Parent Leadership Evaluation Guide

for CBCAP Programs

FRIENDS National Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention

A Service of the Children's Bureau

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Introduction

About This Guide

Parent leadership is a strengths-based approach that recognizes parents as experts who hold the most knowledge about their families and communities. Parent leadership has been a priority for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) programs since 2012, with a focus on creating opportunities for parent leaders to provide insight on program design and community efforts. Parent leadership initiatives can result in positive changes to programs when agency staff partner with parents to share in responsibility, accountability, and leadership.

While incorporating parent voice and engagement is a priority for CBCAP programs, evaluating parent leadership efforts can be challenging. This guide is intended to support CBCAP lead agencies, both CBCAP state lead agencies and Tribal & Migrant grantees, in partnership with parents, to develop an evaluation that is specific to their parent leadership initiatives or woven into an existing evaluation plan.

The evaluation may be developed through the following steps:

- Identifying current parent leadership engagement strengths and opportunities for growth
- Developing parent leadership evaluation outcomes
- Developing an evaluation plan
- Implementing a customized evaluation plan and measuring progress toward identified goals
- Reviewing, refining, and utilizing data for continuous quality improvement

CBCAP lead agencies can partner with parents by involving the parent leaders early in the planning and implementation of the evaluation process. Partnering with families to evaluate parent leadership can lead to more enhanced parent engagement, greater education on the services and resources available to parents, a sense of empowerment, and encouragement to parents that their voices are valued in the evaluation process.

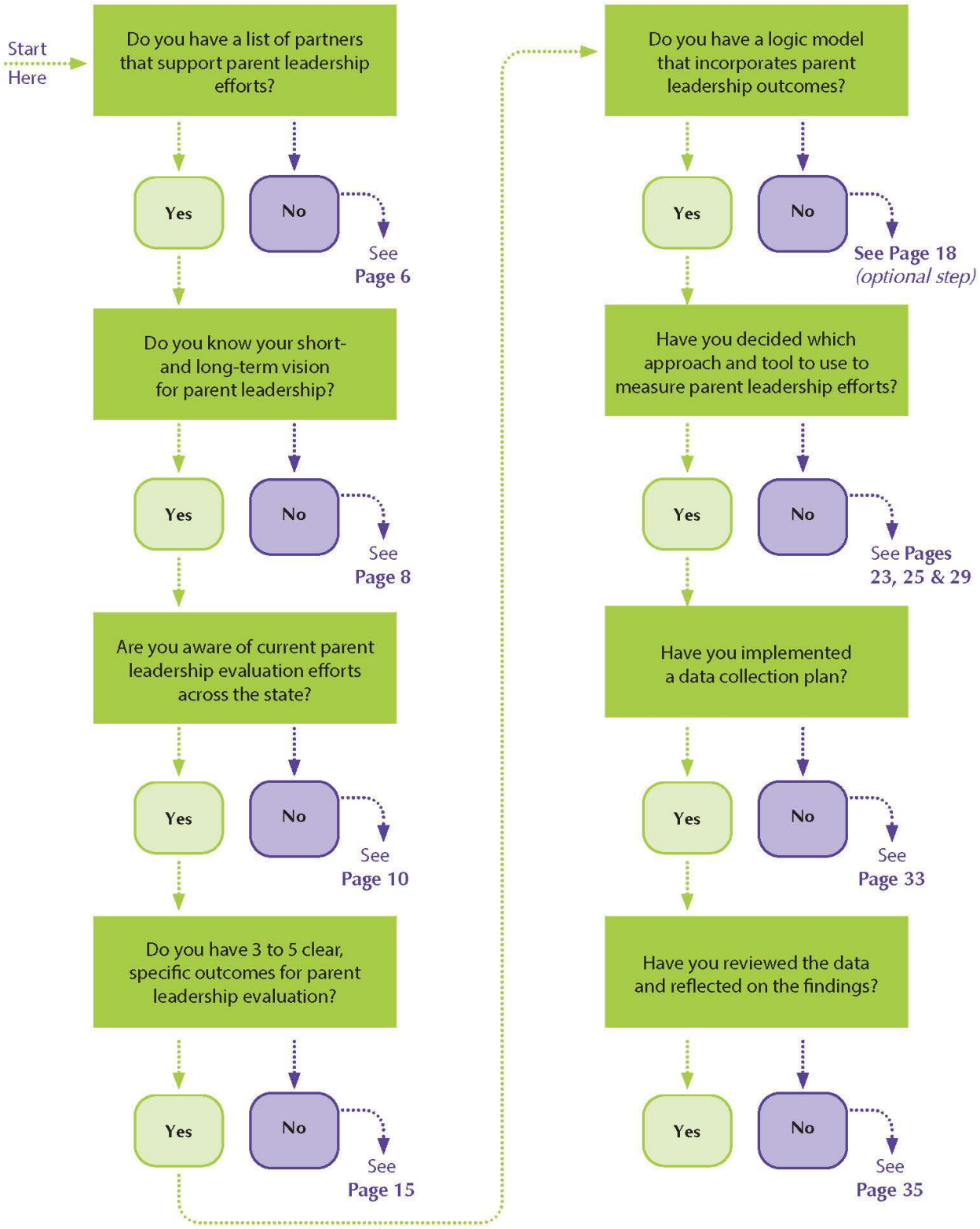
This guide was developed in response to the need for a structured guide to support the evaluation of parent leadership and engagement initiatives in CBCAP programs. CBCAP state lead agencies including Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, and Washington participated in the development and pilot process for the guide. We thank them for their input and have included their work as case studies throughout the guide.

Parent Leadership Evaluation Decision Tree

The decision tree on the following page is intended to serve as a reference point and synopsis for the Parent Leadership Evaluation Guide user. It can help you assess your organization's readiness to create, implement, and evaluate parent leadership efforts.

The left side of the decision tree represents the key topics discussed in the Guide modules. Each topic is framed as a yes-or-no question. The answers to these should give you a good idea of your next steps. When the decision tree says "yes", it is an indication that you can move on to the next category immediately below. If your answer to the question is, "no", the right side of the tree provides page numbers of where you can find more information on the topics listed in this guide.

Parent Leadership Evaluation
Road Map



Module 1
Assessing the Landscape

Overview

Engagement of parent leaders can look different across states, regions, programs, and initiatives. The variety of options for structuring and implementing parent leadership initiatives has important implications for how they are evaluated. Prior to developing a statewide/community level parent leadership and engagement evaluation plan, it is necessary to get an understanding of 1) what parent leadership activities are occurring in your state, 2) what is the vision of these activities, and 3) what you hope to achieve by evaluating the activities.

For the purposes of this guide, FRIENDS defines parent leadership as a strengths-based approach, grounded in the belief that parents are the most knowledgeable about their families and communities. Parent leaders provide valuable insight into programs and community efforts that benefit all children and families (*Meaningful Parent Leadership*: *Building Effective Parent/ Practitioner Collaboration,* FRIENDS National Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention, April 2019).

See the *glossary of terms* for definitions of words and concepts used throughout this guide.

Assessing the Landscape

To get a comprehensive picture of what parent leadership activities are occurring and how they are structured in your state, it is important to assess the current array, or landscape, of parent leadership initiatives. Assessing the landscape can inform your agency of how parent leaders and other partners are engaged, identify new opportunities to involve partners, and support the development of a parent leadership evaluation plan. There are three steps involved in assessing the landscape:

- Identifying your parent partners;
- Developing your theory of change; and
- Assessing parent leadership initiatives.

Identifying Your Parent Partners

The first step in assessing your parent leadership initiative landscape is identifying your parent partners to involve them in parent leadership evaluation efforts from the very beginning. Some may refer to this stage as identifying who has a seat at the table. CBCAP programs are a driving force of parent leadership in the child maltreatment prevention field, it takes state-wide collaboration and coordination across different partners and sectors to engage the prevention continuum. Therefore, in partnership with parents, take some time to brainstorm and consider the partners who play a role in engaging parent leaders in your state/community. This will allow for parent voice to be included early in the evaluation process. Parents can take ownership of the outcomes and take steps to reach them. This shifts your parent engagement approach from not only identifying the parent partners who will have a seat at the table but including them from the onset of your planning efforts or building the table together with parents. Also work with your CBCAP state team to ensure you have a comprehensive list of partners and their roles. Do not limit the table to only those prevention programs focused on child abuse and neglect prevention. You will want to build the table in collaboration with your parent partners.

Who are the major partners that do parent leadership work, value parents' perspectives, and engage parents as leaders in programs or organizations in your state/community?

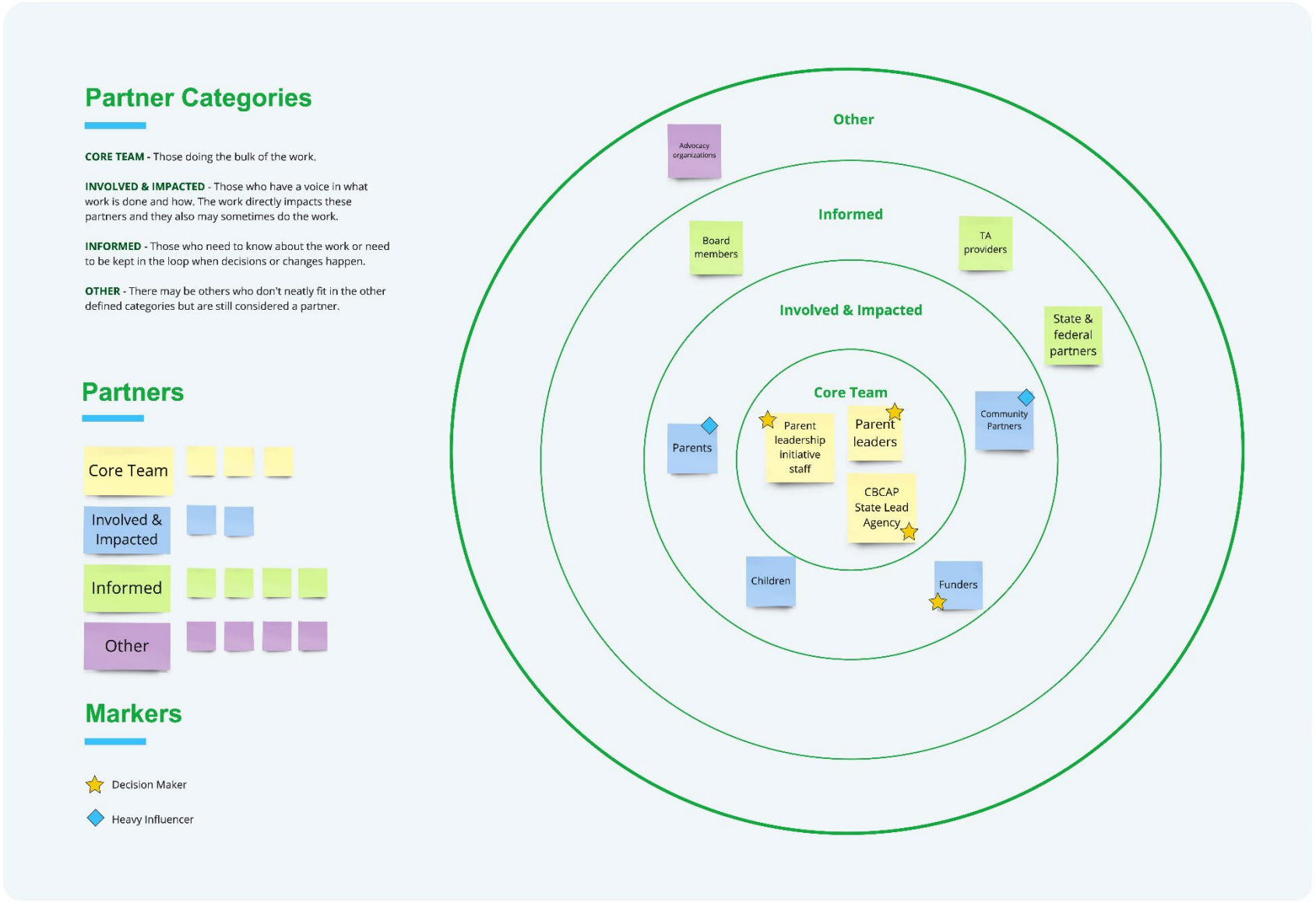
Partners are people or entities involved or affected by a parent leadership program. This may include funders, partner organizations, board members, and community members, and your own organization's employees, managers, and parent leadership participants.

How does your CBCAP program interface and overlap with these partners?

Each partner engages with your CBCAP program at different points and to different extents. Understanding where these points are and to what extent each partner has contact with your program is helpful when reviewing data and making decisions about evaluating your program.

It is important to incorporate parent voice when considering how your CBCAP program overlaps with these partners. Gather input from parents on how these partners are engaged with the CBCAP agency and to gain insight on how different partners are engaging parent leaders across the state/community to build the table together.

If you have just a few partners, making a list might work. If you have a lot of different partners, drawing out their relationship to your parent leadership initiative/program in a diagram or chart might be more helpful. For example, look at the partner map below that outlines examples of partners and categorizes their connection with the program.



When identifying who has a seat at the decision table or building a new table, keep in mind when and how the decisions about program evaluation impact each partner, especially the parent leaders. It is important to keep in mind the level of engagement that you would like to have with parents and be intentional with including them in the conversation. For the best outcomes in your parent leadership initiative, make the decision in partnership with parent leaders early and reference that decision often to make sure you are sticking to it.

Why is this step of building the table important?

The voices and experiences of partners and parents matter as they are the ones affected by the program. Their experiences and suggestions are helpful to consider as you engage in strategic planning, make decisions to allocate resources and services, and seek new funding. For each partner, consider why their involvement in the process is important and remember to be intentional with centering parent voices.

> *Parent Leaders/Partners want to be invited to the table, while the table is being built. Not after the table is built, then you ask us why it can't stand up on its own. We want to co-design the support and services that are meant for our children and families. Nothing for US without US!!"*
>
> *~David Armstrong, FRIENDS Parent Advisory Council member on "Building the Table Together"*

Massachusetts Example

Massachusetts realized early on the importance of centering the voices of parent leaders in every step of the process. After considering how their stakeholders interact with each aspect of the program, they decided to ask a parent leader who is already engaged in their program to collaborate in developing the evaluation plan early on so that the foundational goals of program implementation and evaluation include input from parent leaders.

For more tips on identifying and engaging your partners, check out these FRIENDS resources:

- Meaningful Parent Leadership: Building Effective Parent/Practitioner Collaboration. *https://friendsnrc.org/resources/meaningful-parent-leadership-building-effective-parent-practitioner-collaborations/*
- Preventing Child Neglect – Harnessing Community Power through Conversation: A Conversation Guide *https://friendsnrc.org/wp-content/uploads/Preventing-Child-Neglect-Discussion-Guide-FINAL.pdf*

Developing Your Theory of Change

After identifying the table and who has a seat, the next step in planning your statewide parent leadership evaluation plan is mapping your theory of change. This includes brainstorming broad ideas for your parent leadership efforts and considering what changes you want to make – "dream big!"

This part of the process requires you to imagine a perfect-world scenario where your parent leadership efforts make the best and most impactful or tangible change possible. Brainstorm the broad questions below. We have provided some examples but don't limit your ideas at this step. Be sure to engage parents in this planning process. Brainstorming sessions and focus groups are essential and serve as outlets for collecting parent input and ideas.

1. What is the vision of parent leadership in your state/community?

- We will foster long-term engagement as parents move through different stages of parenting.
- Co-creating with parents will become the primary approach to service development and delivery.

2. What outcomes or **changes** are you hoping to make with parent leadership in your state/community?

- We will see systematic change in the ways that programs engage with and provide services to families, parents, and children.
- We will see systemic change in the ways that people talk about families, parents, and children.
- Professionals will develop skills to effectively listen to parents without defensiveness or being dismissive.

3. What are the indicators that the parent leadership efforts have been **successful (signs of success)**?

- Parents will have a greater sense of self-efficacy.
- Parents will have a greater sense of self-confidence.
- Parent participation barriers are identified.
- Parent participation barriers are addressed.
- We will serve families who are demographically representative of the community.
- We will hire more staff with lived experience of participating in services.
- We will have staff who are involved in co-designing services with parents and families.

TIP:

- When looking at existing efforts to determine the change you're hoping to make, ask yourself, "Where are we getting stuck? What feels overwhelming?" Asking these questions can help you identify opportunities for change that aren't as obvious.

Assessing Parent Leadership Initiatives

Surveying your partners allows you to gain a comprehensive picture of parent leadership initiatives across your state and/or local communities. The information you collect through this survey should reflect what your grantees have done to engage or collaborate with parent leaders, how well those efforts have worked, and opportunities for growth.

The *Family Leadership Self-Assessment Tools for Systems-Building Collaboratives* survey can be a helpful tool to survey your grantees and partners. In addition to gathering information about parent leadership efforts and important aspects of parent leadership promotion at the organizational level, the tool also asks programs to rate the effectiveness of the initiative. This tool helps you assess the lay of the land and identify opportunities for collaboration, technical assistance, or growth for parent leadership initiatives in your state.

This tool assesses key areas of effective parent leadership:

- Communications
- Parent leadership involvement in the collaborative (organization/agency)
- Training and leadership development
- Principles/policies/practices
- Evaluation/assessment

When reviewing the findings of the self-assessment tool, here are some questions to consider:

- How can we define what it means to be "actively involved" in co-design and engaging lived experience? This may be a good question for agency partners and parents to use to define what they consider as actively involved so everyone is on the same page.

  How are meaningful engagement and co-design different from playing a leadership role? Overall, the primary role of co-design is elevating the voices and contributions of people with lived experience. Co-design is about how we are thinking (our mindsets), what we are doing (our methods), and how our systems embrace the participation of people with lived experience. (K.A. McKercher. Beyond Sticky Notes. Doing co-design for real: mindsets, methods, and movements. Downloaded, November 17, 2023 from *https://www.beyondstickynotes.com/what-is-codesign*)

- What meaningful change is coming out of the shift to co-design? For example, the demographics of participants who enroll and complete prevention programs represent the demographics of the broader community.
- What's working well at the community level that could be expanded to the state level? Additionally, are there opportunities for taking what's working well at the state level and breaking it down at the community level? An example might be if existing community cafes are effective, can they be leveraged or expanded?

Michigan Example

Using Qualtrics, Michigan surveyed a large number and wide variety of partners using an adapted version of the FRIENDS Family Leadership *Self-Assessment Tool* for System-building Collaboratives. Individuals from entities such as family support centers, pregnancy and parenting support services, perinatal mental health, and others were surveyed to assess the lay of the land. Choosing to include individuals outside of, but closely related to, CBCAP funded work allowed state leads to better understand a broad range of parent leadership efforts across the child and family well-being system in the state. They were able to hear from over 100 individuals across the state doing parent leadership work to better identify where there were opportunities to align efforts and maximize evaluation potential. With finite resources available, the Michigan lead agency had to prioritize after reviewing the analysis of survey responses that were not consistent across the types of respondents.

For example, 32% of the survey respondents reported that they have not "helped develop forums in which parents can work together to address concerns and solve problems." From this data, an opportunity emerged to provide training/technical assistance to create and evaluate the forums to a) identify whether they are relevant and helpful in achieving their intended goal and b) assess barriers preventing successful implementation of this service model. An example of these forums could be training parents and practitioners to host and facilitate community cafes designed to engage the voices of parents, prevention stakeholders, and practitioners.

Massachusetts Example

In comparison to the broad nature of Michigan's survey, Massachusetts chose to survey their CBCAP-funded Family Center programs to keep the scope narrow and focused. The survey results provided useful insight into the strengths and areas of growth related to parent leadership efforts. For example, one of the areas for improvement was ensuring family members are representative of the broader community.

Other Survey Options

An alternative survey option is the *Parent Engagement and Leadership Assessment* developed by the Center for the Study of Social Policy. This tool is part of an ongoing collaborative effort to redefine how families experience early childhood systems, and the role parents can play to reshape these systems to be more responsive, and accountable to families and the communities they serve.

TIPS:

- Convert this tool into a virtual survey (Qualtrics, Survey Monkey, Doodle, etc.) to make it quick and easy to fill out and gather the data.
- Send the survey to CBCAP grantees AND other stakeholders and entities across the state/community.

Nevada Case Study

The Nevada Division of Child and Family Services (Nevada DCFS) became the State Lead for CBCAP services in July 2019 and was working to establish their programming. They decided to survey a key group of CBCAP programs across the state, including family resource centers, counseling centers, and other child and family support resources. Survey question topics included respecting the opinions of families, seeking input from families, and including that input in the decision-making process.

Twenty-one partners responded to the survey and their responses provide a snapshot of parent leadership efforts in Nevada. Survey questions highlighted areas of potential growth and development for Nevada including new outlets for parent feedback, opportunities for families to be leaders, and policies at the state, county, and community levels that support family leadership. Overall, respondents agreed that initiatives need to respect and use the input of families in decision making.

This information will help guide their efforts to build parent leadership initiatives in the state and focus the evaluation of those initiatives on prioritizing parent voice.

Module 1 Action Steps

Identifying Your Parent Partners

Identify partners who play a role in engaging parent leaders.

Developing Your Theory of Change

Brainstorm broad ideas for parent leadership efforts including short term outcomes, long term outcomes, changes to be made, and signs of success.

Assessing Parent Leadership Initiatives

Survey your partners to gain a comprehensive picture of parent leadership initiatives across the state/community.

Module 2
Developing Outcomes & A Logic Model

Develop Clear Outcomes

Programs believe in the power of parent leadership. However, it can be difficult to boil down ways to evaluate parent leadership efforts. Without articulating specific outcomes for parent leadership initiatives, it is difficult to assess whether the indicators have been achieved through specific efforts. One way to mitigate this is by developing clear outcomes.

To develop clear outcomes, revisit your theory of change and signs of success identified at the in Module 1 and compare them with the focus areas of opportunity identified during the 'lay of the land' assessment analysis you completed at the end of Module 1. Try to identify three to five specific outcomes that intersect with your original destination and the focus areas of opportunity.

The process of developing outcomes presents a great opportunity to ensure many perspectives. Especially if you identified a need to include parent voice more intentionally at the table during your parent leadership assessment in module 1, now is the time to seek out, welcome, and include parent voices, especially those furthest from opportunity. Engaging parents early in this process will improve your ability to form outcomes that include the voices of those most impacted by systems. This can be seen as not just giving parents a place at the table, but inviting parents to help build the table at which they will have a place.

See the *glossary of terms* for the definitions of the following terms used within this guide: Assumptions, Inputs, Outputs, Outcomes, and Indicators.

Washington Case Study

Washington decided to modify their parent leadership efforts by engaging lived experiences through a shift from parent in-put to parent co-design.

"We want the state agency, as a whole, to shift mindset around how it works with and views families by decreasing blame and shame on parents and instead reframing to understand that the system is letting parents down. We also want to address the stigma around help seeking."

Washington considered the question, "What changes *are we hoping to make with parent leadership in our state?" and identified the following:*

- The agency listens to families.

- The agency forges deeper relationships with parent leaders.
- The agency has resources to support parent leaders and maintain their capacity to serve.
- Parents have a streamlined approach to making suggestions.
- Parents can participate despite restrictions, barriers, and challenges.

*Then they asked themselves, "How will we **know we have been successful**?" and established the following signs of success:*

- The community establishes what works well for them and then we build community services around them.
- Families feel welcome and services meet their needs.
- Parents realize/recognize they are the experts in their own lives and their expertise is valued and utilized.
- Parents are increasingly engaged in community programs and services.
- Parents are respected decision makers across systems.
- Biases about parents and families are identified and addressed.

As a result of this brainstorming session, Washington identified the following as the destination of their vision map:

Vision

Parents and caregivers, including those furthest from opportunity, are emboldened to influence their communities and state initiatives.

Outcome 1

Organizations engage in program, policy, and evaluation co-design with parents and caregivers.

Indicator 1

Contractor staff report that support helped build organizational capacity to engage parents.

Indicator 2

Contractor staff report that training helped build organizational capacity to engage parents.

Outcome 2

Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) implements and models parent feedback loop.

Indicator 1

Hire parents as contractors to pay them to provide community training using the Bringing the Protective Factors to Life training series.

Indicator 2

Ensure that parent leadership program development activities for Strengthening Families WA funded programs are run by and with parents.

Indicator 3

Co-design a Family Practice Model in that parents provide ideas and input.

Indicator 4

Co-design a Family Practice Model in that the agency acts on ideas and input with parents.

Indicator 5

Co-design a Family Practice Model in that the agency reviews the results with parents.

Nevada Case Study

From the analysis of their stakeholder survey, Nevada identified the need to respect the opinions of families by seeking their input and including it in the decision-making process. The results of the survey also indicated the importance of supporting parent leadership at the local level, which aligns with their original vision of a parent leadership framework that includes involvement from parents in all areas of the state. To develop clear goals, they brainstormed what this framework would look like in the context of the focus areas of opportunity identified in the stakeholder survey.

Nevada asked themselves, "What **does this vision look like** in our state?"

- CBCAP funds allocated at the county level.
- A prevention program for every county.

Then they asked, "How will we **know we have been successful**?"

- When we recruit and engage parents from a variety of backgrounds
- When we have a clear path to engaging parents in the feedback process.

As a result of this brainstorming session, Nevada identified their vision and three main outcomes to shape their first steps towards achieving the vision:

Vision

Engage parents from a variety of backgrounds and clear the path for their feedback and input.

Outcome 1

Expand and strengthen statewide Parent Leadership Advocacy Group

1. Provide training to parents to increase skills to participate at all levels.
2. Provide training to service providers to increase their knowledge and capacity to involve parent leaders.
3. Prepare parents to be advocates through support from CBCAP grantees and state lead agency.

Outcome 2

Establish and implement Parent Leadership guidelines.

1. Develop expectations of parent leaders with parents.
2. Ensure parent leaders are compensated.

Outcome 3

Develop a Parent Leadership Board

1. Create policies and procedures for the Board with parents.
2. Equip Board to provide input on planning CBCAP programs and services.
3. Involve Parent Leadership Board in grant review.

Develop a Logic Model

If your organization already uses a logic model or you find logic models helpful, you may create a logic model using the outcomes you developed in the previous section or incorporate them into an existing logic model. If you decide to use a logic model, it should outline the activities and resources (sometimes called inputs) needed to accomplish 3-5 outcomes that support the vision of your parent leadership initiatives. For each outcome and associated activities, your logic model should list what you want or expect (who will do what) and an indicator, or sign that you have been successful in reaching that outcome.

TIP:

If you are getting stuck, try paraphrasing your activities, outcomes, and indicators as if-then statements

- *For example: "If we do (activity), then the result will be (outcome)." If the result is (outcome) we will know because (indicator)."*
- *Examine these if-then statements with your outcomes and overall vision- do the outcomes and indicators really reflect progress toward your vision? Each activity should help you make progress toward your outcomes and vision. If they don't, it's time to go back and figure out why.*

A key component of developing a logic model is including representation of appropriate partners, so if you choose to create or use an existing logic model, be sure to include your identified key partners as identified from Assessing the Landscape, Module 1 in developing and reviewing your logic model.

Weaving Parent Leadership into an Existing Logic Model

Instead of developing a logic model specifically for parent leadership, some states have worked to weave parent leadership initiatives and associated evaluation into an existing logic model, such as the one developed as a part of their prevention plan. Taking this approach can help ensure that parent

leadership goals and outcomes are supported by existing efforts and that all initiatives reflect language and practices incorporating parent leadership and parent voice.

As part of their participation in the 2020-2021 Prevention Mindset Institute, Alabama worked to ensure that parent leadership was integrated with their existing logic model. Their logic model, below, is a helpful example of what it could look like to integrate parent leadership initiatives and evaluation into an existing prevention plan logic model. To learn more about the Prevention Mindset Institute and review the Summary Reports, visit the FRIENDS website: *Prevention Mindset Institute | Friends NRC*

Attachment E: Alabama PMI Logic Model

Vision: The Protective Factors will be integrated across systems to provide a foundation for primary prevention by advocating for systemic change through promoting and incorporating the Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework in state-level policies, practices, procedures, and regulations.

Activities	Projected Outcomes	Indicators	Measurement
• Partner with the Alabama Network of Family Resource Centers (ANFRC) to promote the framework statewide • ANFRC will continue to provide trainings to frontline staff, supervisors, case managers, counselors, teachers, probation officers, therapists, nurses, etc. • Provide *Strengthening Families through Fathers* Program • Initiate and maintain a parent leadership council comprised of parents with lived experience in the child welfare or prevention systems.	1. *The Strengthening Families™ Protective Factors Framework* is implemented across systems that serve children and families. 2. Fathers are connected to their children in positive, pro-social ways. 3. Parent leaders will be a voice for influencing policy and practice at the state and local levels.	1.1 Key staff from all sectors serving children and families (education, child welfare, mental health, courts, etc.) receive Protective Factors training. 1.2 At the state and local levels, policies, procedures, and practices reflect the *https://cssp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/About-Strengthening-Families.pdf*[1] as articulated in the SF PF framework. 2.1 Fathers contribute financially to meet their children's needs. 2.2 Fathers demonstrate an understanding of the protective factors and apply them to their lives. 2.3 Fathers communicate with their children's mother effectively and appropriately. 2.4 Fathers use positive parenting practices as defined by the *Strengthening Families Through Fathers* curriculum 3.1 A diverse group of nine parent leaders are recruited, selected and trained. 3.2 The parent leaders are invited to review procedural and promotional materials that are in development or up for revision. 3.3 Parent leaders present at local and state meetings/conferences so policy makers will hear the voice of parents with lived experience. 3.4 Parent leaders are invited to make recommendations for policy at the local and state levels and advocate for increased resources for promoting the well-being of children and families. 3.5 There are increased levels of funding and support for programs and activities that increase the well-being of families.	*1.1: Counts of trainings provided and attendees present. *1.2: Participant surveys (immediately after training and at 6-month follow-up) 1.2: Written Documentation of changes in policies and practices at the state and local levels **2.1, 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4: Retrospective pre/post survey Qualitative data from fathers' focus groups 3.1-3.3 Written documentation 3.3. Presence of increased funding and other supports in child and family serving organizations resulting of parent leadership advocacy.

*Outcome data reported in the, 2020 Alabama Department of Mental Health, Children's Trust Fund, and Alabama Network of Family Resource Centers report, Strengthening Families and Communities: Preventing and Addressing Trauma Training
** Outcome data reported in the SFTF Pilot Fatherhood Study Report (2020), Alder-Baeder, F. et al.

Other barriers include staff turnover issues, transitions in staffing require re-doing some steps.

For more information on logic model development, check out these resources or ask your FRIENDS TA coordinator:

- *Logic Model Overview + Key Components*
- *FRIENDS Logic Model Builder*
- *FRIENDS PDF - Sample Logic Model Overview*
- *FRIENDS Menu of Outcomes and Indicators*

Below is one example of a common outcome with several indicators that could be measured.

Common Outcome

Parents are prepared to assume a leadership role in developing and implementing program policies and activities (such as participation on boards of directors, curriculum development, and evaluation committees).

Indicators

- Parents report feeling welcome to participate on advisory boards and committees.
- Parents have sufficient knowledge to meaningfully participate on advisory boards and committees.
- Parents report feeling confident enough to contribute ideas to advisory boards and committees.
- Parents report feeling confident that their contributions to advisory boards and committees will be taken seriously.
- Parents know how to volunteer to participate on advisory boards and committees.
- Parents understand that childcare, transportation, and work leave issues will affect their level of participation when serving on a board.

Washington Case Study

The value of developing a logic model is ensuring that all planned activities contribute to achieving your vision and each task directly supports the activity. When building their logic model, Washington considered the work they are already doing and looked for places where that work and their 3-5 clear outcomes and activities overlap. This helped them remain mindful of capacity and feasibility throughout the process of identifying activities.

A note on co-design…

Washington wanted parents to directly shape the state and local work. To achieve this, they knew they would need to increase the number of parent leaders engaged in co-design throughout their programs. For some states, co-design is incorporated into all activities. As they put their outcomes and activities into a logic model, Washington realized that they need to start by building a foundation and framework for co-design. They decided to make co-designing a Family Practice Model its own activity so that they can focus on building co-design into the agency framework that structures parent engagement. This will enable them to incorporate co-design into other initiatives and activities in the future.

Nevada Case Study

While a logic model can be an effective tool to outline all planned tasks and ensure they support progress toward a vision, Nevada found that a simpler approach worked better for them in this stage

of planning. Nevada chose to assign broad action steps, or activities, to each outcome and work to identify the resources (inputs) and indicators later in the process, giving them time to review these activities with their partners to gain feedback.

TIP:

This report shares findings from the first ever landscape analysis of parent leadership organizations across the U.S., including a survey and five focus groups with parent leaders, staff, and members of the philanthropic community. New York University Center for Policy, Research, and Evaluation, 2023. *Parent Power and Leadership for Justice: A Landscape Analysis*

Module 2 Action Steps

Develop 3-5 Clear Outcomes

Align your outcomes with the focus areas of opportunity identified in Module 1.

Develop a Logic Model (Optional)

Leverage the use of a logic model to outline the activities and resources needed to accomplish your outcomes.

Module 3
Choosing Methods and Tools

Now that you have a logic model that outlines your outcomes and the activities you will do to achieve them, it's time to ask how to measure the outcomes of those activities to assess progress and know if an activity has been a successful step toward realizing your vision of parent leadership. In this module, we'll start with an overview of some data types and methods commonly used to evaluate Parent Leadership efforts. Then we'll walk through the process of identifying which methods will work best to evaluate the outcomes from your logic model and discuss some tools and strategies you can use to collect the data.

Data Types and Methods

Quantitative

Quantitative methods collect data that are numeric. Data collected with quantitative methods are used to answer questions with a number, such as:

- How many?
- How often?
- To what extent?

> ***Example***
> *You want to measure attendance at a certain parent event to see if your new outreach strategy is working, so you ask every parent who attends to sign in at the event. After a series of events, you could compare the number of attendees to see if it increased over time.*

This type of data can provide you with a 'big picture' view of what happens in your parent leadership efforts. However, this type of data may make it more difficult to see how and why those efforts impact the individuals and families who participate. This type of data is usually gathered through surveys, observational assessments, tallies, and checklists that yield verifiable data. Collecting and making sense of this type of data requires you to have a clear understanding of the problem, or goal, and what question you want to ask.

Qualitative

Qualitative data is information that contains words, subjects, descriptions, definitions, observations, and categories usually without any numeric data. Qualitative data answers questions that cannot be answered with a number, such as:

- Why?
- How?
- What is the process?
- What does it mean?

> ***Example***
> *You want to know if the content of a parent leadership training event helped parent leaders feel more confident advocating for themselves and other parents at the organizational level. You can collect qualitative data by conducting a focus group about their experience using the content of the training in their advocacy work.*

> ***Example***
> *Following a community café, you could ask participants to identify what felt the most relevant or describe how they felt while participating. You could then compare this data with quantitative data, such as attendance rates, to assess if a particular feeling or experience was associated with increased attendance.*

Qualitative data provides the opportunity to understand what you should be looking for and helps you answer the questions you didn't know to ask. Essentially, it explains the how or why behind quantitative data through the exploration of those impacted by parent leadership efforts and provides context necessary to understand more complex problems. Qualitative data can help you understand how and why initiatives and programs are impacting systemic factors and broader outcomes.

Interviews can be low-cost, approachable ways of collecting qualitative data and will give you higher-quality, more usable data. Open-ended survey questions are another good method for collecting qualitative data because they can be added to survey tools that you are already using. Engaging parents in open conversations, such as an informal small group discussion or a more formal focus group, can be a good way to make space in which they can voice what is more difficult to convey in a written response. Ripple effects mapping is another way to collect qualitative data that involves reflecting on a particular piece of data to dig into the details that could have been missed in other analyses.

For more information on using Qualitative Data, check out the FRIENDS guide to *Using Qualitative Data in Program Evaluation.* For an introduction to Ripple Effects Mapping, see the *Ripple Effects Mapping for Evaluation.*

Participatory Methods

Participatory methods are a different way of thinking about knowledge that has implications for every stage of the evaluation process and works well within the context of parent leadership. In parent leadership evaluation, the participatory approach can take many forms, such as focus groups led by parents or working with parents to find patterns and themes in the data.

> ***Example***
> *You want to understand the perspective of parent leaders who are engaged in facilitating learning sessions for other parents as a part of child abuse prevention programs. You decide to hold a series of focus groups with parent leaders to learn more about their experience. To make this approach participatory, parent leaders help in the process of designing the questions and moderating the focus groups. After the data is collected, parents assist with analyzing the data from the focus groups and deciding what should happen next*.

> ***Example***
> *You want to evaluate a training event to understand if it resulted in positive impact on the quality of community cafés. You conduct a focus group with parent leaders about the training and then work with them to develop questions and survey parent attendees to learn about their perspectives of the community café. After collecting responses from parent attendees, you work with parent leaders to analyze the data and determine next steps.*

Participatory methods provide space for parent leaders to help decide the focus of evaluation, determine what is meaningful, and generate innovative solutions. This allows for power-sharing among the parent leaders and program staff.

Choose Your Approach

To choose the methods that will best work to obtain the data needed, consider each parent leadership outcome, indicator, and activity you identified in Module 2. Think through the terms and concepts embedded in each outcome, define them, and decide for each concept how you will measure change. We've outlined this process in the following three steps:

1. Decide what outcome you are selecting for measurement:

> ***Example****: Your CBCAP program funds community cafés across the state. You have noticed that some community cafés are better attended than others and you have provided a training for your parent leaders to increase their knowledge related to facilitation, with the hope that increased facilitation skills will improve community café attendance. Your outcome is centered around* ***growing and measuring change with leadership skills of parent leaders.***

2. Decide on the specific indicators to measure (e.g., if you are evaluating for leadership skill development, focus on knowledge growth, confidence, or facilitation skill development)

> ***Example***: *You want to learn about whether a recent community café facilitation training improved facilitation skills amongst parent leaders and you also want to know if attendance by other parents improves after the training.*

3. Decide how you are going to measure change (quantitative, qualitative, or participatory approach)

> ***Example***: *Determine whether you want to use a quantitative, qualitative, or participatory approach to evaluating parent leadership skill development and community café attendance. You can decide to use one method, or you can use a mixed-methods approach. Continuing the example above, you may decide to use a mixed methods approach by collecting and evaluating quantitative data to measure the attendance rates over time and qualitative data to measure improved facilitation skills.*

After defining the indicators you would like to measure, you may find that an existing tool, like the CSSP Parent Engagement and Leadership Assessment Tool linked below, is a good fit for your evaluation needs and adequately assesses the indicators and concepts you've outlined. For additional examples of existing tools, check out the links in the "Choose the Tool" section later in this module.

TIP

- You can find the CSSP Parent Engagement and Leadership Assessment Tool on page 8 of the *CSSP Parent Engagement and Leadership Assessment Guide and Toolkit*

Using Indicator-Measurement Approach With A Logic Model

When choosing evaluation tools and methods for activities included in a logic model, it can be useful to further break down each indicator of the logic model and consider what type of data and which method will best give you the information that you need. Be sure to include parents in selecting the evaluation tools and methods. This helps to ensure that the data collection process is a feasible task and results in information that assesses whether your efforts have been successful.

We recommend putting each indicator into a table format (see below) in the order that they appear on your logic model. For each indicator, identify a measurement. After you have completed this process, it may be helpful to organize the table by data collection method, but this step is optional and may not be beneficial in every situation. Excerpts from Washington's approach are provided below as an example.

Washington Case Study

To select the evaluation methods and tools that best fit their needs, Washington first looked through the outcomes, indicators, and measurement of each activity listed in their logic model and asked the question, *"What data will provide us with the best information to inform success and identify improvement areas in the future?"* From this question, they determined that a mix of quantitative, qualitative, and participatory approaches would provide them with the best information. They next looked at what evaluation is already being done to take advantage of any overlap or opportunities to work parent leadership evaluation questions into data collection tools they already use. Their movement through this process is captured well by an outcome-indicator-measurement table.

Quantitative Methods

Washington has some existing program surveys, including an annual evaluation, that they can use to capture parent leadership data. Quantitative methods can be applied to measure the indicators by incorporating counts of paid contractors and number of parents engaged into their existing program surveys.

- **Outcome:** What we intend to see change.
- **Indicator:** What we will specifically measure in terms of change.
- **Measurement:** The way we will measure the change (optional to add quantitative, qualitative, participatory)

Quantitative Methods Applied to Measure Indicators

Outcome	Indicator	Measurement
Contractors build organizational capacity that supports codesign with parents.	Number of parent voices participating in contracted programs increases.	Number of parents attending contracted programs (quantitative)
DCYF implements parent feedback loop.	DCYF hire parents as contractors to provide and run trainings.	Number of paid parent contractors (quantitative)

Qualitative Methods

During this stage of the process, Washington noted the limitations of relying on quantitative data as a measure of success: while they have historically done a good job of using quantitative evaluation methods to measure progress on performance indicators for the state, they haven't always asked the "why."

The qualitative methods they identified in the next table reflect an effort to understand the "why" behind the quantitative data, which will improve their ability to implement future improvements that target barriers to achieving their goals. A great example is the indicator which focuses on growth in the numbers of parent leaders engaged in work as paid contractors. Washington currently has a

mechanism in place to pay parent leaders for their input and work but want to know if the wage is sufficient to retain parents in those roles when the time involved, consistency of available work, and expertise of their lived experience are considered.

In addition to this information, they want to identify other indicators (like training and materials) that parent leaders need to be successful in their role as contractors and ensure those needs are met. To identify what parent leaders need to be successful and remain in their role, Washington will elicit qualitative data by incorporating open-ended questions into surveys or interviews with parents. They listed this broad evaluation question as a "problem to be addressed" so that they can continue to seek data around what makes it harder for people to join the work as parent educators and other contractors.

Qualitative Methods Applied to Measure Indicator

Outcome	Indicator	Measurement
DCYF implements and models parent feedback loop.	DCYF hires more parents as contractors to provide and run trainings.	Survey or interviews to ask open-ended questions such as: *Is the wage enough?* *What are the barriers?* *What are the tools they need?* *Are we responding to their needs?*

Participatory Methods

In addition to identifying and addressing barriers to parent participation, Washington prioritized both co-design and a parent feedback loop in their logic model. These outcomes present them with a great opportunity to use participatory methods of data collection and evaluation, ensuring that parents have an active role in shaping the work happening in their state and identifying focus areas for future improvement. The participatory methods they focused on include focus groups, parent participation in data collection and analysis, and SenseMaker® sessions.

Washington identified distrust and stigma as the problems they want to address through participatory data collection. To address this, they are considering engaging partners in sense making sessions centered around the questions, "What do parent stories teach you?" and "What changes are needed to engage and promote parent leaders?" By using SenseMaker® to approach these questions, partners can learn what it means to effectively co-design a parent leadership program through the process of the parents reflecting themselves.

A Note on SenseMaker®

SenseMaker® is an innovative technology that gathers stories from individuals to hear, in their words, what it looks like when families are thriving and when they are just surviving. To participate in sense making, families are asked to submit an anonymous story through a simple online tool. After submitting a story, individuals answer follow-up questions about the story they shared, allowing them

to describe what their story means to them. As stories are collected, patterns are analyzed in depth to gain a better understanding of what families need to thrive.

A note on Participatory approaches

Participatory approaches ensure parent leaders and parent leadership initiative staff are engaged in the evaluation process. This method offers the benefit of parents and agency staff co-designing expectations of parent leadership efforts. Participatory approaches align with the values of collaboration, democratic engagement, and empowerment that guide Parent Leadership Initiatives. Contact your FRIENDS TA coordinator to help build the evaluation capacity for your parent leadership initiative.

Choose the Tool

To choose a tool, first consider any evaluations that you are already doing. If you are already using an evaluation tool, consider whether that tool can be adapted to include questions about your parent leadership initiatives. If you do not currently perform an evaluation that will fit your needs for measuring parent leadership initiatives, consider using an evaluation tool, in whole or in part, that is already in existence.

> *Example*
> *Circle of Parents, a support group facilitated by a Kansas CBCAP grantee, uses the Protective Factors Survey, 2nd edition (PFS-2) to evaluate the impact of their efforts on protective factors and social supports of attendees. Using an existing, validated tool allows them to assess change over time and compare their efforts with other CBCAP initiatives that also use the PFS-2 instrument for evaluation. For more information about Kansas' CBCAP evaluation using the PFS-2 instrument, check out the impact data in the Kansas Children's Cabinet & Trust Fund Annual Reports linked below.*

- *2021 Annual Report* – Impact data begins on page 55
- *2022 Annual Report* – Impact data begins on page 56

Whatever tool you decide to use, it is important that the tool and data collection process are the same so that you can accurately measure change over time. This means that you should find specific questions that you'd like to ask and ensure they are on each measurement tool that you are using. On the next page you will find a table outlining examples of outcomes, indicators, and measurement tools taken from the *FRIENDS Compendium of Annotated Measurement Tools.*

Examples of outcomes, indicators, and measurement tools taken from the *FRIENDS Compendium of Annotated Measurement Tools.*

Outcome	Example Indicator (See full compendium for additional examples)	Outcome Term	Measurement Tools	Domains/ Protective Factors
Parents are prepared to enter mentoring relationships with other parents, agency staff, board members, policymakers, or funders.	Parents have received training or guidance on how to be a mentor.	Short-term	Child and Youth Resilience Measures Community Life Skills Scale (CLSS) Family Support Scale Inventory of Socially Supportive Behaviors Short-Form	Concrete Supports for Parents Formal and Informal Supports Outcomes Resilience Social Supports
Parents develop mentoring relationships with parents, agency staff, board members, policymakers, or funders.	Parents mentor new staff. Parents mentor new program participants.	Intermediate/ Long-Term	Family Support Scale (FSS) Inventory of Socially Supportive Behaviors Short-form Protective Factors Survey 2nd Edition (PFS-2)	Concrete Support for Parents Formal and Informal Supports Outcomes Resilience Social Supports
Parents are prepared to assume a leadership role in developing and implementing program policies and activities (such as participating on the board of directors, curriculum development, and evaluation committees).	Parents have sufficient knowledge to meaningfully participate on advisory boards and committees. Parents report feeling confident that their contributions to advisory boards and committees will be taken seriously.	Short-term	Child and youth Resilience Measures Family Support Scale (FSS) Inventory of Socially Supportive Behaviors Short-Form	Concrete Supports for Parents Formal and Informal Supports Outcomes Resilience Social Supports
Parents assume an active role in developing and implementing program policies and activities (such as participating boards of directors, curriculum development, and evaluation committees).	Parents serve on advisory boards and committees, such as boards of directors, curriculum development, and evaluation committees, etc.	Intermediate/ Long-term	Family Support Scale (FSS) Inventory of Socially Supportive Behaviors Short-Form	Concrete Supports for Parents Formal and Informal Supports Outcomes Resilience Social Supports

For additional examples of existing tools, including the *Protective Factors Survey*, check out the links below.

- *FRIENDS Compendium of Annotated Measurement Tools*
- *Parent Engagement and Leadership Assessment Guide and Toolkit: Parent Engagement and Leadership Assessment Guide and Toolkit: Full Report - Center for the Study of Social Policy (cssp.org)*
- *Protective Factors Surveys | Friends NRC*
- *FRIENDS Meaningful Parent Leadership: Building Effective Parent/Practitioner Collaboration* (see checklists on pages 35 & 36 in the guidebook)

Washington Case Study

Washington centered parent leadership as a value early on in this process, but until this point, they hadn't really established a measure of success for putting that value into action. They realized a need to define what success looks like for them and grow in their ability to use qualitative and participatory methods to measure that success.

After choosing their methods and approaches, Washington started laying out the who-how-where-when of data collection. They chose to primarily embed parent leadership evaluation questions into existing surveys administered by their agencies. The parent leadership survey questions will be adaptable to capture different types of data. Annual and quarterly surveys will be used as the quantitative method, and open-ended questions will be used on surveys to capture qualitative data. To align with WA's mapped change identified in Module 1, they have committed to learning more about and implementing new qualitative approaches including SenseMaker® and Ripple Effects Mapping to ensure parent voice is captured.

Nevada Case Study

A key theme among Nevada's evaluation method selection was simplicity, because the state recognized the fact that evaluation methods and questions do not need to be complicated. The method selected can be specifically centered around answering the question, *"did we do what we said we were going to do?"* Once evaluation goals were identified, Nevada considered the range of evaluation types that would best fit their programs. The state chose to use quantitative, qualitative, and participatory approaches to evaluate their outcomes because using more than one method can yield better evaluation results. Additionally, Nevada chose to use both premade survey instruments and develop their own survey questions to enable a thorough analysis of their efforts.

Module 3 Action Steps

Understand Data Types and Methods

Quantitative methods collect data that are numeric, qualitative methods collect non-numeric data, and participatory methods bring partners together to interpret data.

Choose the Approach

Outcomes describe who will do what; indicators are the specific way the outcome is being measured; and the measurement captures the way we will measure the indicator.

Choose the Tool

Ensure your tool and data collection process are consistent to accurately measure change over time.

Module 4
Implementing & Measuring Progress

Overview

Now that you have selected evaluation methods, it is time to implement your evaluation and measure progress. It is important to have a clear plan that details the steps involved in implementing your evaluation. An evaluation plan specifies the activities, staff assignments, and timelines that will be used to better understand outcomes and improve your parent leadership evaluation efforts. Module 4 will walk you through how to implement, analyze, and refine an evaluation plan to put your data collection plan into action.

To promote smooth and appropriate data collection, be sure to train relevant staff and establish clear processes and roles to ensure that your data collection methods identified in Module 3 are resulting in data that will be used in a meaningful way.

The following steps can serve as a general guide for collecting data from clients/participants/parent leaders:

- Obtain informed consent and consider other data security (confidentiality).
- Consider providing compensation and/or incentives for client participation.
- Train appropriate staff in data collection processes and ensure they have the materials needed.
- Collect the data via methods identified in Module 3.

For additional tools and best practices for implementing data collection, see *the FRIENDS Evaluation resource page*.

Analyze: Review, Report, Reflect, and Refine Your Data

The data gathered from your evaluation process should provide a measure of success for each of the outcomes and indicators developed in Module 2 and inform the next steps of program improvement. Parent leaders can and should be involved in this analysis. What you learn about your outcomes can help you advocate for additional funding or community support, identify any changes needed to better align your programs with the vision and outcomes you outlined in earlier modules, and inform both future programming plans and the next cycle of your evaluation process.

Review the Data

When reviewing and analyzing your data, consider the different collection methods used. Interpreting quantitative results collected via surveys will require a different approach than that of qualitative methods such as focus groups and interviews. Another important component in data review is analyzing for impact. To assess impact, try asking these questions with your evaluation team including parent leaders and staff:

- Did your findings yield expected or unexpected results?
- What did respondents report is working well?
- What are areas for improvement within your parent leadership efforts?

An additional lens that should be applied to your data analysis is if the evaluation method used was a good fit for your organization, the parent leaders, and the component you intended to measure. Questions to consider include:

- Were the evaluation methods appropriate for measuring the targeted outcome?
- Were the instruments appropriate for the population served?
- Were staff trained and supported to conduct evaluation as intended?

Report Your Findings

Once you have collected, analyzed, and begun interpretation of your data you will begin to have a better picture of the progress towards your outcomes that has occurred. An important step is to report these results back to key partners which may include staff, parent leaders, participants in program(s), board members, funders, and community members. Synthesizing your data into an outcome report is a good way to demonstrate your findings in a variety of ways.

A comprehensive outcome report should detail the steps your organization has taken throughout this guide. The report should include:

- Background information on Parent Leadership initiatives.
- Intended outcomes of your evaluation efforts.
- Key findings and recommendations.
- How you identified parent leadership strengths and opportunities for growth.
- Developed evaluation outcomes and/or logic model.
- Selected evaluation methods.
- Implemented the evaluation plan and measured progress.

To make the information easier to read and digest, find creative ways to present the information visually through graphs, charts, tables, photos, and other graphics. Actively involve parent leaders in the development of the outcome report. Additionally, it may be feasible to extract certain

elements of the comprehensive report to develop targeted fact sheets, depending on the desired audience. Consider pulling highlights from your data out of the main text and into a designated section. FRIENDS has some examples of how to *share data*.

Reflect & Refine

Taking time to reflect on your parent leadership evaluation planning, implementation, and analysis ensures that organizations are systematically and intentionally improving services and increasing positive outcomes for the families served. Reflection also provides opportunities to examine:

- What went well?
- Where were the barriers?
- What are potential opportunities for program innovation?
- How can we replicate positive outcomes?
- What do we need to change?

The answers to the questions above should result in recommendations and plans about how the organization should inform and shape program delivery decisions and adjust services to improve results. If your organization is engaged in Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), these recommendations can be used in that process.

To learn more about CQI, see the *FRIENDS guide* on CQI using Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles.

Kansas Case Study

The Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund (KCCTF) is the state lead agency for all CBCAP programs across Kansas. KCCTF, along with key partners across the prevention continuum, are working together to build a system that honors and strengthens families. Kansas CBCAP grantees are committed to authentically engaging and including parents, caregivers, and others with lived experience in the design, delivery, and evaluation of programs and services. This commitment is detailed in the Kansas logic model which also highlights the identified evaluation methods used to measure progress made towards parent leadership and authentic engagement.

Kansas Case Study: Implement

To evaluate parent leadership efforts, Kansas' evaluation plan uses a rapid-cycle approach to capture the landscape of parent leadership across the state, as well as measure the efficacy of CBCAP services and programs. The plan uses a variety of ongoing qualitative and quantitative methods. For this Case Study, Ripple Effects Mapping as a participatory approach will be discussed.

Kansas Case Study: Collect the Data

Ripple Effects Mapping (REM) is a visual-participatory approach to program evaluation that engages providers, participants, and partners in an interactive, reflective process, which yields qualitative and visual data to capture both intended and unintended outcomes of an initiative.

Data were collected by holding virtual REM sessions with CBCAP program staff. Program staff committed to gathering virtually for two-hour sessions over the course of two days, for a total of four hours of data collection. The Kansas CBCAP state lead facilitated the sessions to examine prevention and parent leadership efforts across the last fiscal year. The REM session consisted of:

- Peer interviewing/appreciative inquiry: identifying current experiences with the program of future possibilities of parent leadership initiatives, how to elicit desired future outcomes, and conceptualizing the broader program vision.
- Whole group discussion/reflection: reporting on results from peer interviewing and reflecting upon shared understanding and making connections to current or future parent leadership initiatives. This part of the process is intended to cause a shift in perception, understanding, program possibilities, and serve as thematic foci for the visual mapping process.
- Mind mapping/radiant thinking: Participants engage in the co-creation of a visual map of casual factors and outcomes while considering the role of the parent leadership initiatives in the outcome, significant changes, and themes associated with outcomes.

Kansas Case Study: Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used to generate themes and codes, as well as determine relationships between codes. The REM data highlighted the ways in which CBCAP grantees are effectively increasing social supports and leveraging their relationship with clients as a protective factor and child maltreatment prevention strategy. Findings also demonstrated that Kansas CBCAP grantees were effectively working to expand and build parent leaders, which were then serving as extended social support and community-based advocates.

Kansas Case Study: Reporting Results

Each year, KCCTF develops an annual report to share outcomes and progress with partners and the public. Kansas chose to feature the REM findings through the evaluation section of this reporting structure.

The CBCAP evaluation section of the annual report reviews the general evaluation plan and purpose of implementing CBCAP programs. The evaluation section is divided into the following segments:

- Evaluation Approach and Results
- Ripple Effects Mapping Evaluation
- Ripple Effects Mapping Results

The report blends data reporting through written text and visual representations of the data. This includes a visual mapping of the data collected through the REM sessions. See an example of the *KCCTF Annual Report here.*

Note that parent leaders may also be impacted by participating in the evaluation process through:

- helping them to build deeper relationships with evaluation team members;
- seeing evaluation in a way that is respectful and dignifying;
- improving active listening and inquiry skills;
- expanding evaluation practice within their own professional organizations;
- validating which parent leadership practices are working and improve upon ones that are not.

Module 4 Action Steps

Implement Your Data Collection Plan

Put your plan into action by following best practices including asking parent leaders and staff to participate in conversations about goals, outcomes, and collecting and analyzing data.

Analyze Your Data

Review, report, reflect, and refine the data gathered in your evaluation process.

Conclusion

After moving through all four modules of this guide, you will have successfully outlined the vision and outcomes of parent leadership efforts in your state, established a structure and process for evaluating those efforts, and completed one evaluation implementation cycle. As you move forward with building parent leadership efforts in your state, the processes and concepts outlined in this guide can be used to further refine the focus of your state's parent leadership efforts and evaluation plan. You may find that it is helpful to revisit content in some of the initial modules as you gain additional data that provides context around the vision and outcomes that you established early in this process.

Parent leadership efforts are not static and can look very different across states, regions, and time periods. The goal of this guide is to support programs that are initiating evaluation of parent leadership efforts in their state, and for those who are seeking to refine existing evaluation strategies. On the next page, we have provided a summary of the action steps for each module and can be used to assist you in identifying what has been accomplished and those steps in progress.

We would like to extend our thanks to the CBCAP state lead agencies in Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, and Washington for their willingness to pilot this guide. Their feedback and insight allowed this guide to take shape with authentic examples of parent leadership evaluation.

Parent Leadership Evaluation Guide

For CBCAP Programs

Modules 1-4

Action Steps

MODULE 1	Done	**Assessing the Landscape**	In progress
		Identifying Your Parent Partners	
		Developing Your Theory of Change	
		Assessing Your Parent Leadership Initiatives	
MODULE 2	Done	**Developing Outcomes & a Logic Model**	In progress
		Develop 3 to 5 Clear Outcomes	
		Develop a Logic Model (optional)	
MODULE 3	Done	**Choosing Methods & Tools**	In progress
		Understand Data Types and Methods	
		Choose the Approach	
		Choose the Tool	
MODULE 4	Done	**Implementing & Measuring Progress**	In progress
		Implement Your Data Collection Plan	
		Analyze Your Data	

Glossary of Terms

Assumptions

Beliefs held about the work and people involved that influence the way we think the activities will function.

Co-Design

Co-Design is a participatory approach to designing solutions, where community members are treated as equal collaborators in the development process. This approach amplifies the voices and experiences of the people closest to the needs addressed through an engagement or initiative. Learn more about co-design *here*.

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)

CQI is a process to ensure programs are systematically and intentionally improving services and increasing positive outcomes for the families they serve. CQI is a cyclical, data-driven process; it is proactive, not reactive. *Learn more about how to pursue CQI here*.

Evaluation

Evaluation is a valuable tool for organizations seeking to strengthen the quality of their programs and improve outcomes for the children and families they serve. Evaluation data can be used to report outcomes, identify impactful interventions, and make informed decisions about future programming opportunities. Ideally, evaluation is treated as part of service delivery. A plan for evaluation should be built into any program that provides supportive services to children and families.

For more information on the importance of evaluation visit the *Why Evaluate page* on the FRIENDS website or contact your FRIENDS TA Coordinator.

Indicator

A specific, observable, and measurable change that shows the progress made toward achieving a specific output or outcome.

Inputs

Resources committed to a program's activities to produce the intended outputs and outcomes.

Outcomes

Intended result of an activity or process. Outcomes are statements about the changes in status, beliefs, and behaviors that your services are designed to bring about. If you are successful in providing your services, what changes will program participants' experience?

Outputs

The tangible and direct results of activities.

Parent Leadership

Meaningful Parent Leadership is a strengths-based approach grounded in the belief that parents are most knowledgeable about their families and communities. Parent leaders provide valuable insight into program and community efforts that benefit all children and families. Parent leadership is meaningful when parents and staff throughout the organization work together as partners to make decisions about programs, policies, and practices that affect families and communities and share responsibility, expertise, accountability, and leadership.

For more information about parent leadership and enhancing the engagement of parents as stakeholders and partners within your program and organization see *Meaningful Parent Leadership: Building Effective Parent/ Practitioner Collaboration* or contact your FRIENDS TTA Coordinator.

Theory of Change

A theory of change helps strengthen strategies and maximize results by identifying the work to be undertaken, the expected signals of progress, and the presumed or possible pathways to achieving the desired goals. For more information on how to develop a theory of change, see *Developing a Theory of Change: Practical Theory of Change Guidance, Templates, and Examples*.

Vision

A statement that encapsulates the driving force behind the work you do. What do the families in your community want and value? What do you want for the families and community that you serve? A truly inspired vision statement may not be measurable, at least not in the short-term, and your program does not necessarily have to be responsible for single-handedly achieving it.

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List of Resources

Continuous Quality Improvement, FRIENDS National Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention.

Family Leadership Self-Assessment Tool for System-building Collaboratives, FRIENDS National Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention.

Logic Models, FRIENDS National Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention.

Meaningful Parent Leadership: Building Effective Parent/ Practitioner Collaboration, FRIENDS National Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention, revised April 2019.

Parent Engagement and Leadership Assessment Guide and Toolkit, Center for the Study of Social Policy, 2019.

Parent Power and Leadership for Justice: A Landscape Analysis. New York University Center for Policy, Research, and Evaluation, 2023

Preventing Child Neglect – Harnessing Community Power Through Conversation, A Conversation Guide. FRIENDS National Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention, April 2019.

Prevention Mindset Institute, FRIENDS National Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention.

Ripple Effects Mapping, Washington State University Extension Office, 2011.

Sharing Data, FRIENDS National Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention.

Using Qualitative Data in Program Evaluation, FRIENDS National Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention.