

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
TOWN OF AMHERST YOUTH BOARD  
Strategic Directions  
2001-2005**

***BELIEF STATEMENTS***

*The Amherst Youth Board believes that:*

Families are persons who share love, safety, opportunities, guidance, comfort, health, and blessings.

Families are the primary vehicle for communicating and demonstrating positive values and traditions.

Throughout a family's life, it becomes stronger through mutual trust, respect and Communication.

Children and families deserve a proactive community that provides opportunities to support their growth.

All families have strengths.

All children and families have intrinsic worth, with unique talents and abilities.

Diversity should be respected and celebrated.

The values of a community affect the well-being of its children and families.

The health and well-being of children and families affect the entire community.

Communication, cooperation and collaboration are essential to strengthening families.

Service to others and community involvement are important for building strong families and communities.

***VISION STATEMENT***

*Based upon these beliefs...*

The Amherst Youth Board envisions a caring community, in a dynamic partnership with children and families who are healthy, safe and nurtured, and where diversity is treasured and all are supported in fulfilling their potential.

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***MISSION STATEMENT***

*Guided by this vision, the mission of the Amherst Youth Board is...*

To serve youth and families through youth development, advocacy, prevention and intervention programs that strengthen family and community.

***STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES***

*Consistent with this mission, the Amherst Youth Board intends to fulfill the following strategic objectives through December 31, 2005:*

To integrate ten new partners into the Healthy Communities/Healthy Youth Initiative  
In building asset levels in the Town of Amherst.

To increase the number of families served through Amherst Youth Board programs  
and services by 10%.

To maintain a level of external funding at 45-50%.

To create a multi-faceted, community-wide initiative that provides increased  
opportunities to reflect and celebrate the rich diversity of the Amherst community.

***STRATEGIES***

*Toward meeting these objectives, the Amherst Youth Board will engage in, but not be limited to, the following strategic activities:*

In the area of *ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE*, the Youth Board's by-laws, job descriptions, committee structure and overall organizational flow will be reviewed to ensure optimum efficiency in implementing the strategic plan; a formal research and evaluation strategy will be designed to monitor plan implementation, ensure program quality, evaluate program outcomes and evaluate success in achieving the Youth Board's strategic objectives; and the feasibility of changing the Amherst Youth Board's name to better reflect the direction and intent of the Strategic Plan will be considered.

In the area of *HUMAN RESOURCES*, the Youth Board will continue to develop its volunteers and staff by offering additional opportunities to expand their knowledge, skills, and professional growth; seek new strategies to recruit, retain and honor the accomplishments of staff and volunteers; work toward identifying and addressing the issues and needs of the Board regarding roles and responsibilities, structure and function, and orientation and training; and seek to reflect the diversity of the Amherst community in the composition of its staff and volunteers.

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In the area of *TECHNOLOGY*, the Youth Board will develop a comprehensive plan to meet its technological needs in service of increased program effectiveness and efficiency; utilize the Town's wide area network and Youth Board's website to improve computer literacy among staff, parents, and youth; and consider an automated telephone system with initial human contact.

In the area of *PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING*, the Youth Board will pursue strategies to enhance its visibility throughout the community; increase staff and volunteer knowledge about all Youth Board programs, services and activities; act as ambassadors and advocates on behalf of its programs and services; increase the visibility of the Healthy Communities/Healthy Youth Initiative throughout the Amherst community; ensure the accuracy and consistency of released information across all collaborators; and reactivate the Speakers' Bureau.

In the area of *GOVERNMENT RELATIONS*, the Youth Board will work to establish and/or maintain open communication with positive working relationships with all levels of government; including the Town of Amherst, Village of Williamsville, colleges, universities and private and parochial schools residing within the Town and Village, the County of Erie, the State of New York, and the Federal Government; educate, inform and grow understanding among key government officials, most particularly the Town Board liaison, about the program, services and activities of the Amherst Youth Board and its mandated role as advocate on behalf of Amherst Families and youth; encourage the development of a shared vision with the Amherst Recreation Department and Commission regarding positive youth development; continue to maintain positive, productive relationships with the Amherst Senior Center, Police Department, Courts and other Town Departments; continue to advocate on all levels of government for legislation and policies that contribute to the well-being of children and their families.

In the area of *CAPITAL NEEDS AND GENERAL OPERATING FUNDS*, the Amherst Youth Board will cultivate funding to support its technology needs; develop strategies to generate community-based support; maintain and increase financial support from all levels of government; develop a joint effort with the Amherst Youth Foundation to expand its endowment; continue current and develop new fundraising events; and establish satellite Centers in designated high-need areas of Amherst, most particularly, in Eggertsville.

In the area of *PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION*, the Amherst Youth Board will enhance its mechanisms for needs-based program development and program evaluation; increase its awareness of best practices and other research regarding positive youth and family development; prepare itself and its contract agencies to transition to outcomes-based evaluation; initiate and oversee the diversity initiative; continue to oversee the Healthy Communities/Healthy Youth Initiative; and align its programs and services to be consistent with the strategic plan.