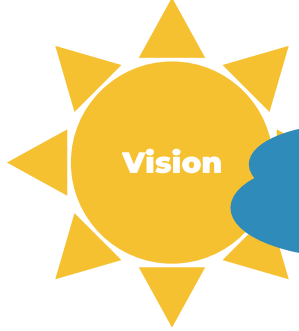


Theory of Change



Vision

Ensuring all children and youth in Ottawa can reach their full potential and grow up great!

Strategies

Awareness: organizations are aware of available resources

Access: organizations know how to access support and services

Alignment: organizations align their support and services

Activities

IECMH tipsheets and posters
 Just Ask Campaign

Professional Development Events
 Resource Repository
 Critical hours conference and online training
 Practice Change Champions

Creating Connections
 Mapping critical hours programs

Short-term Outcomes

- Expose professionals and parents to valuable information
- Increase professional and parent knowledge of early mental health topics
- Increased parent awareness of resources available to them and their children and youth
- Organizations strategically distribute posters
- A range of parents reached despite barriers
- Remind parents and professionals of information and resources previously known
- Creation of community connections

- More staff can access professional development opportunities: critical hours staff, early years staff, staff working with families
- Trusted guide
- Best practices are shared

- Gaps identified in programming/resources
- Gaps in critical hours programs addressed
- Service providers refer children, youth and families to appropriate programming
- Families know the options for critical hours programs
- Teachers understand the social-emotional needs of incoming [kindergarten] students
- Teachers prepare the learning environment for students

Intermediate Outcomes

- More staff have awareness of evolving needs
- More staff have the awareness of knowledge on how to support
- Parents are more supported and better equipped to support their children and youth
- Increased use of appropriate early mental health skills
- Increased use of appropriate resources
- Increased awareness of the evolving needs of the family
- Increased knowledge in how to support the adults in the lives of children and youth

- More access when and where they need it
- More children and youth access appropriate critical hours programming

- Staff and organizations align their programs to coordinate preventative and responsive support
- New programs created
- Existing programs evolve
- Critical hours programming needs of children, youth, and their families are met
- Learning environments foster belonging and build student confidence
- Young students develop a strong social-emotional and knowledge foundation needed to succeed

Long-term objective

Organizations are able to respond to the evolving mental health and well-being needs of Ottawa's children and youth



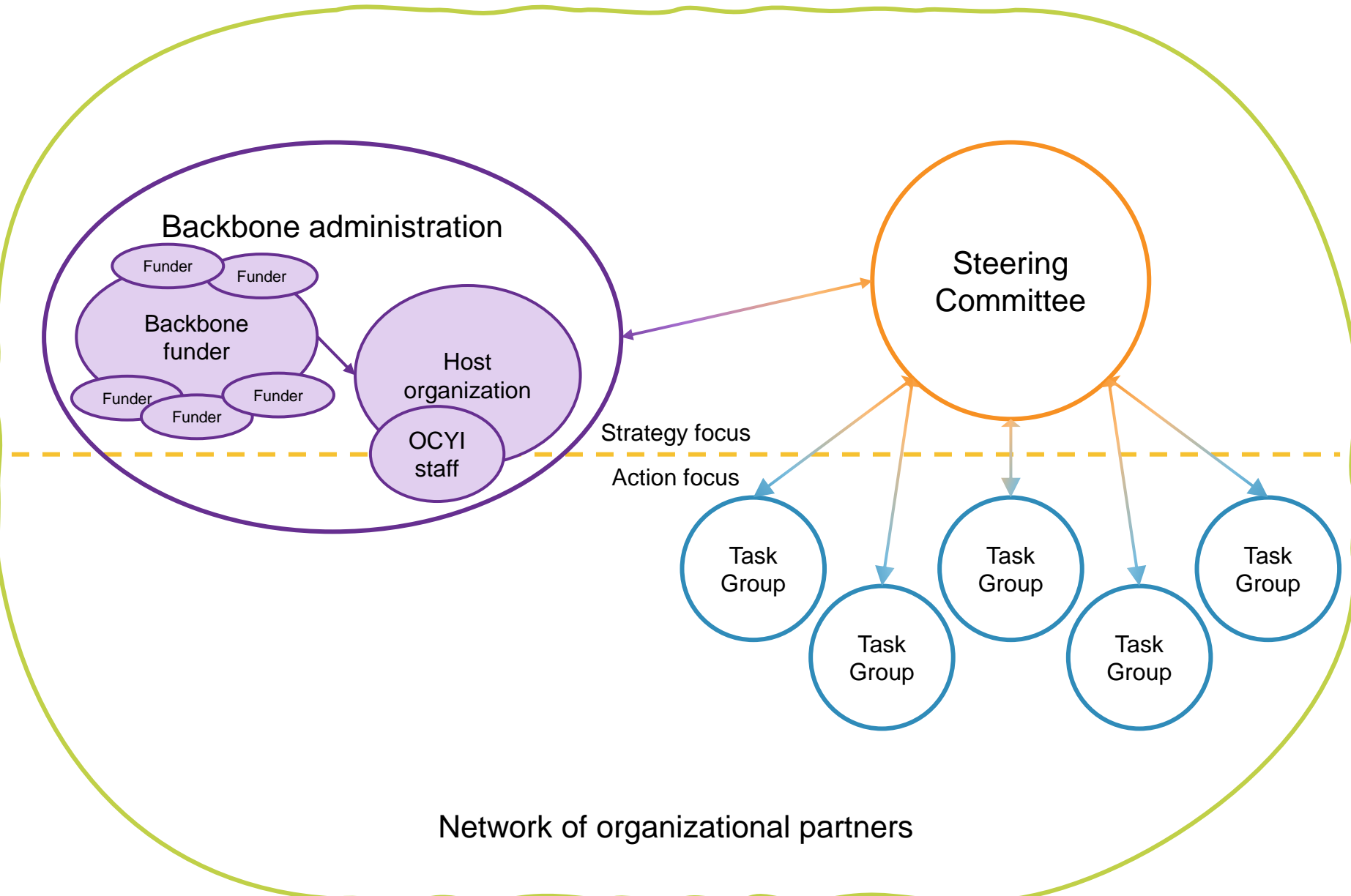
OCYI Theory of Change Narrative

The Ottawa Child & Youth Initiative's (OCYI) Theory of Change guides the work of our task groups as well as how the organizational partners in our network come together in common work. It is essential for us to define key terms in the long-term objective so that we understand each other and work together to the same common objective.

Organizations are able to respond to the evolving mental health and well-being needs of Ottawa's children, youth, and their families.

- **Organizations:** OCYI is a network of child and youth-serving organizations, groups, agencies, and other entities, each of which has their own work and mandates. Being part of OCYI's network means thinking outside of silos to work together as well as how each individual member of the network can receive what they need to achieve their goals.
- **Respond:** the choice of the word "respond" is meant to indicate a reaction to the present state, as well as prepare to act to future needs, including prevention work.
- **Evolving:** the current long-term objective comes on the heels of the most acute aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which highlighted large changes for young people, however, we wish to connote that as time progresses need change even without global, catastrophic events. We also infuse some hope that over time the evolving needs means increasing shifts to preventative work rather than more reactionary work to negative situations.
- **Mental health and well-being needs:** this phrasing is meant to be an umbrella term that balances easy-to-understand languages with the leading-edge understanding of needs. Broadly, this should include all the social and emotional support for children and youth to develop into happy and healthy adults. This specific choice to use "mental health and well-being" is inclusive of substance use health, behavioural disorders and health, age-appropriate use of technology, and mental illness management, as well as forming a healthy baseline at all ages of development. We recognize that there is great variety here and the individual should be the focus of any support, reflecting the individual's personal experiences, cultural identity, preferred language, medical needs, prior and current mental illness, and family relationships, among others.
- **Children and youth:** birth to early 20s, when most programs transition individuals to adult programming
- **Families:** young people are heavily influenced by the adults in their lives, and support of children and youth is incomplete without addressing the needs of those who parent them. Families is inclusive of biological or adoptive relations (e.g., mother, father), as well as siblings, extended family/kin, or foster families active in the care and development of the young person. This would also extend to informal relationships that may not have a legal relationship/responsibility however play a role in care and development, such as neighbours, family friends, or a friend's parents. Identifying families in the long-term objective also highlights how mental health and well-being needs can be supported starting in the pre-natal period by supporting birthing and expecting parents.

Governance Structure



OCYI Governance Narrative

The Ottawa Child & Youth Initiative's (OCYI) governance structure consists of a network of organizational partners which make up the membership of the Steering Committee and the Task Groups, as well as the backbone structure of host organization, funders, and staff.

- Organizational partners: individual organizations, groups, agencies, etc. that provide services and programs to or otherwise support children and youth in Ottawa
- Backbone administration:
 - Host organization: CHEO serves as OCYI's host organization, housing administrative, human resources, and financial management needs. CHEO is one of OCYI's organizational partners
 - Staff: OCYI has a small staff that manage the work of OCYI, the staff are employed by the host organization
 - Funders: United Way of East Ontario provides backbone funding for OCYI's work and staffing. Additional funding comes from other organizational partners and project-specific grants or funding awards
- Steering Committee: made of representatives of organizations within the network of organizational partners. The Steering Committee's purpose is to provide leadership, vision, and strategic direction to the overall work of the collaborative.
- Task Groups: each individual task group has a specific objective for their specific focus for their action plans. Membership is from the network of organizational partners. The work of the task groups is action-oriented, focused on projects to advance the Strategic Direction

This structure allows many organizations across Ottawa to come together to work towards the common long-term objective of:

Organizations are able to respond to the evolving mental health and well-being needs of Ottawa's children, youth, and their families.