Results-Based Accountability (RBA):
A disciplined way of thinking and taking action used by communities to improve the lives of children, families and the community as a whole. Think Small is using RBA as a framework to align our strategic plan.

Population Level Result:
All children in Minnesota are ready for kindergarten.

Population Level Proxy Indicator:
All children in seven-county metro area have access to high-quality early care and education programs.

Proxy Level Indicator Data Points:
• Number and percent of high-quality programs
• Number and percent of children in high-quality care

Kindergarten-Readiness
Kindergarten readiness is defined as the successful demonstration of progress across the 8 developmental domains as described in Minnesota’s Early Indicator of Progress at kindergarten entry.

Dosage:
Think Small is working towards creating high quality, full day/full year programs that are available to children, birth to 5 years old.

Equity:
To support the full potential for every child, Think Small commits to championing policies and practices of equity that empower a just, inclusive, and equitable care and education system for children in their crucial early years.

Think Small is well aware that we will not be able to reach our population level result of all children being prepared for Kindergarten by ourselves. Therefore, we have identified partners to work with us in each of our strategy plans. Our current partners include early childhood providers; school districts; state agencies; policymakers; researchers; promise neighborhoods; other nonprofits working in the field of early childhood, education, health, human services, and homelessness. This list will grow as we develop our work and invite others to share our population level result of all children being prepared for Kindergarten.
Early Childhood Quality

Result:

Increase and retain the number and percentage of licensed family and center-based child care providers participating in Parent Aware in the seven-county metro area.

Target:

- Increase percent of programs that have earned a three or four star Parent Aware rating
- Decrease the number of programs closing that have earned a three or four star Parent Aware rating
- Decrease the number of programs hesitant to participating in Parent Aware

Performance Measure

How Much:

- Increase the percent of programs who have earned a three or four star Parent Aware rating from 15% (July 2018) to 20% (Jan 2020)
- Monitor and analyze Parent Aware star rating reports every 6 months

How Well:

- Effectively analyze data to reduce number of child care providers leaving Parent Aware and/or closing
- Effectively analyze data to increase number of child care providers participating in Parent Aware

Difference Made:

- More child care providers will earn a three or four star Parent Aware rating resulting in more opportunities for young children to receive the skills and knowledge to be ready for school and life
Early Childhood Access

Result:

*Fully optimize all financial assistance funds Think Small administers.*

Target:

- Controlling/managing/reallocating administrative costs in order to optimize available funding for children and families
- Educating eligible families on the most efficient use of funding supports to cover the costs of high-quality early care and education
- Identify other pots of money to braid with early learning scholarship funds

Performance Measure

**How Much:**

- Think Small will ensure 97% of state early learning scholarship – Pathway 1 (PW1) dollars are spent each biennium in Hennepin and Ramsey counties
- Monitor and analyze Parent Aware star rating reports every 6 months

**How Well:**

- 90% of children newly-awarded an early learning scholarship (PW1) in Hennepin and Ramsey counties will enroll in a program
- Children newly awarded an early learning scholarship (PW1) who chose a program will enroll within 25 days of award date

**Difference Made:**

- An increased number and percent of income eligible children (185% of poverty or below) in seven-county metro area will enter kindergarten with at least one year of high-quality early care and education programming
Parent Engagement

**Definition of Parent Engagement:** Continuous parent involvement in their child’s development and education, ultimately leading to parent empowerment.

**Result:**

*Parents and caregivers of children under five and expecting parents are supporting and preparing their children for kindergarten.*

**Target:**

- Think Small will advance and develop innovative ideas that allow us to educate, engage and empower parents and caregivers so they have the information and resources they need to prepare their children for kindergarten.
- Think Small will commit to fostering meaningful engagement with parents and caregivers by applying a ‘parent engagement’ lens to our work throughout the agency.

**Performance Measure**

**How Much:**
- Think Small will make 200,000 parent engagement connections
- Monitor and analyze Parent Aware star rating reports every 6 months

**How Well:**
- High Touch: Direct connection with parents/caregivers with impact/results seen (Goal: 15,000 ‘High-Touch’ connections (includes texting enrollments)
- Medium Touch: Targeted connection with parents/caregivers made, although unclear if information/resources provided are used (Goal: 25,000 ‘Medium-Touch’ connections (parent outreach events)
- Low Touch: Indirect connection to parents/caregivers to reach out and inform (Goal: 160,000* ‘Low-Touch’ connections (social media)

**Difference Made:**
- Parents and caregivers have the information and resources to prepare their children for kindergarten
Policy

Result:

Create and change legislation to support increases in access to quality early learning opportunities that meet the needs of families and increase the number of high-quality slots.

Target:

- Fully fund early learning scholarships
- Increase Parent Aware participation
- Ensure CCAP funding meets all CCDBG reauthorization requirements and is tied to quality
- Ensure families have robust high-quality early care and education options, including LFCC and CCC, that meet their needs
- Every child receives a school readiness assessment during transition to kindergarten
- Provide strategic leadership in early childhood efforts as applicable
- Engage Think Small staff in policy strategy plan

Performance Measure

How Much:

- Increase the amount of money available statewide for early learning scholarships by $75M
- Increase the percentage of Parent Aware participating programs in the seven-county metro area from 25% (July 2018) to 30% (Jan 2020)
- Increase the percentage of children receiving a school readiness assessment during their transition to kindergarten from 10% to 20%

How Well:

- Efficient utilizing all of the state early learning scholarship dollars allocated by the legislature
- More effective transitions for programs moving from one star to four stars

Difference Made:

- An increase in the number and percentage of children will have access to and attend high-quality early care and education prior to entering kindergarten
Data Development

Result:
_Improve internal collection and use of data to ensure all children in Minnesota are ready for kindergarten._

Target:
- Identify roadmap of what data is collected internally, by whom, why and where
- Identify what external data exists and how does Think Small access it
- Analyze what is needed (gaps) and what is not needed
- Create a continuous improvement plan

Performance Measure

How Much:
- Number of data points intentionally collected
- Data points are reviewed every six months

How Well:
- Clean accurate data
- Streamline and automation of data processes

Difference Made:
- Staff will understand why data is collected and can tell a story about it
- Improvements are made in service delivery
2019-2023
Strategic Plan
Year One

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