Scaffolding Strategies to Promote Equitable Opportunities
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Minnesota Department of Human Services
In 2017, Black children were more than three times as likely as white children and American Indian children more than five times as likely as white children to be the subject of a screened-in maltreatment report.

In 2017, American Indian children were 19 times more likely than white children to be in out-of-home care. Children of two or more races were five times more likely and Black children were three times more likely than white children to be in out-of-home care.
MN Child Welfare Continuum

Universal Promotion for Family Well-Being

Primary Prevention Strategies and Family Serving Systems

REPORT OF MALTREATMENT

Report

Screened In

CP Family Assessment

CP Family Investigation

Safety and Risk Assessment – Family Needs and Strengths

No Services

In-Home CP Services

Out of Home Placement

Post-Permanency

Screened Out

PSOP

Child Welfare Response

Family Needs and Strengths

In-Home Services

Children's Mental Health Developmental Disabilities Juvenile Justice

No Response

Referred Elsewhere
Conceptual Framework

Universal Promotion for Family Well-Being

Primary Prevention Strategies and Family Serving Systems

Public Understanding

Health and Well-Being in All Policies

Community Innovation

Safe, Stable, Nurturing Relationships and Environments

Social and Economic Security

Minnesota families have what they need to thrive

3/25/2020 MN Department of Human Services / mn.gov/dhs
How can we make it happen?

Identify Opportunities for Synergy:

• Family First Prevention Services Act
• Title V Maternal Child Health Needs Assessment
• Preschool Development Grant Needs Assessment
• 2 Gen/Whole Family Systems
Common Entry Point – Community Engagement

Identify Opportunities for Synergy:

• Family First Prevention Services Act
  • Working groups

• Title V Maternal Child Health Needs Assessment
  • Discovery Survey

• Preschool Development Grant Needs Assessment
  • Advisory Committee
  • Community Engagement and Feedback Loops

• 2 Gen/Whole Family Systems
  • Human Centered Design
Setting the Stage: Family First Prevention Services Act

The candidacy question gave us an opportunity to develop shared hopes and dreams regarding whom we wanted to serve with the FFPSA dollars.
Discovery Survey

Please answer the questions below.

Thank you for taking the time to tell us what you think about the needs of women, children, and families in your community!

What is the most important thing women, children and families need to live their fullest lives?

What are the biggest unmet needs of women, children and families in your community?
Response

39% identified as a community member
11% identified as a community leader

37% 35-49
30% 50-64
21% 25-34
5% 65+
3% 18-24
>1% Under 18

647 Community-based organization/non-profits
608 Healthcare professionals
442 Local public health professionals
85 Minnesota Department of Health
77 Department of Health & Human Services
24 Minnesota Department of Education
169 Other state workers
147 Other Maternal & Child Health worker
61 Policymakers
Title V Discovery
Survey: Cross Cutting Priorities
The health and well-being of American Indian Women and Children

“... Many women and families have unmet trauma and are surviving. They need to recover with education and support that they can connect with culturally.”

Data has shown significant disparities affecting American Indians for hundreds of years and the approach has always been to address them through mainstream, evidence-based strategies; and we haven’t seen improvement (in fact we’ve seen worsening).

...Yet we continue to operate from a mainstream framework....

There needs to be an acknowledgment that American Indian people carry cultural knowledge and wisdom that has sustained their communities and nations for generations, and that only through authentic engagement and partnership will we see change.

“We’ve had high rates, we continue to have high rates – and we’ve had resources (although not enough to really address the issues) but those resources are attached to a set of criteria and/or activities that do not work for us. For example, evidence based programs are predominately normed on a mainstream population and we have no other options, but to use an outside approach or not receive the resources, both of which are inequitable.”

American Indian women, children and families experience worse outcomes than other populations in Minnesota. These disparities are caused by historical trauma, racism and continued colonial practices and policies that are barriers to opportunity and thriving.

- The American Indian child poverty rate in 2016 was 36% compared to 14% of all children in Minnesota
- Only 50% of American Indian youth graduate from high school
- Compared to white children, American Indian children in Minnesota are 18 times more likely to be placed in out-of-home care

Why It’s Important

The history of American Indians is one of great strength. It is a history built on values that have shaped American Indian culture and communities for generations: respect for elders, caring for family, a sense of responsibility to take care of the land, and a belief that the current generation should make a better world for the next. It is a history of resilience through significant pain and injustices including (but not limited to) broken treaties, mass murder, boarding schools, and land theft. It is also a story of current lived experience surviving racism, the devaluation of American Indian culture and biased history taught in schools.

We have a responsibility to stop making American Indian women and children invisible.
Supporting parents socially and emotionally with family focused activities, policies, and education

“[Women, children, and families need] community! Many parents are struggling to raise their children in isolation and need community relationships, friendships, mentoring, resources, professional support with challenges in their lives.”

The parent-child relationship and the environment of the family, which includes all primary caregivers, are foundational to a child’s well-being and healthy development.

48% of all parents don’t feel they are getting the support that is needed when they are stressed.

Parents need a network of supportive relationships, strategies for coping with stress, resources, knowledge, and an understanding of child development. Parents and caregivers who have resources and support are more likely to provide safe and healthy homes for their children and families.

Supporting parents can benefit the parent-child relationship, help families meet their physical, emotional, and financial needs, and improve outcomes for children and parents. Parental education programs have been shown to improve parental self-esteem, positive parenting practices, parental mental health, and ultimately improve the parent-child relationship. Community connection and belonging is very important to caregiver health as well.

A parent can be any figure in a child’s life that provides care, safety, and security for a child. Parental figures can be biological, adopted, foster parents, grandparents, or other primary caregivers.

90% of white parents report having someone they can connect with for emotional support related to parenting compared to 49% of African American parents.

Parents need a network of supportive relationships, strategies for coping with stress, resources, knowledge, and an understanding of child development. Parents and caregivers who have resources and support are more likely to provide safe and healthy homes for their children and families.
MN Preschool Development Grant

Guiding Principles: Racial Equity • Trauma-informed • Geographic Responsiveness • Everything is Connected • Whole Family • Agencies Working Together • Belonging

Inclusive and Responsive Practices, Programs and Policies
Minnesota Preschool Development Grant (PDG) Community Engagement Framework

Gather input: Include the voices of a wide variety of:
- Family voice
- American Indian Tribal Nations
- People of color
- Voices of other people impacted by inequities in race, geography or wealth

2. Analyze & Interpret stakeholder input

3. Collaborate to develop strategic plan

4. Check In: Does this reflect your values?

5. Synthesize Strategic Plan Feedback

6. Finalize Strategic Plan

7. Share Strategic Plan

Inclusive and Responsive Practices, Programs & Policies
Information Contributing to Preschool Development Grant Needs Assessment

EARLY CHILDHOOD DATA USE WORKGROUP
A cross-stakeholder agency workgroup to increase, improve, and optimize information sharing to coordinate eligibility and services and reduce family burden.
14 interviews/focus groups
16 local governments and organizations

PLANNING & ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Partners, including grantees, in creating the needs assessment and strategic plan, and advising on grant activities.
35 individuals 21 organizations

PARENT COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES
A research report on effective communication strategies for all parents, and prioritizing: vulnerable parents, fathers, and parents who speak a home language other than English.
14 group discussions in community settings
89 participants
51 key interviews

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS
Led by grantee partners and prioritized parent and provider voice.
134 Events
56 Communities
1,372 People
6 Languages
11 Tribal Nations

73% parents

MULTILINGUAL LEARNER INTERVIEWS
Explored the perceptions and decision-making of parents of young multilingual children.
5 Home/Heritage Languages
10 Countries of Origin
15 individuals

STATE-LED ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS
Facilitated conversations with those working to influence policy and practice.
11 councils & task forces
200 individuals

REGIONAL PRENATAL TO GRADE 3 LEARNING
An effort to build on the quality and coherence of children’s learning and care experiences from the prenatal stage through grade three.
10 school districts 1 Tribal Nation

TRANSITIONS
Deepen understanding about the experience of transitions to kindergarten.
4 focus groups with parents
3 focus groups with kindergarten teachers and principals
Community Engagement Findings

- People want this to be successful
- Skepticism about translating action steps into reality
- Not having childcare, especially infant care: a root problem affecting access to many other things
- Support for care and education workforce: worthy wage, supports to meet requirements/guidelines
- Need for mutual trust: a system that trusts providers and parents, and parents and providers that trust the system
- Eligibility issues: income eligibility “cliff” problem, middle income have the most difficulty in accessing childcare in some regions (e.g., scholarship eligibility), different eligibility requirements
- Service navigation support for parents (e.g., hub, navigator): Do we need navigators or are we too complex? Are navigators the best use of resources? Simplification of services is also needed.
- Tailored supports needed for: families with children with disabilities, parents with criminal backgrounds, male caregivers (system geared toward females)
- Transportation, Stable Housing, Health Care, Employment
- Culturally specific services, culturally responsive early childhood programs and services, local nuance matters
- Communication needed: parents not knowing about resources
Minnesota Awarded a Preschool Development Renewal Grant

- $8.9 million annually for three years
- Same goals as the Planning Grant
- Funding December 31, 2019 – December 30, 2022
**Outcome:** Families and front-line workers will be able to connect to the services they need by better understanding the services and programs available and have individualized support and follow through.

**Early childhood navigation system** as a one-stop shop to:

- Navigate prenatal and 0-8 resources
- Refer families directly to programs
- Coordinate services, offer follow-up and utilize a common application.

“There needs to be a system developed that is specifically targeted to families on how to get the resources they are seeking. Ideally there would be a clearinghouse – what are the contacts needed, then the family would be passed to the next tier for support.” – Hermantown-Proctor School

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## Investing Directly in Communities

### Hubs

Fund Tribal Nations and local collaborations to coordinate services, build capacity and pilot initiatives. Open feedback loops to ensure continuous improvement and responsive policy, practice and programs.

### Sub-grants

Community Solutions sub-grants (MDH) to promote community solutions to community identified problems prioritizing families of color and American Indian families.

"We know children in our Tribal programs need something a little more unique. Our people are the best resources for determining what that is and how that happens" Terrance Tibbetts, Former White Earth Chairman (from Tribal Tour Report)
“Disjointed systems and communications lead to families’ distrust of all our systems. Our systems don’t communicate between each other or support data sharing.” – Hennepin County

“...if such data sharing were allowed, it could help agencies operate more efficiently and reduce the paperwork burden that families now face when providing income information to multiple agencies.” – State Staff as quoted in Office of Legislative Auditor Report, 2018
Two Gen/Whole Family Systems

Cohort 1:
- Funded through TANF Innovation dollars
- 4 community grantees in partnership with counties and one Tribal Nation

Cohort 2:
- Funded through CCDF, TANF, and State Disparities Funding for Child Welfare
- 8 community grantees in partnership with counties and Tribal Nations
Bringing it all together to build a continuum of promotion and prevention

Public Understanding

- Data Stories focusing on equity, built on concepts brought by community
- Feedback Loops with Community and Families

Health and Wellbeing in All Policies

- WE CARE/ Help Me Connect
- RFP language and communication
- CCDF Presumptive Eligibility
- Funding to support community based solutions

Community Innovation

- Two Gen/Whole Family Systems Grantees
- Relationships First
- Community Solutions Grantees
- PDG Hubs
Discussion/Questions?

- What’s happening in your state?

- Is there a consistent approach to community engagement and feedback loops?

- How is your state scaffolding dollars to support families at the community level?
Thank you!