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Our Vision for the Next Three Years

New 3-Year 2026 Strategic Plan Prioritizes Belonging, Global Scholarship, and Public Policy Impact

SRCD's Strategic Vision

SRCD's mission is rooted in an understanding of child development as an integrated part of lifelong development that takes place in complex and interrelated contexts. It is based on a belief that in order to create reliable, valid, and useful knowledge, developmental science must explore a diverse array of biological, cognitive, psychological, social, and cultural dimensions of development through rigorous scientific inquiry that uses multiple perspectives, methods, and levels of analysis. This task requires approaches that represent individual disciplinary traditions as well those that integrate multiple disciplines across a broad range of biological, behavioral, and social sciences. This task also requires diversity in all its forms—among the children, families, and communities who are studied; among the scientists who conduct this work; and among the students who are preparing to be future teachers, practitioners, and researchers. Although no single study can incorporate the full range and scope of these disciplinary and diversity goals, SRCD takes the position that a full, integrative field of developmental science is needed to achieve a comprehensive understanding of human development and to foster the effective application of that understanding to improve human well-being.

For more than 90 years, the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) has served as the professional home for developmental scientists, uniting researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and partners committed to understanding how children develop and thrive.

Today, SRCD is an international, multidisciplinary professional association that publishes leading peer-reviewed journals, convenes the world's largest gathering of developmental scientists through its Biennial Meeting, advances the use of developmental science through its Child Policy Hub, and supports researchers across career stages through mentoring, professional development, caucuses, and leadership opportunities.

Building on this strong foundation, SRCD's Governing Council has adopted a new three-year Strategic Plan that will guide the Society's priorities and investments over the coming years.

The new plan reflects both the tremendous strengths of the organization and its members, and the changing environment in which developmental scientists work. As research funding, higher education, public policy, and professional societies continue to evolve, the plan positions SRCD to remain a vibrant professional community while expanding the impact of developmental science around the world.

Why Develop a New Strategic Plan?

The planning process was launched to:

- Update SRCD's previous strategic plan.
- Respond to changes in member needs and uneven participation in SRCD across career stages.
- Position SRCD to navigate a rapidly evolving scientific, higher education, and policy landscape.
- Provide clearer strategic direction to staff, the Governing Council, other member leaders and governing bodies, and partners.
- Prioritize SRCD's long-term financial sustainability.

A Community-Informed Process

SRCD's Strategic Plan was shaped through an extensive planning process designed to gather perspectives from across the Society and ensure that recommendations reflected multiple sources of evidence.

Working with Common Ground Consulting LLC, SRCD conducted a comprehensive review that included:

- Review of more than 50 organizational documents.

- Thirty-one in-depth stakeholder interviews with Governing Council members, staff, journal editors, Policy Fellows, and other leaders.
- A member survey analyzed alongside membership demographic data.
- Five focus groups representing committee chairs, caucus leaders, editors, policy leaders, and staff.
- Staff and Governing Council retreats dedicated to strategic planning and refinement.

Themes were systematically analyzed and compared across these data sources to identify areas of strong consensus as well as differing perspectives across career stages, member communities, and organizational roles. The result is a strategic plan grounded in evidence and informed by the voices of the SRCD community.

Goal 1: Become a Professional Home for Developmental Scientists by Cultivating Genuine Belonging



SRCD will redesign the member experience across the full career trajectory – from students and early career scholars to emeriti members. Professional value and belonging to the developmental science community will be visible and accessible across all career stages and in each year—not just during the Biennial meeting. SRCD will proceed with humility, creativity, and in the spirit of enfranchising members who have been marginalized in the field, including those from diverse geographic, cultural, and epistemological backgrounds.

Goal 2: Advance Global Scholarship to Understand Child Development Worldwide



SRCD will become a genuinely global organization. We will honor the full diversity of child development worldwide, both in the participants in research studies and in the scholars leading the research, with particular attention to the Global South, to reflect the majority of the world's population.

Goal 3: Establish SRCD as the Scientific Voice in Policy and Public Discourse on Child Development

SRCD will position itself as the trusted scientific voice for developmental science. Dissemination of academic publications and presentations will be amplified through policy, practice, media, and public discourse in ways that are credible, member-relevant, and integrated. We will seek partnership opportunities that can help us use developmental science in service of all children, especially those who are marginalized due to systemic inequities.

Goal 4: Build a Sustainable Financial Model in Service of Mission

SRCD will align budget decisions with mission priorities and organizational aspirations from a diversified revenue base. We will reduce dependence on any single funder category and develop sustainable earned income streams, through a documented path to a balanced budget that does not depend on investment reserves. We will continue to consider how to equitably leverage our fiscal resources to advance our organizational aspirations.

Moving from Strategy to Action

This Strategic Plan is intended to guide implementation. Each strategic goal is accompanied by:

- Measurable indicators of success
- Priority implementation strategies spanning the next three years
- Specific Year One actions that will help translate the plan into meaningful progress.

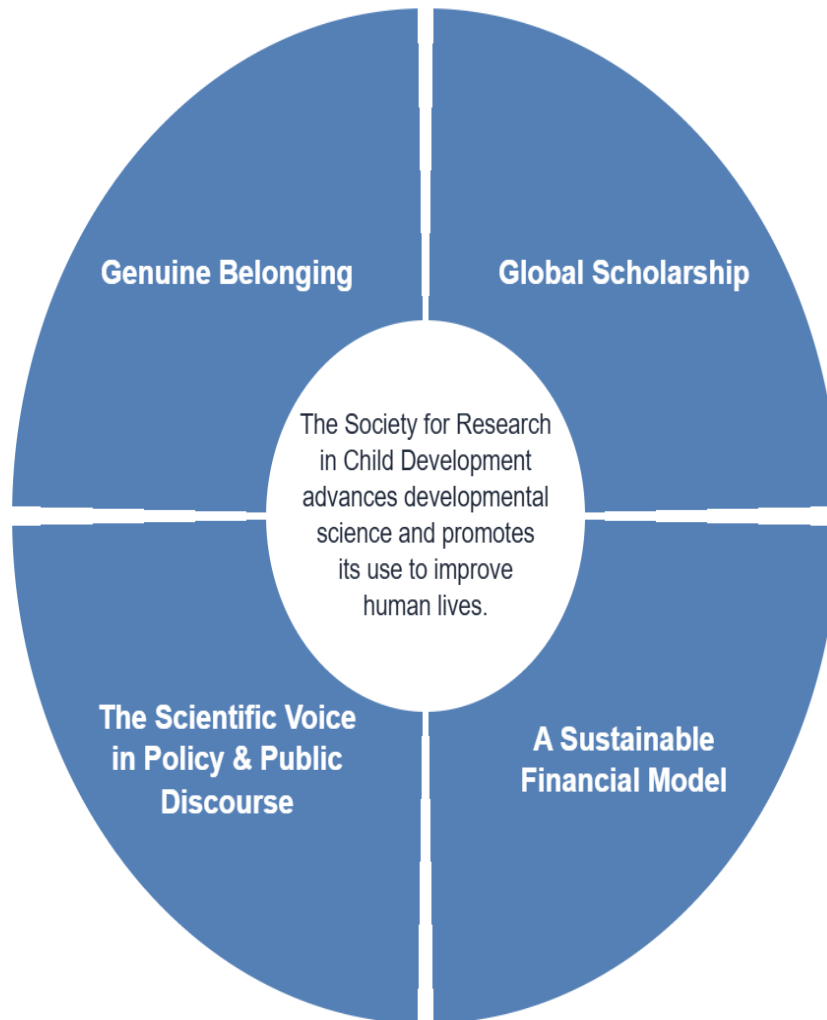
“SRCD’s talented staff are eager to begin implementing this plan and to work closely with our members to continue building toward our mission of promoting the use of developmental research to improve children’s lives,” said Dr. Suzanne Le Menestrel, SRCD’s Executive Director.

As implementation begins, SRCD will continue to engage members, volunteers, and partners in bringing this shared vision to life, and regularly publicize updates.



SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Strategic Goals



GOAL 1

**Become a Professional Home
for Developmental Scientists by
Cultivating Genuine Belonging**

GOAL 2

**Advance Global Scholarship
to Understand Child
Development Worldwide**

GOAL 3

**Establish SRCD as the Scientific
Voice in Policy and Public
Discourse on Child Development**

GOAL 4

**Build a Sustainable Financial
Model in Service of Mission**

