

Annual Plan Update

April 2008

Imagine!

1400 Dixon Avenue

Lafayette, CO 80026

Phone: 303-665-7789 Fax: 303-665-2648

www.imaginecolorado.org

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This Annual Plan Update is available at www.imaginecolorado.org and from the Imagine! office at 1400 Dixon Avenue in Lafayette, Colorado. Availability of this document is advertised on the website and in the *Imagine!That* newsletter.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of **Imagine!** is to create and offer innovative supports to people of all ages with cognitive, developmental, physical and health related needs so they may live fulfilling lives of independence and quality in their homes and communities.

VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

LIFESTYLES: The lives of persons with developmental disabilities reflect the contributions, diversity of lifestyles, and choices that are available to all citizens in Boulder and Broomfield counties. Priority is placed on achieving individual dignity, privacy, and quality of life.

FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORTS: Supports for learning, leisure planning and work are shaped both by individual choice and by family choices and needs. Successful outcomes are achieved through a partnership of consumers, family, friends, and **Imagine!** staff.

QUALITY SERVICES: All services provided by **Imagine!** reflect community values and lifestyles, support community integration and adopt a non-punitive posture towards the development of prosocial behaviors. Quality services demand our commitment to continuous improvement through research, evaluation, feedback, and practice.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES: Assisting persons with developmental disabilities is essentially a community building endeavor. Through creativity, innovation, professional and personal teamwork and individual effort, a variety of human and business resources in the community collaborate to achieve the mission of **Imagine!**.

Executive Summary

2007 continued to be a year of massive changes and disruption for consumers, providers, and staff; doing, redoing, redoing again, and:

- updating PARS for all consumers in comprehensive services;
- responding to the switch to a fee for service system in comprehensive services;
- handling the changes (which were not to occur) in SLS;
- trying to inform families, board, staff, consumers and providers of all of the changes;
- maintaining staff morale;
- at all costs protecting consumers;
- working to increase resources for an under-resourced system;
- implementing the SIS;
- and preparing for continuing disruption in the system this next year.

We are actively involved in preparing to implement the new coordinated system of payment for early intervention services resulting from the passage of SB004.

We are nervously watching the activities of CMS at the Federal level with respect to changes in TCM/CM. Switching to a system as they describe in the Federal Register (with only one case manager and 15 minute billing increments) will be a major negative change in our system, again.

The SIS---oh, the SIS! Questions continue around its validity for rate setting, the cost of administering it, when it is administered, by whom, etc. And how it will be used in SLS?

The implementation of the requirements around the PAR has been most confusing and hectic. Case managers, business offices, consumers and families, and providers have all expressed great displeasure with the system. We are looking forward to the anticipated “streamlining” of the process by the DDD in the near future.

Our staff is skilled and dedicated, and brings pride to all of us at Imagine!. Local businesses continue to employ people with developmental disabilities, and our neighborhoods are accepting and welcoming to all. It’s a good place to be!

Accomplishments for the year include:

1. Maintained the quality operations and services of the organization, including retention of quality employees as well as the recruitment of top-notch new employees.
2. Increased considerably the positive public “news” about people with disabilities in our community.
3. Continued to see an increased in the number of SPOs in our community.
4. Continued excellent relationships with local governments, local providers, the local advocacy organizations, state offices, fellow non-profits, and our families/consumers.
5. Continued the very positive work ethic and values base for Imagine! employees.
6. Increased behavioral training for direct care staff.
7. With senior staff and the Board, revised and implemented a strategic plan for the organization.
8. Created a new “Department of Program Integrity” to include Q/A functions, ethics, and corporate compliance.
9. Received a HUD award in excess of \$600,000. to construct a “smart home” in the Longmont area.
10. Received continued contributions from our foundation, a \$100,000.00 donation from one donor, and \$250,000.00 from the City of Boulder to replace the current home on Iris Street with a new “Smart Home”.
11. Continued our collaboration with C.U. Computer Sciences dept. and with the Coleman Institute for Cognitive Disabilities at the University of Colorado in the development of technological innovations to assist people with developmental disabilities.
12. Continued activities to monitor and influence state level budgeting and policy- setting activities.
13. We continued using our local dollars to match to Medicaid in order to continue services for those individuals whom we are “over-serving” in SLS.
14. We are now in our second year as the Medicaid contractor to Foothills Behavioral Health for mental health services for the “dually diagnosed”.
15. We continue to support families who wish to “self direct” in SLS by being the employer of record for over 150 individuals selected by families as the provider of services for their adult children.
16. Our Board continues to be very active, adding new members, and engaging in strategic planning.

Imagine! Assessment of Local Issues April 2008

A Community Forum was held on February 26, 2008. Three “break out sessions” were organized to cover comprehensive services changes; family and children’s services; and changes in SLS, including the SIS. The forum was well attended by family members, providers, staff, and Imagine! Board members. Based on input received at that forum, from personal contact with consumers and providers throughout the year, and from personal observation of services, few changes in our prior year assessments of community need and interest are evident. The majority of the conversation centered on waiting lists, possible impacts of the Federal Budget, the SIS, possible changes in SLS, the “tiers” and rates for Comprehensive services, and the need for increases in resources for people with disabilities this coming year. Other major issues identified by the community, Board, staff, providers, family members in our community include:

- The lack of available State and Federal resources continues. Our waiting lists for services continue to grow, while our funding remains relatively flat. Again, we rely on revenues generated by the passage of the mill levy in Boulder County and the increase in our contract with the City and County of Broomfield to provide additional services in our communities.
- The future method of payment from the state to Imagine! as a CCB still is unclear, and causes great unease. We have yet to be informed of the new rates for the comprehensive services levels. This makes budgeting for the next fiscal year much more problematic.
- Unfortunately, we “wrote off” approximately \$150,000.00 uncollectible receivables for services rendered. This is due in great part to the continued complexity and turmoil of the systems change.
- We see an increasing need for the development of an improved statewide system for assisting young men and women with a developmental disability who are moving back into the community from the judicial system (DYS). Perhaps “automatic” funding as is the case with the foster care program.
- The CHRP program needs major attention at the State level. The number of providers has been drastically reduced in the past few years. Imagine! continues to be a major (and one of the only) dd players/providers in the dd system and the State.
- We are exceptionally nervous and displeased with the possibility that Imagine! may receive few, if any, new SLS resources as a result of a State (DDD) expectation that we will get the numbers of persons served in our community through SLS down to the base contract through “attrition”. This is because we can no longer use local funds to match to Medicaid for these local funded services. One could view this as punishment for using local funds to over serve eligible consumers with local funds when the state had few new resources. This arrangement can only have a negative impact on those families on our waiting list or in FSSP.
- We are concerned that the proposed changes in the Comp waiver and new rate system (and rates) will “encourage” more congregate services in the future in both residential and day services.
- We continue to anticipate that the demand for EI services will exceed our ability to cover the costs with the current EI and Part C allocations, necessitating a request to the Division for Developmental Disabilities for additional funding.

- We continue to see an increase in the number of individuals with extreme needs receiving supports in SLS. In several cases, the families prefer to keep their son or daughter at home with them, rather than accept a comprehensive resource. A new model of services that blends SLS and Comprehensive services is still needed. This model would permit a higher level of financial support to allow needed supports, sometimes perhaps even 24 hour “staffed” supports, in order to help maintain the individual in their parent’s home.
- The number of individuals living at home with aging caregivers continues to grow. This is perhaps one of the most significant issues facing the adult services system and Imagine! in the years ahead.
- The changing demographics of our community—aging, and growth, suggest the need for new resources and new service models: SLS - 10 of the 183 living with parents are over the age of 50; FSSP - 122 over the age of 18, 6 are over the age of 50. (all living with parents); eligible adults living alone without support - 10 are over the age of 50. (presumably may need support sooner or later); 80 teenagers will enter adult life in the next 3 years.
- We continue to anxiously anticipate what we will have to do to implement the changes for providing and billing for behavioral services under the comprehensive services waiver, which require: Lead Therapist; Senior Therapist; and Line Staff. We have communicated our concerns about the inapplicability of the model and payment schedule to the State.
- We continued to advocate for changes to the waivers to permit the provision of “Comp-like services” to individuals residing in their own home/or family home.
- We continue to believe that the state needs to develop, with CCBs, SPOs and families, regionally based emergency respite services for adults in short term crisis as other states have done.
- There is a need for funding and an improved system for assisting kids with dd coming out of the judicial system (DYS). set up something like automatic \$ for foster care transition?
- Staff turnover is at an all time high at Imagine!, especially in Case Management. Adult Case Management had over 25% turnover in 2007 and turnover for Children’s Service Coordinators was over 50%. Half of these resignations were for other jobs.

Over half of the Supported Living Counselors resigned. Labor Source, our vocational services department, experienced over 25% turnover, with 1/3rd for other jobs. Out and About had over 40% turnover, with 1/3rd of those resigning doing so for outside positions. Nursing staff had 50% turnover. Twenty percent of lead counselors resigned during the year, with over 50% turnover in residential counselors.

Overall employee turnover was 34%, with non-exempt employee turnover at 42% and exempt employee at 14%. Voluntary separations constituted 94% of the turnover. The average tenure of the exempt employees who left voluntarily was 40 months, and non-exempt tenure averaged 18 months.

- The ability to provide services to those on the waiting list, including increased resources for Family Support, both in terms of numbers of individuals funded, and the amount of funding which needs to be greatly increased.
- Regional short-term emergency behavioral residential setting for those in need of short term, highly controlled, professional behavioral services during episodes of behavioral crisis.
- Regional modifiers to rates to reflect the cost of doing business in our catchment area.

- Sufficient EI and Part C resources to meet the direct services needs of a growing population of young children needing EI services.
- Adequate funding for CCB functions. We are using local funds to “subsidize” the activities we perform as the local CCB per the requirements of the State.
- The ability to provide expanded/more intensive “comp like” services to individuals (adults) living in their own homes or the homes of their family members.
- The ability to more extensively use technology to support individuals with disabilities and their families.
- Reasonable, practical and adequately funded modifications to the Comp and SLS waivers.

CRITICAL ISSUES FACING IMAGINE! IN NEAR-TERM

Approved by the Board of Directors 11/13/07

These are the critical issues facing Imagine! that were identified by key stakeholder groups including the Board of Directors, staff, the Foundation Board, partner organizations, the Family Support Council, and the Human Relations Committee. Issues are listed in order of importance, to the extent possible. Some issues overlap and are inter-related. Following each issue are samples of representative stakeholder comments.

1. Need for Additional Funding

- The lack of needed funding impacts Imagine!'s ability to meet community needs.
 - The waiting list for services is growing.
 - Emergency placements are growing.
 - There are more crises occurring in the community.
 - Autism diagnoses are growing.
- The lack of needed funding impacts getting and retaining staff.
 - Turnover is a major issue.
 - There are workforce shortages.
 - Imagine! employees often have to hold two jobs to make it financially.
 - Many Imagine! jobs are high stress; some employees say it's not worth the level of stress, given the low wages.

2. Ongoing Changes in Medicaid System

- System is becoming less responsive with new Medicaid changes. Requirements have been developed for bureaucrats, and not to meet the needs of or to protect clients.
- There are increased demands by the state for us to do un-reimbursed monitoring and functions.
- Medicaid Waiver rates for all Waiver services are showing a diminishing trend in relation to the cost of providing services. This issue is a threat to Imagine! as a provider as well as our network of providers for Comp, SLS, CES, HCBS, and HCBS-CWA services.

3. Growing Wait List & Increasing Demand for Additional Services

- The DD population is aging and growing more complex in its needs.
- There is a growing need for adult service resources. Current service designs like Comprehensive and Adult Supported Living Services need significant reform at the State level.
- People with autism and higher IQs—are they in or out of the system?
- How do we address the needs of our aging clients who have depended on their now aging families for support?

4. Need for Building the Capacity/Infrastructure of Imagine!

- There is a need for internal capacity building to keep pace with growth and provide a solid foundation for quality services.
 - Growth has occurred without sufficient infrastructure.
 - We need to maintain cohesion around organization's mission and direction.
- Imagine! needs to strengthen its capacity, including infrastructure and institutionalizing processes and procedures.

- Significant work is underway to address Imagine!'s infrastructures. These include human resources functions, information systems, case management, finance systems conversion, and reporting mechanisms to the State of Colorado. These systems serve to provide critical internal business intelligence that allows us timely decision-making, analysis and evaluation of our operations and business responsibilities.

5. Need for Effective Staff Recruitment, Retention and Succession Planning

- Turnover at Imagine is a major issue.
 - Non-competitive wages, combined with tighter labor markets, will continue to cause high turnover of direct service staff.
- There are workforce shortages.
- There are a number of key employees who are nearing retirement age.

6. Imagine!'s Culture is Being Impacted

- The focus on accountability is growing, which can have a negative impact on creativity.
- Imagine! feels less like a family than it used to, due in great part to the increased "bureaucratic" requirements of the State and Federal government.
- Given the organization's growth, internal communications and relationship-building are more difficult.
- We will have a new Executive Director this coming fiscal year.
- There are more rules and regulations, allowing less creativity and personal control regarding how the job is done.

7. Perceived Potential Conflict of Interest

- There is a debate underway about a potential conflict of interest with CCBs providing case management and also providing services.

Imagine!- Strategic Plan (CCB activities)

2008-2010

Mission

The mission of Imagine! is to create and offer innovative supports to people of all ages with cognitive, developmental, physical and health related needs so they may live fulfilling lives of independence and quality in their homes and communities.

Vision

Imagine! is a highly regarded and respected organization that is the first choice of families, consumers and the State for quality services for people with cognitive and health related needs in Colorado. Imagine! is seen as:

- Ethical in all dealings
- Comprised of an empowered and engaged Board of Directors and workforce that seeks and supports progressive practices;
- Committed to collaborative partnerships.
- Improving and enriching the lives of the individuals we serve;
- Ensuring community – and individually-empowered decisions;
- Advocating for people with cognitive and developmental disabilities at the local, State and National levels;
- Generating local community commitment to assisting individuals with cognitive, developmental, physical and health related needs.

Topic Areas

The main areas of concentration for Imagine! are:

- #1 – Identify and deliver our core services, recognizing that they may change.
- #2 – Ensure sufficient infrastructure to meet the mission of the organization.
- #3 – Offer innovative and cutting edge services.
- #4 – Ensure adequate funding to meet the mission
- #5 – Create a powerful brand identity and establish broad community awareness of Imagine! and the needs of individuals with cognitive, developmental, physical and health related needs.

#1: Deliver core services

Objective	strategies to achieve the objective
1. Create the capacity and mechanisms for addressing unmet needs in our community.	A. Develop and adopt a format for conducting on an annual basis an environmental scan, SWOT analysis, and scenario planning, considering historical and future issues, in order to identify and propose pro-active as well as reactive strategies to address the issues under this objective.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> B. Develop assessment methodologies which include input of families, consumers, staff, Board and others, a review of other communities/State models, and which will guide Imagine! planning activities for determining needed services, service trends, consumer satisfaction, grant targets, and budget modifications. C. Develop and adopt a methodology for annually assessing and projecting the consumer demand by setting desired, by consumer needs, and especially by age, disability and medical condition. D. Propose service models for that target unmet needs and facilitate a preventative and proactive approach to mitigating long term, comprehensive needs. E. Develop expanded opportunities for helping families plan for the future of their children, including: aging family members; aging children; families of young children; after school services; independent living opportunities
<p>2. Provide CCB supports that are highly valued and desired by all customers of Imagine!, reflect the personality and needs of our various communities, and which are considered among the best in the State and Nation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Reconfigure Q/A methods to: incorporate new providers; ensure imagine! and State DDD standards are met; allow for informed choice of service providers; provide quality indicators to families and consumers; redesign the Guide to Consumer Services. B. Develop and implement a process for providing technical assistance to all provider organizations on an as-needed basis. C. Develop an effective method of measuring and reporting outcomes (performance measures) for all services and to all constituencies.
<p>3. Provide innovative, high quality Case Management Services ready to meet any changes in state or federal funding and requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. analyze potential changes. B. Develop models/pilot models C. Train/retrain staff. D. Use the internet and the Imagine! website to provide current and useful material for our consumers, staff, and community.

#2 – ensure sufficient infrastructure to meet the mission.

Objective	strategies to achieve the objective
<p>1. Maintain a corporate environment and culture at Imagine! that promotes the vision of Imagine! which: puts the customer first; is embraced by customers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. establish ad-hoc, topic specific , time limited committees across departments to address specific issues. B. Annually review and report to staff and

and employees alike; encourages creativity, high ethics, and professionalism; is fun; attracts enthusiastic, intelligent, committed and devoted employees, and is effective and efficient in the delivery of services.	<p>Board on wages and benefits to ensure a competitive package for attracting and maintaining a strong employee base.</p> <p>C. Review and revise as necessary job descriptions, and alternative employment/staffing models.</p> <p>D. Annually survey employee satisfaction.</p> <p>E. Create an atmosphere at Imagine! that inspires, promotes teamwork, creativity and stability, and generally “fires up” employees.</p> <p>F. Ensure the development and promotion of a corporate philosophy of management, staff recognition, and staff compensation (including benefits) that guides the decisions regarding these topics.</p> <p>G. Offer effective and needed training and professional opportunities.</p>
2. Utilize effective technology capabilities	<p>A. Revise current applications and consolidate unnecessary and redundant systems such as to increase reliability and reduce inefficiencies (i.e. double entry).</p> <p>B. Fully integrate document imaging system.</p> <p>C. Install new business/finance system which meets the needs of all departments.</p>
4. Continually enhance the effectiveness of the Board of Directors	<p>A. recruit and recommend to the Board qualified new potential board members taking into account statutory requirements, community representation, and ethnic/gender representation.</p> <p>b. conduct orientation sessions for all new board members.</p> <p>c. schedule regular board member visitations to service sites.</p> <p>d review, revise and adopt policies and practices to ensure compliance with State and Federal changes regarding not for profit governance, fiscal controls, and management.</p>
5. To ensure that facilities meet the need of the organization.	<p>A. Annually review and analyze physical plant use.</p>

#3 – Encourage Providers to offer innovative and cutting edge services

Objective	strategies to achieve the objective
1. Work with SPOs to identify and implement new services for our community.	<p>A. Initiate services to the Autism population using the new waiver.</p> <p>B. Research impediments to employment.</p> <p>C. Further the development of a “Behavioral Services” section for</p>

	Imagine! that targets identified populations.-children and adults.- D. Research the viability of expanding the fiscal intermediary offerings of Imagine!
	E. Continue to prepare the organization for expanded self-directed services options made available by the State.
	F. Review our work with Foothills Behavioral Health with Imagine! serving as the contract entity to the BHO for delivering mental health services to Imagine! “dually diagnosed” consumers.

#4 – Ensure adequate funding to meet the mission

Objective	strategies to achieve the objective
1. Increase funding from the State and Federal government.	A. Expand activities at the local, State and Federal levels to include senior management, Board of Directors, families and consumers, and others. B. Monitor and prepare for possible changes at the federal level in Medicaid funding.

#5: Create an organizational identity establish broad community awareness of Imagine! and the needs of people with developmental disabilities.

Objective	strategies to achieve the objective
1. Create a compelling communications plan for Imagine!.	A. Create an outstanding web site (as evaluated by staff, families, consumers, etc) that excels in its ability to provide timely and useful information to all constituencies (e.g. best links to helpful info for all families/consumers). B. Create an organized, comprehensive public information plan that encompasses all activities and all departments, and informs all sectors of our community about the need for inclusion of people with disabilities, services offered, and how to contact Imagine! and our providers.

Family Support Annual Plan, March 08

For many years now, the focus of Family Support has been on finding ways to spread limited dollars across as many families as possible. Although this continues to be a goal for FSSP, there has been much more conversation this past year about the best way to provide support for such a large and varied group of individuals and families. Staff and the FSSP Council have engaged in very interesting conversations and strategic planning. Some of the challenges we face include: increasing numbers of families requesting services due to lack of movement into Supported Living Services and Comprehensive Services, and increased early identification; an increase in numbers of individuals over the age of 21, no longer in school, who have different and increased needs; an increase in numbers of individuals with aging parents; **and longer wait lists for Medicaid Waiver programs. We continue to look for ways to offer respite options to families in our program and this year have offered financial support to Easter Seals for respite care for Family Support families.**

Early in the year, the FSSP staff and Council identified the need to find ways of gathering information from, and disseminating information to families. I am happy to report we have made great strides in this area. With the help of the Imagine! Marketing and Communication Director, we now have a quarterly newsletter devoted to Family Services, and a new website designed specifically for families. In addition, we have developed a series of information sessions called the Imagine! Initiative. To date we have presented a Financial Planning Workshop and a Future Planning Workshop. Both were well attended! We will continue to provide these kinds of events throughout the year.

In terms of gathering information, we are in the process of revising our Families Most in Need Questionnaire in an effort to make it a more “robust”, and useful tool. We are hoping to gather information that will assist us in determining the best use of Family Support dollars. The Family Support Council will provide input and “test” the new tool for us.

FSSP staff and Council goals for April 07 – 08:

1. Assist FSSP staff in determining ways of assessing and assisting families in determining what their desires are for the future of their children with at least one focus group, or needs assessment. ***The Imagine! Initiatives provided families with information regarding financial planning and future planning. The Most in Need Questionnaire is being revised and will be piloted on the Council.***
2. Continue to advise staff on how to allocate limited resources. Engage in conversations and provide input to staff regarding possible changes in the structure of Family Support in the future. ***A proposal for use of FSSP dollars for the kids and families waiting for CES has been developed. Implementation is scheduled to begin April 1, 2008***
3. Work with staff and families to identify non-traditional options for out of home placement ***The Imagine! Initiative – Future planning included presentations on non-traditional options for out of home placement. Imagine! is encouraging research and development in the area of non-traditional options for out of home placement.***

FSSP staff and Council goals for April 08-09

1. Develop more efficient and effective methods of gathering information from families.

2. Utilize information from families to further assess the need for re-structuring Family Support to better meet the needs of families.
3. Continue to explore opportunities to partner with families.
4. Explore options to address the needs of individuals “transitioning” from school age to adulthood.
5. **Continue to examine alternative respite care options which may help children to remain in the family home.**