

Housing Kentucky Families:

new vision  
new strategies

2015 Kentucky Affordable Housing Conference



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# Reimagine Your Organization as a Social Enterprise

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# Reimagine Your Organization as a Social Enterprise



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# First Things First



# Early Considerations

- **Honoring** our history.
- **Creating** and implementing core values.
- **Challenging** traditional programming.
- **Identifying** barriers with community.
- **Considering** residential & financial needs.
- **Acknowledging** our lack of for-profit business experience.



# Early Considerations

- **How** is your agency committed to honoring staff and client strengths and interests? *For us – A place of yes!*
- **Which** industry or enterprise celebrates your local culture and will be embraced by your community? *For us - Kentucky Proud & Buy Local*
- **How** do you incorporate self-sufficiency, self-reliance in your support services? *For us – Helped us “walk the talk.”*



# Early Considerations

- **What** is your plan to engage the community, and are changes needed to make this happen? *For us – Access while maintaining safety and confidentiality for survivors*
- **Who** are your community partners and what resources are available to support social enterprise. *For us – Local colleges and universities were key to early buy-in.*



# Other Considerations

- **Identify** the challenges of your population: housing, transportation, income, job skills, poverty, impact of prolonged victimization on physical and mental health, ongoing safety, self sufficiency. *For us - community among residents has been a challenge.*



# Other Considerations

- **Strong** foundation of who you are as an organization
- **Commitment** to not lose sight of your mission.
- **Bottom line** - entrepreneurial venture is to benefit families not just the organization.
- **Research**



# Trauma-Informed Care

## **Social Enterprise only a part of Trauma-Informed Care approach.**

U.S. Department of HHS (2014) defines trauma informed care as an approach to engaging people who have survived trauma in such a way that recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role of trauma in their lives.

# Trauma-Informed Care

- Need to be respected, informed, connected and hopeful
- Connection between trauma and trauma symptoms including substance abuse, depression, anxiety, etc.
- Value of collaborative approaches that empower survivors.





“This week of gardening was a good week for observing finished patches after weeks and weeks of planting, watering, weeding, and composting. The whole garden was blooming and coming together nicely. The efforts of all the girls and their garden supervisors were never more noticeable or enjoyable to us than this week. The lettuce they harvested could have won awards!”



# **Planting** Seeds for Growth

# Where to begin?

- Formed diverse committees of community members. Looking at mind, body, health holistically.
- UK Agriculture, State Agriculture/KY Proud, attorneys, small farmer, social workers/Faragher farms, community activists, forester, artist, life coach, YMCA.
- Explored similar programs nationally, still rather limited programs practicing a TIC and Social Enterprise.

# Mission & Vision

- Promote an environment of creative, nature-based and strength based collaborative work opportunities. Individuals and Agency!
- Provide survivors with avenues to heal from physical and emotional trauma.
- Provide survivors with a sustainable source of field-to-table fruits, vegetables, herbs, berries etc. for meal preparation in the shelter.
- Benefit families and organization!

# Mission & Vision-Aligned

- Empower clients with information, resources, and access to self-sufficiency options, including micro-enterprise opportunities by imparting employable skills related to agricultural production, manufacture of value-added products, and marketing of produce and goods from the farm.
- Help survivors find economic opportunities in a healing environment that incorporates the inherent benefits/value of nature, creativity, work and movement while creating an income stream for our program.
- Implement evidence-based research.

# Asset-Driven



## Ours:

- 40 Acres
- Horse stables
- Barn
- Facility with room to expand
- Supportive Board of Directors
- Community that values land/farming

# Ever-Evolving



- Box Gardens
- Shared Farmer part-time
- Small garden
- Engaged families
- Visited and explored similar organizations (stole ideas and concepts 😊)
- Created a strategic plan that incorporated Social Enterprise with Programming

# Ever-Evolving





“We had the opportunity to cut flowers from the garden and we did enjoy making arrangements for an event. We watered plants and picked peas too! I look forward to big, garden fresh spinach tonight! I also look forward to the medicinal effects of spinach too. Good stuff! Gardening was a good stress reliever.”



Always **Value-Added** 🍓

# Added **Healing**

- Survivors introduced to nature-based healing options during intake a first few weeks following entry into program.
- Invite families to explore and consider gardens and farm as a space to reflect and participate.
- Encouraged to participate in farm-to-table activities, nature-based support groups, and stipend project alongside of other healing supportive services.

# Added **Empowerment**

- Survivor selected group of staff that assist with implementation of goals related to emotional, physical and financial well-being.
- Survivors will be able to apply for and commence a Training Assistantship which will provide a personalized farm-based training program in response to interests and skills.
- Can be cultivation of harvest, production of value added goods and/or development of other related skills applicable to the culinary, marketing, or sales sectors.

# Added **Empowerment**



- Training Assistantship participants will be hired as part-time temporary employees.
- They have access to all supportive self-sufficiency programming.

# Added Sustainability



- Survivors assume the role of Leadership Fellows.
- They may meet hourly requirements through a mix of agricultural activities, other entrepreneurial activities, mentorship of survivors and participation on a Steering Committee.

# Added **Sustainability**

- Survivors will receive hourly salary and housing stipend for up to 6 months and have access to continued support services.
- Leadership Fellows plan would include completion of specialized certifications supporting job placement, degree-based programs, development of microenterprises etc.
- We envision a scholarship and mentorship component for Leadership Fellows.



I had fun this week working on the farm. It was calming and exciting I love learning new things. My dislikes this week snipping my finger while harvesting. Even though harvesting is my favorite thing so far. I love finding vegetables from last fall and feeding them to the horses. They enjoyed the carrots too. I am excited about next week can't wait to see what it will bring.



# Our Case Study

# Social Enterprise

- **Farm and Flower CSAs**
- **Body Products**
  - Benefit to Families
  - Benefit to GreenHouse17
  - Benefit to Community



# Business Plan



- Mission
- Description of Business
- Marketing
- Customers
- Product
- Pricing
- Competition

# Business Plan

- Promotional efforts/Targeted Marketing
- Management Plan (who is responsible for what)
- Financial Plan (costs, shipping, labor and market, certifications, packaging, infrastructure, fees etc.)



# Surprising Partnerships

- Grow Appalachia
- Peace, Love and Happiness Foundation
- United Way of the Bluegrass
- Local Government
- Small Business owners
- Chefs



# Enterprise Model



- Production takes place at our facility and grounds.
- Products include soaps, balms, candles, flowers, seeds, herbs, popcorn and we hope to reintroduce local honey.
- Business ideas cultivated in partnership with our residents through craft/farm groups

# Marketing

- Engage general community.
- Create consistent messaging.
- Cultivate community through small, home-based events that allowed us to sell the holistic purpose of our vision and enterprise.
- Participants sell products at community events.
- Social media, website, ETSY and soon “To the Market” that promotes survivor made products.



# Looking Forward

- To create new and profitable of enterprises that align with our mission/vision.
- Implement jobs component of our vision
- Explore business partnerships with existing entrepreneurial ventures.
- Test partnerships with retail outlets
- Small business mentors for participating residents



# Looking Forward

- New Products
- Shared Kitchen income opportunities
- Open the door for future opportunities that are aligned with our mission and vision
- Other survivor based sales opportunities
- Sewing business
- Research by UK



# Looking Forward

- Manual for duplication by other service providers (Rural and Urban)
- Financial support to survivors for their own business's.
- Animal Care



# Lessons Learned

- With few organizations to compare to we had to be creative and test the waters (we are still navigating options) Some aspects will work some may not but you have to.....
- Start somewhere
- Engage in the process of Social Enterprise. For us, Nature-based healing seemed like an organic approach for our families and our assets. Explore you own.

# Lessons Learned

- Capitalize on the strengths and gifts of staff and clientele
- In our approach our families are not a workforce but there are models that are specific to employable skills for their population.
- Sustainability





**Questions?**

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