

Down Syndrome Association National Capital Region

Organization Charter

November 13, 2007



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Organization Charter

Foreword

DSA-NCR Strategic Planning Initiative

- In 2007, DSA-NCR identified a need to redefine itself and develop a long-term plan to ensure that children and adults with Down Syndrome are fully integrated, supported and welcomed equally into all aspects of society. As a result, DSA-NCR hired Deloitte to conduct a Strategic Planning exercise which took place between June 2007 and November 2007.

Objective

- The objective of DSA-NCR's strategic planning initiative is to provide long term strategic planning to position DSA-NCR to assume a more active role in advocacy and in meeting the needs of its members.

Deliverables

- The following deliverables have been created as a result of this project:
 1. Environmental Scan and Analysis [separate document]
 2. DSA-NCR Organization Charter [**this document**]
 3. DSA-NCR Program Plan [separate document]
- The following sources of information were used to design DSA-NCR's organization charter:
 - Comments from the member and non-member focus group discussion.
 - An interview questionnaire was used to conduct phone interviews with the following organizations:
 - The Canadian Down Syndrome Society (CDSS), a large not-for-profit organization with DS focus.
 - The Scott Mission, a large not-for-profit organization based in Toronto.
 - The Ottawa Rotary Home, a small not-for-profit organization based in the NCR.
- In addition, Deloitte Partners specialized in the not-for-profit sector provided sample best practices for structuring a small not-for-profit organization.

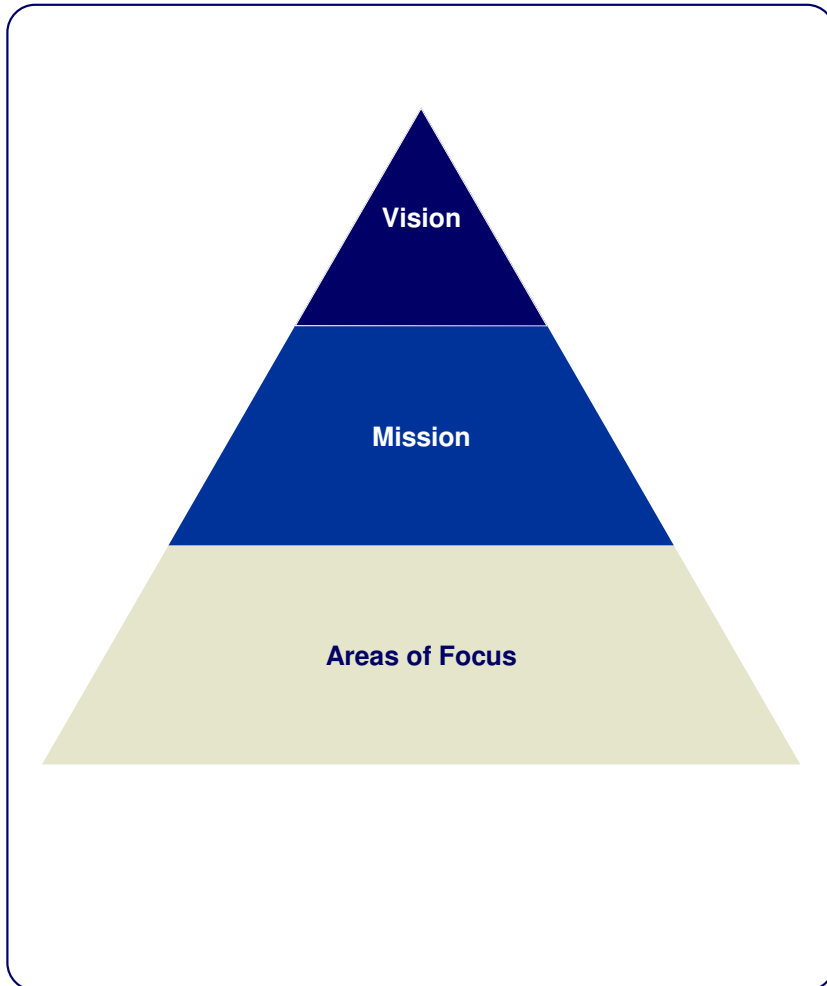
Organization Charter

Introduction

- The DSA-NCR Organization Charter presents how DSA-NCR should position its organization in the community and determine which priorities it will address and what direction it will take.
- In addition, this document includes a planning and management framework which once implemented, should enable DSA-NCR to deliver on its mission and mandate and to increase efficiency in the management of its operations.
- This document is structured as follows:
 - **Vision, Mission, and Areas of Focus**
 1. Vision, Mission and Areas of Focus Overview - Understanding how an organization defines itself.
 2. Current Mission - How DSA-NCR currently defines itself.
 3. DSA-NCR Vision and Mission - How DSA-NCR will be defined from now on.
 4. DSA-NCR Areas of Focus – DSA-NCR priorities.
 - **Planning and Management Framework**
 5. Planning and Management Framework Overview – Presentation of the Framework.
 6. Management Structure – How should DSA-NCR be structured?
 7. Planning Process – Key steps of the annual planning process.

1. Vision, Mission and Areas of Focus Overview

- The following framework is used to design DSA-NCR's organization charter:



Vision

(also described as an 'aim' or 'purpose')

Asks the following question:

1. What do we want or aspire to be?

Mission

(more specific than vision)

Asks the following question(s):

1. What is our core purpose?
2. What business are we in?
3. What is the scope of our organization (i.e. health support, education)?
4. Why do we exist?

Areas of Focus

(what we do; Highest level priorities where the organization wants to focus on)

Asks the following question:

- What is the scope of our activities and initiatives?
- Where will we focus our efforts and resources?
- What are our specific priorities with our mission (i.e. health support – fine motor skills)?
- How will we achieve our vision?

2. Current Mission

DSA-NCR's Current Mission:

- At the time of its incorporation as an association, DSA-NCR founders defined two objectives and how the organization should accomplish these two objectives in the bylaws of the organization:

The Purpose of the association is to

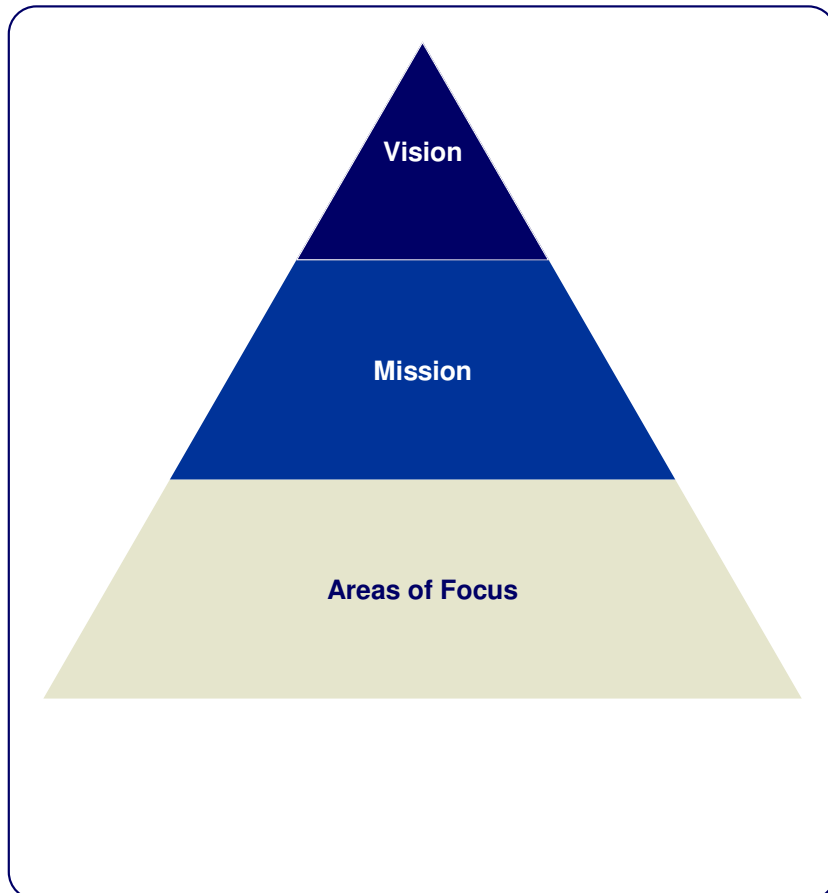
1. Enhance the quality of life for persons with Down Syndrome by increasing their access to all aspects of Canadian Society;
2. To provide Assistance and support to their parents and families; and,
3. To accomplish these objectives through the use of all legitimate means and available knowledge including advocacy, research, information dissemination, education and training, initiation and sponsorship of programs and activities, and monitoring and evaluation of the use of existing and future resources.

DSA-NCR's Current Services

- DSA-NCR's current service offering is very diversified in areas ranging from organizing social events (e.g. an annual pic-nic) to funding organizations which provide medical or employment services to individuals with DS.

3. DSA-NCR Vision and Mission

DSA-NCR's revised Vision and Mission



DSA-NCR's Vision is to...

- To help people with Down Syndrome to live full and rewarding lives

DSA-NCR's Mission is...

- To act as a first point of contact for information and support for the Down Syndrome community.
- To enhance knowledge and understanding and create awareness about Down Syndrome in the Ottawa community.
- To create a more inclusive community for people with Down Syndrome through educational and awareness raising efforts.
- To provide support for people with Down Syndrome and their families, in addition to forming collaborative support networks with relevant organizations.

Areas of Focus

Primary Areas of Focus

Secondary Areas of Focus

Quick Wins

4. DSA-NCR Areas of Focus

DSA-NCR's Areas of Focus

DSA-NCR's areas of focus are as follows:

	Age	Socio-Economics	Geographic	Language
Primary Areas of Focus Areas where greatest opportunities are identified and where the DSA-NCR may have a significant impact.	Work Related Services			
	Housing and Accommodations			
	Social Interaction and Networking			
Secondary Areas of Focus Areas where an opportunity exists, but where the DSA-NCR has not yet identified as a primary area of focus.	Advocacy and Awareness			
	Education			
	Health Support Services			
Quick Wins Areas where the DSA-NCR may have a significant impact with limited efforts and/or resources.	Professional Services			

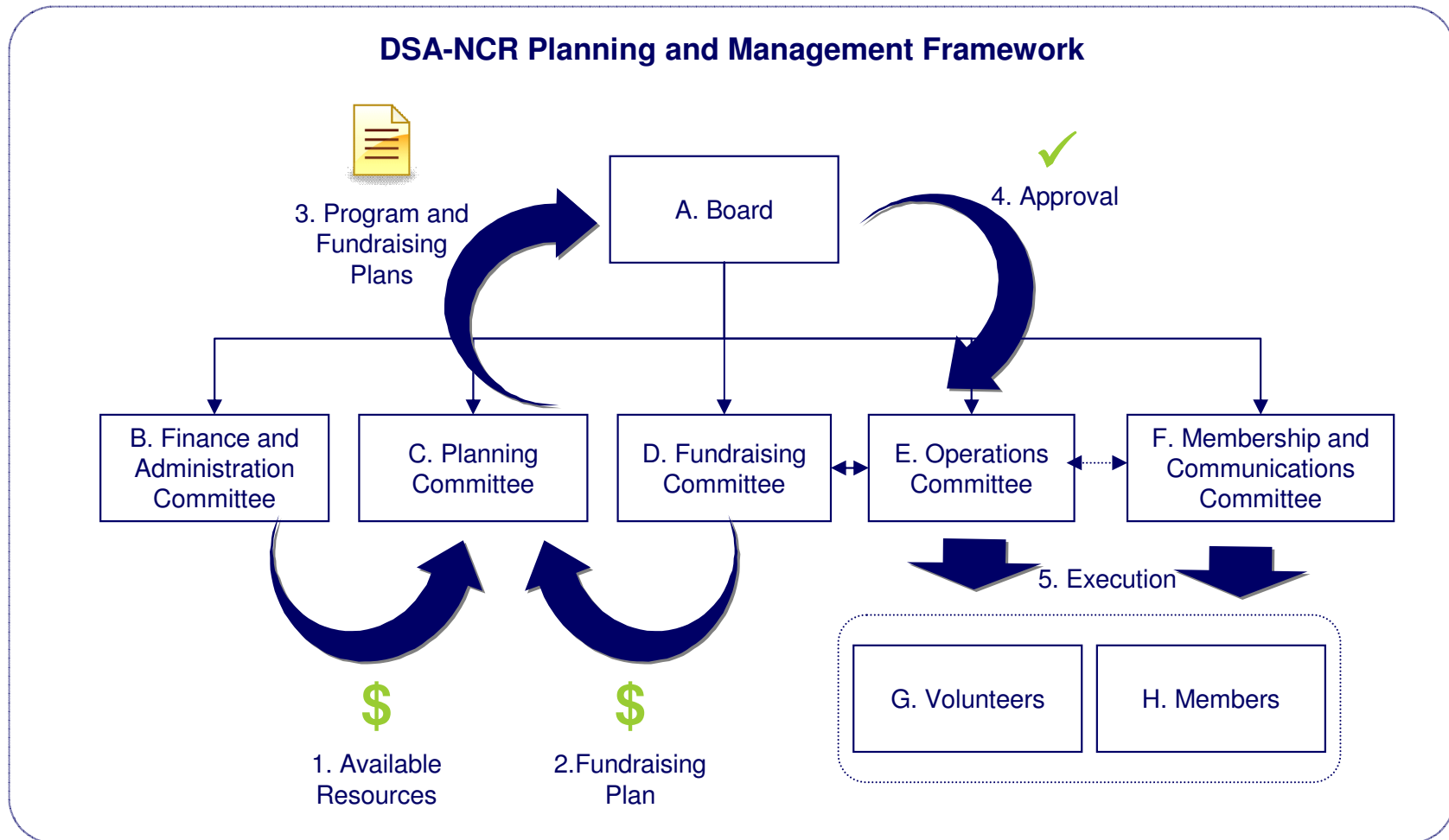
Note: Since the 2008 National Down Syndrome Gathering is not a recurring event for DSA-NCR, it has been presented separately from the other areas of focus see 2008 Program Plan.

Demographic Considerations

- The following considerations apply across all areas of focus and should be considered in assigning resources and efforts to each activity in the areas of focus.
 - Age – are services proportionately representative for adults with Down Syndrome?
 - Socio-Economics – to what extent does income and financial status play a role in families/individuals ability to support the costs of living with Down Syndrome?
 - Geographic – are services more readily and widely available in one region than in another (e.g. Gatineau vs. Ottawa)?
 - Language – Can the DSA NCR support and adhere to the needs of the Francophone Down Syndrome community?

5. Planning & Management Framework - Overview

- In order to successfully deliver on its mission and mandate and to increase efficiency in the management of its operations, DSA-NCR should implement the following Planning and Management framework. Details on each element of the framework are provided in the following pages.



5. Planning & Management Framework - Overview

- The Planning and management Framework is further explained in the following pages using this structure:

Management Structure

- A. Board
- B. Finance and Administration Committee
- C. Planning Committee
- D. Fundraising Committee
- E. Operations Committee
- F. Membership and Communications Committee
- G. Volunteers
- H. Members

Planning Process

1. Communicate available resources
2. Develop fundraising Plan (previous year funding & forecasted fundraising for the coming year) and submit to Board
3. Prepare program plan and submit to Board
4. Program plan and Fundraising plan approved by Board
5. Execution of activities in the Program and Fundraising plans

6. Management Structure

A. Board

- For an NPO to grow, It is essential to have a well structured board with bylaws in order, and ensure that the organization meets all of Revenue Canada requirements for NPOs.
- The board should identify a mentor agency to go through growth.

Board Composition and size

- DSA-NCR should diversify its board/administration which is currently composed of parents of children with DS for the most part. As their child grow up, parents are less involved, the result is an organization that is mainly focused on the needs of parent with children with DS, rather than on people with DS themselves.
 - For small NPOs, the board must be operational with a strong funding component to ensure sufficient funds for operations. It must include administrators (operational people) and networking people.
 - Having a person with DS on the board has proven very valuable for other DS organizations: it forces everyone to speak in clear terms and it helps balancing the discussions from parent needs (usual board members) to people with DS. It also shows the broader community that “we practice what we preach”.
- Having a board size of a maximum 10 members is ideal, as it is not too large to manage, and large enough to provide a good range of people with different skills.

Board Logistics

- Board members should meet each month (except summer months) to discuss the following:
 - Update - what have we achieved last month?
 - Plan - what will we do in next month?
 - Financial discussion - Where are we at?

Board Support

- People involved in the association are often the same, as a result they often feel exhausted: there would be a need to allocate tasks to sub groups within the organization.
- An executive director or equivalent should prepare a program plan, and the board should approve it. If the organization does not wish to hire employees, preparation of the program plan should be allocated to a subcommittees.
- Board subcommittees should include at least the following subcommittees:
 - Finance (audits, financial accounting and reporting),
 - Priorities / planning (to allocate funds to priorities)

6. Management Structure

B. Finance and Administration Committee

- The Finance and Administration Committee is responsible for bookkeeping, dealing with auditors, and reporting financial information to the Board.
- The organization's finances should be transparent and communicated to members.

C. Planning Committee

- The Planning Committee is responsible for preparing the Program plan based on available resource information provided by the finance committee and ensuring that the activities in the plan are aligned with the organization's organization charter. The planning Committee submits the Program plan to the board for approval.

D. Fundraising Committee

- The Fundraising Committee is responsible for identifying funding sources and planning fundraising campaigns. It prepares the fundraising plan, which is submitted to the board for approval.
- The Fundraising Committee also assumes responsibility for funding management and for identifying new sources of funding, and may want to consider the following ideas:
 - Board members are more important to open doors than any fundraising campaign.
 - Finding an honorary chair for the board to increase visibility of the organization.
 - United Way is not the ideal fund source for DSA-NCR for several reasons:
 - A considerable amount of paperwork
 - Only gives to service-oriented organizations (not to organizations that would redistribute the funds to other organizations).
 - The DSA-NCR should identify its potential sources of funding in a funding plan and determine which funding sources it feels comfortable using (i.e. Telemarketing or fundraising firms have been very successful for many NPOs, but the DSA-NCR should consider whether this is an ideal approach for the organization (some members may not approve this approach)).

E. Operations Committee

- The Operations Committee is responsible for implementing the Program plan and coordinating activities and initiatives throughout the year. It also supports the Fundraising Committee in implementing the fundraising plan.
- If the DSA-NCR grows, it will be necessary to hire employees and accept the related additional efforts required so as not to overwhelm volunteers and board members.

6. Management Structure

F. Membership and Communications Committee

- The Membership and Communications Committee is responsible for communicating the organization's news, activities and initiatives to members and volunteers
- Further development of the DSA-NCR website in a timely fashion is imperative.
 - Consider the implementation of a DS-related web reference, which would save time for parents
 - Use the website and the quarterly newsletter as a point of contact for DS youth and adults to connect
 - An up-to-date website will help in communicating to the community, thereby involving new and established members alike.
 - There should be enough content, resources and contact information on the website so that DSA-NCR's website is a key reference for the whole Canadian DS community.
- There is a need for better correspondence between the DSA-NCR and its members. According to some members, one missing element is better communication of the organization's achievements.
- There is a considerable amount of DS-related information and programming available in the NCR and on the internet, but no single point of access. The DSA-NCR should be that point of access for the NCR DS community.

G. Volunteers

H. Members

- Volunteers and Members support the Operations Committee in delivering on the Program plan.

7. Planning Process

1. Communicate available resources

- The Finance and Administration Committee should prepare annual reports, and provide resource information to the Planning Committee for their use in the preparation of the program plan.

2. Develop fundraising Plan (previous year funding & forecasted fundraising for the coming year) and submit to Board

- The Fundraising Committee identifies funding sources and prepares the Fundraising Plan, which is provided to the Finance and Administration Committee and approved by the Board.

3. Prepare program plan and submit to Board

- The Program Plan should be prepared annually by the Planning Committee, using information such as available resources and discussions of the board meetings. Activities included in the program plan should be aligned with the organization charter.

4. Program plan and Fundraising plan approved by Board

- The Board reviews the Program Plan and the Fundraising plan and approves them.

5. Execution of activities in the Program and Fundraising plans

- Program Plan activities are carried out by the Operations Committee supported by the Communications/Membership Committee that is responsible for coordinating volunteers and members.
- The implementation of the Fundraising plan is led by the Fundraising Committee and supported by the Operations Committee.

