



South Shore Stars

Strategic Plan

January 1, 2020 - December 31, 2022

About South Shore Stars

South Shore Stars was founded in 1970 and from our inception our programs have focused on providing quality early education, academic enrichment and family support, all of which are necessary to ultimately break the cycle of poverty. We have stayed true to our original mission, with two interconnected goals:

- Enable parents to work
- Support each of our children to thrive

As we expanded to offer middle and high school academic support programs and home visiting, we have remained focused on these two goals.

Stars serves about 1200 children annually, making a long-term investment in our families. Although our programs are located in Quincy, Randolph and Weymouth, our families live in all of the surrounding cities and towns. We provide programs to a diverse population, concentrating on school readiness and academic achievement, by promoting healthy development and strengthening families. Stars is a unique organization in our communities because of our focus on low-income families and at-risk children/youth, coupled with our ability to provide continuity of services from infancy to high school. No other agency is doing this comprehensive work in our communities.

We achieve our mission by communicating our values effectively and upholding our standards of excellence and accountability throughout our organization. Our organizational structure provides clear lines of responsibility that support achieving Stars' objectives. Both private and public funders consistently commend Stars for our management expertise which results in: high quality programs, maximum enrollment, sound fiscal management, and compliance with all funder requirements and regulations.

Our core programs include:

- Home Visiting - Centered on parents supporting their children's early development, while accessing support services, training and employment.
- Family Child Care (FCC) System - FCC Providers nurture infants and toddlers, supported by our early education and social services staff.
- Preschool - Three nationally accredited preschool centers providing early education and care.
- School Age - Five out-of-school time centers, concentrating on social/emotional learning throughout the school year, and a summer camp focused on reducing summer learning loss.
- Middle School - Students referred by school personnel because they are at risk of failure, providing academic enrichment and support.
- Youth in Motion -- Targeting 9th grade students with a history of failing and successfully supporting them to ultimately graduate.

Our low staff to child ratios, specialized training, volunteer program, and social workers are critical to providing the kinds of programs all children need to grow to their full potential. Ongoing program evaluation and assessment of children's progress ensures that we are achieving our goals and objectives. Over the past five decades, Stars has been a leader in our communities and statewide, advocating for at-risk children and low income families, bringing stakeholders together

to develop new initiatives, identifying potential resources, and advocating for effective program policies further advancing our mission.

Strategic Planning Process

Beginning in November of 2018, a series of focus groups consisting of staff, Board members, stakeholders and community leaders met concentrating on the following two questions:

- What does Stars do well (assets, resources and accomplishments)?
- What are the needs in our communities and how do they align with Stars' strengths?

A Board Strategic Planning Steering Committee reviewed and synthesized the information from these focus groups identifying the challenges we confront and the strengths we have as follows:

Challenges

- Increased complexity of family and children needs.
- Increased diversity of population served.
- Insufficient public resources funding to meet expanding needs.
- Increased competition for funding/fundraising.
- Decreased sources of funding/fundraising.
- Overburdened/underfunded partners (child welfare, mental health system, public schools).
- Increased challenges in recruiting staff.
- Lack of available and affordable facilities.
- Burdensome, constantly changing regulations.

Strengths

- **Mission driven** – The Stars team is committed to improving the lives of children from economic and culturally diverse families, ensuring low income families and children who experienced trauma receive the support they need.
- **Commitment to staff development** – The diversity and longevity of our staff is a testament to Stars' commitment to staff development and the staff's commitment to our mission.
- **A culture of collaboration and resiliency** – The evolving and diverse needs of our children and families are met by an extended team that is able to work together, problem solve and adapt.
- **Comprehensive approach and continuity of care** – Our services support children from birth through high school.
- **Evidence/research based programming** – Our approach, curriculum, child assessment and program evaluation is rooted in decades of research.

With this information, the Steering Committee agreed that our strategic plan would focus on the following:

- **Programming** – High quality, evidence based programming and family support.
- **Organization/Infrastructure** – Organizational alignment to meet the needs of our families and staff.
- **Awareness** – Expand awareness of our organizational strength, programs and accomplishments aimed at increasing our fundraising capabilities.

Three Working Groups comprised of staff and Board were created to identify the strategic priorities that will further our work in each of the areas.

- Increase our ability to support children's developmental growth and strengthen support for families with complex needs.
- Sustain and expand our older youth programming.
- Expand awareness of our programs aimed at increasing private fundraising.

SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Over the next three years, South Shore Stars and staff are committed to accomplishing the following:

Strengthen Early Childhood Programming

- Increase therapeutic supports to infants and toddlers enrolled in EHS Stars and Family Child Care.
- Better support children with special needs by providing consultation/coaching from speech/language, occupational and physical therapists to our preschool teachers.
- Increase support for our FCC Providers and preschool teachers by developing and implementing an annual “self-care” professional development plan.
- Increase our ability to support our children who have experienced trauma by creating a child specialist position to provide consultation, coaching and professional development to our preschool teachers.
- Optimize preschool classroom enrollment targets.

Strengthen School Age Programming

- Increase focus on intentionally supporting social and emotional development in all aspects of the day.
- Identify potential programs to provide Mentors for identified youth.
- Restructure staffing to create a fulltime Academic Coordinator position.
- Explore applying for 21st CCLC grants in Weymouth and/or Quincy.

Strengthen Support for Families

- Develop a strategy to translate all relevant materials into parents’ preferred language of choice.
- Develop and begin to implement an agency-wide family engagement and support plan.
- Create a child care program Family Partner position.
- Restructure EHS Stars staffing to have fulltime Family Partner.
- Expand cultural competence professional development.

Strengthen and Expand Youth In Motion

- Expand summer programming adding 15 Rising 9th grade students.
- Increase the number of 9th grade students.
- Partner with a program to provide Mentors for identified youth.
- Implement plan to provide mental health support to YIM students.
- Implement Year 13 plan, supporting YIM participants after high school graduation.

Expand Stars Programming to New Locations

- Identify new Quincy Preschool site.
- Expand EHS Stars service delivery area.
- Explore developing Weymouth YIM.
- Identify new site for either Weymouth Afterschool Stars or the Administrative Office.

Increase Corporate, Foundation and Individual Support

- Design a new mobile friendly website.
- Expand social media presence.
- Develop new materials and distribution plan.
- Develop/implement a Board Development plan aimed at increasing Board Members’ support of fundraising efforts.
- Identify potential foundations to support Strategic Priorities.
- Leverage 50th Birthday to raise funding for Strategic Priorities.
- Explore feasibility of hiring a Major Gift staff member.

Strengthen Administrative and Program Support Capacity

- Restructure Management Team Roles.
- Review Benefits Package.
- Implement IT plan that supports program staff.

STRATEGIC PLAN ADDENDUM 1

MISSION STATEMENT

South Shore Stars provides comprehensive early education and youth development programs that enhance the optimal growth of children from economically and culturally diverse families, using a family support approach, in collaboration with parents, schools and other service providers.

STATEMENT OF VALUES

Community leaders and parents established Stars in 1970 with the goal of providing affordable childcare to working families. From its inception Stars committed itself to create an environment which supports each child's development. It is our intention that every child attending our programs is both nurtured and challenged. Following is our agency's statement of values:

- We facilitate learning and foster developmental growth by identifying and building up each child's strengths, skills, interests and learning styles.
- We foster independence and taking initiative by viewing each child as an individual with their own experiences, knowledge, and skills. We believe that children learn by doing, trial-and-error, repetition, and imitation.
- We respect our families' many different cultures, welcoming and celebrating this diversity throughout our programs. Staff attempt to infuse a multicultural and anti-bias awareness into all activities, model behaviors that demonstrate appreciation of other cultures, support diversity of opinion, and create an atmosphere that encourages children to acknowledge and value individuality and diversity.
- We attempt to instill in our children a respect for themselves, each other, staff, and their environment. We help them learn the importance of cooperation, negotiation, problem solving, and peaceful conflict resolution.
- We help children understand that they are members of a larger community and encourage them to help other children, share, and learn firsthand the value of volunteerism.
- We help children to be trustworthy and honest by nurturing and teaching them to make good choices and accept the responsibility of those choices.

STRATEGIC PLAN ADDENDUM 2

South Shore Stars Graphic Overview

PURPOSE – Provide comprehensive early education and youth development programs to South Shore low income families and children who have experienced trauma.

PROBLEMS AIMING TO RESOLVE	AVAILABLE RESOURCES	PROGRAMS	POPULATIONS SERVED	STRATEGIES/ACTIVITIES agency wide:	EVIDENCE OF SERVICE DELIVERY agency wide:	OUTCOMES agency wide:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents cannot work without access to affordable child care. Without access to early education, children from low income families, often start school without the essential skills to succeed. School Age children from low income families without access to afterschool and summer programs, are at higher risk of academic failure. Children who have experienced trauma often have developmental delays and difficulty with self-regulation. Parents confronting stress (financial, mental health, immigration status) often cannot meet the developmental needs of their children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five decades of experience and proven commitment to mission Experienced, educated, committed staff Committed, effective Board of Directors Volunteer program Multiple funding sources (EEC, DESE, OHS, UW, corporations, foundations, private donors) Collaboration, partnerships with other CBOs and school systems Continuity of care: Programs serving pregnant women through high school seniors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early Head Start Stars Family Child Care System Three Preschool Centers Five OST elementary centers Summer Day Camp OST middle school program Youth In Motion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very low income pregnant women, families with children under age three, children with special needs Low income families with infants and toddlers, eligible for subsidized child care Primarily low income families eligible for subsidized child care and children who have experienced trauma Primarily low income families, eligible for subsidized child care, academically at-risk students and youth that have experienced trauma Primarily low income families eligible for subsidized child care, academically at-risk students and youths that have experienced trauma Students at risk of academic failure Students at risk of academic failure and not graduating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs are free or sliding fee, based on family size and income Professional development through: staff observation, coaching, mentoring, supervision training, professional development plans Strengthening families approach Four licensed, experienced social workers Evidence-based program evaluation and continuous program improvement plans Evidence based screening, assessment, curriculum Individualized planning Family Partnerships Agreements Evidence based screening, assessment and curriculum Low ratios, small group size Intentionally supporting social/emotional development Professional development Focus on engagement and relationship building Intentionally supporting social/emotional development Project-Based and Community Service Learning Clubs Multiple activities including: swimming, boating, athletics, martial arts, digital media Certified teachers integrating literacy and STEM into activities Collaboration with school day staff Focus on engagement and building relationships Low ratios Academic support lead by school day teachers Teacher/specialist facilitated PBL and CSL Clubs Ongoing assessment of growth and academic achievement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ARNETT, HOVERS, SAYO, ERS, APT scores Accreditation and QRIS levels Center Improvement Plans Professional Development Plans All Staff Evaluation Tool Preschool Career Lattice Teaming Plans Parent Questionnaires Family Activities Number of Home Visits (PROMIS) Number of Socialization Groups (PROMIS) 90 minute/week FCC Specialists/Provider (PROMIS) Family Partnership Agreements (PROMIS) Year round/10hrs/day/5 days/week Family Child Care (daily attendance) Year round/11 hrs/day/5 days/wk (daily attendance) 1:7 staff to child ratios Each class minimum LT with BA, teacher AA, TA Each center minimum one class with 15 or fewer children 4 centers: 44 wks/school dismissal to 6PM/5 days/wk JFK: 33 wks/school dismissal to 5:30PM/3 days/wk 8 weeks, full day/5 days/wk (daily attendance) School year, 33 wks/school dismissal to 5:30/4 days/wk 6 week summer program, full day, 4 days/wk SAYO scores, benchmark data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff retention Staff reach Professional Development Goals Center Improvement Plans goals achieved ASET scores increase Preschool Centers accredited Children with teaming/accommodation plans improve (Teaming data) Children with developmental concerns receive appropriate services (Teaming data) Parents access needed resources Parents report satisfaction with programs (Parent Questionnaires) Family Partnership goals achieved Children reach developmental milestones (TSG) HVs and FCC Providers have positive interactions with children and parents (HOVERS and ARNETT) Children demonstrate growth in all developmental domains (COR) Children start school ready to succeed (COR) Teachers have positive interactions with children (ARNETT) Children demonstrate growth in homework completion Children demonstrate growth and proficiency in SEL skill areas (SAYO) Youth demonstrate growth and proficiency in SEL skills areas (SAYO) Youth develop positive peer and adult relationship (SAYO) Youth demonstrate academic gains (grades improve, benchmark assessment data) YIM participants graduate high school Attain and maintain designation as a 21st CCLC Exemplary Program Site

ULTIMATE IMPACT
 - Families are economically self-sufficient - Children enter school ready to succeed - Youth graduate high school

South Shore Stars Organizational Learning Plan

CURRENT DATA	ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES	INFORMING PROGRAMMING	DATA FLOW
DEMOGRAPHICS ACCUFUND enrollment database CCFA (EEC subsidized child care) PROMIS (EHS) DESE Student enrollment database (21 st CCLC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine enrollment Determine child and families demographics Determine attendance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informs staffing levels Informs outreach efforts One indicator of youth engagement in middle/high school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data entered by enrollment staff or Home Visitor Reviewed monthly by Enrollment Director, Program Directors and Executive Director Regular reports to Executive Director
SCREENING ASQ, ASQ-SE (HV, FCC, Preschool)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify children with developmental delays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer for further evaluation and services Develop individual plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Screening completed within 45 days of enrollment Reviewed by, FCC Specialist, HV Coordinator, CDs and Program Director
CHILD/YOUTH OUTCOMES TSG Gold (HV, FCC) COR (preschool) SAYO – S, T, Y (youth) TEAMING REPORTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of child/youth developmental growth Strengthen school, program collaboration (SAYO-T) Understand youth perception (SAYO-Y) Analysis of the success of individual plans for children with behavior concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify HVs, FCC Providers, PS teachers needing support Identifying children needing evaluation/referral Develop individual plans for children; identify plans effectiveness Identify center/program strengths and program areas needing improvement informing Action Plans Informs training plan Annual analysis informs social worker practice and areas to improve teaming process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TSG and COR Anecdotes entered daily by HVs, FCC Providers, FCC Specialists and LTs Program Directors generate reports, reviewed by CDs (COR) and EHS Leadership Teams and Policy Council (TSG) Executive Director reviews reports semi-annually SAYO pre (October) and post (May) are collected by Center Directors; from center staff, classroom teacher and youth analyzed by Program Director; reviewed by Executive Director Teaming data is reviewed/analyzed by Social Services Director and Executive Director in July/Aug Contributes to the development of Action Plans in October/November
PROGRAM EVALUATION Environmental Rating Scales, APT CENTER ACTION PLANS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify program areas needing improvement, improvement over time: program structure; activities, staff/child interaction Identify center improvement goals/measuring success using available data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies center/program strength and program areas in need of improvement included in Action Plans Informs training plans Use TSG, COR, ARNETT, HOVERS, ERS, APT data to develop individual Center Action Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ERS observations every other year by appropriate staff APT observations in Oct/Nov Action Plans developed in Oct/Nov: ongoing observations, periodic review of plans by Program Directors and Executive Director; annual report to Policy Council and Board of Directors Plans submitted to EEC as part of QRIS process
PARENTS PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE FAMILY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS (EHS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify parent perceptions, priorities and concerns Identify parent goals for their family Analyze goal attainment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform Action Plans Keeps HV and FCC Specialists focus on parent goals and their progress Informs Action Plans and annual program self-assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff surveys distributed to all parents in May; analyzed by Executive Director in June, reviewed by Program Directors in the fall with CDs and Coordinator Agreements completed within 45 days of enrollment Entered in PROMIS Progress entered into PROMIS Leadership team review PROMIS reports monthly
STAFF DEVELOPMENT Staff Observation Tool (SA) ARNETT (PS, FCC) HOVERS (HV) Supervision Checklist Staff Evaluation/Individual Training Plan ASET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine the quality of staff interactions with children and youth Identify staff supervision issues/patterns Identify staff training need Identify strengths, needs, patterns of staff professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data is used to structure supervision and develop annual staff training plans Structures monthly supervision Used to develop annual staff training plan Individual ASET scores determines level of annual bonus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observations by supervision occur at least monthly throughout the program year Monthly individual supervision Staff professional development plans developed in October; reviewed by both Program Directors ASETS completed by supervisors, reviewed by Program Directors and Executive Director in May; summary data reviewed by Board Personnel Committee in June