas to provide modernized and efficient technology.

Fiscal Year 2018

Complete IT assessment, determine needs, and create action plan.

Reorganize the IT department structure, based on assessment recommendations and overall needs of the growing organization.

Organize the structure of the IT Board committee to support our work both now and into the future.

Develop an integrated strategy for promoting synergy between the office workforce, community staff, and telecommuting staff.

Fiscal Year 2019

Infrastructure Strategy

Complete transfer of data to CRM and plan for service area consolidation.

Implement telecommunication and metric reporting systems based on the IT assessment.

Expand and improve remote access to the organization's information and data resources.

Fiscal Year 2020

Implement a technology integration program that connects information resources across the organization.

Create and conduct staff training for new technology systems.

Ensure secure access to resources through identity management technologies.

ACHIEVED ONGOING NOT MET

Infrastructure Key Performance Indicators

(Reported Quarterly)

*Pending assessment outcomes



Talent

Together with infrastructure, recruitment, and development, talent retention is a foundational part of the strategic plan's design. To best enhance this architecture, we must evaluate each component. Considerations include compensation, benefits, work-life balance, leadership development, and succession planning, all of which work together to create a vibrant and engaged culture.

A culture of success—where both those we support and those who support them succeed—is a critical part of our organization's value system. The success of our staff directly correlates to the success of our clients, and speaks to the heart of our mission.

We will recruit, develop, and retain a dedicated workforce where all staff members feel valued and inspired. We will offer competitive wages, a caring work culture, advancement, and strong leadership. To achieve this, we will invest in the following strategies.

We will focus on our current and incoming leadership. Understanding the profound effect an experienced leader has on retention has helped us identify key leadership competencies. With these skills in mind, we will be able to invest in the ongoing professional development of our current leadership team and equip future leaders whom we want to elevate within the organization. We will assess the program by measuring inbound competencies, post-training knowledge, and skills, as well as the performance of subordinates.

Strong leadership best practices and staff retention will provide an opportunity to efficiently and responsibly increase our recruitment efforts. Easterseals Midwest will focus on a comprehensive marketing campaign, targeting positions through data-driven, micro-targeted recruitment efforts that are measurable. Using the right platforms, we will deliver our message to the right groups and audiences.

Our commitment to the hiring process will include continued enhancements in creating a dynamic and efficient user experience on **joineasterseals.com**.

As we continue to cultivate our talent and develop data and programs to support a thriving culture, we will focus on compensation and staff advancement opportunities. Through a full and robust compensation package that includes outstanding healthcare, workplace benefits, and competitive wages, we hope to attract and retain a quality workforce.

Through these efforts, we will secure Easterseals Midwest as the employer of choice, attracting and retaining the best talent in the industry, while providing those we support with excellent programming.

Talent

Key Themes

Attraction Compensation Culture Data Evaluation Hiring

Leadership
Effectiveness/Succession
Mentoring Program
Recruitment
Retention

Overview

Attraction

Be the employer of choice through increased referrals, retention, and a culture of care surrounding compensation, benefits, well-being, and work-life balance.

Compensation

Pay competitive wages with annual performance-based pay increases.

Culture

Invest in how we support, reward, and acknowledge our most valuable resource. Increase communication, culture cultivation, and incentive opportunities. Promote employee wellness and work-life balance.

Data Evaluation

Establish metrics to gauge the effectiveness of recruitment initiatives that include: marketing efforts, referrals, sign-on bonuses, and any other recruitment initiatives. Evaluate all aspects of the recruitment and retention process with reliable data.

Hiring

Increase qualified hires through targeted recruitment campaigns.

Leadership Effectiveness

Cultivate leadership and mentor programs for all leadership-level employees. Conduct a needs assessment to determine current leadership competencies, and augment accordingly. Implement leadership succession planning throughout the organization.

Mentoring Program

Create a tailored mentor program for all new hires and newly promoted managers.

Recruitment

Launch a comprehensive recruitment campaign to educate and attract top talent.

Retention

Reduce turnover rate through efforts that include compensation, benefits, and well-being initiatives.



Talent Vision 2020

Our vision is to be an organization with a culture that empowers our employees to make profound, positive differences in the lives of people with disabilities.

Talent Goal 2020

We will recruit, develop, and retain a dedicated workforce by reducing Direct Service Professional position turnover to less than 30 percent.

Fiscal Year 2018

Develop and strengthen leadership capability by investing in ongoing and professional development of management staff.

Talent Objectives

Fiscal Year 2019

Develop a comprehensive recruitment campaign to educate and attract top talent and establish metrics to evaluate effectiveness.

Fiscal Year 2020

Establish Easterseals Midwest as the employer of choice by promoting employee wellness through competitive compensation, well-being, health, and work-life balance.

Fiscal Year 2018

Conduct a needs analysis to determine the tools required to

Establish core metrics and evaluate the effectiveness of recruitment initiatives

Identify leadership competencies and create onboarding mentor programs with a 30, 60, 90, 120 day checkin process.

Implement leadership succession planning throughout the organization.

Talent Strategy

Fiscal Year 2019

Increase the total number of candidates and hires for highsuccessfully lead our workforce. priority positions through marketing and higher compensation practices for all positions (particularly those that are challenging to fill).

> **Increase opportunities** for internal staff advancement.

Increase financial incentives for employee referrals.

Fiscal Year 2020

Increase our compensation and benefits to a level that is competitive with similar for-profit organizations.

Reduce turnover rates through enhanced efforts in employee total rewards and culture initiatives.

ACHIEVED ONGOING NOT MET

Talent Key Performance Indicators

(Reported Quarterly)

Critical Direct Service Professional position turnover Workforce tenure Length of open positions (vacancies time to fill)

Notes	

Together, we're changing the way the world defines and views disability by making profound, positive differences in people's lives every day.











