



# 2022 - 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

CHIMO YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES

# CONTENTS

Message from the Board President and Chimo's Executive Leadership.....	3
Our Foundation.....	2
Mission* .....	2
Vision* .....	2
Values* .....	2
A. Executive Summary .....	3
Planning Process .....	3
B. Our Strategic Directions.....	7
1. Exceptional Services.....	7
2. Sustainable Operations .....	8
3. A Strong, Healthy Workplace .....	9
4. Planning for Change.....	10
C. Next Steps.....	11
D. Conclusion.....	11

# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT AND CHIMO'S EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

Strategic planning provides an opportunity to reflect on the past, celebrate successes, and look ahead to the future. In 2021, after a period of organizational growth and change, including navigation of the COVID-19 pandemic, Chimo Youth & Family Services (Chimo's) Board of Directors resumed the strategic planning process that was started in January 2020.

Chimo's board consists of a passionate, community-driven group of volunteers, who are committed to ensuring strong governance and stewardship of the organization. As we, alongside our community, recover from the pandemic and approach an exciting and hopeful future, this is more important than ever.

In planning our approach, we wanted to ensure that our new strategic plan responded directly to the current and shifting environment and reflected the needs of our clients and community. As such, our board prioritized stakeholder engagement. We engaged clients, family members and caregivers of clients, staff, management, and community partners from across the region to gain a comprehensive understanding of our stakeholders' views. From the outset to the culmination of our board discussions, we asked difficult questions and listened deeply. Our goal was to develop a three-year strategic plan based on meaningful engagement, setting the vision for a strong and sustainable future.

As part of the process, we undertook an analysis of the environment in which we operate. We assessed Chimo's current capacities, opportunities, and aspirations for growth. From this base of engagement and analysis, we developed four new strategic directions that will guide us over the next three years.

We are deeply proud of our organization's successes and look forward to a future full of potential—where Chimo continues to support children and youth in building resiliency for the future.

We extend our gratitude to everyone who took the time to share their ideas with us. We look forward to continuing in our mission to strengthen the ability of children and youth to effectively manage their mental health challenges and guide their caregivers in supporting their children.

Sincerely,

Kate Farnell, Board Chair

Teresa Rye, Director of Administration and Shannon Mossip, Director of Clinical Services

# OUR FOUNDATION

## Mission\*

Strengthen the ability of children and youth to effectively deal with and/or resolve their mental health challenges, building resiliency for the future.  
Strengthen caregivers' understanding, skill base and ability to guide and support their children.

## Vision\*

Service excellence in the delivery of children's mental health services.

## Values\*

Respect

Integrity

Transparency

Innovation

Professional Excellence

*\* Mission, Vision, and Value statements are currently under review.*

# A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As providers of a range of high-quality, community-based and residential mental health supports and services since 1975, Chimo Youth & Family Services (Chimo) is continuing to focus on meeting the mental health needs of children, youth and their families across the city of Kawartha Lakes, North Durham Region, South Durham Region, Peterborough County, Northumberland County, Haliburton County, and York Region & Simcoe County.

In keeping with our commitment to provide accessible services, Chimo's programming has been shaped to address the complex needs of families, parents, caregivers, youth, and the broader community. With the support of our partners and a team of knowledgeable and passionate staff, our unique programs and services empower children and youth to achieve success in their home, school, community, and beyond. With new opportunities to coordinate service and strengthen partnerships, and a growing awareness regarding the importance of mental health, Chimo's future is bright and full of exciting potential.

In January 2020, Chimo engaged Laridae, a leading non-profit management consulting firm, to guide the Board of Directors through a strategic planning process. After having completed a series of stakeholder engagement activities in February 2020, Chimo made the decision to put the strategic planning process on temporary hold, to enable the organization to focus on delivering safe mental health services amid the COVID-19 global pandemic.

In July 2021, Chimo resumed the strategic planning process to renew the organization's future strategic direction. The strategic planning approach, based on best practice for the non-profit sector, supported the Board of Directors as they championed the planning and provided oversight throughout the final stages of strategy development.

## Planning Process

From the initial project kick-off in 2020, to the completion of the planning process, Chimo prioritized stakeholder engagement to ensure that the final strategic plan would have a strong foundation, informed by experience, evidence, and the broadest-held perceptions of the individuals who interact with the organization on a regular basis—as clients, family members and caregivers, staff, partners, and members of the communities that Chimo serves.

Engagement strategies to solicit input included focus groups and two online surveys<sup>1</sup>. In total, feedback was gathered from **over 90 stakeholders**, including:

- **24** focus group participants
- **91** respondents to the online survey in 2020
- **48** respondents to the online survey in 2021

The feedback shared by stakeholders demonstrated their commitment to seeing Chimo grow and improve, and their dedication to and appreciation for the services and programs provided. The themes that emerged throughout the stakeholder engagement process helped guide the Board of Directors' thinking leading up to and during the strategic planning retreat on August 25 and September 1, 2021

From the perspective of Chimo's most valued stakeholders, several themes emerged as areas where the organization excels, or where they could grow and develop with a newly created strategic plan. They were:

- Community Partnerships
- External Communications & Branding
- Human Resources
- Internal Communications
- Management, Leadership & Governance
- Service Delivery
- System Navigation Challenges
- Technology
- Transformation and Change
- Workplace Culture

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"Chimo provides top support to families and individuals with a multitude of issues. The staff always provide support, guidance, resources, and at times, will go above and beyond in supporting the clients they work with."

– Survey Respondent

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Chimo identified and considered the strategic issues, data, financial picture, and overall external environmental landscape through a series of facilitated discussions. The Board mapped key issues, opportunities, and challenges. The retreat culminated in unanimous agreement on four strategic directions.

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<sup>1</sup> A second survey was launched in July 2021 (after the process was on hold since March 2020), to re-engage stakeholders and capture updated experiences, thoughts, and ideas of Chimo's community following many months of navigating the pandemic.

## B. OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

As the organization takes on new opportunities and challenges in the coming years, Chimo is focused on maintaining a positive client experience through the delivery of high-quality, professional services and programs. At the core of these strategic directions is our commitment to prioritize children and youth above all else.

Chimo is committing to a three-year strategic plan. As such, the directions are broad and oriented to the future. This allows the organization to respond and adapt as circumstances change over the years. The directions offer a framework for the development of internal, annual operational plans with measurable goals and objectives. These operational plans, developed by Chimo on an annual basis, will action the strategic directions.

In direct response to what we heard from our community of stakeholders, in addition to the internal and external considerations that shaped the planning process, the following are our four directions:

- 1. Exceptional Services**
- 2. Sustainable Operations**
- 3. A Strong, Healthy Workplace**
- 4. Planning for Change**

### 1. Exceptional Services

Overtime, Chimo has become a highly sought-after children's mental health service provider that offers a range of core mental health services and supports, including day treatment, live-in treatment, respite programs, and a variety of community-based services. As we move forward, and the mental health needs of children and youth continue to evolve, we will ensure our approach to service delivery remains equitable and accessible, and that we maintain evidence-based practices and strong accountability as an organization. We are focused on balancing service needs with meeting the expectations of our funders, the families we serve, and the organization.

Understanding that children and youth meet Chimo at a vulnerable and sensitive time in their lives, we commit to delivering services in a way that encourages them to feel safe and protected. Through collaborating with our community partners, we will explore innovative solutions to improve accessibility and support clients and families in navigating service pathways across the sector. Ultimately, we strive to deliver consistent, high-quality, and timely service so that those we serve can feel confident placing their trust in Chimo.

Over the next three years, we commit to *Exceptional Services* through:

- **Quality and Innovation:** Demonstrating leadership in delivering the highest level of quality care, adapting to various service delivery methods, and incorporating creative, yet evidence-based, and clinical best practices into our work. Establishing approaches to regularly measure the quality of our services and programs and remain flexible and open to solutions that improve quality and effectively address the needs of our clients.
- **Awareness:** Investing time and resources into increasing Chimo's visibility and improving communications and information sharing with other service providers. Ensuring our partners have the most current and up to date information regarding our programs and services, and a clear understanding of who we are, what we do, and how to access our services.
- **Accessibility:** Addressing potential transportation, language, and cultural barriers to service and exploring ways to increase accessibility, such as continuing to offer hybrid (in-person and virtual) service delivery options for clients.
- **Partnerships:** Leveraging our network of community partners to improve client outcomes and enhance families' experiences navigating service pathways and transitions. Identifying key relationships that are reciprocal and allow us to share our strengths as service providers, enhancing the community's overall capacity in addressing our local children's mental health care system.

## 2. Sustainable Operations

To achieve our mission and reach the highest attainable standards of quality service, our organization must remain sustainable as we look to the future. In the coming years, we commit to taking a proactive and thoughtful approach to operational sustainability. By prioritizing succession planning for key management and board roles, as well as regularly assessing our financial position, this will enable us to increase organizational capacity and overall stability, setting Chimo up for continued success.

We recognize the important role of our Board of Directors in providing leadership and guidance to the organization. We commit, as a board, to uphold our oversight responsibilities, and to expand our board membership to ensure we have strong engagement, complementary skill sets, and diverse representation from across our communities. We will continue to enhance our governance expertise and implement a process for board recruitment and succession. By focusing on these areas, we will ensure Chimo is well-positioned to continue as a local leader in the children's mental health sector for years to come.

Over the next three years, we commit to *Sustainable Operations* through:

- **Governance:** Maintaining a strong, diverse, vibrant, and actively engaged board through investing time and resources into board recruitment and succession planning. Building on our



current members' strengths and ensuring the strategic renewal of board membership, in a way that aligns our expertise with the changing needs of the organization.

- **Succession Planning:** Approaching succession from a holistic lens and ensuring the organization is equipped to manage change and gradual staff turnover. Developing clear succession strategies, detailed plans for key positions that outline management pathways and growth opportunities, as well as ensuring effective knowledge transfer.
- **Financial Sustainability:** Understanding that our services are integral to the wellbeing of our community, we will prioritize our long-term financial sustainability. Through managing our expenses and resources responsibly, exploring possible means of diversifying our revenue, and regularly assessing the organization's financial position to meet ongoing obligations while remaining adaptable to environmental changes.
- **Enabling Efficiency:** Reflecting on our processes and systems to ensure that the right services are being offered at the right point of care – with the aim of enhancing the efficient use of our internal resources, while maximizing the positive experience and meaningful impacts for children, youth, and their families.

### 3. A Strong, Healthy Workplace

The unwavering passion and commitment from staff, and their knowledge and expertise that they bring to the organization is the core of Chimo's culture and overall success. We recognize the value and impact of investing in our team and cultivating a positive workplace culture, where staff feel empowered, supported, and consistently appreciated.

Understanding everyone's unique life circumstances, we will find creative ways to encourage work life balance – engaging staff and collecting feedback along the way. We will continue to support innovation and growth, provide professional development opportunities and tools for success, strengthen our collective capacity and overall efficiency, and ensure we work together as an effective team. With these commitments, we strive to provide a workplace where staff look forward to coming to work and believe in the overarching purpose and values of the organization.

Over the next three years, we commit to *A Strong, Healthy Workplace* through:

- **Maintaining a Strong Team:** Implementing strategies that support Chimo in building and maintaining a highly effective team. Finding solutions to increase the number of qualified candidates during recruitment, exploring creative ways to achieve work life balance, prioritizing staff morale and overall wellbeing, addressing the local wage gaps, and ensuring opportunities for personal and professional growth.
- **Healthy Team Dynamics:** Strengthening our positive and motivating workplace environment that provides staff with opportunities for autonomy, professional development, and a sense of fulfillment and purpose. Engaging staff regularly in ways that prioritize open and honest

communications, gathering ongoing insight to support the organization's continuous improvement.

- **Professional Development:** Empowering and supporting staff through continuing to offer learning and professional development opportunities that contribute towards service excellence, innovation, and working productively as a team.

## 4. Planning for Change

As we reflect on the past and look toward the future, we understand the importance of continuing to demonstrate agility and adaptability. Whether it is predictable or unexpected change that presents itself, we have come to appreciate the strategies that help Chimo navigate new and challenging situations and support the organization in remaining open to potential opportunities that present themselves.

With some uncertainty that continues to impact our day-to-day work, we will prioritize clear communication with all of our stakeholders amidst change and ensure we remain aware and responsive to our clients' needs and the changing demographics of our communities. We understand that the environmental conditions and external pressures impacting other service providers across the sector have a significant impact on demand for our services. Furthermore, as the children's mental health sector sees signs of stabilization, we intend to re-engage with our mental health service providers across the Central East Region to define Chimo's position within Ontario Health Teams as the province moves forward with the restructuring of the health care system.

Over the next three years, we commit to *Planning for Change* through:

- **Awareness:** Enhancing our knowledge of local mental health needs as we continue to experience the impacts of COVID-19 and recover as a community. Monitoring potential increase in demand for service and continuing to adapt to emerging needs.
- **Communication:** Proactively communicating with our staff, community partners, and those we serve to manage expectations and keep them informed of the organization's current state and aware of any potential changes that may impact the future of Chimo and the services we offer.
- **Strategic Positioning:** Re-engaging and strengthening our connections across the children's mental health sector, to determine the organization's position within Ontario Health Teams and ensure mental health is a priority in our evolving health care system.

## C. NEXT STEPS

Our newly developed strategic directions provide Chimo with clear focus to guide the organization over the coming years. Together, as a Board of Directors, we've jointly committed to the future success of the organization and to our mission and vision. Having come to the end of our strategic planning journey, we are now prepared to implement the strategic directions and champion change and progress. As we take the first steps to drive the strategy forward, the board has committed to the following action items:

1. Communicating the strategic plan, both internally and externally;
2. Developing annual organizational goals and objectives to align and further each strategic priority;
3. Providing year-end progress updates for stakeholders; and,
4. Seeking regular feedback as the directions are implemented.

## D. CONCLUSION

The Board of Directors is proud of all that Chimo has accomplished to date. Through our strategic plan, we will ensure our clients remain our top priority. Our new strategic directions have been designed to provide a stable framework that will anchor us as new challenges arise and our landscape shifts in the coming years. We are committed to operating in a sustainable manner and maintaining accountability through all our initiatives.

We thank all those who took the time to contribute thoughts and feedback through our engagement activities, particularly during this tumultuous year with many competing priorities. We've listened carefully, and your voices have been instrumental in helping us shape a shared, exciting new future.

As we progress in fulfilling our strategic directions, the Board of Directors looks forward to sharing our accomplishments and performance with our community. We invite you to join us on this new stage of Chimo's journey.