The Two-Generation Approach Framework

A CLOSER LOOK AT STATE-LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION

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Executive Summary

Building family well-being and maintaining it across the lifespan is one of the most powerful ways that we can ensure that everyone reaches their potential and is able to fully contribute to our communities. The Two-Generation (Two-Gen) approach builds well-being by working with families to create a solid and stable foundation through integrated, intensive, and high-quality services in four areas of focus: early childhood education, elementary education, economic stability, and family engagement.[1]

Many families face systemic challenges to reaching their full potential—for example, young parents with children under the age of six may not have access to quality child care that aligns with their work or education schedules. For optimal results, Two-Gen programs are offered simultaneously, in a mutually reinforcing way.[2]

Like a house needs quality materials to last through generations and survive life's storms, all parents need social resources, economic assets, and strong family bonds to do well. Two-Gen programs are innovatively designed to help parents access and build these resources. This foundation then provides the environment children need to attain academic success and emotional stability so they can succeed as adults and

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pay it forward to future generations.[3] The policy and programmatic changes that support these interconnected and systemic efforts happen on a continuum, and over time. The Two-Gen approach begins with establishing a new mindset focused on family-centered program design, continues with the alignment of services across multiple organizations, and culminates in providing coordinated services to children and parents together, while tracking family outcomes over the long term.[4]

With generous support from The Annie E. Casey Foundation, the National Human Services Assembly (the Assembly) sought to explore how three states are developing and implementing a Two-Gen framework in practice and gain insight about how to translate support for an intentional Two-Gen approach into a coordinated implementation strategy. This report identifies key themes and lessons that other states may consider as they pursue the implementation of their own Two-Gen framework.

Research Methods

Based on an environmental scan of all fifty states and consultation with national experts, the Assembly focused its research on three states—Connecticut, Colorado, and Utah. These states have established support for the Two-Gen approach and are beginning to align service delivery at the statewide level to maximize outcomes for both generations together. From this starting point, the Assembly conducted a

series of qualitative interviews with stakeholders in each state aimed at: (1) developing a deeper understanding about the policies supporting the Two-Gen approach that currently exist in each state; (2) defining where programs are aligned; and (3) identifying where ongoing efforts in each state could close the gaps in policy and program implementation that impede statewide systems change. The interviews focused on policies and programs at the state level, but many programs administered by state agencies are aided by federal funding and may be delivered by local agencies. As a result, the interview subjects ranged from state agency officials to local government officials to private-sector stakeholders.

After collecting and reporting the "story" of how each state arrived at its current stage of Two-Gen implementation, the report brings to bear the salient inflection points from the interviews across all three states. These inflection points represent challenges that the three states have faced and, in many cases, the solutions chosen to address them. The Assembly's analysis of these challenges and solutions is merely the starting point for advocates and practitioners at the state and national level to utilize as they begin, or continue, to further Two-Gen policy and programmatic changes throughout the country.

State Two-Gen Implementation: Connecticut, Colorado, Utah

The Assembly's report provides: (1) background and context for the Two-Gen approach taken by each state; (2) an overview of Two-Gen programs at the state level; and (3) a "policy map" providing a graphic representation of Two-Gen framework in each state. The Assembly's research found that the approach in each state can be generalized as follows:

Utah

The state legislature created an interagency commission to explore the extent of intergenerational poverty in the state. Since then, the Commission has developed a work plan to align agency data collection and programs through to the caseworker level to ensure that services are more intentionally and effectively connected. The Department of Workforce Services has also launched demonstration projects which are delivering and evaluating the outcomes of intensive and integrated Two-Gen services at the local level.

> The Assembly's analysis of these challenges and solutions is merely the starting point for advocates and practitioners at the state and national level to utilize as they begin, or continue, to further Two-Gen policy and programmatic changes throughout the country.

Colorado

The state's agency-driven approach begins with the interagency coordination provided by the Two-Generation Manager at the Colorado Department of Human Services. Each office of the Department of Human Services employs specific strategies, based on that office's target population, to align services under the Two-Gen framework. In addition, the Colorado legislature recently amended the state's policy with respect to the child care subsidy program, expanding access and increasing the quality of child care for low-income families.

Connecticut

The state's Two-Gen framework is administered by the Commission on Women, Children and Seniors, which is a non-partisan agency of the Connecticut General Assembly. The Commission is managing a pilot program that will build Two-Gen systems and program models within six communities in the state. Stakeholders hope the lessons learned from the pilots will serve as a template for scaling up the Two-Gen approach statewide.

Utah

In 2012, the Utah State Legislature initiated the state's approach to addressing two-generation poverty. With bipartisan support, the legislature passed laws in consecutive sessions to identify the target populations and implement strategies to increase the coordination of services to families.

Highlights of Utah's approach include:

- **Determining the Scope of the Challenge.** The first step in the process was determining the extent to which Utahns experience poverty across generations.

- **Creating a Long-Term Plan.** After identifying the depth of intergenerational poverty across the state, the legislature created a cross-agency commission to develop evidence-based poverty mitigation interventions. The Commission identified four target cohort populations and developed a long-term plan, setting goals and benchmarks to increase the economic stability of each cohort and ultimately cultivate well-being across generations. The plan defines concrete steps for aligning agency services and coordinating case management down to the family level.

- **Statewide Action.** Based on the Commission's recommendations, agencies have begun sharing data and experimenting with demonstration projects. Agencies are targeting services to each cohort across four focus areas: (1) early childhood development; (2) education; (3) family economic stability; and (4) family health.

> The data collected … helped establish intergenerational poverty as an important issue impacting Utah, and one worthy of addressing with policy-based solutions.
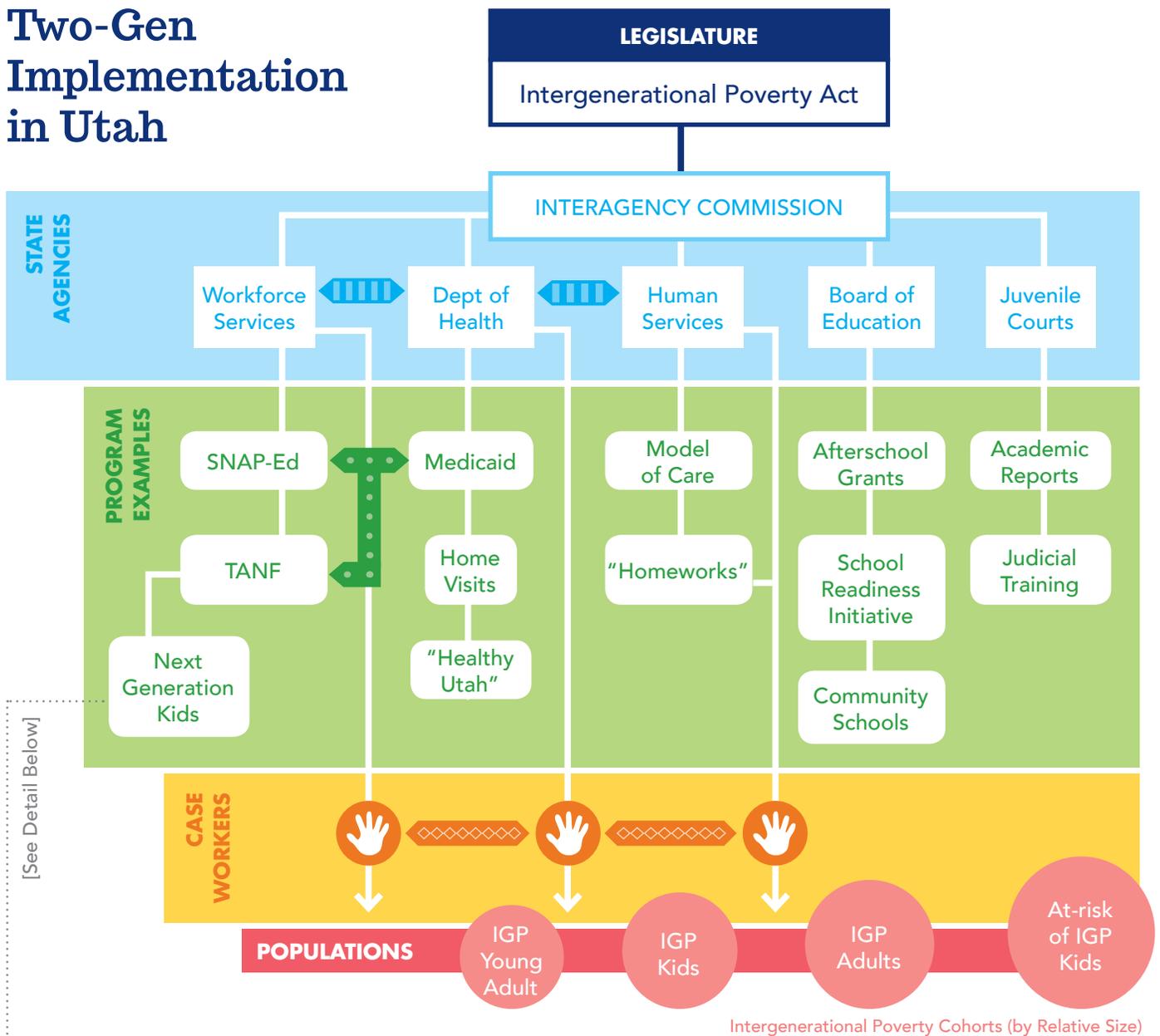
Assessing the Challenge

In 2012, State Senator Stuart Reid (R-Ogden) introduced the Intergenerational Poverty Mitigation Act (the Act)[5] to determine whether the struggle for family well-being he was seeing in Ogden existed throughout the state, and whether there was a correlation between the likelihood of the use of public assistance programs from one generation to the next.[6] The bill, which passed unanimously, required the Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS) to assess the level of intergenerational poverty in the state and report its findings back to the legislature.

DWS defined "intergenerational recipients" as adults, ages 21 to 40, who received public assistance during the current year and who also received public assistance as children.[7] DWS found that, in 2012, 38.8% of all adults receiving public assistance across the state fit this definition of intergenerational poverty.[8] This amounted to 4.2% of the total state population.[9] Further, 67.4% of adults classified as facing intergenerational poverty had at least one child in their household.[10] The data collected by DWS helped establish intergenerational poverty as an important issue impacting Utah, and one worthy of addressing with policy-based solutions.
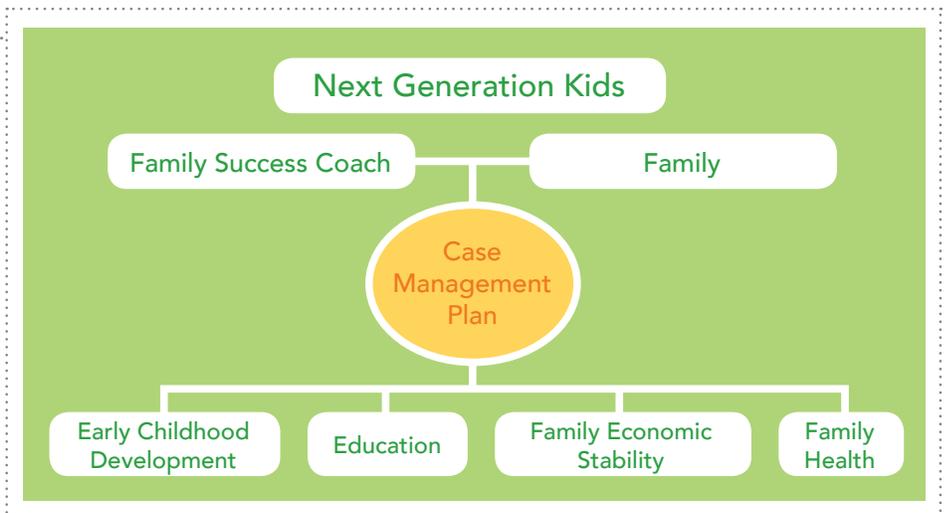
State-Level Action to Address the Challenge

As a result of the DWS report, in 2013 the Utah Legislature followed up on the 2012 Act by enacting legislation that created the Intergenerational Welfare Reform Commission (the Commission).[11] The Commission's role is to:

Two-Gen Implementation in Utah

LEGISLATURE

Intergenerational Poverty Act

INTERAGENCY COMMISSION

STATE AGENCIES

Workforce Services	Dept of Health	Human Services	Board of Education	Juvenile Courts

PROGRAM EXAMPLES

- SNAP-Ed
- TANF
- Next Generation Kids
- Medicaid
- Home Visits
- "Healthy Utah"
- Model of Care
- "Homeworks"
- Afterschool Grants
- School Readiness Initiative
- Community Schools
- Academic Reports
- Judicial Training

CASE WORKERS

POPULATIONS

IGP Young Adult	IGP Kids	IGP Adults	At-risk of IGP Kids

Intergenerational Poverty Cohorts (by Relative Size)

[See Detail Below]

Detail: Coordination of Next Generation Kids Program

Next Generation Kids

Family Success Coach — Family

Case Management Plan

- Early Childhood Development
- Education
- Family Economic Stability
- Family Health

KEY

- ▬ Data-sharing MOU's
- ▬ "No-Wrong-Door"
- ◇◇◇ Informal Coordination via Client
- ✋ Case Workers

- Refine and continue the data collection and reporting process initiated in 2012;
- Implement data-driven policies and programs addressing intergenerational poverty in the state;
- Improve coordination between state agencies down to the case worker level; and
- Develop a five and ten-year plan for achieving these goals.

The Commission is comprised of the executive directors of the state Department of Workforce Services, Department of Health, Department of Human Services, the state superintendent of schools, and the head of the juvenile courts system. The legislature also established an Intergenerational Poverty Advisory Committee (the Advisory Committee) comprised of advocacy groups, academic experts, faith-based organizations, and local government officials to offer recommendations for how the Commission can best achieve the goals of the Act.

Defining Target Populations and Policy Areas

The Commission was tasked with defining the populations and policy areas to include in the initiative. Recognizing the need for a more comprehensive measurement for the number of Utahns facing intergenerational poverty than had been used up to that point, the Commission defined four Intergenerational Poverty (IGP) cohorts to track changes to over time (Table 1).[12]

With these cohorts in place, the Commission identified four policy areas within which to focus its efforts: (1) early childhood development; (2) education; (3) family economic stability; and (4) family health.

> The legislature also established an Intergenerational Poverty Advisory Committee comprised of advocacy groups, academic experts, faith-based organizations, and local government officials to offer recommendations for how the Commission can best achieve the goals of the Act.

A Five and Ten-Year Plan

As mandated by the Act, the Commission prepared a comprehensive "five and ten-year plan" to serve as a roadmap for the long-term implementation of the intergenerational approach to poverty. While the plan, published in March 2015,[14] has not been in place long enough to yield meaningful outcome measures, a summary of highlights and potential challenges may be useful for states that are considering their own Two-Gen poverty mitigation agenda.

In the plan, the Commission sets out policy recommendations, goals, and measureable benchmarks for each of the four intergenerational focus areas. The Commission began collecting data in 2014 to serve as the baseline data points for tracking progress toward the benchmarks and goals over the next several years.[15] Table 2 (page 6) summarizes the primary goals for each of the four intergenerational focus areas identified in the plan.

Table 1: Utah Intergenerational Poverty (IGP) Cohorts

Cohort Name	Ages	Public Assistance (PA) Threshold[13]
IGP Adult	Adults ages 21 to 43	Received PA for twelve consecutive months as a child and during the year of measurement
IGP Young Adult	Adults ages 18 to 21	Received PA for twelve consecutive months as a child and during the year of measurement
IGP Children	Children under 18	Children of the IGP Adult cohort
Children at-risk of IGP	Children under 18	Children of parents who received PA during the year of measurement

Table 2: Five and Ten-Year Plan Goals

Focus Area	5-Year Goal	10-Year Goal
Early Childhood Development	Align all systems involved in early childhood development to ensure Utah has the capacity to prepare for kindergarten children who are at risk of remaining in poverty.	Children at risk of remaining in poverty as they become adults are emotionally, cognitively, and developmentally prepared for kindergarten.
Education	Align systems serving educational outcomes to ensure efforts are focused in schools disproportionately affected by IGP.	Children at risk of remaining in poverty as they become adults graduate from high school at the rate equal to the statewide rate.
Family Economic Stability	Children at risk of remaining in poverty are living in stable families able to meet their basic needs.	Children at risk of remaining in poverty are living in families that are self-sufficient.
Health	Children experiencing IGP have access to quality physical health, mental health, and dental care.	Children experiencing IGP are receiving physical, mental, and dental care at the same rates as the statewide rates.
IGP Commission Overarching Goals	Agencies serving same families coordinate case management of these families ensuring alignment of case management plans and reducing burden on families.	Eliminate duplication of services across state agencies and ensure case managers serving the same families collaborate on the best services necessary to serve the needs of children.

Tracking Data Across Agencies

The Utah Commission is using data provided by agencies such as the DWS, the Utah Department of Health, and the Utah Department of Human Services to track the cumulative services received by the IGP cohorts. These serve as the basis for the indicators used to measure progress toward the benchmarks established in the five and ten-year plan.

In 2013, agencies began executing memoranda of understanding (MOUs) to define the scope of information shared between agencies for data collection and tracking purposes. DWS and the Department of Human Services, Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) executed an MOU authorizing the sharing of certain individual records and other, more sensitive data, in aggregate. For example, DCFS must send DWS the aggregate number of individuals within each IGP cohort who have been diagnosed with certain mental health issues, who were victims of abuse, or who were perpetrators of abuse.[16] Even though individual records containing personal information are generally protected under state and federal privacy laws, sharing the information in aggregate, without personal identifiers, enables DWS to determine the extent of IGP enrollment across multiple DCFS and DWS programs.[17] DWS currently has similar MOUs with the Utah Department of Health, criminal justice entities, and the Utah Data Alliance, which is a private collaborative partnership that tracks longitudinal education data.[18]

Coordination of Services

As in most states, the array of services with the potential to benefit both generations of a family are administered by multiple state agencies. For example, the Department of Health administers Medicaid provisions, while DWS administers job training programs and child care assistance. Unless these programs are coordinated to serve both generations of a family at the same time, the potential cumulative effect of the Two-Gen approach may be lost.[19]

Case Worker Level Coordination

The Act mandates that the Commission facilitate improved coordination of intergenerational efforts down to the case worker level. To meet this requirement, the agencies comprising the Commission are in the process of negotiating MOUs to exchange information at the individual program participant level. For some agencies, like DCFS, federal privacy laws[20] have been a significant hurdle to the transfer of individualized data to other state agencies. However, the Commission is currently developing agreements that will create a method for flagging individual records without disclosing confidential data.[21]

This effort will begin with agreements between DWS, the Department of Health, and the Department of Human Services to share whether a family who is engaged with one agency is also engaged with the programs of the other two agencies. While the agreements themselves will not permit the disclosure of specific information about the family, case workers will still have enough information to request a waiver directly from the family to disclose, on a case-by-case basis, additional information as needed to provide the complete range of available services. Although each IGP family may still have multiple case workers assigned to them, these data-sharing agreements will help identify the common pool of prospective clients[22] and develop joint case management plans.[23] Once every involved agency has access to a family's comprehensive information, all assigned case workers can coordinate to ensure that both generations of a given IGP family are receiving every intervention for which they are eligible.

There are other informal mechanisms that assist families' enrollment in support programs delivered at the local level. For example, DWS reports to the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) about children receiving SNAP benefits. USOE then makes this information available to each local school district so children receiving SNAP benefits can be enrolled in the free or reduced school lunch program without further proof of income.[24]

Improving Participant Enrollment Processes

To help increase enrollment across multiple programs, Utah has developed a "universal" web application to apply for services provided across multiple state-level agencies. Utah's myCase portal[25] provides a single application process for Utah's food assistance program, Family Employment Program, Medicaid, Primary Care Network health coverage,[26] child care subsidy program, and unemployment insurance.

Program Implementation

DWS and other agencies are beginning to target existing programs toward the IGP cohorts and demonstrate the outcomes of a fully-integrated Two-Gen program on a small scale.

Next Generation Kids (NGK) Demonstration Project

In September 2014, DWS launched the Next Generation Kids (NGK) demonstration project to test strategies for leveraging the state's Family Employment Program (FEP) to address intergenerational poverty. FEP is a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funded program providing financial support to low-income parents who are seeking employment.[27]

NGK is being implemented in Ogden. The families invited to participate in NGK are selected from a pool of former participants in the FEP program who have not yet exhausted their time-based eligibility under TANF. NGK utilizes the flexibility permitted under TANF to fill in gaps in services. For example, NGK provides enrolled families with community-based early education, parent employment plans, adult education opportunities, financial stability workshops, and family coaching. These programs are delivered at local schools, community centers, and through in-home visits.

DWS markets the NGK program to the subset of the IGP adult cohort who have at least one child in their household, otherwise identified by the Commission as the IGP children cohort. Eligible parents may then choose to enroll their family in the intensive NGK program or remain with their current DWS case manager. Each NGK site is typically capped at 25 families.[28] Each family who chooses to enroll becomes part of an NGK cohort and is assigned a "family success coach."[29] Family success coaches are trained in skills such as trauma-informed care and motivational interviews.

> Although each IGP family may still have multiple case workers assigned to them, these data-sharing agreements will help identify the common pool of prospective clients and develop joint case management plans.

> New seats created by grants awarded under the school readiness expansion provision must be reserved for IGP, or at-risk of IGP, students. Further, the grants provide scholarships to high-quality pre-K programs for IGP, or at-risk of IGP, students.

Coaches work with the participating family to create a case management plan incorporating the four intergenerational focus areas to address the obstacles families often face while trying to achieve long-term financial stability.[30]

During 2015, the NGK programs created such plans for 31 families.[31] Of these families, ten adults obtained employment, four received their high school diploma, and ten enrolled in job training.[32] In 2016, NGK will expand to serve two new neighborhoods in Salt Lake County. In time, DWS plans to more broadly incorporate those NGK strategies which have yielded positive results into the statewide case management structure of the Family Employment Program.[33]

Two-Gen Aligned Programs

Utah policymakers are working to more intentionally align existing services and systems for children and adults with the goal of addressing intergenerational poverty. Following are examples of recent policy decisions that either specifically target the Commission-identified IGP cohorts for services, or require that the program align with the Commission's five and ten-year plan.

SNAP-Ed. Utah's SNAP-Ed program, Food $ense, uses federal Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) funds to provide in-person courses about nutrition, budgeting, food preparation, food safety, and the importance of physical activity.[34] In 2015, DWS partnered with Utah State University to ensure that IGP populations are specifically targeted for marketing efforts in order to increase IGP enrollment in the program.[35] In comprehensive case management demonstration projects, like NGK, SNAP-Ed is a required component of the plan for all participating IGP families.

Afterschool Funding. In 2014, Utah enacted the Intergenerational Poverty Interventions in Public Schools Act, also introduced by Senator Reid. The Act appropriated $1 million annually from the state education fund for grants funding afterschool programs targeted to the IGP cohorts.[36] The State Board of Education reviews grant proposals from Local Education Agencies (LEAs) based on: (1) the academic needs and interests of the participating students; (2) the intended outcomes of the program, and how they will be measured; and (3) how the proposed programs will improve the academic achievement of children affected by intergenerational poverty.[37] The State Board of Education is required to provide the Commission with an annual report on the program.

Early Childhood Learning Opportunities. The Utah School Readiness Initiative, enacted in 2014, created the School Readiness Board, distinct from the State Board of Education, to award grants to LEAs and private entities for high-quality school readiness programs.[38] While the term "intergenerational poverty" was not included in the original statute, in 2016, the state passed legislation (S.B. 101) that expanded the School Readiness Initiative and added provisions specifically targeting IGP children. For example, new seats created by grants awarded under the expansion provision must be reserved for IGP, or at-risk of IGP students. Further, it provides scholarships to high-quality pre-K programs for IGP or at-risk IGP students.[39]

Community Schools. In 2016, the Utah legislature provided a $2 million appropriation to establish community schools in Utah.[40] Grants will be used to establish partnerships between local school districts and community partners to improve outcomes for low-income students as they progress through school. Grantees will coordinate and align services to students, as well as services to the families and communities of the students. Partners must develop shared goals, outcomes, and measurement practices that align with the Commission's five and ten-year intergenerational poverty plan.

Colorado

Colorado's state-level Two-Gen efforts are largely driven by the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS). Along with this agency-led effort, a grassroots coalition of children's well-being advocates engaged with the state legislature to recommend improvements to existing public human services funding streams that would increase enrollment and accessibility of federal and state programs that support two generations together.[41]

Highlights of Colorado's approach include:

- **State Agency Leadership.** Today, most programs falling within the scope of Two-Gen are administered by CDHS and linked through its Office of Performance and Strategic Outcomes. CDHS has used the administrative rulemaking process to focus federal, state, and private funding streams to provide multiple sources of support to both generations of families struggling to sustain economic stability. In addition to the formal administration of agency programs, CDHS has taken the lead on increasing informal coordination across divisions within the agency. CDHS created a dedicated Two-Generation Manager position to oversee the integration of human services within the agency. Significant efforts are currently underway to expand the scope of Two-Gen programs beyond CDHS into other state agencies.

- **State Policy Changes.** Beginning in August 2013, a collaborative of 60 private stakeholders began developing recommendations to expand the state's child care subsidy program using the Two-Gen lens.[42] The General Assembly's nonpartisan Legislative Council then created temporary commissions during consecutive legislative sessions to solicit public input and inform the legislative debate surrounding the subsequent state-level policy changes, which ultimately became the amendments to the child care subsidy program.[43]

State Agency Coordination
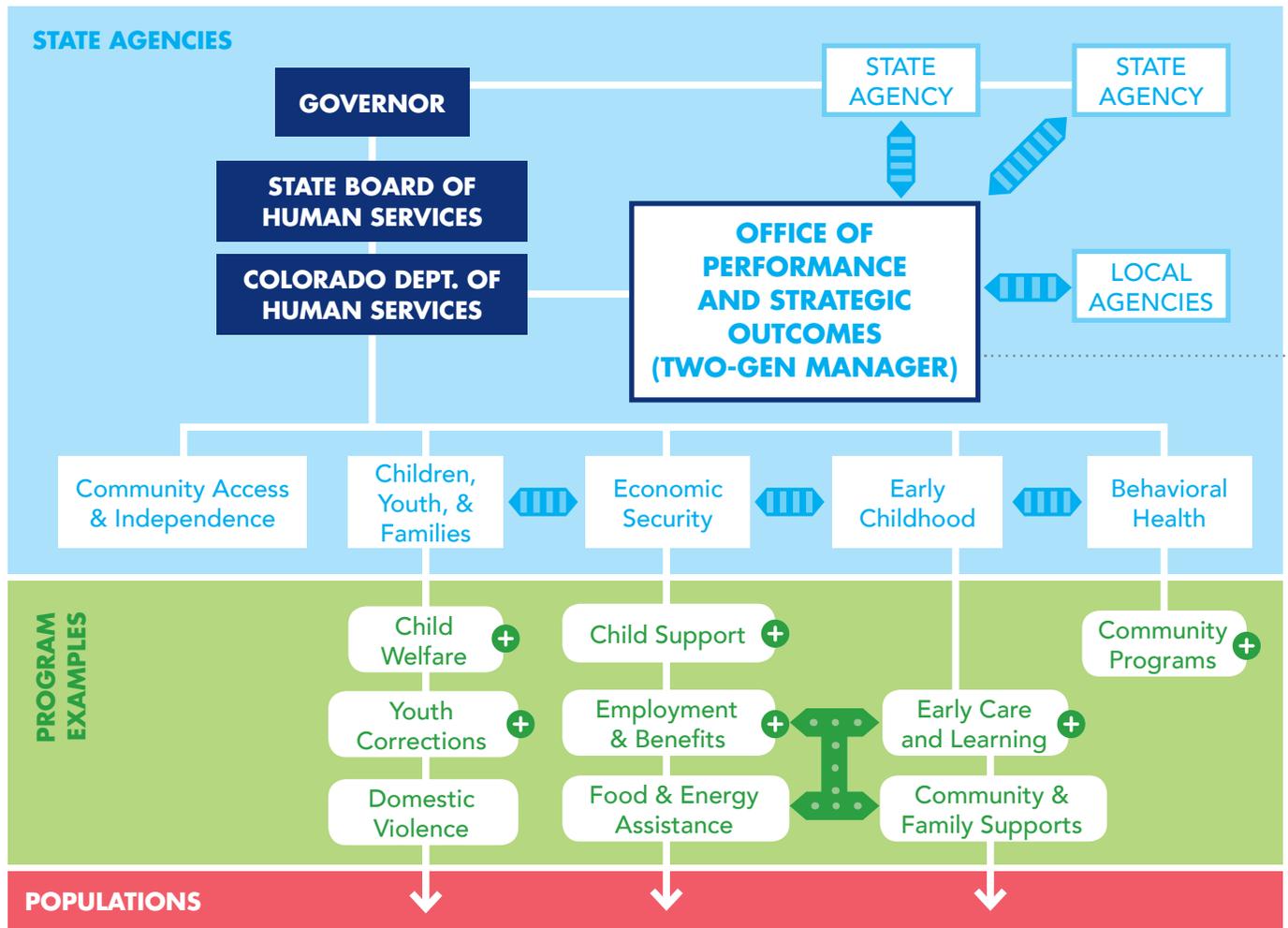
Colorado Department of Human Services Programs

This section highlights the Two-Gen strategies in place in Colorado's Department of Human Services (CDHS) as of spring 2016. CDHS is divided into offices, each serving one of five programmatic areas: (1) Children, Youth, and Families; (2) Economic Security; (3) Early Childhood; (4) Behavioral Health; and (5) Community Access and Independence. Three offices of executive management supervise these programmatic offices: (1) Office of Performance and Strategic Outcomes; (2) Chief Medical Officer; and (3) Office of Administrative Solutions.[44]

In 2014, CDHS created a dedicated Two-Gen Manager staff position within its Office of Performance and Strategic Outcomes (OPSO) to: (1) coordinate the implementation of the Two-Gen approach across the Department's five programmatic offices; and (2) work with each office to develop consistent outcome measures for Two-Gen aligned programs across the Department.

Training & Outreach

OPSO has developed an ongoing work plan to incorporate the Two-Gen approach throughout the agency. Because there is no statutory mandate to coordinate the delivery of services, most coordination happens organically, or as a result of periodic intra-agency meetings and training. These trainings are designed to embed the Two-Gen theme across the department. The goal is to foster coordination between staff who are
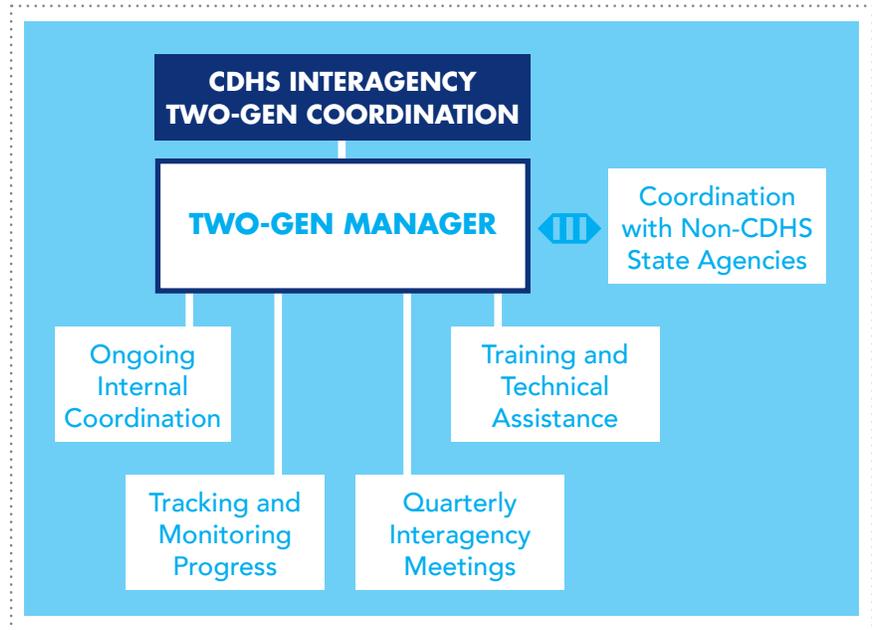
Two-Gen Implementation in Colorado

STATE AGENCIES

GOVERNOR

STATE AGENCY — **STATE AGENCY**

STATE BOARD OF HUMAN SERVICES

COLORADO DEPT. OF HUMAN SERVICES

OFFICE OF PERFORMANCE AND STRATEGIC OUTCOMES (TWO-GEN MANAGER)

LOCAL AGENCIES

[See Detail Below]

| Community Access & Independence | Children, Youth, & Families | Economic Security | Early Childhood | Behavioral Health |

PROGRAM EXAMPLES

Child Welfare +

Child Support +

Community Programs +

Youth Corrections +

Employment & Benefits +

Early Care and Learning +

Domestic Violence

Food & Energy Assistance

Community & Family Supports

POPULATIONS

KEY

Coordination via the Office of Performance & Strategic Planning

"No-Wrong-Door"

Two-Gen Special Project

Detail: Role of the Two-Gen Manager

CDHS INTERAGENCY TWO-GEN COORDINATION

TWO-GEN MANAGER

Coordination with Non-CDHS State Agencies

Ongoing Internal Coordination

Training and Technical Assistance

Tracking and Monitoring Progress

Quarterly Interagency Meetings

Table 3: Two-Generation Coordination Between CDHS Offices

CDHS Office	Two-Gen Strategy
Office of Children, Youth, & Families	Division of Youth Corrections will engage the parents of children involved in the corrections system in efforts to strengthen the entire family unit
Office of Economic Security	Leverage engagement with child support system to help non-custodial parents gain job skills and employment
Office of Early Childhood	Increase percentage of Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) participants who are enrolled in SNAP
Office of Behavioral Health	Coordinate with clients of other CDHS offices to increase referrals into "wrap-around care," a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grant-funded program
Office of Community Access & Independence	This office does not have a special project

engaged with the Two-Gen approach to create process-based efficiencies in service delivery where possible.

During the fall of 2015, the Two-Gen Manager coordinated training for the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)[45] staff at two, four-hour workshops.[46] These workshops trained home visitors on the additional supports available to families that fall within the Two-Gen framework. CDHS has additional trainings planned for 2016 to further embed Two-Gen approaches into program implementation.

Alignment of Services

Since 2014, OPSO has also organized its intra-agency work plan around the core focus areas of the Two-Gen approach and developed a special project in many CHDS offices, all coordinated by the Two-Gen Manager. Key gaps in service delivery were identified that had the potential to be addressed through increased coordination and data-sharing across two or more CDHS offices. Each office is now coordinating to enhance service integration within its assigned programmatic area under the existing policy framework. The Offices meet with the CDHS Executive Management Team quarterly to benchmark their progress. A summary of the Two-Gen strategy for each office and examples of how each office is meeting this challenge in a unique way are detailed in Table 3.

The Office of Children, Youth, & Families, Division of Youth Corrections. The Division, which historically only engaged the child generation of the family, is now working to strengthen the family unit holistically. The Division surveys parents at each state-operated youth corrections facility, on an ongoing basis, to inform its strategy for system improvement. In conjunction, Youth Corrections Client Managers completed a training about the theory behind Two-Gen, the PEAK no-wrong-door portal (detailed on page 13), and effective family engagement. The Division's strategy is based on the ecological model for public health, which addresses risk factors at the individual, familial, community, and societal levels.[47]

The Office of Economic Security. This Office's strategy is to shift the child support program from a strictly "enforcement, parent-focused system," to a mechanism that can meet the needs of noncustodial parents and children "through family-centered assessment and case management."[48] A subset of noncustodial parents who are currently making child support payments will be assessed based on the "frequency and amount" of payment, and categorized for additional services and benefits. For example, a noncustodial parent making regular but small payments, might be offered additional job training supports. The Office plans to scale up the family-centered approach by the end of 2018.

The Office of Economic Security also oversees the Colorado Parent Employment Project (CO-PEP), which is a National Child Support Noncustodial Parent Demonstration Project "intended to reduce barriers to payment and increase employment among noncustodial parents over a five-year period."[49] The program is administered in six counties, and provides intensive case management, enhanced child support services, 16-hour parenting capacity curriculum, intensive employment services, and other work supports. Based on an evaluation through March 31, 2016, the halfway point for the demonstration, CO-PEP has enrolled 659 participants in enhanced services for at least a six-month period. Child support payments among the group increased by 10%, and 74% of participants were employed after twelve months.

The Office of Early Childhood. This Office is seeking to increase the percentage of SNAP-eligible participants in the child care subsidy program who enroll in SNAP benefits. The goal is to ensure that families who participate in the child care program also receive proper nutrition to bolster the child's physical and cognitive health to increase early-learning outcomes. The Office of Early Childhood is working with the Office of Economic Security to share data to determine which families receiving the child care subsidy are not enrolled in SNAP. The Office is presently conducting outreach to eligible families, both directly and through the county offices where the greatest number of applicable families currently reside.

The Office of Behavioral Health. This Office is focused on increasing the efficiency of the referral process into the Office of Behavioral Health from the population of clients currently engaged with other CDHS offices. Referred individuals will receive "trauma-informed wraparound" services to reduce case manager caseloads, serve both generations, and create individualized plans that address cultural, social, emotional, cognitive, and economic needs. This cross-office client identification system will be integrated in the twelve communities where wraparound care is currently funded by a grant from SAMHSA.[50] OPSO is working with the Office of Behavioral Health to apply for additional federal funding to expand wraparound services in the state.

Cross-Agency Partnerships

As the lead Two-Gen agency, CDHS has begun working with other state departments to begin applying the Two-Gen approach to their programs, as well.

Colorado Opportunity Project

The Department of Health Care Policy & Financing (HCPF) is leading a collaborative partnership with the Department of Health and Environment and CDHS to solicit proposals for community-based interventions to remove barriers to economic stability at each life stage, from birth to adulthood.[51] The goal of the Project is to deliver evidence-based initiatives and community-based promising practices that remove roadblocks for all Coloradans, so that everyone will have the opportunity to reach and maintain their full potential. The project is based on the idea that opportunities (or obstacles) are presented at each stage of life, from family formation to decline and end-of-life, requiring a focus on interventions shown to make a difference in creating pathways and removing obstacles at each life stage. The coalition of state departments, in partnership with local agencies and private partners with expertise in each programmatic area, will seek to implement such identified evidence-based initiatives and community-based promising practices.

Access to Success Project

The U.S. Department of Labor recently awarded a grant to the Community College of Aurora through the Strengthening Working Families Initiative. In partnership with the Office of Early Childhood at CDHS, Access to Success aims to help parents obtain entry-level jobs in high-demand, high-growth career pathways, while assisting them to overcome child care, academic, and financial barriers as they pursue career advancement. The project was designed with the Two-Gen framework in mind to assist both parents and their children reach positive education and economic outcomes.

Strategies Supporting Two-Generations

Colorado has a number of programs that support the Two-Gen framework across state agencies. Many of these programs are small in scale, and are intended to generate data about the potential for better outcomes by targeting both generations together under the *existing* umbrella of programs. Others are state policy-level changes that are designed to increase access to high-quality services for low-income families statewide. Under both strategies, stakeholders are taking steps to leverage the salient change in culture at the agency level to continue coordinating efforts to a holistic approach to family well-being.

> *It is critical to provide low to moderate-income families with access to high-quality, affordable child care that fosters healthy child development and school readiness, while at the same time promot[ing] family self-sufficiency and attachment to the workforce.*

PEAK

PEAK is Colorado's online portal to check eligibility and apply for a variety of public benefits programs.[52] This inter-Department online public benefits application tool eases the burden of coordination by providing Coloradans with access to food assistance, cash assistance, early childhood education, child care programs, and Medicaid.

Employment First (SNAP E&T)

Colorado is working to increase utilization of SNAP Employment & Training, called Employment First, in the state.[53] During fiscal year 2015, Employment First operated in 28 of 64, counties but has since expanded to 46 counties,[54] and further expansions are being planned. Employment First was recently rebranded using the tagline "Support, Connect, Succeed" to convey the essential purpose of the program to participants. The new tagline makes Employment First more appealing to parents who are otherwise exempt from the program. Although the precise number of participants with dependents is not available, evidence suggests that a significant number of families with children are participating in the program.[55]

Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP)

In 2014, Colorado adopted changes to its child care subsidy,[56] the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) to more fully align the program with the state's broader Two-Gen strategy by:

- Providing $9.9 million in state funding, independent of federal block grants, for the 2014–15 fiscal year;
- Raising the income limit for enrollment;
- Revising the reimbursement rate methodology for child care providers;
- Providing incentives for providers to improve the quality of care;

- Providing continuous, twelve-month eligibility before redetermination is required; and
- Increasing the flexibility for each county to determine what qualifies as an eligible activity.

Support in the state legislature for the changes to the CCCAP program was generated, in part, by leveraging the value of the Two-Gen approach. For example, while CCCAP had been previously positioned as a work support for parents, advocates argued that improving access to high-quality child care would lead to positive outcomes for *both* children and parents by: (1) fostering healthy early childhood development; and (2) promoting economic stability by supporting parents' employment and education goals.[57] Legislators added the following language to the legislative declaration of the law, acknowledging the importance of this approach:

> *It is critical to provide low to moderate-income families with access to high-quality, affordable child care that fosters healthy child development and school readiness, while at the same time promot[ing] family self-sufficiency and attachment to the workforce.*[58]

In 2014, the Colorado legislature also bolstered the policy changes to the CCCAP program with two laws designed to increase families' access to high-quality child care and promote economic stability.

"Cliff Effect" Pilot Program. The CCCAP "Cliff Effect" Pilot Program seeks to mitigate the adverse incentive created when a parent begins earning wages that raises that family's income above the eligibility threshold for child care subsidies. The Bell Policy Center found that nearly one-third of the families participating in CCCAP have taken actions to limit their income to remain below the income threshold for the subsidy.[59] Rather than immediately withdrawing all child care support, the pilot program allows counties to gradually withdraw child care benefits by increasing the parent co-payment as family earnings increase.[60] The Cliff Effect pilot was initially limited to ten counties. In 2016, the legislature amended the program to allow additional counties in the state to participate at the discretion of CDHS.[61]

Child Care Tax Credit. The legislature also de-coupled the state's child care tax credit from an individual's federal child care tax credit to increase the number of low-income Coloradans eligible for the benefit.[62] This tax credit will permit more families who receive the CCCAP subsidy, but still pay significant out-of-pocket expenses for child care, to recoup some of their out-of-pocket costs.

Connecticut

In 2015, the Connecticut General Assembly budgeted $3 million in state-funded grants to test Two-Generation strategies across six communities in the state. With guidance from the state's Two-Generational Interagency Working Group and private partners, policymakers hope the pilot sites will lead to "a long-term plan to adopt a two-generational model for the delivery for services … on a statewide basis."[63]
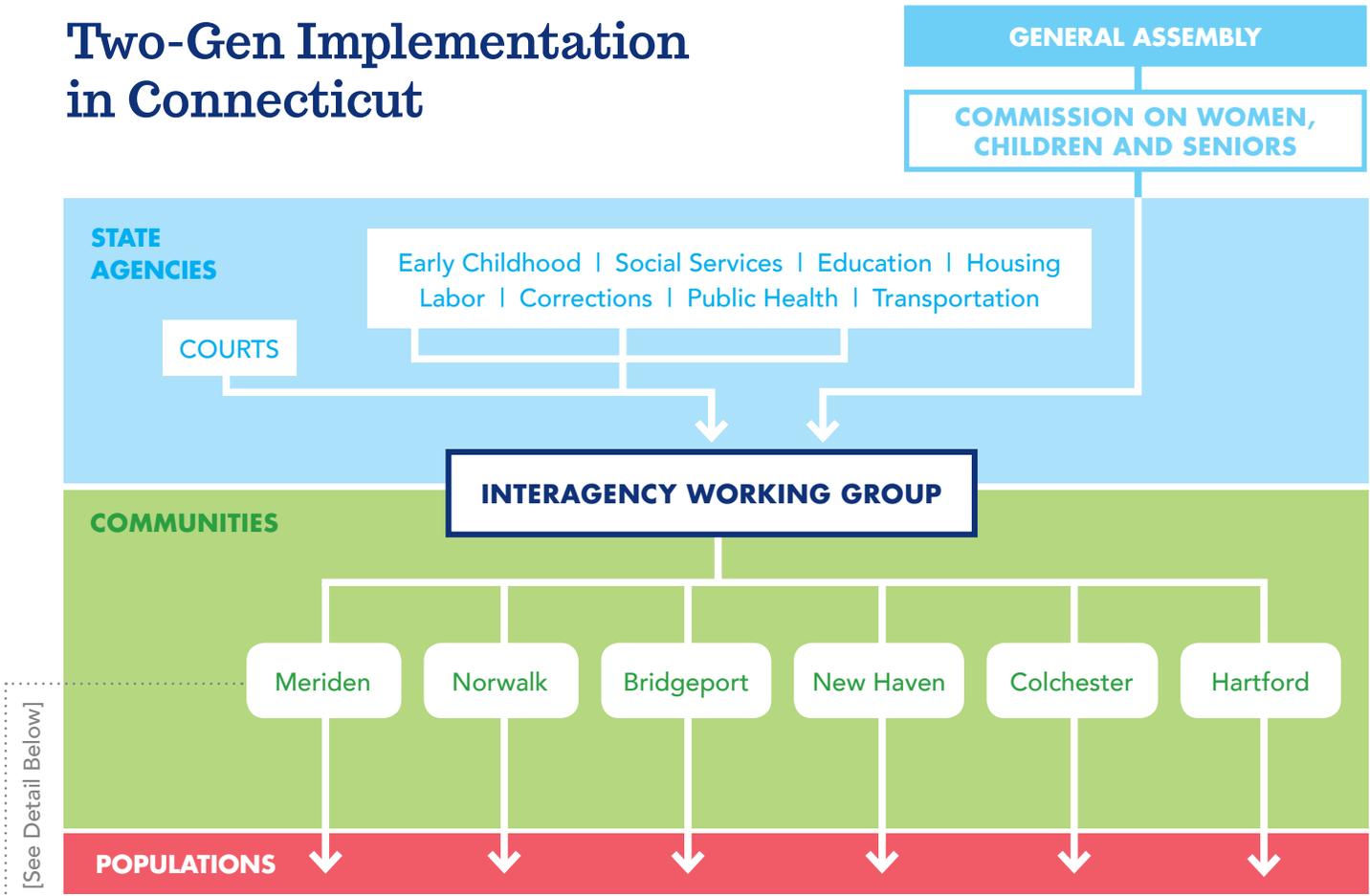
Highlights of the Connecticut Approach include:

- **Legislative Agency Leadership.** The Connecticut Commission on Women, Children and Seniors, an agency of the Connecticut General Assembly, serves as a liaison between government and private groups and provides recommendations to the legislature and the governor for systems changes and model policies that will improve child outcomes in health, safety, and learning.[64] The Commission helped establish Two-Gen as a priority for the state after an extensive research and planning process.

- **Pilot Communities.** Policymakers in the state have embraced the view that keeping the family at the center of the program will result in service choices that will lead to better outcomes for the families. The State Legislature established a pilot project to implement Two-Gen in six communities across the state. Policymakers in Connecticut expressly aim to use the information gained from the six pilot communities to replicate an integrated Two-Gen framework statewide that braids federal TANF funds with state and local resources.[65]

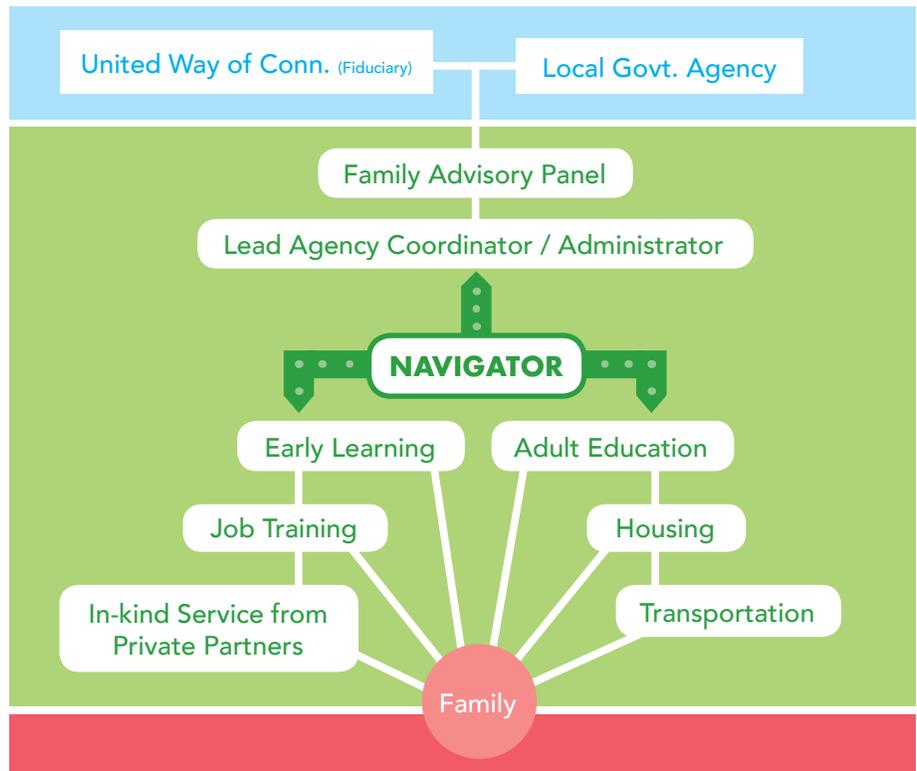## Identifying the Two-Gen Need in Connecticut

The Commission's 2013 annual report was the first government publication to propose examples of potential state systems changes using the Two-Generation approach to more efficiently reduce poverty in the state. The following year, the state budget implementation bill was the first law in the state to include explicit Two-Gen language. The 2014 Act required the Commission to develop "a two-generational school readiness plan" that provided recommendations about supports for high-quality early childhood learning coupled with "intensified workforce training" and other programs serving the parent population.[66] The Act required that the plan prioritize families with children ages five and under who live at or below 185% of the federal poverty guideline.

The Two-Gen plan was submitted to the legislature in December 2014.[67] The plan focused on increasing simultaneous delivery of services to parents and children that provide quality early learning, pathways to work for parents, and related support services. The plan explains the challenges facing low-income families across the state as a means to encourage political support for the Two-Gen approach. The Commission suggested that much of the benefit of Two-Gen-friendly policies could be achieved without extensive new funding, and, instead, through "an assessment of how funds are being used, with redesign for improved program and policy alignments that support 'family outcomes.'"[68]

Two-Gen Implementation in Connecticut

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

COMMISSION ON WOMEN, CHILDREN AND SENIORS

STATE AGENCIES

Early Childhood | Social Services | Education | Housing
Labor | Corrections | Public Health | Transportation

COURTS

INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP

COMMUNITIES

| Meriden | Norwalk | Bridgeport | New Haven | Colchester | Hartford |

POPULATIONS

[See Detail Below]

Detail: Example Pilot Project Framework

KEY

⬡⬡⬡ Interagency Coordination

United Way of Conn. (Fiduciary)

Local Govt. Agency

Family Advisory Panel

Lead Agency Coordinator / Administrator

NAVIGATOR

Early Learning

Adult Education

Job Training

Housing

In-kind Service from Private Partners

Transportation

Family

Table 4: Summary Recommendations from Connecticut Two-Gen Plan

Recommendation	Implementation Example
Add adult programs to existing child services	Integrate adult English language learning (ELL) into children's preschool ELL program
Add child program to existing adult services	Provide high-quality child care at adult education and training facilities
Merge child and adult programs at existing service locations	Community-based, case managed program to integrate workforce development, subsidized housing, and infant care
Provide both child and parent services at "intentional hub site"	Locate services for parent and child at community college, housing program, or family resource center
Scale up programs from demonstration projects	Employ pilot sites to create "system designs" incorporating Two-Gen strategies for larger scale replication

The plan highlights a few examples of how other states have moved forward along the Two-Gen continuum, and provides high-level programmatic shifts for the legislature to consider in advancing the Two-Gen framework in the state. These recommendations are summarized in Table 4.

The Commission also recognized that developing long-term support for the Two-Gen approach would require a culture shift at the legislative and agency levels to embed the concept of Two-Gen as a means of producing measurable outcomes and greater return on investment of taxpayer dollars.

Two-Gen Pilot Program Planning

The Connecticut General Assembly established the "two-generational school readiness and workforce development pilot program" in 2015.[69] The 2015 state budget implementation bill created the Two-Generational Interagency Working Group (Working Group), which includes the state executive agencies, court system, members of the legislature, and private partner organizations, to oversee the pilot program design and implementation. The Commission on Children is responsible for administrative support to the Working Group. The bill designates six communities for the pilot locations and requires that the program "shall be funded by state and available private [funds]," though the bill does not provide a specific appropriation. The Working Group is tasked with planning, designing, and evaluating outcomes for the projects.

The Working Group released a guidance document in January 2016 outlining the framework and mission of each pilot project and the timeline for implementation.[70] The principal criterion for evaluating each community's proposal was how the program design "intentionally links, coordinates, and aligns high-quality services for children with high-quality service and supports for parents [, or] caregivers."

The Connecticut General Assembly ultimately provided approximately $2.76 million in total funding for the pilot program to be divided among the pilot sites based on project type, geographic location, and the number of families served. Implementation plans were due to the Commission on Children by March 4, 2016, and the original grant period was set to run from April 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.[71] As of May 2016, each pilot community had received a letter approving its project, subject to ongoing minor revisions to project design.

Pilot Program Implementation

Target Population and Goals

The Working Group guidance directs the pilot communities to target families with household earnings that are 75% of the state median income or below, or equivalent to 300% of the Federal Poverty Guideline. The guidance proposes the following systems changes to intentionally link and coordinate services to both generations:

- Bring the family back to the center of service delivery through strong parent involvement strategies;

- Bolster the quality of services by streamlining services and establishing a community-state partnership; and

- Provide concurrent work opportunities to parents and high-quality child-learning through grade three through: (a) co-location of services; (b) "no-wrong-door" intake; (c) referral networks; and (d) virtual or remote service delivery.

Each pilot is expected to report on outcomes achieved through the project and to participate in a statewide evaluation of the project.

Grant Application Criteria

Each pilot community was invited to submit one implementation proposal after interested stakeholders had the opportunity to collaborate. Each proposal was required to include a description of the poverty issues facing the community, the target population, project design, recruitment strategy, project goals, data collection, and budget. The pilot communities were also advised to include ways for the project design to

transition to the statewide level using TANF funding. The proposals were evaluated on, among others, the following criteria:

1. How well does the proposal target low-income families?

2. How were parents involved in the program development process?

3. Are the enrollment guidelines clear?

4. How does the lead, or backbone, agency have the unique capacity to coordinate and facilitate the various stakeholders?

5. How well are specific outcomes defined?

6. How does the program intentionally connect adult and child services?

7. How is the pilot project different from coordinated services already in place in the particular community?

8. How does the project reflect "a commitment to equity?"

9. How will data be collected, monitored, and evaluated?

Table 5: Overview of Pilot Sites, *May 2016*

Community	Lead Agency	Target Population	Estimated # of Families
Bridgeport	United Way of Coastal Fairfield County	Young parent families of children 3 and under, with a particular focus on families where the mother is age 18–21.	50
Colchester	Collaborative for Colchester's Children	Families with children 8 and under who are enrolled in, or receive support from, specified programs.	Not publically available
Greater Hartford	Move UP! Collaborative	Families with at least one child age 8 or under, where at least one parent is unemployed, underemployed, or seeking further education.	75
Meriden	United Way of Meriden and the local Board of Education	Families who meet the eligibility guidelines established by the Working Group.	30
New Haven	United Way of Greater New Haven	Custodial to noncustodial mothers and fathers; grandparents caring for young children.	50
Norwalk	Human Services Council of Connecticut	Eligible families living in the Colonial Village public housing apartments.	25

Overview of Pilot Site Proposals

The six communities plan to take varying approaches to certain aspects of each program's design. For example, some communities will target specific housing communities, while others will receive referrals through the public school system or through existing parent education programs. Table 5 provides summaries of each pilot site, some of which may have undergone minor revisions since they were first presented to the Working Group in March 2016.[72]

The Working Group has already gained insights from the pilot project about how the Two-Gen approach must be adapted when moving from a theoretical model to practical implementation. For example, stakeholders have found that greater attention to planning and process evaluation is vital to overall program success. Further, parent engagement has been one of the most valuable tools in developing programs, and Two-Gen, in reality, often involves a "third generation," where a grandparent acts as the primary caretaker of a grandchild. As such, programs should also be tailored to fit the unique needs of these circumstances.

Pilot Site Evaluation Process

As provided in the grant application guidance, the evaluation of each pilot program must include both a formative and consequential element. Moreover, the General Assembly passed legislation to revise the outcomes that will be measured.[73] The program, as amended, requires that the design of each pilot project is informed by "technical assistance in best practices" and by "members of low-income households" in the community. The bill also amends the reporting provisions to require the Working Group to consult with "state and national evaluators" to develop outcomes that measure "the areas of school readiness and school success" and "workforce readiness, work success, and family support outcomes."

Given the relatively short, fourteen-month, window for service delivery, the formative evaluation will focus on determining: (1) the nature of any systems changes at the state and local service-delivery level; (2) the extent of parent involvement throughout the process; and (3) how the pilot programs differ based on their unique demographic and geographic makeup. To ensure the evaluations are consistent and robust across the pilot communities, the Connecticut Association for Human Services is providing technical assistance to the lead agency at each pilot location.

Two-Gen Alignment

While the primary locus of the Two-Gen approach in Connecticut is the pilot program, this section highlights the state agency-level opportunities that Two-Gen stakeholders are hoping to leverage moving forward.

Culture-Change and Data-Sharing

Promoting professional development and best practices through the Two-Gen lens is one way to embed a methodology that considers Two-Gen ideals when creating policies and service-delivery processes. This became clear when feedback from the pilot communities showed that one of the most significant hurdles to program development was closing the gaps in services that result from disparate application, eligibility, and receipt of services between and among the array of local, state, federal, and private human services.[74]

Another approach to fragmented and siloed service provisions that Connecticut is evaluating is "middleware" data-sharing processes to link agency data sets. Middleware solutions allow two operating systems to share data without requiring expensive, and complex, complete systems integration. For processes such as identifying common clients, middleware can be a cost-effective way to increase service integration and efficiency.

Expanded Eligibility for Child Care Assistance

In 2016, The Connecticut legislature expanded the list of activities for parents to qualify for the child care subsidy, Care4Kids. Enrollment in a two or four-year degree program will now qualify as an employment activity for participation in the child care subsidy program.[75] The Commission on Women, Children and Seniors gave testimony in support of the bill as a means to close an "opportunity gap" for poor families. This policy change aims to increase parental autonomy, and provide access to high-quality learning for children with the greatest need.[76]

Recommendations: Overarching Policy Opportunities, Challenges, and Lessons

The Assembly's extensive review of the efforts underway in the three states revealed overarching opportunities and lessons for other states to consider as they develop their Two-Gen approaches.

Cultivating Political Leadership

All three states profiled in this report benefited from having government institutions and policymakers as strong Two-Gen leaders and allies.

- **Utah:** The first two phases of the Intergenerational Poverty agenda in Utah were shepherded through the legislature primarily by the efforts of former Senator Stuart Reid. Senator Reid generated bi-partisan support for Utah's Two-Gen legislation using the story of the intergenerational poverty he witnessed in his own community. Governor Gary Herbert has also been a vocal proponent of the state's efforts to address intergenerational poverty, connecting it to his goal to develop a skilled workforce by improving education outcomes.[77] In 2016, Lieutenant Governor Spencer Cox joined the Intergenerational Welfare Reform Commission as its chair. One of his key responsibilities is to facilitate the ongoing dialogue between Utah's lawmakers and the Commission. The Lieutenant Governor's role as a liaison to the legislature alleviates concerns raised by Senator Reid's retirement in 2014. Two-Gen advocates feared that without Senator Reid to champion the effort with his colleagues, support for the approach in the legislature might eventually erode.

- **Colorado:** Reggie Bicha, executive director of the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS), is a nationally recognized Two-Gen leader. In 2012, he was named one of Ascend at the Aspen Institute's inaugural fellows. The fellowship program is intended to "fuel their work with a two-generation approach that invests in children and parents together".[78] Under his leadership, CDHS has taken actions to establish Two-Gen as a long-term priority, including by overhauling its administrative rules to increase program efficiency and by creating a Two-Gen staff position.

- **Connecticut:** The General Assembly created the Commission on Children in 1985 to promote the coordination of public programs and provide recommendations about legislation to increase well-being for children. On July 1, 2016, the Commission on Children merged with the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Aging to become the Commission on Women, Children and Seniors. The Commission is a trusted resource for lawmakers, known for its ability to identify research-based policy solutions. The new Commission is specifically required to incorporate the Two-Gen approach and recommend systems innovations intended to reduce family poverty.[79]

Ensuring Program Sustainability

The success of the Two-Gen approach hinges on a sustained, long-term commitment that withstands political cycles and trends. State-level stakeholders expressed concern that the initial enthusiasm for the Two-Gen approach could wane after demonstration projects end or temporary funding streams dry up. The following are some approaches states have taken to promote the long-term sustainability, and expansion, of Two-Gen programs:

- **Seek Statutory Authority.** Establishing statutory authority for the Two-Gen approach provides state agencies with a higher degree of security in the long-term viability of their efforts and provides a level of assurance that their efforts will survive leadership and staffing changes. This fosters stakeholders' ability to focus more on aligning and coordinating services

than on continually reinforcing the value proposition of the Two-Gen approach to lawmakers.

- **Pursue Legislative Declarations.** In a state where the legislature is less willing to provide a binding mandate for the state to apply the Two-Gen approach, legislative declarations may create non-binding, yet still persuasive, mechanisms of similar effect. For example, a legislative declaration in Colorado's law changing its child care subsidy policy reframed the focus of the program as Two-Gen by emphasizing increasing children's outcomes through access to high-quality early education, in addition to the more traditional framing of child care as a support to foster the parent's employment outcomes. Although a declaration doesn't have binding force of law, the precedent for what the legislature cares about can serve as a reminder to policymakers about the purpose of the program, even in subsequent sessions.

- **Develop Long-Range Plans.** Developing long-range plans that provide state-level goals and benchmarks can help maintain a focus on the effort over time. For example, the Utah Commission has set progressive five and ten-year benchmarks to guide agencies' development of the best Two-Gen practices for their state.

- **Leverage and Bolster Existing Resources.** Many federal and state programs are flexible enough to leverage for Two-Gen efforts. For example, Utah utilized its TANF program to develop the Next Generation Kids demonstration project. Colorado is drawing on the flexibility of the SNAP Employment & Training to increase the number of parents participating in the program. States are allowed to transfer up to thirty percent of their TANF funds directly to the state's Child Care Development Fund, which can help to more directly link parental employment and child development efforts. States can also appropriate

state funds to these programs as a signal to federal policymakers that these programs are vital to family well-being in the state.

- **Embed Sustainability Into Program Design.** During the planning phase, consider how training and culture change can foster the long-term sustainability of Two-Gen strategies. For example, pilot program administrators can train existing staff in case management techniques that can be replicated after the pilot period has ended.

- **Leverage the Success of Small-Scale Programs.** Small scale programs can be used to incentivize permanent, incremental changes at the local or state level. For example, the Two-Gen pilot in Meriden, Connecticut is using grant funds to create "navigator" positions that will work directly with pilot program families and connect with the local offices of state agencies to ensure that both generations of enrolled families are receiving services and engaged with programs that align with the family's goals. The goal is that local agencies will recognize the administrative and process benefits of the new position during the grant period and opt to continue funding the position.

- **Realistically Define Expectations.** Two-Gen research suggests that systems change happens over time, and on a continuum.[80] The early stages of program alignment on that continuum are likely to produce modest outcomes for families. As a result, advocates face the challenge of selling the value of the Two-Gen approach, while also managing expectations about when the programs therein will produce tangible results.

State-Level Management and Oversight

States adopting the Two-Gen approach need internal support and oversight to coordinate the state-level systems changes necessary to progress along the Two-Gen continuum. Dedicated staff positions and interagency work groups or commissions can provide momentum and guidance toward integration and more efficient delivery of human services within the Two-Gen framework. In either case, ownership of the day-to-day responsibilities should be firmly established to facilitate the ongoing coordination, planning, and implementation of the Two-Gen approach.

- **Dedicated Agency Staff.** One approach is by creating a dedicated Two-Gen staff position within an agency. Like the Two-Gen Manager in the Colorado Department

of Human Services, this approach facilitates informal networking among divisions within an agency, and can help to embed the Two-Gen lens in decision-making processes throughout the agency.

- **Interagency Commissions and Work Groups.** The Intergenerational Welfare Reform Commission in Utah utilizes a coalition of members who hold existing positions in state agencies to develop a comprehensive, high-level, Two-Gen plan for agency actors to follow. The Commission is staffed by the Department of Workforce Services, which provides the day-to-day administrative support needed to keep the initiative moving forward. Similarly, the Interagency Working Group in Connecticut is helping to ensure that the Two-Gen pilot program is designed and implemented to effectively meet the diverse needs of participants. The Connecticut Commission on Women, Children and Seniors provides the administrative support to the working group.

State-Level Planning and Implementation

The early stages of state-level Two-Gen planning and implementation often focus on determining how to focus the effort and develop processes to coordinate services for families.

Identifying/Defining Target Populations

The Two-Gen approach promotes programs that maximize outcomes (high-quality, integrated, intensive) for a specific subset of the population (low-income families). States may begin the Two-Gen implementation process by identifying the specific populations and/or communities to target with programs. For example:

- Utah identified Intergenerational Poverty cohorts to track at the state level and has designed policies specifically targeted at one or more of the cohorts.

- Connecticut is focusing on six communities. The communities have some flexibility to determine how they will target their efforts, as long as participants meet the eligibility threshold set by the state. For example, one pilot community is focusing on residents of a specific public housing apartment building. Other pilot projects may target non-working families who may not otherwise be eligible for certain existing statewide programs.

Fostering Full Engagement in Existing Programs and Services

States are applying a variety of tactics to ensure services are delivered to families for maximum impact. This can include taking the burden of coordination off of the families, and ensuring that families are accessing all the services for which they are eligible.

- **Case Management Coordination.** Recognizing that families may interact with multiple state agencies and departments, states are implementing processes to coordinate services for families behind the scenes. Formalized agreements to share client information is one approach to increase program efficiencies through the identification of common clients. These agreements may involve both inter and intra-agency memoranda of understanding (MOUs) to address the constraints of state and federal privacy laws. Informal coordinated case management is an alternative data-sharing method in situations where certain client information has not been collected, or cannot be shared, through formalized agreements. In this circumstance, case managers for each program should communicate directly with clients and other case managers to determine the needs of the family and coordinate enrollment in all appropriate services.

- **Utilizing Navigators.** "Navigators," like the ones being utilized in the Connecticut pilot communities, serve as liaisons between families and the partner organizations. They work with families to map out a success plan and then work with the partner agencies to identify the services and supports that are available to meet the family's unique circumstances.

> Formalized agreements to share client information is one approach to increase program efficiencies through the identification of common clients. These agreements may involve both inter and intra-agency memoranda of understanding (MOUs) to address the constraints of state and federal privacy laws.

- **Establishing No-Wrong-Door Portals.** Many states now employ a "no-wrong-door," or the similar "universal" application process for many available public assistance programs, such as PEAK in Connecticut and myCase in Utah. Over time, states should continue to include more programs, from across agencies, into these web-based platforms.

- **Targeting Outreach.** States can also utilize targeted marketing of under-utilized programs such as SNAP-Ed. In Utah, participants in Next Generation Kids demonstration program are offered SNAP-Ed as part of their "family plan." Leveraging known Two-Gen target populations can increase the likelihood that families will enroll in multiple programs simultaneously. Further, programs like SNAP-Ed are flexible enough to be delivered at locations where Two-Gen families are already engaged.

Addressing Policy Barriers

States should identify and address where existing policies can be improved to better align with the Two-Gen approach. For example:

- **Child Care:** Small policy changes to a state's child care subsidy program can improve access to quality programs. Broadening the scope of eligible activities to include job training and higher education increases the available opportunities for parents to acquire the skills and training needed to earn higher wages. Similarly, de-coupling eligibility from parents' work schedule to increase continuity of care recognizes the reality of sporadic or fluctuating work schedules faced by many low-income parents.

- **Recognizing the Role of Grandparents:** All three states have recognized that the adult generation of a family is often a grandparent, or "third generation," and not a parent. Nearly 21% of these families live below the federal poverty guideline.[81] States planning new Two-Gen initiatives should ensure that policies recognize the role of grandparents as caregivers by ensuring that programs consider the needs of older adults in the home—such as transportation, health care, and legal services. Further, states should continue to implement policies that eliminate barriers to accessing state and federal programs that serve both generations of the family.[82]

Maximizing Existing Resources

Two-Gen stakeholders should consider the needs of the target populations in light of the existing framework and programmatic assets and constraints. For example, some stakeholders reported challenges with reconciling differences between new Two-Gen grant requirements and the design of existing programs. Rather than having local providers develop new systems to fit the grant requirements, policymakers can maximize outcomes by integrating with existing systems to the extent possible. Further local-level practitioners may have variable degrees of background knowledge about Two-Gen and require additional assistance from state-level stakeholders. While state-level stakeholders are generally cognizant of these challenges, better lines of communication between practitioners, policymakers, and agency executives will facilitate a more complete understanding of the baseline circumstances in each community where the Two-Gen approach is being modeled.

Evaluation

All three focus states have incorporated some form of formative and outcomes-based evaluation into their Two-Gen approaches. This evaluative process has the potential to lead to important findings and insights into what is still a relatively new approach to addressing the needs of families. However, practical barriers often limit consistency and robustness of evaluations from location to location. For example, funding limitations and grant periods often constrain practitioners from methodically implementing a sound logic model that lends itself to measuring outcomes for both generations of a family consistently, and over the long-term.

Policymakers may consider a state-led evaluation process to increase consistency and allow practitioners to focus on implementation. For example, Connecticut recently changed the evaluation process for the state's Two-Gen pilot initiative by shifting much of the responsibility to the state level through a grant-funded, public-private partnership. This approach to outcome evaluation will lessen both the fiscal and administrative burden on the lead pilot site agencies. These agencies can now commit the funding originally dedicated to program evaluation directly to service provisions.

Conclusion

The Two-Generation approach has the potential to fundamentally transform state policies, systems, and programs to more effectively build family well-being. Colorado, Connecticut, and Utah are on the vanguard of state implementation of the Two-Gen approach, developing innovative solutions to the structural barriers and challenges that have traditionally kept services for children and adults in silos. In doing so, the three states are making significant contributions to the field's understanding of how to best translate support for the Two-Gen approach into tangible policy solutions.

Additional Resources

A growing body of Two-Gen resources are available to policymakers, advocates, and practitioners as they seek to apply the framework at the local, state, and federal level.

The **Annie E. Casey Foundation** provides resources to inform both practitioners and policymakers about the Two-Gen approach, including:

- The _Creating Opportunities for Families_ policy report details the three key components of a well-developed Two-Gen strategy—work supports for parents; access to high-quality early childhood education for their children; and parenting skills training with emotional well-being support.

- The _Kids Count Data Book_ for 2016 focuses on key trends in child well-being and family opportunity including the Two-Gen approach.

- The Foundation also provides a growing _Collection of Resources on Two-Generation Approaches_.

Ascend at the Aspen Institute has a developed a number of resources to elevate innovate Two-Gen solutions, including:

- The Ascend Outcomes Working Group's _Making Tomorrow Better Together_ report is a valuable resource that can help policymakers think through the intended outcomes for the two-generation programs they are supporting.

- The _Top Ten for 2Gen_ provides practical policy solutions to guide systems change at the federal, state, and local level.

- _The 2Gen Outcomes Bank_ collects and organizes the "outcomes, research, tools, and evidence base for two-generation approaches, strategies, and programs."

Endnotes

1 THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION, CREATING OPPORTUNITY FOR FAMILIES: A TWO-GENERATION APPROACH (Nov. 14, 2014), *available at* http://www.aecf.org/resources/creating-opportunity-for-families/.

2 ASCEND AT THE ASPEN INSTITUTE, MAKING TOMORROW BETTER TOGETHER: REPORT OF THE TWO-GENERATION OUTCOMES WORKING GROUP 6 (March 2016) [hereinafter *Ascend Report* 2015], available at http://ascend.aspeninstitute.org/resources/making-tomorrow-better-together.

3 *See id.* at 13.

4 *See id.* at 6.

5 S.B. 37, Gen. Sess. (Utah 2012).

6 Interviews conducted with staff from the state agencies comprising the Utah Intergenerational Welfare Reform Commission (Feb. 17–25, 2016) [hereinafter *Utah Interviews*] (responses from these interviews have been synthesized to facilitate the narrative format, and to the protect confidentiality of respondents).

7 UTAH DEPT. OF WORKFORCE SERVICES, INTERGENERATIONAL POVERTY IN UTAH 7 (2012) [hereinafter *2012 Annual Report*].

8 *See id.* at 12.

9 *See id.* at 12.

10 *See id.* at 15.

11 S.B. 53, Gen. Sess. (Utah 2013) (codified at UTAH CODE ANN. § 35A-9-301 *et seq.*).

12 *See* UTAH INTERGENERATIONAL WELFARE REFORM COMMISSION, UTAH'S FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT ON INTERGENERATIONAL POVERTY, WELFARE DEPENDENCY AND THE USE OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE 8-11 (2015) [hereinafter *2015 Annual Report*], *available at* https://jobs.utah.gov/edo/intergenerational/igpr.html (last visited Apr. 29, 2016).

13 *See id.* at 15 (Public assistance includes any of the following means-tested programs: direct financial assistance, the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), child care subsidies, and Medicaid.).

14 INTERGENERATIONAL WELFARE REFORM COMMISSION, UTAH'S PLAN FOR A STRONGER FUTURE: FIVE- AND TEN-YEAR PLAN TO ADDRESS INTERGENERATIONAL POVERTY (March 31, 2015) [hereinafter *Utah Plan*].

15 *See 2015 Annual Report, supra* note 12, at 17.

16 *See Utah Interviews, supra* note 6.

17 *See id.* (Note that social security numbers are used for agencies that do not prescribe to the uniform personal identification number (PID) system.).

18 *See id.* (Agencies include: Dept. of Health; Dept. of Corrections; Dept. of Human Services, Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health; Dept. of Human Services, Division of Juvenile Justice Services; and the Utah Juvenile Courts system.).

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