



UPSTREAM RESOLUTION of ALIGNMENT

Aligning Practices and Activities of **Becoming Independent** With the Upstream Investments Initiative

Resolution Date: September 4, 2014

WHEREAS, the County of Sonoma is sponsoring a community-wide strategic initiative called Upstream Investments with the following **mission**: To facilitate the implementation of prevention-focused policies and interventions that increase equality and reduce monetary and societal costs for all residents of Sonoma County.

WHEREAS, the Upstream Investments **vision** for all residents of Sonoma County is that poverty is eliminated and all people have an equal opportunity for quality education and good health in nurturing home and community environments.

WHEREAS, the Upstream Investments Initiative is designed to target the following **factors**:

Social and economic factors

Poverty and racial/ethnic disparities
Community conditions
Public opinion, public policy, and laws

Family and individual factors

Family dysfunction
Negative peer influences
Early antisocial behavior

WHEREAS, the Upstream Investments Initiative seeks to promote four community **goals**:

1. The whole community is engaged in supporting the healthy development of children.
2. Community members have access to education and training and are adequately prepared for the challenges of the future.
3. All community members are well sheltered, safe, and socially supported.
4. Sonoma County has a thriving diverse economy that produces economic security for all.

WHEREAS, the Upstream Investments Initiative seeks to expand **funding** for Model Upstream Programs and also seeks to promote **organizational practices** that support the Upstream Vision.

WHEREAS, the Upstream Investments Strategic Initiative promotes the implementation of **outcomes-based practices** including Evidence-Based Practices, Promising Practices, and Emerging Practices.

WHEREAS, Twenty-two **indicators of success** will inform the community about the success of Upstream Investments.

1. Reduced child maltreatment
2. Reduced youth binge drinking
3. Reduced youth drug use
4. Reduced youth depression
5. Reduced youth tobacco use
6. Reduced teen births
7. Reduced obesity
8. Improved pre-school attendance
9. Improved 3rd grade reading
10. Improved 3rd grade math
11. Improved high school completion
12. Improved higher education
13. Improved housing affordability
14. Reduced homelessness
15. Reduced juvenile arrests
16. Reduced adult arrests
17. Reduced domestic violence
18. Reduced gang membership
19. Improved youth connectedness
20. Reduced poverty
21. Reduced unemployment
22. Improved health insurance rates
23. Reducing hip fractures
24. Increase fruit and vegetable consumption
25. Increase physical activity
26. Increase dental care for children

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Becoming Independent shares the Upstream Investments **mission, goals, commitment to improving the indicators of success, and vision** and has aligned its organizational practices with the Upstream Investments Initiative as follows:

Becoming Independent's mission is "to promote community inclusion and participation for people with developmental disabilities."

Becoming Independent's vision is for those with developmental disabilities to find "an improved quality of life – meaningful work, recreation and support of family, friends and the community."

Becoming Independent (BI) achieves our mission through programs and services that foster the greatest level of independence for Sonoma County residents with disabilities. Community inclusion for people with developmental disabilities increases equality and reduces monetary and societal costs countywide. BI's mission and vision are in full alignment with Upstream's implementation of prevention-focused policies and interventions that increase equality and reduce monetary and societal costs for all residents of Sonoma County.

For example, BI's Employment Services Spectrum helps 250 individuals with disabilities to become successful employees in the North Bay community. Our continuum includes: a) supported facility-based vocational education b) contracted work assignments; c) tailored day service to increase job readiness skills; d) supported employment geared toward individuals ready for competitive employment opportunities; and e) placements in competitive community-based jobs.

WHEREAS, the Upstream Investments **vision** for all residents of Sonoma County is that poverty is eliminated and all people have an equal opportunity for quality education and good health in nurturing home and community environments.

- ✓ Explain how the Organization's **mission/vision** are aligned with the Upstream mission/vision.

BI's personal enrichment, employment services, community living supports and transportation services focus on preventing dependency and isolation for people with disabilities. The cost of supporting an individual through BI's programs pales in comparison to the cost of institutionalization (\$15,488 per year average vs. the most current estimate of over \$400,000 per year at the Sonoma Developmental Center).

BI's history of increasing independence through supported living services and employment readiness has helped to reduce poverty in our region for decades. BI will continue to increase independence and reduce poverty through further collaboration and use of evidence based practices.

- ✓ List which Upstream **Indicators of Success** are promoted by the organizations practices and programs.

BI's programs and services predominantly serve low-income individuals with disabilities. The majority of BI's clients qualify for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) based on financial need. Monthly SSI payments range from \$640.00/month to \$1,133.00/month—income that is below the federal poverty level. The 2011 American Community Survey estimates that 32.4% of working-age adults with disabilities are employed, compared with 70.5% of people without disabilities — a disparity our programs seek to address. BI promotes most of the 26 Upstream indicators, with a focus on:

- Reducing Homelessness
- Reducing Poverty
- Reducing Unemployment
- Increasing Physical Activity
- Reduced Hip Fractures

- ✓ Make a commitment to submitting the Organization's programs to the **Portfolio of Model Upstream Programs**. Or, list the Organizations' programs that are already on the Portfolio of Model Upstream Programs.

BI uses evidence-based practices although none of our programs and services are on the Upstream Portfolio. BI will work with Upstream staff to explore a portfolio path for one or more of our programs.

- ✓ Identify the level of Organizational **funding** dedicated to upstream investments.

100% of BI funding is dedicated to upstream principles — decreasing disparities for individuals with disabilities and their families.

- ✓ Describe any **organizational practices** that reflect upstream principles (such as strategic planning, policies, budget activities, resource deployment, or contracting).

With a staff of more than 300 and an annual operating budget of \$14 million, BI serves close to 1,000 individuals each year with a continuum of services based on best practices. In 2013, the North Bay Business Journal selected BI as one of the Top Ranking Nonprofit Organizations, as well as one of Sonoma County's Best Places to Work.

BI is devoting significant agency resources to obtain and implement Therap@ Services Web-Based Developmental Disabilities Software, providing a comprehensive solution for documentation, reporting, assessment and data tracking.

- ✓ Describe **collaborations** with other organizations that promote Upstream Investments.

Sonoma County Board of Supervisors chose BI as one of only five winners of the 2009 Sonoma County Jefferson Awards for "excellence in community leadership and civic engagement." Other collaborations with Upstream partners include partnerships with: Council on Aging, Redwood Empire Food Bank, Catholic Charities, Volunteer Center of Sonoma County, City of Santa Rosa, City of Healdsburg, and the Sonoma County Library system.

- ✓ List ways that the Organization is **promoting** community-wide knowledge and understanding of Upstream Investments (such as posting a link to SonomaUpstream.org on the Organization's website or including Upstream Investments in Organizational publications).

BI promotes community-wide knowledge and understanding of Upstream Investments by posting a link to SonomaUpstream.org on our website.

Approved and adopted the 4th day of September, 2014

I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted by the Board of Directors of Becoming Independent.

Following Roll Call Vote: Ayes: 7
Nos: 0
Absent: 6

Bonnie Burrell

Bonnie Burrell, President, Board of Directors, Becoming Independent