System Governance

Authentic Inclusion of Resident Voice in Decision Making
of The Early Childhood System of Care (ECSOC)

System of Care Refinement

✅ Increase community-driven supports and services

✅ **Develop structures for parent and resident voice in system decision-making**

✅ Increase family voice, choice, engagement & involvement

✅ Use racial and ethnic equity lens in decision making

Racial and Ethnic Equity Impact Statement

Children's Services Council is committed to advancing racial equity so that ALL children grow up healthy, safe and strong.

Council Discussion Questions

- What's intriguing?

- What concerns do you have?

- What do you see as priority areas for this work?

- What do you see as potential pitfalls?

Children's Services Council
PALM BEACH COUNTY
Healthy. Safe. Strong.

1) Background & impetus for resident voice inclusion

2) What is authentic resident voice in decision making and why is it needed?

3) Where is CSC on this journey?

4) How do other organizations include resident voice?

Background and Impetus for Resident Voice Inclusion

Reducing Disparities in CSC Outcomes

- "Reducing disparities" was added to CSC's first organizational goal.
- Disaggregation of system level data was the next step.
- Among CSC participants, Black, Haitian and Hispanic children experience higher rates of poor birth outcomes, abuse and neglect, and lower rates of kindergarten readiness relative to White children.

Strategy Review and Allocation Analysis (SRAA)

Purpose of SRAA

- Results of the SRAA inform CSC's strategic planning for the upcoming five years.

Recommendations from June 2018

- Develop effective processes and structures for parents and community members to be actively involved in how our system of care functions
- Obtain ongoing and systematic community and client input and feedback

Early Childhood System of Care

Children's Services Council
PALM BEACH COUNTY
Healthy. Safe. Strong.

Public Awareness, Parenting & Outreach

Individual Child &
Family Services
• Healthy Beginnings

Quality Child Care
• Scholarships
• Quality Care
  ○ Strong Minds
  ○ Afterschool – QIS

Neighborhood-
Based Approach
• BRIDGES

Professional Development

Continuous Quality Improvement & Accountability Infrastructure

Data Systems

Authentic Resident Voice in Decision Making

What is Authentic Resident Voice ?

The "Authentic Resident Voice" A process in which community members are able to **genuinely** project their voices and lived experiences to system stakeholders and service providers within the context of their community and individual lives.

Racial Equity, Inclusion & Diversity

By power we mean a person's ability to influence or shape events or decisions regardless of their professional position in community.

Promoting Racial and Ethnic Equity

…we make a conscious and explicit effort to:

- "Model as an organization the changes… we want throughout our community and advocate for the elimination of institutional and structural racism…"

- "through active engagement of… families, listening to…. needs, understanding… strengths, and advocating for needed… systems change".

Why Include Resident Voice at CSC?

- To address blind spots in the ECSOC
  - We don't always know what we don't know
- To inform resource allocation decisions
- To improve CSC outcome achievement

Where is CSC
On This
Journey?

Where is CSC on this Journey?

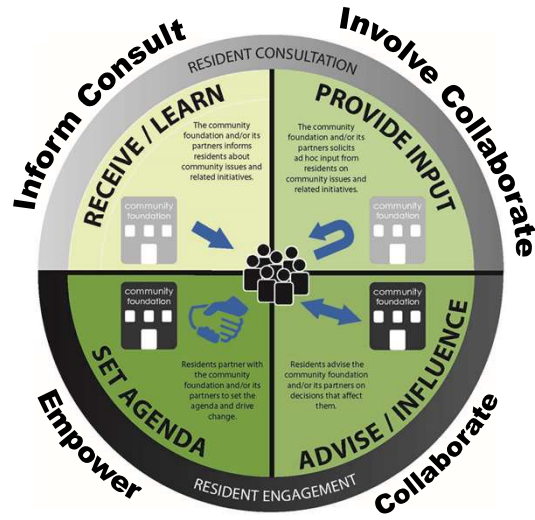- We're making some strides at the provider level to include resident voice

BUT

- The voices of residents are not being elevated into the CSC/ECSOC

Levels of Resident Engagement

BRIDGES Resident Response

Great Ideas Initiative

- Grassroots student-led grant making

- Youth empowered as the grantors

- Awarded (7) $5,000 mini grants

EC-LINC Parent Leadership

Race Equity and Parent Leadership Convening

- 1.5 days in Oakland, CA
- 9 EC-LINC communities
- 45 participants
- 20 parent leaders, including 8 fathers

EC-LINC

MANIFESTO
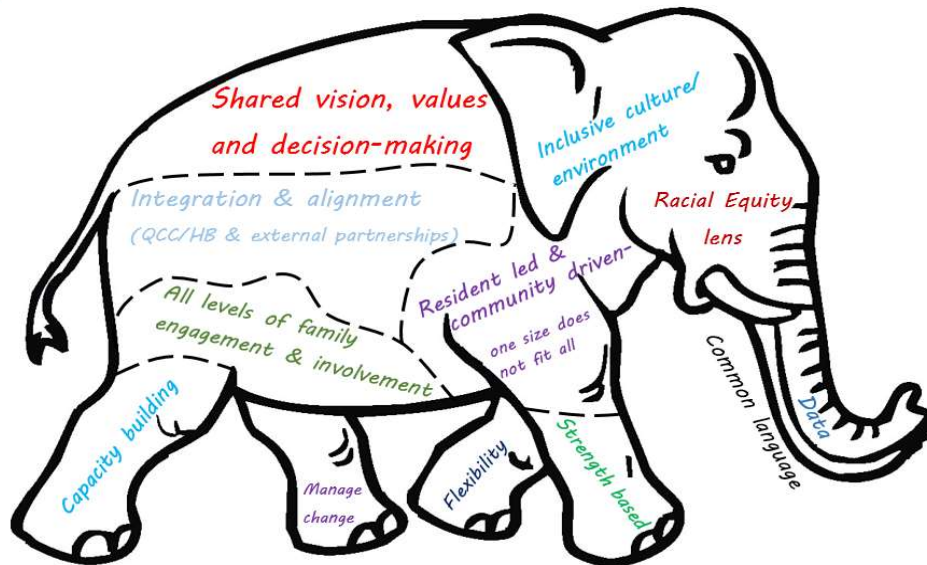for Race Equity & Parent Leadership in Early Childhood Systems

System Governance Planning and Refinement

- CSC System Governance team has been formed

- Developing a multi-phased plan

- Ongoing due diligence of stakeholders is critical

System Governance Planning and Refinement

How Will Resident Voice Be Heard?

- We will create multiple strategies to get resident voice
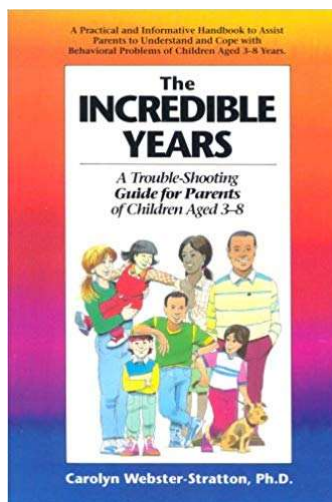
- One size doesn't fit all…..

FIND YOUR PATH

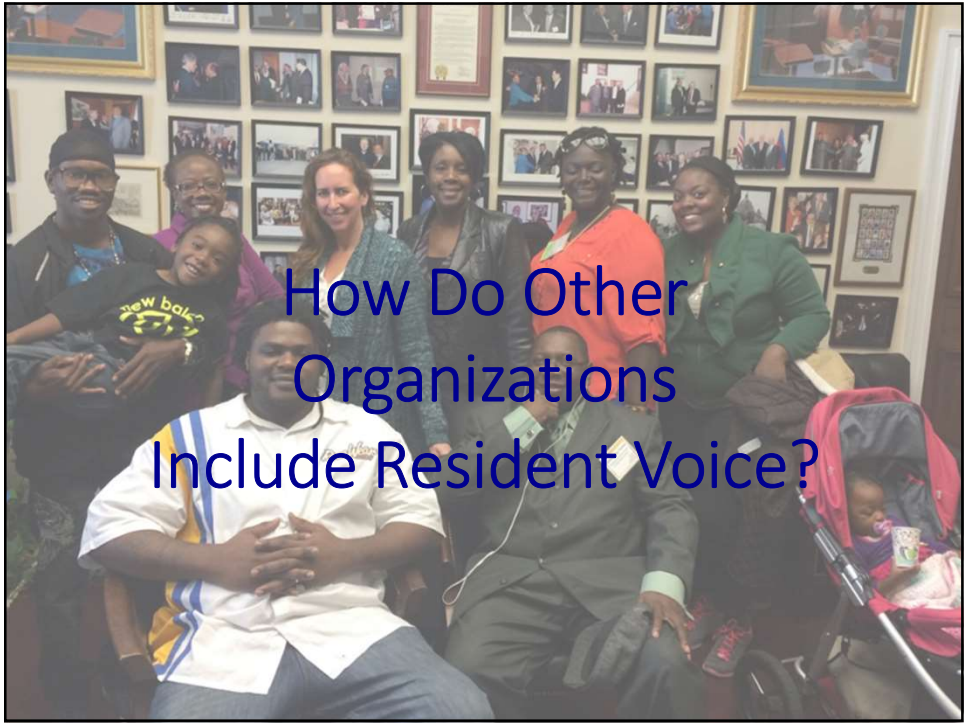## How Can Voice Be Heard?

Shared Power To Influence Decisions

If We Don't Include Residents…

If We Don't Include Residents…

How Do Other
Organizations
Include Resident Voice?
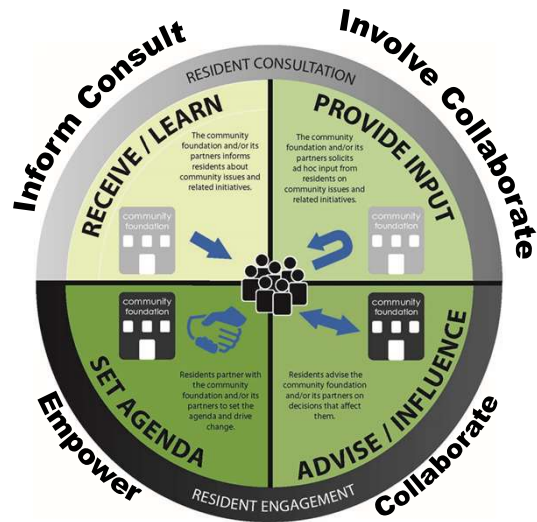
What Are Other Organizations Doing?

Where Are They On The Spectrum?

Questions for CSC

Questions to Guide Discussion

- What's intriguing?

- What concerns do you have?

- What do you see as priority areas for this work?

- What do you see as potential pitfalls?

Why Engage the Public?

Cities and counties throughout California are applying a variety of public engagement strategies and approaches to address issues ranging from land use and budgeting to climate change and public safety. They are discovering a number of benefits that can result from the successful engagement of their residents in local decision making. These include the following potential outcomes.

- **Better identification of the public's values, ideas and recommendations**
  Elections help identify voter preferences, and communication with individual constituents provide additional information to local officials about resident views on various topics. However gaps often remain in understanding the public's views and preferences on proposed public agency actions and decisions. This can especially be the case for residents or populations that tend to participate less frequently or when simple "pro" or con" views don't help solve the problem at hand. Good public engagement can provide more nuanced and collective views about an issue by a broader spectrum of residents.

- **More informed residents - about issues and about local agencies**
  Most residents do not regularly follow local policy matters carefully. While a relatively small number do, most community members are not familiar, for instance, with the ins and outs of a local agency budget and budget process, or knowledgeable about planning for a new general plan, open space use, or affordable housing. Good public engagement can present opportunities for residents to better understand an issue and its impacts and to see local agency challenges as their challenges as well.

- **Improved local agency decision-making and actions, with better impacts and outcomes**
  Members of the public have information about their community's history and needs. They also have a sense of the kind of place where they and their families want to live. They can add new voices and new ideas to enrich thinking and planning on topics that concern them. This kind of knowledge, integrated appropriately into local decision making, helps ensure that public decisions are optimal for the community and best fit current conditions and needs.

- **More community buy-in and support, with less contentiousness**
  Public engagement by residents and others can generate more support for the final decisions reached by city or county decision makers. Put simply, participation helps generate ownership. Involved residents who have helped to shape a proposed policy, project or program will better understand the issue itself and the reasons for the decisions that are made. Good communications about the public's involvement in a local decision can increase the support of the broader community as well.

- **More civil discussions and decision making**
  Earlier, informed and facilitated deliberation by residents will frequently offer a better chance for more civil and reasoned conversations and problem solving than public hearings and other less collaborative opportunities for public input.

- **Faster project implementation with less need to revisit again**
  Making public decisions is one thing; successfully implementing these decisions is often something else altogether. The buy-in discussed above, and the potential for broad agreement on a decision, are important contributors to faster implementation. For instance, a cross section of the community, city, or county may come together to work on a vision or plan that includes a collective sense of what downtown building height limits should be. If this is adopted by the local agency and guides planning and development over time, the issue will be less likely to re-occur repeatedly as an issue for the community and for local officials. In general, good public engagement reduces the need for unnecessary decision-making "do-over."

- **More trust - in each other and in local government**
  Whatever their differences, people who work together on common problems usually have more appreciation of the problem and of each other. Many forms of public engagement provide opportunity to get behind peoples' statements and understand the reasons for what they think and say. This helps enhance understanding and respect among the participants. It also inspires confidence that problems can be solved – which promotes more cooperation over time. Whether called social capital, community building, civic pride or good citizenship, such experiences help build stronger communities, cities and counties. Additionally, when a local agency promotes and is a part of these processes - and takes the ideas and recommendations of the public seriously - a greater trust and confidence in local government often results.

- **Higher rates of community participation and leadership development**
  Engaging the public in new ways offers additional opportunities for people to take part in the civic and political life of their community. This may include community members who have traditionally participated less than others. These are avenues for not only contributing to local decisions but for residents to gain knowledge, experience and confidence in the workings of their local government. These are future neighborhood volunteers, civic and community leaders, commissioners, and elected officials. In whatever role they choose, these are individuals who will be more prepared and more qualified as informed residents, involved citizens and future leaders.

Resident Engagement Guidebook

Exploring Readiness and Options

THE ASPEN INSTITUTE

Community
Strategies Group

CFLEADS
**Community Foundations
Leading Change**

October 2014

About the Aspen Institute Community Strategies Group

The Aspen Institute Community Strategies Group (CSG) designs, leads and delivers work focused on strengthening community philanthropy, regional vitality, and family economic success across the United States. Within these focus areas, CSG designs and manages action-inducing peer-learning among organizations, leaders and policymakers. It convenes thinkers and doers to swap strategies and find common ground. It manages initiatives that catalyze innovation and progress. It builds networks to spread good ideas and useful lessons. And, it produces tools, analysis, and stories that help communities make better decisions. Overall, CSG strives to help leaders at the community level – and the stakeholders who support them – sharpen their focus and strategy in the midst of action.

Aspen CSG served as lead facilitator of the CFLeads 2013-2014 Resident Engagement Community Leadership Network (CLN), after serving as the primary facilitator in three prior CLNs. In addition, CSG partnered with CFLeads for its 2007-2008 National Task Force on Community Leadership and in developing the *Framework for Community Leadership by a Community Foundation.*

About CFLeads

CFLeads is the hub and go-to resource for community foundations seeking to make more impact in their communities through community leadership. As a national network, CFLeads supports and connects hundreds of community foundations across the country as they take on new roles, push their practices, and learn from the experiences of their peers.

Mission
*CFLeads helps community foundations advance their
community leadership practice to build thriving communities.*

Vision
*Community foundations take on challenging issues, engage residents,
pursue cross-sector solutions to community problems, and marshal the needed resources
to improve their communities and provide opportunity for all.*

Contents

Acknowledgements

Authors

Kristin Feierabend
Program Associate
The Aspen Institute Community Strategies Group

Caroline Merenda
Program Director
CFLeads

Introduction

Community foundations are unique institutions in the civic landscape; they are local, independent, permanent, and generally have broad community betterment missions. As such, they have a unique ability to further the public good. As community foundations have become more involved with their communities, expanding their role beyond grantmaking, resident engagement has emerged as a practice that is helping them make more sustained impact. Urged in 2005 by Monitor Institute's *On the Brink of New Promise: The Future of U.S. Community Foundations* to "shift priorities from a focus on the institution to the community" and in 2013 by the CFLeads Cultivating Community Engagement Panel's *Beyond the Brink: Engaging Residents. A New Call to Action for Community Foundations,* to directly engage residents as partners in change so that "all residents have a chance to participate in important decisions and take action to improve their communities," some community foundations have committed to work more closely with residents, particularly those residents that are most vulnerable and most affected by the programs and policies many foundations seek to influence.

This *Guidebook* helps community foundations and other community partners understand what it takes to deepen their resident engagement practice. It builds on the *Framework for Community Leadership by a Community Foundation,* which was created by CFLeads, the Council on Foundations' Community Foundations Leadership Team, and the Aspen Institute Community Strategies Group, and outlines the key building blocks community foundations need to have in place to be effective community leaders.

The *Guidebook* is part of a suite of products created by CFLeads to help community foundations better understand the concept, practice and impact of resident engagement. They are the result of two years of study and exploration, beginning with the 34-member Cultivating Community Engagement Panel, which concluded that resident engagement is largely missing from community foundation practices and urged foundations to do more. The Panel's work was followed by a Resident Engagement Community Leadership Network (CLN), which brought together eight community foundation teams over the course of a year to deepen their resident engagement practices. In addition to this *Guidebook, Powerful Partners: Lessons from Community Foundations about Resident Engagement* reports on the findings of the CLN, and *Community Foundations and Resident Engagement: Stories from the Field* illustrates the work through real-life examples.

The specific objective of this *Guidebook* is to help community foundations determine their readiness to engage residents more deeply.

With this *Guidebook,* users can:

1. Understand what resident engagement is, why it is important, and explore what it looks like in action.

2. Learn what critical skills and capacities are needed to more deeply engage residents from any starting point.

3. Determine specific steps that must be taken in order to engage residents more deeply in addressing issues that affect them.

This *Guidebook* was created as an early tool for community foundations interested in more deeply engaging residents. As the field learns more and more community foundations adopt this community leadership practice, we anticipate this *Guidebook* may change and that other tools will emerge. Users of this *Guidebook* are encouraged to provide feedback, suggestions and other tools to CFLeads at info@cfleads.org.

Why a *Guidebook*?

As community foundations have adopted new tools and approaches to strengthening their communities, resident engagement has emerged as a key practice. This *Guidebook* is designed to assist community foundations as they explore the range of efforts and activities that encompass resident engagement. It also describes why such efforts are critical to community change and deeper, long-lasting community impact.

The activities found in this *Guidebook* can assist community foundations in structuring productive dialogue around what it means to engage residents and help gauge the foundation's willingness and capacity to do more. From there, the community foundation can take its next best step to engage residents more deeply in addressing local challenges. This *Guidebook* is designed to move community foundations from *understanding* resident engagement to actually taking *action* in their community.

What this *Guidebook* is not designed to do is facilitate dialogue around some of the more complex issues that come with resident engagement, such as race, class, power and control. However, given that one objective of resident engagement is to connect with individuals or groups who have been historically marginalized or are currently disconnected from civic life, it is likely that these issues will come up. Because many resources already exist, we did not want to duplicate efforts. We instead strongly encourage you to look to those resources when (or even before) those issues come up. To help, we have included sources for additional information in "Readings and Resources" on page 9.

Who should use the *Guidebook*?

The *Guidebook* is designed for community foundations interested in engaging residents more deeply in addressing pressing community challenges. The *Guidebook* is geared primarily toward community foundation staff and board members, however the resources and tools found in this *Guidebook* are not exclusive to this audience. Private foundations, community-based organizations and local government may also find this *Guidebook* useful and are encouraged to apply it in their own work.

Community foundations that have embraced the community leadership practice of resident engagement have seen substantial and sustained impact.

How the *Guidebook* is Organized

The *Guidebook* is divided into three parts, each with activities and tools to help staff and board members better understand what resident engagement means and how to take that understanding and move it toward action.

Part 1: *Readings and Resources* introduces the concept of resident engagement through a series of short readings, reports and resources. A structured activity uses those readings to introduce the concept of resident engagement to foundation staff and board members and initiate a deeper conversation about what it can mean in a community foundation context.

Part 2: *The Resident Engagement Spectrum* offers a way to think about the multiple levels at which a community foundation and/or its partners can consult and engage residents in addressing local issues. The activities in Part 2 are designed to help staff and board members begin to develop a shared understanding of what resident engagement means within the context of their own foundation and to foster focused, intentional dialogue about potential risks and benefits that come with engaging residents more deeply in addressing local challenges.

Part 3: *From Understanding to Action* is a set of tools designed to take what staff and board members have learned about resident engagement in a community foundation context and move them toward action. Activities in Part 3 include:

- *A Status Assessment Tool,* which uses the *Framework for Community Leadership by a Community Foundation* to help determine the foundation's resident engagement strengths at a particular point in time.

- *Designing for Impact Tool,* which can help the foundation clearly articulate an issue or area of work where it wants to engage residents more deeply and describe what the engagement process will look like.

- *Action Planner Templates,* which can help the foundation define the specific steps it must take to engage residents more deeply in addressing community issues or strengthen specific resident engagement building blocks.

- *Resident Engagement Check-Up,* which can help the foundation evaluate its resident engagement efforts and consider how to strengthen its approach in the future.

How to Use the *Guidebook*

The *Resident Engagement Guidebook* is designed to be a structured exploration that a community foundation can undertake with staff and board members. Almost all of the tools can be pulled out and used individually, but for the best results, we encourage you to design a thorough exploration process.

Designing Your Resident Engagement Exploration:

1. Lay the foundation for the exploration process.
First, design the process in which you will explore resident engagement. Determine:

- *Who will lead?* Determine two or three people within the foundation who will take leadership in making this examination and exploration happen. In order to develop shared ownership of the process, these individuals should ideally come from different areas or departments of the foundation. If needed or desired, secure outside facilitation assistance to make sure the process is inclusive, targeted and engaging.

- *Who will participate?* Work with a specific group to deepen your understanding of and plans for resident engagement. For example, you might start with a committee of the board, with a special ad hoc board and staff group, or with the entire staff or board at a retreat. During the exploration process, you might break into sub-groups (e.g., by program, administrative, and finance staff) so that staff have an opportunity to explore resident engagement in the context of their particular job responsibilities.

- *When?* It's best to set a particular time period during which you will both conduct this exploration of resident engagement and make a determination about your next steps. Depending on the context and what you connect it to (see next point), that time period might be a few weeks to a year.

- *Connected to what other action?* This examination will have more impact if it is connected to making some decisions about or producing some results for the foundation – for example, as a preface to annual goal-setting, a board direction-setting retreat, significant strategic planning process, or as a new strategy to advance current community leadership work.

2. Use the activities and resources throughout the *Guidebook* **to structure your exploration.**
Each section of the *Guidebook* includes resources and activities to help structure conversations and guide your foundation along its resident engagement path. Use the activities as they are, or take them and make them your own.

You may want to tailor discussion questions to better meet your needs based on your community foundation's starting point and your reason for having the discussion. Ideas for discussion questions are included with activities.

3. Gather and have at it!
Assemble your group or team according to your plan to explore resident engagement. This might be a one-time event or a series of sessions. Whichever it is, make sure you have enough time to have a rich exchange of ideas, reflections and implications for foundation action.

• PART 1 •
What is Resident Engagement and Why is it Important?

The term "resident engagement" can mean different things to different people:

- "Resident engagement means that residents feel that they have a voice… that they're part of the decision-making for what their community should look like."

- "Working with the community… with people who live in the community, in their space, where they are, around the issues that they care about. Not the issues we might expect necessarily."

- "Resident engagement means creating the space – through small grants or literally physical space, food, child care – for low-income residents, and, in particular, people of color, to identify solutions they feel will most benefit them. And being patient in that development."

- "Resident engagement is when we not only are engaging with them, but they are involved in the design, implementation, and continuation of the project *post-grant period*."

- "I like the cliché, 'Do nothing about me without me.' You're more likely to develop something helpful and that people interact with if you involve the folks that you're trying to 'help.'"

- "It fundamentally comes down to a belief that a community can solve its own problems, and *only* the community can solve its own problems."

The comments above were made by community foundation staff and board members who were asked to define resident engagement in their own words. As you can see from their responses, resident engagement can be interpreted in a variety of ways. Those who are new to resident engagement may

approach it cautiously—recognizing its importance but unsure of what exactly it entails—while those who have practiced it for some time may use phrases they have come to understand from experience to explain what it is and why it is important. Even within a single foundation, staff, board members and others may be at different places in their understanding of resident engagement.

Initiating a dialogue around what it means to engage residents in addressing community issues is an essential first step in deepening your resident engagement practice. Doing so can uncover hidden assumptions, produce new insights and create shared understanding among foundation staff and board members.

Part 1 provides a starting point for this dialogue. Here, we provide a definition of resident engagement and share thoughts on why it's important. Then, we offer a resource list and activity to help structure and guide your own foundation's resident engagement conversations.

Defining Resident Engagement

The CFLeads Resident Engagement Community Leadership Network and the Cultivating Community Engagement Panel spent a significant amount of time considering what resident engagement means in a community foundation context. For the purposes of this *Guidebook*, we have pieced together language and themes from those discussions to offer the following definition of resident engagement:

Resident engagement is an approach that centers on helping community members identify the changes they want to see and then supporting them in pursuing their goals. The community foundation and/or its partners ensure that community change is accomplished by working with residents, rather than doing things for them or to them.

Why is Resident Engagement Important?

The Cultivating Community Engagement Panel found that resident engagement is a critical – but often missing – piece of community leadership. So why, exactly, is resident engagement so important?

Solutions that Make Sense When Addressing Complex, Multi-Sector Challenges

While decisions made by traditional community leaders can have significant community impact, there is potential for those decisions to have an even greater impact when residents are involved. "The challenges facing our communities are too complex and too entrenched to be addressed by any one sector, or one organization," stated one Resident Engagement Community Leadership Network participant. No one sector can do it alone. *For example, a community foundation that decides to help build a new playground to encourage physical activity among children, may find that the playground goes unused. When the foundation finally asks neighborhood families why they aren't using the playground, parents explain that they don't feel comfortable letting their kids play outside unsupervised. What they really would prefer is an after-school program where kids can have supervised play.* If the foundation had engaged residents up-front in this scenario, they might have had a very different outcome – and a more worthwhile investment. When residents are involved in identifying and developing solutions to challenges that affect them, they create solutions that make sense. After all, who is more familiar with the issues affecting them than the residents themselves?

Long-Term, Sustained Community Impact

Community foundations often grapple with the tough question of how to sustain community initiatives in the long-term. They can't afford to fund projects for years on end, yet the issues being addressed may require long-term investment. When community foundations engage residents in issues that affect them, residents not only build relationships and generate solutions that make sense, but they develop the skills and capacity to take on issues on their own in the future. *For example, residents that come together to develop a farmers market may initially rely on community foundation and/or partner support, perhaps in the form of grants, staffing, business development training, or leadership development. Over time, residents build relationships, leadership skills, and a sense of ownership over the project – so much so that they find ways to support the market on their own (volunteers, vendor fees,* *crowdfunding, donations, special market currency, etc.) and no longer rely on the foundation.* This not only sustains the effort over time, but it may garner greater support for the community foundation from donors. Donors may be more energized and willing to step in and offer the community foundation support when they see community members investing time and effort to address an issue.

Relationships and Trust

When residents are given the opportunity to come together to identify and create solutions to common challenges – *to address bullying in their school system, for example* – new relationships are built. In working together, residents begin to realize that they have shared values and interests related to other issues and opportunities, and that they can work collectively to pursue them. And because the challenges facing communities are so complex, no one sector can do it alone. Everyone – including residents – must contribute in order for lasting results to be possible.

In addition, as the community foundation increasingly facilitates and supports resident-driven efforts, it builds relationships with residents and becomes a trusted partner in the community. Once relationships are established, they can be leveraged to address other issues in the future. *For example, while the parent coalition might initially come together to address bullying in schools, it could later go on to advocate for more vocational training opportunities.* It is these relationships based on trust and mutual respect that make community change possible. As one Resident Engagement Community Leadership Network advisor stated, "Change moves at the speed of trust."

The Role of the Community Foundation in Resident Engagement

In this *Guidebook*, we often refer to community foundations "engaging residents more deeply" or "strengthening their resident engagement practice." While these words suggest that the main role community foundations play in resident engagement is working directly with residents, we have found that community foundations actually play a number of different roles in resident engagement – often concurrently – and that they may never engage directly with residents. Instead, they may work closely with a community partner whose "on-the-ground" work is more connected to local residents or the issue at hand. In that case, the foundation may not work directly with residents but support the efforts of organizations that do.

Readings and Resources

Learn More and Be Inspired!

Before beginning the activities in this *Guidebook*, you and your team can gain a lot of inspiration from a number of sources!

1

Stories from the Field includes two articles that illustrate resident engagement in action and the incredible power of this work:

"Our Hearts Are In This"
Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo

"This Was Really An Eye-Opener"
Humboldt Area Foundation

http://www.cfleads.org

2

A report by the CFLeads Cultivating Community Engagement Panel that calls for more resident engagement by community foundations and makes recommendations for important changes in community foundation practice:

Beyond the Brink: Engaging Residents.
A New Call to Action for Community Foundations
CFLeads Cultivating Community Engagement Panel.
July 2013.
http://www.cfleads.org/community-engagement/
call-to-action.php

Beyond the Brink may also be helpful if you would like to engage in a discussion about how other terms will be defined during this process. Just as the term "resident engagement" can mean different things to different people, so can the term "resident." Some define residents as those with "lived experience" who add perspective to the work community foundations do with nonprofits, government, business, and other entities and sectors in the community. Others would prefer to use terms such as "resident agency" and/or "inclusiveness." For more information, see the box on page 8 ("Guiding Principles for Resident Engagement") of *Beyond the Brink*.

3

A webinar that highlights the findings of the Cultivating Community Engagement Panel and provides more examples of resident engagement practice by community foundations:

Resident Engagement: The Next Step in Community
Leadership (Webinar)
CFLeads. July 2013.
http://www.cfleads.org/community-engagement/
webinar-2013-07-29.php

4

Additional stories about community foundations and the steps they took to work more closely with residents:

Community Foundations and Resident Engagement:
Stories from the Field.
CFLeads. October 2014.
http://www.cfleads.org

5

In advance of participating in the activities found in Part 2 of this *Guidebook*, users are encouraged to read and review:

Powerful Partners: Lessons from Community Foundations
about Resident Engagement
CFLeads. October 2014.
http://www.cfleads.org

In this document, resident engagement lessons are shared by eight community foundations that participated in the 2013-14 Resident Engagement Community Leadership Network hosted by CFLeads.

6

Framework for Community Leadership by a Community Foundation

CFLeads, the Council on Foundations' Community Foundations Leadership Team, and the Aspen Institute Community Strategies Group
Updated July 2013.

The *Framework* serves as a foundational document on community leadership for the community foundation field by providing the building blocks of effective community leadership practice. See pages 18 and 19 of this *Guidebook* for building blocks that make up the "Practices for Success" and describe the skills and capacities needed to consult with and engage residents.
http://www.cfleads.org/community-engagement/framework.php

7

Philanthropy and Resident Engagement: The Promise of Democracy

National Civic Review Special Edition. Fall 2013.

This special issue of the National Civic Review examines the vital role philanthropy can play in cultivating strong, connected communities where residents are actively engaged in shaping their community's future. Choose from more than 10 articles on resident engagement and philanthropy to deepen your resident engagement exploration.
http://www.cfleads.org/community-engagement/national-civic-review.php

8

On the Brink of New Promise: The Future of U.S. Community Foundations

Lucy Bernholz, Katherine Fulton and Gabriel Kasper. Blueprint Research & Design, Inc. and Monitor Company Group, LLP. 2005.

This report examines the changing environment for community philanthropy and its implications for community foundations. It explains the "shifting fundamentals" within the community foundation field – and how that shift points toward taking on more – and more effective – community leadership.
http://monitorinstitute.com/downloads/what-we-think/new-promise/On_the_Brink_of_New_Promise.pdf

9

Additional sources of information to facilitate dialogue around some of the more complex issues that come with resident engagement, such as race, class, power and control, as referenced on page 3:

Joint Affinity Groups (JAG)

Founded in 1993, JAG is a network of collaborating affinity groups engaging over 20,000 professionals, who are committed to equity and social justice.
http://jointaffinitygroups.org/resources/publications-research

The following JAG members also have resources available online:

Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy (AAPIP)
http://aapip.org/what-we-do/publications

Association of Black Foundation Executives (ABFE)
www.abfe.orf/knowledge-center

Emerging Practitioners in Philanthropy (EPIP)
http://www.epip.org/

Funders for LGBTQ Issues
http://www.lgbtfunders.org/resources/publications.cfm

Hispanics in Philanthropy (HIP)
https://www.hiponline.org/resources/publications-and-recordings/terms/list

Native Americans in Philanthropy (NAP)
http://www.nativephilanthropy.org/articles/

Women's Funding Network (WFN)
http://www.womensfundingnetwork.org/tools-for-change/reports-resources/

Please also see the following resources:

Colorado Funders for Inclusiveness and Equity
http://www.coloradoinclusivefunders.org/resources.html

D5 Coalition
http://d5.sen-associates.com/tools/

Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity (PRE)
http://www.racialequity.org/resources.html

Racial Equity Resource Guide of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation
http://www.racialequityresourceguide.org/

• ACTIVITY 1A •
Reading into Resident Engagement:
What it Means to Us

Purpose:

This activity is designed to introduce foundation staff and board members to resident engagement through relevant readings and generate conversation around what it means for community foundations to engage residents more deeply in addressing local issues. *This activity can be done on its own or immediately preceding Activity 2A: Introducing the Resident Engagement Spectrum.*

Objectives:

After completing this activity, participants will have a clearer understanding of what resident engagement is, why it is important and what opportunities and challenges come with it.

Materials Needed:
- Selected readings from the resource list in Part 1 (*ask participants to bring copies with them or have printed copies available*)
  - Recommended: "Our Hearts are in This," "That was Really an Eye-Opener," and *Beyond the Brink: Engaging Residents. A New Call to Action for Community Foundations*
- Discussion questions (*on-screen or printed*)
- Flip chart
- Markers
- Post-its

Preparation for Activity 1A

- Use a selection of readings from the resource list in Part 1 to help your group begin its resident engagement exploration.

- Organize a meeting where you can engage in a preliminary conversation about resident engagement. *Remember that foundation staff, board members, and others may be at different places in their understanding of resident engagement. Early on, consider conducting individualized sessions for different groups (e.g., donor services staff; program staff; board members; etc.) so that they understand how resident engagement applies in their own context. Later, bring the groups together for a broader conversation about resident engagement within the foundation.*

- Share the readings and a few discussion questions with participants in advance of the meeting.

- At the meeting, structure the conversation around a series of discussion questions. Constructing and asking good questions is critical to having a good discussion—both about resident engagement in general and about where your foundation wants to go with it.

Activity 1A: Reading into Resident Engagement

Here is a menu of questions you might consider for your discussion:

- **What surprised you** in the readings, if anything?

- **What "stuck"** from the reading – either because it resonated with you or because it seemed "off-the-mark"?

- What are the top two ways that resident engagement – as it is described in the readings – **feels *different from* or *similar to*** what our foundation is doing today?

- What do you see as potential **benefits** of engaging residents more deeply in the foundation's work?

- What **concerns** do you have about engaging residents more deeply in the foundation's work?

- What are the one or two things that most **excite** you about potentially strengthening our foundation's resident engagement practice?

Next Steps
- Continue the conversation with *Introducing the Resident Engagement Spectrum* (Activity 2A) and *Taking a Deep-Dive into Resident Engagement* (Activities 2B, 2C, and 2D).

• PART 2 •
The Resident Engagement Spectrum

The Resident Engagement Spectrum is a tool for understanding the various levels at which a foundation and/or its partners consult or engage local residents in designing, implementing and evaluating solutions to pressing community challenges.

The Resident Engagement Spectrum is presented as a diagram that illustrates two categories of activities undertaken by community foundations that involve residents: Resident **Consultation** and Resident **Engagement**.

Resident Consultation refers to practices in which residents receive information from – or participate in programs of – the foundation and/or its partners with little or limited input into design, implementation and evaluation.

- At the most basic level, residents receive or learn information about community issues and foundation initiatives from the community foundation and/or its partners.
- In some cases, the community foundation and/or its partners might ask residents to provide input on community issues or initiatives through surveys, focus groups or meetings.

Resident Engagement refers to practices in which residents work closely with the community foundation and/or its partners to design, implement and evaluate solutions to pressing community issues.

- Residents might advise or influence the community foundation and/or its partners on decisions affecting the community by serving on advisory groups or engaging in listening campaigns (voicing concerns and designing solutions).
- At the highest-touch level, residents actually work with the community foundation and/or its partners to set the agenda and drive change.

How the Resident Engagement Spectrum is organized

- The Resident Engagement Spectrum (page 13) defines the four types of resident consultation and engagement and lays them out in a diagram. The Resident Engagement Spectrum diagram can be helpful in introductory conversations about resident engagement.
- Four supplementary handouts (pages 14-17) provide a more in-depth description of each type of resident consultation or engagement. The handout for each of the four types includes:
  - Consultation or engagement tactics
  - Examples
  - Benefits
  - Challenges
- A separate document (pages 18 and 19) lists the Practices for Success – building blocks from the *Framework for Community Leadership by a Community Foundation* – needed for each approach.
- Page 20 provides additional resident consultation and engagement scenarios that can be used in Part 2 activities.

Thinking and Working with the Resident Engagement Spectrum

The Resident Engagement Spectrum and supplementary handouts are intended to help your community foundation develop a shared understanding of what resident engagement is, to gauge where you currently land on the spectrum, and to determine the next best step to take to advance your resident engagement practice. Keep in mind:

- Residents may play different roles in community foundation efforts depending on the activity, timeline and goal.
- The community foundation may play different roles depending on the activity, timeline and goal.
- The community foundation may never directly work with residents but instead support partners already engaging residents.

- You can learn a lot from stories about how to engage with residents more deeply, but it's up to you to determine what strategies make sense in your geographic, cultural, and organizational context.
- Your exploration of resident engagement may surface tough questions on issues such as power, race, class, culture and more. In order to successfully and substantially strengthen your resident engagement practice, we suggest you take advantage of resources on page 9 (or others you are familiar with) to engage your foundation in a deeper dialogue around these issues.

- Remember that resident engagement is just one piece of community leadership. In order to reflect on other elements of community leadership, refer to the complete *Framework for Community Leadership by a Community Foundation.*

Resident Engagement Spectrum
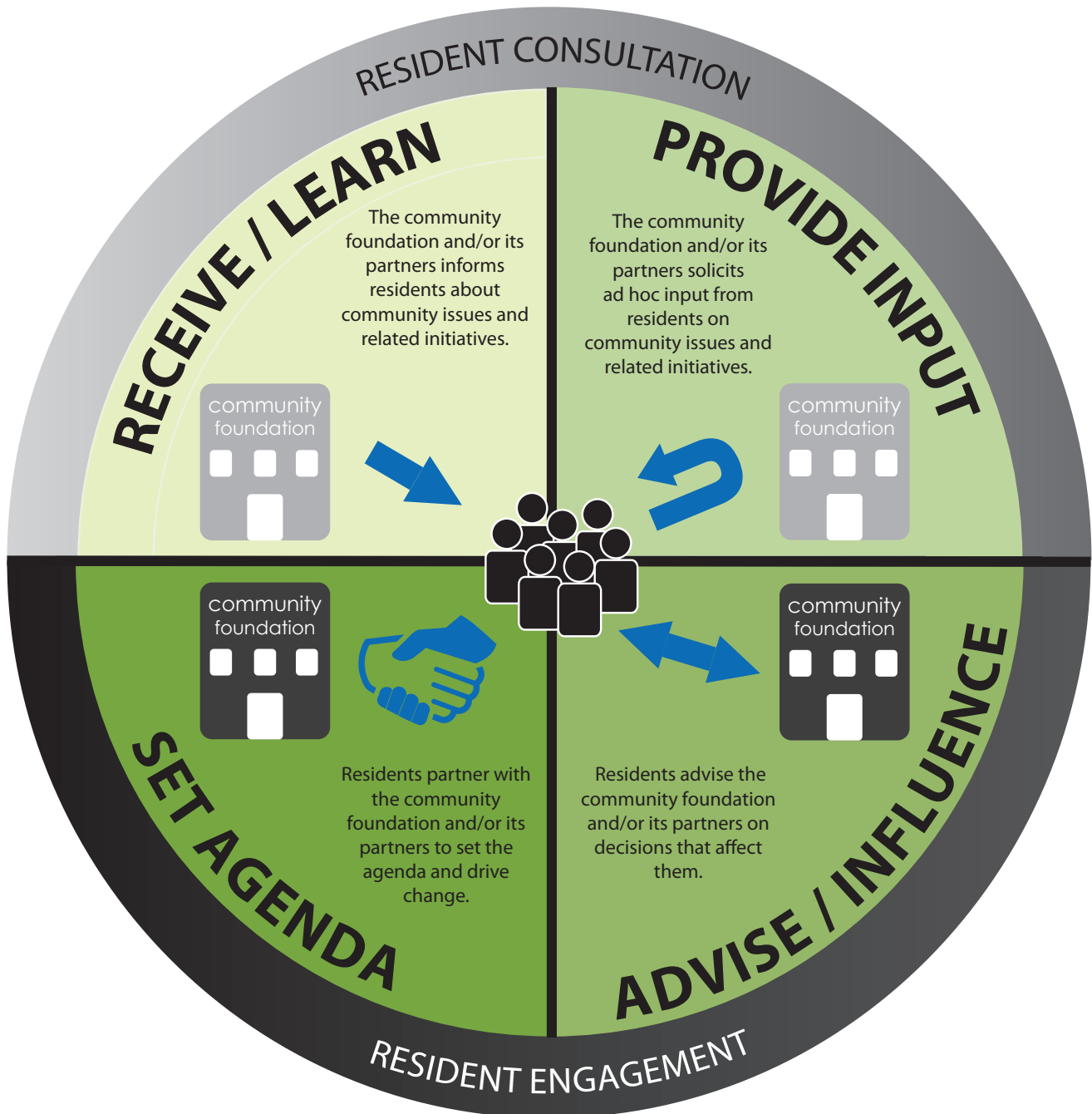
RESIDENT CONSULTATION

RECEIVE / LEARN

The community foundation and/or its partners informs residents about community issues and related initiatives.

community foundation

PROVIDE INPUT

The community foundation and/or its partners solicits ad hoc input from residents on community issues and related initiatives.

community foundation

community foundation

Residents partner with the community foundation and/or its partners to set the agenda and drive change.

SET AGENDA

community foundation

Residents advise the community foundation and/or its partners on decisions that affect them.

ADVISE / INFLUENCE

RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT

Receive / Learn

Resident Role

The community foundation and/or its partners inform residents about community issues and related initiatives.

Consultation Tactics

Residents receive information from the community foundation and/or its partners through community events, media, materials, and other sources. The intent is to help residents understand community issues and opportunities so that they can make informed, thoughtful decisions in both their personal and civic lives. For example, the foundation and/or its partners invite residents to hear the results of a local environmental study or share data from a community indicators project.

Example

A community foundation conducts or funds research and finds that teen smoking is on the rise in the community. In response, the community foundation funds a public awareness campaign to discourage smoking. Anti-smoking presentations are given at local meetings, and public service announcements targeted at youth are created and delivered by local media.

Benefits

By using this approach, the community foundation and/or its partners have the opportunity to reach many residents and build visibility within the community. The community foundation may come to be seen as a credible source of information in the community through this approach.

Challenges

As the one-way arrow on the Resident Engagement Spectrum indicates, this is an activity in which residents receive information or services from the community foundation and/or its partners but are not actively engaged by them. Residents may or may not see the information or services that are provided as relevant to them. While the community foundation and/or its partners may provide residents with information or initiatives deemed valuable or interesting, this activity is not designed to build or strengthen relationships.

Resident Consultation
Provide Input

Resident Role

The community foundation and/or its partners solicit ad hoc input from residents on community issues and related initiatives.

Consultation Tactics

Residents are asked to share input on community foundation and/or partner activities through surveys, foundation-led and/or foundation-convened community meetings or events, and focus groups.

Example

A community foundation has decided that it wants to conduct a public awareness campaign to discourage teen smoking. Before doing so, the community foundation hosts a number of focus groups with local teens to determine what type of awareness campaign teens think would be most effective. The foundation collects ideas from the teens and begins running the awareness campaign. The campaign messages generate local conversations about the issue and teens who participated in the focus groups begin engaging in conversations with their friends about the issue of smoking.

Benefits

By using this approach, the community foundation can be introduced to new perspectives and different ideas that help target the community foundation's actions and produce better results. Residents have an opportunity to share their ideas and opinions, and solutions identified will likely be more appropriate than had residents not been consulted. If the consulted residents see their perspective reflected in the community foundation's and/or partner's action, their opinion of and respect for the community foundation will likely improve.

Challenges

As the arrow on the Resident Engagement Spectrum indicates, the community foundation and/or its partners reach out to residents, who in turn provide input. This process may frustrate residents if the community foundation and/or its partners do not act on the input provided. Staff must also have the skills necessary to manage the process of reaching out to residents, particularly residents previously not engaged or under-engaged, and individuals who are low-income or people of color. Community foundations and/or their partners must also be mindful about appointing or consulting "gatekeepers" and leaving other residents out of the process.

Resident Engagement
Advise / Influence

Resident Role

Residents advise the community foundation and/or its partners on decisions that affect them.
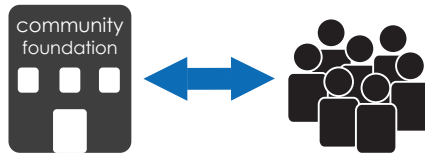
Engagement Tactics

Residents advise the community foundation and/or partners in decision-making by serving on community foundation advisory committees and/or working groups. Residents are asked to share their perspective on community issues through activities such as listening campaigns and community dialogues or exchanges. These exchanges then lead the community foundation and/or its partners to engage in targeted action in partnership with residents.

Example

A community foundation holds a listening campaign to understand issues local teens face. While smoking is noted as an issue, what the teens deem more problematic is a lack of structured after-school activities. Hearing this as an issue, the community foundation decides to set up an advisory group with youth representation to advise the foundation on grant-making related to the issue. Youth are excited to see that the community foundation cares about an issue of real importance to them. Teens who participate in the advisory group develop leadership skills and feel invested in the community.

Benefits

As the arrow on the Resident Engagement Spectrum indicates, this is a two-way process with information and input going back and forth between the community foundation and/or partners and residents. By using this approach, activities and decisions at the community foundation may be more likely to reflect the needs of residents and residents have some level of influence in decisions. Other benefits for the community foundation include building relationships with residents and staff and board members being energized and inspired by working with residents. Residents benefit from this approach as they have the opportunity to acquire new skills and connections and participate in new ways.

Challenges

In addition to the challenges found when residents are consulted, a community foundation and/or its partners may find they don't have the flexibility to act on the input of residents. The community foundation may find that existing processes – including grantmaking priorities, grant applications, grant due dates, etc. – need to be adjusted and/or changed to be able to go in new directions and engage in new types of community leadership. When engaging residents in this way, it is important to communicate both the short- and long-term benefits to board members and donors.

Resident Engagement
Set Agenda

Resident Role

Residents partner with the community foundation and/or its partners to set the agenda and drive community change.

Engagement Tactics

Residents set the agenda by designing and leading efforts to assess and act on community priorities. Community organizing or other intensive community processes are some tactics used to mobilize residents to act on community issues. Residents may decide to use data and/or policy to address an issue and may serve on the community foundation board or committees where they have decision-making power.

Example

A community foundation holds a listening campaign and finds that teens want more after-school activities. The foundation encourages the teens to organize a working group to take on the issue and offers the teens training support. The teens decide to take on the issue and work together to research and identify strategies to increase and strengthen after-school activities. They use what they learn to successfully lobby for the school administration to make changes. Through the process, the teens build research, advocacy, confidence and leadership skills.

Benefits

Benefits of this approach include a greater likelihood of improving the lives of residents as the decisions made by the community foundation and/or its partners are shaped by residents. Residents benefit by acquiring new skills and connections. They develop confidence and competence to move on to other issues and/or sustain the work over time. The community foundation and/or its partners benefit from having staff with the skills to engage residents and new leaders in the community are discovered and developed. As the handshake on the graphic indicates, the community foundation and/or its partners and residents are truly working in partnership with one another. Because relationships are based on mutual respect and trust, community impact is deeper and longer-lasting.

Challenges

Similar to the challenges mentioned previously, the community foundation and/or its partners must have the flexibility to go in new directions and a willingness to allow residents to set the agenda. This requires that staff and board members be actively involved - participating in networks and nurturing relationships with residents throughout the community. Staff and board members need to have relationships with broad constituencies and be willing to leverage those relationships. They need to serve as "bridge builders" that connect residents to traditional community leaders in positions of power. Staff need the time, sensitivity and skills to build long-term relationships to sustain the work.

Organization Crosswalk

	Children's Services Council of Broward County	Best Starts for Kids, King County	Early Learning Multnomah (ELM)	Ready for School, Ready for Life, Guilford County, NC	Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County (CSC)
	Organization Type: Independent taxing authority, dedicated public funding Established 2000 **Annual Funding:** $90,000,000	**Organization Type:** Independent taxing authority; Dedicated public funding Established 2015 **Annual Funding:** $65,000,000	**Organization Type:** Funding through the Oregon State Department of Education: One of 16 Early Learning Hubs in Oregon **Annual Funding:** $10,200,000 biennially	**Organization Type:** Nonprofit Organization funded through a multi-year Get Ready Guilford initiative; Investment by Blue Meridian Partners and the Duke Endowment **Annual Funding:** $32,000,000 first three years	**Organization Type:** Independent taxing authority; Dedicated public funding Established 1986 **Annual Funding:** $137,000,000
Purpose & Focus of Organization Funding Structure	Provide leadership, advocacy and resources necessary to enhance the lives of the children of Broward County and empower them to become responsible, productive adults through collaborative planning and funding of a continuum of services.	They are dedicated to put every baby born and every child raised in King County, Washington, on a path toward lifelong success. It invests in prevention and early intervention strategies that promote healthier, more resilient children, youth, families and communities. BSK has a comprehensive approach, starting with prenatal support, sustaining the gain through teenage years, and investing in safe, healthy communities that reinforce progress.	Organization mission is to eliminate racial and social disparities in kindergarten readiness and create opportunities for success by implementing environmental level changes that align programs, systems and funding in early childhood with a focus on children living in poverty and all children of color. Member of Early Childhood Learning and Innovation Network for Communities (EC-LINC)	To build a supportive, responsive system of care that improves outcomes for children and their families while reducing disparities. Seeking to improve outcomes in four areas: • Planned and well-timed pregnancies • Healthy births • On track development for infants & toddlers • Kindergarten readiness & Success in third grade Member of Early Childhood Learning and Innovation Network for Communities (EC-LINC)	To plan, fund and evaluate prevention and early intervention programs and services, and promote public policies that benefit all PBC children and families. CSC's four goals are that all our children are: • Born healthy • Safe from abuse and neglect • Ready for kindergarten • Able to access quality afterschool and summer programming. Member of Early Childhood Learning and Innovation Network for Communities (EC-LINC)
Platform Strategy to Include Resident Voice	Initial steps in progress but no organizational strategy in place.	Diverse Children & Youth Advisory Board • Comprised of King County residents and stakeholders with geographically and culturally diverse perspectives makes recommendations and monitors distribution of levy proceeds. Community Café Model • Utilized for large group community engagement process; also small focus groups • High level of community participation in development of Implementation Plan	Parent Accountability Council • Representation on the PAC includes 2 members from each "community of color"; members must be either a parent of a child 0-6 or part of an early learning program • Parents included on the PAC are expected to engage additional parents; a larger group of 20-25 parents meet quarterly • 2 parent members are also included on ELM's Oversight Council, which oversees operations and makes allocation decisions	Family Action Learning Teams (Family ALT) This group includes families with children age five and under who meet monthly to serve as consultants, decision-makers, and change agents. Roles of the Family ALT members include: • Consultant - Offer perspectives and feedback • Partner - Directly involved in the design and decision making • Change Agent - Independently do for families the things that matter to families	Initial steps in progress but no organizational strategy in place.
Primary Strategies	• CSC Broward created Community Participatory Action Research (CPAR) project teams consisting of adult community partner agencies and the youth participants. • Focused on ongoing collaboration, communication, equal participation, and trust among the participants. • CPAR experts provided trainings to project teams to introduce the principles of CPAR to the service provider staff and youth to become co-researchers. • Then built participatory relationships required to create meaningful feedback loops. • Teams developed key findings used to create products/outputs and system improvement recommendations.	• 10 geographic regional workgroups were established through collaboration with community partners. The BSK regional workgroups are empowered to make recommendations. • Over 1,000 community residents were engaged in the process, providing direct access to the "power structure". • Funding is now equally split between evidence-based/informed program and locally community developed programs (Note: The first year of funding for community-designed programs is dedicated to capacity building) RFP's result in multi-year funding (usually 3 years). • Include youth and community members on RFP review panels whenever feasible.	• The 12 member Parent Accountability Council ensures that family voice guides ELM's work. Family members who participate in the PAC represent the county's largest cultural, racial and ethnic communities. • In addition to the monthly PAC meetings, partner organizations convene quarterly culturally-specific Parent Leadership Team meetings for broader parent input. • ELM started with "family/parent voice" embedded in its organizational plan, and their structure and operation are designed to share power. • ELM ensures the PAC Guiding Principles are operationalized in all investments and strategies.	• All decisions are made only with consultation and participation of Family ALT; "authentic family voice" included in all aspects of organization's work. • Leaders, Providers, & Families from same organizations (ideally) go through Action Learning Cycle together and engage in active problem solving. • Engaged interpreter to encourage participation of Spanish-speaking families.	BRIDGES • Supports a community-networking concept that coordinates services, engages residents, and builds partnerships among businesses, nonprofits, municipalities, and civic and religious groups. EC-LINC • Development of parent/residents to support change and leadership. Great Ideas Initiative Targets smaller nonprofits that are working in partnership with local communities to: • Develop creative approaches to solve a problem, manage change or deliver innovation • Improve/expand upon an existing project that addresses a community's wants or needs • Inspire young people to pursue their passions • Fuel innovative partnerships that help families leverage community resources.

	Children's Services Council of Broward County	Best Starts for Kids, King County	Early Learning Multnomah (ELM)	Ready for School, Ready for Life, Guilford County, NC	Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County (CSC)
Results and Benefits of Approach	• Allows for the participants lived experiences in the system to be shared with those who make system funding and programmatic choices. • Staff recommended continuing the use of the CPAR framework. • The process resulted in "strong" conversations regarding racial disparities. • CSC Broward is now looking at issuing RFP's that specifically address disparities; requesting all contracted provider's leadership staff to complete equity training. • Two key board members are serving as champions for cultural change and all board members have expressed their commitment to the process.	• In addition to BSK, racial equity and community engagement efforts are reflective throughout King County governmental agencies/departments. The County also now holds information sessions about RFP opportunities in community-based locations such as libraries and community centers and posts informational webinars on their website. • The County also requires every panelist in the RFP review process to participate in a 3-hour Bias Awareness Workshop. These trainings allow reviewers to recognize their own implicit biases and the ways implicit biases can affect the application review process.	• ELM's Strategic Plan includes expanding and deepening the Parent Accountability Council (PAC) reach to include other parent leadership councils throughout the county. • Establishing an Alumni Network, which will help to track longer-term engagement with parents and the longer-term impact of parent voice and leadership. • ELM recognizes that there is great diversity among these larger communities and that a council of 12 individuals cannot represent them all. Accordingly, the PAC members are each a part of a larger team convened for PAC support and voice at supporting local agencies. This year those agencies are convening several additional culturally-specific community teams in order to diversify the voices represented on the PAC.	• Collecting real-time feedback from families in all design and implementation work. • Leading a cultural shift to help change the power structure. • Helping partners engage families in the planning, design and implementation of their programs. Funders of these programs also care about family engagement and are incorporating some new practices during RFP processes. • Planning to implement EC-LINC "Manifesto for Race Equity and Parent Leadership in Early Childhood".	• BRIDGES has become a place for local parents and residents to feel comfortable about speaking about their families' and community needs. • EC-LINC Parents created the Race Equity and Parent Leadership in Early Childhood Manifesto which is being used as a blueprint for parent inclusion and engagement. • Great Ideas Initiative over four years the Initiative has provided a total of more than $1.9 million to 66 smaller local nonprofits/grassroots groups and a new vehicle/"voice" to try something new to help Palm Beach County's children and families.
Lessons Learned	• Ensure that stipends/incentives are available for system involved participants ($15 per hour stipends for residents participating in CPAR). • Transportation related concerns must be addressed, and offering meals during all day sessions is essential. • The location of the full day CPAR trainings is important, it should be hosted at a neutral site that is convenient for the system involved participants- community partner agency staff can commute.	• Establish trust by respecting community members' schedules. • Staff commitment is a critical factor in the success of the full community engagement process. • Plan for setting limitations on focus areas and funding (what is on the table and what's not), and communicate to community residents that the implementation plan would incorporate both research and their input. • One major early barrier to achieving King County's goals for enhancing equity among residents was the ability to have greater diversity of service providers. • King County recognized that the evidence-based programs in their portfolio of funded services have historically been developed by those with access to resources and privilege.	• Staff noted that many of their parent leaders serve on additional committees, and have secured employment at nonprofit organizations in their network. • Staff believe that they have benefitted by intentionally establishing a plan and structure for including the parent and family voice from the beginning.	• Provide the right level of supports. Families need childcare, interpretation services, transportation assistance, variety of food choices, etc. to make sure that all families feel welcome and can participate fully. • Engage families in the development phase of programs, policies, practices and changes to get better outcomes. • After action intent to tell families about the difference, their input made. • Families report that they rarely hear back about the results or feedback, which discourages engagement.	• Early responses to BRIDGES Take Action is very positive. BRIDGES sites are sharing the results from their evaluation with community stakeholders. • EC-LINC - Parent Leader Network is new. We are working with the two parents that attended the training and will provide support as they look to implement new strategies in the community. • Great Ideas Initiative – We are waiting to learn the results of the Student Led Grant-making project. We have heard positive feedback and involvement but this is a very new approach. Results will be shared in December 2019

System Governance

Authentic Inclusion of Resident Voice in Decision Making of the Early Childhood System of Care (ECSOC)

Council Workshop
October 24, 2019

System Governance:
Authentic Inclusion of Resident Voice in Decision Making of the Early Childhood System of Care (ECSOC)

Crosswalk Companion Document

The October 2019 Council Workshop is structured around the concept of inclusion of resident voice in decision-making of the Early Childhood System of Care. The pre-reading materials provide a wide array of context and viewpoints to help review, discuss and think deeply about how CSC can approach resident inclusion to ensure "best intent" will result in sustainable action.

This companion document begins with CSC's Racial and Ethnic Equity Statement, which serves as the foundation and impetus of this approach. The subsequent information serves as additional reference to the document titled "Organizational Crosswalk" and provides contextual details of efforts being made to include resident voice by four organizations across the country to view alongside CSC. A Glossary of Terms is included at the end.

Table of Contents

Racial and Ethnic Equity Impact Statement

Children's Services Council is committed to advancing racial equity so that ALL children grow up healthy, safe and strong.

Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County (CSCPBC) aspires to be an innovative and courageous leader supporting a community where ALL children and families are healthy, safe and strong. Our leadership involves not only promoting policies and practices that address racial and ethnic equity but also working to dismantle structural and institutional racism that harms our community's children.

We recognize that equity is not the same as equality. The path to equity requires that the community provide more support and resources to the families in our community that are challenged by compounding inequities based on their race and ethnicity - health, education, housing, economic opportunities, among others - that put them at a disadvantage and limit their ability to reach their full potential. CSCPBC recognizes that it has an important role to play in this process. Our goal is that race and ethnicity are no longer predictors of life outcomes.

We commit to ensuring equity in terms of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, age, ability and other protected categories of individuals. However, we also recognize that race and ethnicity are some of the biggest predictors of long-term success. Therefore, we commit to ensuring racial and ethnic equity is embedded in our structure, policies, strategic planning, and advocacy efforts.

Promoting racial and ethnic equity is critical to truly making a difference in the lives of those we serve. To that end, we make a conscious and explicit effort to:

- Ensure our work focuses on the elimination of racial and ethnic disparities in child outcomes;
- Educate ourselves and others to improve understanding of implicit bias and the historical context of racial and ethnic inequities, which is vital to recognizing and dismantling barriers to improved outcomes;
- Critically examine CSCPBC policies and practices using a racial equity lens and work to ensure that both their intent and impact will promote fairness and equity;
- Model as an organization the changes we want to see implemented throughout our community and advocate for the elimination of institutional and structural racism in systems we influence; and
- Serve our community's children through active engagement of their families, listening to their needs, understanding their strengths, and advocating for needed programs, services, and systems change.

Mission

To plan, fund and evaluate prevention and early intervention programs and services, and promote public policies that benefit all Palm Beach County children and families

Vision

All children grow up healthy, safe and strong

Goals

Children we serve are:

- Born healthy;
- Safe from abuse and neglect;
- Ready for school; and
- Have access to quality afterschool and summer programs

Children's Services Council of Broward County

Organization Profile

Like the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County, the Children's Services Council of Broward County is an independent taxing authority, established by the voters in 2000 and reauthorized in 2014.The CSC Broward's mission is to provide leadership, advocacy and resources necessary to enhance the lives of the children of Broward County and empower them to become responsible, productive adults through collaborative planning and funding of a continuum of services.

Based on the Hawkins and Catalano "Communities That Care" (CTC) model, the Broward County Children's Strategic Plan sets the vision, mission, goals and objectives for establishing a better community in which children live, learn, and thrive. Using a collective impact approach, committees consisting of public & private entities, government, faith-based organizations, and community residents meet frequently to share data, strategies/best practices, accomplishments, and activities concerning children and families in Broward County. Currently, more than 1,500 Broward partners come together in monthly committee meetings to analyze data and find solutions to the community needs for the County's youth. This information is summarized and submitted to the Leadership Coalition, which consists of Broward's policy advisory entities. The Leadership Coalition provides a platform for policy change and funding recommendations to be made.

Strategies to Include Resident Voice

In March 2018, as part of Broward CSC's racial equity work and through funding provided by the Federal Performance Partnership Pilot grant, a Community Participatory Action Research (CPAR) framework was chosen as a strategy to integrate equity into the child welfare, juvenile justice and behavioral health systems. The CPAR framework directly engages communities and community knowledge in the research process so that strategic actions lead to community transformation and social change. As a framework for research conducted in, for, and by communities CPAR recognizes that:

- Community knowledge is irreplaceable and provides key insights that ground-truths administrative data
- Complex social issues often cannot be well understood or resolved by "expert" research
- Interventions from outside of the community have often had disappointing results
- Communities should have equal inclusion and collaboration in the identification, research, and resolution of community issues
- There is value and legitimacy in the knowledge of individuals, families, and others in the community

CSC Broward created CPAR project teams consisting of adult community partner participants and the youth of the agencies. The teams initially focused on developing collaboration, communication, equal participation, and trust among the participants. CPAR experts provided

trainings to project teams to introduce the principles of CPAR to the service provider staff and youth to become co-researchers. This also helped to build the participatory relationships required to create meaningful feedback loops. These teams developed key findings used to create products/outputs and system improvement recommendations.

Results and Benefits of Approach

- CPAR was successful at creating products/outputs to improve systemic outcomes because it allows for the participants lived experiences in the system to be shared with those who make system funding and programmatic choices.
- Utilizing the CPAR framework resulted in increased youth leadership and advocacy capacity, and created an avenue for system involved community partner staff to view youth through a holistic perspective.
- Due to the success of the CPAR project teams at creating "youth system involved community data," staff recommended that funding be allocated to sustain the use of the CPAR framework in the future. This not only created meaningful feedback for system involved participants, but it has the added benefit of providing youth the opportunity to be leaders in informing and changing the systems and policies that impact their lives.
- The process resulted in "strong" conversations regarding racial disparities.
- CSC Broward is now looking at issuing RFP's that specifically address disparities; requesting all contracted provider's leadership staff to complete equity training.
- CSC Broward is developed a "Learning Together" RFP, with the intent to build community relationships, not necessarily to implement new programming.
- CSC Broward has established an intentional focus on achieving cultural change. An internal Racial Equity Committee composed of 15-20 staff meet every month (open to all staff). In addition, this is a standing agenda item for department heads and included on all agendas.
- Two key board members are serving as champions for cultural change and all board members have expressed their commitment to the process.

Implications/Lessons Learned

- When replicating the CPAR process, consideration for the adult and youth community participants' ability to fully participate is critical. One way of doing this is to ensure that stipends/incentives are available for participants involved in the system ($15 per hour stipends for residents participating in CPAR).
- Additionally, transportation related concerns must be addressed, and offering meals during all day sessions is essential. Finally, the location of the full day CPAR trainings is important; it should be hosted at a neutral site that is convenient for the system-involved participants.

Website: https://cscbroward.org/

Best Starts for Kids, King County, WA

Organization Profile

Similar to the CSC, Best Starts for Kids (BSK) is a voter-approved, taxpayer financed initiative dedicated to help put every baby born and every child raised in King County, Washington, on a path toward lifelong success. It invests in prevention and early intervention strategies that promote healthier, more resilient children, youth, families and communities. BSK has a comprehensive approach to early childhood development starting with prenatal support, sustaining the gain through teenage years, and investing in safe, healthy communities that reinforce progress. Throughout all departments and agencies, equity and social justice has been established as an integrated part of King County's work, starting with their Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan (2016-2022). King County is the largest county in Washington with a population of 2.2 million people.

BSK includes a diverse Children and Youth Advisory Board comprised of King County residents and stakeholders with geographically and culturally diverse perspectives. They are responsible for making recommendations and monitoring the distribution of levy proceeds, which averages $65 million per year to support King County families and children so that babies are born healthy, children thrive, and young people grow into happy, healthy adults.

Best Starts for Kids has four focus areas:
1. Invest early: Support pregnant individuals, babies, very young children, and their parents during critical developmental years with a robust system of support services and resources that meets families where they are—home, community, and child care.
2. Sustain the gain: Continue progress made with school- and community-based opportunities to learn, grow and develop through childhood, adolescence and into adulthood.
3. Communities matter: Support communities to build safe, thriving places for children to grow up.
4. Results focused & data-driven: Use data and evaluation to know what is working for kids and communities.

Platforms/Strategies to Include Resident Voice

Communities of Opportunity (COO) is an initiative started in 2014 by King County and the Seattle Foundation, uniting with communities to address inequity. It is a community-led initiative that promotes leadership, influences changes to institutions, systems, and policies, and seats the base of power within communities, not outside of them. "Community members have voice to shape solutions that affect them and can express it through civic engagement and leadership."

The King County's COO approach produces "change that is community-driven and thus responsive to the needs and the desired solutions of those communities." The COO approach explicitly includes community voice among four specified areas:
- All people thrive economically
- All people are connected to community and have a voice.
- Al people have quality, affordable housing.
- All people are healthy.

A key tenet of COO is that community partners have a vitally important role in shaping and owning solutions. Given that top down and disconnected efforts of the past have not reaped the hoped-for results, the COO approach:
- Highly values and places at the center of its work community voice and leadership
- Makes co-design of programs and strategies with communities standard practice
- Strengthens connections across and among the health, housing, economic prosperity and community connection sectors

Primary Strategies
BSK engaged community members early on in the development of their strategic plan, the BSK Implementation Plan. Incorporating resident voice was a clearly stated, intentional, and critical component of the BSK Implementation Plan from the beginning.

BSK utilized the Community Café Model for both a large group community engagement process, as well as for discussions with smaller groups engaged through focus groups and interviews. There were 10 geographic regional workgroups established through collaboration/advertisement with community partners. They noted a high level of community participation in the development of the BSK Implementation Plan, including between 50-100 people at 10 different county geographic regions.

The process centered around 4 key questions:
- What programs and services are working well in your community?
- Which are not?
- Where are the gaps in programs and services?
- What have you heard of in other parts of the country that you would like to see in King County?

Results and Benefits of Approach
- A recent Results for America case study cited and featured King County: *King County, Washington Applies an Equity Lens to Design More Accessible, Collaborative, and Outcomes-Focused Contracting Processes* (January, 2019). With King County established as a national leader in racial equity work, BSK organized with racial equity and community voice as a focus to be integrated with all of their work. In their plan and operation, BSK determined that community voices must be consistently included in decision-making.

- Overall, over 1,000 community residents were engaged in the process, providing direct access to the "power structure".
- This high-level policy direction has been fully embraced by BSK. The 2018 BSK annual report notes that, "many Communities of Opportunity partners have organized for a more racially just and equitable region. For example, COO partner organizations mobilized over 250 people to serve in critical leadership roles to advance change in communities."
- BSK funding is now equally split between evidence-based/informed program and locally community developed programs (Note: The first year of funding for community-designed programs is dedicated to capacity building) RFP's result in multi-year funding (usually 3 years).
- BSK fully engages with residents and service providers to shape the values and goals of the initiative, and they include youth and community members on RFP review panels whenever feasible.
- The BSK regional workgroups are empowered to make recommendations.
- The BSK evaluation team also holds "Data Dives" conversations with the community in which residents review survey data and interpret the findings through their cultural lenses and unique perspectives.
- In addition to BSK, racial equity and community engagement efforts are reflective throughout King County governmental agencies/departments.
- The County now holds information sessions about RFP opportunities in community-based locations such as libraries and community centers and posts informational webinars on their website.
- The County also requires every panelist in the RFP review process to participate in a 3-hour Bias Awareness Workshop. These trainings allow reviewers to recognize their own implicit biases and the ways implicit biases can affect the application review process. They help reviewers recognize organizational strengths including strong connections to the community and experience serving diverse, underrepresented populations.
- Monthly meetings of the Children and Youth Advisory Board can be accessed via Skype Webinar.
- All board agendas are prefaced by the following statement: *Equity is an ardent journey toward well-being as defined by the affected. Equity demands sacrifice and redistribution of power and resources in order to break systems of oppression, heal continuing wounds, and realize justice. To achieve equity and social justice, we must first root out deeply entrenched systems of racism. Equity proactively builds strong foundations of agency, is vigilant for unintended consequences, and boldly aspires to be restorative. Equity is disruptive and uncomfortable and not voluntary. Equity is fundamental to the community we want to build.*

Implications/Lessons Learned
- BSK staff established trust by respecting community members' schedules, often connecting on evenings and on weekends.

- All community resident workgroup information/feedback was collected, coded and put into "themes;" the themes led to strategies
- BSK staff were personally committed to the project and process. They described this as a critical factor in the success of the full community engagement process.
- BSK staff recommends that organizations trying to replicate or undertake a similar process be open and honest about the process. They should plan for setting limitations on focus areas and funding (what's on the table and what's not), and communicate to community residents that the implementation plan would incorporate both research and their input.
- One major early barrier to achieving King County's goals for enhancing equity among residents was reaching a greater diversity of service providers. King County recognized that the evidence-based programs in their portfolio of funded services have historically been developed by those with access to resources and privilege.

Website: https://www.kingcounty.gov/best-starts-for-kids.aspx

Early Learning Multnomah (ELM)

Organization Profile

Initiated in 2015, under the Oregon Department of Education's Early Learning Division, ELM is one of 16 regional Early Learning Hubs across Oregon. ELM collaborates with cross-sector partners to create local systems that are aligned, coordinated, and family-centered. Families receive the support they need to become healthy, stable and attached, and their children receive the early learning experiences they need to thrive.

Multnomah County is the most populated county in Oregon and home to almost 800,000 people, including about 63,000 children age six and under. More than half of these children are living in households that earn 200% of the federal poverty level; children of color make up more than two-thirds of that group.

ELM's vision is that every child in Multnomah County is prepared to succeed in school and life, regardless of race, ethnicity or class. Their targeted population is children of color (including immigrants and refugees) ages birth to 6 years and all children in poverty.

ELM's mission is to eliminate racial and social disparities in kindergarten readiness and create opportunities for success by implementing environmental level changes that align programs, systems and funding in early childhood with a focus on children living in poverty and all children of color.

ELM partners and collaborates with numerous organizations across the county including housing, healthcare, government, K-12 schools, child care, and culturally specific services, to build an early learning system that authentically serves children and families without bias or discrimination. Recognizing that majority of existing government early learning system components and anti-poverty programs were not designed to address the needs of communities of color, ELM established the following priorities and practices to address this concern:
1. Prioritize investments that build capacity in communities of color.
2. Fund Community Education Workers and home visitors from communities of color.
3. Fund staff from communities of color to lead family engagement in eight elementary schools.
4. Partner with health and housing to create culturally responsive tools and services.
5. Advocate for culturally relevant training for preschool teachers.
6. Raise equity as a central issue in every meeting and convening.
7. Invest time and resources to deepen understanding of equity and inclusion and an accountability plan.

Platforms/Strategies to Include Resident Voice

Beginning with its inception in 2015, ELM's intent was to establish a plan that would

incorporate the "parent/family voice" into all of its work, including decision-making, and overall, to "share power." ELM developed the Parent Accountability Council (PAC) to ensure that family voice guides their work. Family members who participate in the PAC represent the county's largest cultural, racial and ethnic communities: African American, African Immigrant, Asian/Pacific Islander, Latino, Native American and Slavic. In addition to the monthly meetings, parents included on the PAC are expected to engage additional parents, which meet quarterly as a larger group of 20-25 parents. The meetings are convened by partner organizations to realize even broader input from parents. Representation on the PAC includes 2 members from each "community of color", and members must be either a parent of a child ages birth to 6 years old or part of an early learning program. Furthermore, two parent PAC members are included on ELM's Oversight Council, which oversees operations and makes allocation decisions.

Primary Strategies

The PAC developed the following Guiding Principles: We are parents from different culturally-specific communities. We know that different communities need different solutions. These principles reflect our common values and will direct the work of ELM.

- Priority Population: Focus on children who are called "at risk" but who are really "full of promise". We want all children to thrive.
  - Some families face racism and discrimination. Some families live in poverty. Some families earn enough to put them just above the poverty level but then they don't qualify for needed services. Some families have language barriers and experience lack of respect and low self- esteem. Other families don't have a safe place to live, or they deal with substance abuse, criminal backgrounds and unemployment. These and other factors are often due to systemic and historical reasons
- Equity: Make the invisible visible. We are here. We are all equal. See us. Respect us.
  - Families with language and cultural barriers often struggle to communicate with schools and end up isolated and not respected. Make it possible for parents to speak up and then listen to their voices. Figure out what parents need to feel comfortable because some will speak up in a large group and others will talk with a trusted home visitor. Find ways to build trust if you want people to speak up. We need support getting ready for kindergarten. Have people in the school who can speak to us and our children and understand what we say. Find teachers and staff who are from our communities. Welcome us into the schools with respect. Be kind. Add flexibility to meeting times between parents and teachers. Get the right resources to every family. Listen and hear what is in our hearts. We have ideas that you need to see and hear.
- Parent-Centered: Nothing about us without us. We are raising the children. We are your best resource.
  - Understand what it's like to be a parent. Understand that we raise our children to be proud of who they are and to be proud of their roots. Get to know us. Partner with us to see the success of our children. Ask us what we need and act on what you hear. We know what is best for our children. Recognize that our

lives may be different from yours (for example: we may have many generations and ideas about parenting in one home). Give us social settings so our children can learn how to interact with others and we can learn confidence. Recognize how important we are in how our children turn out. Parents have a critical role in our communities. Come to our homes, and respect us. Learn from us as we learn from you. Include all of our family members. Programs wouldn't exist without us so include us when planning programs and services, doing them, measuring their success, and sharing their success with us. Hear our needs before you proceed.

- Family Engagement: Support the family to support the child. Support us as we take care of our children. Meet us where we are.
  - We want better communication between parents and schools. Provide education for parents and caregivers in the home and out of the home. Caregivers include grandparents and extended family. Offer classes, resources and services in our native languages. Give us the opportunity to learn English. Training needs to be culturally- responsive, in-depth and ongoing. Honor our culture. We are hungry for knowledge and will ask for what we need. We invite you to ask us what we need and want to know. Follow through with commitments to parents. Start early. Don't wait until problems get big. Prevention is as important as intervention.
- System Coordination: Work together to partner with families. Talk to us. And talk to each other. It takes all of us to make life better for our children.
  - We want better communication between parents and schools. We need to know how our children are doing when they are away from us on a regular basis, especially when our children have learning problems or struggles. We want to work together. Schools should partner with community agencies and parents. People making decisions about our schools and our neighborhoods need to talk to us. Understand the solutions and programs we've already developed and how they help us. Learn from programs that work well in our communities. Use our wisdom. Share the good work that we are doing.

Results and Benefits of Approach

- ELM's Strategic Plan includes expanding and deepening the Parent Accountability Council (PAC) reach to include other parent leadership councils throughout the county and ensure that the PAC Guiding Principles are operationalized in ELM investments and strategies.
- ELM is going to establish an Alumni Network, which will help to track longer-term engagement with parents and the longer-term impact of parent voice and leadership.
- ELM recognizes that there is great diversity among these larger communities and that a council of 12 individuals cannot represent them all. Accordingly, the PAC members are each a part of a larger team convened for PAC support and voice at supporting local agencies. This year those agencies are convening several additional culturally-specific community teams in order to diversify the voices represented on the PAC.

Implications/Lessons Learned

- ELM staff noted that many of their parent leaders serve on additional committees, and have also secured employment at nonprofit organizations in their network.
- ELM staff believe that they have benefitted by intentionally establishing a plan and structure for including the parent and family voice from the beginning. They have continued to adhere to this practice and the further development of structures and opportunities to support this goal.

Website: http://www.earlylearningmultnomah.org

Ready for School, Ready for Life Guilford County, NC

Organization Profile

Ready for School, Ready for Life (Ready, Ready) is a nonprofit organization that leads a collaborative effort to design and build an innovative system of care for Guilford County, North Carolina's youngest children and their families. Grounded in well-documented brain science and socio-economic research that demonstrates the great value of quality experiences from the prenatal stage through age 8, Ready, Ready is on a mission to greatly enhance support for parents and other caregivers who are responsible for our young children's development.

Guilford County has a diverse population and demographics and is populated by approximately 520,000 people principally living in two cities: Greensboro and High Point. Almost 6,000 children are born in Guilford County each year, and about half are born into poverty. Guilford County Schools, one of the 50 largest school districts in the country, has a diverse student population with 120 languages spoken.

Pursuant to a very selective competitive process, Guilford County's Get Ready Guilford Initiative was selected for a multi-year investment from Blue Meridian Partners, with substantial support from the Duke Endowment, to pilot and grow the Ready for School, Ready for Life initiative, dedicate to improving outcomes for children. Blue Meridian is a national partnership of impact-driven philanthropists seeking to transform life trajectories of America's children and youth by making large investments in promising solutions. The Blue Meridian investment totals $32.5 million and funds key priorities to plan, design and implement a system that, in time, will seamlessly connect a wide range of services for the 6,000 children born in Guilford County each year. Priorities include:

- Expanding three existing and proven programs that serve families prenatally through age 3 (Guilford Family Connects, HealthySteps and Nurse-Family Partnership).
- Developing a navigation system to connect families with effective services prenatally through age 3.
- Working with local programs in a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) effort to build capacity for using data in service delivery and decision-making.
- Building supporting technologies to facilitate coordination among child- and family-serving agencies and organizations.
- Conducting rigorous evaluation for learning and impact to understand what works for families.
- Strengthening the backbone organization that will continue to manage and execute this growing initiative.

Platforms/Strategies to Include Resident Voice

An overarching theme and priority of Ready, Ready is building parent leadership and engaging families in the development of Guilford County's early childhood system-building work. From

the start, Ready, Ready prioritized "family voice," intentionally ensuring that family voice would be included in making decisions about Guilford County's early childhood programs, practices, policies and processes. Ready, Ready, has engaged family voice in three key ways since 2015:

1. Elevating family voice using themes that emerged during family focus groups and during the Family Photovoice process.
2. Monthly meetings with families through Family Action Learning Teams. The Family Action Learning Teams (Family ALTs) were created to consistently engage a small group of core families as leaders, advisors, partners, and advocates in the system-building work. The commitment to families has been that they would be engaged in all aspects of decision-making within Ready, Ready's work.
   a. Members of the Greensboro Family ALT, which has roots in the Family Photovoice project, have worked together for four years with consistent participation of family leaders.
   b. The High Point Family ALT launched in January 2019, with consistent participation by 3 to 4 families. Other families participate as schedules allow. The focus of their work has been to provide input about system design, and to learn about and share information about healthy child development and parenting practices with other families in the community. They also develop projects in the community that will be beneficial to other families (e.g., bilingual "Books in the Garden" project to encourage Active Reading with children up to age five). Participants represent voices that often go unheard in traditional decision-making settings.
3. Implement family-centered design processes. Ready, Ready's work is to design and implement a connected system that improves population outcomes while reducing racial disparities through a universal assessment, targeted intervention approach. The organization's design processes have included direct service providers, clinicians, parent leaders, and other community members. To engage additional family perspectives, design team members solicit feedback and ideas from families with whom they have contact through their programs and/or daily life. This technique has been used to gather data that informed development of the early literacy strategic plan, the early childhood workforce strategic plan, and key messages about Ready, Ready's work.

Primary Strategies

To support the expansion of building family voice into its work, in early 2019, Ready, Ready launched the Guilford Parent Leader Network. This structure includes members of Family Action Learning Teams, parent leaders who are interested in serving on Boards/committees of early childhood programs (including Ready, Ready), future family engagement work of Continuous Quality Improvement cohort programs, and more as work continues to evolve. Additional recruiting efforts are underway now, bolstered by projects developed by families and Ready, Ready staff.

The Guilford Parent Leader Network enables families to engage in ways that best suit their interests and schedules. Generally, families can participate in three ways.

1. <u>Family Action Learning Teams</u> (meet monthly and stay in touch between meetings) Participating families play the following roles:
   - o Ambassadors who share information about early childhood programs and services through community outreach.
   - o Experts who identify problems and create solutions to system improvement.
   - o Community activists who 'win' community improvements for young children
   - o Advocates for parents to navigate the early childhood system.
   - o Change makers who can help solve systemic problems in early learning, health and development.
2. <u>Parent representatives</u> serve on one or more committees established through Ready, Ready. They contribute to the work by representing their own views, as well as expanding family voice by soliciting feedback from other families in their network between meetings. They also serve as vocal advocates for policies and practices that support healthy development of Guilford County's youngest children and their families.
3. <u>Network members</u> participate in the parent network social media outlets and occasional focus groups and/or surveys to provide feedback on key issues. They may also participate in projects that are of interest to Guilford County families.

Membership in these groups can be fluid based on family situations. For example, families who participate in a Family Action Learning Team for a year may choose to become a network member as their lives change.

Results and Benefits of Approach

With an increased focus on family engagement and parent leadership in the system-building work, and a network of families serving as vocal leaders within the system, the Guilford initiative working with local partners, are expecting the following:

- Develop and implement strategies targeted to what families say they want and need to improve outcomes for their children instead of perceived wants/needs, thus decreasing the risk of missing the mark
- Conduct system scans, via parent feedback, about what is happening "on the ground" to enable the staff to diagnose system issues and make course corrections more quickly
- Participating families will be connected to a network of families, decreasing social isolation that is often prevalent during this critical time of child development and that can produce negative child outcomes
- More families will have access to quality information about child development to share with peers
- Families will be more likely to advocate for programs, policies and practices that will improve outcomes for children and families
- More families will assume leadership positions within existing and future structures (programs, initiatives, Boards, etc.) that shape the community
- Advocacy skills gained during the earliest years will result in continued advocacy when families reach the K-12 system.

Implications/Lessons Learned

The following recommendations for the upcoming year are being proposed by Ready, Ready staff:

- Strengthen the Guilford Parent Leader Network by increasing participation in two Family Action Learning Teams as the primary family decision-making body, and increasing participation of parent representatives and network members.
- Develop stronger partnerships with agencies/organizations who effectively serve "difficult to reach" families.
- Develop a structured approach to gathering real-time feedback from families to assess how well the system is serving their needs.
- Build parent leadership skills through intentional training and development, ensuring that families can participate meaningfully in Ready, Ready decision-making bodies (Boards and committees).
- Work with families to translate leadership experiences gained during their work with Ready, Ready into paid employment.
- Continue developing a Guilford-wide approach to family engagement.
- Hire full time project manager/facilitator with expertise in family engagement and building family leaders to coordinate and execute recommendations.

Website: https://getreadyguilford.org

Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County

Organization Profile

The Children's Services Council (CSC) was established in 1986 as an independent special district by Palm Beach County voters, who provided a dedicated a source of funding for programs and services for children and their families. Since its inception, CSC has particularly focused on strategies that would improve the lives children living in communities with high levels of poverty and associated poor indicators of health and wellbeing.

Early Childhood System of Care

Over the past two decades, CSC has intentionally focused on developing a comprehensive Early Childhood System of Care (ECSOC), which supports programs and services for pregnant women, families with infants and children under 6. The ECSOC is designed to create a seamless way to improve birth outcomes, reduce child abuse and neglect and prepare young children for school. In addition, CSC also supports afterschool services for school-age children and special programs for teens. CSC's ultimate goal is that all Palm Beach County children grow up healthy, safe and strong and become successful, productive members of our community.

Within the ECSOC, Healthy Beginnings offers universal screening of pregnant women and newborns to identify those who may be at risk of a poor birth outcome because of poverty, limited access to health care, poor nutrition, substance abuse, homelessness, domestic violence and other challenges. Once screened, CSC's entry agency assesses families and helps them navigate, and receive the prevention or early intervention services that specifically fit their needs. Families may be referred to one of more than two dozen programs.

Also, within the ECSOC, the CSC's entry agency offers universal screening and assessment of children younger than 6 to help families access health insurance or a doctor, and determines whether the child is reaching vital social, emotional, behavioral, cognitive and physical milestones. The goal is to improve early child development outcomes so more children are ready to learn when they enter kindergarten. Based on the assessment, children may be linked with programs that work with families to address any developmental vulnerabilities.

CSC's Strong Minds child care network is designed to: improve children's school readiness through stronger teacher-child relationships; provide more children with access to quality care through Council-funded scholarships; and connects families to the ECSOC. About 41,500 children attend more than 220 early childhood education programs and 160 afterschool programs that participate in CSC's quality child care and afterschool networks.

CSC also supports BRIDGES, a community-networking concept that coordinates services; reduces duplication of efforts; engages residents; and builds partnerships among businesses, nonprofits, municipalities, and civic and religious groups. There are 10 BRIDGES neighborhood

gathering places for families across Palm Beach County, located in areas with some of the most challenging circumstances for children.

Overall CSC now serves over 70,000 children and families annually, by supporting more than 35 nonprofit and other agencies in Palm Beach County, which provide a range of more than 50 services to families – from prenatal health, screening and nutrition to mental and behavioral health services that combat maternal depression and toxic stress. The majority of these programs are either evidence-based or promising, having proven over time to make a difference in the lives of children and families.

Primary Strategies for inclusion of resident voice

BRIDGES

BRIDGES is CSC's most direct initiative at engaging and providing "voice" to parents and local residents. Borrowing from some of the Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) and Community Schools successful tenets and strategies, BRIDGES build on existing community assets, encourage leadership and advocacy through community engagement, provide residents with key skills and information, and promote a "two-way conversation" about the community's needs. The neighborhoods identified for BRIDGES were found to be areas with multiple population-based concerns showing high rates of preterm births, low-birth weight infants, child maltreatment reports, poor school achievement, as well as many other economic and social risk factors. They were also selected because CSC believes they have strengths with which to build on, including many community resources and potential alliances and partnerships.

Through improved relationships with partnering agencies, BRIDGES make services more accessible and efficient by directly connecting parents to relevant services and eliminating redundancy. BRIDGES staff ask parents to become BRIDGES "members" rather than clients in a program. This creates a different vision and perception of parents as community members with something to gain and something to give, generating greater buy-in by those most likely to desire and benefit from achieving community-wide outcomes.

Through convening and developing capacity, BRIDGES recognizes existing resources and strengths within their neighborhood and themselves and provides a platform for members to directly participate and give back, even in simple, small ways. This might involve spreading awareness, modeling behaviors and values, advocacy or volunteerism. This extends the reach and greatly enhances the impact beyond what BRIDGES can reasonably achieve on via paid staff positions.

The Early Childhood Learning and Innovation Network for Communities (EC-LINC)

Early Childhood Learning and Innovation Network for Communities (EC-LINC) is a partnership of the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) and the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County in collaboration with their local leaders and early childhood national experts, established in 2012.

EC-LINC was established to bring together innovative local communities with state and national leaders to intentionally collect existing and new knowledge, develop resources, and test new ideas.

EC-LINC is a network of partners with a shared goal—to support families and improve results for young children in communities across the country.

Fourteen exemplary communities with long histories of building effective early childhood systems are members of EC-LINC. Their perspectives and experiences are invaluable to guiding the work and solving common challenges faced by communities together. Member communities and their leading organizations include:

- Alameda County, CA: First 5 Alameda County
- Boston, MA: United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley
- Denver, CO: Denver's Early Childhood Council
- Hartford, CT: The Office for Community Child Health at Connecticut Children's Medical Center
- Guilford County, NC: Ready for School, Ready for Life
- Kent County, MI: First Steps
- Lamoille Valley, VT: Lamoille Family Center and Building Bright Futures
- Los Angeles, CA: First 5 LA
- Multnomah County, OR: Early Learning Multnomah
- Onondaga County, NY: Early Childhood Alliance
- Orange County, CA: Children and Families Commission of Orange County
- **Palm Beach, FL: Children Services Council of Palm Beach County**
- Volusia and Flagler Counties, FL: Thrive by Five
- Ventura, CA: First 5 Ventura County

Great Ideas Initiative

As a novel alternative to traditional funding/grant making, CSC's Great Ideas Initiative (GII), provides funding to smaller nonprofit agencies not currently funded by CSC, to support innovative and creative approaches that enhance the lives of children and their families. GII provides an opportunity for new ideas and "voice" to:

1. Develop creative approaches to solve a problem, manage change or deliver innovation
2. Improve/expand upon an existing project that addresses a community's wants or need
3. Inspire young people to pursue their passions, truest intentions and daring ideas
4. Fuel innovative partnerships that help families leverage community resources, or
5. Build their own capacity to strengthen or expand their community footprint.

This user-friendly initiative, which began in 2016, provides a vehicle and platform, enabling the "voice" of smaller organizations to be heard and connect with CSC's larger system and network of agencies.

In short, BRIDGES, EC-LINC and the Great Ideas Initiative represent very direct locally driven models, platforms, and practices that provide "voice" to residents in improving health, early education and social conditions for their children and families.

CSC has also adopted a Racial and Ethnic Equity Impact Statement, which "involves not only promoting policies and practices that address racial and ethnic equity but also working to dismantle structural and institutional racism that harms our community's children."

Promoting racial and ethnic equity is critical to truly making a difference in the lives of those we serve. To that end, we make a conscious and explicit effort to:
1. Ensure our work focuses on the elimination of racial and ethnic disparities in child outcomes;
2. Educate ourselves and others to improve understanding of implicit bias and the historical context of racial and ethnic inequities, which is vital to recognizing and dismantling barriers to improved outcomes;
3. Critically examine CSC's policies and practices using a racial equity lens and work to ensure that both their intent and impact will promote fairness and equity;
4. Model as an organization the changes we want to see implemented throughout our community and advocate for the elimination of institutional and structural racism in systems we influence; and
5. Serve our community's children through active engagement of their families, listening to their needs, understanding their strengths, and advocating for needed programs, services, and systems change.

This policy statement is also intended to improve practices and conditions for realizing significant progress in incorporating "Family and Resident Voice" and input into CSC's Early Childhood System of Care and programs.

System Governance Glossary of Terms

These terms are defined in the context of Systems Governance

1. **What do we mean when we say "System Governance"?**
   <u>System governance</u> refers to an assembly of stakeholders joined in a unified vision with a shared set of expectations. Charged with steering, decision-making, communication, establishment of policies and monitoring of procedures for the achievement of agreed upon goals. System governance structures must be flexible and confers legitimacy when they are active and inclusive, with established leadership and a process for managing equitable distribution of its resources.

2. **How do we define System Governance in the "Early Childhood System of Care (ECSOC)"?**
   Governance of the ECSOC refers to how interconnected and interdependent entities are managed to create coherence among policies and services. It comprises the traditions, institutions and processes that determine how power is exercised, how parent/residents/ community are given voice to promote equity, and how decisions are made on issues of mutual concern.

3. **What is Results Based Accountability?**
   Results Based Accountability™ (RBA), also known as Outcomes-Based Accountability™ (OBA), is a disciplined way of thinking and taking action that community can use to improve the lives of children, youth, families, adults and the community. RBA uses a data-driven, decision-making process to help communities and organizations get beyond talking about problems to taking action to solve problems.

4. **What do we mean by community supports?**
   <u>Community-based supports</u> refer to how systems of care builds on the strengths of the children and families it serves and how it draws on the community's assets to provide a balanced perspective to meet the complex needs of children, youth and families.

5. **Who are the stakeholders?**
   Stakeholders can include internal and external people/community
   <u>External Stakeholders</u>**:** A family and/or child who is impacted by CSCs mission, vision and services.
   <u>Internal Stakeholders:</u> People serving CSC such as board members, staff, volunteers, and or donors.

6. **Who/what are the consumer of the services?**
   <u>Consumer of Services:</u>
   A person who participated in a service that was funded by CSC. An actual service recipient.

7. **What is a parent?**
   Parent - Anyone who, by birth or legal guardianship, is the primary caregiver for a child, and is their child's first teacher and best advocate.

8. **What is a resident?**
   Resident - Those who live in the community and based on their lived experience are able to add perspective to the work (CSC) does with nonprofits, government, business, and other entities and sectors in the community.

9. **Who is the community?**
   Community - A group or network of people in a particular geographical area or environment, who are impacted by the existence or lack of: history, relations with other, cultural values, shared resources, common interests, social cohesion and a willingness to set and strive for common goals.

10. **What do we mean when we say "voice" of the community?**
    The "voice" refers the values, opinions, beliefs, perspectives, and cultural backgrounds of the people as well as the degree to which those values, opinions, beliefs, and perspectives are considered, included, listened to, and acted upon when important decisions are being made in their communities.

11. **Who is the voice of the community?**
    Voice of the Community - Individuals who know the community, its issues and its players. People or groups that stand to be directly affected, positively or negatively, by either an effort or the actions of an agency, institution, or organization.

12. **What is the authentic voice?**
    Authentic Voice - A process whereby which, community members are able to genuinely project their voices and lived experiences to system stakeholders and service providers within the context of their community and individual lives.
    This practice gives people of color an opportunity for their voices to be heard and for their lived experiences to be valued and validated. Systems of care that are effective in centering authentic voice have a shared distribution of power where community members and leaders are at the forefront of the decision making process.

13. **What do we mean by pathways?**
    Pathways and Mechanisms refer to the process to create multiple strategies to include the voice of the communities we serve and ways residents can participate. To ensure pathways are effective, they must facilitate ease for people to get involved with the intentions of removing barriers and providing needed supports.

14. What do we mean by Platforms?

Platforms refers to the methods, mechanisms, strategies, processes and approaches we use to elicit community voice.

15. What is Community Pulse?

Community Pulse:

A balanced consideration of the rights, needs, responsibilities and capacities as defined by the Residents with an underlying value of social justice and a focus on improving local communities' self-reliance and participatory decision-making.

16. What are racial equity tools?

Racial Equity Tools:

Techniques or instruments designed and used to assess, define, create, and promote an environment conducive to building and sustaining equity, diversity, and inclusion into the fabric of an organization, community, city, state or county.

The preference is to utilize tools that are designed and used to assess cross-cutting issues about the broader climate or functional areas.

17. What is equitable Inclusion?

Equitable inclusion refers to the intentional, ongoing effort to ensure that diverse individuals, particularly those who have been historically marginalized, fully participate and are valued in all aspects of the work, including identification of what needs to be transformed, development of the equitable solution, and decision-making processes.