

# SeriousFun Children's Network

## Strategic Plan FY 22-24

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### Executive Summary

SeriousFun Children's Network (SeriousFun) was sparked by Paul Newman's vision of creating a place where children with serious illnesses could experience the joy, adventure, independence, and friendship of childhood, free of charge. What started as one camp more than 30 years ago has grown into a global network of more than 30 camps and programs serving the needs of children with serious illnesses and their families, all around the world.

In 2020, we faced a pivotal moment as the COVID-19 pandemic swept across the world. SeriousFun Member Camps and Partner Programs had to dramatically shift their models of delivery in the face of so many unexpected challenges. During that time, we saw even more clearly the strength and importance of operating as a collaborative and supportive network. Leaders and teams across SeriousFun worked together and shared strategies to pivot to alternative and virtual programming, and best practices to continue to meet the mission of serving children with serious illnesses and their families during a time of great need. We demonstrated agility, adaptability, and perseverance and recognized we are strongest when we work together.

As SeriousFun looks forward to 2022-2024, the power and potential to serve, engage, and impact more children and their families through our Network should not be understated. We have a significant global footprint with the ability to reach children in culturally appropriate, personalized ways. We also possess shared knowledge, resources, medical, and programmatic expertise that allow us to support children with a wide range of complex medical conditions safely through high-quality experiences. Lastly, with our sights set on the expansion of high-impact partnerships to pursue new geographies, camps, coalitions, programs and models of delivery, we'll find ourselves to be a stronger, more resilient and more effective Network than we've ever been.

### Strategic Plan Overview

While each camp operates at the direction of their own Board of Directors and by its own Strategic Plan, independent of SeriousFun Children's Network, this plan is considered the Network-wide strategy. The Support Center will lead plan implementation.

The pillars, objectives, and key results detailed in this plan were arrived at through internal and external research, including comparator and environmental analysis, and developed as a result of a series of workshops, conversations, and inputs from leadership and staff at camps and partner programs, Support Center leadership and staff donors and funders, and Network Board Members.

When this Strategic Plan is realized, SeriousFun Children's Network will have reached and more deeply engaged more children and families as a result of new opportunities created within and outside of our existing camps and partner programs. We will have achieved increased global brand and mission awareness for the Network. And we will have expanded our fundraising efforts and ensured financial sustainability for the Support Center and Partner Programs, while providing financial support and guidance for camps. Our Network will be stronger as a result of ongoing and enhanced

collaboration and a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Finally, we'll continue to pursue the safest, highest-quality experiences for children and their families. By 2024, we will be closer to a world where every child with a serious illness will find belonging, experience joy, and realize their full potential.

Our three-year picture of success will be supported by the pillars of SeriousFun's 2022-2024 Strategic Plan, which are to:

- Expand our mission and amplify impact;
- Increase brand awareness and fundraising; and
- Enhance organizational and operational excellence.

## SeriousFun's Focus

SeriousFun's work is focused on the vision, mission, values, and reason for being detailed below, which were developed and affirmed during the process of creating this Strategic Plan. Our vision statement describes the aspirational future we seek to achieve, and our mission statements describe the work we are doing every day to drive toward our vision. Our reason for being statements articulate the unique impacts SeriousFun Children's Network and the Support Center are positioned to make. Finally, our values are the guiding principles that drive Network-wide behavior and the decision making of the Support Center, Network Board, Member Camps, and Partner Programs. Together, these elements serve as a north star and form a filter through which every decision we make and every action we take should pass.

## SeriousFun Children's Network Vision

*A world where every child with a serious illness will find belonging, experience joy, and realize their full potential.*

## Mission Statements

*Note: The vision statement describes the world SeriousFun Children's Network and the Support Center hope to create when we achieve all of our goals. Since the mission statement describes the work we do each day to drive toward our vision, we've developed a statement to articulate how the Network supports the vision and a statement to articulate how the Support Center supports the vision.*

### SeriousFun Children's Network Mission

*Together, we empower children with serious illnesses and their families to reimagine what is possible by creating inclusive camp and recreational experiences, inspiring confidence and joy, and building community and connection.*

### Support Center Mission

*To advance and support a global community dedicated to creating safe, innovative, and high-quality camp and recreational experiences for children with serious illnesses and their families.*

## SeriousFun Children's Network Values

1. **Inclusion** - As a global network, we welcome and celebrate diverse voices and perspectives, and create communities and experiences based on inclusion and belonging.
2. **Possibility** - We create opportunities for everyone impacted by our mission to explore their unique talents and abilities, discover their own potential, and imagine what's possible.
3. **Collaboration** - We know we are stronger together. Purposeful collaboration and knowledge-sharing across our Network results in greater efficiency, reach, and impact.
4. **Innovation** - Inspired by our founder Paul Newman, we continuously innovate and evolve to meet the needs of the children and families we serve and positively impact the world around us.
5. **Safety** - Safety and security are cornerstones of SeriousFun's work. As a Network, we create environments and experiences that prioritize the medical, physical, and emotional wellbeing of all.
6. **Fun** - We take our work seriously so children and families can focus on having fun.

## Reason for Being

### SeriousFun Children's Network

*SeriousFun Children's Network exists to provide transformative, camp-inspired experiences that have a lasting, positive impact on the lives of children with serious illnesses and their families around the world. This is accomplished by the collaboration of SeriousFun's 30 independently operated Member Camps and Partner Programs, and the Support Center. Together, we:*

- *Serve children with serious illnesses and their family members from more than 50 countries across five continents, always free of charge*
- *Share knowledge, resources, and responsibility for ensuring safe, innovative, and high-quality programming*
- *Bring our medical and programmatic expertise to support children with a range of complex medical conditions*

### SeriousFun Support Center

*The Support Center exists to advance the collective priorities of the Network ensuring children with serious illnesses and their families have safe, innovative and high-quality programming by:*

- *Upholding Network-wide standards of excellence across all SeriousFun Camps and Programs*
- *Building the professional capacity of Network staff*
- *Developing partnerships to expand our reach and impact*
- *Raising global awareness and funds*
- *Advancing the innovation, growth, and sustainability of the Network*

## SeriousFun's Approach Over the Next Three Years

We have organized our three-year plan around three pillars which articulate the priorities we must focus on in order to advance our mission and drive toward our vision. These are the guideposts we have used to organize our plan objectives and measurable key results (OKRs). These OKRs should not be seen as a report card or performance document, rather, they should push the Network, through the work of the Support Center, to stretch in service of our critical mission to serve more children with serious illnesses and their families. This plan will be continuously evaluated, and, if we are not meeting planned measures, we will assess the reasons why and adapt accordingly.

### Pillar 1: Expand our mission and amplify impact

#### Definition

We will reach and engage more children and families\* through new programs, partnerships, service models, technologies, and other opportunities within and outside of our existing camps and partner programs.

*\*Reaching more children will be measured by the number of new children and families reached and deeper engagement will be measured by increased touchpoints with existing children and families.*

#### Objectives and Key Results

##### Objective 1.1:

Create new opportunities for existing camps and programs to more deeply engage and reach more children and families.

*Note: Reach is to be measured by number of new children and families reached and engagement is to be measured by additional touchpoints with existing children and families.*

**Key Results 1.1:**

We will consider this objective achieved when we:

- 5% increase in funding that supports or benefits new programming for camps and partner programs.
- Create 2 new partnerships with organizations working to or providing services to support children with medical conditions for potential growth at camps
- Build a coalition of 4 organizations serving children with medical or related conditions to build/share best practices and information among organizations
- Create 2 opportunities to leverage technology to support programming experiences

**Objective 1.2:**

Create opportunities outside of existing camps and programs to reach more children and families.

**Key Result 1.2:**

We will consider this objective achieved when we:

- Strategically expand into 2 new geographies
- Establish 2 new partnerships with existing outside organizations to provide new program models
- Initiate the camp membership process with 1 new organization through any type of existing or new model

**Objective 1.3:**

Expand our target audience to share our expertise to the benefit of more children and families.

**Key Result 1.3:**

We will consider this objective achieved when we:

- Identify/Develop 2 areas of intellectual property that have relevance outside of our organization (i.e., train-the-trainer)
- Identify 5 opportunities to share expertise
- Identify 3 service models and implement 1 (e.g., Fee for Service, Open Service, Hybrid)

**Pillar 1: Conclusion**

Pillar 1 commits to expanding our mission and impact by creating new opportunities for existing camps and programs through partnerships, building coalitions for mission-aligned organizations, and increasing funding for new programming. We will also pursue opportunities outside of existing camps and programs, such as growing to new geographies and program types and bringing another Member Camp into the Network. Lastly, we'll expand our target audience to share our expertise in order to better educate and support the medical camp community and other communities around the world.

## Pillar 2: Increase brand awareness and fundraising

### Definition

We will increase brand awareness and fundraising for SeriousFun and explore how these two functions can work together most effectively to reach our goals.

### Objectives and Key Results

#### Objective 2.1:

Increase and diversify revenue streams to support financial sustainability and strategic priorities.

##### Key Result 2.1:

We will consider this objective achieved when we:

- Return to pre-pandemic fundraising levels (\$14M) and in addition grow revenue to \$15M by 2024
- Achieve targets to support Support Center sustainability as determined by the Financial Plan
- Add 2 new revenue vehicles to further diversify and build revenue base
- Add 5 new relationships (corporate, foundations, and individual) over \$200,000
- Increase major gifts and planned giving revenue by 20%

#### Objective 2.2:

Increase and amplify global recognition of SeriousFun Children's Network.

##### Key Result 2.2:

We will consider this objective achieved when we:

- Increase brand awareness globally by 5 percentage points
- Finalize and rollout of SeriousFun 2.0 brand guide
- Carry out 2 Network-wide brand initiatives
- Establish 2 new marketing programs aimed at identifying and engaging target prospective supporter audiences

#### Objective 2.3:

Improve supporter and donor engagement.

##### Key Result 2.3:

We will consider this objective achieved when we:

- Create and test no less than 3 donor/supporter journey maps that move donors/supporters through the pipeline
- Create stewardship and cultivation plans for each donor type/dollar level to increase engagement and retention
- Increase overall number of donors to pre-pandemic levels of greater than 2,000 donors annually

### Pillar 2: Conclusion

Pillar 2 commits to increasing SeriousFun Children's Network's brand awareness and fundraising. In pursuing our fundraising objectives, we'll increase and diversify revenue streams to return to pre-pandemic fundraising levels — supporting both SeriousFun Support Center's sustainability and allowing us to better resource camps, programs, and new initiatives. We'll further advance this by improving supporter and donor engagement to cultivate and maintain donors. We're also committed to increasing and amplifying the global recognition of SeriousFun Children's Network for the purposes of creating greater support for our mission and fostering a more cohesive, united network of camps and partner programs.

## Pillar 3: Enhance organizational and operational excellence

### Definition

We will amplify the benefits of operating as a networked organization; promote diversity, equity, and inclusion at each level of the Network; and support the safest and highest-quality camp experiences for children with serious illnesses and their families.

### Objectives and Key Results

#### Objective 3.1:

Capitalize on and amplify the benefits of our federated organizational model.

##### Key Result 3.1:

We will consider this objective achieved when we:

- Increase participation in Network services offerings (from pre-pandemic levels) from camp and program staff outside of the USA by 50%, with a 25% increase in the first year
- Create a Theory of Change
- Modify Support Center approach to funding camps and programs to invest in growth and expansion of the Network
- Pilot 1 new shared business services model across the Network
- Define roles throughout the Network and develop decision-making framework

#### Objective 3.2:

Embed a DEI-positive culture into each level of the Network.

##### Key Result 3.2:

We will consider this objective achieved when we:

- Implement the recommendations from Support Center DEI audit
- Create and implement a Network-wide DEI strategy

#### Objective 3.3:

Advance safety and quality standards and practices.

##### Key Result 3.3:

We will consider this objective achieved when we:

- Develop and implement a revised Criteria program
- Develop, implement, and assess a program quality system for the Network
- Develop and implement a multi-year support plan that advances medical quality across the Network

#### Objective 3.4:

Embed financial sustainability into Support Center and Member Camp strategy and financial management practices.

##### Key Result 3.4:

We will consider this objective achieved when we:

- Create and maintain a multi-year financial plan for the Support Center to be integrated with the annual budget and planning process, as well as the 3-year strategy
- Modify Support Center approach to funding camps and programs to support financial sustainability across the Network
- Revise Support Center approach to investments and endowment spending to align with sustainability goals

## Pillar 3: Conclusion

Pillar 3 commits to enhancing the organizational and operational excellence of the Network. We will capitalize on the benefits of the federated model to increase the value of belonging to the Network, create a Theory of Change, and identify and pilot new service models for the benefit of all of our camps and programs. We'll create a Network-wide DEI strategy following a Support Center audit. Safety and security are cornerstones of SeriousFun's work, we'll ensure that, along with criteria aimed at mitigating risk, we advance safety and quality standards and practices across the Network. And finally, we will focus on the financial sustainability of the Support Center and Member Camps and Partner Programs through our strategies and management practices.

## How We'll Make Progress On Our Strategic Plan

In order to fulfill the OKRs in our Strategic Plan, each pillar, objective, key result, and activity has been assigned an accountable owner. Together, we will continually evaluate our progress toward these results. SeriousFun Support Center staff will meet monthly to discuss activities and quarterly to evaluate key results, which are graded on a scale of 0-1 (or 0-100%). The OKR model maintains that a score of 70% or higher is considered passable or good. While each OKR will receive a number grade, we will also discuss them subjectively. We don't anticipate every key result will achieve 100%. If that were to be the case, we didn't stretch enough. We also recognize some goals might fall flat, and we will need to determine why and what we need to do moving forward. The OKR setting model ensures the plan remains both measurable and adaptable.

The team will also come together annually to evaluate key results and the plan objectives overall, which may change or shift based on learnings from the previous year. Additionally, during annual planning, teams will develop new work plans for the forthcoming year. These meetings are critical for determining where we are exceeding, meeting, or not reaching our expectations.

## Conclusion

Since the first camp, The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp, was founded by Paul Newman in 1988, the camps and programs of SeriousFun Children's Network have provided over 1,430,000 camp experiences for children living with serious illnesses and their families, totally free of charge. We know we can do more. Despite a challenging 2020, where our camps and programs were challenged in ways never imagined, we banded together because our mission is more relevant than ever and it is imperative that we steadfastly continue to work toward fulfilling SeriousFun's vision — a world where every child with serious illnesses will find belonging, experience joy, and realize their full potential. We begin 2022 with a new Strategic Plan and an increased sense of urgency that our work has never been more important than it is now. By expanding our mission and impact, increasing our brand awareness and fundraising, and enhancing our organizational and operational excellence, we have the opportunity to take our global network to levels of potential and make an important difference in the world. Together, we **can and will empower** children with serious illnesses and their families to reimagine what is possible by creating inclusive camp and recreational experiences, inspiring confidence and joy, and building community and connection.