

Open Hearts Healthy Minds Strong Communities



Strategic Plan 2021-2026



FAMILY SERVICE TORONTO
For People. For Change.



Closeout Report

June 24, 2026



Closeout Report on the 2021-2026 Strategic Plan

Executive Summary

The [2021–2026 Strategic Plan, Open Hearts, Healthy Minds, Strong Communities](#), guided Family Service Toronto’s (FST) work from April 1, 2021, to March 31, 2026. Approved by the Board June 17, 2020, the Plan articulated a clear intended impact: *individuals and families in Toronto experience greater stability and resilience in more just and supportive communities*. Guided by FST’s mission, vision and values and grounded in FST’s Theory of Change, the Plan focused on alleviating the root causes of poverty, marginalization, discrimination, and violence through integrated services, systems change, and social action.

Over five years, the Plan advanced 15 commitments across five strategic priority areas:

1. Strengthening the FST Team
2. Expanding Community Counselling and Mental Health Services
3. Reducing Gender-Based Violence
4. Enhancing Developmental Disability Services
5. Developing a Public Policy Capability

In addition, the commitments were supported by 15 foundational strategies - People, Culture, Systems, Funding, and Community. Plan progress was directed through the development of annual operational plans and managed through the quarterly reporting cycle and Strategic Plan Annual Updates.

Over the lifespan of the Plan, overall performance demonstrated meaningful impact, with several objectives exceeded, some partially met, and others deferred due to staffing or operational pressures.

The FY25–26 Q4 Operational Plan Report (final Q report on the 21-26 Plan) highlights FST’s continued progress in advancing the commitments of the 2021–2026 Strategic Plan while also identifying areas for continued development as the organization prepares to implement Embracing the Unknown: Strategic Plan 26-31. Across the five strategic priority areas, Q4 activities focused on strengthening service reach, enhancing collaboration and partnership, and investing in systems and people to support long-term sustainability.

Key Achievements: Strategic Priorities

1. Strengthening the FST Team

Commitments

Work more collaboratively towards shared goals
Strengthen internal communications
Share ownership and responsibility for performance

FST advanced internal communications, strengthened recruitment reach, and progressed organization-wide initiatives focused on accessibility, recognition, and wellness. New tools and platforms improved operational efficiency, data collection, and staff experience. Key accomplishments included improved job-posting circulation (including more diverse sourcing via LinkedIn and a new cross-posting resource spreadsheet), implementation of “EAP Fridays,” and expanded communication and engagement through PULSE. The FST Team also supported major organizational review milestones and increased clinical learning opportunities through dedicated training and consultation activities.

Communications and engagement were strengthened

- Volunteer Resources strengthened internal and external communications through the quarterly Volunteer Resources newsletter and Staff Update contributions; delivered a comprehensive social media campaign for National Volunteer Week and supported staff participation as volunteers at the Social Action conference.
- Cross-team engagement remained active, including participation in initiatives such as the Accessibility Working Group.
- PULSE (intranet) content increased cross-department visibility through Staff Updates, People and Culture posts, Health and Wellness updates, bulletin-board content, and team updates.
- “Tech Connect” continued as a PULSE feature through Q4; future development is planned for the 2026–27 fiscal year.

Recruitment sourcing diversified and job-posting distribution was improved

- Staff leveraged personal and professional networks to circulate job postings, with continued work to diversify recruitment sources; HR enlisted a volunteer to build a comprehensive job-posting resource spreadsheet to support broader cross-posting of openings.
- Increased use of LinkedIn improved both the diversity and the number of candidates sourced.

Culture, recognition, wellness, and accessibility initiatives were expanded

- “EAP Fridays” were implemented to promote employee wellness.
- Staff changes and achievements are now recognized through the monthly Staffing Changes/Recognition email.
- HR and Volunteers participated in a Lunch & Learn promoting National Accessibility Week.
- Management received training on staff recognition and provided input into the Recognition Program, reinforcing the importance of manager involvement.
- Leadership discussions emphasized building and sustaining a culture of trust and the role of managers in supporting it.

Organizational effectiveness and clinical practice supports were progressed

- FST meetings guidelines were developed and implemented to strengthen EDI approaches
- Major milestones of the organizational review were completed, including a new organizational structure intended to enable stronger collaboration and faster decision-making.
- Crisis Prevention Institute training agreements were signed with City Wide Commons partners to provide Crisis Prevention and Intervention training for staff across agencies.
- A clinical day was held for all CSP staff, focused on case consultations, clinical learning, and networking.
- The SCSS team provided education on elder abuse and supported case consultations for complex clinical situations involving trauma, stigmatization, and substance use navigation.

2. Expanding Community Counselling and Mental Health Services

Commitments

Rethink approach to counselling services

Double access to counselling services

Introduce more group counselling and virtual options

Counselling and mental health services advanced through strengthened partnerships, improved triage and prioritization processes. Work with Hard Feelings progressed toward a strategic alliance that aims to expand low-/lower-cost access and improve specialized referral pathways. Early outcome indicators show meaningful symptom reduction among clients screened using standardized tools, alongside a sharp decline in high-priority waitlist ratings.

Partnership activity increased (shared referrals, shared training, and shared space), while program diversification expanded access points for distinct communities (e.g., 2SLGBTQ+ groups, disability-focused counselling pathways).

Access, Triage, and Navigation Improvements

- New client appointments were prioritized using standardized screening (GAD7 and PHQ9) to support transparent, needs-based scheduling.
- Preliminary analysis (n=19) comparing screening at first contact vs. first assessment indicated a 59% decrease in symptoms.
- Among waitlisted clients screened at first contact, the share rated high priority declined from 19% to 2% as of March 27, 2024.
- Walk-In Counselling at Church Street was re-opened one afternoon/evening per week in April 2024; virtual services operated an additional three days per week.

Equity-Seeking Focus and Tailored Supports

- Service planning emphasized a focus on mental health counselling supports for equity-seeking communities, including building a deeper understanding of the range of issues presented and the modalities that can be effectively used to support clients.
- Equity-focused growth included new and developing mental health supports tailored for 2SLGBTQ+ communities, Queer newcomers/refugees, Spanish-speaking seniors, and people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, reflecting unique access barriers and needs.
- FST continued developing low-barrier service navigation for clients accessing counselling supports through the Toronto Community Crisis Response program, reflecting multiple intersectional needs.
- The newly initiated Transitional Housing and Support program in the VAW program attracted internal and external referrals, providing housing supports and referrals to complementary sectors (e.g., legal supports, food security).

Program Highlights

- Pathways to Counselling (PTC): Launched a new funded PTC program for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities through the DS Case Management program; PTC services continued overall.
- PTC Youth: Completed program development for a new PTC Youth program for clients aged 12-17 with Ontario Autism Program funding.
- Group programming: Started the Resourced and Resilient 2SLGBTQ+ group as part of a partnership with Women's College Hospital.
- Youth engagement: Ran a new Writing Club for 2STNB+ youth ages 16-29.
- Financial literacy: The VAW team partnered with the Canadian Foundation of Economic Education to offer monthly financial literacy webinars.

- Seniors programming: Delivered a Spanish-speaking seniors narrative group as a joint program between SCSS and Community Engagement.

3. Reducing Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Commitments

Challenge the status quo

Engage with men

Strengthen supports to women's shelters

Gender-based violence-related work advanced across three main areas: (1) improved access and responsiveness through the Violence Against Women (VAW) short-term support model, (2) strengthened and diversified community engagement and learning opportunities across multiple newcomer and language communities, and (3) continued development of prevention-focused programming for men, alongside sector collaboration and knowledge sharing. Quantified outcomes include a reduced time to first appointment for VAW intake (2–5 days) and strong participation in targeted workshops (10 clients in four financial literacy sessions; 11 clients in four family law sessions).

Service delivery improvements (VAW short-term support model)

- Short-term support was fully integrated into VAW team workflows, enabling faster response to initial requests.
- All clients calling for service were seen for a first appointment within 2–5 days, indicating improved access and triage capacity.
- When a waitlist support group showed limited uptake, programming was adapted toward higher-demand, practical workshops (financial literacy and family law).

Community Engagement and learning events

- Community-based learning and peer-led engagement advanced GBV awareness and leadership, including an International Women's Day event with the Arabic community that combined workshops, networking, and peer support.
- An Afghan community event facilitated cross-gender discussion about GBV and Canadian customs; program participants—including men—were reported to have actively supported and advocated during the dialogue.
- Men's wellness groups were initiated within Community Engagement programming with focus communities including Nigerian and Afghan participants.

- Some senior/language groups (Spanish-speaking and Afghan Seniors – SALC) integrated men and women in the same group to broaden learning opportunities and dialogue.
- Work continued with an Indigenous-serving organization to develop workshops for newcomers on Truth and Reconciliation; planning and learning to support an Indigenous Learning event progressed, with increased understanding of Nation-to-Nation considerations.

4. Enhancing Developmental Disability Services

Commitments

Refine the Passport model

Strengthen program accountability

Provide stewardship for the evolution of individualized account programs

Developmental Disability Services advanced priority work across communications, service quality, case management system change, partnerships, and operational effectiveness within the Passport program. Key accomplishments included expanded counselling capacity through the Pathways to Counselling program, progress in data and reporting (Power BI and a Passport KPI dashboard), and continued service improvement work to strengthen controls and client experience. FST became an active leader in DS case management system change to improve service quality and client experience. FST was selected by MCCSS as the Case Management Lead agency for the Toronto region. Enhancements to PassportONE, improved accountability mechanisms, and knowledge dissemination activities contributed to improved client experience and positioned FST as a steward and innovator within the developmental services sector.

Client communications and accessibility

- Work continued to improve clarity and accessibility of client-facing materials, including review of Passport service agreements and forms for plain language and simplicity.
- New Passport communication tools (including English and French brochures) supported consistent messaging to recipients and stakeholders.
- An accessibility subcommittee (including people with lived experience) reviewed the website and provided recommendations to leadership for implementation.
- Options Children hosted workshops on funding, camps, and service navigation, with plans to increase offerings.

Service model development (case management, aftercare, and peer support)

- Work progressed on short-term case management and aftercare supports to better serve clients beyond crisis response and self-advocacy capacity.

- Planned/initiated components included development of program guidelines (Options and PDP), and an aftercare pilot for discharged case management clients.
- Options Children expanded service navigation access for non-registered clients and exceeded program targets as service offerings widened. Service reach increased with education/presentation activity that reached 568 participants.

Passport program operations and continuous improvement

- Program guidance updates were implemented (new Passport guidelines and approval directions), supported by updates to e-claim forms and stakeholder training on changes.
- Dedicated staffing was added for claims-focused work to help expedite payments and reduce processing time.
- Continuous service improvement activities were established (e.g., misuse-of-funds guidance, best practices working group, draft Passport procedures manual, and a draft common client satisfaction measurement tool).
- Reported outcomes included increased utilization (+3%), increased funds administered (+\$50M), and absorption of an 8% client load increase with stable reimbursement processing times and improved risk management for misuse-of-funds events.
- Overpayment tracking and reporting were enhanced within CRM to improve monitoring and repayment follow-up once deployed.

Partnerships and sector engagement

- Partnership development remained a core strategy, including collaboration across Passport agencies and PassportONE and broader sector engagement through OPAN workplans.
- A joint Passport agency/PassportONE claims management training module (invoices and receipts) was delivered in February 2024 with 130 participants.
- Collaboration with Community Living Toronto continued to improve the quality of web submissions and identify potential enhancements in MyDirectPlan and the P1 platform, reducing rework and improving efficiency.
- A partnership with Ontario Works was developed to identify individuals needing Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) screening and referral; a pilot is planned at the Yorkgate OW/ODSP office with FST staff support.
- Children's team knowledge-sharing included external training delivery (FIT programs, ministry representatives, and partners) and a presentation at the Ontario Association of Dual Diagnosis conference on peer resource development.

- The Coordinated Service Planning (CSP) program began taking Urgent Response cases associated with the Ontario Autism Project, extending service responsiveness for higher-need situations.

Data, reporting, and technology enablement

- Power BI was implemented and initial reporting development began, supporting more consistent performance monitoring.
- A Passport KPI dashboard was developed under the OPAN workplan to support system-level monitoring and evaluation of Passport performance.
- Enhanced CRM reporting was initiated for overpayment tracking to strengthen financial controls and oversight.

Workforce Capacity and Training

- Staff capacity building continued through training and targeted role development, including increased staffing resources within the Passport program.
- An Occupational Therapist joined the Children's team as a volunteer consultant to strengthen clinical input.
- Work continued to identify barriers to counselling access for individuals with developmental disabilities and to strengthen internal partnerships among counsellors to broaden eligibility and reach (beyond single-demographic pathways).

Pathways to Counselling

The joint Developmental Services, Mental Health Counselling, and Gender-Based program (Pathways to Counselling) expanded by adding counsellor capacity for individuals living with a developmental disability who requested mental health counselling. A monthly community of practice supported shared learning across teams, identification of common challenges, collaborative problem-solving, and improvements to administrative processes.

Housing initiative (APSW)

Work progressed on the MCCSS APSW Housing Project. All three phases were completed on schedule and on budget. Contract positions ended and completion of the eligibility assessments were transferred to FST staff.

5. Developing a Public Policy Capability

Commitments

Renew our policy, advocacy and community networks

Develop new calls for action and reform

Strengthen connections between our public policy capability and our programs

FST strengthened a lived-expertise-centred approach to program and policy development through research, community conversations, coalition-building, and targeted advocacy. Work across the SSHRC and Localizing Canada's Commitments to Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) projects strengthened community-based evidence generation and knowledge mobilization, while the CERB Amnesty Campaign supported lived experience advocacy that contributed to the reversal of claw backs to the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) for low-income seniors. Governance and infrastructure for Campaign 2000 was strengthened and national engagement to support poverty reduction and social development objectives were expanded. These efforts elevated FST's impact and reinforced its leadership in addressing systemic causes of poverty and inequality.

Lived expertise strengthened the evidence base for policy influence

- Program and policy development efforts explicitly centered client and community lived expertise through SSHRC and SDG grant work.
- SDG community conversations prioritized local and Indigenous sources of knowledge to inform poverty reduction approaches.
- Documented engagement included meetings with First Nations individuals in Whitehorse and Carcross First Nation, and with Inuit women in Ottawa's Vanier District and in Iqaluit, Nunavut, who had experienced gender-based violence; learnings informed core messaging where appropriate.

Foundational research deliverables positioned the organization for gap analysis and targeted engagement

- Completed SDG project deliverables that included foundational SDG research assets (literature review, policy map, environmental scan, community-based research framework) and the creation of a national project Advisory Committee to enable a gap analysis on exclusion from policy-making and knowledge development.
- Developed a list of key informant interviews and an approach/process for gap analysis.

Advocacy and knowledge mobilization contributed to tangible policy outcomes

- Gathering data and stories from diverse people living in poverty to support federal advocacy through the CERB Amnesty Campaign; reported outcome included reversal of hundreds of thousands of dollars in GIS claw backs impacting low-income seniors.
- Developed shared advocacy messaging for Canada's participation at the United Nations 2nd World Summit for Social Development (WSSD2); Senior Director, Strategy and Innovation presented at WSSD2 in November 2025.
- Established the WSSD People's Report Network for Canada (35 collaborators) to research and release the WSSD2 People's Report 2025, alongside a coordinated social media release strategy.
- With partners, released a briefing note on poverty eradication, launched a "take action" petition to end poverty, and delivered a national dialogue on poverty featuring panelists with diverse lived expertise.

Coalition participation expanded reach and diversified leadership

- Hosted three in-person coalition meetings supporting member organization engagement in national and Ontario public policy development activities.
- One national convening engaged 90 organizations, with 45 participating on a working group committee; several had not previously worked together.
- Expanded and coordinated national coalition engagement in poverty eradication work (e.g., 90 organizations mobilized; 45 on a working group; 350+ attendees at a national dialogue on poverty) and strengthened Campaign 2000 structures for ongoing participation.
- Campaign 2000 network diversification continued, with Nunavut, Newfoundland, and Yukon playing more active steering committee roles.
- Campaign 2000 deepened local leadership with Toronto partners engaged in regular reporting on child and family poverty, as well as hosting an in-person dialogue with Toronto agencies for the National Advisory Committee on Poverty with over 55 agencies participating.
- Delivered report card launch events annually in Ottawa, and 2024–2025 in Toronto and Ottawa, presenting Ontario, Toronto, National, and Nunavut report card findings.
- Convened and participated in cross-sector, invite-only national convening on best practices for supporting people labeled with intellectual/developmental disabilities who experienced sexual violence (virtual; spring 2022).

Internal research, evaluation, and governance infrastructure strengthened

- City-wide Research Leadership group collaboration (e.g., social identity data) supported more inclusive research/evaluation practices, including sharing findings in accessible formats via the organization's website.

- Initiated a community of practice across Social Action Research and Research & Evaluation functions to strengthen horizontality in policy and engagement work.

Key Achievements: Foundational Strategies

1. People

Strategies

We will cultivate the skills that allow each of us to be more agile and adaptive

We will support professional development and personal growth

We will hold one another accountable for our mission, impact and actions

FST advanced leadership development, wellness and equity. Initiatives focused on strengthening staff development pathways, modernizing leadership capabilities, and improving organizational systems that support performance and succession planning. Key progress included enhancements to the Volunteer Program (development opportunities and improved communications), expanded leadership orientation tied to modernized core competencies (including Equity, Diversity and Inclusion), implementation of a new HRIS to support succession planning, high-participation wellness programming, and a redesigned performance management and compensation approach that shifted from “pay for performance” to a merit increase model.

Volunteer Program: development pathway and stronger communications

- Enhanced staff development through the Volunteer Program, positioning volunteering as a structured development pathway.
- Developed internal and external communications for the program, including quarterly newsletters with program updates and volunteer recognition.
- Increased use of social media to promote the program and attract new volunteers.

Modernized core competencies: EDI integration and manager enablement

- Managers received updates (December 2022) on the Developmental Services Workforce Initiative: Modernizing the Core Competencies.
- Valuing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) was established as a core competency with a four-stage growth model.
- Shared tools and modules for competency-based self-assessment, coaching, and behaviour-based interviews.

- Reinforced competencies through ongoing HR communications and webinars; additional management training was provided through a consultant and Developmental Services sector resources.
- Expanded the Leadership Orientation and Development program, including goal setting and alignment to the modernized core competencies.

Performance management: streamlined process and compensation model reset

- Revised performance management following consultation with leadership; streamlined the process based on feedback.
- Shifted compensation from a pay-for-performance model back to a merit increase model.
- Implemented a revised performance appraisal model, core competencies, and compensation approach for all leadership roles.

Employee wellness: expanded programming

- Expanded the Wellness Program and strengthened collaboration with Citywide Commons, including first virtual yoga sessions.
- Wellness sessions achieved a 99% overall satisfaction rate among participants.

2. Culture

Strategies

We will reward innovation that responds to the needs of our communities.

We will strengthen our ability to collaborate to achieve our shared goals and learn from our shortcomings and failures.

We will stand up as a leader in the community sector to better support our partners and beneficiaries.

FST advanced a coordinated culture and engagement agenda by translating Employee Engagement Work Group (EEWG) recommendations into an implementation plan and expanding communication, onboarding, and recognition practices. Notable progress included launching/strengthening staff touchpoints (townhalls and weekly updates), formalizing orientation and cross-role learning, and delivering a multi-part Recognition Program supported by a comprehensive Recognition Policy.

EEWG recommendations moved into implementation expanding connection mechanisms

Prioritized EEWG work plan recommendations and developed an implementation plan spanning culture definition, communication cadence, onboarding, and HR updates. Established/implemented semi-annual all-staff townhalls and a weekly staff update email to improve consistency and transparency.

Capability-building and cross-role awareness supported

Implemented FST Connect to enable peer learning across roles and implemented a New Staff Orientation program to increase understanding of FST areas.

Recognition practices evolved, strengthened and formalized

Delivered a Recognition Program with colleague recognition, on-the-spot awards, and the FST Awards; a recognition task force planned and delivered the annual recognition event. Employee Engagement Team reviewed the recognition program; a new Charissa Tucker Award was developed and processed, with awards presented May 26, 2026.

Staff-led events and wellness programming increased participation

Staff planned and presented major events (Townhall, Winter Solstice) and quarterly wellness sessions, reinforcing collaboration through cross-organizational teams.

Talent pipeline partnership produced hires and financial benefit

Collaboration with Newcomer Women resulted in 14 Client Payment Administrators hired through a one-day event, described as financially beneficial.

Labour relations

Milestone achieved - concluded collective agreement negotiations, securing ratification of a 3-year agreement before expiry with a 98% approval vote.

Reported full participation in joint union-management harassment and discrimination learning and refresh sessions.

3. Systems

Strategies

We will invest in our Human Resources (HR) systems and supports.

We will invest in our business platforms to create more efficient and intuitive systems.

We will implement metrics that allow us to better evaluate our impact and improve our services.

FST advanced client service automation, strengthened data and outcome measurement capabilities, improved IT service management, and progressed major enterprise platform modernization. Key deliverables included deployment and support of the Electronic Client Record System (ECRS), launch of the cloud-based PassportONE system, completion of an online intake form integrated with TREAT, automation of clinical assessment outreach (PHQ-9 and GAD-7), centralization of internal and external IT requests in SysAid, and continued upgrades to infrastructure

and end-user devices. The organization also initiated transition planning for core administrative platforms (ERP and HRIS/Payroll), expanded cybersecurity readiness through staff training and multi-factor authentication, and reinforced quality and governance through accreditation renewal and integration of performance and quality improvement (PQI) into strategic planning.

Client Systems and Service Automation (ECRS and TREAT)

- Deployed and managed the new Electronic Client Record System (ECRS) with full user support and external hosting.
- Completed design of an online intake form integrated with TREAT to automate intake: clients submit information online, and submissions automatically create or update the corresponding client file in TREAT—reducing manual data entry for staff.
- Initiated work on additional integrated online forms with TREAT to automate administration of clinical assessments and strengthen outcome measurement.
- Developed an online tool integrated with TREAT to streamline outcome-based clinical assessments and improve consistency and timeliness of data collection.
- Implemented automated email triggers in TREAT to send PHQ-9 and GAD-7 assessments without manual staff steps.

Data, BI, and Outcome Measurement

- Tech and BI partnered with service delivery teams to establish and implement an outcome measurement framework.
- Launched a new target-setting process to clarify meaningful indicators and improve performance management and reporting.
- Planned integration of program evaluation outcomes, metrics, and recommendations into existing reporting processes to support continuous service improvement.

IT Operations, Infrastructure Modernization, and User Support

- Developed a Technology Plan outlining future information management strategies, infrastructure changes, and an operating model for user support; recommendations included future staffing and project priorities.
- Completed Windows operating system upgrades and replaced aging laptops with newer devices preinstalled with Windows 11.

Service Management and Support Visibility (SysAid)

- Integrated the PassportONE helpdesk email inbox into the SysAid ticketing system, enabling centralized tracking of internal and external IT requests.

- Improved ability to monitor response and resolution times and analyze the type and volume of requests—supporting targeted strategies to increase efficiency and reduce recurring issues for both FST and Passport Agencies.

Enterprise Platforms (ERP and PassportONE)

- Invested in a cloud-based Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to replace MS Dynamics Great Plains (GP), with goals to optimize operational efficiency and enhance reporting for data-informed decision-making.
- Signed a Statement of Work with BDO to upgrade from Dynamics GP to Dynamics 365 Business Central, including enhanced integration with the PassportONE (PP1) system.
- Launched the cloud-based PassportONE system, completing a major two-year project.
- MCCSS approved costs associated with PP1 CRM integration; the project kicked off in April 2026.
- Implemented eSignature in PassportONE (December 2025) to improve Passport client onboarding; all Passport agencies began using the tool for service agreements in April 2026.

Administrative Systems (HRIS/Payroll and Finance)

- Determined that enhancing current HR/Payroll and Finance systems would not meet required functionality and reporting needs; initiated needs analysis and planning for replacement systems.
- Completed evaluation and selection of a new HRIS and payroll platform, ensuring capabilities for employee experience, applicant tracking, performance management, and reporting; selection criteria included features intended to reduce bias and discrimination in hiring and performance management.
- Signed a contract with ADP for Workforce Now; the new HRIS (ADP / “MoneyPenny”) launched on February 14, 2025, with training delivered in phases (Phase 1 completed by fiscal year-end).
- Moved recruitment to the new platform to simplify candidate applications; expanded online learning modules to increase professional development opportunities for staff.

Security, Compliance, and Quality Governance

- Completed cybersecurity training for more than 200 staff and deployed multi-factor authentication organization-wide.
- Completed formal accreditation renewal with the Council on Accreditation (COA) to ensure continued alignment with high standards.
- Developed performance and quality improvements (PQI) embedded in the strategic planning process, supported by a consultant and broad input from staff, partners, and service users.

Impact and Business Value

- **Improved client and staff experience:** online intake and eSignature reduce friction and turnaround time while enabling clients to complete steps remotely.
- **Reduced administrative burden:** automated creation/updating of client files in TREAT and automated assessment outreach decrease manual data entry and repetitive tasks.
- **Stronger measurement and reporting:** outcome framework, target-setting, and standardized assessment tooling improve consistency and enable more meaningful performance insights.
- **More effective support operations:** centralized ticketing increases visibility into demand, supports service-level management, and enables root-cause reduction of recurring issues.
- **Modernized core platforms:** ERP and HRIS modernization strengthens scalability, integration, and data quality needed for decision-making.
- **Risk reduction and assurance:** MFA, cybersecurity training, and accreditation renewal strengthen organizational controls, compliance posture, and service quality.

4. Funding

Strategies

We will aggressively pursue opportunities that allow us to diversify and increase our revenues.

We will manage our assets to support and expand our services.

We will introduce new social enterprise models that help to expand our service offering.

FST advanced several funding, facilities, and partnership initiatives centered on 355 Church Street and Sterling Road. The most significant outcome was City Council approval and a \$1.5M transfer (late December 2025) to support development of a Crisis Training Centre in partnership with Gerstein Crisis Centre; lease finalization is ongoing with construction anticipated to begin in late spring 2026. FST completed the accessibility-aligned lobby renovations for installation of the Welcome Desk to service FST and the Citywide Commons. Space utilization analysis using Skedda allowed for increased rental of FST space on the third floor and meeting room rental pricing was validated through a downtown market scan. HR and Finance consulting support to the Citywide Commons was provided through early spring 2026.

Crisis Training Centre (355 Church Street, 4th Floor)

FST partnered with Gerstein Crisis Centre to submit a joint proposal (May 2025) to the City of Toronto to develop a Crisis Training Centre on the fourth floor of 355 Church Street. Key pre-construction milestones were completed, including a project plan, draft floor plan, and costing, along with submissions supporting a funding agreement and lease. City Council approved the project and transferred \$1.5M to FST in late December 2025. Lease negotiations continued at quarter end; construction is anticipated to begin in late spring 2026. This is a cross-over initiative with the foundational strategy Community.

Citywide Commons

Monthly meetings with Executive Directors of the Citywide Commons continued to advance coordination across programs, funding opportunities, public policy priorities, and a shared approach to reopening plans following COVID.

Commons Transition (Café Space at 355 Church Street)

The Café space at 355 Church Street was transitioned to a Commons space. A business model review was conducted to identify opportunities to better align and leverage the FST and Hard Feelings models.

Welcome Desk (Front of House Improvements)

Construction, renovations, and modifications for the Welcome Desk at 355 Church Street were completed, including work to address AODA requirements. The Welcome Desk was launched in 2024 and enhancements were finalized during 2025.

Space Optimization (355 Church Street and Sterling Road)

FST continued to optimize space at 355 Church Street and Sterling Road to drive operational efficiencies and/or revenue. Following implementation of Skedda (November 2023), space utilization analysis supported additional third-floor space at 355 Church Street being rented to Newcomer Women (move-in: February 2024). In addition, Newcomer Women's Services and Madison moved into FST offices at Sterling Road.

Meeting Rooms - Rentals (355 Church Street)

FST completed a downtown market analysis of meeting room rental rates. Results confirmed that FST's rates are within competitors' ranges.

Shared Services Citywide Commons: HR and Finance Consulting Support

Through the partnership with City Wide Commons, FST provided HR and Finance consulting services to support their collective bargaining process. Services began in April 2025 and continued through early spring 2026.

5. Community

Strategies

We will ensure that a community development ethos is at the heart of our services.

We will work to engage our service users and communities to ensure that our services are responsive and appropriate.

We will support individuals and communities to take action on the issues that matter to them.

FST strengthened community engagement and amplified FST's policy and program impact through improved communications, deeper inclusion of people with lived expertise, and expanded partnership delivery. Key outcomes included a policy win supporting CERB Amnesty, the launch of the SDGs Localizing Poverty Indicator Framework report (with cross-country lived-expertise participation), expanded community events reach through multilingual International Women's Day programming, and capacity building across programs (20 staff trained in communications/media relations). Work also advanced on a Campaign 2000 website refresh, an SDGs project website launch, and an organizational strategic communications framework.

Communications and Visibility

- Developed and began implementing a communications strategy to facilitate community engagement with FST's work, with a focus on Campaign 2000.
- Maintained regular monthly newsletters and strengthened social media dissemination, contributing to increased engagement with Campaign 2000.
- Advanced digital modernization initiatives, including a Campaign 2000 website refresh and an SDGs project website launch.
- Completed internal and external communications audits (including AODA context) and secured SLT (Senior Leadership Team) approval of a strategic communications framework for 2024–25 (key messages, style guide, editorial calendar, tactics/channels).
- Expanded internal communications through the new intranet (PULSE), supporting cross-organizational information flow and staff engagement.
- Built media readiness: trained 20 staff across program areas in communications/media relations and prepared talking points in response to THRIVE report findings (no media inquiries received).

Policy, Research and Knowledge Mobilization

- Co-authored and released the first annual national poverty report card on disability poverty with Disability Without Poverty (released June 2023).

- Launched the SDGs project’s *Localizing Poverty Indicator Framework* report (February 26, 2024), bringing together steering/advisory committee members, local host organizations, and a panel of people with lived expertise from across Canada.

Service Design, Client Voice and Inclusion

- Developed and piloted diverse approaches to incorporate input from people with developmental disabilities into program development and evaluation.
- Assessed the effectiveness of pandemic-era service adaptations (virtual walk-in and phone services) through client experience and access lens.
- Used client engagement surveys and service-user interviews to strengthen participation and inclusion; included Passport agency input to inform Passport ONE.

Community Engagement and Partnerships

- Co-planned and facilitated multilingual International Women’s Day events, including in-house and partner-hosted programming across Arabic, Tamil, and Spanish-speaking communities with excellent reach:

In-house FST event	~50 registered clients
Arabic-speaking, with partners	~135 participants; partnered with 8 organizations
Tamil-speaking	41 participants
Spanish-speaking, with partners	250 participants; partnered with 10 agencies

- Secured confirmation of a New Horizons Grant for the SALC Newcomer Seniors program to develop narrative-therapy-based books for Afghan and Spanish-speaking communities.

Overall Assessment and Looking Ahead

The work achieved during the life of the 21-26 Strategic Plan reflected meaningful progress, adaptive responses to challenges, and strategic investments in people, systems, and partnerships. Overall achievement levels varied, reflecting the complexity of systems change, sector-wide constraints, and external pressures experienced during the Plan period. Nevertheless, the 2021–2026 Strategic Plan significantly strengthened FST’s organizational foundation, expanded its service reach and innovation capacity, and elevated its role as a thought leader and advocate within Toronto and beyond.

The lessons learned, infrastructure built, and partnerships formed through the course of the 21-26 Strategic Plan provide a strong platform for the 2026–2031 Strategic Plan: Embracing the Unknown, supporting deeper impact, greater integration, and sustained organizational resilience.

Source Reports

[Family Service Toronto FY21-22 Q4 Service, Financial and Risk Report](#)

[Family Service Toronto FY22-23 Q4 Service, Financial and Risk Report](#)

[Family Service Toronto FY23-24 Q4 Service, Financial and Risk Report](#)

[Family Service Toronto FY24-25 Q4 Service, Financial and Risk Report](#)

[Family Service Toronto FY25-26 Q4 Service, Financial and Risk Report](#)