

A Place Where You Belong

Strategic Plan 2023-2025



How A Place Where You Belong Came Together

Engaging Malvern Family Resource Centre (MFRC) and community stakeholders in the development of our 2023-2025 Strategic Plan, **A Place Where You Belong**, began in Summer 2022. While the impacts of the Pandemic are still being felt across Malvern and Scarborough, community members are looking forward, and engaging with us to drive a more equitable recovery. Over the last many months, MFRC staff, board members, and volunteers have engaged over 1,000 community members, MFRC program participants, partners, and stakeholders in the development of **A Place Where You Belong**. Through initial consultations, our strategic directions started to take shape, and subsequent conversations helped us to fine tune what we were hearing and feeling, and in validating our early drafts.

Consultations have engaged community members that don't yet know us well, while other consultations have deepened our understanding of how we can better support long-time MFRC members. We have spoken to EarlyON participants and after-school

parents, youth, newcomers, seniors and families and have created space for equity-deserving community members to let us know how we can do better. Engagement sessions with staff, board members and volunteers also furthered how we can build stronger internal systems that facilitate our mission.

While we are proud and energized by **A Place Where You Belong**, we know the real work is making it come to life. This plan will guide us in building out new ways to support and engage within our communities, while deepening our existing programs and services. Built into this plan is a set of key performance indicators that will serve as the foundation for monitoring our progress and measuring our impact.

Connect.
Belong.
Thrive.



Our Mission

To be an essential and trusted Community Hub that connects, engages, and takes collaborative action in supporting our communities to thrive.

Our Values

1. Co-creation and Collaboration.

We believe in the power of deeply engaging participants and those with lived experiences in program development and improvement.

2. Commitment to Community.

We build authentic and trusted relationships across our diverse and ever-changing community.

3. Belonging.

We build welcoming spaces and programs where everyone is accepted, respected and included.

4. Excellence.

Taking a holistic approach, we build and implement high-quality programs and services and continually prove, improve and learn.

5. Well-being.

We are committed to supporting resident's physical, mental, social and economic well-being.

6. Elevating Voices.

We support Malvern and Scarborough communities in speaking their truths and work with them to advocate for social justice.



The Core of A Place Where You Belong

So much has changed and yet so much has stayed the same across Malvern and Scarborough since the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Our communities have borne the health, economic and social impacts of the Pandemic, which has laid even barer the pre-existing inequities that have been growing across our City, and particularly in Scarborough, over the last many years.

As you will read in more detail, the MFRC team has supported our community throughout the Pandemic through programs to combat isolation and food insecurity, vaccination education and clinics, and mental health counseling. Now, MFRC is looking forward and has co-created **A Place Where You Belong**, a plan to guide our engagement and support within Malvern and Scarborough over the next three years.

MFRC aims to be an essential Community Hub, especially for those that need us the most. We aim to use our public spaces, and our deep and authentic connections, to bring people together. Together through programming, partnerships, and in driving to a collective future our community deserves.

The value of Community Hubs such as MFRC is that we offer co-located programs and services across all stages of life, and have specific programs to support those that need us most. However, we know more is needed in specific areas. That's why several of our strategic directions focus on engaging specific community members. For example, within **A Place Where You Belong**, we are committing to:

- 1.** Deepening our engagement and programs with and for youth. While continuing to support youth mental health, leadership and life skills, we will build out youth programming to support academic achievement and employment.
- 2.** Exploring the development of a licensed childcare program. While already supporting young children through our EarlyON program, we know that more accessible and affordable childcare will help our youngest community members get the great start they need and support parents and caregivers to enter and re-enter the workforce.
- 3.** Expanding our food security and food literacy programming. The Pandemic and rising food costs are pushing too many community members to the brink. We will develop a food security strategy, re-introduce food into all of our programming, and expand our food security focused programs.

Engage Communities in New Ways

MFRC is a multi-service Community Hub that engages community members across a range of programs and services and a different stages of life. To fully realize the benefits that come with our co-located programs and services, we will focus on integrating supports for community members that may span across programs and teams. We will outreach to engage isolated seniors and newcomers that may not yet have a network in our community. Finally, we will improve the links between our programs, ensuring that community members that access our EarlyON programs, for instance, know about and benefit from our food justice or summer camp programs.

Goals

Through this strategic direction we will:

1. Target outreach and engagement strategies to better engage those that need us most
2. Prioritize holistic supports for our communities that go beyond number served
3. Deepen knowledge, linkages, and referrals to ensure that every door at MFRC is the right door



Strategic
Direction **3**

Deepen Our Program & Service Impacts

Wait lists for licensed childcare hamper our youngest community members in getting the great start they deserve and is a barrier to employment for parents and caregivers. A lack of youth programming can push youth down a negative path, and rising food costs make it nearly impossible for families to make ends meet. The Pandemic has increased isolation in our communities for older adults and newcomers. MFRC can and will do more to close these gaps that hold too many of our community members back.



Goals

Through this strategic direction we will:

1. Sustain our virtual program offerings, especially for those with barriers to in-person participation, to enhance accessibility
2. Create physical spaces that are welcoming and promote a sense of belonging
3. Confront all forms of racism within our community and stand up for social justice
4. Create new programs that support an equitable COVID recovery

Strategic
Direction **2**

Champion Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility

By developing new equity-focused programs, engaging in tough conversations on race and taking action to further social justice, and implementing programs in-person and virtually, we will intentionally work to ensure that everyone in our communities feels like they belong at MFRC.

Goals

1. Explore developing a licensed childcare program
2. Create new youth programs including academic supports and employment
3. Grow our engagement in food justice programming
4. Create new programs that better serve older adults and newcomers



Goals

1. Build community knowledge of MFRC's programs and services
2. Develop and invest in a holistic outreach strategy
3. Deepen our relationships with community members and co-create programs and services through resident-led engagement
4. Build authentic and trusted partnerships with community leaders, resident groups and other organizational partners to amplify our collective advocacy



Strategic Direction **4**

Harness the Power of Community

Beginning with building the awareness of MFRC's programs and impacts, we can forge stronger and lasting partnerships that will result in more community-responsive programs and collective advocacy, that will push for an equitable recovery and a more just Malvern and Scarborough.

Strategic Enablers

We also know that in order to maximize our impact in our community, we must improve four strategic enablers to make us more efficient, more effective, and allow us to focus on our mission.

1. Diverse, Engaged & Inclusive Workforce

We will invest resources to attract, develop, train, and retain highly skilled and dedicated team members. We will foster and support the development of leaders from within the community and from equity-deserving groups. We will track and improve the intersectional dimensions of diversity of our staff and board.

2. Digital & Operations Transformation

We will invest resources and time to improve our administrative, human resources and financial systems and tools so that they support our mission. We will cut down the use of paper at the Centre by 50% over three years and we will enhance our program data system to give us deeper and more timely insights into the effectiveness of our programs. Through the further development of these systems we will break down siloed program areas, supporting members to take more fulsome advantage of our wrap-around programs.

3. Philanthropy & Earned Income

We need to be responsive to urgent and evolving community needs and to do this, we need to deepen our relationships with our donors and supporters. We will give community members who have the means more opportunities to support us, and build new and stronger relationships with local businesses. Finally, we will further explore earned income streams that can support other areas of MFRC's programs and services.

4. Strengthened Governance

We know and understand the value that engaged organizational governance can bring to MFRC and will invest time and energy to deepen our work in this area. We will continue to recruit a diverse, local and multi-skilled board of directors and staff leadership and regularly evaluate their performance. We will invest in onboarding, training, and succession planning. Our leadership teams will become more engaged with our community and governance decisions will become more transparent.



MFRC's Support Over the Pandemic

As **A Place to Belong** looks forward to how MFRC will evolve and grow our impact over the next three years, it is also important to look back and recognize the impact that MFRC has had in supporting our communities throughout the Pandemic. Over the last three years MFRC has continued to step forward to support our communities that bore the brunt of the health and economic impacts of the Pandemic. Since the early days of March 2020, MFRC adapted programs and services to meet evolving community needs, while leveraging the expertise, knowledge and energy of residents, volunteers, staff, board, and partners to maximize impact.

Through virtual EarlyON and after-school programs, youth mental health counseling, newcomers and women who were connected to community, and seniors who kept physically fit and engaged via Zoom, MFRC's staff and volunteers greatly supported our communities when they needed it most. These programs all adapted to better serve members through these difficult times. But MFRC didn't stop there. We launched new work including our COVID response initiative that provided food, mental health supports and PPE to hundreds of residents. In partnership, we initiated vaccine outreach to encourage higher COVID vaccine uptake, and our Urban Farm donated produce to hundreds of families across Malvern and Scarborough.

The next three years will bring significant change across our communities and within MFRC and A Place Where You Belong positions us to continue to be responsive to these changes, while furthering our work within our community.

A Place to Belong

Key Performance Indicators

A set of 10 external and five internal key performance indicators will support MFRC's leadership in monitoring and capturing our impact over the next three years:

External Key Performance Indicators

1. # of participant and staff testimonials that capture holistic supports
2. # of programmatic, training and advocacy engagements in support of anti-racism and social justice
3. Fully explored and data driven decision on licensed childcare
4. # of youth engaged in new academic and employment programs
5. # of participant engagements within our food justice programming
6. # of older adults and newcomers served
7. # of new members engaged
8. # of resident-led program development sessions held
9. # of long-term partnerships
10. # of system and policy wins

Internal Key Performance Indicators

1. % of staff with intersectional dimension of diversity
2. % of staff that note a high sense of belonging through pulse survey
3. # of high functioning operations systems
4. % increase in philanthropic and earned revenue
5. % of organizational leadership from equity deserving populations

Thank you to all who shared their lived experiences in supporting the development of **A Place Where You Belong**. We look forward to building on this engagement as we make this plan a reality.





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