

THE RIGHT TURN

The Right Turn, Inc. **Organization History/Background Information** Updated February 2022

- 1974: Pierre Clerical Program was founded to train individuals for entry-level clerical positions in central South Dakota. The program initially operated in Stanley County under the sponsorship of the Agar School District.
- 1977: Pierre School District became the local sponsor and remained the sponsor until July 1993.
- 1986: The Pierre Clerical Program was renamed The Right Turn to reflect its broadened scope of services. Programs/services added were:
- Basic skills brush up/General Educational Development (GED) Diploma pre-testing, preparation, and testing (in coordination with Pierre School District's Adult Basic Education program)
 - Education/career counseling
 - Pre-employment training/job search assistance
 - Life skills training
- 1989: The Advance High Alternative School Program was instituted with Pierre School District to serve at-risk youth needing an alternative setting to continue/complete high school. This program was continued until 2009 when such services were transferred to the local school districts.
- 1993: The Right Turn left the sponsorship of Pierre School District and became The Right Turn, Inc. The organization was registered as a 501(c)(3) non-profit incorporated in the State of South Dakota. The Right Turn became one of the first United Way Participating Agencies in South Dakota.
- 1995: The Right Turn, Inc. and Growing Up Together, in collaboration with the Oahe Child Development Center Head Start Program and school districts from Harrold, Stanley County, and Pierre initiated an Even Start Family Literacy Program with grant funds from the South Dakota Department of Education. The program was funded for four years.
- 1996: The Right Turn, Inc. collaborated with Black Hills Special Services Coop (BHSSC) to co-locate a Vocational Resource Center (Community Employment Options) to jointly provide specialized evaluation, employment, and independent living opportunities for targeted disabled individuals approved through the South Dakota Division of Rehabilitation Services. The Community Employment Options operated jointly for several years.

- 1997: The Right Turn, Inc. agreed with the South Dakota Department of Corrections to provide academic education, career exploration/counseling, short-term vocational training, and job training to inmates of the Women's Prison located in Pierre. The Right Turn, Inc. provided this service until 2012 when it became administered directly by the staff of the South Dakota Department of Corrections.
- 1998: The Right Turn, Inc. and Pierre Economic Development Corporation partnered with the Governor's Office of Economic Development, Workforce Development Program, to train area individuals to be home-based medical transcriptionists. Western Dakota Technical Institute Business & Training Center developed this eighteen-month non-degreed non-degreed-directed program for The Right Turn, Inc. This program was discontinued in 2006 when The Right Turn, Inc. became a nationally recognized online curriculum provider.
- 1999: The Right Turn, Inc. was one of four lead agencies in Oahe Child Development Center's Early Head Start Program. The Right Turn, Inc., through a collaborative agreement, provided programs and services to families participating in the Early Head Start six-county county area.
- 1999: The Right six-county began serving Stanley County School District students in the Advance High alternative school program. This program was in operation until 2009.
- 2001: The Even Start Family Literacy Program was reinstated with grant funds from the South Dakota Department of Education. The Right Turn, Inc., and Growing Up Together collaborated with the Oahe Childhood Development Center Head Start and Early Head Start Programs, Harrold, Stanley County, and Pierre Schools to deliver services. The Early Childhood Program was located with Growing Up Together in space donated by St. Mary's Healthcare Center for several years.
- 2001: The Pierre School District contracted with The Right Turn, Inc. to provide coordination services for a Safe and Drug-Free and Communities Drug-Free
- 2002: The Pierre School District contracted with The Right Turn, Inc. to provide coordination services for a Character Education Pilot Program.
- 2002: The Pierre School District contracted with The Right Turn, Inc. to provide a full-time teacher/tutor for high school youth in a Directed Study Program.
- 2002: The Right Turn, Inc. initiated the Education and Family Literacy Program (formerly administered by Pierre School District). Basic academic skills brush up, GED preparation, beginning literacy, and English as a Second Language (ESL) services continue to be offered through this program.
- 2004: The Right Turn, Inc. began providing job placement and development services for clients served by the South Dakota Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services.
- 2006: The Even Start Early Childhood Classroom relocated offices from St. Mary's Healthcare Center into space at 122 East Dakota Ave. The Facility was licensed by the State of South Dakota as a group family childcare center in May of 2007 and was called The Right Turn Early Learning Center.

- 2006: The Right Turn, Inc. entered into a partnership with Career Step to provide Medical Transcription and Medical Coding Training via distance learning. Students served in this program were from throughout the entire state of South Dakota.
- 2007: The Right Turn, Inc. entered into an agreement with the South Dakota Department of Social Services to the Early Childhood Enrichment (ECE) program for central South Dakota. This program, Early Learning Network, provides training and technical support for childcare providers in the following counties: Buffalo, Brule, Gregory, Hughes, Hyde, Jones, Lyman, Mellette, Stanley, Sully, Todd, and Tripp.
- 2008: The Right Turn, Inc. expanded job placement, job coaching, job shadow opportunities, and job readiness services for clients served by the Department of Human Services Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. Most of these services were discontinued in 2010.
- 2009: The Right Turn, Inc. was awarded a one-year demonstration grant by the SD Department of Labor to target basic academic skills for students preparing for employment in the construction field.
- 2009: The Right Turn, Inc. contracted with the SD Department of Labor to provide skills development and assessment services for the National Career Readiness Certification (NCRC) program in Pierre and Winner. The NCRC continues to provide employers with a consistent, nationally recognized standard to measure the job skills an individual possesses. In 2011, this program was transitioned from a grant to a fee-based service.
- 2010: The Right Turn, Inc. received a Nonprofit Enhancement grant from the South Dakota Community Foundation for strategic planning.
- 2010: Online training programs with Career Step were expanded to include Pharmacy Technicians, Medical Transcription Editor, Medical Administrative Assistant, and Administrative Assistant, in addition to Medical Transcription and Medical Billing and Coding programs.
- 2010: The Right Turn, Inc. contracted with the United States Probation Office to provide work readiness services to clients under the supervision of the federal court system statewide. Workshops were held in Eagle Butte, and Irene, South Dakota.
- 2011: The Right Turn, Inc. received funding, from the Capital Area United Way to implement a one-year pilot program called Discovery Pathways, which was designed to bolster workplace soft skills for a select group of students in the Adult Education program.
- 2011: The Right Turn, Inc. received funding from the Barbara Bush Foundation to implement "BRIDGES," a home-based family literacy project on the Crow Creek Indian Reservation.
- 2012: Area youth applied for and received a grant from the Turner Foundation for Healthy Communities/Healthy Youth for The Right Turn, Inc. to provide American Red Cross babysitting certification training. This grant was issued again in 2013. American Red Cross babysitting certification classes continue to be held annually with financial support from Capital Area United Way and other local sponsors.

- 2012: Barb Biwer, a trainer with The Right Turn, Inc.'s Early Childhood Enrichment Program, received two notable statewide awards honoring her many years of service in improving the quality of child care in the state: the "Susan Smith Award" from Dakota Head Start Association and "Champion for Children Honor Roll" designation from South Dakota Voices for Children.
- 2013: Online training programs were expanded to include Computer Technicians and Executive Assistant training in addition to Pharmacy Technician, Medical Transcription Editor, Medical Administrative Assistant, and Medical Billing and Coding programs. We also piloted online Early Childhood Enrichment courses this year.
- 2013: Missy Slaathaug, Adult Education Coordinator and Instructor was named "Adult Educator of the Year" by the South Dakota Association for Lifelong Learning.
- 2014: The Right Turn, Inc. began offering TSA background check fingerprinting and identity document examination services for Hazardous Materials Endorsement for Commercial Driver's License candidates, federal transportation workers, and frequent flyers.
- 2014: Michelle Lees started providing Barton Tutoring in November 2014 and The Right Turn, Inc. expanded these services during the summer of 2019.
- 2015: The Right Turn, Inc. began offering computer classes through the DEI grant that the Black Hills office received and made it available to us. This training opportunity was for individuals with disabilities and continued until 2018.
- 2015: An International Potluck Dinner was hosted by The Right Turn, Inc. staff and volunteers on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. This annual event celebrated the world's cuisine & culture.
- 2015: Test proctoring services were expanded to include a diverse variety of national testing clients. We are the only testing center in central South Dakota to offer PAN, NOCTI, Prometric, and PearsonVUE testing services.
- 2016: The Right Turn, Inc. received the "Spirit of United Way Partner Agency" award from Capital Area United Way.
- 2017: The Right Turn, Inc. moved to 115 E. Sioux Avenue after providing services at the corner of Dakota and Coteau for 20 years. The new building is being purchased under Contract for Deed through a nonprofit real estate holding company that was formed to benefit The Right Turn, Inc. TSA fingerprinting and document examination services were discontinued.
- 2018 In September, The Right Turn, Inc. hosted a student film festival "Telling Our Stories".
- 2019: The Right Turn, Inc. continued the agreement with DSS funding our Early Childhood Enrichment Program serving twelve south central counties for three years.
- 2019: Touching Hearts 50/50 Fundraising raffle debuted at Trapper's home games throughout the summer.

- 2019: The Right Turn, Inc. once again received the “Spirit of United Way Partner Agency” award from the Capital Area United Way.
- 2019: The Right Turn, Inc. entered into an agreement with the SD Department of Labor and Regulation for Governor Kristi Noem’s Family First Initiative. This agreement allows for access to free computer classes, financial literacy, and workplace social skills training.
- 2019: Early Childhood Specialist, Nancy Schlichenmayer was nominated for the Governor’s Award for Distinguished Service by the Board of Directors of Oahe, Inc. This award was presented to her in November of 2019, recognizing her lifetime of contributions to the employment of people with disabilities.
- 2019: The Right Turn, Inc. Executive Director Mary Gates was nominated for the “South Dakota’s Premier Woman’s Award” from the Spirit of Dakota Award Society.
- 2019: The Right Turn Inc. and volunteers coordinated child engagement activities during Fort Pierre’s Trader Days. Phil Baker performed and several state agencies were involved: SD Game Fish and Parks, SD Discovery Center, Cultural Heritage Center.
- 2020: The Touching Hearts Fundraising 50/50 Raffle raised \$11,850 before the Ace of Hearts was drawn.
- 2020: The Right Turn, Inc. initiated COVID response actions on March 18, 2020 with most staff working from home using an online training platform, for classes and trainings.
- 2020: Executive Director, Mary Gates retired in May of 2020. Nancy Schlichenmayer was named Executive Director of the Board of Directors in May of 2020.
- 2020: The Right Turn, Inc. coordinated and implemented child engagement activities during Fort Pierre’s Trader Days. Phil Baker provided two performances of live children’s music while volunteers from SD State Library staff facilitated children’s activities and a book walk.
- 2020: The Right Turn, Inc. entered into an agreement with the SD Department of Labor and Regulation for Family First Initiative. This agreement, which supports Financial Literacy sessions, Bring Your ‘A’ Game classes are offered both online and in-person, Teknimedia computer training and monthly financial literacy activities.
- 2021: The Right Turn, Inc. received a grant from Child Care Aware for “Building Resiliency Skills in Caregivers and Children”. Read for Resilience books were distributed and providers received training on how to utilize the books.
- 2021: Nancy Schlichenmayer, Executive Director presented for a national virtual conference, “The Power of Engagement with Harmony SEL”.

2021: March 2021 marks one year of The Right Turn, Inc.'s responsiveness to COVID Pandemic measures. More trainings were offered in person again. Individualized instruction has proven to be effective in assisting participants to meet their goals. The annual International Potluck Dinner was not held in 2021 due to the COVID Pandemic limiting social gatherings.

2021: The Right Turn, Inc. collaborated with Christensen Farms to sponsor a Trapper's baseball game. We invited Board members, current and previous Child Development Associates (CDA), GED, and English Language Learning (ELL) students. Pork burgers from Christensen Farms were grilled and served. One of our students, Greg Kline threw out the first pitch.

2021: Nachos were served on First Thursdays in August in Fort Pierre by The Right Turn, Inc.

2021: A Vitalant Blood Drive was hosted by The Right Turn at the American Legion in August.

2021: The Right Turn, Inc. staff coordinated and implemented child engagement activities during Fort Pierre's Trader Days. Randy Sauer from Hayes, Kansas, provided performances of live children's music on Friday at Faith Lutheran and the Boys and Girls Club. He also performed Saturday at Trader Days. A volunteer from the SD State Library staff helped with children's activities and we had a book walk set up where children received books.

2021: In response to increased programming, additional staff joined The Right Turn, Inc. Computer training was added. More Barton students received the special tutoring. Our GED teacher started working full time full-time to meet the needs of our students which increased the number of students who obtained a GED.

2021: The Right Turn, Inc. launched a new website, www.TheRightTurn.net.

2021: Because of involvement with the SD Day of Giving and a donation by BankWest and Beck Motors, The Right Turn, Inc. added a vehicle to promote safe travel for our staff.

2022: The International Potluck Festival was held at The Right Turn in January 2022.

2022: In February, The Right Turn participated in the 50th annual Farm, Home, and Sport Show.

2022: Buddy Seiner lead the agency in some Strategic Planning.

2022: One Barton tutoring participant completed all ten levels of the curriculum.

2022: Fundraising for the agency involved The Right Card 50/50 raffle and a Pizza Ranch fundraiser.

2022: Greg Kline was named Adult Education & Literacy Student of the Year by the SD Association of Life-Long Learning in July.

2022: Alicia Ziegler participated in SD Partners in Policymaking.

2022: During the fiscal year 2021-2022, The Adult Education and Literacy program worked with 90 students and 29 of them received their GED.

2022: Danette Jarzab was featured in an article published by Burlington English in April.

2022: A grant was received by the Council of DD to prepare inclusion kits for children to learn to be more responsive and inclusive of others regardless of their abilities and disabilities.

2022: The Right Turn received a WorkWell Grant from the SD Department of Health to promote healthy lifestyles by preventing, reducing, and managing chronic disease through workplace environment and policy change.

2022: A Vitalant Blood Drive was hosted by The Right Turn at the American Legion in August.

2022: Michelle Lees received an Advance Certification for Barton Tutoring.

2022: Director Schlichenmayer announced her retirement on February 10, 2023, in July and the Board of Directors selected Max Strat to provide leadership for the agency which involves a merger with Capital City Campus.

2022: Laura Rojas, ECE Program Administrator participated in a training for Positive Indian Parenting with SD Child Protection Services.

2022: The Right Turn received a grant from the SD Department of Health to prepare and distribute more inclusion kits for children to learn to be more responsive and inclusive of others regardless of their abilities and disabilities, babysitting clinics, parenting classes, and books for families.