

Department of Family Services Strategic Plan Overview

April 2024 (Version 2)

WY Home Matters

WY Home Matters is a framework that guides how the Department works across divisions, systems, and with communities to engage and serve children, youth, vulnerable adults, and their families. The Department's values - **safe at home, providing opportunities for success, and supporting the people who support the families** - provide the foundation for WY Home Matters. The Department believes in providing more front-end prevention services and economic and concrete supports (i.e. material resources and supports to meet basic needs such as financial assistance, food assistance, employment services) in order to prevent or limit an individual's involvement in formal child welfare, juvenile justice, or adult protective services. A growing body of research links increased access to economic and concrete supports with a reduction of risk for protective services involvement and improved child and family outcomes. Economic insecurity and material hardship (i.e. not being able to meet basic economic needs) are known contributors to protective services involvement.

Strategic Plan - "A WY Home Matters Roadmap"

The Department's three-year strategic plan¹ (State Fiscal Years (SFY) 2024 - 2026) is a roadmap that organizes work currently underway or planned that helps to operationalize WY Home Matters and the Department's values. The strategic plan establishes **three strategic goals** and **four operational goals**. These goals and associated strategies are not intended to address every aspect of Department operations; instead, the strategic plan seeks to better organize and elevate key goals and strategies that will help the Department to achieve success together, through innovative and effective cross-agency and cross-system partnerships.

Strategic goals were developed to drive impact on a number of key outcomes related to children, youth, vulnerable adults, and families directly. These goals primarily relate to values of safe at home and providing opportunities for success.



Operational goals build a strong foundation for how the Department's work gets done and, when successful, helps the Department achieve its strategic goals. Operational goals relate to the value of supporting the people who support the families and ensure that staff and partners have what they need to be successful.



¹ The full strategic plan can be viewed at dfs.wyo.gov/about/data-and-reports/

Table 1. Strategies and Measures Summary

Strategic Goals - Strategies and Measures of Success
<p>1. Safely decrease the number of court-ordered placements for children, youth, and families <u>Current and planned work includes</u>²: Motivational interviewing training and practice; community behavioral health reform; community-based prevention pilot projects; community juvenile services boards (CJSB); expansion of Kinship Connections Program; and partnerships to increase support for exiting/aging out youth <u>Success will be measured by</u>: Increased #/% of prevention/diversion cases; decreased court-ordered placements; and increased #/% of youth exiting care who receive economic and concrete supports or independent living services</p>
<p>2. Increase economic and concrete supports and community-based services for individuals and families served by the Department and its partners <u>Current and planned work includes</u>²: Expansion of home visiting services; plans of safe care infrastructure; increased access to early care and education services (e.g. child care assistance); addressing provider licensing barriers; family resource centers; SNAP Education and Training expansion; and partnerships to increase employment opportunities <u>Success will be measured by</u>: Increased utilization of economic and concrete supports for at-risk individuals/families; increased proportion of spending on prevention; and decreased involvement in protective services and juvenile justice</p>
<p>3. Increase Department and community capacity to achieve and maintain safety and independence for vulnerable adults so that they can remain in their homes and communities <u>Current and planned work includes</u>²: Improved coordination of funding/services for vulnerable adults; improved Adult Protection Team (APT) training; community-based projects (e.g. transportation, guardianship) for vulnerable adults; increased access to economic and concrete supports; and expansion of Commodity Supplemental Food Program <u>Success will be measured by</u>: Increased # of vulnerable adults receiving economic and concrete supports; increased #/% of partners actively engaged in APT meetings; and decreased recurrence of Adult Protective Services (APS) cases</p>
Operational Goals - Strategies and Measures of Success
<p>1. Improve employee recruitment, retention, and satisfaction <u>Current and planned work includes</u>²: Increased collaboration opportunities across divisions/teams; innovation labs; increased use of human resources data; secondary trauma training and supports; improved onboarding experience; implementation of revised training plan; caseworker training redesign; and increased availability of internships <u>Success will be measured by</u>: Decreased turnover; increased staff satisfaction; and reduced time to fill positions</p>
<p>2. Modernize and leverage information technology (IT) and business process solutions to improve client experience, coordination of services, and outcomes <u>Current and planned work includes</u>²: Completion of large-scale IT projects (e.g. WYOSAFE, EPICS/JAS, Early Childcare Access, Resources & Eligibility System; and Juvenile Justice Data System); updated IT strategic plan; and establishment of a unified data warehouse that supports Department-wide data integration, reporting, and evaluation <u>Success will be measured by</u>: Completion of IT projects on-time and on-budget; timeliness of benefits application processing; and timeliness of payments for providers (e.g. child care providers)</p>
<p>3. Improve access to timely, accurate, and meaningful fiscal data <u>Current and planned work includes</u>²: Implementation of new cost allocation system; expanded grant management capacity and tools; standardization of budget training and tools; and implementation of internal audit processes <u>Success will be measured by</u>: Decreased number of audit findings; and increased ability for staff to monitor budgets</p>
<p>4. Improve Department-wide use of quantitative and qualitative data, including user experience and voice, to inform decisions and improve policy and practice <u>Current and planned work includes</u>²: Increased use of continuous quality improvement; business process reviews; increased opportunities to seek feedback from partners and consumers; increased data visualization capacity; increased data-sharing to understand program impact; and establishment of data governance policies, procedures, and processes <u>Success will be measured by</u>: Increased timeliness of public records requests; and increased feedback from consumers</p>

² This is not an exhaustive list. To see a full list of planned strategies, visit <https://dfs.wyo.gov/about/data-and-reports/>.