



Ain Dah Yung (Our Home) Center

# Strategic Intent

2025

Grounded in tradition, guided by purpose — this strategy shapes Ain Dah Yung Center's (ADYC) path forward to strengthen our people, systems, and community over the next three years.

# Looking Ahead

## Dear Community Members, Staff, and Stakeholders,

On behalf of the Board of Directors and our dedicated leadership team, we are honored to share our strategic plan for the next three years. As we look to the future, our commitment remains steadfast: to nurture the capacity and practices that will empower ADYC to meet the rising expectations of our community while honoring our rich cultural heritage.

### Where We Have Been and Are Today

Over the past several years, ADYC has made remarkable strides in our mission to provide a healing space for American Indian youth and families. Guided by the teachings of our ancestors and the seven grandfather teachings, we have navigated challenges while staying true to our core values of respect, courage, honesty, wisdom, humility, truth, and love.

We have witnessed significant growth in our services, reflecting the increasing demand for culturally relevant support within our community. Our advocacy efforts have led to meaningful wins at the Capitol to improve our emergency shelter and transitional living spaces. We have been recognized for our deep engagement within the community, striving to lift up our voices and stories. We have cultivated new leaders at all levels, including our Board of Directors, who are committed to the vision of a just and equitable society where American Indian youth can thrive.

Some of our accomplishments include:

- 1. Decreasing Inequities:** By implementing pay equity measures and addressing staff turnover, we are fostering a supportive environment that reflects our values and nurtures our staff.
- 2. Streamlined Programming:** We have prioritized promoting current staff into leadership roles, ensuring that our programs resonate with the cultural identity of our community while creating pathways for professional growth.
- 3. Healthcare Management:** We remain committed to addressing rising healthcare costs with sensitivity, ensuring that the burden does not fall disproportionately on our employees during these challenging economic times.
- 4. Advocacy and Engagement:** We will continue to amplify our community's needs, advocating for our youth and families, and engaging in meaningful ways that ensure our services are impactful and responsive.

Now, as we stand in a time of increased risk and uncertainty, we are not merely maintaining our course; we are dedicated to rising to the "we want more" expectations of our community. Our four strategic imperatives are designed to strengthen our organization and deepen our impact, reinforcing our role as a pillar of support and cultural connection.

As we embark on this journey, we invite you to join us in realizing our mission: creating a world where all American Indian youth lead full and healthy lives, actively engaged in the preservation and promotion of our rich culture and values. The path ahead may be challenging, but we are confident in our ability to overcome any obstacles through unity, commitment, and shared purpose.

Thank you for your ongoing support and belief in our mission. Together, we will shape a brighter future for ADYC and the communities we serve.

With Gratitude, Miigwech, Pidamayaye, Pinigigi (thank you)



**Sheri Riemers**  
Executive Director  
White Earth Nation of Ojibwe

# Our Strategic Intent



This strategic intent outlines the ideal future we envision for ADYC over the next three years. Together, we will cultivate the people, operational frameworks, and financial strategies that will guide us on this journey. We will continue to foster a sense of belonging, healing, and empowerment within our community, grounded in our traditions and values.



## Our Mission

Meaning "Our Home"  
in Ojibwe,

Ain Dah Yung Center is steadfast in our mission: to provide a healing place within the community for American Indian youth and families to thrive in safety and wholeness.

# Our Vision

Our vision is a world where all American Indian youth lead full and healthy lives, surrounded by and as active builders of American Indian culture, values, and community.

- **Belonging, Healing, and Strength** – Every American Indian youth feels connected, empowered, and whole.
- **Justice and Equity** – A society where American Indian youth thrive with fairness and opportunity.
- **Uplifting Our Traditional Ways of Being** – Traditions are preserved, celebrated, and carried forward.
- **Youth as Medicine** – American Indian youth are the strength of their communities, empowered to heal and lead.
- **Self-Determination** – American Indian youth have the agency to shape their lives, families, and future.

## Who We Serve

We serve American Indian youth, their families, and caregivers throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan area and Minnesota tribal communities. Our mission is to advocate for and promote positive change for American Indian youth and families impacted by historical trauma. We emphasize the transfer of cultural and traditional practices to preserve our heritage for future generations. Our doors are open to all youth, including those from American Indian communities and those from other backgrounds.

## What Need We Solve

**Our Value Proposition, the reasons people seek, support, or fund our mission**

We enhance the lives of American Indian youth by prioritizing shelter, connection, personal development, and overall well-being. The young people we serve engage with American Indian culture to find safety, healing, and support. They emerge as self-reliant, civically engaged citizens, leaders, and changemakers, confidently rooted in their cultural identity.

# Our Core Values

## The Seven Grandfather Teachings

These teachings are the principles that unite us and define our work. We are called anew to exercise bravery with respect and humility, truth and honesty, through wisdom and love.

1. With each other, with those we serve, and in community, we will recognize, respect and celebrate the inherent worth of American Indian youth and their unique cultures.
2. We will honor the importance of peer-to-peer and intergenerational learning spaces.
3. We will prioritize youth leader voices that represent the needs of their communities.
4. We will incorporate healing, preserving and uplifting our traditional ways of being.



# Our Declared Outcomes

## Four Imperatives to Get There

To achieve our mission, and our vision of an ideal future for ADYC by January 2028, we will have completed critical repairs and renovations to our Emergency Shelter and Youth Lodge. This is a pivotal moment in history as we navigate the lasting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the social unrest following George Floyd's death. These events, forever etched in our collective memory, will shape our youth, families, and communities for years to come.

To move forward, we must focus on **four strategic imperatives**:

### 1. Aligning Programs with American Indian Youth Needs

Align our program portfolio with the greatest economic and social justice challenges facing American Indian youth in the region.

**Our Goal:** Increase the reach and impact of our youth-facing programs.

### 3. Empowering Leadership and Well-Being

Protect and strengthen the human capacity, capabilities and culture needed to lead future growth.

**Our Goal:** All ADYC staff and board embody our values and mission, fostering personal and team well-being.

### 2. Ensuring Safe and Culturally Responsive Shelter

Honor and support the strengths of families to care for youth while ensuring that, if needed, American Indian youth have access to secure, culturally responsive shelter across the Twin Cities.

**Our Goal:** 100% of Twin Cities American Indian youth in secure, culturally responsive housing.

### 4. Building a Resilient and Sustainable Organization

Expand and diversify revenue and system ecosystem relationships, optimizing our operations over the next 3 years.

**Our Goal:** Reduce risk and improve organizational resilience, laying a strong foundation for future growth.

# Aligning Programs with American Indian Youth Needs



**Goal:** Increase the reach and impact of our youth-facing programs.

## Strategies

- Develop an opportunity map by integrating community input, ADYC program outcome strengths, gaps, and data on American Indian youth trends and future needs.
- Define an 'ideal' program portfolio that outlines the scope, goals, and measures of success for each program.
- Identify 1-year and 3-year goals for ADYC programs, clarifying the needs to be addressed, target populations, leadership requirements, staffing, facilities, funding, sustainability, and impact evaluation.
- Increase American Indian youth involvement in program decision-making to ensure cultural relevance and effectiveness.
- Enhance data systems to track contract and organizational deliverables, inform decision-making, and highlight success stories.
- Strengthen partnerships with tribes and American Indian youth-serving organizations to fill service gaps, create synergies, and maximize impact.

## Implications

- Requires investment in staff capacity, development, and resources to expand and assess programs effectively.
- Necessitates adjustments to community outreach and messaging strategies to broaden ADYC's visibility and engagement.
- The opportunity map will serve as a guide for strategic investments across all imperatives.

## Year 1 Actions (FY 2025–26)

- Establish organizational measures for reach and impact.

## Milestones & Budget

- TBD

# Ensuring Safe and Culturally Responsive Shelter



**Goal:** 100% of Twin Cities American Indian youth in secure, culturally responsive housing.

## Strategies

- Increase awareness of ADYC’s shelter services among American Indian youth and the broader American Indian community.
- Continue advocacy efforts to shape shelter agreements and funding structures that prioritize youth and family well-being over rigid institutional constraints.
- Align capacity and funding plans with anticipated shifts in federal, state, and local government support.
- Expand partnerships with allied organizations that serve American Indian youth to establish referral pathways, particularly in underserved areas like outstate Minnesota.
- Formalize and lead a coalition to create a network of culturally responsive shelter services, strengthening visibility and funding opportunities statewide.

## Implications

- Requires relationship-building with regional partners to create holistic support systems for youth, parents, elders, and entire families.
- Necessitates additional grant development efforts, particularly for joint-funded initiatives.
- May require expanded staffing and resources to strengthen ADYC’s advocacy, outreach, and shelter services.
- Since American Indian youth and families thrive in environments of safety and wholeness, our goal of 100% means ensuring that all American Indian youth have access to secure, culturally responsive shelter—whether within ADYC, with their families, or in other supportive housing.
- Housing models at ADYC may need to evolve to incorporate inclusive, youth-centered definitions of family.

## Year 1 Actions (FY 2025–26)

- Develop and implement messaging that removes barriers preventing American Indian youth from seeking shelter at ADYC.

## Milestones & Budget

- TBD

# Empowering Leadership and Well-Being



**Goal:** All ADYC staff and board embody our values and mission, fostering personal and team well-being.

## Strategies

- Design an organizational structure that supports ADYC’s growth, aligning leadership competencies, accountability, succession planning, compensation, and sustainability.
- Amplify youth voices in advocacy and governance, ensuring active participation in decision-making through fellowships and leadership development.
- Build a diverse, capable board engaged in shaping ADYC’s future, ensuring leadership reflects our mission and values.
- Integrate the 7 Grandfather Teachings into ADYC’s core values, daily responsibilities, spaces, programs, policies, onboarding, and career progression—guiding interactions within and beyond ADYC.
- Create spaces for healing, self-expression, learning, growth, and shared accountability to foster a resilient workplace.
- Strengthen advocacy skills and staff capacity to actively engage, participate, and drive meaningful change.

## Implications

- Invest in professional development for all staff, with equitable pay and well-being plans.
- Use culturally relevant engagement tools (e.g., Gallup surveys) to track progress, recognize achievements, and guide growth.
- Implement a board composition strategy and development plan to strengthen governance.
- Secure funding to sustain values-driven changes in practices, advocacy, and spaces.
- Align efforts with program strategy, supported by robust operational and HR infrastructure for long-term success.

## Year 1 Actions (FY 2025–26)

- Define how the 7 Grandfather Teachings integrate into programs and spaces.
- Use this process to assess staffing structures and pay equity.

## Milestones & Budget

- Staff report greater understanding and application of ADYC’s core values.

# Building a Resilient and Sustainable Organization



**Goal:** Reduce risk and improve resilience, laying a strong foundation for future growth and impact.

## Strategies

- Strengthen relationships with tribal organizations by refining how we measure and communicate our impact, increasing investment in ADYC programs.
- Deepen engagement with family and community foundations for expanded funding opportunities.
- Ensure ADYC leadership actively participates in MUID, MIAC, SIA, and other convenings/sub-committees to foster relationships and create collaborative opportunities.
- Build common ground and partnerships among “first and second ring” American Indian organizations and broader ecosystem players to pursue joint funding opportunities and enhance system-wide impact and resilience.
- Research and develop relationships with youth development funders and other non-culturally specific funding sources to support ADYC’s overall mission and specific programs.
- Develop and implement a marketing strategy to grow individual donations.

## Implications

- Understanding community needs in the Twin Cities and beyond will guide when and where to build funding support.
- The ecosystem partnership map (from Imperative #1) is key for identifying and securing joint funding.
- A robust data strategy and infrastructure will strengthen our digital presence, including the website, social media, and related systems.
- Marketing and media partnerships will amplify our message and support advocacy efforts.
- Clear communication of data and impact stories will boost both marketing and program awareness.

## Year 1 Actions (FY 2025–26)

- Conduct a marketing assessment to identify growth and outreach priorities.
- Map American Indian organizations and infrastructure to guide partnerships and funding.

## Milestones & Budget

- By year-end 2025, all teams have a core data system for informed decision-making.
- Establish new partnerships to strengthen ADYC’s infrastructure and the broader ecosystem’s resilience.

# Summary in Review

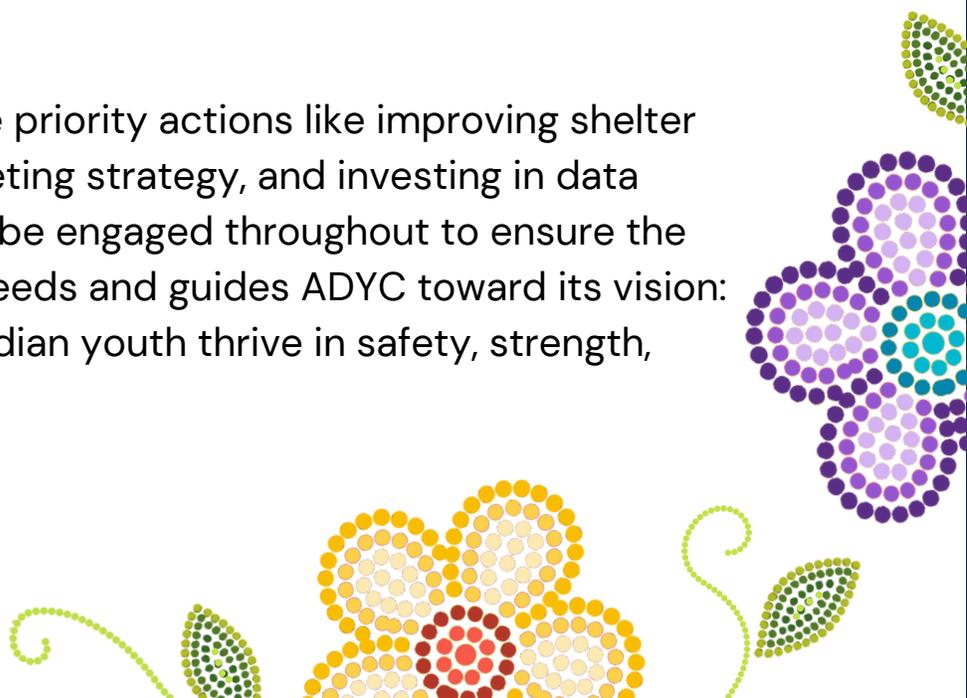
ADYC has launched a bold strategic plan for 2025–2028 to meet growing community needs while staying rooted in cultural tradition. In recent years, ADYC has advanced its mission through increased community engagement, pay equity, stronger leadership pathways, and advocacy wins that improved shelter services. These efforts have strengthened its role as a healing space for American Indian youth and families.

The plan centers on four imperatives: aligning programs with key justice and economic challenges, ensuring secure and culturally grounded shelter, investing in staff and organizational culture, and expanding funding and partnerships. Each area includes clear goals and actions, such as building an opportunity map, embedding the 7 Grandfather Teachings into operations, and growing system-wide collaboration with tribal and allied organizations.

ADYC remains focused on creating safe, empowering spaces for American Indian youth while building long-term resilience. The organization is committed to preserving cultural identity, elevating youth voices, and fostering healing, leadership, and self-determination.

## What's Next?

In Year 1, ADYC will activate priority actions like improving shelter outreach, refining its marketing strategy, and investing in data systems. Stakeholders will be engaged throughout to ensure the plan reflects community needs and guides ADYC toward its vision: a world where American Indian youth thrive in safety, strength, and cultural connection.



# Get Involved

At ADYC, we believe that every individual has the power to make a meaningful impact in the lives of American Indian youth. Whether through volunteering, advocacy, or financial support, your involvement helps us create a world where American Indian youth thrive in culturally rooted, supportive communities. By joining our mission, you contribute to programs that provide secure shelter, leadership opportunities, and cultural preservation, ensuring that every young person has the resources and support they need to shape their future.

There are many ways to get involved, become a mentor, support our events, or donate to sustain our work. Your contributions help us strengthen our reach and impact, creating lasting change for American Indian youth in the Twin Cities and beyond. Together, we can build a more just, equitable future where every American Indian youth has the opportunity to lead a full and healthy life.

## Contact Us



Call us at:

**651-227-4184**



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