



Oklahoma Association of Youth Services

The
Oklahoma Association of
Youth Services

Successful Futures

FY 2024 Q-2 Report

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Evaluation Plan	5
Where We Are.....	5
Data and Impact Assessment.....	6
Data Highlights for Counties with Populations < 50,000.....	7
Analysis of the data provided.....	7
Figure 1	8
Table 1.....	9
Overall Youth Engagement	9
Table 2.....	11
Figure 2.....	11
Spotlight on Youth.....	13
Key Considerations.....	17
Moving Forward	18
Conclusion.....	19

Executive Summary

Greetings All,

The executive report on the Successful Futures Initiative for the recent quarter showcases significant achievements in providing essential services to children and youth from third through eighth grade. These services encompass life skills, nutrition, physical activity, character education, and tobacco prevention/cessation, and they have seen substantial progress driven by the initiative's participating contractors. Utilizing a variety of sites to increase accessibility, such as schools, libraries, faith-based organizations, and community sites, the initiative has effectively reached and positively impacted its target audience.

At the heart of the initiative's approach is the incorporation of the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets, which plays a fundamental role in guiding the delivery of services. This framework ensures that the program's offerings are comprehensive and profoundly beneficial, contributing significantly to the holistic development of the children and youth involved.

This report highlights the collaborative efforts and milestones achieved by the initiative, underscoring the importance of a united approach to making a difference. The positive response from the communities involved underlines the effectiveness of the initiative and the vital role that social-emotional education and development play in preparing young individuals for their futures.

The momentum and positive outcomes observed in the first quarter of the year for the Successful Futures Initiative were further solidified in the second quarter, illustrating the program's enduring impact, and expanded scope. This quarter marked a significant increase in student engagement and the initiative's penetration into a wider variety of communities. This growth stems from the concerted efforts of participating contractors who have adeptly utilized multiple community venues to enhance the initiative's accessibility. The uptick in enrollments and active engagement during this quarter signals the initiative's escalating relevance and appeal to the children and youth it serves.

Notably, the second quarter saw substantial improvements in the quality of services provided by the Successful Futures Initiative. These enhancements were not only driven by external feedback but by a robust internal process of self-regulation and continuous improvement. Weekly technical assistance calls with the Oklahoma Association of Youth Services (OAYS) office, collaborative interactions with an external evaluator, and active teaming among contractors have been pivotal in refining program offerings. This collective approach has fostered innovation, particularly in life skills and character education, leading to more engaging and impactful experiences for students. The initiative's dedication to following its original overarching goals and objectives has been central to guiding these improvements, ensuring that services remain both comprehensive and effective.

The quarter also witnessed a surge in community support for the Successful Futures Initiative. The strengthening of partnerships with schools, libraries, faith-based organizations, and other community groups has not only broadened the initiative's reach but also enriched its service delivery. These deepened collaborations have paved the way for a more integrated service model, providing participants with holistic and transformative experiences. The community's enthusiastic engagement, coupled with the visible positive outcomes in student development, reaffirms the initiative's vital contribution to the holistic growth of young people.

These advancements in the second quarter build upon the foundation laid in the early stages of the initiative, propelling it towards greater achievements and reach. Through internal reflection, collaboration, and the pursuit of excellence, the Successful Futures Initiative continues to demonstrate its commitment to making a meaningful difference in the lives of children and youth by offering comprehensive educational and developmental services.

These developments in the second quarter not only consolidate the gains made in the earlier phases of the initiative but also set a strong foundation for future growth and success. The Successful Futures Initiative's ability to demonstrate sustained progress and adaptability is early evidence of its enduring commitment to enhancing the lives of young people through comprehensive educational and developmental services. Gratitude is extended to all team members, partners, and especially the participating children, youth, and their families, whose support and engagement are fundamental to the initiative's success. The initiative remains dedicated to delivering programs that foster the well-being and development of young people.

As we move forward, the Successful Futures Initiative remains dedicated to nurturing the potential within each young individual, reinforcing our commitment to their growth and success in an ever-evolving world.

With confident hope and resilient optimism!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P.J. Messiah". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dr. Peter John A. Messiah
Executive Director/CEO
Oklahoma Association of Youth Services

Evaluation Plan

The Successful Futures Initiative has significantly advanced its evaluation strategy by implementing Smartsheet for data submission from contracted coordinators. This initiative, developed in collaboration between the Oklahoma Association of Youth Services (OAYS) and the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences, introduces a robust preliminary data-collection tool. Designed to be intuitive yet comprehensive, it gathers essential data across all contracted agencies, providing insights into the scope, frequency, and types of services delivered.

The introduction of this tool marks a substantial increase in data submissions, reflecting its efficiency and the proactive involvement of contractors. Their feedback has been key in refining the tool, optimizing the data collection process, and enhancing the relevancy of metrics. This ongoing refinement process, supported by OAYS administration and the external evaluator, aims to achieve a more streamlined and flexible reporting system.

It's important to note that the comprehensive data collection began after the start of Q-2, so the insights from this new system are not included in the current report. However, it is anticipated that the program will integrate detailed metrics into Q-3 reports, leveraging the full capabilities of this system for more informed decision-making.

This strategic enhancement in the evaluation process emphasizes the program's commitment to leveraging data for continuous improvement and impact assessment. By focusing on a more refined, collaborative approach to data analysis, the Successful Futures Initiative is setting a precedent for evidence-based program management and reporting.

Where We Are

Agency	Location	Service Areas (County)
Crossroads YFS	1333 West Main, Norman, OK 73069	Cleveland
Frontline YFS	902 NW 32nd, Newcastle, OK 73065	McClain, Garvin
Great Plains YFS	901 South Broadway, Hobart, OK 73651	Beckham, Greer, Harmon, Kiowa, Tillman, Washita, Jackson
Le Flore County Youth and Family Services	510 N Broadway St, Poteau, OK 74953	Haskell, LeFlore
Logan Community Services	4710 S Division Street, Guthrie, OK 73044	Logan
Marie Detty YFS	317 C Avenue, Lawton, OK 73502	Comanche, Stephens, Jefferson
Mid-Del YFS	2840 Linda Ln, Del City, OK 73115	Oklahoma
Muskogee Co. Council of Youth Services	4009 Eufaula Avenue, Muskogee, OK 74403	Muskogee, Wagoner
Northwest YFS	620 Flynn, Alva, OK 73717	Alfalfa, Woods

Okmulgee/Okfuskee County YFS	1950 N. Okmulgee Ave., Okmulgee, OK 74447	Okmulgee, Okfuskee
Panhandle Youth Services for Children	405 S. Main, Guymon, OK 73942	Texas, Cimarron, Beaver
People Inc.	205 S J T Stites St, Sallisaw, OK 74955	Adair, Sequoyah, Cherokee
Rogers County YFS	1810 North Sioux, Claremore, OK 75017	Rogers
Southwest YFS (2)	198 East Almar, Chickasha, OK 73023	Caddo, Grady, Cotton
Tri-City YFS	14625 NE 23rd Street Choctaw, OK 73020	Choctaw/Nicoma Park, Harrah, Jones, Luther School District
YFS of Bryan County	1105 Lynwood, Durant, OK 74702	Bryan
Youth Services of Creek County	1025 E Grayson Ave, Sapulpa, OK 74067	Creek
Youth and Family Resource Center	326 W 11th St, Shawnee, OK 74801	Grant, Garfield, Major
Youth and Family Services, Inc.	7565 East Highway 66, El Reno, OK 73036	Blaine, Canadian, Kingfisher
YFS of Washington County	2200 SE Washington Avenue, Bartlesville, OK 74006	Nowata, Washington
Western Plains YFS	202639 E County Rd 42, Woodward, OK 73801	Harper, Ellis, Woodward
Oklahoma Association of Youth Services		At-Large, Technical Assistance

Data and Impact Assessment

In the second quarter of FY2024, spanning from October through December, the Successful Futures Initiative showcased significant strides in achieving its operational goals. Notably, there was a pronounced increase in overall program participation rates, with a few agencies exhibiting significant dips in service provision. These “dips” are due to staff turnover and some agencies not submitting their numbers. Checking with the agencies, services are being provided and a plan for data submission is articulated to the coordinator and their respective Executive Directors. This overall rise in engagement is critical, as it directly aligns with the initiative’s overarching objectives to support and develop the skills and competencies of young individuals within the community.

The heightened participation rates observed during this period are indicative of the initiative's success in resonating with its target demographic, thereby enhancing its overall impact. Such improvements highlight the initiative's ability to adapt and respond to the needs and interests of its participants, ensuring that the programs offered are both relevant and accessible. This adaptability is essential for fostering an environment that not only attracts participants but also retains their involvement, contributing to sustained developmental outcomes.

Furthermore, this progress in participation rates reflects the collaborative efforts of stakeholders involved in the Successful Futures Initiative. From Executive Directors and program coordinators to community partners, the collective endeavor to enhance program visibility, accessibility, and relevance has been instrumental in achieving these results. As the initiative moves forward, maintaining this momentum will be central to expanding its reach and deepening its impact, thereby continuing to fulfill its mission of empowering young individuals, and equipping them with the necessary tools for success.

Data Highlights for Counties with Populations < 50,000

Analysis of the data provided several highlights and trends can be observed:

1. **Overall Program Growth:** The Overall Program Growth from July to December in the number of children and youth served by the program is 11,499 participants, representing a substantial percentage increase of approximately 1154.52%. This significant expansion highlights the initiative's success in reaching and impacting its target demographic across the targeted counties (see Figure1).
2. **Average Monthly Participation Growth:** The average monthly participation growth from July to December in the program is approximately 310.2 participants. This figure represents the average increase in the number of children and youth served each month, indicating consistent and growth in program engagement over the specified period.
3. **Widespread Program Impact:** The initiative has a broad and varied impact across multiple counties, as indicated by the diverse number of participants served in different regions. This suggests the program's ability to cater to a wide demographic.
4. **Variable Engagement Across Counties:** The data shows significant variability in participation numbers across counties, with some areas showing higher engagement rates than others. This could reflect differences in community needs, program outreach efforts, or availability of resources across locations.
5. **Seasonal or Strategic Influences on Participation:** The fluctuation in monthly participation numbers might suggest seasonal influences on engagement or the impact of strategic program initiatives aimed at increasing participation at certain times of the year.
6. **High Engagement in Specific Areas:** Counties or groups of counties like "Woods, Alfalfa, Harper" with particularly high participation rates indicates the program's effectiveness in their engagement with their community partners as they are in all schools within the district's they serve except for one.
7. **Opportunities for Targeted Improvement:** Areas with lower engagement rates or minimal growth represents opportunities for targeted outreach, program adjustment, or resource allocation to enhance participation and impact.

- Demonstration of Program Scalability:** The ability to serve a large and increasing number of participants across a variety of regions demonstrates the program's scalability and adaptability to different community contexts.

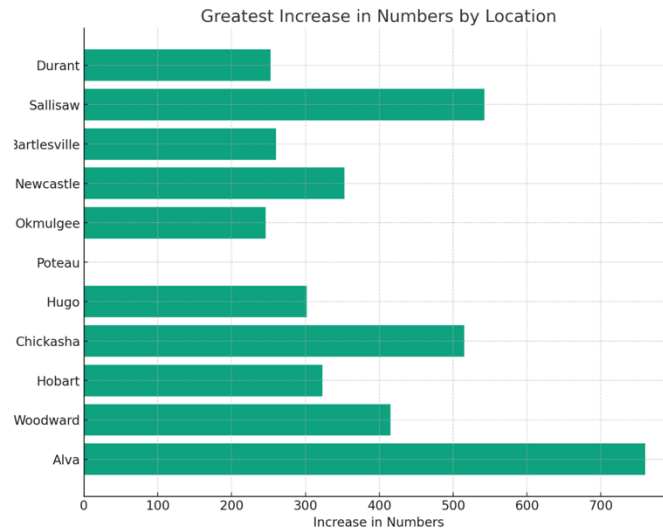


Figure 1

Given the overall number of children and youth reached from July to December is 21,414, and the subset of those served in counties with populations less than 50,000 is 12,932 (See Table 1), several generalizations can be inferred:

- Significant Reach in Less Populated Areas:** A substantial portion of the initiative's reach, approximately 61.8% (12,932 out of 21,414), is in counties with populations less than 50,000. This indicates the initiative's strong focus and significant impact on smaller, potentially rural, or less urbanized communities.
- Balanced Program Distribution:** The data suggests that the program has a balanced distribution of services, catering not only to densely populated areas but also ensuring that less populated regions are not underserved. This highlights the initiative's commitment to equitable access to its services.
- Potential for Diverse Needs Across Counties:** The difference in the number of participants between more and less populated counties reflects diverse community needs and varying levels of resources or accessibility. It suggests the initiative is adaptable, tailoring its approach to meet the specific requirements of different populations.
- Opportunity for Expansion:** While the initiative has significant reach in less populated counties, the remaining 38.2% of its influence is in more populated areas. This points to a balanced approach but also highlights potential opportunities for further expansion and engagement in both types of regions.

5. **Effectiveness in Community Engagement:** The ability to engage a large number of participants across counties of varying sizes demonstrates the initiative's effectiveness in community engagement and outreach. It implies successful strategies in making the program accessible and relevant across diverse settings.

6. **Insight into Program Priorities:** The substantial outreach in less populated counties may reflect a strategic priority to target areas where services like those offered by the initiative are less available or where there might be greater need due to fewer local resources.

7. **Evidence of Program's Scalability and Flexibility:** Reaching over 20,000 children and youth in a range of county sizes from July to December showcases the program's scalability and flexibility. It indicates the initiative's capability to adjust its scope and services to cater to both large and small communities effectively.

These generalizations suggest that the Successful Futures Initiative is effectively reaching a significant number of children and youth, with varying degrees of engagement across different counties, highlighting both its successes and potential areas for focused improvement.

Location	July	August	September	October	November	December	Row Total
Durant	138	285	198	205	315	62	1203
Sallisaw	26	141	105	226	395	568	1461
Bartlesville	10	110	156	252	270	270	1068
Newcastle	48	71	291	401	159	322	1292
Okmulgee	203	204	261	242	69	315	1294
Poteau	0	0	1	-	-	-	1
Hugo	371	194	496	281	-	-	1342
Chickasha,	50	515	237	0	0	88	890
Hobart	68	0	51	323	12	300	754
Woodward,	8	18	170	423	417	327	1363
Alva	74	116	659	834	224	357	2264
Total							12932

Table 1

Overall Youth Engagement

In the Successful Futures Initiative's second-quarter report, covering October to December, the segment on youth participation delineates the dynamic engagement of agency partners across their communities. This period witnessed a vibrant increase in program activities, with agency coordinators taking on pivotal roles that not only challenge but also empower and guide participants toward a brighter future. Throughout this section, the accomplishments, and the significant role of agency contributions in achieving the overarching goals of the Successful Futures Initiative is celebrated. The data from this

quarter reveals several important trends and insights, demonstrating the initiative's broad and positive impact across various locations.

1. **Widespread Impact Across Diverse Locations:** The initiative successfully reached a broad spectrum of counties, demonstrating its widespread impact and the adaptability of its programs to cater to diverse community needs.
2. **Variable Engagement Levels:** There is significant variability in engagement across different locations, with some areas like Sapulpa, Alva, and Sallisaw showing notably high numbers of participants. This variation may reflect differing local needs, the initiative's focus areas, or the effectiveness of local outreach and engagement strategies.
3. **Strong Growth in Participation Over Time:** Locations like Alva and Claremore show substantial growth in participant numbers from July to December, indicating successful outreach efforts and growing community engagement with the initiative's programs over time.
4. **Significant Increases in Specific Periods:** The sharp increase in participants in certain areas during specific months, such as Claremore in October and Sapulpa from September to November, suggests that events, program launches, or targeted initiatives may have successfully attracted more participants during these times.
5. **Consistency in Engagement:** Bartlesville and Woodward display a relatively consistent increase in participation over the months, indicating steady program growth and sustained interest among participants.
6. **Opportunities for Targeted Improvement:** Areas with low or no growth, or those with significant drops in participation, offer opportunities for targeted program improvements, more focused outreach efforts, or adjustments in program delivery to better meet community needs. This also indicates periods where no coordinator was hired, or employee turnaround was present.
7. **Evidence of Program Resilience and Adaptability:** The overall reach of 21,414 participants (See Table 2), with a notable portion coming from counties with populations less than 50,000, underscores the initiative's resilience and adaptability in engaging with a wide range of communities, including those in less populated or potentially underserved areas.
8. **Highlighting Areas for Strategic Focus:** The data provides valuable insights for strategic planning, indicating where the initiative might focus its efforts to expand reach, enhance engagement, or address barriers to participation.

These generalizations reflect the initiative's successes and challenges, providing a foundation for data-driven decision-making to enhance future program effectiveness and community impact.

Location	July	August	September	October	November	December	Row Total
Alva	74	116	659	834	224	357	2264
Bartlesville	10	110	156	252	270	270	1068
Chickasha	50	515	237	332	202	326	1662
Choctaw	80	100	290	60	44	85	659
Claremore	0	75	212	907	189	282	1665
Durant	138	285	198	205	315	62	1203
El Reno	3	0	296	0	0	0	299
Guthrie	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Guymon	0	0	152	6	1	362	521
Hobart	68	0	51	323	12	300	754
Hugo	371	194	496	281	-	-	1342
Lawton	0	6	197	274	175	174	826
Midwest City	73	103	199	146	82	349	952
Muskogee	73	96	161	33	-	-	363
Newcastle	48	71	291	401	159	322	1292
Norman	37	42	62	42	52	30	265
Okmulgee	203	204	261	242	69	315	1294
Poteau	0	0	1	1			2
Sallisaw	26	141	105	226	395	568	1461
Sapulpa	39	185	768	650	198	317	2157
Shawnee	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Woodward	8	18	170	423	417	327	1363
Column Total							21414

Table 2

The Successful Futures Initiative's Q-2 report, covering October to December, highlights a period of significant activity and engagement, driven by dedicated agency partners. This quarter saw a notable increase in participant involvement, reflecting agency commitment to challenge, motivate, and support children and youth. The collective efforts of partners have played a crucial role in extending the program's reach and enhancing the impact on the communities served (See figure 2).

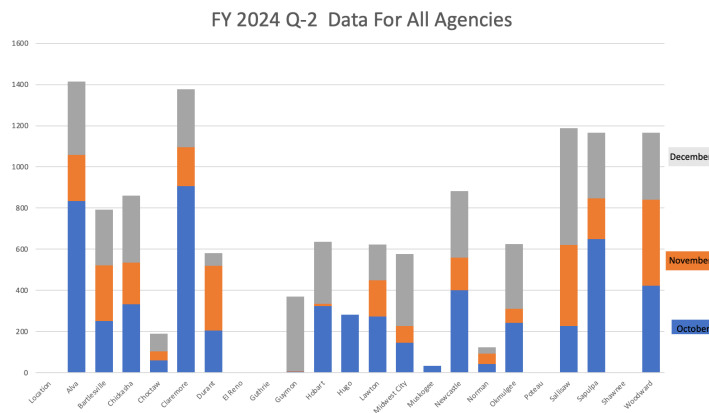


Figure 2

1. **Heightened Activity Engagement:** The quarter witnessed a significant uptick in program activities, indicating a proactive approach by agency coordinators. This increased activity level suggests a strategic push to enhance participant engagement during these months.
2. **Empowerment Through Challenges:** Agency coordinators have been instrumental in introducing challenges that motivate and foster growth among participants. This approach has likely contributed to more meaningful and impactful experiences for the youth involved.
3. **Broad Impact Across Communities:** The initiative's reach across diverse communities during this quarter underscores its effectiveness in connecting with and impacting a wide demographic. The broad engagement hints at the initiative's adaptability and relevance to various community needs.
4. **Recognition of Agency Contributions:** The data underscores the critical role of agency partners in the initiative's success. Their contributions have been pivotal in shaping the program's direction and enhancing its impact on participants' futures.
5. **Insights into Program Dynamics:** The participation data from this quarter offers valuable insights into the dynamics of the program, including which activities have seen the most engagement and how different communities respond to various initiatives.
6. **Strategic Opportunities for Growth:** The trends observed during Q-2 present strategic opportunities for further growth and expansion. Identifying areas of high engagement and potential gaps can inform future planning and resource allocation.
7. **Enhanced Participant Experience:** The increase in activities and targeted challenges suggests an enhanced experience for participants, likely contributing to higher satisfaction and retention rates.
8. **Evidence of Program Resilience:** The sustained engagement and activity levels during Q-2 demonstrate the program's resilience in maintaining momentum and participant interest over time.

The second quarter has underscored the initiative's success in engaging a wide demographic and making a meaningful difference. The contributions from agency partners have been key to providing valuable experiences that promote growth and empowerment among participants. Moving forward, the insights from this quarter will guide strategies to further expand programmatic reach and adapt to community needs. Progress made is inspirational and serves as the common motivator behind the program's

collective mission of nurturing successful futures for children and youth supported by the initiative.

Number of Children Receiving Character Education

The Oklahoma Association of Youth Services (OAYS) Successful Futures Initiative has strategically incorporated the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets into its programming and educational endeavors. This integration is pivotal, as these assets cover an extensive range of personal, social, and cultural competencies that form the cornerstone of the initiative's character education underpinnings. The utilization of these assets ensures that every participant benefits from a holistic approach to character education, designed to foster well-rounded development. By mapping each programmatic activity to specific developmental assets, the initiative ensures that its offerings are not just educational but transformative, supporting the growth of essential life skills and values in the young individuals it serves.

This deliberate alignment with the Search Institute's framework enables the Successful Futures Initiative to focus on building resilience among children and youth. The initiative's emphasis on character education through the lens of the 40 Developmental Assets is a methodical approach to enhancing protective factors while simultaneously mitigating risk factors that children and youth might face. Each contracted coordinator plays a crucial role in this process, tasked with the responsibility of connecting every activity to an asset, thereby ensuring that the programming is both comprehensive and impactful. This methodology stresses the initiative's commitment to not just academic or skill-based learning but to nurturing resilient, capable, and socially responsible individuals.

Furthermore, the initiative's focus on the 40 Developmental Assets highlights its recognition of the diverse needs and challenges faced by children and youth today. By fostering an environment that values personal growth, social connectivity, and cultural understanding, the Successful Futures Initiative is setting a precedent for how character education can be seamlessly integrated into youth programs. This approach not only prepares participants for the complexities of the modern world but also instills in them the confidence and resilience needed to navigate life's challenges. As the initiative continues to evolve, its dedication to embedding these developmental assets within its curriculum is evidence to its vision of empowering the next generation with the skills, values, and resilience necessary for success.

Spotlight on Youth

In October, People, Inc. in Sallisaw, Oklahoma, showcased an innovative activity that seamlessly blended fun with developmental learning. Led by Samantha Bumgardner, the event was designed to foster a range of skills among students through a creative and engaging challenge: constructing marshmallow monsters. This activity was not only a test of speed and creativity but also an exercise in embodying the 40 developmental assets.

The core of the activity revolved around students being divided into teams of four, each armed with a bag of materials to create their unique marshmallow monster. The task was timed, injecting a sense of competition as teams vied to craft the fastest monster at their

tables. This friendly rivalry escalated as each table's creation was then judged on criteria such as the scariest, funniest, or overall best monster, sparking curiosity and engagement among the children.

During the activity, participants encountered various challenges that prompted them to ask insightful questions, such as techniques for attaching candy eyes to their marshmallow creations. This opened opportunities for peer learning and support, as the facilitator encouraged participants to share ideas and materials, fostering a spirit of collaboration and positive values.

The event also became a lesson in patience and anticipation. Children eager to taste their “monstrous” creations were reminded to wait until the collective voting process concluded, adding a layer of excitement about possibly winning a prize or the title for the best monster. This delay gratification was a practical exercise in self-control and community decision-making.

Moreover, the activity prompted discussions about sharing and the ethics of copying others' ideas, challenging students to employ communication skills and empathy developed in previous sessions. Such interactions were critical in teaching social competencies, including conflict management and the importance of following rules.

Observations from the lesson highlighted significant outcomes: children's empowered use of creativity and autonomy, which boosted their confidence in their abilities and ideas. The supportive environment, characterized by voting for peers' monsters and offering positive feedback, even to those who didn't win, stressed the importance of a positive identity and empowerment. Finally, the unanimous enjoyment expressed by the children, coupled with the thrill of competition and the satisfaction of consuming their creations, highlighted the constructive use of time and engagement in positive activities.

This marshmallow monster activity presented to People, Inc.'s participants exemplifies how creative tasks can be more than just play. They are vital tools in nurturing a wide array of developmental assets in children, from social skills and positive values to empowerment and a positive identity, laying a solid foundation for their growth into well-rounded individuals.

Although People, Inc. utilized the "marshmallow monsters" activity, Samantha incorporated discussions about focusing on healthy snacks and how sometimes it is ok to have a not so healthy snack, but that it is important to get back on track with healthy eating. This taught the participant decision-making and the concept of differentiating between "right" and "wrong."

This type of imaginative lesson-planning activity exemplifies the creative chops the contracted coordinators exhibit on a daily basis and further delineates their adaptability in learning how to deep-dive into creating connected lessons that embodies multiple strands of the program's overall goals and objectives, tethering them to learning opportunities that children and youth not only relate to, but have higher probability of memory retention.



In Northwestern Oklahoma, a transformative movement is taking root, aimed at empowering children and youth to navigate the complexities of today and seize the opportunities of tomorrow. Through a strategic partnership with the Oklahoma Association of Youth Services' Successful Futures Initiative, powered by TSET, Northwest Family Services is at the forefront of this visionary endeavor. This collaboration is not only enhancing the scope and impact of youth services but also setting a new standard for community engagement and support.

At the heart of this initiative is the desire to equip the children and youth of Alva, Alfalfa, and Woods counties with the life skills they need to thrive in an ever-changing world. The Successful Futures Initiative, powered by TSET, brings together resources, expertise, and a commitment to health and wellness that complements the mission of Northwest Family Services. Together, they are embedding essential life skills education into the fabric of the community, reaching age-range appropriate students in nearly all schools within the districts they serve.

What makes this partnership uniquely effective is its integration within the educational ecosystem of the region. Northwest Family Services, through the support of the Successful Futures Initiative, is a staple in the local schools, offering programs that are

both accessible and impactful. This integration ensures that life skills education, and other initiative-related opportunities, are not add-ons but fundamental components of the students' daily experiences, fostering an environment where learning and personal development go hand in hand.

The collaboration between Northwest Family Services and the Oklahoma Association of Youth Services is distinguished by its commitment to quality and consistency. By harnessing these strengths, the initiative offers a wide range of services targeted to ensuring children and youth embrace a happy and healthy lifestyle. This approach not only increases the number of students reached but also elevates the quality of support provided, ensuring that every interaction is meaningful and transformative.

Driving the success of this partnership is the unwavering dedication of individuals like the agency's Executive Director, Brenda Rose and her committed Successful Futures Coordinator, Amanda Lambert. Her vision for a future where every child is equipped to face life's challenges with confidence and resilience is the guiding force behind the initiative. Through the partnership with the Successful Futures Initiative, Northwest Family Services is not just preparing students for the challenges of today. They are laying the groundwork for a generation that is resilient, empathetic, and ready to contribute to their communities. The life skills taught through this initiative are the building blocks for personal success.

As this partnership continues to grow and evolve, the Alva, Alfalfa, and Woods counties of Northwest Oklahoma stand as a testament to what can be achieved when communities partner with Youth Services Agencies and come together with a common goal. The work being done by Northwest Family Services is more than just an investment in individual lives; it's an investment in the future of the community and the state at large.





Key Considerations

As the Successful Futures Initiative navigates the complexities of program delivery, experiences in the recent quarter have shed light on several key considerations essential for sustaining progress and enhancing impact. The adaptability demonstrated through the coordinator backup system has been a cornerstone in maintaining service provision amidst staff turnover, revealing both resilience and areas for strategic enhancement.

1. **Enhancing Backup Coordinator Training:** Prioritizing in-depth training for backup coordinators ensures they are well-prepared to step into leadership roles as needed, maintaining the continuity and quality of program activities.
2. **Developing a Robust Training Framework for New Hires:** Establishing a comprehensive training program for new staff at partner agencies is critical. A structured onboarding process, coupled with ongoing professional development, equips them with the skills and knowledge to thrive in their roles.
3. **Adapting to Staff Changes:** Implementing strategies for rapid integration of new staff minimizes disruption to services. This involves clear communication of role expectations and immediate immersion into the initiative's culture and methodologies.
4. **Strengthening Program Design Integrity:** Regular reviews and updates to the program design help mitigate the impacts of staff turnover. This proactive approach ensures that the program remains robust and effective, even in the face of change.
5. **Expanding the Backup Pool:** By increasing the number of trained backup staff, the program enhances its resilience and flexibility, ensuring that it can respond effectively to any staffing challenges that arise.

6. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Continuous assessment of the program's effectiveness, particularly considering staff changes, allows for data-driven adjustments. This ensures that program outcomes remain aligned with goals and participant needs are met.
7. **Enhancing Direct Communication Channels:** Capitalizing on the weekly technical assistance provided by OAYS leadership strengthens the program's foundation. Direct access to decision-makers facilitates agile responses to challenges, ensuring that solutions are promptly and effectively implemented.
8. **Fostering a Culture of Continuous Learning:** Creating an environment that values and promotes continuous learning empowers staff to pursue professional growth. This not only prepares individuals for potential advancement but also enriches the program with a diverse set of skills and perspectives.
9. **Leveraging Technology for Training and Support:** Utilizing digital platforms for training and collaboration ensures that all team members, regardless of their location, have access to critical resources and support. This approach broadens the scope of training and enhances the flexibility of support mechanisms.

Through these focused strategies, the Successful Futures Initiative is poised to navigate the challenges of staff turnover and program delivery with agility and foresight. By investing in people, processes, and technology, program leadership reinforces a commitment to empowering youth and communities, ensuring the team is fully equipped to drive forward program's mission with excellence and innovation.

Moving Forward

Moving forward, the Successful Futures Initiative is committed to enhancing its impact and ensuring the resilience of its programming amidst the dynamic challenges of staff turnover and the evolving needs of communities. To guide the path forward and measure progress, several Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been identified that will serve as benchmarks for success. These KPIs are designed to be solution-focused, reflecting strategic priorities and dedication to continuous improvement:

1. **Program Participation Rate:** Monitor the monthly and quarterly growth in participant numbers to gauge the initiative's appeal and effectiveness in engaging target demographics.
2. **Staff Retention and Turnover Rates:** Track staff retention and turnover to assess the team stability and the effectiveness of strategies to support and retain key personnel.
3. **Backup Coordinator Utilization:** Measure the frequency and effectiveness of backup coordinator deployment in maintaining program continuity, aiming for seamless service provision despite staff changes.

4. **Training Completion Rates:** Evaluate the percentage of new hires and backup staff completing technical assistance opportunities, ensuring all team members are well-equipped to contribute to the program mission.
5. **Participant Satisfaction Scores:** Develop and implement a system for collecting and analyzing participant feedback in collaboration with the external evaluator from the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences. This will enable leadership to understand participant experiences and satisfaction with the program comprehensively.
6. **Staff Training and Development Participation:** Monitor the participation rates in continuous learning opportunities and professional development programs, reflecting a commitment to fostering a culture of growth and excellence.
7. **Technology Adoption and Utilization:** Assess the adoption rate and utilization of technology platforms for training and support, aiming to maximize the accessibility and effectiveness of these tools for staff and participants alike.
8. **Community Engagement and Partnership Strength:** Evaluate the depth and breadth of engagement with community partners and stakeholders, aiming to strengthen collaborations and leverage community resources for enhanced program impact.
9. **Program Adaptability and Innovation:** Track the implementation of new strategies and initiatives in response to identified challenges and opportunities, showcasing the program's ability to innovate and adapt to changing conditions.

By focusing on these KPIs, the Successful Futures Initiative intends to not only maintain but also amplify its capacity to make a meaningful difference in the lives of the children and youth served. These indicators will provide a clear framework for assessing progress, identifying areas for strategic investment, and ensuring that the program remains strong for the communities served. Moving forward, The Oklahoma Association of Youth Services remains dedicated to the TSET Successful Future's mission, remaining empowered by contractor achievements, and inspired by the potential to create an even brighter future for all participants.

Conclusion

The Successful Futures Initiative, reflecting on its journey through the second quarter, stands as an example of progress and adaptability in the realm of youth development. Amidst the ebbs and flows of staff transitions, the initiative has not only persevered but thrived, thanks to a meticulously deliberate program design that ensured continuity in service delivery. While not without its challenges, this system largely proved its worth, allowing the Successful Futures Initiative to maintain the high-quality engagement communities have come to expect. In instances where backup personnel, initially trained in May of FY2023, assumed leadership roles, the program witnessed the resilience and

flexibility of program design. This shift, however, accentuated the necessity of further training to bolster program ranks and safeguard the integrity of programming.

Delving into the essence of the initiative, nine pivotal considerations have been identified that will steer the course moving forward. These considerations are anchored in the lessons learned and the milestones achieved, reflecting a collective commitment to nurturing the potential within each child and youth served.

The OAYS Successful Futures Initiative utilizes strategies for maintaining a resilient and impactful program center around a holistic approach to staff development and program management. At the forefront of efforts is the comprehensive training of backup coordinators and new hires. By ensuring these key personnel are well-prepared to step into their roles and integrate seamlessly into the daily operations of the initiative, it is the intent that the program safeguards the continuity and effectiveness of services. This commitment to training is matched by a structured regimen that equips the program's team with the necessary tools and knowledge to excel, thereby enhancing the collective efficacy of the initiative.

The seamless integration of new staff, alongside the regular evaluation and adaptation of the program design, ensures that initiatives remain robust and responsive to the challenges of staff turnover. By expanding the pool of trained backup staff, the flexibility and resilience of programs is bolstered, preparing leadership and contractors to navigate unforeseen challenges with agility. This strategic approach is buttressed by rigorous monitoring and evaluation, allowing for timely adjustments that align with program goals and the evolving needs of the communities served.

Further strengthening program framework is the emphasis on open communication channels with OAYS leadership and the cultivation of a culture that values continuous learning. These elements foster an environment where innovative solutions are readily pursued, and professional growth is encouraged, enriching the initiative with a broad spectrum of skills and knowledge. Additionally, the adoption of technology for training and support maximizes accessibility for staff, ensuring they have the resources needed for success. Together, these consolidated strategies reinforce the program's commitment to empowering youth and communities, highlighting the initiative's capacity for sustained impact and adaptability.

These guiding considerations form the bedrock of efforts to expand reach, deepen impact, and continue making a meaningful difference in the lives of children, youth, families, and communities served. The Successful Futures Initiative, buoyed by a spirit of innovation and a commitment to excellence, is poised for a future filled with promise and opportunity. The challenges ahead, whatever they may be, will be cooperatively navigated, inspired by collective achievements, and driven by the profound belief in the potential of every young individual served. The program's journey is one of hope, resilience, and unwavering dedication to empowering the next generation.