



Strategic Playbook

How We Advance Our Mission
And What Guides Us

2026



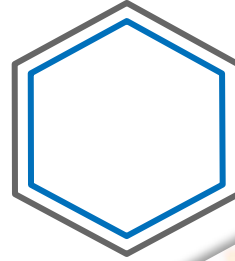
About Us

MEMBER DRIVEN

Our members are **state, county, and city human services agencies** across the country.

BIPARTISAN

With a focus on **building common ground** and **generating policy, practice, and process solutions** that work for people and communities.



Our Mission & Vision



MISSION

To advance the well-being of all people by **influencing** modern approaches to sound policy, **building** the capacity of public agencies to enable healthy families and communities, and **connecting** leaders to accelerate learning and generate practical solutions together.



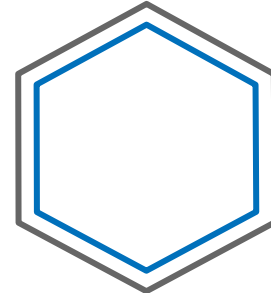
VISION

Thriving communities built on human potential.

Our Members

Administer, align, and deliver services that build resilience and bolster family well-being through access to food, adult and child protection, employment, child care, physical and behavioral health, housing, and many other key building blocks necessary for thriving communities.

Built upon a foundation of policy and practice expertise and ethics and program integrity, our members manage complex IT systems, performance measurement and data analysis, legal and healthcare systems, and workforce development and training.



Core Principles of Human Services: A Shared Vision for Thriving Communities

Our members strengthen the well-being of individuals, children, and families and partner to build communities where everyone can thrive. They do this by:

CENTER PEOPLE

Co-design accessible services to meet people where they are and honor their voice

SERVE BETTER

Make programs work better, and together, for improved outcomes

LEAD THROUGH COLLABORATION

Provide services in partnership with communities

INVEST IN THE FUTURE

Focus on solutions that uplift, empower, and sustain communities

*These principles are grounded in **Community and Social Impact**, which centers system and community partnerships to advance collective well-being today and into the future.*

Community and Social Impact

Community and Social Impact supports partnership between public agencies and communities to strengthen human services by driving collaborative, measurable systems change through:



- Strengthening **leadership and capacity**
- Promoting **safety, health, and well-being**
- Deepening **community engagement**
- Advancing **social and economic mobility**
- Improving outcomes through **data, technology, and innovation**

Learn more about our CSI work:

aphsa.org/community-and-social-impact

APHSA Supports Our Members in Realizing this Shared Vision Through Our Work in Three Focus Areas

Advancing Individual, Child, and Family Well-Being

Moving human services upstream and bolstering existing services and programs

Promoting Social and Economic Mobility

Reducing hunger, improving health and well-being, and increasing access to meaningful career pathways

Modernizing the Human Services Sector

Supporting people and system innovation to move us forward



Priorities for Advancing Individual, Child, and Family Well-Being

- Establish a primary prevention-oriented ecosystem for child and family well-being.
- Support effective child welfare response through maintenance of children in their homes and communities, when appropriate, permanency pathways, and improved system capacity to meet the specialized needs of all children and families.
- Create a system of care for youth with complex needs and specialized populations.
- Strengthen communities by co-creating accessible, supportive programs, and partnerships for individuals, children, and families.
- Expand access to affordable, quality child care by increasing supply, modernizing financing, and elevating the early childhood education workforce.
- Build integrated early childhood systems that offer seamless access to different service models for families across ages and needs.
- Explore APHSA's role in advancing aging and disability services to support well-being and self-determination.



Priorities for Promoting Social and Economic Mobility

- Mitigate benefits cliffs and support long-term economic mobility.
- Promote alignment and simplification across programs that advance health and economic well-being.
- Modernize benefit delivery systems and strengthen integrity through technology investments.
- Support effective implementation of new federal policies that help states achieve compliance, strengthen program integrity and accuracy, and ensure access to benefits for all who are eligible.
- Advance community-informed approaches that align systems and communities to break cycles of poverty and unlock long-term stability, opportunity, and economic mobility for individuals and families.



Priorities for Modernizing the Human Services Sector

- Support, develop, and sustain agency leadership and workforce capacity as the foundation for sustainable, human-centered modernization.
- Modernize human services technology and delivery systems and strengthen program integrity.
- Embed human-centered design and lived expertise in modernization efforts.
- Advance alignment, interoperability, and simplification within and across programs.
- Encourage responsible and ethical adoption of AI and contribute insights and innovations to the national human services tech policy environment.
- Identify what works and help members bring innovations to scale more rapidly.
- Deepen community engagement and strengthen public-community partnerships.
- Explore new financing and procurement approaches to enable sustainable innovation.

How We Activate the Strategic Playbook, With and Through Our Members

- ❖ Influence national policy and practice solutions
 - ❖ Broker knowledge sharing among local, state, federal policy leaders, people with lived expertise, and community leaders
 - ❖ Provide expert training, technical assistance, leadership development, and facilitation services
 - ❖ Curate a resource hub of evidence-based best practices, tools, and briefs
 - ❖ Convene and connect human services leaders
- ❖ Promote transformative frameworks for human services
 - ❖ Drive innovation through system modernization, data analytics, and cross-sector collaboration pilots
 - ❖ Promote and incorporate the voices of people with lived expertise as authentic partners
 - ❖ Build partnerships with philanthropy, industry members, communities, and peer organizations in support of our member and organizational goals



Learn more about how we are achieving these priorities by reviewing our action plan.

aphsa.org

