



*Building a Community
Where Everybody Belongs*
Strategic Plan 2024-2027

Greetings

For more than 60 years, Woodstock and District Developmental Services (WDDS) has been providing opportunities and supports for people living with developmental disabilities in Oxford County. What began as an initiative by caring local citizens and families has become a comprehensive service agency offering programs and supports such as employment, accommodations, learning, community engagement, passport, respite, family supports, and youth camp. These initiatives continue the shared vision of our founders to help build a community where all people, whatever their abilities, are welcomed, included, and belong.

2020 was a challenging year. The global coronavirus pandemic highlighted the value of community, connection, communication, and relationship. As WDDS builds its future, we will continue our efforts to foster connections, ensuring the people we support are integrated with and contributing citizens of our community.

In these turbulent times, WDDS commits to guiding our organization in ways that are thoughtful and deliberate. With hope, we place our stake in the ground to articulate our agency's direction. Between now and 2024, WDDS will continue to focus its efforts and resources on:

- Enhancing our relationships with families, partners, and the community
- Developing strategies to improve organizational culture so as to be an organization of choice for employees, people supported, families, partners, volunteers, and donors
- Providing quality, innovative, and responsive supports and services; and
- Expanding our organizational resources so as to innovatively support our services

By concentrating on these key areas, we forge forward toward our vision of an inclusive community for all persons whatever their ability. Building a more inclusive community is, in itself, an inclusive task. It requires the steadfast efforts of everyone: citizens, partners, people supported, families, employees, volunteers, and allies. All of us working together will make that vision a reality. We hope you will partner with us to build a **community where everybody belongs**.

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider our strategic plan and what it means for our people, community, and organization. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,
Board of Directors

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Acknowledgements

Many people participated in our strategic planning process: people supported, families and care providers, community partners, volunteers, employees at all levels of our organization, and members of the Board of Directors. We are grateful you shared your perspectives so generously. Our decisions about WDDS’ future directions were informed by your wisdom, and our strategic plan is stronger because of your contributions. **Thank you.**

Vision, mission, and values

Organizations are rooted in the core elements of vision (the extraordinary accomplishment the organization seeks to achieve), mission (the organization's purpose), and values (the timeless principles that help the organization pursue its purpose). Together, these defining features shape the identity and actions of an enterprise.

During its strategic planning, the Board of Directors took time to thoughtfully reflect on and refresh WDDS' vision, mission, and values.

Vision: A Community Where Everybody Belongs

Mission: WDDS provides opportunities and supports for people with developmental disabilities to live full lives in the community

Values:

- **Respect and Dignity** – Honour the individuality of each person
- **Community Integration** – Champion and support opportunities for individuals to actively participate and contribute to the community
- **Quality** – Staff and volunteers strive for excellence as ambassadors and valued members of WDDS
- **Personal Growth** – Support all people in developing to their full potential



Strategic Priority

Community

Our goal:

To enhance relationships with families, partners, and community.

To reach our goal, we will continue to:

- Strengthen WDDS' community presence and profile.
- Build new relationships and deepen relationships with existing community partners.
- Engage families and care providers.

Why we are focusing on community:

Relationships are at the heart of who we are and what we do. The desire for connection so many of us have felt during the coronavirus pandemic highlights the importance of knowing others and being known by them.

Enhancing our relationships with families, partners, and the wider community is more than building our brand or social media profile. Certainly, we want others to know who we are and what we do, building on our solid reputation as an organization with depth and breadth of expertise.

But more than that, we want to know our community and for our community to know us. We want to be present to and in relationship with one another. The more we know our community and its needs, the more we can provide responsive, quality supports and services. The more we are known by families, partners, and community members, the more we can be of support.

Focusing on community helps WDDS to be an active community member, partner, and leader. In so doing, we not only strengthen our organizational relationships but help bridge individuals with their community and support greater community integration.



Strategic Priority

Organizational culture

Our goal:

To be an organization of choice.

To reach our goal, we will continue to:

- Support ongoing professional development.
- Ensure continuity of leaders through succession planning.
- Improve communication with employees, families, and people supported.
- Strengthen employee engagement.
- Strengthen recruitment strategies.

Why we are focusing on organizational culture:

Culture is a defining feature of any enterprise, reverberating across WDDS – employees, people supported, families and loved ones, volunteers, partners, donors, allies – and representing both *who* we are and *how* we are as an organization. Strong organizational cultures are linked to strong engagement, productivity, and performance and help to attract like-minded and like-hearted persons who share our vision, mission, and values. This is especially important for our organization where recruiting and retaining a skilled, sustained workforce nurtures stable relationships and supports for individuals and families.

Our work is rewarding, challenging, and often under-resourced. It is important we continue to cultivate an environment of collaboration, relationship-building, and communication and offer tools to support individual and professional growth so we successfully achieve our mission. Such an environment fosters a sense of belonging in all members of WDDS. It reminds us of the individual and social value generated by our work and our relationships, that who we are and what we do matters. It helps us become an organization of choice for current and potential employees, people supported, families, partners, volunteers, funders, donors, and allies. As we strengthen our culture, we want all members of our organization to say with pride, “I belong!”

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Strategic Priority

Service excellence

Our goal:

To provide quality, innovative, and responsive supports and services.

To reach our goal, we will continue to:

- Enhance supports for young people coming into service.
- Explore diverse housing models.
- Develop individualized supports for people with complex needs.
- Assess WDDS' programs and services to ensure quality, innovative, and responsive supports and services.

Why we are focusing on service excellence:

On the surface, service excellence is about how we do what we do, ensuring our programs and services meet the Ministry's operational standards. At WDDS, service excellence goes further than a minimum standard.

We recognize that each person we support – their story, their circumstance, their individual needs – is unique. For example, the housing needs of a person with a specific medical issue are different from the housing needs of a supported person working in the community. The goals of and supports needed by a transitional-aged youth are different from the goals and supports of a senior. The skills training sought by one person may be different from the growth opportunities desired by another person. A priority of service excellence does not simply require us to meet the minimum standard; it asks us to set the industry standard.

Focusing on service excellence is how we honour and support individuals to make their own choices about who they want to be and the goals they have for their life. It is our promise to the people we support and their families, to our employees, partners, donors, allies, funders, and the local community: You can count on WDDS to deliver high quality, innovative, and responsive supports and services that help people to live rich, full lives and be active, participating members in their local community.



Strategic Priority

Sustainability

Our goal:

To expand organizational resources.

To reach our goal, we will continue to:

- Explore diverse funding models.
- Diversify WDDS' revenue streams.

Why we are focusing on sustainability:

WDDS has a history and reputation of being a financially sound organization that provides exemplary management of the resources entrusted to us. Building on these sound financial practices, we seek to expand our operational resources through diverse funding models and revenue streams.

We take seriously our fiscal and ethical responsibility to provide high quality programs, services, and supports. Ensuring WDDS is positioned well for its future requires trusted management of all of our resources – physical, human, intellectual, and financial. As we explore alternative and sustainable options, we are committed to our reputation as an organization of choice so that all those we work with – people supported, families, employees, volunteers, funders, donors, and partners – are confident their investment in us is time and money well spent.



Our planning process

WDDS intentionally listened to the voices of stakeholders – people supported and their families, employees, volunteers, community partners, and Board of Directors – as we undertook our planning. We were inspired and guided by this wisdom as we developed a comprehensive, actionable strategic plan. Our planning process included:

Engage

We consulted more than 130 stakeholders to hear their ideas about WDDS, local needs, and the wider environment.

Decide

WDDS' Board of Directors reflected on what our stakeholders had to say, refreshed our vision, mission, and values, and decided on the priorities and goals we will pursue in the next three years.

Develop

We transformed the decisions made by the Board into an actionable, measurable strategic plan.

Action

With our direction set, we are shifting into action! Going forward, we will monitor progress toward our goals, and share our successes and challenges with you.



 **WDDDS**

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