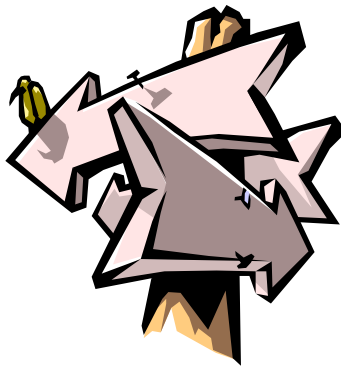


Warren County Department of Social Services Strategic Plan

Combined Report from
Sessions One and Two



November 14-15 and 26-27, 2012
Warren County Community Center

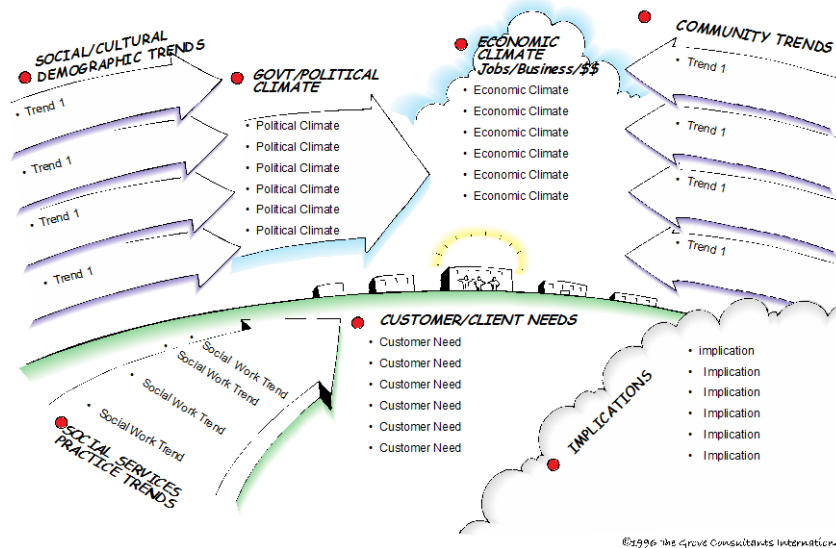
A. Tyler St.Clair
205 Madison Street
Lynchburg, Virginia 24504
434-846-2428
ats6t@virginia.edu



Warren County Department of Social Services
 Comprehensive Strategic Plan November 14-15 and November 26-27, 2012

WARREN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Warren County Department of Social Services Environmental Scan



Political/Governmental Climate

- Major health care reform; privatization of our programs (Medicaid = 1/3 of work)
- Federal and state budget crisis; financial crisis at the federal level become our crisis by increasing unfunded mandates
- Warren County tax base may increase, thus improving our salaries and work environment; clients may be better off

Community Trends

- People are working but are still needing assistance
- Jail, power plant, FBI are employment opportunities
- Often during periods of growth, drugs use and crime seem to increase
- Lack of permanent affordable housing; no permanent supportive housing; only motels for temporary housing
- Blended family trends affecting eligibility
- Children living at home longer and returning
- We identify mental health needs but resources are not sufficient

Social Services Practice Trends

- Eligibility Modernization
- Family engagement
- Prevention work
- Coordination of partner agencies
- Funds inconsistent and come with huge administrative burdens
- Still experiencing “new clients” with expectations that we cannot meet
- Constant audits, reporting, reconciliation, charge-backs

- Young mothers with special needs kids

Social/Cultural/Demographic Trends

Economic Trends/Factors

- Lack of resources
 - Lack of money
 - Lack of private insurance to obtain counseling and mental health services
 - Lack of providers who accept Medicaid
 - Lack of substance abuse providers (not adult services; some services for kids)
 - Lack of individual therapy providers who accept Medicaid/managed care
 - Lack of medical care providers
 - Lack of funds to pay for medication and medication management
 - Lack of transportation to services (i.e. Logisticare Cab criteria and money for gas)
 - Adult health care insurance for adults who don't meet income criteria for Medicaid
 - St.Lukes Free Medical Center is very limited in services and prescriptions
 - No dental care services for adults with limited income
- Lack of employment opportunities
- Lack of unemployment services
- Lack of self motivation to seek employment or training to better themselves
- Homogeneous population, with no giant shifts in the population
- Ethnicities in Warren County are defined by geography

Customer/Client Trends/Factors/Needs

- Expense of childcare; childcare assistance is a challenge
 - Lack of daycare assistance; there is a long waiting list
 - Lack of providers who accept daycare assistance; daycare centers are not getting reimbursed in a timely way and are not wanting to serve our clients
 - When there is less assistance for daycare, frustration goes up, children are left in unsafe environments, and CPS complaints go up
- Public assistance becomes a way of life - a multi-generational cycle; clients use Food Stamps and Medicaid, not Welfare (TANF and VIEW)
- Lack of County fiscal/local fund support
- No HUD housing in Warren County (have to go to Shenandoah County to apply)
- More involvement from the Northwestern Community Services Board (NWCSB,) especially on substance abuse
 - The realignment of the CSB around specialized geographic services means clients have to go to other counties to get services
 - Very difficult to get an appointment, especially for psychiatric services
- Resources for seeking employment are limited; no VEC
 - Can apply on line, but many clients don't know how to do that
- Lack of community/school extracurricular activities for youth
- Lack of funding and support for alternative education

IMPLICATIONS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN FOR OUR WORK/PRACTICE:

What does the Environmental Scan tell us about what we have to do in the future?

1. A lot of the issues are funding driven. We have to increase our skills in making a case for needs. We have to:
 - Do more research
 - Be able to provide statistics
 - Justify our strategy/requests/recommendations
2. We need to bring new and different services to the County to deal with the gaps. We need to:
 - Make a case for different services
 - Educate the community
3. We have to focus more on education. We need to:
 - Get out in the community more and not stay in the office
 - Bring in our community partners to educate us
 - Educate each other inside the agency through cross training
 - Educate the clients
4. We need to improve access to what families need, physically and electronically. If we can't get it here, we need to figure out how to get them there.
 - Improve available transportation opportunities
 - Improve knowledge and ability to access on-line services
 - Bring partners in
 - Think about what we need in the design of the building
 - Advocate for transportation resources (i.e. routes/partners) with the BOS and other agencies
5. We must engage ourselves in more prevention, particularly focusing on kids that are part of the generational trend and work to change it.
 - Identify the right kids that are at risk (i.e. middle school)
 - Change the picture; empower them
 - Work to address the lack of school services
6. We have to get good at doing it right the first time because rework is expensive and time consuming.
 - Improve communication in the building
 - Know what different departments do, what we need from each other and get it
 - Stay better connected to with the State to be ahead of the game/expectations
7. We recognize that we can't just stay the course. We must have a plan/roadmap to get us to our goal and be open to constantly looking for new ways to do things. We have to get past just organizing ourselves to working outside the agency to make things better for our clients.

VISIONING BRAINSTORM

Imagine Warren County Department of Social Services in 2022 in its most ideal state with clients served at their very best.

- What do you want to KEEP?
- What do you want to CHANGE?

Purple Group

Keep:

- Supportive team
- Keep connected to families over time
- Personal touch and personal connection
- More diverse staff [that we have been getting]
- Passion and commitment of the workforce
- Family focus
- Open communication between Services and Eligibility
- Good staff
- Good work ethic
- Advisory Board
- New building efforts
- Family friendly working environment
- Flexibility of setting appointments
- Staffing
- Attorney

Change:

- Solution focus
- Supportiveness of training and education
- Professional development and organizations involvement
- Inservices
- Go paperless
- Embrace technology (social media, electronic messages, etc.)
- Pilot new ideas
- Change intake to get a more holistic picture of the client's need
- One stop service delivery for Warren County
- Evidence based ongoing services like parenting or gatherhood, nutrition class, resume writing, interview skills, continuous and ongoing anger management, substance abuse
- Satisfaction survey across the agency for all aspects of what we do
- Understand each others' roles
- More staff
- Design a different service module for the baby boomers

Baby Blue Group

Keep:

- Dedicated staff
- Level of confidentiality and privacy that each family deserves
- Strong team morale
- Open communication between units
- High levels of customer service that our clients are accustomed to
- Strong networking between our department and community agencies
- Positive community image
- Accurate administration of policies

Change:

- Increased funding to provide services and referrals to meet the community's needs
- Discretionary funds to assist families in need, and provide "extras" for foster care children
- Funding and resources for families who keep relatives out of foster care
- Increase in staff to keep up with growing community and their needs
- Simplify and clarify program policies
- Electronic filing system
- Increased services and benefits for the elderly
- Streamline and simplify internal procedures (too many hands)
- More efficient training methods for new staff and refresher training for current staff
- Lose the "It's not my job" attitude and take initiative and responsibility

Green Group

Keep:

- Continue to hire people who are dedicated to the job
- Modernization of computerized data and stay up to date with technology
- Continue to strengthen partnerships with community partners
- High level of good customer service
- Continue to provide prevention services to keep kids out of foster care
- Lines of communication open amongst different units in the agency and continue respect and support of each unit's duties
- Continue our "supportive family" within the agency
- Continue to have a director in the agency who show us that she cares and values the staff

Change:

- Eliminate CSA/FAPT
- Our building (worker safety, breakroom, play area for kids, more client friendly)
- Change payscale to meet all agencies
- The need for clients to come to the agency (CommonHelp and Modernization)
- If foster care is needed, shorten the duration of care
- More funding for all agency services
- Electronic case files and administrative records

- More family involvement in decision-making process - empowering families to make the decisions
- Fully staffed and trained
- DSS can be the decision-maker in the case without outside influences (i.e. GAL, FAPT, attorneys, service providers)
- More consistency in Benefit Program Policy
- Agency inner-office social events (lunch/breakfast)
- Staff Development Day
- Lower caseloads for all programs
- More support staff
- Follow through with tasks/ideas
- Change the agency's perception with the public to remove past criticism
- Help education the community on resources available
- Praise workers for a job well done more consistently
- Define meeting structure



WARREN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES VISION November 27, 2012

Warren County Department of Social Services is a high performing agency committed to strengthening, supporting, and empowering families so that they can achieve their highest goals as part of the Warren County community. Our vision includes these outcomes:

Customer Service

We provide the highest level of customer service satisfaction through staff members that are well trained in community resources as well as agency programs which are provided in a state of the art facility for all citizens of Warren County.

Family Empowerment

We have a commitment to involving families in the decision making process, thus giving them a voice to identify their natural support systems, strengths, needs, and the services that will best help them.

Modernization

We embrace the innovations of technology to be more efficient, effective, responsive, and accessible which facilitates quality contact with those we serve.

Continuous Learning

We have a culture that values and promotes continuous training for our staff members and the citizens of Warren County so that we achieve positive outcomes using evidence-based practice and education.

Streamlined Policy and Procedure

We foster an efficient and effective work environment by actively improving and streamlining our processes and maintaining interoffice communication and collaboration.

Community Resources

We have a commitment to create informed working partnerships with community agencies and to carefully evaluate clients' needs in order to make appropriate referrals.

WARREN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES GAP ANALYSIS

Streamlined Policy and Procedure

We foster an efficient and effective work environment by actively improving and streamlining our processes and maintaining interoffice communication and collaboration.

GAP ANALYSIS

<p style="text-align: center;">STRENGTHS</p> <p>Some of the strengths that we have now to apply to this outcome include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We developed Handbook • Recognize need • Regular staff meeting • Require unit meetings • Open door policy • Meeting on HR processes 	<p style="text-align: center;">OPPORTUNITIES</p> <p>Some of the opportunities that are there to further this outcome include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the agenda for staff meetings • Take information from individual uni meetings to whole staff • Cross-functional in-service training • As staff is more experienced, there is less need for consultation • On-line resources - internal webpage
<p style="text-align: center;">WEAKNESSES</p> <p>Some of the weaknesses we have to address in order to achieve this outcome include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisors and lead workers have constant interruptions • Communication is still a problem • Need to standardize some HR practices • Budget process is not inclusive enough 	<p style="text-align: center;">THREATS</p> <p>If we don't address this outcome, what could happen?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chaos • Inefficient • Never have "the team" we strive to be

Community Resources

We have a commitment to create informed working partnerships with community agencies and to carefully evaluate clients' needs in order to make appropriate referrals

GAP ANALYSIS

<p style="text-align: center;">STRENGTHS</p> <p>Some of the strengths that we have now to apply to this outcome include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We currently have a referral list • Have good rapport with community partners • Dedicated staff • Individual staff members have reciprocal relationships 	<p style="text-align: center;">OPPORTUNITIES</p> <p>Some of the opportunities that are there to further this outcome include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automate on-line referral to community partners • Create a resource bank • Have a resource day "in-service" • Identify gaps and realign resources that are being duplicated
<p style="text-align: center;">WEAKNESSES</p> <p>Some of the weaknesses we have to address in order to achieve this outcome include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to keep referral list updated • Need to meet with community partners more often • Staff turnover • One-on-one relationships vs. Agency wide 	<p style="text-align: center;">THREATS</p> <p>If we don't address this outcome, what could happen?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missed resources/services • Lose credibility • Miss opportunity to best serve clients • Use DSS resources that could be spent on other things to close gaps in community

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone is not aware of all the different resources • Gaps in resources 	resources
---	-----------

Modernization

We embrace the innovations of technology to be more efficient, effective, responsive, and accessible which facilitates quality contact with those we serve.

GAP ANALYSIS

<p style="text-align: center;">STRENGTHS</p> <p>Some of the strengths that we have now to apply to this outcome include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CommonHelp website • Knowledgeable staff that know what systems are needed to be more efficient, effective, responsive, and accessible • Staff willing to learn about new systems 	<p style="text-align: center;">OPPORTUNITIES</p> <p>Some of the opportunities that are there to further this outcome include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing more laptops for telecommuting • Educate customers/clients on CommonHelp • Educating partner agencies re: CommonHelp • Create in-house trainers for staff
<p style="text-align: center;">WEAKNESSES</p> <p>Some of the weaknesses we have to address in order to achieve this outcome include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of date computers and software for staff • Lack of electronic filing system • Clients’ lack of knowledge about CommonHelp • Lack of availability for immediate training for new staff • Lack of refresher courses for current staff • Out-of-date County website 	<p style="text-align: center;">THREATS</p> <p>If we don’t address this outcome, what could happen?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If modernization is ignored we will be further behind other agencies and state expectations • Possibility of losing trained, experienced staff to other agencies

Family Empowerment

We have a commitment to involving families in the decision making process, thus giving them a voice to identify their natural support systems, strengths, needs, and the services that will best help them.

GAP ANALYSIS

<p style="text-align: center;">STRENGTHS</p> <p>Some of the strengths that we have now to apply to this outcome include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet face to face with families allowing them to identify their strengths and needs • Family Partnership Meetings • Include family when writing Service Plans • Face to face interviews to establish their eligibility • Meet face to face to establish goals (i.e. VIEW, IL kids) • Front desk engages clients to let them know their needs in order to point them in the 	<p style="text-align: center;">OPPORTUNITIES</p> <p>Some of the opportunities that are there to further this outcome include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting the families invested in services by giving them the opportunity to take responsibility • Face to face interviews allow workers to assess the family • Look at high caseloads and determine if more staff is needed • Review the current FAPT process and structure to determine if it is client friendly
---	---

right direction	
WEAKNESSES	THREATS
<p>Some of the weaknesses we have to address in order to achieve this outcome include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High caseloads don't allow ample time with each client • Are a few years behind with Family Partnership meetings • Lack of trained facilitators • Deadlines; time crunch with meeting with the clients • FAPT process - currently families do not have a voice during these meetings • Enabling clients (i.e. transportation, doctor appointments, counseling) 	<p>If we don't address this outcome, what could happen?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lose the ability to address the clients' needs when not meeting face to face (i.e. CommonHelp) • Lose the personal touch so that clients just become numbers • Workers lose their compassion for clients • Families don't become invested when they don't feel heard (FAPT) • Generational cycle will continue and will continue to create dependency versus independence

Customer Service

We provide the highest level of customer service satisfaction through staff members that are well trained in community resources as well as agency programs which are provided in a state of the art facility for all citizens of Warren County.

GAP ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
<p>Some of the strengths that we have now to apply to this outcome include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joan is very knowledgeable about agency programs and community resources • Seasoned workers • Phone system is user friendly and person to person contact is easy to achieve • All phone calls are returned within 24 hours • Bulletin boards in lobby/suggestion box • Staff buddy system • Ceall phones for services staff • Agency computer programs • CommonHelp 	<p>Some of the opportunities that are there to further this outcome include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross training • Buddy up seasoned and new workers more • Do mini-trainings for common problems • Cell phones keep workers more connected • Schedule regular customer service surveys • Utilize regional specialists for training
WEAKNESSES	THREATS
<p>Some of the weaknesses we have to address in order to achieve this outcome include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High staff turnover • Need second receptionist for quicker service • More training for desk staff about services and resources • A lot of new staff with lack of training and experience • High caseloads; slower processing with new staff • Lack of training available from State 	<p>If we don't address this outcome, what could happen?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bad reputation I the community • Can't retain staff or find qualified new staff • If you don't cross train at front desk, clients will be upset and frustrated • Loss of support from County administrators resulting in lack of funding • Worker burnout

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New policy/programs a lot to learn/train (i.e. CommonHelp) • Cell phone can make workers too available • Building - hard to access handicap entrance • Lack of CommonHep work stations and lack of room in lobby for more • Lack of professional communication 	
--	--

Continuous Learning

We have a culture that values and promotes continuous training for our staff members and the citizens of Warren County so that we achieve positive outcomes using evidence-based practice and education.

GAP ANALYSIS

<p style="text-align: center;">STRENGTHS</p> <p>Some of the strengths that we have now to apply to this outcome include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The workforce consists of a new generation that is familiar with different concepts such as evidence based practice • The experienced generation has knowledge of policy • Staff is motivated to keep up to date on policies and procedures 	<p style="text-align: center;">OPPORTUNITIES</p> <p>Some of the opportunities that are there to further this outcome include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology is available; we just need to be trained how to use it properly • Utilize CommonHelp to its full potential
<p style="text-align: center;">WEAKNESSES</p> <p>Some of the weaknesses we have to address in order to achieve this outcome include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State doesn't offer training • No official in-house training • Lack of knowledge of evidence based programs • Staff not fully trained in order to provide citizen training 	<p style="text-align: center;">THREATS</p> <p>If we don't address this outcome, what could happen?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having untrained and inexperienced staff • Citizens uneducated in the services provided by the County • Increased rate of charge backs

WARREN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Outcome: Streamlined Policy and Procedure

Goal 1: Develop an inclusive budget process

Goal 2: Develop and implement a structured approach to identify and prioritize the streamlining of agency processes

Goal 3: Develop and implement an on-line intra-agency communication tool to share information and provide consistent, timely messaging

Outcome: Community Resources

Goal 1: Create an automated referral that sends e-mails to the referral source

Goal 2: Plan and implement an annual in-service resource day for all staff

Outcome: Modernization

Goal 1: Implement and promote the proactive use of the CommonHelp system and realign our business processes to maximize the benefits of the system

Goal 2: Research, purchase, and implement an electronic filing system suitable for all units

Goal 3: Update and maintain agency website

Outcome: Family Empowerment

Goal 1: Encourage a family friendly and family supportive environment at the FAPT meetings to ensure that the families are invested and active in service planning

Goal 2: Pursue a process to make family partnership meetings more effective

Goal 3: Pursue a change in the way that the VIEW program is run so that once the client completes the program he or she is self-sufficient and does not repeat the program

Outcome: Customer Service

Goal 1: Develop and implement a customer service protocol

Goal 2: Rethink and redesign the reception area and front desk to ensure excellent customer service

Goal 3: Develop and implement a strategy to prevent staff burnout & to encourage positive morale

Outcome: Continuous Learning

Goal 1: Develop a focus group and strategy to address staff training, including the evaluation of issues and concerns and the exploration of methods that will promote continuous learning

Goal 2: Develop and implement a client education strategy

**WARREN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN
NOVEMBER 27, 2012**

Outcome: Streamlined Policy and Procedure

Goal 1: Develop an inclusive budget process

Champion: Betty G. Supporting Staff: Tammy, Sharon, Jazan, Mandy, Jessica

Key Tasks/Activities	Target Dates	Comments
1. Educate Management Team regarding the process of budget development	6/13	
2. Give each manager sections of the budget to research and submit proposals	Before 8/13	
3. Present research and proposals to the Management Team; discuss and prioritize as required	9/13	
4. Develop a consensus from these presentations regarding the budget	10/13	
5. Develop a budget for the fiscal year and submit to the County Administrator	1/14	

Goal 2: Develop and implement a structured approach to identify and prioritize the streamlining of agency processes

Champion: Mikki Supporting Staff: John, Jacki, Jackie, Bryan, Mimi

Key Tasks/Activities	Target Dates	Comments
1. Make process improvements a standing agenda item at the Management Team meetings	3/14	
2. Assign a workgroup to study and evaluate the processes that could/should be improved and to make recommendations to the Management Team	4/13	
3. Provide the workgroup with a charter that outlines issues to consider, possible outcomes, resources, and parameters	5/13	
4. Ask the workgroup to identify the top 3 priorities for improvement among agency processes and to present them to the Management Team	6/13	
5. Management Team will receive recommendations, develop improvement strategy, and assign workgroups to selected improvement priorities (including charters, staff selection, support, and a	7/13	

monitoring strategy)		
6. Management Team will monitor improvement strategy and provide assistance and guidance as needed, using the established timetable for improvements and its regular meetings	Ongoing	

Goal 3: Develop and implement an on-line intra-agency communication tool to share information and provide consistent, timely messaging

Champion: Mikki/Nalini Supporting Staff: Ellen and other staff as needed

Key Tasks/Activities	Target Dates	Comments
1. Get input from staff members about goals and needs and explore ways to develop this tool; consult with the County IT regarding intranet Issues to consider: What is private to us, posting anonymously, filters, security levels, meeting minutes, training, suggestions, brag ability Possible outcomes: Better communication, more input across all levels, consistent and timely messaging	3/13	
1. Develop on-line tool	4/13	
2. Present to the Management Team and facilitate conversation about how to implement the tool within the agency	6/13	
3. Implement tool	7/13	
4. Evaluate the tool and modify as needed	12/13	

Outcome: Community Resources

Goal 1: Create an automated referral that sends e-mails to the referral source

Champion: Sharon Supporting Staff: Carolyn, Cindy, Renee, Betty C., Melissa

Key Tasks/Activities	Target Dates	Comments
1. Create a work group to develop a single, standardized client data and referral form that can be sent by e-mail or that clients can take to the referral source that will also be available on a shared drive for the use of this agency	3/13	
2. Contact community resources to discuss plan of action and obtain feedback	4/13	
3. Create e-mail referral list with resource information	4/13	
4. Create automated template for referral and design the system	5/13	

5. Create client consent form for referral with client information and signature	6/13	
6. Bring to Management Team for approval	7/13	

Goal 2: Plan and implement an annual in-service resource day for all staff

Champion: Tammy Supporting Staff: Stephanie, Stacey, Tracey, Carolyn, Joan

Key Tasks/Activities	Target Dates	Comments
1. Schedule a date for the in-service day so that appropriate coverage and notification to clients can be arranged (Develop time slots for 15-20 minute presentations throughout day)	3/13	
2. Assign a workgroup to gather information regarding community resources	3/13	
3. Make a list of all known community resources and assign specific community resources to each workgroup member	4/13	
4. Gather information on community resources and ask for agency representation at a designated time slot to do a “quick” presentation	6/13	
5. Develop a resource list that is made available on shared documents	7/13	
6. Put together packets of resource lists that include brochures, information, and a contact person	9/13	
7. Put together an agenda with time slots and confirm the event date and time slot with agency resources	10/13	
8. Host event	1/14	

Outcome: Modernization

Goal 1: Implement and promote the proactive use of the CommonHelp system and realign our business processes to maximize the benefits of the system

Champion: Sharon/Jazan Supporting Staff: Intake and Support Units, Tammy, and others as appropriate

Key Tasks/Activities	Target Dates	Comments
1. Proceed with implementation of CommonHelp basics using resources that have been provided by the State (Intake and Support Units) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine goals for this stage of the implementation process 	12/12	In progress

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree to have a continuous improvement mindset and to adapt as we get feedback; set up times to meet to evaluate, and tweak (be aware that constant e-mails may not convey the tone effectively) • Rethink staffing (interviewing and processing) • Determine strategy for marketing of CommonHelp • Determine how to assist the client in applying for services and remove barriers as possible • Create implementation strategy (roles, responsibilities, timetable) • Supervisor will create a document to clarify how CommonHelp will be implemented, to include procedures, roles, and changes • Communicate how the procedures will work to the Management Team and staff members 		
2. Train support staff in the initial process flow for CommonHelp	3/13	
3. Convene a cross functional workgroup to look at how to use CommonHelp to streamline and modernize our work	5/13	
4. Consider/work on how to use CommonHelp to modernize and improve our business processes and create a project plan with phased implementation	6/13	
5. Present recommendations to Management Team, including phases	7/13	
6. Implement phases over time to realize full potential of CommonHelp	As scheduled	

Goal 2: Research, purchase, and implement an electronic filing system suitable for all units

Champion: Mikki Supporting Staff: Beth

Key Tasks/Activities	Target Dates	Comments
1. Research and evaluate electronic filing systems that are being used by neighboring social service departments	3/13	
2. Verify with State DSS to ensure program is allowed on state computers	4/13	
3. Evaluate agency needs for the electronic system against available systems and insure compatibility	4/13	
4. Determine cost of system and meet with required persons to complete purchase of system	7/13	
5. Obtain delivery and install the system	9/13	
6. Train staff in the use of the system	9/13	

Goal 3: Update and maintain agency website

Champion: Mikki/Nalini Supporting Staff: As needed

Key Tasks/Activities	Target Dates	Comments
1. Meet with the County representative to discuss what is allowable on the website and the DSS page might be improved	3/13	
2. Design and develop the new website, getting feedback as needed	4/13	
3. Continue to enhance the website to reflect the agency's programs and growth	Ongoing	

Outcome: Family Empowerment

Goal 1: Encourage a family friendly and family supportive environment at the FAPT meetings to ensure that the families are invested and active in service planning

Champion: Beth Supporting Staff: Tammy, Mandy, and FAPT case managers

Key Tasks/Activities	Target Dates	Comments
1. Suggest to CPMT that families complete a satisfaction survey after FAPT meetings to get feedback on how they perceive the meetings	12/12	done
2. Initiate a discussion at the CPMT level regarding family empowerment in the FAPT process and update DSS staff	12/12	In progress
3. Create an internal work group of staff members that present to FAPT to address ways to empower our families during the meetings	3/13	
4. Examine ways to achieve goals for family empowerment within the meetings, considering aspects such as self-concept, attitude, presentation skills, room layout, seating, and effective interventions in order to change the power dynamic of the FAPT meetings; determine roles and strategy	4/13	
5. Implement approaches and identify a regular time to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies	5/13	

Goal 2: Pursue a process to make family partnership meetings more effective

Champion: Tammy Supporting Staff: Mandy, Brenda N., Sarita, John, Holly, Bryan, Jessica

Key Tasks/Activities	Target Dates	Comments
----------------------	--------------	----------

1. Identify staff members who could become trained facilitators	12/12	done
2. Contact regional specialist to schedule facilitator training	1/13	?
3. Research/explore with other agencies how they conduct the meetings and attend other FP meetings to learn about them	3/13	
4. Establish a protocol to make meetings as family friendly as possible	4/13	
5. Train staff members in the policy and procedure	Ongoing	
6. Provide facilitator training	4/13	
7. Identify location, dates, times, and room set up for meetings	Ongoing	

Goal 3: Pursue a change in the way that the VIEW program is run so that once the client completes the program he or she is self-sufficient and does not repeat the program

Champion: Jazan Supporting Staff: Melissa, Nan (Regional Specialist), Extension Service, County Administrator

Key Tasks/Activities	Target Dates	Comments
1. Redesign the program to be more long term rather than short term	1/13	In progress
2. Contact other agencies to obtain information about their VIEW programs	3/13	
3. Develop partnerships with community businesses for internships and mentoring	5/13	
4. Investigate whether VEC could provide training in resume writing and interviewing	3/13	
5. Develop a support group and training sessions in which dinner and childcare will be provided	5/13	
6. Develop a brochure/flyer to explain all the benefits of the program	5/13	
7. Train internal staff regarding the VIEW program	3/13	

Outcome: Customer Service

Goal 1: Develop and implement a customer service protocol

Champion: Beth Supporting Staff: Betty G., Joan, Stephanie, Carolyn

Key Tasks/Activities	Target Dates	Comments
----------------------	--------------	----------

1. Establish a work group to develop a customer service protocol	3/13	
2. Establish a charter that identifies some of the issues that the protocol should address (i.e. client contact, staff safety, face to face contact, phone etiquette, coverage, difficult clients)	3/13	
3. Investigate other DSS departments to learn about/acquire their customer service policies and protocols	4/13	
4. Add the protocol to the Employee Handbook	5/13	
5. Train staff	5/13	
6. Review and update yearly	Yearly in May	

Goal 2: Rethink and redesign the reception area and front desk to ensure excellent customer service

Champion: Betty G. Supporting Staff: Worker from each unit

Key Tasks/Activities	Target Dates	Comments
1. Establish a work group	3/13	
2. Identify the problems that the front desk currently faces and the new challenges that may come about when CommonHelp is initiated	4/13	
3. Research the security requirements to ensure compliance	5/13	
4. Identify traffic flow throughout the month and at various times of the day	5/13	
5. Identify ways to eliminate the backlog at the window	5/13	
6. Develop a new layout for the lobby and secure resources for any changes or items that are needed	6/13	
7. Secure funding for a support supervisor	12/12	done
8. Initiate cross training on new procedures	5/13	

Goal 3: Develop and implement a strategy to prevent staff burnout and to encourage positive morale

Champion: Jazan Supporting Staff: Worker from each unit

Key Tasks/Activities	Target Dates	Comments
----------------------	--------------	----------

1. Form a committee to establish agency events for staff members	3/13	
2. Develop a charter for the work group	3/13	
3. Develop a plan/strategy for the events	3/13	
4. Identify a funding source for the activities	Ongoing	
5. Implement the agency events	Ongoing	

Outcome: Continuous Learning

Goal 1: Develop a focus group and strategy to address staff training, including the evaluation of issues and concerns and the exploration of methods that will promote continuous learning

Champion: Jessica Supporting Staff: Representatives from across agency

Key Tasks/Activities	Target Dates	Comments
1. Management Team will develop a charter for the training initiative that outlines purpose, needs, and the scope of work for the group. The initiative should include the development of individual training plans that can be incorporated in performance plans. (Consider including needs assessment, orientation and initial staff training, roles and responsibilities, and resources.)	3/13	
2. Identify participants from across the agency to serve on a workgroup	4/13	
3. Assess needs, including meetings with supervisors to learn about issues, concerns, and needs	5/13	
4. Identify solutions and potential resources	7/13	
6. Present recommendations to the Management Team	9/13	
7. Implement	10/13	
8. Re-evaluate	10/14	

Goal 2: Develop and implement a client education strategy

Champion: Tammy Supporting Staff: Representatives from Services and Eligibility

Key Tasks/Activities	Target Dates	Comments
1. Develop a workgroup to identify education needs	6/13	

2. Evaluate the biggest needs, especially focusing on those that create gaps in services	7/13	
3. Research community resources for assistance/availability	9/13	
4. Use workgroup to train staff on available resources to educate their clients	11/13	
5. Continue to monitor ongoing and new services available in the community in order to give clients the most up-to-date information	Ongoing	

Notes:

1. Target Date is the begin date
2. Clarify what it means to be “supporting staff.” Need to look at the strengths of the people that need to be on workgroups and give the champion flexibility to select members for workgroups that will be effective.
3. To be successful, must adopt a continuous improvement mindset; group has tendency to move on to next task and “resets” cause frustration.
4. Suggest a community resource bank may be a future goal

**WARREN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES VALUES
OUR “SIGNIFICANT SEVEN”**

1. Communication . . .

means that there is a respectful and effective exchange of thoughts and opinions in a timely manner to include both verbal and non-verbal communication and that we engage in active, open-minded listening and trust-building

2. Teamwork . . .

means that we support one another and step in when others need extra help; we perceive that the work is everyone’s work and we contribute to make the Department function as a whole

3. Dedication . . .

means coming to work each day with an attitude of wanting to do the best job that you can do and to be the best employee that you can be. It means having passion for the job, a sense of pride, and embracing the job. It means recognizing that you can’t do the job halfway and succeed so that you are willing to “be it” everyday. Dedication means that you have buy in to the vision, values, and goals that we have established.

4. Respect . . .

means having an appreciation of everyone’s uniqueness and a willingness to approach people on their own terms. It means having an appreciation of everyone’s job and their part in the whole and believing that every person is equally important.

5. Positive Attitude

means looking at the possibilities in each situation, focusing on strengths, and having a solution focus.

6. Adaptability . . .

means that we recognize that we are in the crisis business and that we must adjust to circumstances and take care of the situation; we focus on what it takes to get it done.

7. Forward Thinking . . .

means that we are proactive versus reactive and always look toward where we want to be in the future. We are oriented toward growth, seeing that there is always room for improvement and to do things better. We look for trends and use data to make decisions. We are not complacent and we do not resist change.

WARREN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES VALUES
OUR “SIGNIFICANT SEVEN”
with Actions that will Promote Them

1. Communication . . .

means that there is a respectful and effective exchange of thoughts and opinions in a timely manner to include both verbal and non-verbal communication and that we engage in active, open-minded listening and trust-building

To get more of it we will:

- Be willing to work at it
- Wipe the slate clean and start over from here with a commitment to this value
- Make sure that we have safe environments so that people can express what they think without being met with harsh words or hostility
- Consider how violations of confidentiality affect the workplace and respect the issues and conversations that need to stay confidential
- Insure that we create an open and accepting environment in our Management Team meetings so that we can discuss items without hostility or defensiveness
- Deal with conflicts and issues with the individual versus a group meeting
- Redefine the purpose and structure of the Management Team so that there is an understanding of what it is to be used for
- Reinforce the efforts of others when they communicate well or work through issues
- Use our knowledge of MBTI types to communicate and resolve conflict

2. Teamwork . . .

means that we support one another and step in when others need extra help; we perceive that the work is everyone’s work and we contribute to make the Department function as a whole

To get more of it we will:

- Think about issues and tasks holistically and not just how they affect us individually
- Stop saying “Eligibility side” and “Support Unit” and “Services side” and just say DSS
- Focus more on planning activities in the agency, building on the energy that we have for working together when there is a crisis
- Eliminate “It’s not my job”
- Consider possibilities for cross functional units where we treat clients more holistically and use all of our resources to wrap around the clients
- Maximize the use of CommonHelp as a platform for teamwork
- Have a better understanding of individual jobs and an appreciation of what is important to the success of each job so that people get what they need and we avoid conflict
- Express appreciation for what contributes to the team; praise people and each other

3. Dedication . . .

means coming to work each day with an attitude of wanting to do the best job that you can do and to be the best employee that you can be. It means having passion for the job, a sense of pride, and embracing the job. It means recognizing that you can’t do the job halfway and succeed so that you are willing to “be it” everyday. Dedication means that you have buy in to the vision, values, and goals that we have established.

To get more of it we will:

- Understand the nature of the business and appreciate how much you have to learn in order to be effective

- Make sure that we have continuous learning opportunities available so employees are always learning and thus becoming more invested and passionate about the work
- Be better prepared with a plan for new staff members to avoid creating frustration
- Provide praise to staff members
- Evaluate and improve our hiring processes to make sure people have a clear understanding of the work, such as including staff members in the interviewing process
- Recognize that culture does makes a difference and make it a place that people want to come to work
- Have humor with one another
- Be willing to deal with barriers and challenging situations to make it a good workplace
- Have an open door policy so that people feel that they can come to you

4. **Respect . . .**

means having an appreciation of everyone's uniqueness and a willingness to approach people on their own terms. It means having an appreciation of everyone's job and their part in the whole and believing that every person is equally important.

To get more of this, we will:

- Treat others as we want to be treated
- Have empathy for clients and help them maintain their dignity
- Understand our clients and engage them
- Recognize that each client is different and avoid generalizations and stereotypes
- Avoid being judgmental about the clients and talking down to them
- Be aware of where we are coming from and avoid projection
- Believe in peoples' ability to change
- Recognize that everyone's standards are not the same
- Keep focus on the real issues and not make things more difficult

5. **Positive Attitude**

means looking at the possibilities in each situation, focusing on strengths, and having a solution focus.

To get more of this, we will:

- Help one another do more of it
- Be willing to let people have their moments
- Be willing to say that you are sorry and start over sometimes
- Have a smile on your face
- Be open minded and avoid negativity
- Look at how we can change to get what we need versus hoping that the world will change; change yourself and how you react to others

6. **Adaptability . . .**

means that we recognize that we are in the crisis business and that we must adjust to circumstances and take care of the situation; we focus on what it takes to get it done.

To get more of this, we will:

- Focus on demonstrating adaptability as supervisors because we sent the tone and our staff members take direction from us
- Dial the drama down
- Reinforce adaptive behavior
- Use the strategic plan goals to help people learn new things and to exercise adaptability

- Give everyone a voice and make them feel that their opinions matter
- Look for opportunities to get clients' opinions of how we do our work

7. Forward Thinking . . .

means that we are proactive versus reactive and always look toward where we want to be in the future. We are oriented toward growth, seeing that there is always room for improvement and to do things better. We look for trends and use data to make decisions. We are not complacent and we do not resist change.

To get more of this we will:

- Value the planning process and follow through with it
- Have a plan
- consider unintended consequences
- Look not only at how a change affects us now but how it will affect us down the road
- Involve yourself at higher levels; pay attention to what the state is doing by going to meetings/training/going to professional associations
- Pay attention to what is going on in the community; look for significant changes in demographics/clients/issues
- Being proactive about hiring a more diverse workforce; what strengths will be important in the future even if not demanded now
- Being proactive with what we are doing now; help our clients be prepared for what might come with the policy changes
- Trying to address needs and gaps with proactive interventions (i.e. school physicals)
- Creating partnerships to address needs
- Look at how things affect our staffing (i.e. how retirements will affect us, etc.)



Next Steps

1. Tyler will send Session Report, which will contain Vision, Strategic Plan Goals, Strategic Plan Action Plans, and Values to Beth, who will distribute (Thursday)
2. The strategic planning group will review the goals and prioritize/time frame them; additionally, look at champion assignments, with Beth having the final decision on champions (December)
3. Communicate with the workforce regarding the strategic plan (vision, goals, and values) on December 5, 2012
 - Give them an overview and some type of document
 - Beth will communicate at the staff meeting
 - Strategic planning group will also have roles to show ownership and commitment
 - (Will need to work this out at the Management Team meeting)
 - Need to help them understand how important this is and what the time out of the office yielded
 - Help them feel like they are a part of this
 - Do it positively
 - Seek engagement in the process (explain their role)
 - Tell them what is next
4. Conduct an MBTI workshop with staff members and consider coupling that with something that will help them take on roles in the improvement/strategic planning process. We started with the top layer, but they are a part of change and we need buy in from all.
5. Management Team needs to get organized for strategic management (restructure, develop a charter for ourselves, look at our schedule). Hold this meeting in January 2013.
6. Implement.
7. Establish a schedule and process for the strategic planning work and acquire resources as needed.