

Developing and Disseminating an IECMHC Vision Tip Sheet

Definition: A vision statement is a set of ideas that describe the future, identifying a team's aspirations and stretching the imagination. The vision statement clearly describes what success will look like and assumes that a major, long-term impact will be achieved. It allows for a guiding light within your team and easy communication of your purpose to your potential audience.

Common Characteristics of Quality Vision Statements

- ◆ They should be short—two sentences at an absolute maximum.
- ◆ They need to be specific to your efforts and describe a unique outcome that only this service can provide.
- ◆ They should be simple enough for anyone to understand. No technical jargon, no metaphors, and no business buzz-words if at all possible!
- ◆ They should be ambitious enough to be exciting but not too ambitious that it seems unachievable. Aim for the next 3 to 10 years.

Examples of Vision Statements from Federal Agencies, Tribes and Nonprofits¹

- ◆ **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration**: Reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities
(<http://www.samhsa.gov/>)
- ◆ **Health Resources and Services Administration**: Healthy Communities, Healthy People
(<http://www.hrsa.gov/index.html>)
- ◆ **Administration for Children and Families**: Children, youth, families, individuals, and communities who are resilient, safe, healthy, and economically secure
(<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/>)
- ◆ **Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo**: To be a self-sufficient Pueblo empowered to thrive in the modern world while preserving our cultural foundation.
(http://www.ysletadelsurpueblo.org/html_pages.sstg?id=7&sub1=98)

¹ Source: Top Nonprofits. (n.d.). *30 Example Vision Statements*. Retrieved from: <https://topnonprofits.com/examples/vision-statements/>

- ◆ **Tulalip Tribes**: We gathered at Tulalip are one people. We govern ourselves. We will arrive at a time when each and every person has become most capable.
(<https://www.tulaliptribes-nsn.gov/Home/WhoWeAre/MissionVisionAndValues.aspx>)
- ◆ **Human Rights Campaign**: Equality for everyone
(<http://www.hrc.org/>)
- ◆ **National Multiple Sclerosis Society**: A World Free of MS
(<http://www.nationalmssociety.org/>)
- ◆ **Habitat for Humanity**: A world where everyone has a decent place to live
(<http://www.habitat.org/>)
- ◆ **Make-A-Wish**: Our vision is that people everywhere will share the power of a wish
(<http://wish.org/>)

Sample Vision Statements for IECMHC

When developing your vision, be bold and consider the profound unmet needs that you are trying to fill, for example access is an overarching challenge nationally, therefore some may consider a vision such as,

- ◆ IECMHC available for all children

Steps for Creating a Vision Statement

1. Decide what to ask your target audience. For example:
 - What is your dream for IECMHC?
 - What would you like to see change for teachers, home visitors, children, and families because of this service?
 - What kind of community (or program, policy, school, neighborhood, etc.) do we want to create?
 - What do you see as the community's (or school's, neighborhood's, etc.) major issues or problems?
 - What do you see as the community's major strengths and assets?
 - What do you think should be the purpose of IECMHC?
 - Why should these issues be addressed?

- What would success look like?
- 2. Gather information from your target audience via interviews, focus groups, or surveys.
- 3. Decide on the general focus of your effort. For example, will you focus on IECMHC within high-risk communities for infants and toddlers?
- 4. Brainstorm and flip-chart all vision statement ideas with your team. Remind them of the following:
 - What you have learned from your discussions with community members
 - What your organization has decided will be your focus
 - Common characteristics of vision statements
 - Discuss options brainstormed, and ask:
 - Will it draw people to the work?
 - Does it give hope for a better future?
 - Does it provide a basis for developing the other aspects of our model planning process?

Administrators can take a strong leadership role in developing and maintaining a shared vision of mental health services by doing the following²:

- ◆ Creating a mental health mission statement through the strategic planning process.
- ◆ Engaging families, staff, and community members in creating a mental health strategic plan and revising that plan regularly.
- ◆ Integrating a mental health perspective into program policies and procedures.
- ◆ Incorporating the mental health mission statement, the mental health strategic plan, and the mental health policies and procedures into new staff orientation.
- ◆ Providing ongoing staff development on topics related to early childhood mental health.
- ◆ Creating space and opportunities for staff, families, and mental health consultants to develop relationships.

² From *Developing and Implementing a Programwide Vision for Effective Mental Health Consultation* by Beth L. Green and Mary Dallas Allen (http://ecmhc.org/documents/CECMHC_AdministratorsToolkit.pdf).

- ◆ Modeling positive relationships with the mental health consultant.
- ◆ Developing community partners who support the program’s vision of mental health services.
- ◆ Using creative and flexible approaches to expand the resources available for mental health supports to children, families, and staff.
- ◆ Valuing and supporting staff wellness.

