

2021

PANHANDLE PARTNERSHIP, INC. ANNUAL REPORT



PANHANDLE PARTNERSHIP

Rooted in Frontier Spirit. Committed to the Future.

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A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Karen Benzel
President

2021 brought many challenges and obstacles to the way we collaborate in the Panhandle and Panhandle Partnership rose to the task! PPI found new ways to support its members, continued to provide networking opportunities, supported the work of the membership and offered many great programs through the Training Academy.

Our mission "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" was never more evident as being accomplish than during this past year. PPI did not miss a beat in continuing the work in the Panhandle. This can be attributed to our Executive Director (thank you Faith!), active board and all the members that believe in the collaboration of the Partnership and continue to work together for a better Panhandle.

This year, we welcome new operations coordinator, Connor Wilburn, who in his short time has jumped right into the work of the Partnership with both feet. Thank you to all our members that believe in the work of the Partnership and that continue to serve our great panhandle community and readily adapt to change in order to serve the community. I look forward to continuing the work of the Partnership and to see how PPI meets the needs of their members. I wish you all the best as 2021 draws to a close and hope for a less socially distant 2022!

A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Partners,

I continue to be amazed at the incredible work being done in the Panhandle to better the lives of all people by working toward thriving and equitable communities. Audre Lorde said, "Tomorrow belongs to those of us who conceive of it as belonging to everyone; who lend the best of ourselves to it, and with joy." I am so fortunate and so proud to serve with individuals and agencies that conceive of a future that belongs to everyone. I am humbled and inspired to continually see people lend the best of themselves to the work. As I reflect on the year and look to tomorrow, I do so with joy and a grateful heart. Thank you all for the head, hand and heart work you do!

"If you want to be a true professional, you will do something outside yourself, something to make life a little better for people less fortunate than you. A meaningful life means one lives not just for one's self, but for one's community."

-Ruth Bader Ginsburg



Faith Mills
Executive Director

OVERVIEW

Who We Are

We are a non-profit, membership-based organization serving the eleven counties of the Nebraska Panhandle.

What We Do

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

Why We Do It

Rooted in frontier cooperative spirit, we believe in collective impact for thriving and equitable panhandle communities.

Please visit <https://panhandlepartnership.com/about-us/partnership-members> if you are interested in becoming a Partnership member.



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 is the Training Academy?

The **Training Academy** employs regional training plans, coordinated curriculum development and assists agencies in grant compliance for trainings.

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

Contact: info@panhandlepartnership.com



**Western Nebraska
Community College**



System Collaborators

CONNECTED YOUTH INITIATIVE

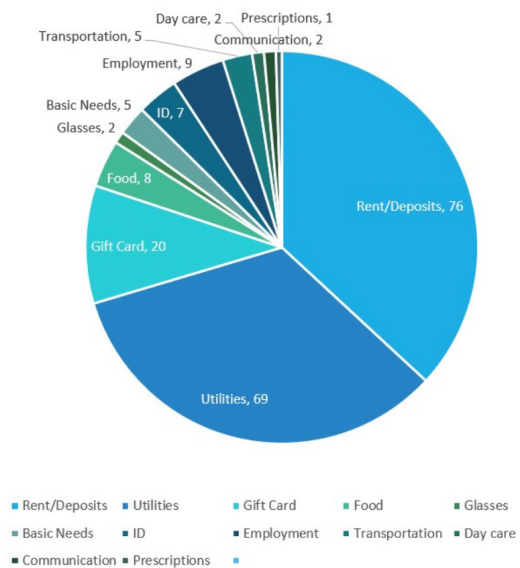
The Connected Youth Initiative seeks to build Connected Youth Communities and collaborations across rural Nebraska to help unconnected young people ages 14-26 with experience in the foster care and/or juvenile justice systems, those who are experiencing or have experienced homelessness, or who are otherwise disconnected from a family structure.

2021 introduced challenges around providing affordable, habitable housing and also limited how many youth could participate in our Opportunity Passport Program. During these times we have increased our collaboration and communication with our partners including Panhandle Coalition for Housing and Homelessness where we address and find solutions to alleviate these issues. We also provided an online classroom model for our Opportunity Passport program to continue providing a supportive service to young people.

In the coming year, we hope to add more partners to increase our reach. Additionally we have been devising ways to not have to keep young people in motels for extended periods of time while they are trying to find permanent housing.

Supportive Services Assistance

243 total referrals from October 2020 to September 2021



One participant, with her match, was able to pay off debt from her son's medical expenses for which her wages were being garnished.



KEY PROGRAMS

- Youth Leadership & Service Learning
- Opportunity Passport
- Transitional Services
- Youth Thrive
- Connected Youth Host Home Program

PANHANDLE COALITION FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS



PANHANDLE COALITION

FOR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

The Panhandle Coalition for Housing and Homelessness is a collaboration of agencies that are committed to serving the homeless or near homeless population in the Panhandle. Striving to eliminate and prevent homelessness is at the forefront of this initiative.

Emergency housing has continued to be our center issue for the panhandle. We've encountered barriers through funding, program management, and covering the overall vast area of the panhandle.

To combat these issues, we have been meeting regularly with community stakeholders to discuss solutions and explore all of our available resources. We have also been educating stakeholders on one defined criteria for homeless. This helps us narrow down and identify individuals who need our assistance the most.

In 2021 we have been able to effectively engage with more stakeholders. Going into 2022, we would like to bring back the Housing Conference to provide even more resources to persons in the panhandle. We will continue to engage in planning for emergency and permanent housing options. We also would like to increase awareness through a media campaign and increase coalition participation numbers.

KEY PROGRAMS

- DOVES
- Cirrus House
- CAPWN
- Housing Partners of Western Nebraska
- NCAP
- Region 1 BHA
- Legal Aid
- NE Works

LIFESPAN RESPITE

The Lifespan Respite Initiative is one of six sites for the Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network. We provide respite services for family caregivers from the demands of ongoing care of an individual with long-term or lifelong disabilities. The Respite Network offers information and referral services for families and respite providers. We also work closely with the Lifespan Respite Subsidy Program. This program serves family caregivers who are not eligible for Medicaid services or other programs.

As of September 16, 2021, The Western Area of Nebraska has the second highest caseload in the state on the Lifespan Respite Subsidy Program. The Southeast area which has 426,371 more population than our area has dropped to third. We have been able to significantly increase our numbers in the past few years due to the spirit of collaboration in the Panhandle. The table above shows the referral sources for the individuals we have worked with since 7/1/2021.

To continue to grow participation, we have created a referral brochure targeting schools, medical clinics, and mental health providers in the area. Our Summer Sports Series has also resulted a tremendous increase in referrals. We have added five new community organizations to our network of services, bringing our total to 19. Community organizations include licensed child care providers and organizations offering activities such as therapeutic riding, dance, gymnastics, etc.

We capped off the year with an Amazing Respite FUN Day at Riverside Discovery Center. We hosted 28 children with 24 of the 28 being brand new to our events. Three children have been approved for ongoing respite funding and two new respite providers were recruited.

Based on the rate of referrals and partnering with new community organizations and continued collaboration, we anticipate huge growth in 2022.

FY 2022 Referral Source	# of Referrals
Community Organizations	37
Early Development Network	27
Behavioral Health Providers	7
Respite Staff or other DHHS Programs	6
Family Members	5
Health Care	3
Schools	3
Total	88



KEY PROGRAMS

- Lifespan Respite Subsidy Program
- Respite Days
- Respite Fun Day

2021 DEVELOPMENTS

- 19% of all Lifespan Respite subsidy cases are in our area
- New funding from B. Keith & Norma F. Heuremann Foundation
- 42% of current referrals are from community organizations
- 30% of current referrals are from the Early Development Network

PANHANDLE PREVENTION COALITION



United together by passion and dedication to making residents of western Nebraska healthy and safe across the lifespan; the purpose of the Panhandle Prevention Coalition (PPC) is to reduce the impact of substance use and abuse while promoting and supporting mental and emotional health for all.

Like many other projects, prevention took on a different look this year. Though not conventional, many great strides have been made by connecting partners.

In the collaborative nature of the Panhandle, braided funding leads to the ongoing success of the PPC. Braided funding refers to the weaving together of federal, state, and private funding streams -- and the development of funding strategies -- to support high-quality programs.

FUTURE FOCUS

- Reignite membership
- Creating a space for connection
- Focused conversations
- Intentional outreach through effective techniques
- Increase reach of initiatives and training
- Increase awareness and understanding of the spectrum of prevention efforts

2021 DEVELOPMENTS

- 129 compliance checks
- Responsible Server Training
- 197 souls trained in QPR
- Awareness raised thru training
- Enhanced partnership with law enforcement
- New tobacco-free policies

SYSTEM OF CARE BIRTH TO EIGHT

The System of Care (SOC): Birth to Eight's mission is to build collaboration among agencies, networks and the community to find innovative solutions to improve the quality of life for families and children in the Panhandle.

SOC committee members continue to be an outlet for families and providers in the Panhandle to receive the assistance and support they needed. Our partnership with Rooted in Relationships, which implements evidence-based practices in their programs and strive for high quality supportive environments for children, has continued to grow. Several committee members completed their third year of Pyramid Model training, became coaches, and suggested and implemented changes to their everyday practices to go above and beyond for our children in the Panhandle.

During the pandemic we were presented with the challenge of providing the same level of high quality training while keeping participants safe. We were able to smoothly transition our normally in person trainings to an online format. Despite this challenges, we were still able to provide the 32 Panhandle Early Learning Connections (ELC) trainings with 375 providers attending from January 2021 - June 2021. From July 2021 - December 2021 we have 35 trainings scheduled with over 350 providers expected to attend and many more to come in 2022!



KEY PROGRAMS

- Families and Schools Together (F.A.S.T)
- Circle of Security - Parenting
- Rooted in Relationships

Collective Impact Evaluation



COLLECTIVE IMPACT EVALUATION

About Evaluation

What is Evaluation?

Evaluation supports the ability to monitor and measure the quality, pace, and direction of change that individuals, communities, and organizations undertake. It does this by systematically generating knowledge that can support learning, quality improvement, and good judgement in decision-making. Evaluation aligns purpose, action, and impact to ensure that longer-term change at the societal level unfolds progressively.

What is Developmental Evaluation?

Traditional evaluation focuses on outcomes. Developmental Evaluation is a unique approach to evaluation that is well-suited for innovations for which the path to success is unclear. It can answer questions like:

- What is emerging as the innovation takes shape?
- What do initial results reveal about expected progress?
- How have different values, perspectives, and relationships influenced the innovation and its outcomes?
- What variations in effects are we seeing?
- How is the larger system or environment responding to the innovation?

This lets us know how a new initiative, program, or innovation should be adapted in response to changing circumstances and what is being learned along the way.

The Evaluation Process

1. Identify assumptions about why the initiative will work.
2. Determine what change you expect to see.
3. Collect and analyze data to understand what happened.
4. Communicate, interpret, and reflect on the results.
5. Make informed decisions to make improvements.

What is Evaluation?

While initiatives generally complete some form of evaluation in cooperation with their funding source, we do not currently look at the systems-level outcomes and impacts of the collective impact work completed across the Panhandle. This evaluation will provide us with a broad view of how the various efforts interact to create change, and reinforce the need for funding of initiatives in the Panhandle - especially those that may be new or novel.

ABOUT COLLECTIVE IMPACT

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.

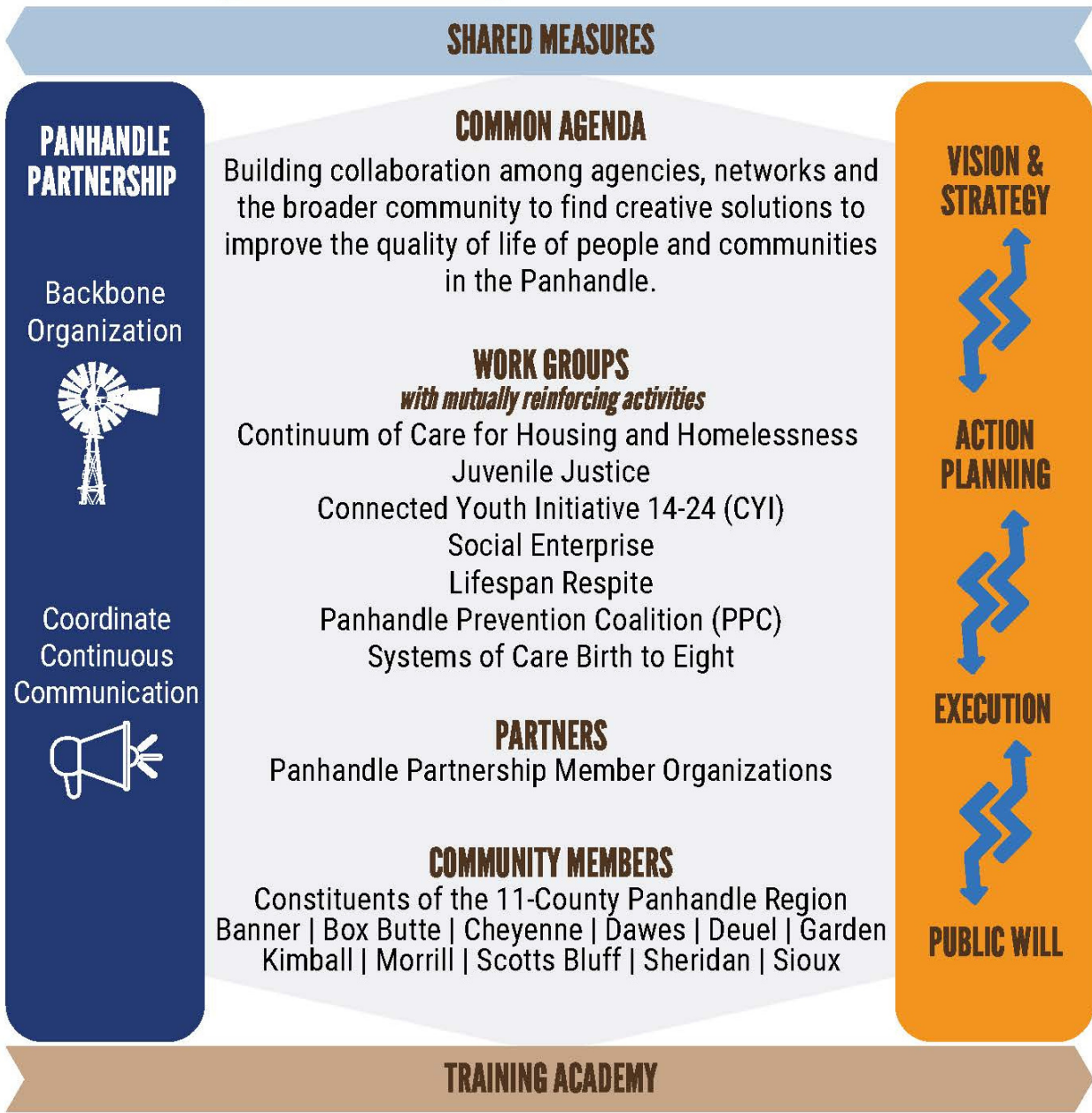
5 Backbone Organization

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 system and member Organizations. This collaboration occurs in cascading levels.

COLLECTIVE IMPACT IN THE NEBRASKA PANHANDLE





Panhandle Partnership
Agency & Individual
Members

PANHANDLE PARTNERSHIP AGENCY MEMBERS

Aging Office of Western Nebraska
AIM Educational Opportunity Center
Ancova Empowerment Project
Banister's 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
Chappell Community Development
Cirrus House
City of Scottsbluff
Community Action Health Center
Conservation Nebraska
Cooperative Ministries Council
Department of Health and Human Services
Department of Labor
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
Independence Rising
Legal Aid Nebraska
Lutheran Family Services
Mediation West
MENTOR Nebraska

Minatare Public Schools
Mobius Communications
Monument Prevention Coalition
Nebraska Children's Home Society
Nebraska Civic Engagement Table
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
Northwest Community Action Partnership
Optimal Family Preservation
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
Regional West Medical Center
Saint Francis Foster Care
Scottsbluff Public Schools
Snow-Redfern Foundation
State of Nebraska – UNL
United Way of Western Nebraska
UNL Panhandle Extension Center
Valley Youth Connections
Volunteers of America
Western Community Health Resources
Western Nebraska Community College

PANHANDLE PARTNERSHIP INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Roger Wess	Sonjia Serda
Joan Cromer	Rachel Sissel
Katie Samples Dean	Daniel Bennett
Shawna Ricshling	Kimberly Dreyer

Thank you for your support!

panhandlepartnership.com



**PANHANDLE
PARTNERSHIP**

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