



# CREATING THE FOUNDATION FOR **IMPACT**

Variety, the Children's Charity  
of Manitoba's Strategic Direction  
for 2020 to 2022

[varietymanitoba.com](http://varietymanitoba.com)



# CONTENTS



- 
- 02. Our Mission, Vision, Core Values and Background

---

  - 04. The Unmet Need

---

  - 05. Variety's Role

---

  - 06. **Strategic Priority #1** - A simplified, unified voice for Variety

---

  - 08. **Strategic Priority #2** - Promote Variety's cause to a new diverse audience

---

  - 09. **Strategic Priority #3** - Make it easy for Variety families to connect

---

  - 10. **Strategic Priority #4** - Variety's Camp Brereton will be a premier fully accessible children's camp in Manitoba

---

  - 12. **Strategic Priority #5** - Variety's Special Needs program will be the premiere granter of specialized equipment, programs and services for children in Manitoba

---

  - 14. **Strategic Priority #6** - Increase sustainable fundraising activities

---

  - 15. **Strategic Priority #7** - Variety Board of Directors governance & nominating process

---

  - 16. Our Commitment

---

## OUR MISSION:

Stepping in where government, healthcare, and other funding ends to provide direct assistance to children in Manitoba living with special needs and experiencing economic disadvantage.

---

## OUR VISION:

To be the premiere children's charity in Manitoba that raises sustainable funds to provide help and hope to children of all abilities, one child at a time.

---

## FOUNDATIONAL VALUE:

**Inclusion** – We strive to create a world where all children play, learn and live together and are provided equal opportunity.

---

## CORE VALUES:

**Collaboration** – We work together with other partners in the community to ensure the needs of Variety children are met in the most efficient and timely manner possible.

**Compassion** – We demonstrate empathy and show a heartfelt passion and desire to help improve the lives of Variety children and their families.

---

## BACKGROUND

*Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba accomplished significant gains in all priority areas over the last three years as a result of the goals it established in its previous 2017-2019 strategic plan.*

---

As an organization, this previous strategic plan created the foundation for Variety to be successful by recommitting ourselves to our mission of serving children living with special needs and experiencing economic disadvantage. This shift allowed us to divest from several worthwhile community programs that did not substantively serve our core client audience or that did not provide direct assistance to these very deserving children. By doing so, we chose to intentionally chart a path of directly assisting more children through our three remaining core programs (Variety's Special Needs Program, Variety's Children's Dental Outreach Program, and Variety's Camp Brereton) and to ensure we are serving the children our mission calls us to.

Over this period, Variety began to transform the culture of our organization to ensure that our mission is at the forefront of our decision making and subsequently the work that Variety undertakes in Manitoba every day. Variety Families, our Board, staff, volunteers, referral partners, and funders are all seen as key stakeholders in this process; at the core of each of us is a desire to positively impact children.

Our 2020-2022 strategic plan is the next step in this process. The goal of this plan is to grow our impact by continuing to determine and address the unmet needs of Variety children, continuing to annually grow the number of children and communities we serve, and to begin to establish community impact by not only removing barriers but by creating more opportunity for children living with special needs and impacted by economic disadvantage to reach their potential.



# THE UNMET NEED

*The operational work undertaken as a result of the 2017-2019 strategic plan began the process of determining the unmet needs of children Variety serves in Manitoba.*



Over the last 3 years unmet needs continued to be present with large funding and service gaps in provincial departments responsible for supporting families and children living with disabilities. There continues to be long wait lists to access publicly funded supports and children are not receiving services during the early childhood period. Once children reach school-age a lack of personnel continue to be one of the biggest issues for school divisions that are struggling to provide adequate services to children living with special needs. The mandate and resources offered by other disability-centered charitable organizations has created additional gaps and the out-of-pocket expenses families face in order to raise their children living with special needs continue to grow.

As a non-disease specific organization that is responsive to the children and families we serve, there has been no shortage of unmet needs for Variety to fulfill. By actively working with 44 referral partners from healthcare, education, social services, and other charitable organizations Variety has been able to begin meeting the unmet needs across the province, assisting children in 47 communities (including Winnipeg) in Manitoba during the last 3 years. Variety is proud of the fact that it now assists children in every geographic region within the province.

3-year data trends on primary diagnosis, geography, and areas of need (specialized equipment, service, etc.) have been inconclusive aside from identifying that the needs Variety is here to address are massive and that many children have multiple diagnosis and a multitude of areas of support that could benefit their growth and development.

Thankfully, over the last 3 years, Variety has been able to keep pace with the significant increase of applications approved through Variety's Special Needs Program, have self-determined a course to expand our Variety's Children's Dental Outreach Program and even though our camper numbers have doubled, established a growth strategy for Variety's Camp Brereton to utilize spring and fall shoulder seasons.

It is time for Variety to take the next step in our journey, with the hopes that during the next 3 years our business model matures and becomes more predictable and we can continue to build our capacity and resources to respond to the significant unmet needs of children living with special needs and those impacted by economic disadvantage utilizing evidence-based solutions.



# VARIETY'S ROLE

Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba provides support to organizations and individuals to purchase specialized equipment and provide programs and services to improve the quality of life for children living with special needs and economic disadvantage.

The supports provided by Variety create impact and support measurable outcomes in one or more of our three areas:



## 01. CARE

We provide assistance that proactively supports initiatives that helps the physical, social, and mental well-being of Variety children.



## 02. FREEDOM

We provide assistance that is essential to the healthy growth and development of Variety children.



## 03. FUTURE

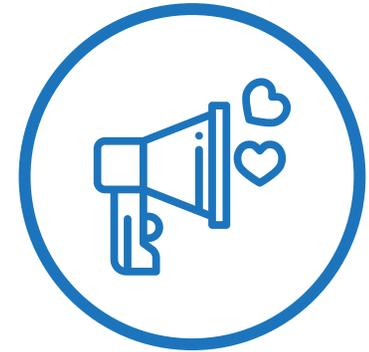
We provide assistance that helps develop the skill, expertise, and aptitude of Variety children.

Variety works collaboratively with other stakeholders on behalf of Variety children and their families to maximize impact and strives to ensure that assistance is provided in the most efficient manner possible.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1

## *Promoting Variety to a new diverse audience with a simplified, unified voice*

We strive to make Variety, the Children’s Charity of Manitoba the most recognized and respected children’s charity in the province. We proactively promote the grants that Variety provides to organizations and individuals to ensure that all families whose children qualify for support are aware of how they can access Variety programs and services. We leverage our brand and image by promoting the stories and positive impact of the work we do for our stakeholders. As we do so, our goal is that the assistance we provide improves the quality of life for Variety children to reach their potential.



### HOW WE’LL DO IT:

- 1.** Elevate the awareness of Variety’s brand in Manitoba by proactively placing Variety kids and their stories at the forefront to emotionally engage Manitobans in our cause
- 2.** Cultivate and nurture Variety Ambassadors for our cause by proactively promoting our granting program and its positive impact to all agencies and health professionals who work with children living with special needs and those impacted by economic disadvantage

- 3.** Enhance our geographic exposure to more Manitobans by promoting Variety in secondary markets such as Southern Manitoba and the Westman region

- 4.** Develop relationships with organizations representing Indigenous peoples to ensure we are serving the needs of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit children in Manitoba

### KEY INITIATIVES:

- 1.** Implement strategies for each program area to ensure Variety brand is prominent, meaningful and measurable by Fall 2020

- 2.** Develop and implement comprehensive marketing strategies for digital channels on target audiences

- 3.** Assess programming to ensure it aligns with our mission, vision, and outcome areas annually, define growth strategy and annual growth goals for current program areas by Spring 2020 and annually thereafter based by performance

- 4.** Create a Marketing & Communications Committee to drive awareness of Variety and ensure the charity’s strategic priorities are known in the community



# STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2

## *Make it easy for Variety families to connect*

Our processes are efficient to ensure that people can connect with Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba in a timely manner to access essential support for their children. As they do so, and as we become a trusted resource for families, we will be helping their child reach their potential.



### HOW WE'LL DO IT:

1. Ensure our processes to apply for support are easy, efficient, and timely
2. Celebrate with Variety families their children's achievements and showcase these achievements to our community
3. Continue to support and engage with every Variety family and their children in order to cultivate the next generation of Variety alumni
4. Work with families to help children reach their potential
5. Ensure moving forward that we are committed to providing a meaningful opportunity for Variety Alumni to stay

engaged to inspire current and future Variety families in such roles as mentors

### KEY INITIATIVES:

1. Provide social interaction opportunities for Variety children and families to allow informal peer support and encouragement to new Variety children and families
2. Develop and implement regular opportunities for Variety families to stay engaged through volunteering and community events
3. Re-establish Variety's scholarship program by Fall 2020 to promote pursuing and finishing post-secondary education

4. Ongoing monthly communication to existing Variety families to ensure they are aware of other ways Variety helps children

5. Develop, capture, analyze and report consistent Key Performance Indicators for programs and Variety children by Winter 2020



# STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3

*Variety's Special Needs Program will be the premiere provider of specialized equipment, programs and services for children living with special needs in Manitoba*



By actively staying connected with existing and new Variety families, it is our desire to become the “top of mind” provider of specialized equipment, programs, and services for children living with special needs in Manitoba. In doing so, we will provide a brighter future to ensure meaningful support that will help Variety children reach their potential.

---

## HOW WE'LL DO IT:

1. Research and identify growth opportunities in terms of geography and area of need
2. Stay connected through direct contact with families
3. Promote dollars available and program criteria
4. Promote the meaningful difference we make in the lives of Variety children through our marketing and communications efforts

5. Focus our support on evidence-based solutions

---

## KEY INITIATIVES:

1. Expanding referral partners in Manitoba by seeking out special needs agency partnerships across the province
2. Communicate with Variety families who receive support from Variety's Special Needs Program that they can reapply for future needs

3. Actively grow direct costs of program by 15% per year commencing in fiscal year 2020/2021

4. Develop, capture, analyze and report priority needs to help determine where and what the unmet needs are and implement process to inform donors

# STRATEGIC PRIORITY #4

## *Variety's Camp Brereton will be a premiere accessible children's camp in Manitoba*

By building a master site plan that includes capital improvements and maintenance, a marketing plan, a partnership program, staffing, and a customer service model, Variety's Camp Brereton will become Manitoba's premiere accessible camp for children living with special needs and children impacted by economic disadvantage.



### HOW WE'LL DO IT:

1. Develop and implement a 5-year site plan for Variety's Camp Brereton focused on site accessibility
2. Build a sustainable and ongoing asset registry and maintenance plan by June 2020. To be carried forward on an annual basis and reviewed each year before the camp opens
3. Implement a marketing strategy to promote Camp Brereton and its positive impact to all potential camp donors and/or sponsors

4. Proactively promote Camp Brereton to agencies who work with children living with special needs and children impacted by economic disadvantage to ensure camp is filled to capacity on an annual basis

### KEY INITIATIVES:

1. Actively plan annual site maintenance based on asset registry and capital projects based on 5-year site plan to make Camp Brereton accessible
2. Capture meaningful data on camper groups, demographics, and facility usage to help inform the site plan

3. Actively seek out donor and/or sponsors for Camp Brereton capital projects
4. Maintain camper numbers by proactively engaging previous groups to rebook for the following camp season
5. Increase off-season camper booking by marketing previous camp experiences through testimonials, camp site activities and location



# STRATEGIC PRIORITY #5

## *Variety Children's Dental Outreach Program*

Variety's Children's Dental Outreach Program provides preventative education, dental screenings, and treatment to children who may not otherwise visit a dentist. Our goal is to provide dental care for children from families experiencing economic disadvantage, especially those without insurance coverage.



### HOW WE'LL DO IT:

1. Continue our partnership with the University of Manitoba Dental School and Winnipeg School Division focusing on children from participating schools
2. Expand program by partnering with private dental clinics
3. Grow program within other areas of Winnipeg and Manitoba by partnering with rural communities

### KEY INITIATIVES:

1. Analyze and develop plan for additional program resources
2. Add more private dental clinics to program by 2021
3. Expand program parameters within Winnipeg by adding more children by 2021
4. Create a plan to partner with rural dental providers to expand program reach by 2022





# STRATEGIC PRIORITY #6

## *Increase sustainable fundraising activities*

By proactively engaging donors to support their specific areas of interest, we will build a fundraising program that is efficient, diversified, and sustainable in meeting the needs of Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba.



### HOW WE'LL DO IT:

1. Continue to grow and engage new supporters for our annual signature events
2. Strategically bundle opportunities into meaningful funding proposals
3. Engage new donor prospects for our cause
4. Improve retention rates by enhancing donor stewardship program
5. Leverage donor database to strategically grow areas of support

### KEY INITIATIVES:

1. Increase fundraising across 4 key categories: Community, Grants & Fundraising, Individual, and Corporate
2. Reduce revenue reliance on signature events by 30%, increase overall revenue, and ensure cost per \$ raised of \$0.25 is achieved for all signature events by 2022
3. Maintain current cost of overall fundraising by continuing to optimize operational efficiencies
4. Introduce pilot patron program known as the Patrons of Variety with the goal to offset operational costs



# STRATEGIC PRIORITY #7

## *Variety Board of Directors governance & nominating process*

Variety, the Children's Charity of Manitoba is governed and guided by the members selected to be part of our Board of Directors. Our goal is to ensure our Board Members are provided with the necessary orientation, structure, and succession planning to ensure sustainable and unified board membership for the betterment of the organization.



### HOW WE'LL DO IT:

1. Governance committee to conduct a full review and refinement of existing bylaws
2. Implement annual Board Member evaluation process to identify recruitment, committee needs, and succession needs
3. Create and implement orientation process for new Board Members to ensure a consistent onboarding process for the board and organization
4. Align Variety staff with Board of Directors through ongoing communication

### KEY INITIATIVES:

1. Governance committee to review and update bylaws including recruitment and succession process for Board and Sub-Committee members by 2021
2. Develop orientation and onboarding program in conjunction with Variety Staff by AGM 2020
3. Evaluate Board Members for future planning in order to create an executive succession structure, to be reviewed on annual basis before the AGM each year
4. Determine minimum commitments required of each Board Member for annual & term basis of board membership; including a minimum of one in-person participation in a 'Variety Moment'
5. Variety staff to present at the first board meeting of each calendar year

# OUR COMMITMENT:



Variety's ambitious plans will require best-in-class knowledge, resources, and practices in place throughout our organization. That's why we will continue to optimize our operations in the following key areas:



## OUTREACH

We will continue to build a network of referral partners throughout the province of Manitoba to assist us in finding more qualifying children to assist.

## VOLUNTEERISM

We will build capacity by engaging volunteers in regular and meaningful opportunities that meet the needs of both Variety and the families we serve.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

We will continue to develop our human resource practices to attract, develop, and retain a talented and committed staff whom are passionate about helping children through Variety.

## BUSINESS PRACTICES

Our policies, processes, and systems will support the growth and efficient delivery of programs and services to Variety families and effectively steward our supporters.

## PHILANTHROPY

We will continue to inspire Manitobans to engage with, understand, support and feel passionate about the work of Variety, to ensure growth of sustainable funding for our cause.