

Bluegrass Behavioral Services for Children

Strategic Plan

2022-
2025



Letter from the Founder

Dear Kentucky Residents and Partners,

I am proud to release the Bluegrass Behavioral Services for Children's Strategic Plan which is the result of months of engagement with providers, consumers, clients, and other partners to improve behavioral health care for our children. This Strategic Plan represents a shared vision for an integrated, child and family-oriented, culturally appropriate behavioral health care system that is person-centered and promotes early intervention. The Plan advances health equity for children with strategies for achieving desired outcomes as well as mental and behavioral health improvements for children that align with the National Department for Health and Family Services Healthy People 2030 Framework, which ranks mental health among the leading health indicators.



Work is already well underway to implement the Strategic Plan with achievements in expanding behavioral health services to all public schools, making easier access to treatment services. We are also in the process of increasing our resources for intensive therapeutic programs. I am very excited about the hope we can provide families through the continued development of programs for children and adolescents, including additional intensive outpatient programs and even future, local residential programs.

This Strategic Plan serves as our guidepost to ensure that our efforts are coordinated, sustained, and accountable. We are excited to work with you to realize a community where mental and behavioral health are priorities and all of our children can live healthy, fulfilling lives.

Sincerely,



Jaime Gilbert, RN, BSN
Chief Executive Officer

Introduction

Bluegrass Behavioral Services for Children (BBSC) envisions a thriving community where the mental health of children is a priority and early intervention is the expectation. BBSC is committed to this vision by providing evidence-based treatment services for children and adolescents that are innovative, person-centered, well-coordinated, and easy to navigate.

BBSC is proud of the services we provide and our recent programmatic accomplishments, including our work to expand school-based behavioral health services. These efforts, while powerful, are not enough. There are nearly daily reminders of the impact that mental and behavioral health issues are having on individuals, families, and communities across the Commonwealth.

The information gathered through our experiences within the community has identified the need to reduce fragmentation of services, better integrate mental health, and expand access to community support, trauma-informed care, and social-emotional learning. Our challenges are clear, and it is no surprise that mental and behavioral health disorders are leading health concerns facing our communities.



This Strategic Plan is evidence of our continued commitment to address the challenges we face and transform the behavioral health services available to children across the state of Kentucky. Together with our community partners, we are making notable progress—but we must continue to innovate and refine our services in ways that foster resilience, promote prevention and early intervention, expand access and engagement in care, as well as improve care coordination and service integration. BBSC must also continue to strengthen internal systems to improve communication, promote accountability, and build workforce capacity.

This Strategic Plan provides a roadmap for BBSC and its partners to align collective efforts with our vision and guide BBSC's continued efforts to become a beacon of hope for struggling children and families. This three-year plan is a critical step in BBSC's efforts to lead change.

OUR APPROACH

At Bluegrass Behavioral Services for Children (BBSC) we believe in every child's ability to succeed. We provide intensive therapeutic services to children and adolescents struggling with areas of difficulty ranging from mild to severe. These issues can be developmental, emotional, social, and/or behavioral, including Autism. BBSC offers programs grounded in a trauma-informed, evidence-based model for social-emotional learning (SEL) for all ages. These methodologies have been recognized by SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) as an evidence-based program and practice, which promotes the adoption of scientifically established behavioral health interventions. Our programming is supported by multiple theories and research in the following: relationship theory, resilience, Logic Model and Theory of Change, mindfulness, affects of rewards and punishments, problem-solving, positive school climate, connection, safety (self-regulation), brain research, and research in academics. Pairing our methodologies and our staff of highly trained and compassionate mental health specialists and staff, creates innovative quality programming that is child-centered and family focused; upholding the highest standards of integrity and producing powerful results.

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

The Strategic Plan is organized around five high-priority goals, each of which has a set of objectives and strategic initiatives that together outline the steps that BBSC will take over the next three years to achieve its vision and inspire action across the system. The goals are high-level statements that clarify what needs to be done to achieve BBSC's vision. The objectives describe the specific, measurable steps that need to occur to achieve the goals. The strategic initiatives are the activities that, when implemented, will drive achievement towards the goals and objectives.

The first step to implement the Strategic Plan is creating a series of detailed action plans. These plans will guide the initial implementation process and help ensure that system-wide efforts are aligned, focused, and well-coordinated. These action plans will also include a set of measurable indicators and timelines for each objective, which will allow BBSC to monitor progress and promotes organizational accountability. The plans will be developed through a series of targeted, collaborative efforts.

Kentucky's children deserve access to high-quality behavioral health services and the opportunity to lead healthy and fulfilling lives, and this Strategic Plan will enhance our work to achieve this goal.

- I. Vision**
- II. Mission**
- III. Values**
- IV. Goals, Objectives, and Initiatives**

OUR VISION STATEMENT

We envision a community where children struggling with social-emotional difficulties and other mental health challenges are met **where** they are, and **when** they are the most impressionable. A place where children experiencing difficulties no longer fall through the cracks and early, intensive intervention capitalizes on their years of greatest potential for change. A place that lightens the burden of raising children struggling with challenging behaviors and facilitates peace and love within families. We see a community full of hope because there are quality, evidence-based, comprehensive services available to children and adolescents to meet all their mental and behavioral health needs.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide culturally competent, community-based therapeutic services to children, adolescents and families to encourage and nurture social-emotional growth and promote healthy families. This early intervention results in building resiliency and giving our children the greatest opportunities for success.



OUR VALUES

- * **Child-centered.** Child-centered approaches may also be called facilitative play or naturalistic. This approach focuses on teaching skills the way most typically developing children naturally develop their skills, by playing and interacting with others. A child-centered approach to learning views children as active participants who are capable and competent learners.
- * **Family focused.** Our programs equip families through evidence-based, systematic changes in the way adults and children perceive behavior, rather than simply targeting specific behaviors. This shift allows us to access the higher centers of the brain to apply a diverse range of skills like problem-solving, empathy, teaching and learning. Adults are able to see the need underlying a child's behavior and then address the deficiency. As a result, children, schools and families report higher levels of social and academic success, as well as a greater sense of connection, fulfillment and support. Bluegrass Behavioral Services for Children brings the strength of this methodology to parent programs, systematically teaching the perceptual shift that allows adults to interpret the need behind children's behavior more accurately. It then provides foundational skills so adults can problem-solve and implement effective solutions. In this way, we meet families where they are, empowering all families to experience increased success.
- * **Quality.** BBSC is research-based and data-driven. We incorporate high standards, evidence-based practices, and cultural sensitivity. Bluegrass Behavioral Services for Children is committed to professional integrity, objectivity, fairness, and ethical business practices. Every child, every family, every encounter.
- * **Integrity.** BBSC holds integrity in very high regard. It is of the utmost importance to us that every client, family and community partner feels respected. We take pride in our efforts to generate trust by always helping others and keeping our promises. BBSC is committed to protecting the privacy of our clients by ensuring that the personal information we receive from clients is kept safe, secure, confidential, accurate and up to date.
- * **Innovative.** According to the US Department for Health and Family Services, mental health disorders affect people of all age and racial/ethnic groups. Estimates suggest that only half of all people with mental disorders get the treatment they need. Many of the Healthy People 2030 Objectives target youth and adolescents, such as "increase the proportion of children and adolescents who get appropriate treatment for behavior problems". This objective currently has developmental status, meaning it is a high-priority public health issue that has evidence-based interventions to address it, but doesn't yet have reliable baseline data. BBSC is missional in our efforts to be innovative by creating and expanding programs to meet the needs of our community. We will always be on the forefront of leading systemic change when it comes to program development and implementation.



Goal 1: Prevention & Early Intervention

This goal promotes behavioral health wellness through prevention and early intervention services and supports.

Education campaigns that are designed to increase the awareness of mental illness and to lessen the stigma associated with them are critical components of a behavioral health strategy. Efforts that promote universal behavioral health screenings to identify those who need and would benefit from referrals to services are also essential. These screenings allow us to identify issues and engage in timely, appropriate treatment before the issues could become severe and lead to other adverse outcomes, such as academic failure, difficult relationships, interactions with the legal system, and substance abuse among other undesirable behaviors.

BBSC is committed to prevention and early intervention by promoting education, awareness, and screening campaigns that are comprehensive, data-driven, and culturally responsive. These efforts can help identify issues early; deliver the knowledge, skills, and necessary supports to make healthy choices; change harmful behaviors; and link children and adolescents to the care they need in a timely manner which invokes the greatest potential for resiliency.

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
1 Increase Awareness. Increase awareness of and counteract stigma toward mental health disorders in children and adolescents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Implement targeted awareness campaigns to educate the community about health promotion, behavioral health conditions, and risk factors, along with help and treatment options.B. Coordinate training programs and professional development opportunities in agencies across the community including Scott County Schools (SCS) and surrounding school districts, Licensed Childcare and Preschools, and bring awareness of youth behavioral health trainings for school administrators and educators.C. Improve the BBSC website to ensure that it provides relevant and user- friendly content for consumers, providers, and partners.D. Develop and implement an approach that provides parents, educators, school staff, and childcare providers access to trainings on how to communicate effectively about behavioral health.

GOAL 1: PREVENTION & EARLY INTERVENTION

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
2 Reduce Occurrence and Severity of Mental Health Disorders. Reduce the occurrence and severity of mental health disorders among at-risk populations in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Implement screenings and early intervention activities in non-clinical targeted settings, such as schools, child development centers, and other community settings.B. Promote universal screenings for mental health disorders in primary care medical and urgent care settings.C. Establish a prevention team to increase community awareness. By raising public awareness, prevention planners can help garner valuable resources and increase local readiness for prevention.
3 Reduce Adverse Outcomes. Reduce the impact of adverse outcomes associated with mental illness and other behavioral disorders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Improve the quality and quantity of support services that are available to children.B. Increase access to harm reduction education to individuals, families, and communities.C. Develop and implement protocols for identifying families struggling with stressors that have an impact on children (e.g., separation, divorce, domestic violence, loss of loved ones, homelessness, financial strains, mental and physical health concerns, trauma) in order to offer support to minimize further trauma experienced by the child.



Goal 2: Access To Quality Services

This goal ensures that individuals and families receive high-quality services to meet their unique needs, resulting in access to the right services, at the right time, in the right amount.

Routine and timely assessment coupled with the immediate availability of evidence-based treatment that is well-coordinated, trauma-informed, and person-centered is essential to accessing quality service.

BBSC is also committed to enhanced care coordination to ensure that high-quality services are available in a timely and integrated manner across the service continuum.

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
1 Increase Access to Routine Comprehensive Assessment. Increase the number of individuals who receive routine, comprehensive assessments and are connected to the right services, at the right time, in the right amount.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Establish and implement best practices for comprehensive and routine behavioral health assessment and referrals.B. Expand co-located, integrated behavioral health models to community partners to promote timely access to behavioral health services, including in primary care and urgent care settings.C. Expand the use of screening and referral practices to community partners such as school, preschool and childcare settings by developing a tool and distributing it as appropriate with education and training in proper utilization.
2 Improve the Quality of Services. Improve the quality of mental health services by enhancing program monitoring, evaluation, and continuous quality improvement activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Implement existing or newly developed clinical practice standards for all BBSC staff and providers.B. Enhance leadership-driven standards and processes that support the implementation of continuous quality improvement (CQI) activities of BBSC staff and providers.C. Increase delivery, monitoring, and evaluation of evidence-based services and programs.D. Integrate therapeutic support specialists into existing and emerging CQI activities.



GOAL 2: ACCESS TO QUALITY SERVICES

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
<p>3 Reduce Barriers to Care. Increase care coordination to ensure that consumers/clients can move seamlessly across the continuum of care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Provide culturally competent outreach and community response through a Community Response Team (CRT), which will provide a multi-site and multidisciplinary model of care to improve behavioral health outcomes in the community. B. Expand school-based behavioral health programs to all public and private schools to improve access to care within the school-based population. C. Improve information sharing, health information exchange, and other care coordination systems between residential facilities, acute stabilization facilities and outpatient treatment providers. D. Implement screening for social determinants of health and other barriers that hinder care coordination and develop enhanced referral mechanisms.
<p>4 Improve Consumer/Client Experience. Improve the consumer/client experience with the BBSC mental health service delivery system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Implement training, staff development, and public health education activities based on guidelines reflecting current best practices for cultural and linguistic competence. B. Develop and implement plans to incorporate consumer/client input to inform BBSC decision-making related to program and service improvements. C. Expand the use of therapeutic support specialists to promote consumer/client engagement and improve outcomes across the array of BBSC and community-based programs. D. Employ a comprehensive trauma-informed approach to treatment, including standardized screening, assessment, and treatment protocols.

Goal 3: Resilience

This goal builds and supports a community that promotes resilience to help individuals and families thrive.

Affirming that all can recover from or manage mental illness and thrive in the community is critical when addressing the behavioral health needs of individuals. Promoting resilience involves creating opportunities for individuals and families to cope with challenges and to reduce or manage adverse outcomes. Supporting people as they make decisions about their care and designing programs to ensure that they receive community, family, and peer support services will foster recovery and resilience. A focus on optimism; building upon an individual's skills, supports, and resources; and addressing the person's needs holistically is at the core of recovery and resilience.

BBSC is committed to developing innovative and effective person-centered practices that promote community integration, enhance connections with family and peers, and reinforce natural supports for recovery and resilience.

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
1 Increase Person-Centered Practice. Increase the number of individuals served or supported by BBSC who receive person-centered care that empowers them, their families, and/or their caregivers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Promote the use of research-based person-centered practices that individualize care and support shared decision-making.B. Develop practice standards, trainings, and accountability measures that drive system-wide improvements in person-centered assessments and treatment plans.C. Design a system that encourages individuals to have control over the amount, length, and type of services they receive and that honors the culture, strength, and unique recovery of those served.
2 Increase Community Integration and Independence. Increase consumers'/clients' ability to integrate into their community, maximize independence, and participate fully in their environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Enhance engagement of community partners for the purpose of collaborating and providing services within those settings.B. Support treatment interventions that reduce rates of client termination and exclusion in other community settings, when appropriate.C. Conduct regular level-of-care assessments to support independence and integration into the community.
3 Increase Community Support Services and Natural Supports. Increase the use of community support services and natural supports for clients served or supported by BBSC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Expand natural support initiatives and models based on best practices to bridge community-identified gaps in behavioral health services.B. Provide resources to community-operated centers, in order to connect hard-to-reach consumers/clients and their families with clinical treatment.C. Build system capacity to incorporate community and natural supports in the ongoing treatment of consumers.

Goal 4: Partnership, Integration, & Coordination

This goal strengthens community partnerships to better integrate and coordinate services towards a sustained and shared vision of excellence.

It is vital to work internally within BBSC and externally with community partners to improve collaboration, coordinate care, integrate services, position resources, and align strategies. Strong organizational structures and systems that drive service integration and care coordination are essential to effective partnerships that seek to reduce the impact of mental illness and support behavioral health in Central Kentucky.

BBSC is committed to addressing the administrative, operational, and policy-oriented barriers to care coordination and service integration in ways that break down the silos between the mental health and medical healthcare systems and promote effective and efficient community partnerships.

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
1 Reduce Barriers to Care Coordination and Service Integration. Reduce the administrative, financial, programmatic, and structural barriers that hinder care coordination and service integration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Integrate strategies for psychiatric and behavioral health services that promote both fiscal and practice-level integration.B. Promote better information sharing and health information exchange between psychiatric hospitals and psychiatric units and other clinical and non-clinical partners.C. Promote integration of behavioral health services with primary care and other clinical and community settings.D. Support evidence-informed programs and policies that improve care transitions from the hospital and other acute care settings to the home.
2 Strengthen Relationships with Staff Clinicians and Contracted Providers. Promote transparency, timely and collaborative discussions, clear decision-making processes, and mutual respect between BBSC and its staff and contracted providers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Develop and implement best practices for information technology platforms to support BBSC and provider programs and services.B. Improve messaging mechanisms to share key information with providers.C. Continue to review and update policies and regulations to address provider challenges.D. Facilitate the sharing of clinical and operational best practices among providers.

GOAL 4: PARTNERSHIP, INTEGRATION, & COORDINATION

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
3 Increase the Integration of Mental Health Services. Support program, policy, and system initiatives that facilitate the integration of mental health services across the Commonwealth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Implement current best practices and models from other jurisdictions on system-wide integration of mental health.B. Write and integrate grant applications for mental health services.C. Place clinicians and/or case managers at community clinical service sites to help individuals identify and make necessary connections to treatment.
4 Enhance Community Partnerships. Enhance community partnerships between BBSC and its clinical and non-clinical partners throughout the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Complete an agency-wide inventory and evaluation of existing MOUs (memorandum of understanding) and MOAs (memorandum of agreements) to determine which ones need to be modified, extended/continued, discontinued, or created. Develop a centralized repository of all past and current agreements.B. Promote new and existing partnerships with community partners, such as Neighborhood Collaboratives, to build a mental health system with the capacity to serve children and youth, those who are unstably housed/homeless, and other vulnerable segments.



Goal 5: Leadership, Innovation, & Accountability

This goal will transform the community's behavioral health system into a nationally recognized, results-based model of care by promoting a common vision, accountable collective action, and research to drive and inform innovative programs.

Success in implementing BBSC's Strategic Plan will require strong leadership; a committed, well-trained workforce; and an effective internal system capable of facilitating partnership and promoting quality and accountability.

BBSC is committed to promoting a common vision, developing strong community partnerships, building internal capacity, and developing the data collection, monitoring, and performance improvement systems necessary to promote accountability and implement innovative, evidence-based, and emerging programs.

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
1 Promote a Strong Workforce. Increase competency, retention, and accountability of the behavioral health workforce to foster innovation and ensure that staff are capable of meeting the needs of our community's residents and providing the highest quality care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Conduct behavioral health workforce needs assessment to identify strengths, weaknesses, and actions necessary to improve competency, recruitment, and retention.B. Develop core competency skillsets for primary position categories in the system to establish and standardize performance benchmarks.C. Streamline BBSC's learning and development functions to deliver high-quality workforce support aligned with agency priorities.D. Begin monitoring comprehensive and customized provider employee onboarding plans.
2 Enhance Performance Management Systems. Enhance existing planning, accountability, and outcome monitoring systems to promote data-driven decision making and the achievement of BBSC goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Review and refine evidence-based practice (EBP) monitoring and reporting to improve system performance.B. Research and explore implementation of best practice payment systems.C. Use innovative approaches to report program performance measures and population outcome indicators.

GOAL 5: LEADERSHIP, INNOVATION, & ACCOUNTABILITY

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC INITIATIVES
3 Increase Innovative Programs. Work collaboratively to promote innovative programs and practices that lead to improvements in the lives of individuals, families, and communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Research and develop new evidence-based programs and promising practices that address service gaps for high-risk, priority populations.B. Leverage the state's flexibility afforded by the Medicaid waiver authority to drive behavioral health care delivery system change from volume-driven care to value-based care.
4 Enhance BBSC's Research Infrastructure. Build on BBSC's goal of research and evaluation to promote innovation and support evidence-informed decision-making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Increase research activities and start new initiatives to bring the latest advances in behavioral health care to the community.B. Increase research specific to the Central KY population so that treatments targeted to our population can be designed and implemented.C. Initiate and expand clinical and translational research throughout the agency.
5 Promote Clinician Education. Promote the education of the next generation of clinicians to work with Kentucky's diverse population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Embed trainees at all levels of BBSC service and create opportunities throughout educational programs to train, recruit, and retain the next generation of clinicians to work with Kentucky's diverse population.B. Support and maintain the highest level of accreditation possible for educational training programs.C. Promote agency thought leaders to present at local, national, and international conferences to attract the best and the brightest students and to encourage BBSC faculty to present at national conferences.

