

STRATEGIC PLAN

2021-2023



WHO WE ARE

MISSION

To create a community where young people find belonging, can discover Jesus, and are empowered to serve.

VISION

For every young person to freely find belonging and connection to God while growing in love and service for their neighbors.

CORE VALUES

Love Your Neighbor - We are rooted in the teachings of Jesus, welcoming of all backgrounds, and guided by the greatest commandment to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"; and "Love your neighbor as yourself".

God With Us - We believe every person was created by God, in the image of God, and has God within themselves.

Relationships - We believe healthy relationships with adults and peers are essential to the growth and thriving of young people.

Diversity & Inclusion - We believe in reflecting and celebrating the diversity of the Iowa City community and promoting the fair treatment, dignity, and inclusion of all people.

Authenticity - We value the voices of young people and encourage them to be their authentic selves and accept one another.

Youth Focus - We care deeply about caring for and celebrating young people in all we do.

OUR TEAM

STAFF

Stephanie Tutson

Co-Director, Neighbors High School

James Tutson

Co-Director, Neighbors College

2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Santhi Hejeebu

Professor of Economics and Business at Cornell College in Mount Vernon

Alex Carrillo, Treasurer

Vice President and Project Manger at Bedrock Builders

Dr. Kevo Rivera

Resident Physician, UIOWA Hospitals & Clinics Department of Psychiatry

David Borger Germann

Executive Pastor, Sanctuary Community Church

Christine Miller

Retired, formerly CEO of Nova Care Design and Vice President of Strategic Planning at UI Health Care

Frederick Newell

Executive Director at Dream City (formerly known as The Dream Center)

WHY NEIGHBORS?

DRIVEN BY THE NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

According to researchers led by the Search Institute, there are research-based positive experiences and qualities that can influence a young person's development, helping them becoming caring, responsible, and productive adults.

These factors are both internal and external and fall into 8 categories:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Support | 5. Commitment to Learning |
| 2. Empowerment | 6. Positive Values |
| 3. Boundaries and Expectations | 7. Social Competencies |
| 4. Constructive Use of Time | 8. Positive Identity |

According to research surveying over 6 million young people in the U.S., only 9% of young people reported meeting the number of supports and strengths young people need to experience positive effects most strongly.

OUR APPROACH

We are compelled to assess in our local community:

- How young people in our area experience these factors.
- How the experience might vary among different groups of young people in our area.
- Where in our community are young people experiencing these supports and strengths.
- **How Neighbors can increase positive factors for young people in our community through faith, relationships, and service.**

CONNECTING TO OUR COMMUNITY

OUR TARGET AUDIENCE

High school and college-aged young people in the Iowa City area.

- High schoolers in Iowa City area from City High, West High, Liberty High, and Tate.
- College-aged young people, ages 18-22 attending Kirkwood, University of Iowa, and those not attending college.
- Young people who have not previously connected easily with faith communities.

OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION

At Neighbors we are committed to celebrating the diversity of the Iowa City area and promoting the fair treatment, dignity, and inclusion of all people. Individuals and families of all races, genders, cultures, socioeconomic status, sexual orientations and gender expressions can find belonging and hold any role in Neighbors.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

USE OF THE PLAN

The following sections of the strategic plan present goals, strategies, actions, and progress indicators. These goals will guide current and future Neighbors staff, board members, and mentors. These goals can and will change as we develop more detailed operational plans critical to the thriving of young people and success of Neighbors.

The goals can be implemented on a short-term (one year), mid-term (three year), or long-term (five year) basis.

As Neighbors develops, the staff and board members will determine more precise time frames for specific actions as needed. The plan also serves as a point of reference for information gathering, decision making, programmatic planning, and evaluation as Neighbors and the world evolves.

6 STRATEGIC GOALS

The mission statement of Neighbors highlights three major areas of activity programming: life-on-life relationships, discover of Jesus, and empowered service. The strategic plan links these three areas of programming with building partnerships and a sustainable organization.

The five strategic goals are:

1. Build a diverse team of adult mentors who create relationships with young people involved in Neighbors.
2. Build a community for young people ages 14-18 in which they can find belonging and discover Jesus.
3. Build a community for young people ages 18-24 in which they can find belonging and discover Jesus.
4. Empower young people to actively serve their communities and beyond.
5. Develop a network of partnerships organizations that share common vision for youth.
6. Create an organization that is sustainable.

GOAL #1

BUILD A DIVERSE TEAM OF ADULT MENTORS WHO CREATE RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED IN NEIGHBORS.

STRATEGIES

1. Recruit diverse teams of mentors for young people and young adults.
2. Provide appropriate training for the teams.
3. Nurture and support the teams, providing resources and additional training as needed.

ACTIONS

1. Host bi-weekly events for the mentors that are nurturing and fun.
2. Identify concerns and resources that may be needed.

PROGRESS INDICATORS

1. Mentor retention 2-4 years.
2. Positive feedback from mentors regarding care and development of beneficial life skills.
3. Mentors spend time with young people 2-5 hours/month outside of programming

GOAL # 2

BUILD A COMMUNITY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGES 14-18 IN WHICH THEY CAN FIND BELONGING AND DISCOVER JESUS.

STRATEGIES

1. Through the team of mentors, build life on-life relationships with young people ages 14-18.
2. Create a welcoming, inclusive environment for young people
3. Create opportunities for young people to discover Jesus and cultivate spiritual wellness.

ACTIONS

1. Recruit and train a team of Mentors building relationships with young people.
2. Host bi-weekly large group events that are engaging and fun.
3. Offer weekly small group opportunities that are inviting and practical.

PROGRESS INDICATORS

1. Mentor retention 2-4 years.
2. Mentors spend time with young people 2-5 hours/month outside of programming
3. Retention and growth of young people participation at large group and small group events.

GOAL #3

BUILD A COMMUNITY FOR YOUNG ADULTS AGES 18-24 IN WHICH THEY CAN FIND BELONGING AND DISCOVER JESUS.

STRATEGIES

1. Through the team of mentors, build life on-life relationships with young adults ages 18-24.
2. Create a welcoming, inclusive environment for young adults.
3. Create opportunities for young adults to discover Jesus and cultivate spiritual wellness.

ACTIONS

1. Recruit and train a team of Mentors building relationships with young people.
2. Host bi-weekly large group events that are engaging and fun.
3. Offer weekly small group opportunities that are inviting and practical.

PROGRESS INDICATORS

1. Mentor retention 2-4 years.
2. Mentors spend time with young people 2-5 hours/month outside of programming
3. Retention and growth of young people participation at large group and small group events.

GOAL #3

EMPOWER YOUNG PEOPLE TO ACTIVELY SERVE THEIR COMMUNITIES AND BEYOND.

STRATEGIES

1. Create regular opportunities for youth to learn about service and leadership.
2. Identify local service opportunities based on youth feedback and community need.
3. Identify non-local retreat opportunities for service.

ACTIONS

1. Twice a year young people will choose a local agency, charity, or cause to serve monthly.
2. Staff will organize and execute the monthly service opportunities.
3. Create 2 non-local service opportunities each year for both ministries.

PROGRESS INDICATORS

1. Young people are creating the focuses of our service initiative.
2. Regular participation by young people, Mentors, and other volunteers in the service opportunities.
3. 25% of the young people involved are participating in service opportunities and/or service trips.

GOAL #4

DEVELOP A NETWORK OF PARTNERSHIP ORGANIZATIONS THAT SHARE COMMON VISION FOR YOUTH.

STRATEGIES

1. Identify local organizations with common goals.
2. Identify local churches looking to partner with a youth ministry with common values.
3. Identify activities for collaboration.

ACTIONS

1. Staff make contacts monthly to develop partnerships.
2. Staff make contacts monthly to sustain partnerships.
3. Establish Neighbors as a student org at all schools and foster relationships with faculty.

PROGRESS INDICATORS

1. 3-5 organizations considered partners in the Iowa City area.
2. 3-5 events that collaborate with partner organizations every year.
3. Staff create 3-5 opportunities to serve the schools in collaboration with faculty and staff.

GOAL #5

CREATE AN ORGANIZATION THAT IS SUSTAINABLE.

STRATEGIES

1. Develop and initiate a funding plan.
2. Ongoing assessment of staff workload, budget, and progress indicators.
3. Create alignment through organizational clarity.

ACTIONS

1. Create funding plan for the next 3 years including a diverse donor base of individuals, corporations, grants, and local partners.
2. Assess staffing needs, budget, and progress indicators quarterly with Board.
3. Continue to develop strategic plan and define organizational roles to create shared understanding in all levels of organization.

PROGRESS INDICATORS

1. Fully funded in donations or pledges for proceeding fiscal year with a diverse donor base.
2. Increased ability to assess and communicate organizational needs and impact, internally and externally
3. Increased organizational alignment through ongoing assessment by staff, board, and mentors.