



Kids' Corps, Inc.
Strategic Planning Session
March 20, 2009

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Anchorage Senior Center Conference Room



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In Attendance

Name	Position Title Membership
Irine Kraiza	PC Chair
Ronnie Brown	Executive Assistant
Kim Quale	Board
Vickie Manning	HR Manager
Rochelle Bulleman	Business Manager
Dirk Shumaker	Executive Director
Charles Freeman	Program Manager
Joy Bentley	Board
Shirley Gillian	Board

What We Do Best

Following introductions, the participants responded to the question, “What does KCI do best?” The responses were divided into the following program sections:

- Parent Services
- Children Services
- Community Services

Community services was viewed as a new way to look at the current KCI business plan; there were no community service areas mentioned. The small subgroup working on this section during the strategic planning session was surprised at the extent of services KCI provided for the community. There was agreement by all participants to include Community Services from here forward

Program Sections

Parent Services

- Monday Munch
- Home visit
 - Teacher
 - Child focused
 - Parent input
- Family Advocate
 - Goal setting
 - Relationship building
 - Community resource & referral
- PCM Activities
- Leadership
- Time for Parents
 - Work
 - School
 - Time with siblings
 - Access community resources
- Nap Respect Parents: self-esteem
- SPARC
- Books sent home
- Book Fair: twice a year
- Board Participation
- David

Children Services

- Hot lunch and snack
- Provide resources – networking
- Help children learn social skills that will stay with a child forever
- Children learn to mentor each other
- Help to instill pride in school, self, peers
- Parent trainings: man-to-man, parents-r-us, SPARC
- Health screenings
- Opportunities to explore: imagination, gross motor, fine motor skills, self help skills
- Individualizing learning plans for each child
- Opportunity to be themselves without having the family hierarchy
- Teacher brags about KCI kids

Community Services

- Advisory committees:
 - Provide a voice in program
 - Reduce service duplication
- Board membership
 - Provides “Joe Smith” a voice in the program
- United Way
- Training programs (volunteers, staff, etc.)
- Dental Coalition
- Homeless Coalition
- Parent education
 - Pilots
 - EfENP
- Volunteers
 - Foster grandparents
 - UAA
- Community volunteers Collaboration with school district
 - Disabilities
 - Homeless
 - NHTSA training (KCI/ASD)
- Central Texas College
 - Improving qualifications of all staff through co-hort groups and flexible class scheduling
- Stronger kids, families, and staff make a stronger community
- Health referrals
- Cross-cultural
- SPARC

Issues and Trends

Knowing that trends impact all of KCI's program services, the participants identified key issues and trends through a round-robin exercise. On everyone's mind was the issue/trend of the world economic recession.

World Issues & Trends

- Global warming
- Quality education can be done through online schools
- Unemployment/inflation/deflation
- Early childhood educators are needed more than ever and are appreciated as professionals
- Economic restructuring
- Emergence of new industries (green, energy, services)
- Situation in Sudan = Kids at KCI
- Families are now coming together to make ends meet
- Wars
- Cultural awareness as people more freely move about in a global workforce
- Mid-east conflict and terrorism
- Possibility of changing funding
- Priorities for national defense

National Issues & Trends

- Vikings and Colts in Superbowl in '09!
- Housing market decline
- Stimulus: rebound of economy
- Universal health insurance initiative
- Job loss/unemployment
- Cost of healthcare
- Cost of education (college)
- Increase in crime/decrease in crime
- Senate election 2010
- Immigration
- Education for families (family support/resources)
- New president
- ACF/Head Start leadership will change with new administration
- Special Ed./EHS
- No tax deduction for non-profit giving

State Issues & Trends

- Immigration from rural communities
- State Pre-k pilot program
- Price of oil
- Sales tax versus property tax
- Lead screenings!
- Unemployment
- Stimulus accepting funds, esp. Title 1
- Healthcare = cost if insured/uninsured
- DKC may **change** to 1 year renewal
- More educational grants are given to those who qualify
- PFD
- Governor's election: '09 or '10?
- Minimum wage
- Gas pipeline \$ jobs
- Treatment facilities

Local Issues & Trends

- Lack of qualified staff who want to work in non-profit programs
- Decreased corporate giving/foundation giving decrease
- Mental health services for 3-5 year olds
- Quality of neighborhoods
- New mayor
- ASD Pre-k: competition for qual.
- Staff impact of economic downturn; increased demand for services
- Availability of more Pre-k options
- Affordable housing/foreclosures
- Funding of community partners
- Transportation system
- Increased awareness of how important education is early on

Prior to examining the accomplishments and challenges of each of KCI's goals, the facilitator shared the results of the most recent staff input, gathered during the March monthly staff open forum. The follow are the collated and prioritized challenges KCI faces according to the staff.

KCI Internal and External Challenges

Internal Challenges

1. Space and accommodations for our services
2. Staff turnover: includes wages, orientation, follow-up on new hires
3. Teambuilding: includes communication, understanding mission and all being on the same page
4. Parent involvement
 - Transportation for all children
 - Community partnerships follow through
 - Unrestricted funding

External Challenges

1. Homelessness and all the services needed to support families
2. Low availability of people seeking work in the ECE field
3. Dwindling funding (charitable giving, federal and state funding)
 - Parent transportation for health and other services
 - Increase in diverse cultures
 - Economic downturn – increased costs
 - Lack of suitable facilities in Anchorage bowl
 - Standardized testing for pre-schoolers
 - Pre-k initiative
 - Competition in child care services
 - Increased military families
 - Influx of rural Alaskan families needing services

Goal Accomplishments and Challenges

In small groups, the participants were each given specific goals to review for accomplishments and challenges encountered in 2008-2009. Following are the five goals along with their subsequent accomplishments and challenges.

Goal 1

Develop a well-trained and highly motivated work force.

Accomplishments

- Collaboration with CTC
 - Two, 2-year degrees, first year
 - Three, 2-year degrees, second year
 - Four, This year, 2-year
 - One, 4-year degree (WBU/CTC)
- Assist with tuition
- Pay increases for degrees
- Awards for degree completion
- Three participating family development credentials
- One FA working toward 4-year
- Training/mentoring

Challenges

- Funding
- Language barriers
- Time to get it done
- Retaining staff
- Recruiting those already holding degrees

Goal 2

Establish classroom environments, operations and facilities that reflect best practices in the field of Early Childhood Education and Family Services.

Accomplishments

- Hired early childhood consultant
- Implemented ECERS wall classrooms (not sure what this means)
- Included home visit/family services SOP
- Updated family partnerships form to make it more “SMART”
- Diverse family advocates that reflect family populations
- Revised staffing form to include more information on follow up and referral
- Added another door at Muldoon and extended the pony wall (reduced number of children at Muldoon)
- Half wall, doors at Mountain View – safety
- First Book grant (second year)
- SPARC
- Carpet – flooring: Davis/Muldoon Bathroom

Challenges

- Find early childhood consultant – fit in
- Training and buy in
- Turnover of advocates
- Turnover
- Time (more comprehensive) buy in
- Completion of project
- Under enrolled: still have repercussions
- Tried many different options; low cost alternative
- Future reduction of funding and availability
- Time to devote
- Money – funding

Goal 3

Increase non-restricted funds

Accomplishments

- Board giving goal and outreach
- Community giving increased
- Increasing childcare fees; non-fed match

Challenges

- Economic impact
- Board skills/training
- Staff utilization of restricted funds

Goal 4

Develop programs that respond to the changing needs of families, fill community service gaps and are in harmony with our mission.

Accomplishments

- ECERS (tool)
- SFI
- SPARC (initiative)
- CTC (on campus college credits)
- Dental/homeless coalitions (beyond shelter)
- Man-to-man
- ASLP Health Literacy

Challenges

- Flat funding
- Finding qualified staff
- Facilities limitations
- Getting parents involved (busy)
- Recruiting board members
- Connections with decision-makers (especially in business community)
- Federal regulations (EHS)

Goal 5

Implement cost-effective and efficient services at all levels.

Accomplishments

- Janitorial contract
- New building progress
- Bulk purchase, research for best price – office supplies
- Printers – cheaper ink

Challenges

- Unfunded mandates
- Flat funding
- Inadequate facilities
- Competition for qualified staff

New Goals

Following a delicious catered lunch by the Anchorage Senior Center, the participants worked in a brainstorming exercise. The scenario was set as:

“Where to you see KCI within the next 18 months to 5 years?”

The participants were asked to keep in mind the essential goals and their priorities, however, they were encouraged to “dream and scheme.”

Following lists the flow of ideas for new goals from the brainstorming session.

- Develop statewide recognition: name recognition
- Community minded should be an emphasis
- ECE leader
- ASD partnerships strengthened
- KCI is viewed as an integral part of the education system in Anchorage
- ASD is using KCI for the Pre-K program
- Government partnerships and leadership utilized
- Knowing KCI’s history – we need a “storybook”
- Community knows KCI once we know our own roots
- We are viewed as experts
- KCI lead Alaska EC profession
- Eliminate homelessness (collaborate)
- Fill community service gaps
- PC that is very active with community and legislators
- More board activity to where board are active members of our work
- Head Start parents are involved in boards and committees associated with children
- Increase parents’ knowledge of KCI
- Large volunteers base within the community
- PR on television for KCI
- 30 second commercial o KCI, channel 1 = 1x weekly for 1 year
- Find current PR media
- Recruit every board member
 - Pursue non board contact
- Volunteers

Staff Input

The following is where staff anticipate KCI will be in 18 months to 5 years.

Where Do You Want KCI to be in 5 Years?

- Quality of staff through federal mandates (staff retention)
- Expansion/renovation
- More space for EHS (3)
- Better position for growing population
- More funding * money, money, money (3)
- Serving Anchorage bowl with more cultural awareness/integration/activities (4)
- Strengthening Families embedded into program (2)
- Full day – no fees
- More incentives for employees
- Serving more areas in Anchorage – ones we are not serving now (2)
- Renovations for expansion on East 20th completed (2)
- More male teaching staff
- KCI should be in a better position to accommodate a growing population's needs through family services, Early Head Start, transportation, etc.
- All teachers should have a BA (4)
- All ATs should have an AA, more ATs with CDAs (3)
- Financially secure program
- High tech infrastructure to better communicate with other municipal services Expand services (3)
 - Better classrooms
 - Larger transportation area
 - More FA – smaller case loads
 - Better educated staff – classroom, FA (federal guidelines, mandates)
- Broaden scope of families we serve
- Stronger bonds with community partnership
- Increase early childhood programs
- Better incentive for employees' educational opportunities....FUNDING
- All part day complete free, no fees
- Twice as many (or increase number of) families served as now (3)
- More bus transportation for all children(4)
- Known throughout the community and supported
- Outstanding provider for needs of children and their families
- More support for kids and their family
- More teachers
- Immediate information to families
- Learn different languages (for staff) - (2)
- More technology in class, fully equipped classes
- Staff uniformity/clothing/IDs (3)
- More advertising for staff
- Signs at each center/logo
- Increase salaries
- Team morale
- Better orientation
- No combo class
- More parent (family) involvement (4)
- Full day programs at all center – Mt. View model
- Curriculum changes/improvements (2)
- Low turnover
- More available health services
- Multicultural center
- Productive teambuilding
- SPED room ex 1:5 ratio
- New modern/bigger facility (3), maintained by quality janitorial staff (staffed by KCI)
- More classes/more availability for more students
- Trained qualified staff/full mentoring program
- Computer systems working and staff using them
- ESL system for teacher to use with all classes
- High paid teacher to maintain classrooms
- Be in our own building
- Have part day preschool (sliding fee scale for those who are just over the income guidelines)

What Do You Want KCI to Look Like Then?

- Professional (5)– happy – motivated *good model for the state
- Fully staffed with happy, trained employees (2)
- (Well) qualified staff that believe mission statement (2)
- Agency in tune with 2014 demands (2)
- KCI – whole town/multi-cultural (multi-services in one area – one stop) – (2)
- Cleaner, healthier, brighter, better, colorful, modern classrooms (floor plans); more inviting to the community – parents, children, staff (7)
- Bigger, inviting, professional facility with quality equipment (indoors/out), staff, materials, KCI employed janitor to maintain facility to high standards.
- Open (spacious) – welcoming environment – confident, positive workforce (3)
- Own gym (indoor) | kitchen, Intercoms, Bells, Cafeteria, Multipurpose room
- Cutting-edge facilities with big parking lot (2)
- Staff lounge/break room (stress-free environment) – (3)
- An agency with high tech infrastructure to better communicate skills with municipality/families
- Better learning/work environment
- Through facilities – educated staff, providing effective program/experience
- Friendly, child-safe, sanitary atmosphere
- Assistant director at each site
- Promoting KCI by uniformity in KCI shirts/vests/aprons, etc. (3)
- Welcoming to diverse families
- Clean/better plumbing
- We know what we're doing
- Staff with higher education credentials; teachers will have AAs and BAs
- More materials available to classrooms (2)
- Look like a great opportunity to set goals
- Teamwork between all staff
- Teacher retention because of being well-trained and happy
- Early Head Start to serve more toddlers, also serving infant and prenatal families
- More parent involvement due to professionalism throughout the agency
- Bus barn with new buses
- Better attendance due to more transportation routes; increased transportation – areas served and buses
- Project based classrooms
- More engaged children

As a part of the open forum, staff were asked to identify current opportunities that await KCI. This information became the foundation for the strategy session.

What opportunities do we have TODAY at KCI that we can use to get us where we want to be in 2014?

- Great management team (leadership) encourages input in planning (2)
- Motivated management to get program where it could be
- Set goals with input from all levels (2)
- Staff and parents involved in decision-making (2): Menus, Curriculum, Renovation, Supplies
- Diverse advisory committees involve: Parents, Teachers, Admin, Etc.
- More community partners (reach out more) (4)
- Caring community; support from community
- Stimulus money: get it/spread it (3)
- Chance of increased funding
- COLA
- Opportunity to make needs known to new admin (2)
- Political climate – pendulum swings (2)
- Confident, caring, motivated staff
- Professional development for staff
- Use media – advertise about KCI – HS (2); Media (news program to talk about HS program, get KCI name out there)
- Training funds (2); KCI providing assistance with teacher’s education (2)
- Partnerships with CTC and Wayland
- Good staff communication due to like-minded goals; communication (staff/parents)
- Sense of equality
- Taking over Catholic Social Services facility
- On hand advisors for CDAs
- Job recruiting fairs
- Letters from parents supporting Head Start to secure funds for future expansion project
- Educational training for parents, families, and staff (2)
- Proceed with Early Head Start
- Renovation of East Center (2)
- Renovations of each center
- Advertising for staff and services provided
- Expanding our community resources and partnerships
- Possible building; opportunity for building growth
- More productive staff meetings
- Support from families
- Professional development plans for all staff (2), (with bonus for degree completion)
- Opportunity to receive an education
- Current staff working/supporting each other
- KCI is a strong agency
- Quality staff
- Leadership in education/funding
- Multi-cultural staff
- Floor plan in place (blue print)
- Profession (self welling)
- Mentorship
- Classes for staff
- Embed SFI
- Best Beginnings – SPARC
- Competent, motivated, caring staff (new and old)
- Support systems in place (parent, staff, community, and more)
- Communication – open forum (2)
- Creativity
- Show accountability
- Appreciate our staff through staff recognition/appreciation program
- Better janitorial services
- New curriculum (Creative Curriculum) (2)
- Opportunity to assess needs of community

The open forum also allowed the staff to explore and examine the current goals and their effectiveness to KCI's movement forward. The following are staff's input.

What current goals will need to be changed in order for KCI to be where it wants to be in 2014?

1. Develop a professional, educated, and highly motivated workforce
 2. ✓
 3. Motivate parents and community to advocate for an increase in non-restricted funding
 4. ✓ - take out develop – maintain and expand
 5. Continue to promote and implement
- Support families in being self-sufficient (community resources), and to improve quality of life
 - Motivated parents and staff to be well
 - Trained and motivated in ECE field
 - Add to:
 - Stay current with technology/training
 - Stay above and beyond our mission statement for staff and families
 - Develop a more effective mentoring program
 - Employ a grant writer for more unrestricted money (more aggressive search for funding)
 - To assure all enrolled children and families are made aware of goals and receive all our uniquely developed services
 - Increase awareness for all HS has to offer (2):
 - Family services
 - Health
 - Parent opportunities
 - Be recognized as Anchorage's premier child and family development program
 - Implementation of current goals:
 - #2
 - #3
 - #4
 - #1
 - #5

KCI Action Plans

Utilizing the staff's open forum information, the participants spent the afternoon reprioritizing and revising the goals (current and anticipated). Goal #1 is a new goal that will demand immediate attention. All other goals are reordered according to length and depth of need.

Action plans were developed for the following 6 goals:

- Goal #1: Develop Statewide Recognition
- Goal #2: Increase non-restricted funds
- Goal #3: Develop programs that respond to the changing needs of families, fill community service gaps and are in harmony with our mission.
- Goal #4: Develop a well-trained and highly motivated work force.
- Goal #5: Implement cost-effective and efficient services at all levels.
- Goal #6: Establish classroom environments, operations and facilities that reflect best practices in the field of Early Childhood Education and Family Services.

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Goal #1: Develop Statewide Recognition
 Leads: Dirk, Ronnie
 Timeframe: 1.5 - 2 years

Action Step 1: PR on television for KCI			
What we're doing	Who is doing	When	Status (Monthly/Quarterly Check)
a. Recruit every board member SWCNBN <i>(abbreviation needs explanation)</i> b. Pursue non board contacts c. 30 second commercial o KCI, channel 1 = 1x weekly for 1 year d. Find current PR media			
Action Step 2: ECE Leadership Recognition			
What we're doing	Who is doing	When	Status
a. Community knows KCI b. KCI is viewed as an integral part of the education system in Anchorage c. We are viewed as experts d. ASD is using KCI for the Pre-K program e. KCI lead Alaska EC profession f. Eliminate homelessness (collaborate) g. Community service gaps			
Action Step 3: Parent Leadership Recognition			
What we're doing	Who is doing	When	Status
a. PC that is very active with community and legislators b. More board activity with parents included c. Head Start parents are involved in boards and committees associated with children d. Increase parents' knowledge of KCI e. Large volunteers base within the community			

Goal leads will next review this action plan and further develop responsibilities and timelines that align with the prioritized steps. Determination will be made whether steps need to be expanded or reduced.

Status column allows the board to conduct a monthly and/or quarterly check on how the goals are progressing.

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Goal #2: Increase non-restricted funds
 Leads: Joy, Kim
 Timeframe: 1.5 - 2 years

Action Step 1: Capacity Building			
<i>What we're doing</i>	<i>Who is doing</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Status</i>
a. Grant = opportunity (dedicated person) for help in getting this done - meet with Lori Wolfe, Foraker	Kim, Joy, Cindy on bd		
b. Work on board member (targeted member)			
Action Step 2: Board Development			
<i>What we're doing</i>	<i>Who is doing</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Status</i>
Action Step 3: Fund Development			
<i>What we're doing</i>	<i>Who is doing</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Status</i>
a. Significant foundation \$ b. No fees for full day care (<i>needs further explanation</i>) c. Funding provided as needed d. Increased fundraising activities			

Goal leads will next review this action plan and further develop responsibilities and timelines that align with the prioritized steps. Determination will be made whether steps need to be expanded or reduced.

Status column allows the board to conduct a monthly and/or quarterly check on how the goals are progressing.

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Goal #3: Develop programs that respond to the changing needs of families, fill community service gaps and are in harmony with our mission.

Leads: Dirk, Charles

Timeframe: 1.5 - 2 years

Action Step 1: Facilities			
What we're doing	Who is doing	When	Status
a. Work on state/fed stimulus possibilities b. Letters of support: gather on annual basis c. Building the case; ongoing <i>*See notes below action plan</i>			
Action Step 2: State EHS Program			
What we're doing	Who is doing	When	Status
In progress School district/Head Start partnerships			
Action Step 3: New Program Development			
What we're doing	Who is doing	When	Status
In progress			

*Notes from action step 1:

Purchased E. 20th

We have facilities that meet the needs of children & families

All classrooms have their own bathrooms

Facility with kitchen

Goal leads will next review this action plan and further develop responsibilities and timelines that align with the prioritized steps. Determination will be made whether steps need to be expanded or reduced.

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Goal #4: Develop a well-trained and highly motivated work force.

Lead: Vickie

Timeframe: 5 years

Action Step 1: Peer Mentoring			
<i>What we're doing</i>	<i>Who is doing</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Status</i>
a. b. c.			
Action Step 2: Training			
<i>What we're doing</i>	<i>Who is doing</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Status</i>
Action Step 3: Support			
<i>What we're doing</i>	<i>Who is doing</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Status</i>

The following is a random list generated from the brainstorming session. Action steps will need to be prioritized beneath these areas. More work will need to be done to build this goal.

- Strong admin staff
- Employee benefits are affordable
- All teachers have 4-year degrees and are staying at KCI
- More male classroom staff
- Get them in the door
- Targeted, degreed pool
- Teachers: model for finding teachers (substitute process model)
- Matched pay with ASD subs
- People at the right place at the right time
- Teacher mentor
- Recruitment/ASD
- Staff serve as community mentors in ECE

Goal leads will next review this action plan and further develop responsibilities and timelines that align with the prioritized steps. Determination will be made whether steps need to be expanded or reduced.

Status column allows the board to conduct a monthly and/or quarterly check on how the goals are progressing.

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Goal #5: Implement cost-effective and efficient services at all levels.

Leads: Rochelle, Dirk, Kim

Timeframe: 5 years

Action Step 1:			
<i>What we're doing</i>	<i>Who is doing</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Status</i>
a.			
b.			
c.			
Action Step 2:			
<i>What we're doing</i>	<i>Who is doing</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Status</i>
Action Step 3:			
<i>What we're doing</i>	<i>Who is doing</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Status</i>

More work needs to be done on this goal/action steps.

- KCI center with a WIC, ANHC, MOA library office located within

Goal leads will next review this action plan and further develop responsibilities and timelines that align with the prioritized steps. Determination will be made whether steps need to be expanded or reduced.

Status column allows the board to conduct a monthly and/or quarterly check on how the goals are progressing.

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Goal #6: Establish classroom environments, operations and facilities that reflect best practices in the field of Early Childhood Education and Family Services.

Leads: Charles & staff

Timeframe: 5 years

Action Step 1: Finding = Community PR			
<i>What we're doing</i>	<i>Who is doing</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Status</i>
a. b. c.			
Action Step 2: Funding for drivers and buses			
<i>What we're doing</i>	<i>Who is doing</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Status</i>
a. Transportation for all children across the Anchorage area b. Ability to transport children to centers (homeless, Salvation Army)			
Action Step 3: Home Visit Program: SFI			
<i>What we're doing</i>	<i>Who is doing</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Status</i>
a. Meeting parents' needs b. Individual family support system			
Action Step 4: Funding for Wait-Listed Children			
<i>What we're doing</i>	<i>Who is doing</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Status</i>
a. No wait list b. Ability to serve families and children from Sudan Camp (Africa)			

Children are succeeding in school (at 3rd grade)
100% dental exams

Goal leads will next review this action plan and further develop responsibilities and timelines that align with the prioritized steps. Determination will be made whether steps need to be expanded or reduced.

Status column allows the board to conduct a monthly and/or quarterly check on how the goals are progressing.