

# Activity:

## Conducting a SWOT analysis

Use the steps below in concert with the example SWOT analysis from the Cherry Street Centre and the SWOT Template to create your SWOT analysis. A SWOT analysis is a tool that can be used in strategic planning or in making a decision about expansion.

### Step 1. Preparing for a meeting

- Decide who will be included in a meeting to complete the SWOT analysis. It should include Board members as well as any other key staff. You want to ensure that you have a variety of perspectives and expertise.
- Gather available data and information on how your organization has been performing. This should be shared in advance with the people who will be attending your SWOT meeting.
- Set a meeting time and date that will allow you to dedicate the needed time to this activity.
- Have the materials necessary to collaboratively brainstorm for this activity.
- Decide if you will brainstorm as a large group or break down into smaller groups.

### Step 2. Brainstorm your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT)

- Depending if you are staying as a large group or a few small groups come together comfortably around large easel paper or whiteboard and write everything that comes to mind under each of the categories.
- **S** - Strengths - What does the organization do really well? Think about your reputation; unique features of your program; resources; assets. This includes anything that is **internal**.

- **W** - Weaknesses - What does the organization not do well? Identifying and acknowledging weaknesses will help you to overcome them. Think about areas that you are currently struggling with **internally**.
- **O** - Opportunities - What is currently happening **externally** that may impact the organization and the organization can take advantage of.
- **T** - Threats - What are the external things that could impact the organization negatively.

### Step 3. Discussion and Analysis

- As a group go through everything that has been identified under each category. Clarify that everyone has a clear understanding of what each means.
- Now that you have your brainstormed list as a group, categorize what is most important. Which strengths are the most important; what weaknesses need to be addressed; where is the biggest opportunity; and finally what is posing the biggest risk.
- Create a final version of your SWOT using the template provided and list the factors in each section from the most important to the least.
- To analyze this as whole identify the following
  - What ways can the strengths (**S**) gain advantage on opportunities (**O**)
  - How can the strengths (**S**) mitigate the identified threats (**T**).
  - What are ways you can take advantage of opportunities (**O**) by overcoming the weaknesses (**W**)
  - Are there ways that minimize weaknesses (**W**) and threats (**T**)?