

DREAMS FOR KIDS DC (DFKDC) GAP ANALYSIS

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide analysis and recommendations based on an evaluation of the strategic, operational, and financial programs of DFKDC and comparisons of similarly focused non-profit organizations.

Overview

Dreams For Kids DC (DFKDC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that provides life-changing activities that empower children with physical and developmental disabilities to unite with their peers and realize their potential.

Research Methods

- Distributed and analyzed qualitative data surveys from stakeholders associated with DFKDC and competitors in similar markets.
- Observed DFKDC events and listened to testimonials/experiences from participants including volunteers, parents, and board members.
- Analyzed annual reports and programming from competitor non-profits.
 - 1) KEEN Greater DC (Kids Enjoy Exercise Now)
 - 2) Best Buddies International
 - 3) Arc of Virginia
 - 4) Arc of Montgomery County

Summary

Captured in this document are the following priority themes: strategic, operational, and financial. Included you will find observed strengths, as well recommendations so that DFKDC is able to plan expansion of services.

This document contains an analysis of the current state provided by Staff and Board Members of DFKDC. Secondly, the areas of deficiency based on collected data surveys, annual reports, testimonials, and observations from Daniel Leadership Institutes Young Professionals Mentoring Program. Lastly, the desired state that DFKDC may focus on with the intent to improve the overall performance and growth of the organization.

THEME: STRATEGIC

❖ **BRANDING/MARKETING**

- **CURRENT STATE:** We have recently created/updated strategic/visionary documentation to reflect our stated mission, vision and brand. We are conducting a project with an outside organization to consider our current state and deliver strategic recommendations. We haven't coalesced around a strategic plan, multi-tier decision-making framework, or identified an achievable roadmap for continuing to grow and improve.
- **DEFICIENCY:**
 - Lacks opportunities for people to easily be involved as a volunteer
 - DFKDC can improve marketing that shows the Dollar to impact
 - DFKDC doesn't market impact and activities to volunteers and possibly partners/sponsors (i.e. event follow-up)
 - DFKDC word of mouth marketing/ items to help stakeholders easily spread the information.
- **DESIRED STATE:**
 - Utilize volunteer link on website to explain volunteer roles available at the clinics and if possible other volunteering capacities i.e. fundraising for the organization
 - Utilize Instagram page to lead people directly to volunteer link on website
 - Continuously advertise instagram handles and twitter handles during clinic
 - Utilize infographics in social media showing the impact of donations
 - Develop testimonies from kids, parents, volunteers, staff/board, sponsors, and ambassadors that show directly the impact of a donation/sponsorship. (i.e. \$15 allows Johns mom to not have to buy special equipment for him to water ski)
 - Develop unique sponsorship levels for sponsors (i.e. Community Sponsors- get verbal recognition at event
 - Make one pager available so that volunteers, parents, and sponsors can download and spread the word about the organization, or postcard with information about organization on one side and ways to connect to social media platforms on other that you can give out at clinics, or your sponsors/partners can have at their places of business

THEME: STRATEGIC

◆ PROGRAMMING

- **CURRENT STATE:** We have two amazing assets that bolster our ability to provide life-changing programs for our target community: a feel-good, fun and non-controversial community that benefits from our programs and enthusiastic supporters who volunteer time and/or give financial support because they love the DFKDC experience. We have some qualitative examples of the impact of these assets, but content generation and messaging related to these themes is time consuming and difficult. We know we don't fully leverage the potential of these assets for community served outreach/growth, storytelling for fundraising, and programmatic decision-making, and we don't know how to best operationalize the process of collecting, generating and refining all of the content required for our go-to-market positioning. We have some quantitative metrics but could need more, which could be a barrier for funding.

We have nurtured relationships that have led to opportunities for grassroots expansion of the programming we offer and identified new opportunities for expansion into new markets (but we have not yet identified these markets). We don't have the knowledge base, bandwidth or mechanisms to assess our opportunities holistically, evaluate and prioritize initiatives, and tie outcomes on new/enhanced programming directly back to our community outreach, fundraising pipeline, overall financial bottom-line.

We've standardized our processes for clinic/social activity execution but updating details for each event is time consuming. We don't have an established continuous improvement process to assess, streamline and simplify event processes and supporting resources.

- **DEFICIENCY:**
 - DFKDC lacks a strategic plan in place to guide how they will achieve the overall goals for the organization. DFKDC has attempted to do this by identifying some of the main issues, conducting SWOT analysis, defining their mission/vision/ and brand.
 - DFKDC Board members lack unification in communicating the goals and objectives financially and operationally for the organization.
 - DFKDC lacks the staff to provide checks and balances for strategic goals

- DFKDC clinic participants are not providing quality evaluation feedback. Therefore DFKDC lacks availability to plan for Quality Improvement of programs.

THEME: STRATEGIC (CONTINUED)

◆ PROGRAMMING

➤ DEFICIENCY:

- DFKDC lacks structured engagement of volunteers during events developing relationship to the organization and programs
- DFKDC is not fully capturing contact information for program attendance leading to a lack in variety of programming options for locations and times that align with the needs of the target population
- DFKDC Your Path to Success program is lacking in providing follow-up resources, connections, and vocational/volunteer opportunities for participants

➤ DESIRED STATE:

- DFKDC do a strategic planning meeting and committee with all the board members and Executive Director. From looking at DFKDC board members LinkedIn they appear to have strong skills with project management and business development. They should look more into options for having a consultant or identify a Board Member to take the lead on consulting and facilitating this.
- DFKDC can increase communication or develop communication plan for Board for presenting information on operational, strategic, and financial documents. Look into having a special place in web domain for just board member access and upload important documents and information there
- DFKDC can explore having an evaluation committee on the Board that focuses on evaluation of programs to make annual recommendations for future planning
- DFKDC would benefit from exploring different platforms to use in order to collect evaluation information from all stakeholders.

THEME: OPERATIONAL

❖ **NUMBER OF STAFF**

- **CURRENT STATE:** We have one Full-time employee (FTE) who is solely accountable for delivering our mission at the strategic, managerial and operational levels. We don't have standardized, documented processes for internal business operations or an understanding of possible process/technical inefficiencies that we could possibly ameliorate to relieve or simplify redundant, cumbersome and inefficient administrative burdens on the FTEs time. We also aren't proactively workforce planning to prioritize strategic/managerial/operational activities and proactively manage our FTEs time spent when deciding to expand scope of work and delivery for various initiatives and activities.
- **DEFICIENCY:**
 - DFKDC currently has one full-time employee and due to the number of operational tasks that are needed to perform successfully, it is difficult to plan for growth without a solid foundation of staff members available to assist.
 - DFKDC lacks a proper budget to be able to hire new staff members to help with operational tasks that are needed
 - Based on the survey results, volunteers are not willing to assist with the operational or "bread and butter" tasks.
- **DESIRED STATE:**
 - Hold more fundraisers and/or campaigns to raise money to hire more staff members so that operational tasks can be effectively executed.
 - Incentivize administrative/operational tasks so that volunteers are more willing to help in these areas.
 - Create a volunteer staff committee to help delegate different tasks that need to be done at clinics such as a clinic leader, setup/breakdown crew, floaters, etc.

THEME: OPERATIONAL

◆ BOARD MEMBERS

- **CURRENT STATE:** We have an active Board with established standards for annual support commitments that include strategic themes including meeting participation, public-facing event attendance, and a personal financial support determination. We don't have Board member expectations/commitments identified at the activity and task level, so the great ideas we adopt often create additional administrative and operational burden for our single FTE and/or specific operationally-focused Board members.
- **DEFICIENCY:**
 - DFKDC does not have board member expectations/commitments set in place at the activity and task level which causes an excessive burden on the single FTE.
 - DFKDC lacks board members who have an abundance of experience to be able to contribute a greater depth of knowledge and skill to the board as a whole.
 - According to the surveys, the board members do not feel completely knowledgeable of how DFKDC allocates its funds within the program
- **DESIRED STATE:**
 - Set clear, manageable expectations for board members so that engagement across the board will increase, which leads to DFKDC board members being more aware of the daily operational tasks happening within the organization
 - Recruit new board members (could do so internally with current volunteers or parents) so that the contribution of knowledge and skills can be increased
 - Bring in a new board member that is an expert in nonprofit management, budgeting/expenses, and fundraising

◆ VOLUNTEERS

- **CURRENT STATE:** We have cleaned up and standardized operations for business process, budget accounting, and event management activities. We haven't completed the financial audit process that is required for eligibility for high-value grant program applicants and haven't done resource planning to address any findings/issues that we will have 1 year or less to address post-audit for compliance. We also do not have the bandwidth to effectively search for and write grants given our limited staff.

THEME: OPERATIONAL (CONTINUED)

❖ VOLUNTEERS

➤ DEFICIENCY:

- DFKDC is not effectively resourcing their volunteers & parents (surveys showed that they are more than willing to help, but have not been asked to help in new areas)
- Based on the survey results, DFKDC volunteers prefer to work hands-on with the children at the clinics, and are not flexible toward helping in other areas
- DFKDC does not have a volunteer committee or leadership opportunities in place to help with delegation of duties when clinics are being held.

➤ DESIRED STATE:

- Create online portal for volunteers to be able to register online via the DFKDC website and also have access to future volunteer opportunities
- Form a volunteer committee to allow volunteers to take over the coordination of events so that the burden may be relieved from the single FTE
- Communicate with volunteers so that they are willing to help in more than just one area of DFKDC such as attending community fairs on behalf of DFKDC, setup/breakdown of clinics, and other areas necessary for properly flowing clinics

THEME: FINANCIAL

❖ FUNDING STREAM

- **CURRENT STATE:** We've worked hard to break even as an organization, ensure the security of our capital cash flow, and establish impactful financial sponsorship and in-kind giving relationships with our sponsors and supporters to cover our \$250K annual budget. We don't have significant cash reserves to fund future initiatives and we've really just started keeping up with revenue requirements in real-time.

We are nurturing some existing relationships and have successfully been able to grow cash and in-kind sponsorship revenue. We don't have a specific, targeted pipeline to prioritize a short list of financial prospects to convert to higher support levels or change from interested to committed supports—both in terms of corporate and individual giving. We also don't have a clear strategy and support resources/guidance how to convert pipeline targets to new or higher

giving levels since success is largely driven by personal relationships on a case-by-case basis.

THEME: FINANCIAL (CONTINUED)

❖ FUNDING STREAM

➤ DEFICIENCY:

- DFKDC lacks multiple funding streams and initiatives to bring in money for the organization
- DFKDC lacks board members who have years of experience in fundraising and nonprofit management
- Board members do not feel completely knowledgeable of how DFKDC allocates its funds within the program

➤ DESIRED STATE:

- DFKDC needs to broaden and diversify to several sources of funding.
- Take advantage of sport activities that can be easily monetized with incentives and honorial recognition (upon certain milestones) for Corporations, Individuals, Foundations, Government and In-Kind donations.
- These sport activities should connect with everyone - Professionals, Students, Senior citizens, thereby there is something for everyone (inclusivity) to participate and give back bountifully.
- DFKDC needs more frequent sport activities during the month in several locations to increase engagement within target market, and increase fund and pledge drive from donors to accommodate for this.
- DFKDC has to utilize local businesses and franchises across the country via partnership for fundraising and casual donations.
- Become more transparent online and include DFKDC's Annual Report as a feature on the homepage that is easy to identify for all visitors on the website.
- Include rankings from charity evaluators such as Charity Navigator and Charity Watch, as well as all awards, and public recognition on the website to encourage donors trust, respect, guaranteed support and reliability as an organization
- Accountability and Transparency is very key to our audience, current donors and the prospective ones. DFKDC has to ensure that all fundings streams are completely accounted for and most importantly revealed graphically in the annual report. See KEEN and Best Buddies as example.

THEME: FINANCIAL

❖ Budgeting and Expenses:

- **CURRENT STATE:** We have extensively cleaned up our accounting practices to provide transparency into our budget management. We plan our budget for current operations and consider our status as a Board at least once a quarter, but we don't assess possible financial impact and risk specifics or do end-to-end financial planning for new/changed initiatives that we want/need to pursue.
- **DEFICIENCY:**
 - According to the survey, Board members acknowledge that DFKDC struggles with financial and budget planning
- **DESIRED STATE:**
 - DFKDC should establish financial goals (that is feasible yet increases yearly) for the fiscal year to be brought in via donations, fundraising, special events and other platforms
 - Bring in new board member(s) that has extensive experience in nonprofit management, budgeting and expenses
 - Establish good documentation, and accountability for all expenses including miscellaneous

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Have DFKDC Ambassadors (select Parents and children who are currently involved and already impact the organization through their influence).**
2. **Increase and diversify DFKDC Celebrity Ambassadors that can locally, nationally and internationally represent the organization, thereby creating awareness, branding the mission and vision of DFKDC, increasing the target market and bringing in diversity (This would be very useful for the expansion project to LA).**
3. **Accountability and transparency about received funds and donation on DFKDC's website next to "About Us".**
4. **The same (recommendation #3) applies to the fiscal financial report. Also, include graphics on the annual report for easy understanding of DFKDC's finances by interested donors.**

