

**Vision Council  
North Star Workgroup Meeting  
May 17, 2022**

**Attendees:**

Andrea Dencklau  
Ana Clymer  
Tim Wilson  
Mary Beth O'Neill  
Anne Starr

Kristie Oliver  
Marlo Nash  
Tonya Blasen  
Jamie Robinson

[Vision Council North Star Workgroup 5-17-22 Slide Show](#)

**Purpose:** To finalize planning the action steps to implement the 2022 priorities and to identify additional partners.

- How can the results-based action plan document be the most useful to the Vision Council?
- What does the NSWG want in the June Vision Council Meeting?
- Making action commitments that advance the work.
- Presentation about the [Four Oaks TotalChild](#): Jamie Robinson

**Check-in: What can you highlight about the Vision Council's work?**

- The Vision Council's work steps outside of the traditional service delivery system. We look at data and population well-being as bigger than programs and government itself. The Vision Council steps outside of the traditional way of looking at a child welfare and juvenile justice.
- Collectively looking at root causes of what leads children and families into systems. Engage more in concrete supports and housing and thinking proactively.
- The holistic way that the Vision Council looks at the intersections in each area and how we can all come together to make sure we have the right things for kids and families.
- All of our efforts strengthen families and housing is a big piece of that.
- For families that don't have the housing foundation nothing else matters because you need a place to live.
- Leading with a holistic approach to address the needs of kids and families.

**[Four Oaks TotalChild](#)**

- Four Oaks philosophy and North Star and allows everyone that is working with children and families to think holistically.
- History: 2010. Looked at their mission and challenged themselves with how Four Oaks help children can become successful adults. Four Oaks worked with bridge span and the University of Iowa, and they created the matrix which allows them to think through four different domains:
  - the youth themselves (childhood basic needs) education & work, family, and community (natural supports).
    - Within the four domains they do an assessment to make sure that they know what is going on with mental health, behavioral health, legal

issues, housing issues, food stability, substance use, and basic life skills. Linn County is very resource rich, so they are able to work through and problem solve, identify strengths, and help the family build on those areas.

- Goal: Enroll 1,400 kids. Currently, over 1,500 kids and still enrolling.
- They follow kids until there are 18. There is a phase of TotalChild programming where they think about goals and strengths for the family. They help them reach that stability. Once the family is good then they do a quarterly check-in until the child turns 18 years old.
- Of the over 1,500 kids - 55% have turned 18 and graduated the program. Over 90% have maintained stability overtime.
- Workforce: Education and Career pathway. Work with juniors and seniors in high school up to age 26 to help them with job shadows, connecting them with mentors in the community, and identifying internship opportunities. The goal is to get them a livable wage.
  - Currently working with about 208 youth in Linn County and continue to enroll. There are currently 10 graduates from the program who have reached the age of 26 and are working at a livable wage.
- Supportive Housing Coordinator: Working to develop and grow. Looking at an assessment to learn what is the barrier in housing. They have also developed a financial budgeting course that can be gone through individually. There is also a renter's course to a person can understand a lease. Working with their affiliate [Affordable Housing Network \(AHNI\)](#) to understand the housing piece and dive in and help families become housing stable.
- The majority of the funding for TotalChild comes from fundraising. They do have a small contract with the state that pays for some of the service.
  - Is there an appetite at the state to provide funding for something like this?
    - Four Oaks will continue to discuss and explore. They are committed to keeping the TotalChild moving forward that is why they donate their fundraising efforts to the project.

### **Is there connection to the Vision Council Work?**

- Excited to consider how can we leverage and apply some of the learning, data, and research on how holistically this could be spread and supported statewide. This is a key project that would benefit many areas of the social determinants of health, child welfare proactive prevention, stabilizing youth from 18-26.
  - What does support look like for a TotalChild Program? What resources can we advocate for?
- It is hard to decide because don't have the depth of experience and what questions to ask. When Four Oaks launched this there was due diligence in looking at what is available, what type of resources are needed - we would be interested in knowing what where the barriers? Need more information to get enthusiastic about it, but it sounds like a very good model. Linn County vs Polk County is very different in terms of collaborations or lack thereof.
  - Four Oaks historically was always paid or contracted to solve one problem. It was not necessarily to solve the needs of the family. The TotalChild was

developed out of need that Four Oaks needed to look at a bigger picture and meet families where they are at in a moment in time. The obstacle has always been the funding. It was previously too broad of a concept for the state to lock into the idea of paying for the service.

- Changing the way that Four Oaks has provided services has been challenging. People are used to working in their silos. Challenging each other to think holistically of what the root of the problem is. Un-siloing is a huge part.

**Synthesis:** At the check in almost everyone commented about how the table of the Vision Council has created is looking holistically of what the children and families need. When Total Child lists what they check in on - behavioral health. Substance use, and housing, financial stability - these are the things the Vision Council at a population level has identified what needs to be addressed. State agencies are struggling with how to fund such a project. There is a match potentially to make of working with generally with the state to fund things from a holistic mindset - which is the from to culture shift. It is also digging in further - does it make sense for the Vision Council to think through is TotalChild something to take statewide or at least support the idea of piloting in other areas? (Is it what Four Oaks wants? Is TotalChild replicable?) It opens up learning more and exploring those questions. It is a solution that the Vision Council has been talking around. Housing - could we start asking every family that is interaction with the system - the stability of their housing? It sounds like the TotalChild approach is doing that very thing. The ideas that the Vision Council has had and wondered about is in practice with TotalChild so there are a lot of bridges there to explore.

- This feels like an opportunity to consider an alignment process - does TotalChild align well is this an opportunity for partnership and a way to start the process to solidify the partnership? These are opportunities that the Vision needs to latch on to - when then know there is a program that is having success and it aligns with what the Vision Council is hoping for to happen.
  - Four Oaks would love to see TotalChild expand - funding is a constraint - so additional discussion would be beneficial.
    - We need to make sure that it also has a rural application to it also because of the political reality.

### **Action Commitments Review:**

- Asking HHS to identify a liaison for housing.
  - Children's System Behavioral Health System State Board: Director Garcia Update: DHS is even looking at housing. DHS knows that housing is key when talking about the social determinants of health. DHS is having conversations with IFA on how they bring their resources to the table to think about the holistic approach to serve the family. Director Garcia is solution focused, so we need to bring solutions and not just pointing out the problem.
    - New representative on the Iowa Council on Homelessness from DHS.
      - <https://www.iowafinance.com/homelessness/homeless-service-agencies/iowa-council-on-homelessness/>
      - Karen Hyatt, Emergency Mental Health Specialist, Iowa Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health and Disability Services currently serves and will also continue to serve.

- Marlo Nash will connect with Karen Hyatt and invite her to the Vision Council meeting in June.
- Ana - Connecting with Cody (Linn County), Amal (Polk County), Cody (IDPH), Ashley (Linn County) and Mary Beth (Four Oaks). They wanted to refine their thoughts before the approached Matt Majeski.
  - Update: There is meeting scheduled on April 18<sup>th</sup>. The Vision Council one-sheeter has been sent to them.
- Andrea: Map out Relationship with Housing Leaders
  - Has started the process, but it is not finished.
- Amal: Housing Needs Assessment

### **DRAFT VC Action Plan May 2022**

- Marlo tried to pare down the essence of the Action Plan so the NSWG could see it at the highest level to make some decisions that will be helpful moving forward.
- The NSWG has agreed to take on: 1.1.3 Build a culturally and content competent health, housing and human services workforce that reflects the diversity of Iowa communities.
  - Goal: How do you make sure of whoever is going to work with families is aware of their preferences and needs. AND how do you make the workforce more representative of the state? It is not just about diversity, but also about cultural competence.
    - Not limited to health and human services - which is why health and housing was added.
  - Vision Council wants to join forces with the Cultural Equity Alliance. The Cultural Equity Alliance is organized around the child welfare system. This is a great place to start as the Vision Council is aligned with values with the Cultural Equity Alliance and Ana belongs to both. The idea is to start with the Cultural Equity Alliance and build out from there.
- With the work on Housing does the NSWG have the bandwidth to create a priority for 1.1.3 for 2022 beginning with the Human Services workforce? Do we want to keep it as a priority for 2022? Does the NSWG feel like they can advance 1.1.3 in 2022, if so, what is possible in 2022? Or do we need to say the work begins at a future date?
  - It can start now. Healing Centered Engagement Framework- child welfare, juvenile justice and some community partners have been trained. This is a framework that establishes healing centered systems and how to work with young people from all cultures and value their individuality and identify. It is a holistic way of looking at systems, young people, and families. Iowa ACEs 360 is continuing to try to move forward. Is this something that the NSWG can align, partner with, and participate in?
  - **Recommendation:** Presentation to the Full Vision Council and Coalition re: Healing Centered Engagement Framework.
    - Build a culturally content competent workforce = short-term goal
    - Workforce that reflects the diversity of Iowa communities = long-term goal.
  - Iowa Aces 360 has also started a trauma informed supervision training with the Des Moines Service Area along with the 5<sup>th</sup> Judicial District. They are trying to figure out how it aligns with the Healing Centered Engagement work. There is a lot of alignment, but they both have rich content that is comprehensive, but

in different ways. The training focuses on supervisors to shape what supervision looks like from a trauma lens, but also focuses on leadership and policy to transform the organization itself into a more healing centered and trauma informed organization (allowing wellness for staff and healing centered practices).

There is emergency and activity around 1.1.3.

- **Who is willing to take the lead and define what taking the lead on 1.1.3 looks like?**
  - Andrea will be tracking that the Vision Council is paying attention to 1.1.3 and that there is progress being made and checking in with the NSWG and the full Vision Council.
    - There continues to be a connection with the Cultural Equity Alliance and workforce. In addition, working with Kristie and Anne in engaging providers.
      - What has been created by the Vision Council is the container to move the work forward. The work is making action commitments, fulfilling them, and checking in and looking what is needed next and doing the next thing. The work is going to take shape as it goes.

Strategy 2.1: Ensure there is a concerted, results-focused effort to provide permanent housing options for families (in the VC Focus Populations) (Result 2: Connected to Permanent Housing).

2.1.1 Forge a cooperative effort with MCOs and other entities to achieve Result 2.

### **Generated List of Partners:**

Possible Partners:

United Ways of Iowa

Family Resources

Four Oaks

MCOs

Iowa Council on Homelessness

Iowa Finance Authority

IA Economic Development Authority

Parent Partners

YSS

Home Forward Iowa

Iowa HHS

NSWG members

Coalition for Family and Children Services

Lutheran Services Iowa

2.1.1a Determine whether a family housing collaborative is needed or a voice for children/families within housing conversations, decision making, and advocacy.

- Does there need to be a family housing collaborative (an entity) or is it creating a voice for children/families?

- A strategy is that the Vision Council is going to get knowledgeable enough about housing and the landscape to plug us into the conversations that are happening so that family housing issues bubble up. As we learned the focus for housing has historically been on veterans and elders and not so much family. This idea emerged from that. Maybe it is both. It is a family focused collaboration and alignment. One of the strategies could be getting the Vision Council connected in some way to make sure that there is a voice for family housing needs.
  - **Marlo's suggestion:** By Q4 2022, the mission of the VC's cooperative effort on family housing is defined.
    - Is it one or the other or both as the strategic operation that the Vision Council is going to work moving forward?
    - **Consensus:** This seems reasonable.

#### 2.1.1b Secure funding to sustain the VC's work on housing.

- The Coalition is working on securing funding to sustain the Vision Council's work.
- What is it that the Vision Council is going to ask someone to fund? Funders are not typically interested in supporting planning and facilitation and the support that the Vision Council needs to keep it together. It is not working to say we have the right group; we are on the right path; we just need support/staff to keep it going. We need to give a funder a sense of how they are going to help move the ultimate results that the Vision Council has set forth.
  - One of the big buzz works in grant writing and donor asks is workforce. Whatever we can do to say that we can help support the people doing the work would be great. If we don't have people to deliver the work, then we are not going to be able to deliver our Vision to the children and families. How is the Vision Council's work going to support workforce?
  - COVID dollars (?) - pandemic relief. The tie in is the holistic approach - this is a way to comeback from the pandemic.
  - Affordable housing and workforce are a priority.

NSWG stopped at 2.1.1.b.

Does anyone have an initiative that has created a planned document that is effective? What is one thing that would help with the plan or one resource that a person could offer up? How would the NSWG see the pieces of paper put together?

- Suggestion: Look at multi-sector Coalition's

What is member's vision for moving forward and what commitment can member's make to continuing the work of the Vision Council?

- Andrea: Vision going forward is to keep going. Commitment to work on 1.1.3
- Anne: Capacity and workload concerns so ready to recommit to the Vision Council's work and be as present as she can be.
- Kristie: We need to continue to move the work forward, so will continue to work on funding.