



2023 to 2028 Strategic Plan

Approved by the Board of Directors May 2023

Introduction

BGC Kawarthas and BGC Kawarthas Foundation are excited to launch a new strategic plan that highlights five priorities to guide our focus and decision-making for the next five years, from 2023 to 2028. Following a meaningful engagement and planning process that sought out the voices, ideas, and experiences of community members, partners, and the children, youth, and families who inspire our work, the plan was co-created by our Boards of Directors and senior staff team.

At the heart of our organization is our community: children, youth, families, and our dedicated staff and volunteers. We are motivated to implement this plan that places their wellbeing, sense of belonging, and success at the centre of everything we do.

Our organization has deep roots in the Kawarthas and considers the needs in our catchment area which includes City of Kawartha Lakes, Peterborough City and County and bordering communities.

This aspirational plan is a road map for us to deepen and expand our life-changing impact in the years ahead. Our vision – ***All children and youth discover and achieve their dreams and grow up to be healthy, successful, and active participants in society*** – continues to resonate as we look to the future we want to build in the Kawarthas and surrounding regions.

We are eager to work with our staff, volunteers, partners, and community to put this plan into action.

Planning Context

After several years of significant change and uncertainty, BGC Kawarthas and BGC Kawarthas Foundation embarked on a shared process to create a new strategic plan. This process included significant community engagement, deep reflection, and consideration of the many internal and external factors that influence our work. Through this process, and as seen in our daily work, we learned that the programs, services, supports, and welcoming environment we create for children, youth, and families in the Kawartha region are more important than ever.

During the engagement process we heard that we are a welcoming and inclusive organization, one whose staff go above and beyond to meet the needs of children, youth, and families, and that we are responsive and collaborative in our work. As our communities change, it is vital that we maintain and continue these practices.

Reflecting on the strengths and challenges of our organization, we recognize the significant impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on our staff, volunteers, and those with whom we work. The past three years have been a time of rapid change, as we shifted operations and practices to keep everyone safe, and our teams and families adapted to public health measures, cost of living pressures, increased isolation and

mental health challenges, a housing affordability crisis, and a challenging labour environment.

As we continue to navigate these challenges, we are focused on creating healthy, safe, and inclusive environments to work, play, and connect with community. We continue to deliver life-changing programs for children, youth, and families. We value, recognize, and celebrate our passionate and committed staff and volunteers who make this magic happen. We will continue to strive to create a positive and equitable work environment for those seeking a way to build community and support children, youth, and families.

Finally, as the cost of living continues to rise, we will meet the challenge of keeping our programs affordable. We are committed to regenerative growth, while staying nimble in our operations so we can respond to new opportunities as they arise.

In scanning our external environment, there are many factors that will impact our work over the next three years. Community organizations like ours continue to see an increasing complexity of needs facing children, youth, families, especially as it relates to youth mental health, income security, and food security. This is further compounded by rising housing unaffordability and inflation. All of these factors put tremendous pressure on household budgets. There continues to be a significant number of households in the Kawarthas that are considered to be 'low-income' and we know we need to keep this in mind as we deliver our programs and services.

Our communities are changing, with a growing population and an increase in racial and cultural diversity. Even with this growth, the local and provincial labour market is very competitive and, as a non-profit organization, it is a challenge to find qualified staff and match wages with the rising cost of living.

There are also changes and pressures at the provincial and federal level that will have a significant impact on our work. The Children and Youth Mental Health system in Ontario continues to be over-taxed, even though we know that so many more children and youth could benefit from easier access to these supports. New Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care agreements and Ontario's action plan to implement their agreement will mean a focus on lowering fees, increasing access, enhancing childcare, supporting inclusion, and enhancing data and reporting. This includes moving to an average of \$10 per day childcare by September 2025. Although there may be future provincial and federal funding constraints to deal with, after a period of extraordinary government spending during the COVID-19 pandemic, there may also be more opportunities for our organization to address priority needs in our communities.

Our new strategic plan takes all of these factors into consideration and also aligns our work with our national parent organization, BGC Canada. We know how vital our organization is for the communities we work with and we are deeply committed to creating positive outcomes for children, youth, and families.

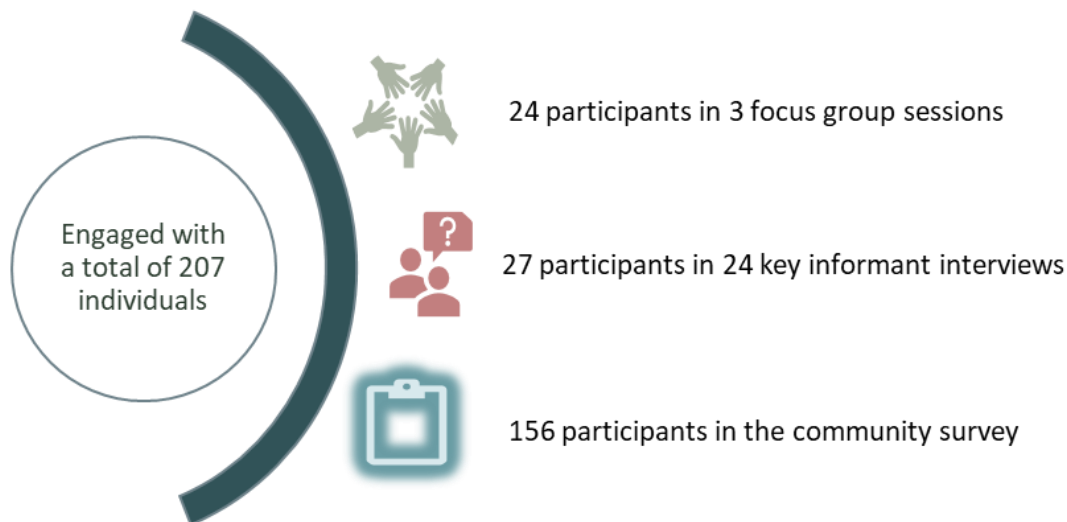
Engagement

As part of a robust engagement process across our catchment area, we invited our staff team, volunteers, donors, families, youth, community partners, funders, and community members to share their ideas, experiences, and perspectives.

Through focus group sessions, interviews, and an online survey, rich information was gathered about our strengths, current and future challenges, opportunities, and changes in the communities with whom we work. Results of engagement were summarized in an Engagement Report, which was provided to the Boards of Directors and senior staff to inform their decision-making.

We are thankful for the participation of the 207 individuals who contributed to this process.

Engagement Methodology



Plan Implementation and Monitoring

To ensure the successful implementation of our strategic priorities, the Boards of our organization commit to the following actions:

1. Support management in the creation of annual operational plans that identify annual goals, objectives, key measures, and roles and responsibilities.
2. Annually monitor and measure the effectiveness of the operational plan.
3. Communicate progress to stakeholders on an annual basis.
4. Complete an annual review of the strategic plan, monitor changes in the BGC Canada strategic plan, amend objectives and strategies as needed, and ensure these are reflected in annual operational plans and budgets.

Our Vision, Mission, and Values

We are driven by our vision, mission, and values, which we share with BGC Canada. These foundational statements inspire our work, both in how we treat each other as well as how we work with the children, youth, and the families who count on us.

Vision All children and youth discover and achieve their dreams and grow up to be healthy, successful, and active participants in society.

Mission To provide a safe, supportive place where children and youth experience new opportunities, overcome barriers, develop positive relationships and build confidence and skills of life.

Core Values

Belonging
We welcome everyone in a safe, accepting environment based on belonging and positive relationships.

Respect
We ensure that everyone – children, youth, families, volunteers, staff – is heard, respected, valued and treated fairly.

Encouragement and Support
We encourage and support every child and youth to play, learn and grow to achieve their dreams.

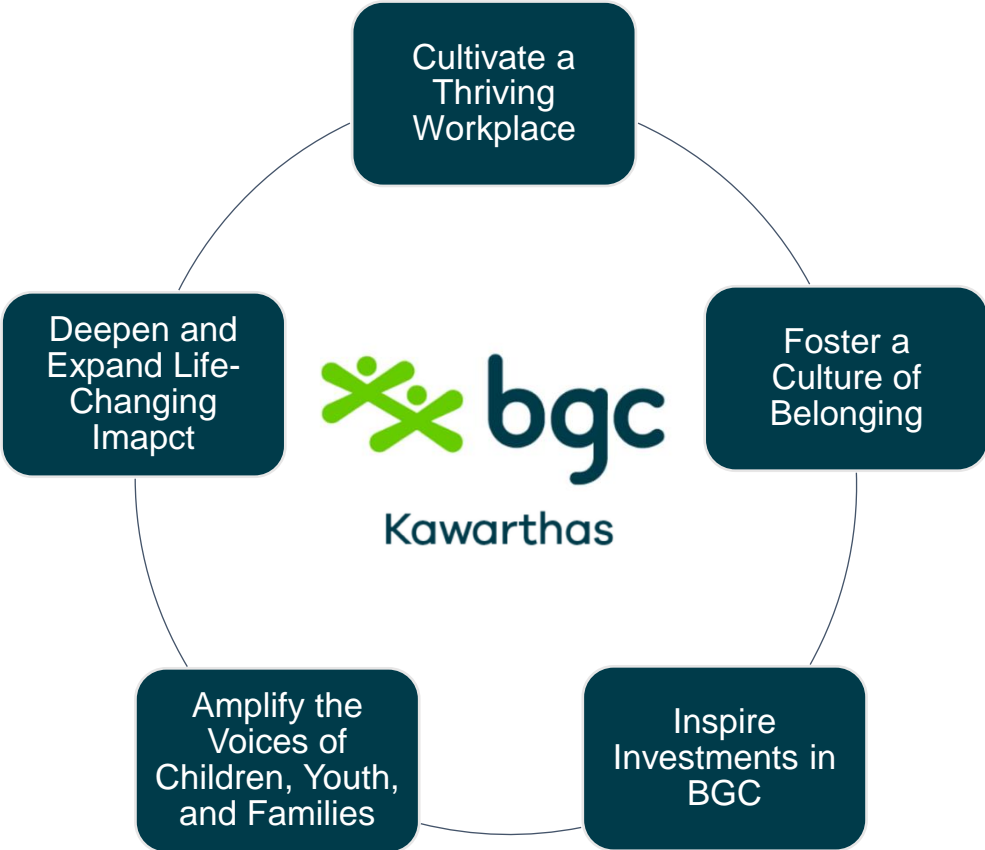
Working Together
We work together with young people, families, volunteers, our communities, and government.

Speaking Out
We speak out with children, youth, and families so that we can make our world better.

Our Strategic Priorities

Driven by our vision, mission, and values, we have identified five strategic priorities to guide our work over the next three years.

The priorities are intentionally broad, to allow for operational flexibility in how they are implemented. They will help us strengthen our core foundation, focus our resources, and provide the foundation for our work in the years ahead.



BGC Kawarthas Strategic Plan 2023 – 2028

1. Cultivate a Thriving Workplace

Goal	Systems and strategies are in place to support an engaged, motivated, and positive organizational culture.
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Develop a Human Resources strategy to recruit and retain a highly skilled, experienced, and passionate staff team, including through consideration of competitive and equitable compensation.2. Cultivate staff engagement through consistent internal communications, team building, and collaboration across sites and departments, while recognizing and celebrating successes.3. Nurture a healthy work environment that promotes mental health, wellness, and work-life balance for staff and volunteers.4. Invest in training, mentorship, and career development opportunities to grow skills, knowledge, and the confidence of staff and volunteers across the organization.5. Develop and implement succession plans for leadership positions among staff and volunteers, while creating pathways to leadership positions.6. Actively recruit, recognize, celebrate, and maximize the diversity of skills, experiences, and expertise of volunteers and their impact on strengthening BGC Kawarthas' capacity.

2. Foster a Culture of Belonging

Goal	Be a leader in applying Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) principles and practices across all areas of the organization.
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ensure that programs and services are inclusive, culturally safe and appropriate, and reflective of the diverse communities, experiences, and identities with whom we work.2. Strengthen diversity on the Boards and volunteer and staff teams to better reflect our communities.3. Continue to build meaningful and intentional relationships with Indigenous groups and neighbouring First Nations.4. Provide EDI-related training and mentorship opportunities for staff and volunteers.5. Work with partners to share EDI practices and model and champion a community culture of inclusivity.

3. Deepen and Expand Life-Changing Impact

Goal	Monitor, strengthen, and expand programs, services, and partnerships to meet the needs of the children, youth, and families.
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Continue to deliver high-quality programs and services that are relevant, affordable, inclusive, and create a positive and long-lasting impact for children and youth.2. Review and adapt programs and services using qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods to ensure that they are meeting community needs and are sustainable.3. Monitor community trends and identify how BGC Kawarthas can address them directly, through collaboration and partnerships, or by advocating for broader solutions.4. Continue to build strong relationships and partnerships to operate programs and services in our catchment areas, and explore innovative programming opportunities.5. Further develop a strategy to expand programs, services, and resources into Peterborough City and County.

4. Amplify the Voices of Children, Youth, and Families

Goal	Raise awareness about the experiences of children, youth, and families, and advocate for support of their needs.
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Carry forward the voice of children, youth, and families internally, at community tables, and across all levels of government, particularly at the municipal level.2. Collaborate with community partners to strengthen the quality of programs and supports available to children, youth, and families, and to champion solutions to meet their needs.3. Strengthen practices that encourage the participation of children, youth, and families in program design and implementation.4. Continue to provide opportunities for children, youth, and families to connect with each other, form relationships in the community, and participate in the building of strong communities.

5. Inspire Investments in BGC

Goal Encourage a culture of philanthropy that ensures sustainability, generates and diversifies funding, and helps reduce barriers for children, youth, and families.

- Objectives**
1. Continue to **build, strengthen, and grow relationships** with donors, local businesses, community leaders, and municipalities.
 2. Explore **new and innovative fundraising strategies**, while maintaining important legacy events.
 3. Develop a **communication strategy** that raises awareness about the life-changing impact of BGC Kawarthas and the return on investment for donations of all sizes.
 4. Continue to actively seek out **grants and new sustainable funding opportunities, while advocating for existing funding** from foundations, BGC Canada, and all levels of government.
 5. Develop a strategy to **expand outreach and fundraising in Peterborough City and County** to support programs and services.