



PANHANDLE PARTNERSHIP

Rooted in Frontier Spirit, Committed to the Future

2022

Annual Report

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panhandlepartnership.com

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The image is a vertical composition. The top portion shows a sunset sky with soft, pinkish-orange clouds. On the right side, a prominent, layered rock formation or cliff face is visible against the sky. A dark blue horizontal band spans the middle of the image, containing the text 'Mission & Vision' in white, bold, sans-serif font. The bottom portion of the image shows a wide, green field with several covered wagons or carts, suggesting a historical or pioneer theme. The background of the field is a hilly, grassy landscape under a clear sky.

Mission & Vision



Who We Are

We are a non-profit, membership-based organization serving the eleven counties of the Nebraska Panhandle. Since 1998, we have served as a catalyst for collaboration in the development of creative opportunities for enhancing family and community life in Western Nebraska.

Mission

We build collaboration among agencies, networks and the broader community to find creative solutions to improve quality of life and communities in the Panhandle.

Vision

Collective impact for thriving and equitable panhandle communities.

Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge that we gather on the ancestral lands of our Očéti Šakówiŋ and Cheyenne relatives, the original caretakers of this water & land. We honor and pay respect to our Očéti Šakówiŋ and Cheyenne relatives and their Elders-past, present and emerging. We also honor and pay respect to our Arapaho and Pawnee relatives in acknowledgement of the neighboring lands in which many of us live and work.

For more information about Panhandle Partnership or to become a member, please email info@panhandlepartnership.com or visit <https://panhandlepartnership.com>.

Board of Directors

Daniel Bennett - Civic Nebraska

Karen Benzel - United Way of Western Nebraska

Brenda Brooks - Department of Health and Human Services

Kim Engel - Panhandle Public Health District

Mandy Fertig - Aging Office of Western Nebraska

Nici Johnson - Educational Service Unit # 13

Jonnie Kusek - Senior Services Inc.

Liz MacDonald - Panhandle Public Health District

Melissa Misegadis - Guardian Light Family Services

Sandy Montague-Roes - Western Community Health Resources

Valeria Rodriguez - Empowering Families

Katie Samples Dean - Samples Dean Law

Paulette Schnell - Scotts Bluff County Health Department

Staff

Faith Mills
Executive Director



Connor Wilburn
Operations Coordinator



Letter from PPI Executive Director Faith Mills

As 2022 comes to a close, I find myself reflecting on how rewarding it's been. I've carved out some time for personal and professional development and I've engaged in some work with The Modern Elder Academy and the Inner MBA Program. They have provided me many opportunities to tell people across the country, even around the world, about the Panhandle Partnership. I often talk about how we're the conductor of the band and we help our partners get the best sound—the best outcomes—possible. We help fine tune harmonies by cultivating collaboration. I talk about how you all are the talent making the music and we are your support. I also talk about the hard work and countless hours that were invested in laying a foundation of trust and creating an expectation of collaboration. Recently, I was sharing these stories with a small group of people in Zoom squares on my tablet and one woman said "It's the Panhandle way. You've created a culture." I thought to myself, "Yes! She gets it!" We have created a culture. We do it the Panhandle Way.

On this journey, I've also been introduced to Lynne Twist, global activist, fundraiser, and author. She speaks about nonprofits as social profits. She replaces deficit language that defines us by what we don't do with empowering language that celebrates what we actually do. Our work profits our society. Our communities are better because of the work we do. Don't be surprised if you hear me referring to the Panhandle Partnership as a social profit. I'm trying it on to see if it fits.

How fortunate are we to live and work in the Panhandle? How fortunate are we to have true multi-county, multi-agency systems working diligently to invest in young children, support older youth, reduce suicide and substance abuse, address affordable housing and homelessness, and provide respite for our caregivers. We are so fortunate.

Thank you all for being members of this band. Thank you for your passion and dedication to your work. Thank you for being instrumental in collaborating the Panhandle Way.



Letter from PPI Board President Karen Benzel

Collaboration. Facilitation. Backbone. Networking. These four words describe the heart and central purpose of Panhandle Partnership, Inc.

Collaboration. The mission of PPI is “to build collaboration among agencies, networks and the broader community to find creative solutions to improve the quality of life and communities in the Panhandle.” The Partnership is living this mission day in and day out. From the quarterly membership meetings to spearheading the revitalization of the Panhandle Coalition for Homeless and Housing (formerly Continuum of Care), PPI is a connector to collaborative partnerships.

Facilitation. PPI facilitates partnerships and brings people together for a common purpose. That sometimes is in the form of having a seat at the table to gather information to bring back to its members and enabling partnerships to facilitating small and large meetings all for the benefit of the members of the Partnership.

Backbone. PPI is a Backbone organization. Creating the structure to support their member agencies. Serving as a fiscal agent for both large and small grants and providing the resources to bring in large scale trainings. Growing the Training Academy and most recently the organization of the Bridges Out of Poverty Trainings that is culminating in training local Bridges Out of Poverty Facilitators this Spring 2023. PPI is a true backbone organization.

Networking. Every Partnership meeting provides the opportunity to network with PPI members in the local region and across the state. The Partnership provides the opportunity to connect with others that are working on similar projects or those projects or programs that may interest you or your agency. Networking opportunities is a key component for joining and being an active participant with Panhandle Partnership.

The work of the Partnership has remained steadfast over the last few years with a few changes in the mechanisms of delivery (as did many of our members). As we are back to in person meetings and virtual options when appropriate, Panhandle Partnership, Inc is there every step of the way encouraging collaboration among members, inviting new members to join PPI and working together in new ways that benefit Western Nebraska. It has been my privilege to serve the Partnership and members these last two years as Board President and I encourage the membership to explore the opportunities that being part of the Partnership create through collaboration, facilitation, networking and the support of the Panhandle Partnership, Inc as a backbone organization for the community of the Nebraska Panhandle.



Collective Impact



ABOUT COLLECTIVE IMPACT^{3,4}

Collective Impact (CI) does not mean collaboration. It is, in fact, a very specific type of collaboration that requires five conditions to be met. Without any of these elements in place, a collaboration is not performing the Collective Impact process. These conditions are:

- 1 COMMON AGENDA**
Collective impact requires all participants to have a shared vision for change, one that includes a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions.
- 2 SHARED MEASUREMENT**
Collecting data and measuring results consistently on a short list of indicators at the community level and across all participating organizations not only ensures that all efforts remain aligned, it also enables the participants to hold each other accountable and learn from each other's successes and failures.
- 3 MUTUALLY REINFORCING ACTIVITIES**
Each participant in the collaborative undertakes a specific set of activities at which it excels, in a way that supports and is coordinated with the actions of others.
- 4 CONTINUOUS COMMUNICATION**
Regular meetings and other tech-based communications to develop a shared vocabulary, build trust, and ensure sustainable coordination of activities.
- 5 BACKBONE ORGANIZATION**
Creating and managing collective impact requires a separate organization and staff with a very specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative. Coordination takes time, and none of the participating organizations has any to spare. The expectation that collaboration can occur without a supporting infrastructure is one of the most frequent reasons why it fails. The Panhandle Partnership acts as the backbone organization for enhancing family and community life in Panhandle.



COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN THE PANHANDLE

Collective impact in the Panhandle occurs through collaboration of many community organizations, coordinated in large part by the Panhandle Partnership via Work Groups and Member Organizations. This collaboration occurs in cascading levels.

COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN THE NEBRASKA PANHANDLE

SHARED MEASURES

PANHANDLE PARTNERSHIP

Backbone Organization



Coordinate Continuous Communication



COMMON AGENDA

Building collaboration among agencies, networks and the broader community to find creative solutions to improve the quality of life of people and communities in the Panhandle.

WORK GROUPS

with mutually reinforcing activities

- Panhandle Coalition for Housing & Homelessness
- Juvenile Justice
- Connected Youth Initiative 14-24 (CYI)
- Social Enterprise
- Lifespan Respite
- Panhandle Prevention Coalition (PPC)
- Systems of Care Birth to Eight

PARTNERS

Panhandle Partnership Member Organizations

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Constituents of the 11-County Panhandle Region
Banner | Box Butte | Cheyenne | Dawes | Deuel | Garden
Kimball | Morrill | Scotts Bluff | Sheridan | Sioux

VISION & STRATEGY



ACTION PLANNING



EXECUTION



PUBLIC WILL

COMMON AGENDA

The overarching goal in the Panhandle is to build collaboration among agencies, networks and the broader community to find creative solutions to improve the quality of life of people and communities in the Panhandle.

The collective impact work in the Panhandle currently falls into the following areas of focus:

- Behavioral Health
 - Mental Health and Well-Being
 - Substance Use and Abuse
- Education
- Early Childhood
- Child Well-Being
- Juvenile Justice
- Older Youth
- Poverty
- Community Revitalization
- Housing and Homelessness

These areas of focus arose from needs identified in the area as well as opportunities for funding. These areas of focus are ever changing as the Panhandle identifies additional needs and puts programs and strategies in place.



SHARED MEASUREMENT

Through creation of logic models for each work group, data indicators were identified. These data indicators were used to create a Dashboard for each work group that show the interconnected and mutually reinforcing indicators across the efforts. Dashboards can be found on the Partnership website.

- Work Group Dashboards:
 - Panhandle Coalition for Housing and Homelessness
 - Juvenile Justice
 - Connected Youth Initiative 14-24 (CYI)
 - Lifespan Respite
 - Panhandle Prevention Coalition (PPC)
 - Systems of Care Birth to Eight

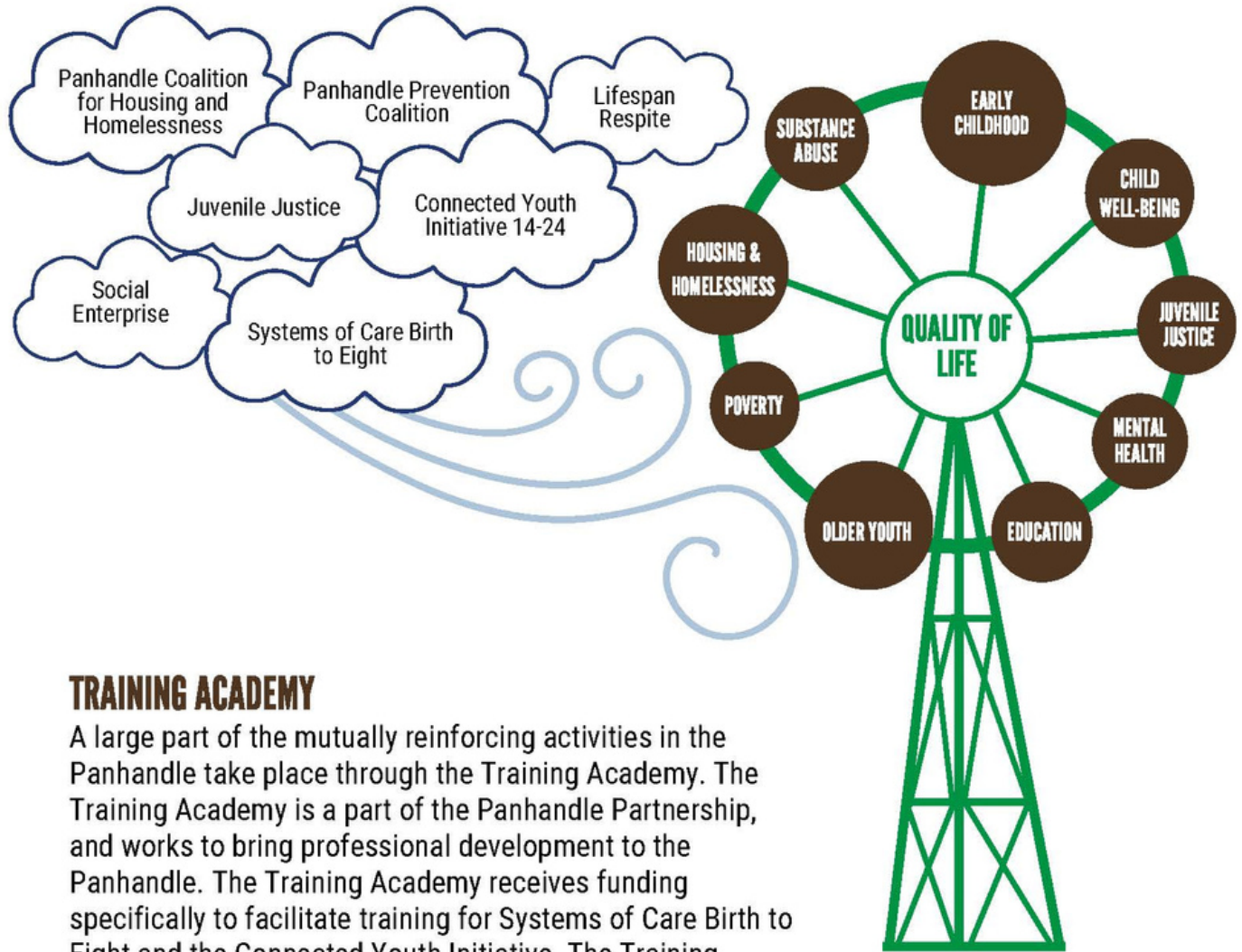
Currently, measurement focuses on the work groups only. In the next phase of development of the evaluation of collective impact in the Panhandle, Partnership member organization work will be identified and indicators added where appropriate.





MUTUALLY REINFORCING ACTIVITIES

As data indicators were identified for each work group, mutually reinforcing activities were also identified. These activities may be different, but work toward the same goals.



TRAINING ACADEMY

A large part of the mutually reinforcing activities in the Panhandle take place through the Training Academy. The Training Academy is a part of the Panhandle Partnership, and works to bring professional development to the Panhandle. The Training Academy receives funding specifically to facilitate training for Systems of Care Birth to Eight and the Connected Youth Initiative. The Training Academy also receives broader funds to bring in trainings for the entire Panhandle based on needs identified and what is offered in metropolitan areas that would not normally be offered in the Panhandle. Additionally, member organizations and outside entities may use the Training Academy to coordinate professional development in the region.

Many of the trainings offered through the Training Academy offer education cross-cutting a variety of focus areas. For example, while Motivational Interviewing may be offered as a request of the Connected Youth Initiative, it is also a good training for workers with a focus in other areas.

CONTINUOUS COMMUNICATION

The Panhandle Partnership holds quarterly meetings to which all member organizations are invited. Work group progress is shared out at these meetings, as well as opportunities for collaboration and other current happenings in the region.

The Panhandle Partnership also coordinates email updates through various listservs. These updates include reminders for upcoming trainings, opportunities for collaboration, meetings, and more.

Each work group holds meetings on a regular basis, generally on a monthly or quarterly schedule.

The Panhandle region is rooted in collaboration, and many member organizations collaborate on projects outside of meetings specifically facilitated by the Panhandle Partnership.





BACKBONE ORGANIZATION

The Panhandle Partnership brings the Collective Impact approach to the Nebraska Panhandle to integrate services across the region, maximize financial resources, and align efforts towards common goals. As the backbone agency, the Panhandle Partnership coordinates the interactions between collaborative partners. There are a variety of sanctioned work groups to which funding flows through the Panhandle Partnership:

- Panhandle Coalition for Housing and Homelessness
- Juvenile Justice
- Connected Youth Initiative 14-24 (CYI)
- Lifespan Respite
- Panhandle Prevention Coalition (PPC)
- Systems of Care Birth to Eight

The collaborative is also made up of member organizations that represent a variety of health and human services areas.





Training Academy



Training Academy Mission

To build an upwardly mobile workforce with **local** talent by providing credible, meaningful, consistent and **affordable** professional development opportunities that results in an **extraordinary** service system.

What we can do for you

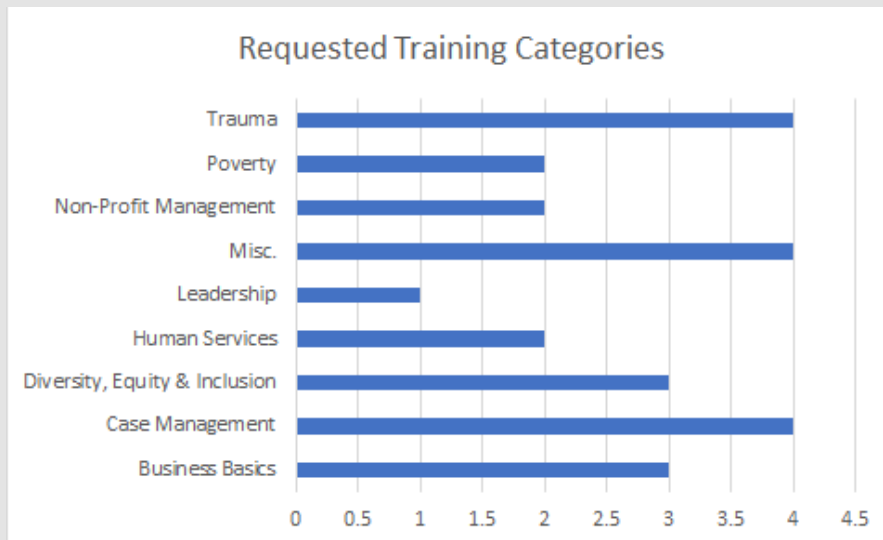
Panhandle Partnership can provide financial, administrative and event management support for a member's training or conference. Contact us to get started!

- Comprehensive Event Registration
- Event Logistical Planning
- Marketing & Promotion
- Materials and Certificates
- Technological Logistics

Email info@panhandlepartnership.com for more info.

Future of the Training Academy

We are exploring innovative strategies to grow our Training Academy in ways that will expand its reach and make it self-sustaining. We've begun this process by surveying current members to gain insight into what training is needed.




Our goal for the upcoming year is to increase the frequency of trainings as well as include more value added training for the business sector.

Bridges Out of Poverty

"This is an incredibly valuable training and our area benefits gaining this information."





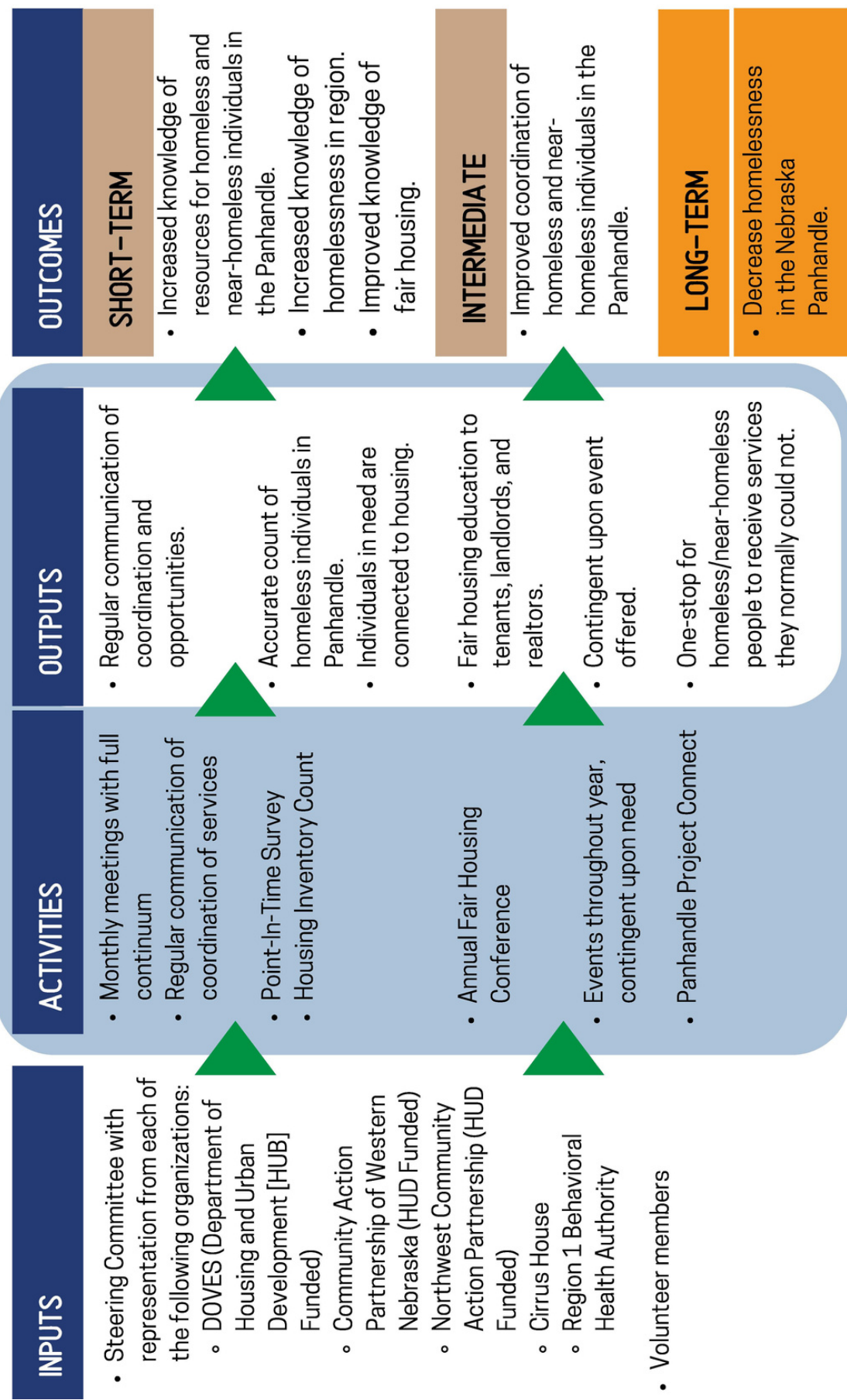
Collaborative Systems

COMMON AGENDA

The Panhandle Coalition for Housing and Homelessness is a collaboration of agencies throughout the Panhandle who are committed to serving homeless or near homeless individuals and families in our community. They are also working together to eliminate and prevent homelessness throughout the Panhandle.



Panhandle Coalition for Housing and Homelessness



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CONNECTED YOUTH INITIATIVE 14-24 (CYI)



COMMON AGENDA

Coordinate and align services of agencies serving unconnected youth ages 14-24.

ACTIVITIES

YOUTH LEADERSHIP

- **Why:** Unconnected youth do not have similar opportunities to learn and exhibit leadership.
- **Who:** Unconnected Youth (young people ages 14-24 who have been in foster care, but are not aging out of the system to qualify for Bridges to Independence, and youth who have received in home & out of home services from the Department of Health and Human Services as a result of abuse or neglect, and youth who have multiple system involvement (Department of Health and Human Services, juvenile justice, mental health, and/or homeless/near homeless with unmet needs) without traditional leadership opportunities.
- **How:** Through 1) Youth Leadership Institute 2) Youth in Leadership 3) Service learning 4) Activities.

TRANSITIONAL SERVICES

- **Why:** Filling gaps that exist in available resources and transitional services.
- **Who:** Panhandle providers.
- **How:** Developed from original asset maps.

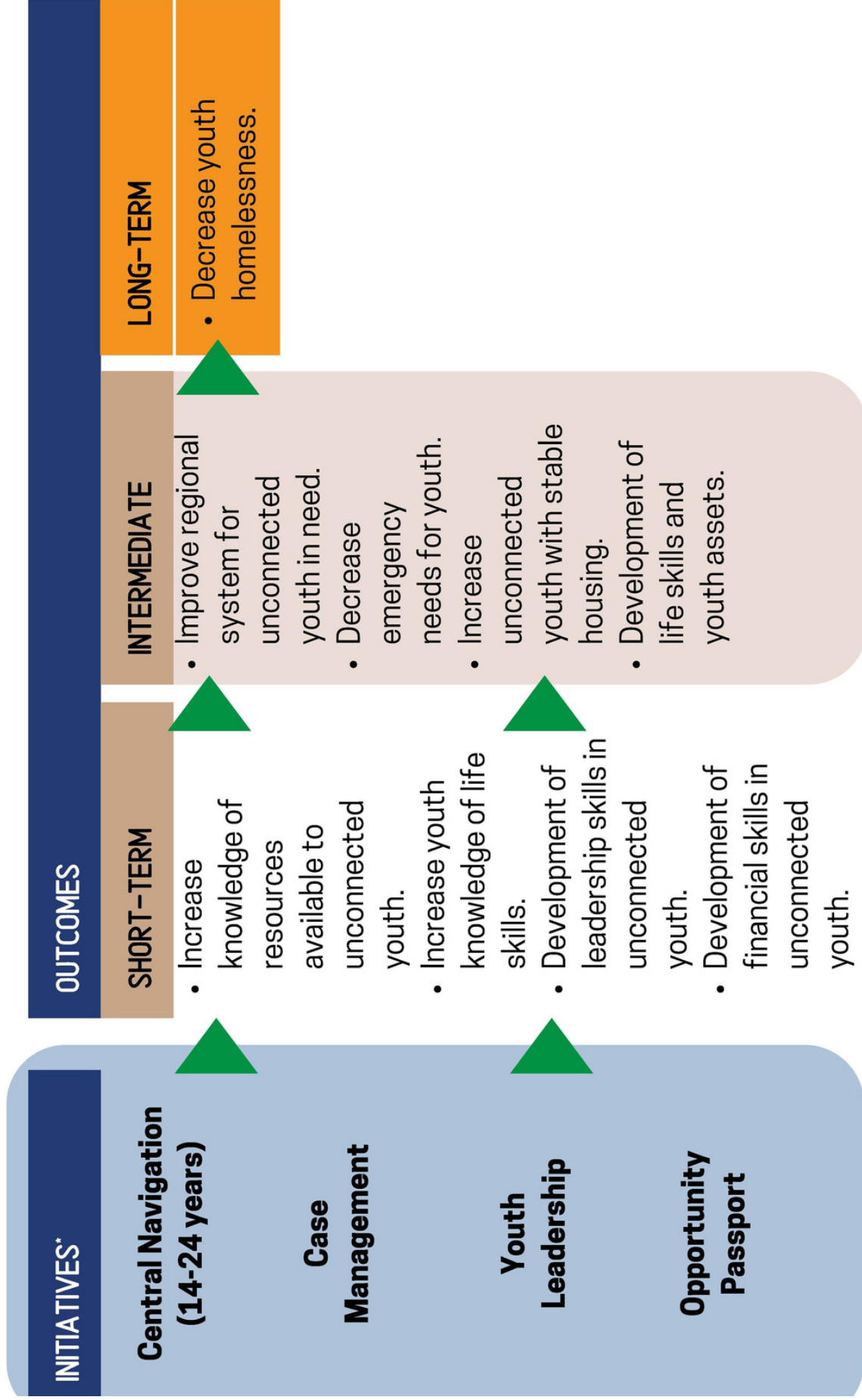
OPPORTUNITY PASSPORT

- **Why:** Financial case management has been identified as a significant need for unconnected youth.
- **Who:** Embedded financial case management through training in Panhandle agencies who serve unconnected youth.
- **How:** Transitional process beginning with basic education around money that moves towards asset acquisition-specific training.

REGIONAL TRAINING PLAN

- Developed during collective meetings with all providers present.
- Agency and system needs identified.
 - Overlapping of needs are often discovered.
 - Trainings are rolled out to meet these needs.

CONNECTED YOUTH INITIATIVE



COORDINATE AND ALIGN SERVICES OF AGENCIES SERVING UNCONNECTED YOUTH AGES 14-24

Respite provides caregivers of those with long term or lifelong disabilities of any age an opportunity to have some time away from their caregiving duties. A respite break can be as short as a few hours or as long as a couple of days or weeks. The Panhandle Partnership Respite Program is one of six Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network Sites. The Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network offers information & referral services for families & potential or current respite providers.

Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network connects caregivers with information about appropriate respite services in their local area. It assists with names & phone numbers of respite providers or assists families who have selected their own provider with the information to have their provider become approved.

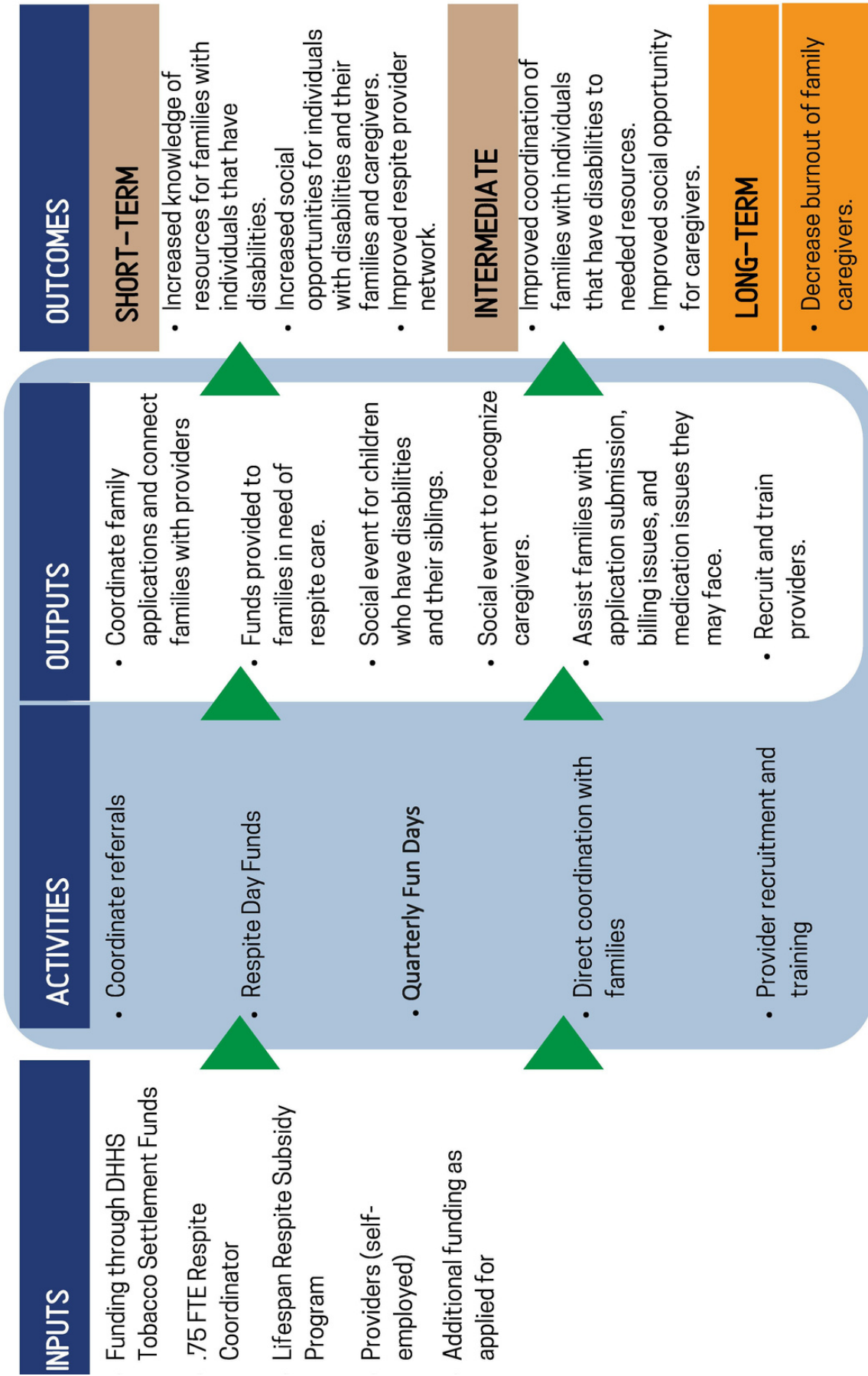
Respite can occur in many different ways & places depending on the needs of the caregiver & the person they are caring for. Respite can occur:

- In the family's home
- In the provider's home
- At a child care facility
- With a licensed child care provider
- At a long-term care facility
- At community organizations the care recipient is able to connect with, such as Buckboard Therapeutic Riding Academy or the YMCA

The respite coordinator assists families with their individual needs.



LIFESPAN RESPITE – WESTERN NEBRASKA



RESPITE PROVIDES CAREGIVERS OF THOSE WITH LONG TERM OR LIFELONG DISABILITIES AN OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE SOME TIME AWAY FROM THEIR CARE GIVING DUTIES.

The Panhandle Prevention Coalition is united together by a passion and dedication to improve the health and safety of western Nebraska residents across the lifespan.

The purpose is to reduce the impact of substance use and abuse, including underage drinking, binge drinking, drinking and driving, tobacco use, drug use, and prescription drug abuse, while promoting and supporting mental and emotional health for all in the Panhandle.

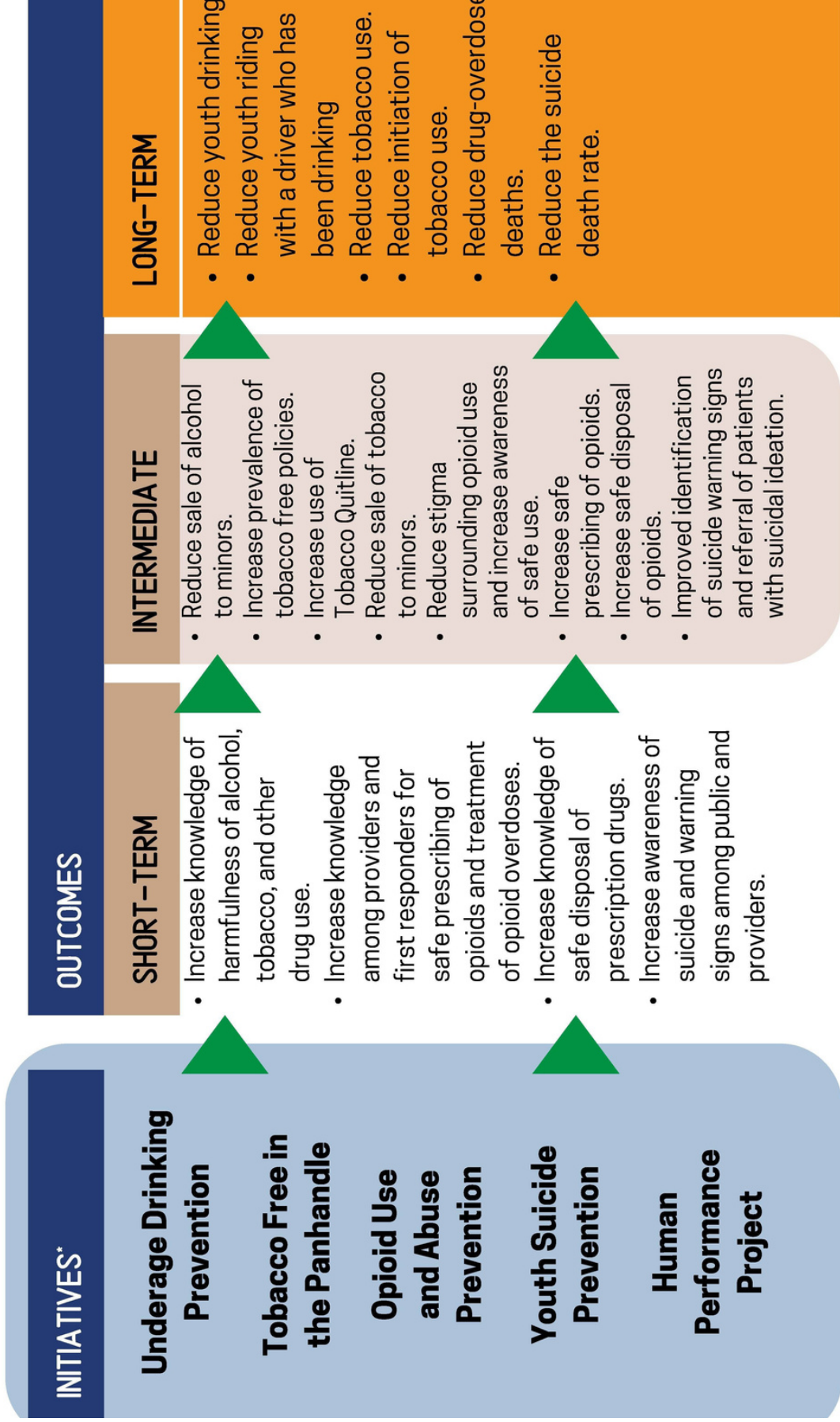
WE DO THIS BY

- Seeking policy change at the local and state levels to reduce youth access to alcohol, tobacco, and other substances.
- Collaborating with law enforcement to facilitate, fund, and standardize compliance checks, beverage server training, and sobriety checks.
- Educating and generating awareness about the dangers of substance use and abuse.
- Ongoing collaboration between practitioners, experts, and leaders across the continuum of care.





PANHANDLE PREVENTION COALITION



OUR PURPOSE IS TO REDUCE THE IMPACT OF SUBSTANCE USE AND ABUSE INCLUDING UNDERAGE DRINKING, BINGE DRINKING, DRINKING AND DRIVING, TOBACCO USE, DRUG USE, AND PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE, WHILE PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH FOR ALL IN THE PANHANDLE.

SYSTEMS OF CARE BIRTH TO EIGHT



COMMON AGENDA

Build collaboration among agencies, networks, and the broader community to find innovative solutions to improve the quality of life for families with young children and their communities in the Panhandle.

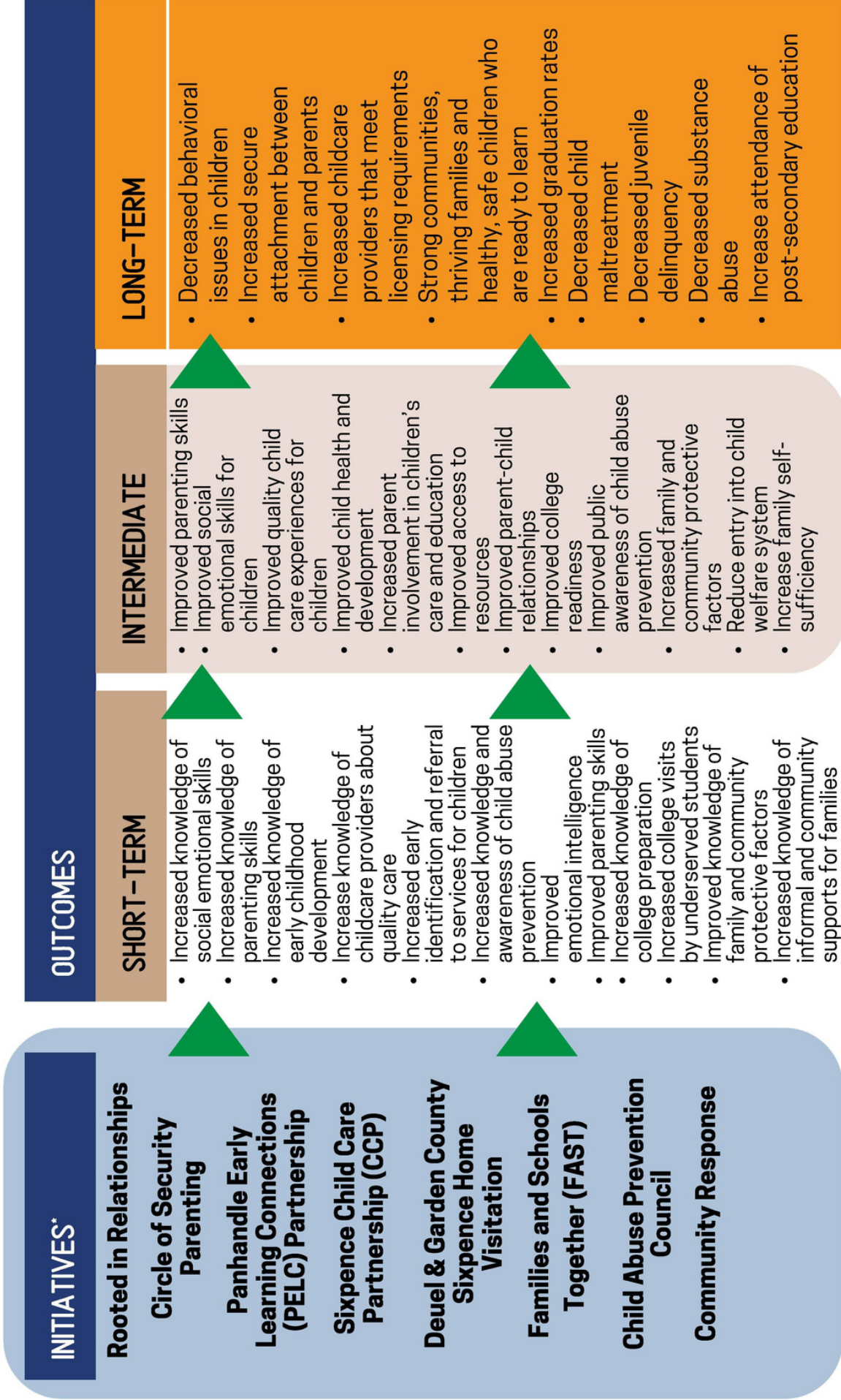
EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM PROGRAMS

- **Circle of Security-Parenting**
- **Communities for Kids**
- **Preschool Development Grant**
- **Families and Students Together (FAST):** FAST is a family support service currently modeled in Chadron, NE that offers multifamily group interventions designed to build relationships between families, schools, and communities. FAST is a parent-child evidence-based project for children moving from preschool to kindergarten and for elementary aged children and their families.
- **Rooted in Relationships Rooted in Relationships (RiR)** is a statewide initiative that partners with communities to implement evidence-based practices that enhance the social-emotional development of children, birth through age 8. RiR supports communities to implement the Pyramid Model, a framework of evidence-based practices that promotes the social, emotional, and behavioral competence of young children in selected family child care homes and child care centers.

EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM ENHANCEMENTS

- **Access:** Community Response is the actions a community takes to develop a system of resources and services which strengthen families, build protective factors, and enhance access to prevention resources. Community Response dollars are intended to address resource gaps in a community's existing services and to not supplant these resources. The Community Response process requires the broad-based collaboration of agencies committed to working together to access all available resources. The intended population for Community Response is families with children 0-14 years of age who are at risk for entering higher end systems of care due to an assessed risk of abuse or neglect.
- **Professional Development:** Regional Training Plan
- **Assessment and Planning:** Ongoing assessment of community needs is part of the work of Systems of Care: Birth-8.

SYSTEMS OF CARE BIRTH-8



BUILD COLLABORATION AMONG AGENCIES, NETWORKS, AND THE BROADER COMMUNITY TO FIND INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN AND THEIR COMMUNITIES IN THE PANHANDLE.



Organizational Members

Aging Office of Western Nebraska
 Ancova Empowerment Project
 Banisters Leadership Academy
 Bayard Public Schools
 CAPstone Child Advocacy Center
 CASA of Scotts Bluff County
 Central Plains Center For Services
 Chadron Community Hospital
 Chadron Public Schools
 Chadron State College
 Chappell Community Development
 Cirrus House
 City of Scottsbluff
 City of Gering Administration
 Civic Nebraska
 Community Action Partnership of
 Western Nebraska
 Department of Health and Human
 Services
 Department of Labor
 Disability Rights Nebraska
 The DOVES Program
 Educational Service Unit 13
 Empowering Families
 Gering Public Schools
 Guardian Light Family Services
 Healthy Blue Nebraska
 Housing Partners of Western
 Nebraska Immigrant Legal Center
 Inclusive Communities
 Independence Rising
 Legal Aid Nebraska
 Lutheran Family Services
 Mediation West
 MENTOR Nebraska
 Midwest Theater
 Minatare Public Schools
 Mobius Communications
 Monument Prevention Coalition

Nebraska Children's Home Society
 Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and
 Hard of Hearing
 Nebraska Foster & Adoptive Parent
 Association
 Nebraska Panhandle Area Health Ed
 Center
 Nebraska Safety Council
 Nebraska SHIP
 Nebraska Total Care
 Northwest Community Action Partnership
 Options in Psychology
 OutNebraska
 Panhandle Area Development District
 Panhandle Equality
 Panhandle Public Health District
 Panhandle Trails Intercity Public Transit
 Region 1 Office of Human Development
 Region 1 Behavioral Health Authority
 Region 22 Emergency Management
 Regional West Medical Center
 Scotts Bluff County Cooperative Ministry
 Council
 Scottsbluff Public Schools
 Snow-Redfern Foundation
 State of Nebraska - UNL
 United Way of Western Nebraska
 UNL Panhandle Extension Center
 UNMC Munroe-Meyer Institute
 Valley Youth Connections
 Volunteers of America
 Western Community Health Resources
 Western Nebraska Community College

Individual Members

Cindy Osborne	Kimberly Dreyer
Julie Eckland	Roger Wess
Katie Samples Dean	Shawna Rishling
Sonjia Serda	Joan Cromer