



Realizing Potential:

Our Children, Our Youth, Our Future

Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services Strategic Framework 2008-12

Purpose

- To provide an overview of the Ministry of Children and Youth Services' (MCYS) strategic framework, ***Realizing Potential: Our Children, Our Youth, Our Future***.
- To provide information on *Looking to the Future*, a multi-year research project to measure and monitor child and youth well-being in Ontario, and other initiatives currently underway.

Ontario's Children and Youth

- There are over **2.8 million** children and youth aged 0 to 18 in Ontario.
 - As a group they represent nearly **22%** of the province's total population.
- Approximately **135,000** children are born in the province each year.
- People from **245** ethnic groups call Ontario home.
- Approximately **15.6%** of children and youth under 25 identified a non Official Language (English/French) as their mother tongue; **14.5%** of children under 15 identified a non Official language as their mother tongue.
- **207,610** people under 25 are in recent immigrant families; **115,555** are under 15.
- There are **1,050,840** visible minority people under 25, **8.7%** of Ontario's total population; **630,590** are under 15.
- Ontario is home to **105,205** Aboriginals under the age of 25; of these, **64,325** were under the age of 15.
- In 2006, approximately **83,000** young people 0-14 in Ontario had disabilities (3.8% of all children); of these **32,860** have a severe disability.

What We Do

- MCYS is a population-focused ministry that funds or provides services to support the success and wellbeing of children and youth aged 0 to 18:
 - Early identification and intervention services for young children and their families;
 - Licensed child care;
 - Financial support through the Ontario Child Benefit;
 - Intensive Behavioral Intervention, respite, residential and rehabilitative supports for children and youth with special needs including autism;
 - Opportunities and supports such as summer jobs and youth outreach workers for youth in high needs communities to help them make positive choices;
 - Child and youth mental health supports;
 - Protection services for children who are, or are at risk of, being abused; and
 - Community and custodial programs for youth aged 12 to 18 in, or at risk of, conflict with the law.
- These services and supports involve a mix of **universal** (the *Healthy Babies Healthy Children* program screens **94.4%** of all live births) and more **targeted** programs.

Our Overall Vision

MCYS envisions an Ontario where all children and youth have the best opportunity to succeed and reach their full potential.

- In 2003, the ministry was created with an overall vision and strategic lens that combines the **population health approach** with the **human capital perspective**.
- Driven to foster children and youth that are (*high level outcomes*):
 - Ready to Learn at All Ages
 - Healthy and Active
 - Economically Secure
 - Safe From Harm
 - Valued, Involved and Responsible
- Services that are (*how we deliver services*):
 - Child- and Family-centered
 - Community Driven and Situated
 - Strength-based
 - Integrated and Collaborative
 - Developmentally Appropriate and Individualized
 - Socially Inclusive
 - Evidence-based
 - Outcomes-based
 - Broad-based

Goals and Objectives

- The MCYS Strategic Framework, *Realizing Potential: Our Children, Our Youth, Our Future* is driven by two main objectives:
 - **Better Outcomes** for children and youth; and
 - An **enhanced experience** for clients as they engage with services.
- The ministry will make progress toward those objectives by aligning its work in support of **five strategic goals**:

EVERY CHILD AND YOUTH HAS A VOICE

**EVERY CHILD AND YOUTH RECEIVES
PERSONALIZED SERVICES**

**EVERYONE INVOLVED IN SERVICE DELIVERY
CONTRIBUTES TO ACHIEVING COMMON OUTCOMES**

EVERY CHILD AND YOUTH IS RESILIENT

**EVERY YOUNG PERSON GRADUATES FROM
SECONDARY SCHOOL**

Impact of Goals

- Two goals relate to *what* outcomes we are working with our partners to achieve for children and youth:

EVERY CHILD AND YOUTH IS RESILIENT

**EVERY YOUNG PERSON GRADUATES FROM
SECONDARY SCHOOL**

- Three goals relate to *how* we will model service delivery and our relationships to achieve these outcomes:

EVERY CHILD AND YOUTH HAS A VOICE

**EVERY CHILD AND YOUTH RECEIVES
PERSONALIZED SERVICES**

**EVERYONE INVOLVED IN SERVICE DELIVERY
CONTRIBUTES TO ACHIEVING COMMON OUTCOMES**

A Framework for Service Improvements

- The goals are intended to be packaged as a group and are *mutually reinforcing*.
- Linked together they provide an overall framework for how to design, manage and deliver services for children and youth – the entire value chain.



Key Activities

- Ministry is committed to deliver on key activities in areas where more transformational changes are required:
 1. Reducing the administrative burden for our partners
 2. Delivering on a multifaceted approach to better link and use data from across sources and sectors
 3. Introducing a comprehensive plan to foster meaningful child and youth engagement in the evolution of our services
 4. Implementing measures to improve clients' interactions with services
 5. Working with partners to introduce outcome measures for programs and find better ways to report on results

Looking to the Future

- *Looking to the Future* is a multi-year interministerial research initiative that will measure and monitor the well-being of Ontario's children and youth at the population level over time.
- An initial descriptive profile of Ontario's children and youth is under development using readily available data to report on outcomes at various ages as well as environmental conditions that influence well-being.
- In the initial profile, social indicators are organized into four domains: Starting Healthy, Staying Healthy; Educational Readiness and Success; Social Inclusion; and Economic Opportunity. A demographic profile is also included.
- Various factors (e.g. biological, social, family, community, economic and the wider society) influence outcomes for children and youth. As several ministries hold the policy and program levers for these factors and collect relevant data, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services has partnered with 10 other ministries in this work.
- As outcome disparities exist between advantaged and less advantaged groups in every society, a number of more vulnerable subpopulations are included in the research (e.g. children with disabilities, children in low income families, children served by children's aid societies).

The Approach

- The profile will provide data on population level indicators across sectors on outcomes and key influences on these outcomes for children and youth in important areas of their lives.
- The indicators proposed for Ontario's profile are very similar to those used in other jurisdictions. Some jurisdictions include more indicators of family functioning, peer relationships, feelings about school, neighbourhood and community safety and general self-perceived health and life satisfaction. *Looking to the Future* contains more indicators on labour market outcomes than most other jurisdictions.
- Proposed indicators for *Looking to the Future* were selected based on indicators commonly measured in other jurisdictions, on research evidence that they are important determinants of health and well-being and on whether the Ontario government is in a position to influence them.
- It will highlight areas where children and youth are faring well and areas where there are challenges requiring policy attention. The findings will inform future research questions to support development of appropriate evidence and policy solutions.
- The profile will be used to:
 1. Improve understanding within government of how children and youth are faring in important areas of their lives;
 2. Promote collaborative approaches across government for addressing cross-cutting issues facing Ontario's children and youth; and
 3. Help provide a basis for evidence-based policy development and service delivery planning for children and youth.

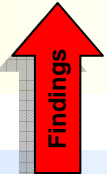
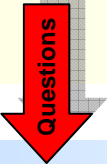
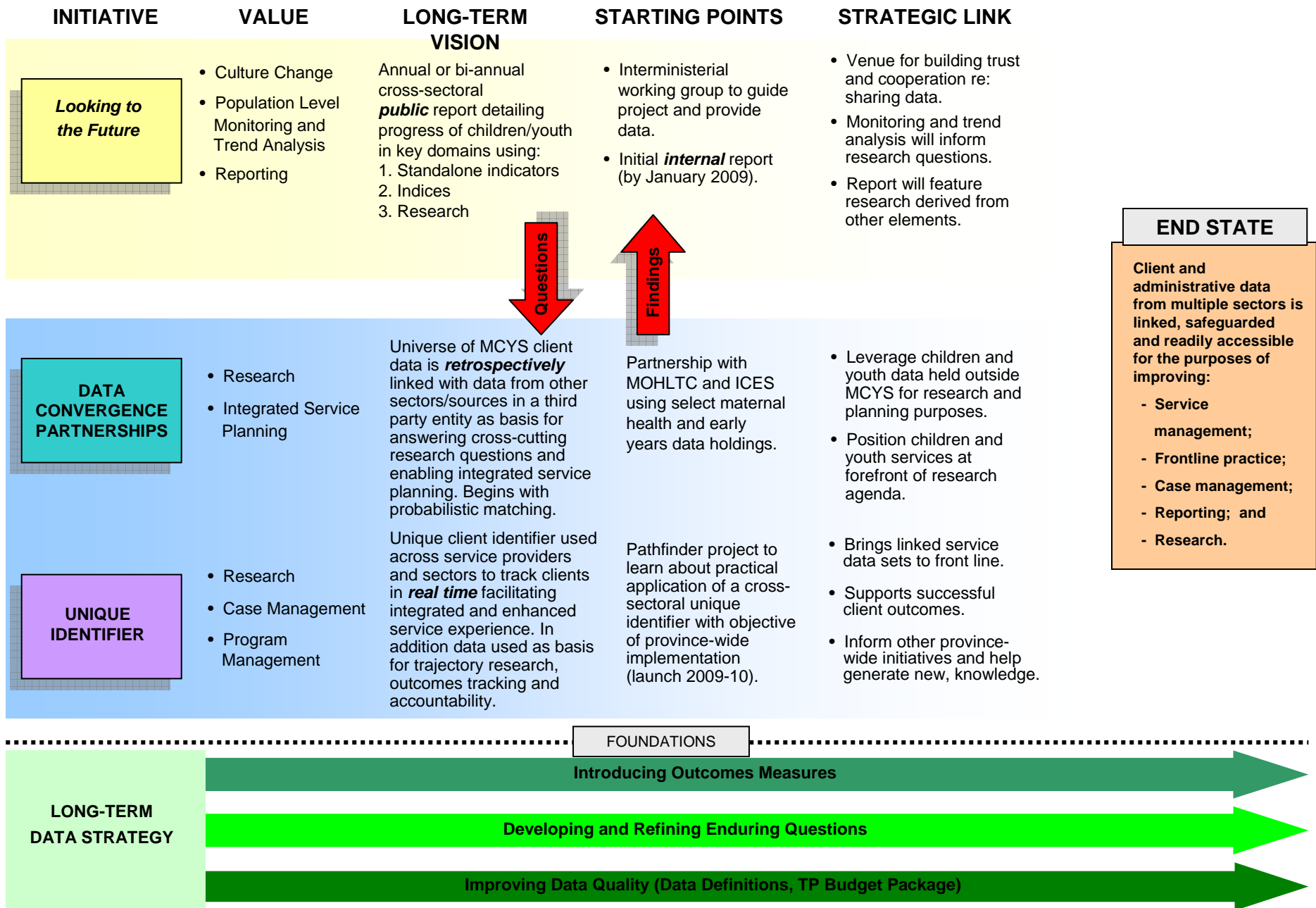
The Opportunity

- *Looking to the Future* has already realized a cultural success in the OPS. Eleven ministries are working together to support the project by contributing and providing relevant data, advice and resource documents. This is an important step in strengthening relationships for future collaborations on research and data-sharing.
- Longer term, this initiative presents an opportunity to:
 - Establish benchmarks and determine whether outcomes for children and youth are stable, improving or getting worse;
 - Understand the relationships between environmental conditions in Ontario and outcomes for children and youth;
 - Establish data sharing relationships with other ministries to link data from across the OPS, integrate research, develop research agendas and coordinate disparate efforts; and
 - Focus government attention and resources to address problems before they become crises and know whether our interventions are making a difference.
- Once the profile is completed, discussions will be held with partner ministries to determine the types of products they would like to collaborate on in the future.
- For example, future work could use more granular data to enable analysis of the relationships among indicators at lower levels of geography such as postal code areas and create composite community or child profiles.

Related Initiatives

- Other related initiatives are also underway that, in the longer term, will enhance the government's ability to track trajectories of children and youth across sectors, answer more complex cross-sectoral research questions, enable integrated service planning and ultimately improve services to achieve the best possible outcomes for children, youth and families.
- An Interministerial Data Convergence Strategy is being initiated with several ministries to develop a continuum of linked data on individuals from prenatal to adulthood while ensuring privacy is protected by using a third party research entity.
- As a first step, MCYS is developing a plan to link data on individuals within our ISCIS data systems for Healthy Babies Healthy Children, Preschool Speech and Language, Infant Hearing and Blind-Low Vision.
- The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is currently working on a plan to link data within the Ontario Perinatal Surveillance System. Once the two ministries' projects are completed, the next step will be to enable linkages among these MCYS and MOHLTC data systems.
- MCYS is also exploring the feasibility of adopting a unique identifier for use across service providers and sectors as a basis for trajectory research, outcomes tracking and accountability.

MCYS Data Strategy – Linking Data



Starting the Conversation

- ***Realizing Potential: Our Children, Our Youth, Our Future*** is a living document that will evolve based on research, learning, our experiences and discussions with those invested in the success of Ontario's young people.
- Help start the conversation, please provide your feedback on the framework at: RealizingPotential.mcys@ontario.ca.
- The document and a feedback form are available on the web in the **"About The Ministry"** section of the ministry's website at:
<http://www.gov.on.ca/children/english/ministry/strategic/index.html> (English)
<http://www.gov.on.ca/children/french/ministry/strategic/index.html> (en français)

