

# Life Steps Strategic Plan Update: 2001 — 2004

## Short-Term Goals

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
Increase working capital.	Our working capital at the close of FY 2005 was \$500,000. We were \$100,000 short of our goal. Two main contributing factors: lower than projected gross revenue, resulting from the state budget cuts, and an increase in expenses because of the managerial changes implemented across the organization.		T	
Increase efficiencies toward a planned, managed growth.	Work has intensified during the past fiscal year in order to complete the self-sufficiency transition by FY 2007. Substantial work was done to create a technological infrastructure, establishing the foundation for developing our database, upgrading hardware and purchasing necessary applications to ensure increased operational efficiency. Regarding personnel, substantial work was done to streamline hiring and selection procedures, including background checking. Our Worker's Compensation problem is under control. We closed this fiscal year with only eight claims. Life Steps participated in the H1B program, importing professionals from the Philippines to complement our workforce in northern and central California. The initiative was very successful. This fiscal year, we have applied for brining in another 10 professionals for the central coast units.	T		
Deepen the culture of the organization.	Best practices and criteria for the Infant/Children unit was fully completed and implemented. The other units are well into developing criteria and parallel implementation, the expected completion in June 2007. Initial orientation was standardized and implemented across the board. The Management of Change process toward self-sufficiency is getting the active participation of a wide cross section of partners throughout the organization.	T		
Maximize internal communication.	Standardized equipment, consolidated purchase/contract accounts for hardware, streamlined inventory, and stabilized existing computer network system were accomplished. We are now moving toward transitioning the entire system to the SBC platform and toward expanding its capabilities by adding applications like SharePoint to further increase the efficiency of our internal communications.	T		

## Long-Term Goals

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
Promote corporate wellness.	Aggressive transfer training and consistent monitoring of best practices have yielded significant savings regarding Worker's Compensation insurance. We closed FY 2005 with eight claims, a 76% reduction from FY 2004. An extra benefit was added: personal leave for employees (a maximum of 10 personal leave days) who have worked for Life Steps five or more years.	T		
Increase name recognition.	To increase the organization's visibility, a new Web site and brochure have been created. The board of directors has added four new directors who have expertise in fund raising, networking and technology. Management has received training in marketing and fund raising. Operation managers have intensified networking within the community and with funding sources as part of the self-management approach. 75% of the managers are now negotiating their business units contracts, formally representing the organization with local and state funding agencies, and established professional and consumers networks in their areas..	T		
Maximize external use of our core capabilities.	We continue to collaborate with Taiwan on the best practice project for early intervention (the TCQM and the Infant/Children units), furthering the development of emerging training modules in order to become a training site for other service providers. A similar process is being developed in collaboration with our drug and alcohol recovery unit.	T		
Build a strong endowment fund.	This goal was not accomplished. The new board of directors is scheduled for a one-day strategic planning retreat on August 29, 2005 to address possible ways to bring in financial support from the community,.		T	
Increase profitability through mergers.	Life Steps completed a merger, but the project failed to yield projected outcomes and was terminated. A second merger is being discussed with Catholic Charities and Tenet hospitals. Both mergers resulted from the closure of an organization in the central coast area that served the elderly.		T	

## Division Goals (Broad)

### Financial Division

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
Replenish reserve account and build	From internal resources, we have replenished the reserve account to \$1.3 million, a \$100K above the	T		

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
cash flow reserve.	target. Our overall goal was \$1.8 million with funds raised by the Board in the amount of \$600,000. Working capital stands at \$500,000: our goal was \$600,000. Our unsecured credit line was increased to \$1 million. We have rebuilt our reserves, securing enough resources to cover payroll for a 3-month period if necessary.			
Develop and implement a fiscal contingency plan.	The revitalization plan was fully implemented as a regular monthly procedure, the controller having reviewed targeted fiscal goals and outcomes with management from all units on a monthly basis. Ninety-five percent of the management team is now fully trained and capable of handling financial reports and discussing and implementing procedures to ensure that they stay within their projected budgets. An executive taskforce is scheduled to finalize criteria linked to a fiscal contingency plan for FY 2007 when the units are incorporated as independent businesses during FY/06.	T		
Maximize efficiency of daily operation through an effective accounting software system.	We successfully implemented the Great Plains software and now use it at 90% of its capability. FRX reports will be implemented in FY 2006.	T		
Fiscal accountability in monitoring budgets.	All the fundamentals are in place to enable managers to successfully accomplish this goal. The monthly review of financial reports for each business unit and correction of course, if needed, on a quarterly basis.	T		
At least 10 to 13 percent annual growth.	Annual growth was severely affected by the economic climate in California. The state deficit forced significant cuts in funding as the government attempted to balance the budget. Over the past four years Life Steps funding decreased by \$2 million. The organization maintained its competitive edge by systematically improving its best practices, particularly in the southern area. Despite a rate freeze over the past two years, we have successfully renegotiated better rates for the Infant/Children Unit regarding in-home intervention and for therapeutic services, expanded into northern California.		T	

### *Best Practices/Standards*

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
Standardize training modules across all projects and	The process now encompasses every business unit with parallel development and implementation of best practices and standards. The Infant/Children unit is our	T		

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
divisions.	showcase. It has become the preferred service provider for several regional centers. Management has now fully committed to meeting this target. Training towards increased professional skills as well as managerial and business competencies were intensified during this fiscal year as part of the transition into self-sufficiency. The focus is equipping partners with strong skills to enable them to self-manage. All the goals set for FY/05 towards this end were met.			
Develop continuous learning resources.	The intranet project (SharePoint) is ready for implementation in FY 2006, and the estimated completion date is November 2005. The provider of choice is SBC and the platform will consolidate all current applications, including Great Plains and Kronos. The IT unit has streamlined procedures and standardized electronic equipment, establishing a workable inventory and wiring configuration for each office in order to prepare for deploying the SBC network. The intranet will greatly increase the pace of learning and transfer of information among partners. This network will also help Life Steps standardize a database system that measures outcomes and evaluates processes of staff and clients preparing the stage to implement a ScoreCard approach..			T
Consolidate development and implementation of internal core knowledge and capabilities, best practice standards and service models.	Intense work was completed during FY 2005, the first year of our transition to self-sufficiency. Strategic and business plans were developed for each identified business unit; training in leadership, entrepreneurship, and financial/marketing/best practices were provided to partners. Competency and best practices criteria were developed and are being implemented among the business units. A detailed technology assessment and plan was completed to support the strategic needs of Life Steps and its business units and are targeted for implementation in FY 2006.			T
Establish a clinical infrastructure.	Fully completed for the Infant/Children units and the Drug and Alcohol unit is further along in the process. The process has started for the Aging Services and the Adult Services units of operation.			T

### Development

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
Build an endowment fund.	Not achieved.		T	

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
Increase visibility in the community.	Revamped Web site and brand. Increased exposure and visibility for the organization. Drug and Alcohol unit lead the group with visits from Washington and a grant from DOL for computer training skills for substance abuse recovered women, with children. Marketing of our aging services via local media; collaborative fund raising for the Alzheimer's population and begun implementation of Raising the Money Model (RMM) module to build an effective donor database.			T
Maximize revenue for existing projects and services.	Grant writing brought in \$579,000 for this fiscal year. Greg Franks was retained in Development to revamp the board of directors. Four new directors have been added and two more may be added. Greg is also working on building a brain trust for the organization and has brought in three members. The RMM was successfully launched by the Circle of Friends business unit with fundraising major event scheduled for October 2005. Training on the RMM module for business units in the Central Coast area scheduled for August 2005. Elimination of the chief of operations and one division director positions toward a more self-managed approach decreased overhead by 11 percent, saving Life Steps \$150,000 per year.	T		
Create new paradigms for growth.	The Management of Change process toward self-sufficiency has increased networking among the business units to explore micro-enterprise opportunities in order to maximize assets that can generate added revenue, e.g., maximizing use of physical plants after program hours, sub-leasing unused space in current offices, consolidating units under one office; using our vehicles after or in between program hours. The Drug and Alcohol unit began selling donated books on the Internet.			T

### Human Resources

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
Increase benefits by reducing costs.	We have added background checking and an attitude test to our screening process in order to decrease turnover and recruitment costs. The aggressive approach to deter Worker's Compensation claims reduced them by 76 percent—from 39 to 8 claims—at the closing of the fiscal year. Intense training on proper transfer and body mechanics are consistently being implemented for new-hires and refresheners are being provided to existing partners working directly with clients..	T		

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
Increase retention and recruitment rates of qualified partners.	Outcomes for the southern and northern areas are at expected levels. The central coast area is still problematic given the shortage of qualified manpower in the area, with an overall turnover for the year of 35%.. The H1B visa project brought in six professionals from the Philippines, who are currently in the central coast area. Another group of expatriates is working toward employment with Life Steps by FY 2006.			T
Strategic business partnering in risk management.	Worker's Compensation claims declined 76% during FY 2005. Workers received intense training, and management is closely monitoring performance for this value driver.	T		
Consolidate standards and procedures for the division.	The Kronos application was fully implemented for the Workforce TimeKeeper (WTK), HRMS and Self Serve Page. The WTK is being fully used. The HRMS and the Self-Serve Page utilization is at approximately 40% of capacity. Bringing utilization up to 85% is the goal for FY 2006.	T		
Implement a corporate wellness plan.	Contracts with local clinics are in place for partners inured on the job and to conduct drug and physical testing as a condition of employment. Consistent training is being provided including first aid training, transfer training, and CPI, for those working with behaviorally involved clients.	T		

## Operations

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
Consolidate implementation of the Management of Change process.	This objective toward self-sufficiency is on schedule and all goals for FY 2005 met at the close of June.	T		
Implementation of TQM	Pilots were conducted in the southern area with the adult and infant units to set up the infra-structure for best practices and standards. The process was successfully completed and implemented with the Infant/Children units. Implementation is partially completed for the adult, aging and drug and alcohol units.			T
Participate actively in the legislative and political processes.	Managers have increased their participation in the process in order to prepare for operating their own business units. They are involved with the network and advocacy groups at the state level, particularly regarding issues related to the disabled, the elderly and	T		

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
	women who abuse substances.			
Standardize operational process to accommodate change.	Taskforces have been formed to further develop criteria and standards for the self-sufficiency management. The purpose is to involve partners in the process of creating the blueprint document that will guide this new approach to business..			T
Maximize fiscal output and use of resources.	Budget projections for FY 2006 were completed. An overall assessment of resource utilization has been conducted, yielding consolidation and savings for some of the business units, particularly in the central coast area. Several of the business units began exploring options to maximize the use of their physical space, manpower, and their vehicles during the programs' off hours. These initiatives are expected to be implemented in FY 2006.	T		

## Division Goals (Specific)

### Adult Services/Infant & Children Services

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
Promote understanding and better access to delivery system for developmentally disabled clients.	Best practices and standards for the Infant/Children units were implemented; they are the provider of choice for funding sources. The process with the Adult Services units, having now completed the necessary pilots, is being implemented across the organization. We predict completion within the next two years.			T
Statewide initiative to increase training, education and communication infrastructure.	The preliminary analysis for the SBC technology project was completed; implementation is scheduled for FY 2006. This will enable us to deploy the SharePoint application and thus fully achieve this goal.			T
Increase knowledge of clients' rights, and participate in advocacy activities with them and on their behalf.	This fiscal year has seen an increased participation by managers in the process. Information has been disseminated consistently, and managers have been encouraged to share it with partners and clients alike, assisting them with proactive steps particularly related to the budget.	T		
Implement TCQM.	Completed for the Infant/Children units. Implementation for the Adult Services units in the southern and northern areas is progressing on schedule. The two units in the central coast area are moving at a slower pace due to their significant restructuring. The restructuring was undertaken to bring both units into compliance with our			T

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
	internal best practices and standards for quality of services and fiscal accountability.			
Revitalization initiative.	Units are on schedule with monthly solvency meetings and action plans to correct their course based on budget projections. Several measures have been implemented re cost savings, consolidation of operations, and micro-enterprise venture exploration.	T		
Maximize use of funded service hours.	We achieved this objective for the southern and northern areas. The central coast area is still working on this goal re the Adult Services and the Aging Services units.			T
Collaborate with other community organizations to consolidate and/or expand services to our clients.	Collaboration through grants and MOUs is an ongoing activity. This past fiscal year two collaborative grants were implemented: 1) the California Endowment Foundation (\$120,000) to finalize planning for the PACE model; and 2) the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (\$99,000) parlayed across the Adult Services and the Aging Services units in the central coast area, bringing developmentally disabled adults into the ADHC under an integrated environment.	T		
Increase market share for specific services in identified geographic areas.	We have re-energized the early intervention program in northern Los Angeles and have created a new program—Family Maintenance—for parenting education, coaching and early intervention; we opened three new sites for the Getting Hip program, which serves autistic pre-teens and adolescents (Los Angeles area); we opened a new site for the Harbor Friendship program, which is a collaborative with Easter Seals.	T		
Work effectively with all support divisions.	The process is on track. Operations and support unit partners are actively participating in taskforces geared toward creating the blueprint for self-sufficiency.	T		

### Aging Services

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
Maximize use of services to 90% through effective marketing approach and use of available resources.	Linkages and the Circle of Friends ADHC in Los Angeles reached 90% of their targets. The ADHC in Santa Maria (Wisdom Center) closed the year with an average of 76%. The ADHC in San Luis Obispo county was closed (April/05) due to inability to reach the financial target within the expected timeframe (3 ½ years in operation). 50% of the clients were transferred to the Santa Maria facility. Linkages Case Management assisted the others in connecting with existing			T

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
	community services in the area.			
Maximize growth so that all services operate at licensed capacity.	Ongoing efforts through consistent outreach and education of the community through face-to-face presentations, the media and advertising, The ADHC unit in Santa Maria is the one still not up to level. Steps have been taken to prioritize this goal for FY/06.			T
Monitor and implement budgets in a fiscally responsible manner.	Accomplished for Circle of Friends and Linkages. The controller is leading an effort to meet targeted objectives for the Wisdom Center in FY 2006.			T
Implement QM consistently.	The process has started for the ADHCs for our internal QM requirements. State requirements are being met.			T
Standardize training and recruitment procedures to stabilize retention and eliminate management by crisis.	Standardization is in place. Linkages and Circle of Friends business units are now stabilized for retention. FY 2006 will focus on consistent implementation for the ADHCs, particularly the unit in Santa Maria.	T		
Standardize operational procedures and processes for the division through consistent training.	Process accomplished for Linkages. The ADHCs are still in progress. Circle of Friends shows noticeable progress. Goal to be achieved in FY 2006.			T
Monitor and participate in legislative/political processes re client advocacy.	All units are very active in this area.	T		
Deepen the culture of the organization while promoting wellness within the working environment.	Under new leadership, substantial progress was observed at Circle of Friends. George Alves, the new manager, has rallied his partners around common goals, anchored in the organization's culture, and the team is moving successfully toward self-sufficiency.			T

### *Drug and Alcohol Services*

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
Deepen the culture of	Collaboration with TCQM is now solidly in place. D&A is	T		

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
the organization by implementing the Management of Change process.	also collaborating with human resources and the accounting units. The unit began exploring collaborative ventures with the Adult Services and the Aging Services units in the central coast.			
Establish Life Steps as the preferred provider.	<p>FY 2005 was a very strong marketing year for Pasos de Vida. It was awarded a grant through the Department of Labor (DOL) with the assistance of Chairman Bill Thomas's office. The grant targets computer training and Microsoft certification for women in recovery from substance abuse. Under Life Steps' leadership, the one-year grant of \$248,000 is a collaborative with the D&amp;A Department, community agencies and Cuesta College in the San Luis Obispo area.</p> <p>The program was also awarded a \$120,000 grant from the Hoag Foundation for a five-bedroom modular house to function as a transition house for women who have completed treatment. The Pasos de Vida program also received several small local grants, and was the site chosen by the Drug Czar Office to launch the federal government voucher program initiative to help women move back into the community after treatment. Dee Krogh, the unit manager, received the Woman of Excellence award from the Santa Maria's Women's Network in recognition for the significant work done with substance abuse issues. All these events generated substantial press and thus increased awareness of our services in the area.</p> <p>The unit maintained its average 75-85 percent of clients without relapse once treatment was completed.</p>	T		
Achieve and maintain fiscal solvency; maximize financial output.	County and state funding were not affected by additional cuts during this fiscal year. The unit started a small enterprise through book sales on the Internet and is exploring how to maximize use of its vehicles to enhance transportation in that rural area (collaboration with Adult Services and Aging Services units). It will be gearing its efforts toward fund raising in FY 2006 (Raising More Money module) in order to ensure they meet their self-sufficiency goals.	T		T
Implement QM on a consistent basis.	The unit began work with TCQM to prepare the Pasos de Vida program for becoming a training site for other professionals (Emerging Training). This is a three-year plan; when finalized it will generate revenue for the unit.			T
Standardize training and operational procedures toward greater efficiency.	We will address this goal in FY 2006.		T	

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
Increase the profile of Life Steps in the community by speaking out re pertinent issues and by speaking on behalf of the clients we serve.	The unit effectively represented Life Steps in several taskforces and committees at local and state levels.	T		
Ensure that projects operate at capacity through increased communication with referral agencies.	Demand continues to be high. Life Steps currently has the only two residential programs for women with children serving the San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties.	T		

## Support Divisions

### *Best Practices and Standards-TCQM*

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
Develop and standardize training modules and processes specific to target populations.	All goals for FY 2005 were achieved. Please refer to the Entrepreneurial Leadership Goals document.	T		
Develop continuous learning resources that build core knowledge and capabilities.	FY 2005 was the second year of a collaborative with Taiwan for training physical therapists and early childhood interventionists. This collaboration also involved the Infant/Children unit. The SBC project, in FY 2006, will help us establish our e-learning system to expand our capability for training internally and externally.			T
Develop best practices and standards specific to services and clients.	On target. The Infant/Children units are completed. The Adult Services and Aging Services units are on schedule for FY 2006.			T
Establish the division's clinical and quality management infrastructures.	Achieved all targets established for FY 2005.	T		
Implement TCQM across the organization.	The process has taken root; goals for FY 2005 have all been accomplished.	T		
Generate statistics	Some preliminary work was done. The infrastructure is			T

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
that help managers set the course for quality deliverables.	being developed as part of the SBC project to enlarge the scope and establish a computerized system for various data collection.			
Develop wraparound packages.	The focus was mostly internal for this fiscal year. The Infant/Children units have completed the packages and several components are in place for the Adult Services units.			T

### Development

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
Strengthen board of directors as a fund-raising body.	The board added four new directors. Committing the board to this goal will start in earnest in FY 2006.			T
Establish an effective database and trend analysis process to maximize fund-raising activities and cultivation of donors.	The Convio system implemented was not effective, so we discontinued it. A new system has been planned in tandem with the SBC project for FY 2006.		T	
Brand the organization for statewide name recognition.	During FY 2005 preliminary work was done toward changing the color and settings to better fit the self-sufficiency model of affiliates. It will be implemented for FY 2006. No change in the logo.	T		
Increase the visibility of Life Steps in the local communities.	Significant work for the Drug and Alcohol unit. The Circle of Friends ADHC in Los Angeles began a community outreach process to prepare for their major fund-raising event in FY 2006.	T		
Research micro-enterprises to promote financial self-sufficiency.	It has gained momentum among the units. Social Dynamics has taken bold steps in exploring possible enterprises scheduled to start in FY 2006.			T
Wraparound packages.	The first of these packages was initiated as a pilot for fund-raising purposes. The RMM model began implementation with the Circle of Friends ADHC and is scheduled for dissemination across the units during FY 2006.			T

### Human Resources

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
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Develop and implement effective database system to allow for proper tracking of records and trend analysis.	The Kronos application is operational. One of the components—Workforce Time Keeper—is being fully implemented as a time logging and billing tool. Savings have been achieved by increasing time efficiency with accuracy and delays. The second component—HRMS and Self-Serve Page—are being used at 45% capacity. The goal for FY 2006 is to bring that usage up to 85% by intensifying training of partners and consistent follow-up.			T
Increase recruitment resources, methods and retention techniques in order to decrease turnover by 30 percent.	Recruitment goals were met in the northern and southern areas but failed to achieve results in the central coast. Turnover in the central coast averaged 35% for the FY 2005. Considering the external challenges of the area—lack of qualified man power and the constraining budgetary steps taken during this fiscal year to yield results in FY 2006—we are importing H1B visa workers from the Philippines as we did in FY 2004 and are approaching the regional center in the area to renegotiate rates for the Adult Services units. The Infant/Children unit succeeded in renegotiating its rate in FY 2005.			T
Increase health and awareness practices through consistent training and incentives.	Significant progress was made in this sector with Worker's Compensation incidents decreasing by 76 percent.	T		

### Financial

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
Research and implement an efficient accounting software system.	Great Plains was successfully implemented.	T		
Contract for overall assessment of division to maximize staff utilization and operation output.	Accomplished in FY 2004.	T		
Develop process to handle revenue generated by increased donations and fund-raising activities.	Separate accounts have been established for each business unit under the restrict or unrestrict categories. Goal has been met.	T		
Establish an effective communication and	Accomplished.	T		

Five-Year Goal	Comments	Yes	No	In Progress
monitoring system to ensure prompt delivery of financial data.				